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THIS IS AN UNCORRECTED TRANSCRIPT.

PROCEEDINGS

MR. STEINBERG: [in progress] attention that next week is the one-year anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq and so it seemed like an appropriate time to take a look back at the last year. I think it's fair to say as we sit here on this near anniversary, that the invasion and the aftermath have not been the unqualified success that some of the proponents had hoped that it would be, but at the same time it has not been the unmitigated disaster that some of the more harsh critics had predicted at the time.

Unfortunately, there's a lot of ground in between and what we hope to do today is to try to fill that in with a little bit more fine-grained assessment of various aspects of the events of the last and the implications, and we're going to look back at where we were and where we've come to, try to assess some of the lessons learned and some of the implications for going forward and we have a very distinguished group of our team here to talk about different aspects of the Iraq invasion and its aftermath, beginning first with Ken Pollack, director of research at the Saban Center here at Brookings, followed by Michael O'Hanlon.

Ken is going to look at the situation in Iraq as is Mike from a slightly different perspective and Mike is also going to talk about the implications of our recent experience for the U.S. military, and then we'll turn to Shibley Telhami, the Anwar Sadat professor at the University of Maryland and a nonresident senior fellow here at Brookings and with the Saban Center, to talk about some of the regional implications, particularly in the Arab world, and finally to Phil Gordon, senior fellow here, director of

our Center of the United States and France, and soon to be the director of Brookings' forthcoming Center on the U.S. and Europe, to look at some of the relationships and the issues with our allies.

So Ken, if you'd kick it off.

MR. POLLACK: Thank you, Jim. I thank all of you for coming out on this, what is it now? snowy, rainy, sleety Wednesday? nothing Wednesday?

I thought that I would touch on three different aspects of the war, all of which have potential ramifications for moving forward, also nice at this point to look back on them. I thought I would talk about the intelligence issue a little bit, talk about Iraq itself, and then also talk a little bit about the impact of the war on some of the other regional governments, try hard not to talk too much about that because that's going to be where Shibley is going to focus I think most of his efforts. I'll take a slightly different tack.

With regard to the intelligence issue, you know, a lot of you have heard me on this issue. For those of you who've read the Atlantic piece, you've gotten probably the fullest exposition of my feeling about that.

I've done any number of TV and radio and print interviews since then which give you, unfortunately, only little snippets and take the chunk that they like.

For me, the intelligence issue is a very complicated one. It's also an extremely important one. I think that we have a real problem as a result of the intelligence failures on Iraq, and my concern is this. I don't think that the rest of the world in terms of their governments disbelieves the United States and will simply disregard whatever intelligence the United States comes forward with at future dates.

I think that's a concern that a lot of people have. My own sense, both in talking to foreign officials, talking to U.S. officials is that, you know, the foreign governments, by and large, understand what happened, and they are still willing to work with us on the basis of our intelligence, recognizing that our intelligence is never perfect and that there are always issues with all intelligence.

But there's a bigger issue and it's an issue that I expect that Phil Gordon probably will touch on also, which is that what the Iraq war said to me, more than any war, is that fighting wars in the age of democracy has very different meaning for building coalitions, and I think where the intelligence issue really is potentially damaging for the United States is with the populaces, with the constituencies of other countries.

So it's not necessarily that the governments will say, well, the United States got the intelligence on Iraqi WMD totally wrong, so we shouldn't believe them on this issue, whether this issue is North Korea or Iran, et cetera.

But I do suspect that many of the populaces do believe that, and the next time around, when the United States wants to go to war, I think the United States will confront a larger problem of building a coalition, because I think it will be harder, even harder than it was with Iraq, for the different governments who would like to participate, who may share our intelligence estimates, to convince their own constituencies that it is worth doing this, because I think the constituencies are going to be the populaces, will be that much more suspicious of U.S. intelligence.

Now as again, I have said on any number of occasions, on the specifics of Iraq and the intelligence, I personally think that there is a lot of blame to go around.

You know, the right is consistently insisting that the blame is entirely on the intelligence community, they got it wrong, and that's why the administration went in the direction it did. That last part I kind a find hard to believe.

On the left, they're claiming that it was all the administration, that the administration lied, made things up, stretched the truth, et cetera.

To some extent I think both are right, to some extent I think both are right. I think that on the WMD issue, it is very clear that the intelligence community got it wrong. We did think that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction were much more aggressive and much more advanced than they actually turned out to be.

There were programs there. It's not true that there is nothing in Iraq. If you read David Kay's final report, or his last report, it's only an interim, but nevertheless it makes very clear there were programs but they were much more rudimentary and much smaller than we believed at the time.

That said, as I pointed out in the Atlantic piece, I think even on the WMD issue, the administration did take those intelligence estimates, faulty though they were and they stretched them a little bit. As far as I can tell they never lied, everything they said was based on their reading of the intelligence or based on things that the intelligence community itself said.

But as I pointed out in the Atlantic piece, what they did was they tended to emphasize those parts of the intelligence estimates that suited the case for war, an imminent war than the parts of the intelligence estimates that were more heavily caveated.

That said, one of the things that's so striking to me is that the national debate and the media have focused so heavily on the weapons of mass destruction issue and so little on the terrorism issue, and of course the war was sold as part of the global war on terrorism, and for the administration it was very important to make the case that going to war with Iraq was about, to a certain extent, perhaps to a great extent, about dealing with the terrorism problem, and I will say from my own experience, I think that the stretching of the truth, the misuse of intelligence that went on amongst some personnel within the administration--again I think we need be very clear--there are a lot of people in the administration who had nothing to do with this, who played very fairly, but there were some who did I think look at sources and cherry-pick intelligence and even disregard the caveats from intelligence professionals that some of the sources they were relying on were not accurate.

In most of those cases it was on the terrorism side much more than it was on the weapons of mass destruction side and I'd like to see a lot more discussion of what happened on the terrorism issue and much less on the WMD issue, which as I said, the administration is absolutely right. The intelligence community got it wrong and that does represent a very big part of the background.

On Iraq itself, certainly we're not in as good a position as I would have liked us to have been, and I will say I don't think that we're in as good a position as we could have been in.

You're all aware of the problems we had with the immediate post-war planning. I think it is very clear that some of the administration, those who were responsible for post-war planning, absolutely dropped the ball, and as James Fallows'

wonderful piece that was a companion to my own in the Atlantic pointed out, what to me is so distressing is that there was so much good work that was done on planning for post-war Iraq in the U.S. Government and the great tragedy is it's not that everyone got it wrong, it's that there were a whole lot of people who got it right and they were the people who should have been doing it and it was disregarded by the people who were actually making the decisions in Iraq.

And of course we've been playing catch-up ever since.

