

America's Role in the World Post 9/11:
A New Survey of Public Opinion

Jane Harman:

Good afternoon and welcome to the Wilson Center. Welcome to the people sitting in this auditorium, those in overflow rooms, those who are listening to us or watching us in various media and who will intersect us on the Internet sometime in the next days and weeks.

I'm Jane Harman, President and CEO of the Wilson Center. And as some of you know, we recently joined forces with NPR to create this year-long public event series that we call the National Conversation. NPR's president and CEO, my California buddy Gary Knell who has a Muppet, which is an improvement on himself, named after him for his roles, his role before on running Sesame Street is sitting in the front row, as is Joe Gildenhorn, Ambassador Joe Gildenhorn who is the chairman of the Wilson Center Board of Trustees. And I'd like to welcome many other friends here today.

My hope is that this series will provide the public, that is you, with new opportunities to engage in much-needed civil discourse free from spin, imagine that in this election season, in the safe political space that the Wilson Center provides. For today's event, the Wilson Center and NPR, partnered with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, a 90-year-old non-partisan institute well known for its studies of American policy -- American opinion on foreign policy. The Wilson Center and I personally have many good friends who are part of the Chicago Council. Especially the chairman, Lester Crown, a dear friend., who will be involved in some activities we're conducting in Chicago later this month. And we also recently participated in the panel on the Middle East with the Council in Chicago. And, as I said, we're so pleased that they have come here today.

The Council's most recent biennial survey which looks at American public opinion on the U.S.'s role in the post-9/11 world will be the launch pad for today's conversation. All on this panel and I were in government on 9/11 which, by the way, occurred on a crisp and clear Tuesday, which will be tomorrow's weather so I understand, and the day of the week that is tomorrow. We were in different roles. All of

us regardless of our party position or party, struggle to find the right strategies to keep our country safe.

Looking back on it, we did some things right and some things wrong. I lament especially that we never debated and put in place a comprehensive legal framework for the post-9/11 world. Mike Hayden, who you'll meet in a moment, was prepared to help with this by fully briefing the intelligence committees at more than one point. But at one point was called back by the White House and not able to brief us on a crucial part of the strategy. There was a headline of an op-ed in yesterday's New York Times. And it was "How Resilient is Post-9/11 America?" The piece made the point, which I think is critical for us to remember that the best weapon against terror is refusing to be terrorized. Oklahoma City is a terrific example.

Since the bombing in 1995, the deadliest attack in the U.S. before 9/11, the city has raised hundreds of millions of dollars to rebuild everything from a performing arts center and a library to a baseball park and public schools. That's the kind of message the United States should be sending to anyone, whether halfway around the world or here at home, who may be fantasizing about committing an act of terror on American soil. That message goes like this: If you attack us, you will make us stronger. We will come together, rise with resilience, and emerge more prepared and resolved. Unfortunately, in this election season, few voters are thinking about our role in the world or our role on these matters. In fact, in the spring Reuters asked registered voters what issues were most important to them in the presidential election campaign. Guess how many said foreign policy? Three percent. That's compared to 53 percent for jobs in the economy, 14 for health care, and nine for family values.

The Chicago Council's new survey underscores this trend in public thinking. In fact, 38 percent of Americans polled among the highest levels ever recorded since the Council's 1974 survey during the Vietnam war says that the U.S. should stay out of world affairs. And the number of people who support an active role in world affairs has also dropped significantly; from 71 percent in 2002 to 61 percent today. The isolationist trend worries me especially. And it poses the issue of how should the White House and lawmakers think about and shape our foreign policy. As mentioned, I believe the best way for the U.S.

to lead requires debating and clearly explaining the intersection of our actions and our values. Some of you were in this room in April when John Brennan gave us that kind of description of our Drone Program, key piece of our counter-terrorism and strategy. As he knows, John Brennan knows, and many of you, I'm sure, agree, just playing whack-a-mole alone won't keep us safe. President Obama understood that when, as a senator, he delivered a major speech here at the Wilson Center during the last campaign said, quote, "Too often since 9/11, the extremist have defined us. Not the only way around." So my view, we can only win the argument by, as President Obama said, authoring our own story.

This afternoon's panel will explore this vital question. And the vital question of our role in the world. And we have a terrific lineup. They're all dear friends and they're sitting right in the front row. I recall traumatizing Phil Mudd when he was a witness before my sub-committee held -- we don't have time to go into that today, but just assume I'm right. Jim Zogby is a singular voice in helping understand the Arab perspective and was on our enormously interesting panel just a year ago entitled "9/11: The Next 10 Years." We're also happy to have Tom Gjelten, I teased him by calling him Mr. Martha Raddatz, who is an esteemed correspondent for NPR and was reporting live from the Pentagon the moment it was hit on 9/11. Martha Raddatz is one of my role models for her brilliance, professionalism, and unflinching readiness to go anywhere and do anything to get the story. She will be chairing the very important vice presidential debate, by the way, in just a few weeks and I'm sure it will be carried live on NPR. And finally we are delighted -- I didn't mention, did I? I -- have I covered everybody? No. Mike Hayden. How did I forget Mike Hayden? That's impossible. So I mentioned that he was trying to be very helpful during the evolution of the very difficult times after 9/11.

And I recall one moment that I do want to expand on and that is calling him on a Saturday after the president, President Bush, had substantially declassified the fact that we had a terrorism surveillance program, suggesting that he come and brief the full intelligence committees on the Hill. He readily agreed. He was shopping for a Christmas present for his wife and said, "I'll come in today. But you have to clear it with the White House." And this is what I mentioned. And the White House first

cleared it and then pulled that back so Mike didn't come. So there have been many times over many years when Mike Hayden personally, and you'll hear this today, with candor and effectiveness, whether you agree with what he did or not, spoke out about the importance of protecting the country and the importance of informing the public about some of our critical programs. We are delighted that Marshall Bouton will be delivering today's keynote address. Marshall has led the Chicago Council on Global Affairs for the past decade and, like me, is a policy junkie. He previously held several wonky titles, including executive vice-president and chief operating officer of the Asia Society, director for policy analysis from Near-East, African, South Asia in the Department of Defense, special assistant to the U.S. ambassador to India, and executive secretary for the Indo-U.S. Sub-Commission on Education and Culture. But even more impressive than his resume, is his obvious passion and commitment to fostering essential debate about tough issues.

Please join me now in welcoming Dr. Bouton, who, unfortunately for the Chicago Council, will be leaving there sometime next year. Marshall will tell us more about the results of the fascinating new survey, will offer keynote remarks, and then we'll move to the panel. Please welcome Marshall Bouton.

[applause]

Marshall Bouton:

Thank you Jane very much. We're thrilled, we're honored, in fact the Wilson Center has agreed to partner with us in hosting the release of the Council's 2012 study. This is a great institution now, very, very capably led by Jane and we're delighted to have this opportunity to collaborate with you early in your tenure. So I have a really tough job and that is to try to present the findings of a rather exhaustive study of American thinking about U.S. foreign policy. I'm looking forward very much to the panel and to their comments so it's incumbent upon me to try to get this done as rapidly as possible. And I'll have to ask for your forgiveness in advance because I'm going to breeze through a lot of data and, frankly, it's the tip of the iceberg of what the Council has done. As Jim Zogby would know from his own work, one doesn't get to report nearly as much of what one finds as one would like.

Methodology -- I'm not sure where I'm pointing this. There we go. The methodology is pretty straightforward. It's a random sample of all Americans, of all adult Americans, and our survey research is done based on an Internet sample drawn random through random selection process, random digital dialing by GfK Custom Research, formerly known as Knowledge Network. We actually interviewed 1,877 individuals, that's about twice the normal national sample. And we do that because we ask so many questions that we need to have a larger sample in order to keep the margin of error quite low, which you can see is less than 3 percent. So let me first offer an overview of the key findings of the study and that will make me feel less guilty about racing through so many graphs. Ten years after 9/11, we see that Americans are recalibrating, they're in a process, and underscore this is process, this is a snapshot in time, of recalibrating their views on their international engagement. And searching for what, in their view, would be at least equally effective but less costly ways to project positive U.S. influence and to protect American interests around the world.