Now the simple fact, as far as I'm concerned, is that today we were still suffering from those mistakes, but the situation is not lost and I really do bristle when people just categorically write off Iraq and say it's a quagmire, it's Vietnam, it's doomed, it's hopeless.

There's a lot of good in Iraq and in fact the United States is doing a lot of very good things in Iraq, and I try very hard to give Bremer and the CPA and the administration credit for a number of the things that they are doing right in Iraq, and introduce a whole bunch of other features inside of Iraq that have very little to do with the United States but come from the nature of the country and the people and their leaders, and what they want, and how they've done things that also create really positive factors in Iraq.

That said, there's also a lot of negatives in Iraq and right now I continue to look at Iraq and say this country could go in either direction.

Fifteen years from now this could be a stable, pluralist society, it could be a model of what we'd like to see the Middle East becoming, or it could be absolutely chaos, and it really does depend on us as far as I'm concerned.

I'll tell you that right now there are two things that I am concentrating on in terms of Iraq and where Iraq is going to go and what we've done with that country since the end of the war.

The first of these is the political process that you're seeing unfold around you, and here, you know, I think it's wonderful that we got this constitution signed and I actually give Jerry Bremer and his team credit. It was hard to get these guys to sit down and actually agree to this document and it did show some real negotiating skill on their part to get them to sign this document.

That said, this constitution in some ways is not related to the deeper problem, and in some ways all the hoopla over the constitution is papering over the much deeper problem, which is that the November 15 process, the process that the CPA and the administration created to supplant the current governing council, which was widely recognized as being illegitimate and not up to the task at hand, that process was designed to supplant the governing council and that process is dead. Okay.

There is nothing out there right now, and if you look at the constitution, what it says about the new interim government is simply that the governing council and the United States will decide, in consultation with the United Nations.

So for the next nine months, since the new transitional government isn't expected to come into power until December of 2004, for the next nine months we have no idea who is going to rule Iraq and the June 30th transfer of power right now looks like it may take place in a vacuum. No one knows what's going to supplant it. That is of great concern.

As I said, the whole reason for the November 15 process, which I thought was a very good process and I gave Bremer and his team real credit for coming up with it, I gave the President real credit for being willing to sign on to it. The problem is that's dead, that's gone, and so we are left with the same unpalatable situation that gave rise to this situation to begin with, but now the June 30th deadline is even closer and we don't have an alternative to what we currently have.

The other big issue that I'm watching on Iraq is the broader populace.

You know, in many ways, for me, the most significant development, last week I guess it was, was not the signing of the constitution. It was Ayatollah Sistani's statement that effectively condemned the United States as being part of the reason for those tragic bombings, where he was blaming the United States, in part, for not having done enough for Iraq's security.

That is a very important development. Sistani has been one of the most important forces arguing for patience and counseling the Shiia to work with the United States on a course of reconstruction, and over the course of the last ten months, what you've seen is Iraqis slowly, increasingly becoming impatient with the United States at our inability to provide the basic services and the basic security that they want and that they are ultimately entitled to, and increasingly you are seeing Iraqis starting to vent that anger.

You saw demonstrations in Nasiriyah, demonstrations in Basrah, and now the statement by the ayatollah and you're seeing other things out there, that demonstrate increasing impatience with the United States.

If that trend persists, that may be the most dangerous development of everything in Iraq, because if the Shiia and the rest of the country, those who have been most supportive of the process of reconstruction decide that the United States either can't or won't do what is necessary to actually give them the basic security and services that they require, under those circumstances you could see them start to go their own way.

That's the start of the disaster for the United States and I'm not suggesting that this is right around the corner. Again, I've really been struck by how patient all of Iraq's leaders have been, at least most of Iraq's leaders, and how much the, you know, the large segment of the Iraqi populace has been.

But these are the beginnings of what could be a very bad trend for the United States and so I'm watching that to see if that improves or doesn't improve.

Final thoughts. The region. Now a lot has been said, a lot has been argued on both sides about what the impact of the war has been on the region and I'll say from my perspective right now, the jury is still out. I think that even though it's been a year since the war, I don't think we yet know what kind of an impact this is going to have, and I'll just touch on two issues again because I want to leave most of the subject to Shibley.

The first is the question of, Have the rogue states mended their ways? The second is the question of democratic reform.

And I think on both counts you have to say that to some extent there has been an impact. I think that it is the case that the Iranians reined in their horns a little bit and the Syrians have reined in their horns a little bit and I suspect that Muammer Qadaffi's decision was, to some extent, influenced by the war itself.

But in every one of those cases, I think the more important causes for those actions had little to do with the war.

I think, you know, as my boss, Martin Indyk, just wrote in the *Financial Times*, Qadaffi has been trying to surrender to the United States for at least four years and probably more like six, and, you know, the war may have just been a final tipping point at the end of it, but, in truth, this is a trend that started long ago, and I think that the war was only a minor element of that.

I think the same in the case of the Iranians and the case of the Syrians as well. It wasn't that there was no impact but, by the same token, I don't see a major impact.

The same thing on the reform side. Have various states perhaps been convinced to move forward a little bit faster as a result of the war, as a result of the process of democratization in Iraq or reconstruction in Iraq?

Yeah. I think that it is there. When you talk to, especially Gulf Arabs, I hear this from them, that they do see this as part of a trend and they do believe that the war has simply accelerated, to some extent, a trend that they already saw.

But as I said, they saw this as part of a trend, and there were much more important factors out there that were already pushing them in this direction, certainly Kuwait, in Bahrain, in Qatar, even in Saudi Arabia, those forces existed before the war.

But what I think is true is that most of the Arab world is still holding its breath because they don't know whether what we've done in Iraq is going to succeed or fail and I think that if it does succeed, then you will see a much greater impact from that

success in the region, and I think that if we fail, you will see a much greater effect from that failure in the region.

But for the moment, no one knows yet and I think they're still just watching the space.

MR. STEINBERG: Thank you, Ken.

As Ken suggested, we're going to come back to several of these issues in the course of the panel discussion but first to Mike for his own assessment of how we're doing in Iraq and also its implications for the U.S. military.

MR. O'HANLON: Thanks, Jim, and also to everyone being here, and one point I'll simply add to Ken's and look forward to his and other reactions to this later.

I'm hearing a lot more concern from various Americans about the role that Iran is playing in Iraq potentially establishing a network that it could activate at some point, so that has me nervous and I think we don't yet know there, either, what's likely to be the development down the road.

Let me talk a little bit about this Iraq index we've been doing at Brookings, Adriana Lins de Albuquerque and myself, with some support from our colleagues, and we've been trying to track trends here in Iraq over the last 12 months, largely based on Pentagon data, with some additional analysis and occasional other data sources but primarily DOD data.

However, DOD does not choose to present trends over the entire 12 month period, and so if we have value-added, it's hopefully in trying to do that and essentially maintain a steadiness of tracking as we go forward.

There are a few things to say. I would summarize by describing the glass as three-fifths full in Iraq, and it's not that full after 12 months of intensive effort but it's a lot better, again, as Ken has suggested, than many people want to argue.

It's been a very difficult period, ever since Saddam fell, obviously. The three weeks of invasion were easier than I thought. The post-Saddam period's been harder than I expected. On balance, it works out to about a wash compared to the kinds of arguments Phil Gordon and I were making a year or two ago in the whole debate over how hard would it be.

So it's about where we thought, on balance, but for me, at least, the reasons have been a little different in detail and I very much hope we can begin to get our arms around this thing.

Here's how the basic situation looks in Iraq. Let me start with a very quick once-over on economic and quality of life indicators, and there's a lot more detail on this on our Web page and there's some printouts outside.

The short story here on economics and quality of life is that things are finally getting back to about where they were under the late Saddam period or maybe a little better and we're about to give the Iraqi economy a dose of crack cocaine in the form of \$18 billion in the supplemental, which is going to, if anything, overheat it in the next few months, and so I think that if you're for a short-term stimulus to get people involved, get people employed, you're going to see a lot of the benefit in the next few months.

We've also, in just the last few weeks, started to see an improvement in a number of indicators that had plateaued in the late fall and winter--availability of gasoline, production of oil, availability of electricity, cooking oils, heating fuels. A lot

of these things got better fairly quickly in the summer, then they plateaued in the mid to late fall as casualties against American forces also increased, and now they've begun to improve again and let's obviously hope that the trajectory remains in the right direction.

Unemployment remains very high but as I just suggested a minute ago, we've begun to make a dent into that and as you inject \$18 billion into an economy the size of Iraq's, you can expect a tremendous amount of short-term employment beginning this spring and summer as contracts are signed and activities begin.

Whether or not that provides the basis for a healthy long-term Iraqi economy can be debated, but I think in the short term we're likely to see an improvement in the overall employment picture. That's the short story on economics and quality of life as I see it.

Security. Security's a little more complicated. On balance, I think again going in the right direction, but let me just give you a few facts and figures that might suggest the good and the bad in the story.

The bad news of course is suicide bombings against Iraqis. This has gotten a lot, lot worse in the last few months. It's a tactic that really hadn't been used much at all, with the exception of the bombing in Nasjaf in August, until the mid fall, at which point we started to see in the vicinity of at least 50 to 75 Iraqis killed per month in the late fall period, into the winter, and now we're seeing well over a hundred killed per month and of course just last week, more than a hundred in one day alone. And these are just reported deaths. The actual casualty figures could be much higher as many of the wounded presumably are unable to recover in what remain fairly mediocre Iraqi hospitals, which have not yet recovered well enough from the war.

So that's the bad news on the violence front. Most of the rest of the story is good, although again, as Ken pointed out in the last forum we had here on Iraq, security in day to day life for Iraqis is not good enough, nowhere near good enough yet. It's getting better. But that's the other part of the story that's not very encouraging yet.

So at least the trend is in the right direction but Iraq remains several times as violent as the most violent American city. Perhaps that's no great surprise in a country that was just at war and had 30-some years of Baathist rule before that. But it is not the kind of environment where people are going to have confidence in their future, where people are going to have confidence in their ability to build a life for their families, and compared to the pre-Saddam period, in terms of routine crime things are much worse.

In terms of state-sponsored crime, things are much better. But nonetheless, that's a second source of considerable concern, even as things start to get better than they were before.

In the area of positive news, and clearly positive news, unambiguously so, we see much lower American troop casualty numbers now in the last few weeks. This may or may not be a trend that's going to continue but in the period of time since February 1st, we've lost, I believe, 31 or 32 American troops. That's in the space of about five and a half to six weeks. We were losing about that number every three weeks through the winter period. So it's almost a dropping in half.

The number of attacks per day against coalition forces has dropped in half. The frequency with which we are able to detect improvised explosive devices and

defuse them before they can be detonated has quadrupled or quintupled according to coalition and DOD authorities.

The accuracy of intelligence leads being provided by Iraqis to the coalition has gone up quite a bit. It's not clear how good most of those intelligence leads are but in fact when they tell us somebody's going to be somewhere, or we'll find a few weapons here or there, they tend to be telling the truth these days, and we tend to go out and find the weaponry or the individuals that we were told about.

All these things are movement in the right direction. I don't know yet to what extent it's going to be decisive. One last point on this general issue of statistics is that we are now arresting or killing many Iraqis than we were before Saddam was captured. This has been a relatively unpublicized development but in the period immediately after Saddam was captured, in addition to getting a few more higher-level Baathist operatives, we've also managed to roughly double the daily rate at which we're arresting or killing people. Now the hope is we're arresting or killing the right people, and in fact those of you who have read a couple of stories on this issue in the newspaper in recent times know that we often are not, and we realize that, and we've actually been letting go 75 percent of the people we've been arresting.

If the worst that happens is we let them go a few days after they're arrested, we can probably deal with the political fallout of those actions. However, if we are killing a lot of innocent people or holding innocents for periods of months, as perhaps is sometimes the case, then you have a real worry about what this is doing to the overall popularity of the U.S.-led effort in Iraq.

But, on balance, I think to first approximation it's good news, we are getting much better intelligence and the insurgency is being weakened. Now how much it's also reconstituting itself as we arrest and kill people, and they're recruiting more individuals, whether from abroad or at home, we don't really know.

General Abizaid, last fall, said he believed there were about 5,000 hardened Iraqi insurgents. That was about months ago. Since that time, we've arrested something like 5,000 people and yet just recently CENTCOM gave the estimate there are still 3,000 to 5,000 hardened insurgents that we're contending with. So how these numbers square is anybody's guess. The short answer is they don't and we're just estimating, speculating how big the resistance is. But again, there is some good news based on hard data about numbers of attacks, numbers of Americans and other coalition forces being killed and wounded, and this is, to my mind, quite encouraging.

That's the overall snapshot I wanted to give you on how things are going in Iraq. I'll just say one word about another paper that's on the mantel out front, it will be on the Web tomorrow, which is my first blush effort to make a case for increasing the size of the U.S. Army and perhaps the Marine Corps as well, increasing active duty ground forces by something in the general range of 50,000 more soldiers above and beyond what Secretary Rumsfeld has done using emergency power, and I'll leave it to you to go through the argument there, if you want.