Despite the struggles, both in foreign policy and economically at home at the last 10 years, Americans still feel the United States has a positive place in the world, a positive role to play. They're uncertain about the implications of the Arab Spring, but they see the Middle East as the greatest source of future threats to the United States by far and are apprehensive at the same time about how U.S. involvement there can be effective and less costly. They clearly see Asia as the region of rising opportunity for the United States, though they're mindful of the potential threats for the longer term that might come from Asia, focusing especially on China and its extraordinary economical growth.

My presentation will go from here basically four parts. First I'm going to elaborate a little bit on how Americans perceive the threats facing the United States and we frame the goals for U.S. foreign policy. Secondly, what kind of role, broadly speaking, do they want the United States to play in the world. Thirdly, what are their policy preferences for achieving those goals. And finally, a little more in particular on how they view the Middle East and Asia.

So first, we find that Americans, and this is our description of course, moving past, slowly past, gradually past a decade of war and thinking about its implications for them, they recognize the world as a very different place in many respects than it was in 2002. The consensus around the nature of threats and across partisan and generational lines that really defined U.S. thinking and responses to 9/11 is in the process of breaking down. And we will see significant differences between partisan groups and generational groups. And millennials, those between 18, ages of 18 and 29, and independents in our political analysis particularly demonstrate a shifting orientation on the part of Americans. They emphatically do not view the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan as having been successful, not worth the cost, and they do not see them as having brought results commensurate with the cost. And finally of course, economics is uppermost in their mind.

So here is the evolution of the perception of threat, terrorism as a threat, over the last 10 years and you can see there has been a slow downhill trend with a kind of plateau in the middle. But a clear downturn over the past two years in the way they see the threat, obviously, in the absence of further major attacks on the homeland. So we've had a very considerable drop from 91 percent seeing it as a critical threat in 2002 to 67 percent today and similar declines have occurred in the perceptions of the threats of Islamic fundamentalism and nuclear proliferation. I mentioned the generational or the age cohort differences and as you would expect, young people in general see the world in a less threatening fashion and a more, the more cynical of us in older age groups, but there is a particular widening of the gap between millennials and older age groups that we've found in the data. And it's, as you will see in other instances as we move through the days, this is not an unusual pattern.

There's also clearly a partisan difference. It's not a difference of majorities, by and large it's a difference of a sort of degree of emphasis or intensity in the way Republicans, Democrats, and independents see things. But what, again, particularly I want to point you to in this slide is where the independents are, that's the yellow line on the bottom. Independents are beginning to separate themselves from both Republicans and Democrats on a wide variety of issues and this is but one example. On the wars, war in Afghanistan, the divide, the crossing of the

lines, happened back in 2009, 2010, but it's at the widest point now, the gap between the war having been seen worth fighting and not worth fighting. And a very similar pattern on Iraq, although obviously the lines crossed a lot earlier back in 2004.

And we asked a series of questions about how Americans assess the results of both wars. And what we've seen is that they really do not believe that -- and this is the partisan divide. They do not believe that the wars have made us safer. They do not believe the wars have advanced the cause of democracy. They do believe both wars have worsened our position in the Muslim world. On -- there is a partisan difference on assessment of the wars, but not striking, as I've said, the majorities are -- particularly on Afghanistan -- are on the same side, that is seeing the war not worth fighting. A Republican opinion is more divided on Iraq.

So I've asked Americans about a set of 11 goals and this is how they respond to those. As usual in the Chicago Council surveys, protecting jobs is job one of American foreign policy in the minds of Americans. This has always been the case, it is even more emphatically the case. If you interpret the second goal, that is reducing our dependence on foreign oil, at least partially as an economic goal, what's striking in this set of findings in 2012 is that these are the only two goals where the percentage of Americans saying that these are very important have gone up. The estimates of importance of the other goals have all dropped, by small numbers, by single digits, but there is clearly a pattern there of a sense of lessened threat from outside and greater desire to focus on domestic issues.

So coming off of this assessment of threats and this construction of goals, how are Americans going to think about the kind of role we should play? First, the good news is, at least in our estimation, in that the majority of Americans do want to stay engaged in the world. Even those who, by the way, say they want to stay out, there is a desire to be engaged internationally, it's not across the board. They support a style of activity in the world, on the part of the United States that they would probably characterize as leadership rather than dominance. They see the United States as less dominant, as less influential, we'll come to that. And the majorities of both across

partisan and generational lines largely agree on these goals, though they differ in intensity.

So this is the central measure that many polling organizations have been using for decades to gauge this sense of internationalism versus isolationism in the American mood. And what we see in 2012 is it's still the majority of Americans support the U.S. playing an active role, but it's the lowest number that it's been at since 1998. And much more interestingly, the percentage who say stay out, 38 percent in 2012, is the highest it's been since we began polling in -- this question in 1974, and one of the highest numbers since the 1950s, other organizations have asked this question. So the gap between active part and stay out is largest that we've seen in recent memory.

This is the generational divide on active part and again, you can see this is somewhat surprising given what else we know about the millennials, but we're seeing for the first time in our recent studies that millennials do not -- the majority of millennials do not want the United States to play an active role in world affairs. It's a very close divide, it's within the margin of error, certainly. But basically they are divided whereas their elders are two out of three in favor of the U.S. playing an active role in world affairs. Go back.

This is the partisan divide on active part. Again, majorities all on the side of the U.S. playing an active role, but Republicans emphatically more so, which makes sense in light of what else we know about Republican emphases on threat assessments. We asked Americans to rate the influence of various countries in the world now and 10 years from now. We asked this question back in 2012, and what you see is a very clear trend of Americans thinking that the United States is less influential than what it was before. We don't state a reference point for the past assessment. And the United States is still the most influential country in the world in their assessment but it's -- the gap between U.S. influence and Chinese influence in particular is rapidly narrowing and many Americans think that the gap will basically close 10 years from now, extrapolating from what they know at the present.

However, when we ask Americans whether they think the United States is a unique nation and the greatest country in the world, a very strong majority says absolutely yes.

So there is a very strong sense of specialness that Americans have. And this is again, across generational and partisan lines. There really -- it seems like a cognitive dissonance here but we just think Americans are being quite situational about their assessment. It's not a discouragement about the character of their nation, it's an assessment in their minds, maybe partially informed, but thoughtfully arrived at that the United States has got to trim its sales in certain respects.

Americans are also comfortable at the same time with the rise of other countries and other countries acting more independently in world affairs. It's the question we've asked for two years now in a row about Turkey and Brazil acting more independently in foreign policy and the majority of Americans are not uncomfortable with that. A similar pattern emerges in the way they assess the U.S. actions in Libya. This has been described as an example of leading from behind. We did not use what had become a very loaded term, we asked Americans whether they thought the United States should have been a leader in this effort or should have played a major role, minor role, or no role at all. And clearly, the great majority thinks that we should have played a major or minor role but not led. They were very comfortable with that decision.

So how would they like us to project U.S. influence in the world? What did they say is the key policy preferences? Well first, very important to understand that even though they feel much more cautious and selective about the use of military force, they still feel that maintaining U.S. military superiority worldwide is a top goal for the United States and is the most effective means we have at our disposal to achieve our ends in our foreign policy. There is, however, some lessening of that emphasis on the use of military force and you'll see that represented in a number of things that I'm going to show you now, quickly. And they turn instead to diplomatic means, to sanctions, and to multilateral efforts to cooperative actions with other nations to project the American power.

We asked them tell us about the effectiveness, whether their -- these methods are very effective, somewhat effective, U.S. military superiority building alliances with other countries, trade agreements, placing sanctions on other countries who violate international law, strengthening United Nations. All of them get majorities

saying effective. But the one that really stands out most is, of course, their assessment of military superiority being effective. Now, we tried to get at these policy preferences through some specific country examples, and we asked, as you would expect, a lot about Iran. And we asked them a series of questions, some posed various alternatives, some were posed independently about how they should, how the United States should deal with the threat of the Iranian nuclear program. By the way, they clearly see it as a threat, three out of four Americans see it as a threat. And there is a strong emphasis, as I suggested, on sanctions and diplomatic efforts, not an unwillingness anywhere in the American public to see military strikes against Iranian facilities, but in this case, it was provided that the U.N. had authorized a strike, that it was therefore in effect a multilateral effort.

Similarly on North Korea, Americans, even though they clearly see the North Korean nuclear program as a threat and nuclear weapons as a threat to the United States and to the international community, they prefer diplomacy, they are willing to see Korean ships stopped and searched for nuclear materials or arms. Of course that would have to involve military force of some kind, presumably. When you come, particularly, and this is always the diving line, when you come to the use of ground troops, putting significant numbers of American troops in the line of fire, that's where Americans' support, public support, really drops. They also, as I've mentioned, want to act militarily, when necessary, in multilateral contexts and we posed this question and asked them and they had to choose one of these methods and only 25 percent said they thought it was good for the United States to act alone militarily. Similarly in uses of troops on the Korean peninsula, if the North Koreans were to attack the South Koreans, Americans are not in favor of U.S. intervening militarily, if we, if the U.S. does so alone. But if it does, so as part of the UN-led operation, Americans would support it.

We asked about the support for a military basis, long-term U.S. military bases. There is still very substantial support for US. military bases around the world. It's declining over time, and we're seeing that those who say fewer bases has increased, certainly since 2002. But they are holding onto the idea that we need bases if we're to maintain our military superiority which you've seen is a very important goal. We asked about the use of troops in

attacking terrorists as well as air strikes, and we found again this same pattern of declining support. Again perhaps not surprising. Although you can see that the support for air strikes, and I think we probably could include in that the use of drones, is still very substantial, nearly, nearly three in four. When you look at a goal that is -- they consider very central to American domestic well-being, such as insuring the oil supply, then there's a lower percentage, but it's pretty steady over time.

And finally, on the use of force, we turn to the current example, and that is Syria. Again, we posed a number of options for dealing with the Syrian civil war and same focus on diplomatic efforts and sanctions. A willingness to see a no-fly zone I think they probably are not aware that the use of the need to attack air defenses in order to impose a no-fly zone. But what this again illustrates is that same "let's try all of the diplomatic measures first."

And we turn now to the Middle East. We've already touched on it a number of ways. We asked the question where do you think most of the future threats to the United States will come in the years ahead, and by far they see the Middle East as the source of threats. And in particular, yes, they see the Iranian nuclear program as a very -- as the leading threat to the United States in the region. But in line with this same preference for avoiding military involvement, Americans are very wary of military action in dealing with Iran. And finally, I'll turn a little bit to the Arab spring.

We asked -- trying to pose the question with some realism -- suppose Israel were to attack Iranian nuclear facilities and Iran were to retaliate, and Iran and Israel would find themselves at war. Should the United States intervene on Israel's side militarily? And 59 percent said no. That's the same finding we had in 2010, so it's a pretty stable opinion. And given the importance of the threat that they perceive from the Iranian program and the very strong relationship between the United States and Israel, it's not as surprising. It's certainly a sobering finding.

On Arab spring, they're deeply uncertain, like many experts on the Middle East, about where the so-called Arab spring is going. Whatever season is in the Arab world now, so

they're waiting to see. But in that environment, opposition to economic assistance, in particular to Egypt has declined rather sharply over the last two years. We don't have it on this graph, but the same pattern only more so with respect to economic assistance to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Support for economic assistance to Israel and military assistance to Israel remains pretty stable.

And finally let me turn to Asia. We're going to see momentarily that Americans now really are beginning to be fully focused on Asia as a region, the region of rising importance to the United States. They see the rise of Asia. They're comfortable with the rise of Asia. They see Chinese economic growth as both an opportunity and challenge. They're comfortable with the U.S. military role and presence in Asia, unlike their discomfort, very deep discomfort, with U.S. military involvement at this point in the Middle East. And they look to South Korea and Japan as our key allies in the region to help us achieve our goals. So for the first time in the Chicago council surveys since 1994 since when we began asking this question, a majority, a very slight majority of Americans see Asia as more important than Europe to the United States. Pew came out with a very similar finding last year.

We asked about the rise of China as a world power. Is it a critical threat to the United States? The majority of the overall samples, 40 percent of Americans said it is, less than a majority. But very interestingly again, millennials even to a lesser degree see China's rise as a threat. They largely look to China as an opportunity. We asked about the impact that Chinese economic growth, particularly the Chinese economy, becomes as large as or larger than that of the United States. And you'll see Americans are divided. Right now, I think that their jury is out. They see positive impacts, they obviously see them in the Wal-Mart and what they're able to buy at relatively inexpensive prices. But they also feel and see the effects of jobs moving to China, so there is a potential in this finding, of course, for this to flip and for negative assessments to increase relative to positive assessments.

They draw from this the conclusion still that the United States ought to seek friendly engagement and cooperation with China. They are not about containment. They are not about limiting the rise of China at this point, and we see it not only in their responses to this question, but also

in responses to questions we asked about priorities for how we work with South Korea and Japan. They see South Korea and Japan as partners of the United States. They see -- about equal parts of the American public see China as a rival and as a partner, so there again lies the potential for a shift. And as I've said, they're very comfortable with the U.S. Six and 10 comfortable with the -- they believe the U.S. military presence in East Asia is a stabilizing force rather than a destabilizing force. They support bases in South Korea and Japan, although there is a very, very gradual long-term secular decline in this support, and I think the Pentagon planners will need to be mindful of that going forward given the pivot. So, all in all, I think we would describe Americans as chastened by the experiences of two wars, and by of course the economic setbacks of the last four years, but they're not retreating into isolationism. They want to be more selective in their engagement of the world, much as we found in 2010. They seek a foreign policy characterized by all the tools of foreign policy, but leading with diplomacy and economic matters. The Middle East is critical to U.S. interests, but Americans are, I would say at this point, confused and cautious about how to deal with what they perceive to be the threats over time from the Middle East. And they are in the process, I believe, of reorienting to Asia. Thank you very much, I look forward to the panel's comments.

Tom Gjelten:

Well hello everyone, I'm Tom Gjelten from NPR, and let me say first of all that on behalf of NPR and our president Gary Knell, can I say what a pleasure it is to be able to join with Jane and the Wilson Center in producing this national conversation. It's a challenging task these days to promote non-partisan discussion of significant policy problems, but I think one of the good news from Marshall's presentation of this data, is that at least in the area of foreign and security policy, the partisan divide is narrower than it is on other issues. Can I say also, it's a great pleasure to be in the company of Jane and General Hayden and Philip Mudd and James Zogby, all of them dedicated public servants who have shown a real commitment to safeguarding our national security over the course of their professional careers.

So Marshall, a very interesting presentation of the data, but as we were saying before we came in, just the fact that Americans think certain things about the world, doesn't

necessarily make it so. And I actually wanted to begin with that point today. We have seen for example, some of the highlights that I have pulled out from Marshall's presentation is that Americans think the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were unsuccessful, did not make the U.S. safer, worsened relations between the United States and the Muslim world. There's also this diminished belief in the dangerousness of the world. I think we can say that seem to be less concerned that unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers will be a critical threat to U.S. interests, diminished concern about terrorism, radical Islam, China. So I wanted to begin actually with that point, and begin with you, General Hayden. We have an overall sense here, apparently, in the American population that the world is not as dangerous a place as it was before. Is that a realistic sense, or is this perhaps a sign of some complacency on the part of the American population?