But, in short, the table on page two of my paper summarizes the argument, at least in snapshot form. For the active duty combat brigades of the U.S. Army, there are thirty-three. The total number of brigades from the active army that will

have been deployed somewhere overseas in 2003 or 2004 numbers thirty-four. In other words, we've already sent some people back for a second time.

We're going to have to do a lot more of that in 2005 because there is no fresh rotation base and I see my good friend Jim Barr in the audience. Many other reservists are also dealing with the very distinct possibility that they are going to have to potentially go and serve overseas again when the whole notion of the citizen-soldier is after you spend a time abroad, you should have a chance to reconstitute your civilian life and be at home for a while before you have to think about the next call-up.

I think there's a real potential recruiting and retention problem developing in the U.S. military, and Mr. Rumsfeld's argument that we don't really know if there's a big problem, we don't really want to necessarily address it cause we're not sure about how bad it will be.

Frankly, I think this is a foolish argument. We need to buy insurance against the possibility that we're going to break the all-volunteer force. The insurance is not that expensive. We can still address this problem now by recruiting people because military service is still appealing to most Americans at this point.

But if we wait another year or two and we start to get shortfalls in personnel, and the word gets out that we're overdeploying and overusing and abusing the military, at that point it's going to be harder to compensate for any shortfalls we have because no one's going to want to join. So this is not the sort of problem you wait until it becomes a crisis before you address.

You take our some insurance against it when you see the early signs of a problem developing and the longer we wait, the more foolish we are in my judgment and

I'm sorry to use strong language but I think this is a very severe problem for the United States because it takes anywhere from one to three years to recruit and train people.

So if you're going to have a problem in 2005, 2006, 2007, having to send the same forces back that have already been there once, you don't wait till 2005, 06, or 07 to begin to address the problem because then it's really too late. You do it now.

We should have done it last year, we better do it right now. The Congress is right. On this point Mr. Rumsfeld is wrong. I'll stop there.

MR. STEINBERG: All right. I think we got your message.

Shibley.

MR. TELHAMI: Thanks. What I'd like to do is talk about the impact of the last year on both public opinion in the Arab world as well as government calculations and the impact hasn't been the same.

Before I sort of describe it the way I read it, I should also say that obviously in the coming years, the next five years or so, the impact could be different depending on what happens in Iraq.

Clearly, if Iraq turns out to be the success that some people hope, it's going to have a different impact than it has had in the past year. My remarks therefore really are focused on what has happened so far and where public opinion is.

I'll begin where I left off exactly a year ago, we were here on the eve of the war, and we had a similar kind of analysis, and at the time I had just done a survey in six Arab countries, public opinion survey, in terms of how people in the region saw the war, their attitude toward American intentions, and also what their predictions were of the consequences of the war.

It wasn't a surprise that most people in the Arab world opposed the war like many around the world. There are two things that were striking about the survey. One was that there was absolutely no trust in what the U.S. says. Basically the absence of trust was the primary kind of opposition point to U.S. foreign policy, but second, the prediction of the public in the region was exactly the opposite of what the U.S. was saying.

The vast majority of people believed that the Middle East was going to become less democratic, not more democratic. They expected that there will be more terrorism, not less terrorism, and they expected that the prospect of Arab-Israeli peace are going to diminish, not increase, unlike what the administration was arguing at the time. If you recall, on the eve of the war the administration was saying the war will make it easier for the U.S. to move and clinch an Arab-Israeli agreement.

That was the regional prediction. And I would say on the face of it so far--I'm, by the way, doing another survey right now as we speak, one year later in the same places, to find out more systematically what the public opinion is. I've been going there several times in the past few months and I can say that, in essence, the first year after the war has reconfirmed people's suspicions and expectations rather than anything else at the level of public opinion.

On the issue of democracy, people do not believe that Iraq has or will bring democracy--that the war has or will bring democracy to Iraq or to the region. There are two reasons for it.

One is what they experienced themselves over the past year at home. Contrary to what we were expecting, many of the governments, because of the fear that

the public was so frustrated and resentful of their tacit support for the war and for the absence of Arab-Israeli peace, have actually cracked down and they've cracked down in part also because they have intensified the war on terrorism in places like Saudi Arabia.

The consequence has actually been for the public certainly not seeing any new opportunities, and all is words and promises, and they have no trust in words and promises. So the real life for them has not been more democratic.

In terms of Iraq, even under the best of circumstances, people still view Iraq as being under occupation. They're not going to make an evaluation on the basis of what Iraq looks like under American occupation.

But, in general, the picture that they have of what's happening in Iraq is not exactly the same as the picture that Mike O'Hanlon presented here, because Mike is focused on the things that matter to us from our point of view.

From their point of view, they're looking at the life for Iraqis on the ground, and what they see is that a statistic of the hugely increasing insecurity of people at the daily life, the disintegration of society. It's a frightening picture. It's a frightening picture to the point that governments actually are able now to say, Is that what you want? and they don't want it, and you hear more and more in the public discourse the reference, quote, to the China model. I'm not sure people really know what the China model is but it doesn't matter.

The idea is you don't do fast reform. Let's do incremental. Clearly, governments don't want to have the power undermine--the China model is a nice way to say I'm not going to do major reform and the public, increasingly, is attracted to the so-called China model. That's at least the impact in the short term.

As I said, in the long term, the Iraq situation could change, and it could change the model for the public as well.

On the issue of terrorism, and it's quite obvious that they fear terrorism more as a consequence of the instability that has emerged within Iraq, and the possible establishment of external bases, in ... that they could operate not only in Iraq but elsewhere. So in a way, they see that as confirming their fears.

And thirdly, the absence of Arab-Israeli peace process has reconfirmed their view that this has all been a promise that was intended to justify and legitimize the war. So, in essence, this has reinforced their fear because this issue, by the way, the Arab-Israeli issue, remains, in my judgment, the prism of pain through which they evaluate the U.S.

We can ignore it but it's like go into the region and say, saying to them, we can--you know, they can come to us and say we'll deal with you on any issue but we're not going to touch the issue of terrorism. Don't ignore terrorism. Terrorism is not important. Well, terrorism now is our prism of pain. It is the prism of pain on 9/11. It is the reality of how Americans are going to see the world, and anybody who wants to deal with the U.S. cannot ignore that issue.

Well, the Arab-Israeli issue remains the prism of pain for the public in the region and they evaluate American intention through that prism of pain and I think that isn't working on our side in the short term.

On the government calculation side, I think it's interesting to look at how governments have seen the events of the last year, and I think it goes a bit against some of the conventional wisdom about the war.

Obviously, before the war, there was a notion that when we assert our power people are going to fear us and respect us and they're going to fall in line because of seeing our power.

Well, in reality, I think it has had an impact on regimes. I think less because they think that they're going to be next or because American foreign policy has it in its interest to remove this or that regime.