Michael Hayden:

There's a bit of truth, I think, to the judgment, again, as an intelligence officer always looking through the world through a pessimistic lens. I would add that the world would be more chaotic, and although the dangers that threaten us may be less catastrophic than we viewed them 10 or particularly 30 years ago, there are more of them, they are less controlled, and they are less in the sweet spot of nation states and traditional security organizations to deal with. I mean, what struck me most of all in the survey was that for the most part, all the pieces on the board that folks were being asked about were nation states. And right now, the real dangers in the world are from sub-national actors. Terrorism is an expression of it, cyber threats are an expression of it, transnational crimes are an expression of it. None of them existential, certainly for us. And so again, I think there's broad wisdom in the judgment, but there are real dangers that have to be tended to.

Tom Gjelten:

And Philip Mudd, another of the findings that jumped out at me is that people on the one hand see the rise of independent countries. Brazil is one that Marshall brought out, but they see this diminished U.S. influence in the world vis-à-vis some of these rising powers, but they see that as a generally positive thing. What's your reaction to that? Is the diminished leadership role of the United

States in the world a net positive, a net negative, or doesn't make much of a difference?

Philip Mudd:

I think it's a net inevitable. I mean, if you look at globalization and the way economics is moving, you can't anticipate that 1.3 billion Chinese are going to live at the level they lived 30 years ago, and then you start to see 10 percent growth every year. So like it or not, you can sit here and talk about American exceptionalism, which I thought was quite surprising, 70 percent of Americans still subscribe to that. But you're going to have to accept decades ahead when the BRICs and others compete economically and also are going to look at that economic performance and say "I want a bigger slice of the pie."

You just have to look at the U.N. Security Council, five nations that represent World War II powers, to say that paradigm can't live forever. So like it or not, it's going to change. The only other thing I'd say to echo what General Hayden said is, sitting at the threat table at both the CIA and the FBI, I'm surprised how much Americans think about past wars. You know, historians always say the past doesn't dictate the future. I saw threats with 10 nieces and nephews in cartels, in gangs, Latin American gangs that came out of Californian prisons that are now on the East Coast. We've got more than 10,000 people dying in this country every year from prescription medical fraud, et cetera. We don't seem to worry about this. I live in Old Town Alexandria and there's parts of that town I can't walk into, but people say, you know, "terrorism I'm concerned about, I'm a little worried about Egypt." I don't quite -- the future always seems uncertain. But it's -- I think it will turn out okay.

[laughter]

Tom Gjelten:

Jim Zogby, one of the important points from Marshall's data was that this idea that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan worsened American relations with the Muslim world. Now this, in spite of the fact that we have for the first time in history a president with a partial Muslim heritage, and one who really made a top priority of reaching out to the Muslim and Arab worlds in his early years in office. So I'm curious about your reaction to that finding, and in particular just to broaden it a bit. There seems to be

this kind of idea in the Middle East that people respect strength and not weakness, and so you know, what have we seen in these four years in terms of the effect of U.S. policies and U.S. leadership on this point?

Jim Zogby:

Let's start with the last point.

Tom Gjelten:

Okay.

Jim Zogby:

It's a favorite of mine because it actually comes from the old colonial mindset of if you're firm and tough and look them straight in the eye, and they'll cower and bend over and say sahiw [spelled phonetically]. And Brits tried it, and it didn't work. We tried it, and it's not working, and yet it's still being taught. Bernard Lewis is still viewed as an expert in some strange way as the guy who taught us how Arabs think.

On the other point, the public is war-weary and wary about new wars, precisely because of how badly handled the Iraq war was in particular. Afghanistan did not create a real dent in terms of Arab opinion, and I think for the most part, as we saw from the data, the public largely dismissed it and or just tolerated it until the corner was turned and we went up to 100,000 troops and now there's a real focus on that one. But in terms of both American public opinion of the war and Arab opinion of America, the Iraq war has done a real disservice to the country, to our image, and I think to the public's awareness and sense of how we ought to conduct ourselves in the region.

Look, when President Obama was elected, even when it looked like he was going to be elected, polling numbers across the Arab world shot up. By the time he was in office and we did a 100 day survey, in some countries our favorables had doubled. We released a poll last summer, a little over a year ago now, and our numbers were lower than they had been in the last year of the Bush Administration. Every single issue the president said he would change, except for getting out of Iraq, which is not viewed as a success anyway because Iran is now viewed as the dominant power in that country, and a meddling power at that. But every single thing the president promised didn't happen. Now, they're not in the Middle East getting into the -- well,

Republicans stopped them from closing Guantanamo, and there was no accountability on torture, and the you know, the Iraq war didn't quite go the way it was because the, whatever, Bush set the stage. Arabs looked at, you promised, it didn't happen, and here's where we are right now. In fact, one of the most disturbing numbers we got was 85 percent in many countries saying "it doesn't matter who the U.S. president is, nothing gets better or changes."

Tom Gjelten:

So was it a mistake to raise those expectations, do you think?

Jim Zogby:

I think the president raised expectations on several levels, both domestically and foreign policy and I think he intended to do them all, but I think what we come down to is the fact that you said we're not going to get into partisan politics, but he had a crew of people saying "We're not going to let him win any victories at all." And on the economy, on health care, but also on foreign policy. I mean look, blocking the closure of Guantanamo, I believe, for no good reason. And the Senate legislation cowering Democrats and Republican obstructionism together combined to make that happen.

On the Arab-Israeli conflict, I mean, I was in the Middle East, I was at the president's speech when he spoke at the State Department on the two-year anniversary. I went from there to the Middle East. By the time I got to the Middle East, the prime minister of a foreign government went to our White House and wagged his finger in the face of the president, and then gets invited to speak to a joint session of Congress where he gets twenty-nine standing ovations, more than the president himself could get, and Arabs were bewildered. It was like, "What is this about?" That's where the "no U.S. president can make a difference. It's just not going to work." And so yeah, I think he set expectations that he believed in his heart he could accomplish, but the deck was stacked against him because of politics at home.

Tom Gjelten:

General Hayden, Jim Zogby raised the issue of Guantanamo. Let's take about 30 seconds and deal with that, okay? You can't say you don't have experience dealing with it. But from this standpoint, I mean if you look at this sort of as

a metaphor or as a symbol, strictly from the standpoint of counterterrorism, what is your thinking these days about whether putting these guys at Guantanamo made the United States -- made sense from a counterterrorism perspective versus this idea that it served as a recruiting tool for Al Qaeda? I mean, that's the key issue, isn't it?

Michael Hayden:

Well, it's one of the issues --

Tom Gjelten:

Yeah.

Michael Hayden:

You know, we have a right to defend ourselves, too. And we've had two presidents, the Congress, and the court system, you know, a very powerful consistency. We are a nation at war, and we can use both authorities according to the laws of armed conflict, and our own law enforcement authorities to defend ourselves. One of the attributes of making war is to take prisoners. Prisoners need to be kept somewhere. The dilemma we've gotten to now, is that we've made it so legally difficult and politically dangerous to capture anyone, that we don't capture anyone. We kill, which I don't think is a higher moral plane. I'm not objecting to it operationally, it takes the terrorists off the battle field, but it's not morally superior, and it sure doesn't get you much tactical intelligence from the detainee. And so, I probably have a higher comfort level with the fact of Guantanamo, as opposed to the brand of Guantanamo, which is something quite different -- and was quite harmful to us allowing people to use that as a recruiting tool.

Tom Gjelten:

But you said that was harmful to us. The broader question, it seems to me, is how important is the global perception of the United States in terms of U.S. security? I mean, are we, sort of, more insecure when we're not seen in positive terms, or --

Michael Hayden:

Sure. Sure. I mean, I'll be very brief, but in military terms you have something called the "close fight" and you have the "deep fight." The close fight, we've been wonderful at, and that's why all those numbers are down in the polling in terms of people feeling danger because we've

essentially prevented people who are already convinced to come and kill or do us harm from doing that. What we've not dealt with very successfully is the deep fight, which is the production rate of those people who might want to kill or do us harm in one year, or three years, five years, or 10 years. That's been very, very difficult for us to do, and this president, like his predecessor, has been forced to make trade-offs for success in the close fight that may or may not assist you in the deep fight. Bring up a point about the president and his promises, and so on, and I leave all the politics aside. When you get into that position, I think you find that the left and right hand boundaries of the lanes you can drive in are much smaller than you anticipated.