But I think what the administration has really projected is the psychology of unpredictability. We have an unpredictable, angry, powerful state, that is the most frightening thing in the world, and I think in the Iraq thing, it was like they couldn't believe that it was going to happen, they didn't see it as serving America's interest, both in terms of alliances and the objective calculations of interest as they saw them, and yet the U.S. did it and succeeded and carried it out, and it can do it again.

So they can say, well, it's not in their interest to do this in Saudi Arabia or Syria, but then again, that's what they thought about Iraq, and the unpredictability has made people nervous, and there's no doubt that early on it has made regimes more nervous about what could happen from the U.S.

So, on the other hand, in comparison to a year ago, the assessment in the region is that the U.S. is weaker than it was before the Iraq war, and that the prospects that the U.S. is going to go on with another war in the short term has diminished significantly.

So in fact it has gone the other way in terms of the calculations because they believe that now the U.S., in essence, has over a 100,000 forces in Iraq, is spending about \$5 billion a month, American public is hesitant. It is much more difficult for the

U.S. to mount another war of choice. Obviously, no one would doubt that we would wage a war of necessity, and therefore, in a way, many of the governments in the region actually feel much more relaxed than they were before the war.

I would say the Libya model probably is a perfect example, because, on the one hand, there is no doubt in my mind that Libya was bit nervous. I mean, I think it would be wrong to say that it wasn't. It was, and Qaddafi was, even though he was making the gestures.

But, on the other hand, it's highly unlikely that this administration with its doctrine of regime change would have accepted this kind of deal from Libya, had the Iraq war gone better. It is hard to imagine that just mere modification of behavior would have been accepted. So I think it's both ways have had an impact on that decision.

In that sense, I think people are nervous but not fearful, not frightened. The bottom line.

I think if you look at how most governments see the U.S. in Iraq today, their attitude is summarized in two conflicting, you know, perspectives. They definitely don't want the U.S. to win decisively in Iraq. They fear American success because they think that the restraint now on American foreign policy is, in large part, because the U.S. is encountering more difficulty than it expected.

So no one is rooting for a speedy success for the U.S. On the other hand, they don't want the U.S. to fail, because they know that the consequence of a fragmented Iraq, and militants winning, will come to haunt all of them, and that's where they're trying to navigate a space of modest cooperation without undermining the stability of Iraq in the long term.

MR. STEINBERG: Thank you, Shibley, and it's a terrific segue into Phil, where the question of whether our allies want us to succeed or not in k has been one of the things that has bedeviled our relationship.

Phil, I turn to you and if you want to give a plug for your book to begin with, that would be welcome as well.

MR. GORDON: Okay. I think you just did, and I think we inflicted about a 100 copies of the cover on people out there. The book that Jim refers to is a book I just completed together with another scholar at Brookings, Jeremy Shapiro, called in fact *Allies At War: America, Europe and the Crisis Over Iraq*. It comes out in a week or so, and in this book we look precisely at the question of what was the role of allies, what went wrong, why did we have such a crisis, and how can we put it back together.

That's the aspect of this issue that I would like to talk about here in complementing what my colleagues have already said.

The role of the allies. What lessons are there? A year after what was probably the most severe crisis in the transatlantic relationship, at least in 50 years, possibly more in the entire post-war period, what lessons are there to draw?

And let me begin with one lesson that I think is already apparent, it's something that Churchill suggested already 60 years ago. I learned over the past year that you can never go wrong with quoting Churchill when you're talking about wars and things like that.

Churchill said the only thing worse than fighting a war with your allies is having to fight one without them, and I think there's a lot of insight into that. Don't get me wrong--we are not fighting a war without allies. We have a lot of allies in Iraq.

As the administration doesn't tire of pointing out, the coalition, depending on how it's defined, consists of dozens of countries who've contributed in one way or another in Iraq. The British, in particular, have been enormously helpful and did a lot of the fighting.

There are now some 24,000 foreign troops in addition to the Americans in Iraq. So you can't go so far as to say that we have done this without allies, and yet, despite all of the contributions I just referred to, the fact remains that the United States, because of the way we went into the war and the lack of more allied support and more international legitimacy, finds itself bearing an enormously disproportionate proportion of the costs of the war on any level you want to take.

If it's the troops in Iraq, despite the 24,000 others, we still have more than 80 percent of the overall foreign troops in Iraq.

In terms of money, it's over 90 percent, and the pledges, frankly, of most of the international community have been very small and they haven't even been delivered on, the pledges that were made.

And then in terms of casualties, the human costs of the war, also the percentages--and you can look at all the numbers that Mike has compiled on the statistical index on the Brookings site. We are also above 80 percent of the fatalities and probably an even higher number of the wounded and casualties.

So despite the various aspects of coalition support or what we're doing, one result of doing it without more international legitimacy and support is the enormous proportion of the burden that we're bearing, and also, you know, what Mike said about the army and the reserves and the overstretched U.S. Army. That's one consequence of

not having been able to do this--and we can talk about what might or might not have been done to get more support--but the bottom line is without having to get more support, the material burden on the United States is considerable.

But I think there's more to it than that. The question of allies in the war is not just a question of how many foreign troops you can get, as important as that is. It's also a question of the legitimacy and perceived legitimacy of the operation, and that's I think another lesson that we're learning as we look back over this past year.

Legitimacy is important for more than how many troops or how much money you can get from other countries.

It's important for persuading the American people that this is an operation that they should support and I think we should all continue to worry that the American support for this is thin. It has been fairly broad but it's also thin. If things go badly, without other countries with us, it'll raise questions in Americans' minds, whether they want to keep supporting this.

Legitimacy is also important for the sustainability of the operation. The more others perceive that the United States is isolated and it doesn't have the backing of the international community, it doesn't have the backing of allies, the more they think we might actually fail and cut and run, and that's particular important for those on the ground. Indeed, those who are trying to drive us out, if they smell blood, so to speak, and the Americans seem isolated, they are inspired to try to win.

If, on the other hand, they're fighting a united international community backed by international organizations, many allies committed to this, they're less likely to win and they're more likely to know that.

And then finally, legitimacy can be important for getting things done that the United States alone cannot get done, and I think we saw an example of that when we finally did bring the U.N. in, Lakdar Brahimi, U.N. envoy, is able to talk to people like Ayatollah Sistani, who are simply not willing to talk to or negotiate with the United States.

So it's not even just a question of getting resources from others. It actually can be more effective when we can bring others on board to help us, and I think that's a lesson, that's one of the things that was part of the debate going into the war, but I think the administration underplayed the importance of getting allies and winning legitimacy.

I think the administration went into this with a different attitude based on a couple of assumptions that have been proven questionable.