Philip Mudd:

Just a quick comment, you know, in the midst of the wet noodle ash that you're giving us here over Gitmo. If you look around --

[laughter]

Tom Gjelten:

I won't mention it again, I promise.

Philip Mudd:

-- in the midst of this debate, if you're in South Korea or Japan, you have to turn to China for security, or Australia. If you move further west, in western Europe, you're going to turn to Russia. I was living most of the past couple of years in the Arabian Gulf, in Saudi Arabia. If you're going to talk about Iran, you're going to turn to China. If you go to Latin America, you're going to turn to Chavez, so we can have these debates about tactical changes in global perceptions, but still, at the macro level, if you're looking around the world at people who say "boy, if push comes to shove, let's see, Putin, not so much. China, I don't think so. Chavez, a little nutty, and he's going to die, anyway."

Tom Gjelten:

Yeah.

Philip Mudd:

So, I think, you know, some of this is a micro conversation.

Jim Zogby:

But, but the issue, the question that was asked was our standing in the region and does it impact one way or another, and it does. And the reason why is because the leaders of that region, rightly so, turn to the United States, but the distance that grows between the leadership in the region and their people, over the relationship -- I was asked, actually, at the time when Mubarak was being threatened by demonstrations, there was an NPR reporter who called and said "Would our standing go up if we dumped Mubarak?" And I said, "you got the question backwards, we're not unpopular in Egypt because we supported Mubarak, he's unpopular in Egypt because he supported us." In Gaza, with the Iraq war, with rendition, et cetera, and his people knew it. And that is the issue, I think, that our friends and allies are threatened, on the governmental level, by the relationship with us, and it creates the opening for extremists and for Iran to sort of play off that resentment.

Tom Gjelten:

I'd argue that Ghraib had a lot more to do with that than Gitmo.

Michael Hayden:

Yeah, you know, this is tiered. Abu Ghraib is the one that --

Tom Gjelten:

Yeah, okay.

Michael Hayden:

-- really branded behavior, and we all agree that was incorrect, even though we argue about one or another aspect of Guantanamo. Tom, can I just offer just a, just a, maybe, a slightly different view, I'm talking about the deep fight. Okay, for 10 or 11 years, the deep fight, unfortunately, was about one of the world's great monotheisms, and what it meant, and we have no legitimacy whatsoever in talking about that. I know we're multicultural and so on, but broadly, we're Judeo-Christian, we're European and African in our heritage, right? We did the same thing in the Cold War. Deep fight -- close fight, hold it, fold it, deep fight, ideological battle with communism. But communism is a Western philosophy --

Tom Gjelten:
[affirmative]

Michael Hayden:

-- you know, written by a German in London. So we've got legitimacy talking about that. We have almost no legitimacy talking about the meeting of the Koran or the Hadith. The good news, Jim, and I think you've suggested this in the last couple of years, is that the deep fight, such as it exists, has changed. It's not about the Caliphate, it's about responsive, responsible governments, rule of law, voting procedures, and so on. We actually know something about that, and we actually have some legitimacy talking about that. And so I'm somewhat hopeful that this, all the turbulence it means for the kind of work Phil and I used to do in terms of counterterrorism, for the deep look towards the horizon, opportunity.

Tom Gjelten:

Let's move a little bit away from the abstract and talk about, you know, real people and real places. And we've all mentioned Egypt, and I think it's a fascinating case that we now have a president of Egypt, comes from the Muslim Brotherhood. He would, from all outward appearances seem to be less willing to play that kind of strategic partnership role in counterterrorism than Mubarak did, so I'm curious about your feelings about whether the leadership of Mohamed Morsi in Egypt, how it's playing out in terms of, what does it mean for U.S. national security interests in that region? Let's begin with you, Phil.

Philip Mudd:

You know, there's not much humor in counterterrorism, but when I saw --

[laughter]

Philip Mudd:

-- the Arab uprisings -- I don't believe in the Arab Spring, by the way, I think there's going to be a lot of bombs -- but when I saw the Arab uprisings and watched al-Qaeda try to formulate a response, you have to sit back, there is a counterterrorist specialist, and take it where you can get it. I'm sitting there saying, "They have no idea what to say." And so, to pick up on General Hayden's point, you know, we don't have -- we've got a dog in the fight, operationally, in counterterrorism; that is, taking

out leadership, for example, and helping others. We don't have much of dog in this fight ideologically, because we have no traction in that universe. Now we've got somebody between us in the adversary, who is viewed by the adversary, that is, al-Qaeda and its sympathizers, what I could call al-Qaedism, as potentially as much of an enemy as we are.

Tom Gjelten:
You're talking about Morsi?

Philip Mudd:
That's correct. So, people don't know in this country, the Salafis hate the Muslim brotherhood and they're in writing saying this for years. So I think when you're looking at the potential of this crest in Tunisia, in Libya, in Egypt, of Islamist rise, we've got to be sitting back saying, first, they've got the vote, and I'm a democrat, that means if they win, we support them. And second, even if I didn't like it, they're going to be the best ideological foil we got.

Tom Gjelten:
Do you agree with that, Jim?

Jim Zogby:
I want to just shift gears a bit and look at the public opinion here in the United States vis-à-vis Egypt, which I think is fascinating because in all the years we poll on "how do you feel about Egypt, favorable or unfavorable over the leadership of Egypt?" We get a two-thirds favorable, one-third unfavorable, and even higher. There were some years, during the Clinton administration, where Egypt's numbers were higher than Israel's. Since Arab Spring, or since the upheaval in Egypt, those numbers have changed. Democrat numbers have not changed at all, the same, two to one, favorable. Republican numbers are the opposite, two to one unfavorable. On the election, the point you made about Morsi and winning and "we believe in democracy, therefore," that's a view shared by Democrats, not by Republicans. And so what we have now, is that for the first time, the Egyptian numbers favorable or unfavorable, overall, are dead even. But what to do about Egypt, as you say in the survey, cutting aid becomes the option. Distancing ourselves in some ways becomes the option. But again, that is a view held by Republicans but not by Democrats.

And the factors are generational and race. There's a racial and generational partisan divide. African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and what we call first globals, you call millenials, the 18 to 29 group, much more open to Arab countries, to Islam, to a more tolerant view of the world. And older, middle-aged white guys, very different attitudes. And it's troubling because the difficult -- it's one thing when it's an ideological debate, but when it becomes locked into demographic groups, sort of, almost like Harry Potter put the Sorting Hat on and going to the respective parties, then it becomes, I think, a much more difficult issue to address.

Tom Gjelten:

Speaking of older, middle-aged white guys --

[laughter]

Philip Mudd:

I was wondering how this could be maybe a representation --

Tom Gjelten:

He was talking about Harry Potter, he's got kids, obviously.

Philip Mudd:

Looking at the diversity in the panel, but anyway, go ahead.

[laughter]

Female Speaker:

[inaudible] a lot of women who are up there.

Jim Zogby:

Actually that's the other group in the demographic group, it's educated professional women. They're in that liberal cohort.

Tom Gjelten:

Well, General Hayden, what about the near fight versus long fight implications of what's happening in Egypt and across the Middle East?

Michael Hayden:

Yeah. Great danger for the near fight. You've got an intelligence service with whom we've cooperated, all right, with a counterterrorism partner, not a bad one, that is, at best, disinterested in this, all right, and distracted. But, in return for that, you've got political developments, Phil's hit it right on, I mean, this is in the heartland of al-Qaeda, and they had absolutely nothing to do with it, and had a great deal of difficulty knowing what to even say about it. And so, as dangerous as it is for us, as disturbing as it might be, it opens the door to something that was closed to us for the first 10 years of the conflict.

Tom Gjelten:

But, look at -- we have Syria, for example, right now, and Egypt, Mohamed Morsi is playing a very aggressive role in the -- I shouldn't say a leadership role, in the Arab world and trying to rally Arab support for the anti-government forces in Syria. Is it dangerous for the United States to sort of sit back and let these kind of regional dynamics play out, let the Arab League take the lead here? Or, you know, with U.S. interests so clearly at stake in the outcome of that conflict, does the United States really need to be in a greater leadership position than it is?