One is, as I've already suggested, we didn't really, at the end of the day, need allies. Militarily, we could do this largely alone, and that turned out to be true.

But even more important, I think the administration felt that victory would bring its own legitimacy and bring the allies along. And Shibley hinted at this vis-à-vis the region, but it was also true vis-à-vis the Europeans. We were so certain that we would win, we would go into Iraq and find massive weapons of mass destruction and programs, prove links between Saddam Hussein regime and terrorists, and put something stable in place that the allies would be faced with that victory and ultimately have to concede with their tail between their legs and come along and support the United States.

Unfortunately, none of those categories--you know, we were not only, you know, two for three or one for three. We didn't find the WMD. We didn't prove the

links with terrorism, and the aftermath has hardly been a cakewalk. And so in the face of that, the allies have been even less ready to come and back the United States, and I think that's another lesson about how you go about this in the first place.

Fortunately, it seems to me that these lessons are sinking in not only among the administration's critics but within the administration itself. And I think, to its credit, it has started to draw some of these lessons and act upon them, and I think you've seen things over the past couple of months at least nodding in the direction of trying to win more international legitimacy and allied support for what we're doing.

The date of June 30th came, to a certain degree, at least, from international pressure; others saying that we needed to accelerate the process of transferring sovereignty. We've decided to do that.

The U.N. I mentioned Mr. Brahimi being involved. That too was an acknowledgment that maybe the U.N. can help, and the U.N. is starting to get closer to playing the vital role that we promised from the start but, to be honest, didn't really have the intention of giving it. There is talk of a serious NATO role in Iraq, which the administration is open to, and the James Baker mission. I think there, too, it's both substantively--I'm talking about debt relief, sending the former Secretary of State Baker around to allies to try to win debt relief. It wasn't a coincidence that James Baker, who put together the first Iraq coalition and was seen more as from the Bush One administration--the importance of allies and so on--to perform this task. So already, it seems to me, the administration is starting to do some of the things that you would expect it to do if it thought that getting allied support was important.

Still, the instincts, it seems to me, seem to be very cautious and skeptical. They don't want to share authority and power--and sometimes, don't get me wrong, for good reason: you don't want to dilute U.S. authority if you can avoid it. But they're starting to conclude that in some cases it's worth trading a little bit of that control and autonomy for outside support, and on a political level as well I think it's important. I think President Bush doesn't want to go into this election campaign vulnerable to the charge that he's isolated the United States and that nobody is helping us.

So you put all of that together and I think they're starting to, reluctantly, come to some of these conclusions, that this is important.

The lesson of all of this as we look back a year later, it cannot be--again, I want to be clear on this--it cannot be, however important I think one should conclude getting allies is, the lesson can't be that the United States therefore subordinates its foreign policy to allied support. You can't give a veto, even to your best allies, over things that you might really have to do.

I think you certainly can't give it to the U.S. Security Council and say that if we can't get a majority, we will under no circumstances act. The United States does need to lead, and sometimes by example. But it also seems to me that there's a big gap between subordinating your foreign policy to allied decisions, on one extreme, but then on the other extreme, assuming that they're not important, you don't need them and you don't have to do anything along the way in order to win their support.

It turned out in Iraq that we did, and we didn't do some of the things we ought to have, and we've done them in the meantime.

And because I think that lesson is starting to sink in, and I'll end with this thought, the future doesn't seem to me to be as bad as the past year has been. I also, like Shibley, reflected a little bit on some of what we had said at these past panels, and I think when I've been up here the message was usually it's really bad with the allies and it's likely to get worse.

So I'm finally going to change that tune, and I think, actually, it's likely to get better. I think there's a real prospect that over the course of the summer, as we continue to do these things--bring in the U.N., involve NATO more, transfer sovereignty to the Iraqis--we make it a little bit easier for allies to start helping even more, particularly the French and the Germans, who have been most opposed and least willing to help. It become easier for them, once we have a sovereign Iraqi government in place, once the U.N. is involved. They're awfully reluctant to help the Bush administration and help the theorists of the Iraq War, but they also know that they have an interest themselves in stabilizing in Iraq.

I say this not only because the U.S. and France just collaborated on regime change in Haiti. I actually think there's a real prospect that we'll see more support as the Bush administration starts to do the things that I think it needs to do in order to put this worst crisis in 50 years behind us.

MR. STEINBERG: Thank you, Phil.

I'll just say for the record, some of us have been sunny optimists about the alliance all along. But I think you've really done a good job of highlighting the issues.

Before I turn to questions, I want to come back to the issue that Ken started us with, which is intelligence and some of the implications of the debate about

the success or lack thereof of the intelligence and the use of intelligence in connection with Iraq and its implications for the future.

Particularly on its implications for national security strategy. One of the things that's been very distinctive about what the Bush administration has highlighted is its view, particularly post 9/11, that we need to take a different view about the balance of risks between action and inaction. That in the face of existential terrorism, potentially armed with weapons of mass destruction, that the risk of inaction in some circumstances may be greater than the risk of action and that we need to change the balance of the way we act, particularly towards the more preventive strategies or preemption as it's typically called.

And there's clearly a very powerful substantive case to be made, that in the fact of those kinds of risks, that you have to worry that by waiting for the risks to become more manifest, that it may become too late.

But if you're going to take that kind of strategy, then intelligence takes on a uniquely important role in trying to inform policy because you're far more dependent on both predictive intelligence and an assessment of capabilities than you are in a situation where you're allowed to wait until a threat becomes so manifestly clear and imminent, that nobody would doubt the need to act.

This is not a new problem, and I want to make clear that the Bush administration is not the only ones who've struggled with it. There are a few of you who will remember a very notable incident in the mid 1990's during the Clinton administration, where we received intelligence that a Chinese flag ship, the Yinxa, was carrying chemical weapons precursors to the Middle East and after great debates within

the administration and after looking at the intelligence, we decided that this was a serious threat and the United States undertook to intercept that shipment, at first at sea, and then finally forcing it into port.

Of course when we got it into port there were no chemical precursors there. Now there are a lot of explanations and a lot of after action was done about how did we get that wrong, did the Chinese get wind of it and offload the shipment or never make it in the first place cause they thought we were coming? Did we have the intelligence wrong?

But there were clearly costs to us for having taken an overt action, a preventive action based on intelligence, which turned out to be faulty.

Now you're not going to be right in every set of circumstances but the more you place your cards on the use of intelligence to engage in preventive or preemptive action, the more risks you're going to take.

And there's a kind of delicious and dangerous irony here because the greater the risk, the more the temptation is for the intelligence community to err on the side of the worse case analysis, and the lesson of the last decade, in at least two important cases tends to reinforce that. That is to say we got it wrong in the late 1980's about how far Iraq's nuclear program had gone and we misjudged how close Iraq had come before the 1991 war to developing a nuclear program.