Philip Mudd:

I dispute your premise --

Tom Gjelten:

Okay.

Philip Mudd:

-- and I, sort of, to make the panel more amusing, dispute something that you said earlier, Jim, and that is, I'm not sure Americans don't like Iraq and Afghanistan because they are mishandled, I think they decided, "Well, we got a lot more significant interest," they forgot, you know, halfway about 9/11. If we had had eight attacks, people would have said "Intervention in Afghanistan is a great thing, how about Pakistan?" So I think some of what's happening is people are saying, "You know, these aren't national security threats." We said India and Pakistan are having a nuke, national security threat. Most Americans probably don't know they have nukes today. We say Syria, national security threat. I think, not so much. So I think the lesson we're taking away is that Americans, you know, smarter often smarter than Washingtonians give them credit

for. I guess we're Americans, too, somebody take that back.

[laughter]

Not inside the Beltway. But Americans have said, look, war is the last resort when diplomacy fails. All your numbers on diplomacy are interesting. And diplomacy didn't quite fail in Iraq. We used U.S. forces, we lost 3,000-plus boys. That doesn't make sense to me. And so, they're deciding not where we succeed and fail, they're deciding what national security interests are, and they're saying it's not until it's an existential threat.

Tom Gjelten:
[affirmative]

Jim Zogby:
Well, you the question about Syria?

Tom Gjelten:
Yeah.

Jim Zogby:
It is a mess and there is no good outcome. And I think that the president is right to be cautious. This is a situation where we say the right thing about Assad's got to go, but we also are very cautious about what comes next. And what role we can legitimately play whether or not -- I mean, I said during the time of the Mubarak thing, that there was nobody on Tahrir Square waiting for America to sprinkle holy water on the revolution. Clearly there is not, I mean, there are those in Syria today who are saying, "give us this, give us this, give us, we'll be your friends for life," but I heard that in Afghanistan back in the '70s and I heard it from Chalabi in Iraq, and where are they today? So, I think we have to be very careful about, you know, looking at Syria, seeing the role we might play in Syria, but then thinking about what the end game in Syria is.

I think that -- I had hoped that Annan could succeed, I surely hope right now that Lakhdar Brahimi can succeed. I think that the better game is pressure on the Russians and the Chinese to come up with some way of helping to push Assad. And then us working with the Saudis and the allies they have on the ground to come up with some transitional

formula. But even then, I don't think we're going to see a dying down of this sort of metastasized conflict that has now spread down to villages and tribes and families. It's going to be a long time before the Syrians settle down.

Tom Gjelten:

Well, I would think that the one vital interest that the U.S. has in Syria is the implications of the outcome there for Iran and what it means about Iran's position. You're even frowning at that.

Philip Mudd:

Well, yeah, I think that's a net plus for us. You've got, you know, the separation between, I think, Hezbollah and Iran. We have a very difficult time in this country -- we're not very good historians but we do remember hostages and we remember embassies being bombed. You know, Hezbollah has become not only a political force in Lebanon, it's become far more than a terrorist group, and I think they have fundamentally different interests than Iran does right now. Even in the event of a strike on Iran's nuclear facilities.

Tom Gjelten:

Different from Iran's?

Philip Mudd:

Different than Iran's. And I think the loss of that, sort of, intermediary, that is Syria, which is the overland route for Iran's supply Lebanon, is a net plus. The Iranians were starting to look, as Hezbollah started to rise, as Bashar al-Assad was there, as Iran was moving in to support some of the Shia eastern province of Saudi Arabia. If you look at it geographically, that Iranian crescent, talking to my friends in the Gulf, they're saying, "This ain't so good," and now, what Hezbollah is doing, which is, I'd argue, a more, sort of, conservative force, and with what's happening in Syria, I'd say Iran is on a bit of a back foot.

Tom Gjelten:

Well, I mean, you're just arguing that we do have a vital interest in the weakening in the Assad regime, then.

Philip Mudd:

That's different than saying that we should intervene.

Tom Gjelten:
Okay. All right.

Jim Zogby:
And it is being weakened, and it is being delegitimized.
And probably nothing is doing more right now to
delegitimize Iran in the region --

Tom Gjelten:
Yeah.

Jim Zogby:
-- than what is happening in Syria and their role in
Syria. The best guarantee we'd have that we could reverse
that is if we got involved, because there's only one
country more unpopular in the Middle East than Iran, us.
I'd say, and add Israel to the mix, too.

[laughter]

Philip Mudd:
But that's in another league.

Michael Hayden:
And the Israelis are incredibly studied at leaving hands
off, because I think they realize this as well. And to
reinforce Phil's point about Hezbollah and Hassan
Nasrallah, there is daylight between them and the Iranians
already. They are stressed by this. I'm a little unhappy
that Nasrallah has tacked as much as he has to support
Assad. My metaphor is Hezbollah is a little bit like the
Corleone family in "The Godfather 3," they want out.
They're more than just a terrorist organization, and
they're a political party there in Lebanon. And they want
to build on that leg, as opposed to the terrorism leg, and
this is forcing them back.

Tom Gjelten:
Okay, before we go into the audience questions we do have
to wrap up with Iran. It seems to me, Marshall, that from
your data you could almost come to any conclusion you want
about Iran. On the one hand, the Americans are much less
inclined to support military intervention. On the other
hand, it was very clear from your data that Iran is the one
threat that they really do take seriously. So, you can, if
you're a president, if you're in the administration, you
can sort of make use of those findings to support almost

any policy you want, diplomacy, threat of military action, et cetera. What -- I'm not even sure what question to ask here, but let's begin with you, Jim. What would you be advising about Iran, in terms of how important is U.S. leadership, the dangers of unilateral action, the dangers of, sort of, dithering and waiting for the U.N. to get behind you? How do you sort that all out?

Michael Hayden:

I tried to sort it out as director of CIA for President Bush for the three years I was in office with him and we didn't. This is the problem from hell. All the options are bad. Iran getting a weapon, or Iran getting so close to getting a weapon that it's almost the same thing, has long term ill effects for the entire region, it's destabilizing. Our taking action, our taking action, to move against the Iranian nuclear program has transient effects and almost certainly guarantees that which we're trying to prevent, and Iran will stop at nothing to get a weapon. And so, there are no good answers to this.

Tom Gjelten:

Phil Mudd?

Philip Mudd:

I think Americans tend to think we're driving down -- this is to pick up something you said, General -- an eight-lane highway here with options, and actually it's about a one lane village road, because the capability to destroy the infrastructure, and I'm not just talking about physical destruction, I'm talking about the incredible engineering and scientific expertise that Iran has, we don't have that capability. We simply -- I don't think we do, with a buried, dispersed, and hidden program. And second, it's a rare place where sanctions work. Sanctions are having a tremendous impact on Iran. So I look at this and say, you can say whatever you want on the stump, but in terms of your options, forget about thinking you've got options from bombing the heck out of them, to doing nothing, your options are very limited. And we saw how those options played out in North Korea, Pakistan, India. I think this is inevitable, and we just can't say it.

Tom Gjelten:

Sanctions are having a tremendous impact on the Iranian economy, there is not much evidence that they're having much of an impact on Iranian decision making.

Philip Mudd:

I think that's true. I'm not sure we understand Iran that well, but again, you know, it's not like we have a lot of options. We can pretend like we do, we just don't.

Tom Gjelten:

What's at stake, Jim?

Jim Zogby:

You know, there used to be a time when we were popular in Iran, and we're not. And, I think that we have played into the supreme leader and Ahmadinejad's game for way too long now. He wants to be the baddest boy on the block. He wants to be the guy who, when he gets up and says outrageous stuff, we go, "Oh my God, he's outrageous, we've got to do something," and the more -- I call it the Farrakhan factor, it's like, you know, Farrakhan knew that when Jesse Jackson was rising, that all he had to do was say something absolutely disgraceful and outrageous, and he would force, sort of, establishment leadership in Washington to denounce him, whereupon he would then come to town without a single bit of advertising, and draw 25,000 people to an arena, because he was the guy who has, sort of, preying off the alienation and the, and the anger.