And similarly, we misjudged the state of advancement of the North Korean missile program later in the 1990's.

And so if you're looking at a situation where the risks are very grave, as in the case of developing long-range ballistic missiles or nuclear weapons, then it's very

difficult to resist the temptation to say, well, under uncertainty we have to prepare for the worst.

And yet if your response to preparing for the worst is taking rather aggressive action, including preemption, then you put the two together and you end up with taking policy actions that are very high risk based on very uncertain intelligence.

And so we have to come to terms with the fact that if we are going to try to develop a set of policies that need to depend on predictive intelligence, we need to develop a range of tools that allow us to prepare for the worst case from a policy point of view, but not make us so dependent on that worst case being right, that if, in the event we're wrong, we pay a large price.

I think that's one of the big intelligence issues that we have not come to grips with or really debated enough, which is how do you intersect the inevitable uncertainty that Director Tenet talked about in his Georgetown speech last week with a set of policies that are more fine-grained and attuned to the fact that the risks are high but so are the uncertainties about the intelligence?

And I think that that's one of the lessons that I hope the new commission that the President has appointed will come to grapple with, not simply trying to understand how did we find out what we found out, or how did we miss the facts, but, rather, to look at that interface between the necessarily uncertain nature of the intelligence and the very consequential policy decisions that may flow from getting it right or getting it wrong.

So on that let's turn to questions. We have mikes. If you would stand and identify yourself after I call on you and then we'll [inaudible].

QUESTION: My name is Mike Miaza [ph]. My question is simple. What is the definition of success in Iraq? I guess there are several different versions of the definition of success in Iraq. A, one by the administration. B, by the people in Iraq. C, by the governments in the region. And finally a definition by Jacques Chirac.

Could somebody on the panel explain more about the divergence in the definition of success in Iraq and the implication or danger it could cause.

MR. STEINBERG: I suspect a number have comments on that but we'll start with Ken and move down the line.

MR. POLLACK: Mike, I think it's a great question and I think the answer is inherent in the question itself, and it gets to both points, that Shibley and I were both making, which is that everyone is going to determine their own criteria and everyone is going to independently judge whether Iraq met that criteria.

You know, for the United States, I think that, you know, we could probably work out a criteria among us. I'm not certain that would necessarily meet, you know, President Bush's criteria or other members of the Bush administration or necessarily the rest of the American public.

I've got my criteria, and my own thinking in the future about other actions like Iraq will be conditioned by whether I think that we met that criteria.

As Shibley has pointed out, the region sees Iraq very differently, and, you know, this is my point as well, in terms of I think right now, no one believes that Iraq has met the criteria for success. As Shibley has pointed out, many in the region think it's going in the wrong direction.

But I think that ultimately everyone agrees that the jury is still out and the question is, At what point in time does someone decide Iraq has been a success or a failure? and when they decide, based on whatever their criteria is, how will they react? That's why I think, as I said, right now, we just don't know what the real impact of the Iraq war is going to be, because the most important aspect of the Iraq war, as I and many other members of this panel said repeatedly before the war, was going to be about the post-war reconstruction of Iraq, and if that succeeded it would have a tremendous impact on the region and if it failed it would have a tremendous impact on the region, and no one I think can say right now whether it is going to succeed or fail.

MR. TELHAMI: Yeah. I think that obviously there are many different interpretations of what success is, and I think if you look even at the public level in the Arab world, I would daresay that probably most people want the U.S. to, quote, fail, more than they Iraq to succeed.

I mean, I would think that is more true at the public level, not necessarily at the government level in the sense of what they see America's success means.

But I would go a step further. I don't think that there is a clear view in this town of what an American success is. I don't think you could take that for granted. It's not just differences between the U.S. and everyone else.

I think the reality of it is there are some things that everybody sort of wants and in fact maybe even the commonalities among governments which is, for example, a stable and unified Iraq. No one wants to see disintegration and instability.

I mean most countries around the world, and certainly the U.S., sees that as a bad outcome.

But beyond that, it's not clear to me, for example, of--we have a lot of conflicting priorities. We have seen that those priorities to conflict. We have an interest in protecting the sources of oil. Even if that wasn't, in my opinion, the driving force for doing to Iraq, it becomes an issue in terms of what happens to those important resources.

We have an issue in fighting terrorism. We have an issue in an Iraq that has a foreign policy that is not in conflict with those interests and we have an interest in having Iraq being somewhat democratic, certainly more democratic than it has been.

We have already seen that some of those choices are not harmonious. Would we be comfortable, if we have an election and it turns out that we have a Shiia government, dominated government that wants to have closer relations with Iran, especially if Mike O'Hanlon's fears turn out to be right. You know, is Iran placing assets in Iraq now that will be deployed at some point?

Would we be comfortable with that? Would we be comfortable with any democratic government which may decide tomorrow we want all of American forces to be pulled out of Iraq very quickly. And maybe you can say that's maybe unlikely, perhaps it is unlikely, but if it is, is this something the U.S. is prepared to do, given the fact that there is an American interest now in stationing American troops in Iraq for a while, besides, in addition to the need for creating a unified Iraq.

So I don't think we have sorted out those priorities and I think our political system is going to have to work through them because the reality is we can't have all these things, and it's impossible to have all these things, and that I think is one reason why a lot of people around the world are suspicious of what we say.

We say we want democracy. I believe we mean it. I think we want democracy. I think our political elite wants democracy. I think even our leaders want democracy. But they want a lot of other things even more, and that's the problem that we have in Iraq.

MR. GORDON: I would like to add a thought because I think it's a profoundly important question, the answer to which--whose nuances are not captured by the screaming back and forth between proponents and opponents of the war.

What I mean is there is many definitions of success in Iraq as there were arguments for going in in the first place, and there were many, whether it was Saddam's WMD or the military threat to the region or freeing the Iraqi population, or promoting Arab-Israeli peace, or ensuring oil supplies from the region, or ending sanctions on Iraq, or giving us an ability to get our troops out of Saudi Arabia.

When you have so many--and there are more--when you have so many possible reasons to do it, you can judge success on any of those and all at once, and what we don't have, and I think we'll never have, is an ability to make a net assessment.

How do you weigh and compare liberating millions of Iraqis from potential torture with the strains on American military families or the casualties or the monetary cost of doing it?

it is almost impossible to make that judgment globally, and so we will continue to fight about this all along because everyone will put a different priority on some different aspect of that.

So I fear, you know, like Chou En-lai said about the French Revolution, you know, it's too soon to tell. 200 years from now it's still going to be too soon to tell because there may not be an answer to this metaphysical question.