Ahmadinejad and the supreme leader both, as different as they are, play the same game. The point is that, I think, as much as this will never happen, that ridicule would be a better tool to confront him with than threats. In other words, "Okay, little man, want a bomb? What are you going to do with it? Sit on it? Feed your people with it?" No. We're giving him bragging rights, which is what he wants. And, in fact, like Pakistan, the bomb for them was not really a defense issue. There's no first use, there's no second use. Use it, and five seconds later you're dead. I mean, the point is that the only thing you can get out of it is to say, "There, I got one, and I'm bigger than you now." Don't give him that, let him play the game, and ridicule the effort. It would be better to diminish them than to make them our equal in the eyes of the arena in which he's playing.

Tom Gjelten:

Okay, we've spent most of the time here on the Middle East. We haven't gotten to Asia, so if you any of you have any

questions about U.S. interests in Asia, I'd be happy to hear from you. Jane Harman. Are you raising your hand?

Jane Harman:

I was. Do we need microphones?

Tom Gjelten:

We need microphones. I'm sorry, we do need microphones. Thank you, for reminding me of that.

Jane Harman:

[inaudible]

Tom Gjelten:

Just talk into it and see if we hear you.

Jane Harman:

Let's see. No. [inaudible]

Tom Gjelten:

Maybe the president of NPR knows how to work a microphone.

[laughter]

Male Speaker:

Test one, two.

Jane Harman:

Okay, so, as the first head of the Wilson Center who happens to be a woman, I thought I'd point out that we do have women leading our programs, many of them, and leading this institution. Not on this podium, but hey. I introduced it by asking whether we had lost our narrative as a country, and I think it influences the poll and it influences our actions in the Middle East, but also in Asia and everywhere. I mean, the polls showed more interest in Asia than in the Middle East, but could -- my short question to everyone is -- and this is sort of what Mike Hayden said about the long game, the deep game -- have we lost our narrative about what the intersection of our actions and interests is? Are we almost totally transactional now, without a view of how people see us, and where we want to be in five or 10 years, and does that affect U.S. security?

Michael Hayden:

Yeah, I'll be very brief, Jane. We've been a nation at war for 11 years. I'll just take a narrow slice, what Phil and I used to do, that drives you to an incredible emphasis on present tense operational activities because, frankly, that's what everyone in the room will measure you on when they go home from work that day. Did you keep them safe that day? So, there are great pressures because of the pace of conflict that the security establishment gets very near term as opposed to long term.

I'll make one additional point, too, and it's not meant as a criticism, meant only as an observation. I look at the numbers for Iraq and Afghanistan, they're almost identical in the surveys. Those are two very different wars, and it's quite surprising that the numbers are so identical, and they reflect, I think, nothing but fatigue and weariness, and, frankly, the fact that the president has other priorities, that the president has chosen to put his personal prestige and his personal political influence in other, largely domestic, issues, as opposed to foreign issues. And so, if we're going to have a long term narrative, it will require some very powerful leadership from the top to keep American attention focused on these longish term international questions, as opposed to, frankly, very tactical questions. "Who gets to pick targets?" being one that was popular a month or two back, and only domestic questions. So, I think if you got both things going, operations tempo, and, frankly, a president who is conflicted because of the great domestic crises he has to face.

Tom Gjelten:

And at a time of tremendous political polarization. Let's go right here, sir.

Male Speaker:

My name is Steven. So you asked a question about Asia, so I'll give you one. There's always the possibility that North Korea could go the DDR route and we could be faced with an implosion of the nation state and people wanting to get out, or China having to settle for -- and other countries having to settle for, Korean unification. So, how likely is the implosion of North Korea over the next four years?

Tom Gjelten:

You've probably --

Michael Hayden:
Sure.

Tom Gjelten:
-- you've got the most recent stuff...

Michael Hayden:
I'll be real quick. If it happens overnight, I'll be on CNN tomorrow telling you how inevitable it was.

[laughter]

I mean, all the pieces are in place. So, I was serving Korea last '97 and '99, it was inevitable then, too. They just, they certainly wouldn't be able to last another decade, and yet, there they are. I think the long-term problem is, number one, the current situation is unsustainable for the long term, but China, that's the most important actor here, China does not want to face the consequences of change. It would much rather keep handing out aspirins to make the pain go away than to deal with the core illness, and until the present tense becomes intolerable to China, I think we'll bump along here, bottom dragging.

Tom Gjelten:
Phil, do you have anything to add?

Philip Mudd:
No, I think that, I think that's right. I mean, as an analyst you look at the characteristics of any problem to try to get away from intuition, which is the enemy of all analysts, I think. And the characteristics here, as the General said, you know, 10 years ago, you would have said, "okay, poor people -- " every piece of it tells you you're going to implode, so it's hard to see this scenario in 10 years, but I don't know what the breaking point is. I do remember, to close, going on Al Jazeera, and somebody asking me -- it was the call-in show, which was a mistake -- but somebody asking me -- former CIA guy in Al Jazeera [laughs] -- somebody asking me, you know, why didn't the CIA know about the movement, the revolution in Egypt? I said, "Well, who could we have hired to tell us?" And, you know, the same holds true for North Korea, the characteristics, like Egypt, are there, I just -- if an

analyst tells you he knows, or she, I would fire that analyst, that's the only thing I'll tell you.

[laughter]

Tom Gjelten:
Ma'am?

Lindsay Worth:
I'm Lindsay Worth [spelled phonetically], I'm with the Naval Postgraduate School. I want to ask some words about the narrative, because I think the question of national security versus foreign policy gets sort of blurred, and in fact, I think, our national security is wound up in our domestic problems, our economy, water, food, education. How do you develop a language that we can educate the public, that they will understand, so it doesn't become caught up with being right or left, or red or blue, and understanding what the parameters are, and what we're actually saying?

Philip Mudd:
Let me. I don't agree, the public doesn't need to be educated, we do, in this town. The public has decided very simple things, this is a country that gave with the Marshall Plan, it was a beacon for democracy, and now we're seen as people who, in the '60s, intervened in a place we weren't wanted, and where we didn't have a national security interest. Whether you agree or not, most people perceive that we did this in Iraq, and it's the American people who have said, We don't like what you guys say, as you apply your foreign policy domino theory ideas to the world. Why don't you do what we elected you to do? Which is to build jobs, educate kids, reduce violence, and don't go overseas, like isolationists we've been for 250 years, unless you really, really have to. So we got to learn, not them, I think.

Female Speaker:
How do we make that happen?

Philip Mudd:
Talk to them.

Jim Zogby:
If you think about it, the Middle East -- I mean, on the narrative issue -- I think the President had a distinct

narrative, I think he lost the narrative, and it's become reflexive. By defending himself and by bowing to much of the opposition wanted, there's now no daylight, really, between his position on many issues the way he'd articulate them and the other side. But, you know, on issues that involve stuff I think about, in the last two years, we had Park51, we had Muslims taking loyalty oaths, we had anti-Sharia legislation, and on and on. And the result is when we're looking at the numbers, the partisan -- this has become gay marriage, stuff dealing with the Arab -- you note that many of the issues that you're looking at, there's no real partisan divide, until you get to the Middle East, and get to issues involving Islam. Then the partisan divide opens up huge, and it's a tragedy. So I agree with you, the public has kind of figured it out, but the public has figured it out because that's what they're reacting to what they've gotten, and they haven't gotten a whole lot that's intelligible from us here in those who shape the debate. And I, if the big distinction between Democrats and Republicans is going to be God and Jerusalem, then you know, God save us all.

Tom Gjelten:

I'm going to go to her first.

Yasmine Sidhaine:

Okay, my name is Yasmine Sidhaine [spelled phonetically], Egyptian journalist and a fellow scholar at the Middle East program in the Wilson Center. First of all, thank you very, very much for this very interesting discussion. I actually have two questions, and I will start by the one regarding Asia. Do you think that the global economy crisis is restructuring the world order currently or not? The second question is regarding of course the political developments in Egypt. Do you think the political developments in Egypt is on the long run in favor of the American interests in the Middle East or not, and how do you perceive the Muslim Brotherhood's stance towards Israel, and especially reading the possible future cooperation or miscooperation after the Sinai issue? Thank you very much.

Tom Gjelten:

Jim, do you want to --

Jim Zogby:

On the first one, you know, beginning with Dubai ports was the first time that we saw in polling we did across the Middle East, people beginning to look east for investment, it was safe and smart. And when then-Crown Prince Abdullah took his delegation to India and China, almost immediately thereafter and almost in response to that, the message got sent. And every year we poll, more and more people in the Arab world, businessmen and government elites are looking to the BRIC countries as safe place of investment. America is still the security guarantor vis-à-vis Iran, which gives way, I think, to some weird and interesting conspiracy theories. They went into Iraq in order to destroy it and bring Iran in to make us weak and vulnerable, so that they'd be able to sell us weapons and that kind of thing. But, that's how it played out. America's the security guarantor, but, in terms of investment, in terms of growth, in terms of the future, not unlike the polling you found about Americans looking -- China eclipsing Europe. In the Middle East, China and the BRIC countries are eclipsing the United States as the place to look for five, 10 years down the road in investment opportunities.

Tom Gjelten:
Teresita Schaffer.

Teresita Schaffer:
Thank you, Tesi Schaffer [spelled phonetically] from Brookings. I'm going to give you some Asia.

Tom Gjelten:
Good.

Teresita Shaffer:
The polling reveals a rather a happy face attitude towards the rise of China, particularly in the younger groups. And I -- my working assumption without reading the full report, is that this reflects in part the fact that there's such a lively business relationship and there's some ambivalence about that. But looking more broadly at the economic plus political plus security dimension, what is the kind of structure of relationships in Asia that we need to put in place in order to make the happy face materialize at the end of a decade or two? The administration has been rather carefully saying it's putting India into that mix, which makes sense to me. How do you feel about it? Where do the other larger countries in the Asian region fit in?

Tom Gjelten:

When you're talking about India, and you're talking China, and you're talking about Pakistan, you're talking about countries that are rivals of each other, so that makes that question all the more challenging.

Michael Hayden:

When I talk about this publicly, one of the first things I say is China's not an enemy of the United States. There are no good reasons for China to be an enemy of the United States, there are logical non-heroic policy choices available to Washington and Beijing. They keep their relationship competitive, occasionally confrontational, never conflictual. And I also point out that, number one, with regard to the rise of China as Phil suggested, it just is. It doesn't have to be good, it doesn't have to be bad, it just is. And I actually fret from time to time more about Chinese failure as opposed to success, and Chinese weakness as opposed to Chinese strength. And so, if you're asking me for a policy prescription, rich engagement across the board with standards, and I would, for example, make Chinese cyber behavior part of the overall relationship with costs and benefits to be derived. While at the same time quietly taking the cue from the other folks in the area, particularly in that second island ring that welcome an American presence so as to make it more difficult for the Chinese in five, 10, or 15 years to do something unfortunate for both countries.

Philip Mudd:

Just to echo that, you know, business of America is business, it's not security. And so, I look at you know, it's a Eurocentric country. There's 300 million-plus people in the United States, 300 million-plus in the EU, and we're heading towards three billion just with India and China and then you start throwing in Pakistan, Bangladesh, et cetera. So, I would sort of echo what the general says, and that is we've got tremendous economic interests here, and we ought to make it virtually impossible not just for us, but for the Chinese to look at an adversarial relationship with us as anything but a huge business loss, I think.

Paulette Lee:

Thank you, Paulette Lee [spelled phonetically], I'm a communications consultant. I've been working in Africa, so my first quick question is, what happened to Africa?

Tom Gjelten:
Thank you.

Paulette Lee:
But because I'm in communications, I'm particularly interested and very concerned about the responses that you got here because they seem to me to reflect what I would call a news cycle. And I'm not clear on how folks who were questioned, if we know from where they're getting their information, how much do they know? Do they know that Saudi Arabia's a great friend but the seat of Wahhabism? Do they know about an Israel-first policy? You know, what does this population know, and how are they getting their opinions? Thank you.

Tom Gjelten:
Jim, do you have a thought on that?

Jim Zogby:
They don't know, but they vote. That's a bumper sticker. I don't know, and I vote. And that's a problem, I mean, to be sure. And to a great extent, the attitudes that we're talking about are shaped by the policy debate or by weariness of the policy debate, or by my own interests which somehow are disconnected from the policy debate, I think you spelled that out perfectly. But when it -- my last book was focused just on exactly what we don't know about the Arab world, which actually filled a book and then some. There was stuff on the cutting room floor. And it, in terms of having an intelligent debate, it creates enormous difficulty.

And I believe that we get -- we allow ourselves therefore to get suckered into problems like the Iraq war. Because to me the lie of Iraq wasn't the weapons of mass destruction, it was "It'll take six days and we're out of there. It's about, less than a hundred thousand troops, it's going to cost us a couple billion dollars, and Iraqi oil money would kick in, there will be flowers in the street, democracy would bloom, et cetera, et cetera." We just had no clue what we were getting into, and those who want us to buy the same bill of goods on Syria aren't being able to get traction. Number one, no one in the political parties other than John McCain are echoing that, are taking that line. But everyone else is being so hesitant that I think the public has caught hold and said, "Maybe we just

don't know what to do here." And so yeah, that's a problem, but we'll stay out.

So sometimes the public is served by not getting informed, but not being, certainly not by being misinformed. But other times, by being misinformed when it's being written on a blank slate creates the problems that we've gotten into in the past. I think particularly in Iraq, and then some other issues in the broader Middle East as well.

Tom Gjelten:

Okay, there's a clock over here that's ticking down to zero, and as someone who spends a lot of time in a radio studio I know what a down clock means. It means you have to get out by zero. But I just wanted sort of quickly to quickly wrap up here. It seems to me that one of the takeaways from this discussion today is the need for us to develop a more coherent and stronger strategic narrative for the country. So I'm just wondering if we go down very quickly, you know, each of you throw out sort of a final point that you would like to make in order to sort of advance us toward that goal.

Michael Hayden:

I'll end where I began with the suggestion that all of our tools, all of our structures, are built dealing with nation states and using hard power as our instrument, and both of those realities are badly eroded in the world in which we find ourselves, so it's going to take an awful lot of retooling here in order to keep us safe and prosperous in the future.

Tom Gjelten:

Philip?

Philip Mudd:

I'd flip our security concepts on their head, you know. I believe American power is driven by soft power. There is a perception, this is post-World War II, that we're the good guys, who come and help the underprivileged. It's what's on the tower when you go into New York. And that we have to understand that soft power is the most powerful form of projecting our national, sort of, will overseas, and that's backed up, occasionally, or less frequently, by hard power. But we separate the two, like soft power is bad. I think soft power gives us the capability to do tremendous things,

and lastly, that younger generation you're talking to, I think, sees that.

Jim Zogby:

I'd go back to President Obama's speech in Cairo, study it, figure out what went wrong in our ability to implement it, but use that as the narrative. It was beautifully structured, taught all the right lessons. I debated George Allen the day after on CBS, and at the end of the debate, the person said, "Bbut can he do it? Can we close the divide?" and I said, "I actually think he can, if given a chance, I just don't think he can close the divide with conservatives here at home, and they're going to stand in the way of him doing it," and that's what happened.

Male Speaker 1:

All right, well, I'd like to thank our panelists. General Michael Hayden, former director of CIA, Philip Mudd, Jim Zogby. I'd also like to thank Jane Harman and the Woodrow Wilson Center, and NPR, Gary Knell for promoting this discussion. You know, if we're going to have a stronger narrative these are the kind of fora I think that can advance that.

[end of transcript]