MR. O'HANLON: I agree with a lot of this but I would also say for me, I have a fairly short list and in response to Phil's thought, to me, I'm not sure if we'll be able to prove that the benefits are worth the costs. But if we can still accomplish the following, I would consider it a success.

No terrorism or no state sponsorship of terrorism and no use of Iraqi territory for terrorism. No Iraqi WMD. No genocide inside Iraq. No aggression by Iraq against its neighbors and at least a patina of democracy. That's my short list.

QUESTION: I'll shout. A question to you. You were saying that, several months back, we can either have the Bosnia model or we can have the Lebanon model. Where would you say we are at? To Mike O'Hanlon.

QUESTION: Twelve months from today, where do you see the security situation? What is the troop level we will have? What kind of--you know, the election will have come and gone--both Iraq and the United States. Thank you.

MR. POLLACK: I'll start by answering my part of the question. This is a really crude metric but it's how you ask the question and it is a point that I've made in the past. Unlike Mike, I kind of would flip. He said, you know, there's a glass that's 60 percent full. I would say it's 60 percent empty at the moment, with an important caveat. I think that the developments of the last few months, again, the breakdown of the November 15 process, which I thought was a very important process, and the increasing unhappiness among Iraqis at our inability to provide security and the rest of the basic

services, those are troubling signs, and think that that leaves us somewhat worse off than where we were a month or two ago.

But I agree with the point that Mike just made, which is a really important one, which is we are about to see a flood of money come into Iraq, and, you know, "inshallah," that money is going to produce at least a temporary buoyancy in the Iraqi economy which will relieve a lot of pressure. If all we do is flood the country with money and create some temporary jobs and by that create a breathing period by which we can deal with the deeper issues of security and basic services, that would be fine, because right now we've got an increasingly unhappy population and it is conceivable to me that that influx of money will create a short-term fix to that problem.

The bigger issue is whether we use that breathing space to deal with these bigger structural issues or we just say good, you know, they aren't as unhappy as they were a month ago; problem solved.

MR. STEINBERG: Mike.

MR. O'HANLON: Amen to that, and my prediction in 12 months, this is not just a complete guess, it's mostly a guess, but you can look at Jim Dobbins good book at Rand, where he has looked at a lot of case studies, past peace operations, trends in troops, et cetera, obviously Iraq's got its own peculiar characteristics. But in terms of our troop levels, I would think we're going to be at about 50,000 in a year, roughly. You know, it could be 75,000.

MR. STEINBERG: 50,000 U.S. or 50,000 total?

MR. O'HANLON: 50,000 U.S., in rough terms.

MR. STEINBERG: And what total foreign?

MR. O'HANLON: And let's say seventy. Let's say we keep that good solid 25,000, that we don't get things completely repaired with the allies and don't get a lot of French, German and Indian help in the next 12 months but we still maintain about 25,000. So the total foreign presence is seventy-five, rough numbers, but I would have preferred that Jim not ask me to clarify cause then I could have had 25K worth of wiggle room, which is about what I need to admit the uncertainties in this business, and in terms of casualty levels to American troops, I hope they're no higher than ten to fifteen killed per month but it could still be easily at that level.

And in terms of the point that Ken's been I think wisely emphasizing now for months, security on the streets for Iraqis based on the improvement in their own security forces and whatever we contribute.

I would hope that by then violence rates have been cut in half compared to what they are today. I would still expect Iraq to be a very violent place in a year but I would hope we can make a lot of progress in the next 12 months.

QUESTION: Andrew Schneider from the Kiplinger Letter. You'd mentioned the likelihood that we'd have something in the neighborhood of 50,000 troops in a year. What are the chances that eventually, when some sort of interim government is put in place, given the ongoing security problems, that there might not be the support for asking the U.S. to stay on, which is a precondition for those 50,000 staying?

MR. : Others are probably better than I on answering that. I'll have to leave it for--

MR. POLLACK: I just can't imagine any Iraqi interim government asking the United States to leave now. You know, there's no one--unless Muntada al

Sadar somehow comes to power in Iraq in dictatorial fashion, I just don't see it happening.

You know, every Iraqi leader of any real responsibility has made it clear that they share, you know, public sentiment. They don't particularly like having us there but they are terrified of what happens if we leave.

And, you know, I think that an interesting question that could obtain is that once you do have a sovereign Iraqi government but I actually prefer the term a more legitimate Iraqi government cause I don't know--we're going to have a sovereign government on June 30. I don't know when we're going to have a more legitimate Iraqi government.

You know, the question becomes, Does that Iraqi government want to tackle this issue head on? You know, do they actually want to sign a status of forces agreement with the United States which might require them to commit to some things which their public would consider an affront to Iraqi dignity but which they nevertheless recognize for pragmatic reasons are absolutely essential.

Things like, you know, who gets to try American soldiers accused of crimes? You know, that's a really interesting question and it may simply be that that Iraqi government chooses to avoid that issue altogether.

That might actually be the smartest answer to what ultimately is an insoluble problem for them.

MR. GORDON: I would just add, I think that Ken has identified an issue which has gotten far too little attention, which is as we move through this next phase, post June 30th, the question of who really has authority to make decisions over what

issues is going to become very, very difficult because there's no question that as long as the U.S. is there, there's going to be a certain amount of authority which the U.S. military commanders are going to insist on and that's more than just the ability to command their own troops.

There are certain things that they will insist on for force protection and for carrying out the mission that will range widely over various aspects of Iraqi life and yet at the same time [inaudible] sovereignty's going to exist in the transition government.

Obviously in the best of all cases they'll work things out. But as we've already seen, that's not assured and how you're going to deal with these two conflicting authorities, each of which are going to claim to have absolute authority over matters which they think are within their sphere of jurisdiction but whose jurisdiction clearly overlaps, has potential for real conflict.

As the members of the IGC begin to think about their own political future in the elections coming forward, how willing are they going to be to accept the demands of the United States which will be significant and whether you have not basically set up a structure which is inherently prone to conflict and divergence leading into a very delicate time.

MR. TELHAMI: I agree with what you both said but I want to add a word of caution. I mean, I don't see any Iraqi government in the foreseeable future asking the U.S. to leave because they really can't handle all of the duties that they have to handle.

But I can see, if in fact we get to a point where there are elections, and real legitimate open elections, that the American presence could become an issue and the

nationalistic forces will be making an issue of American withdrawal, and how this would work out, how soon, or, you know, it's not that there will be an immediate demand but it could be part of a platform or agenda that is hard to avoid, and it could unleash a process that is going to be, you know, in conflict, at least with what American plans in the foreseeable future may be.

MR. : [inaudible].

QUESTION: I'm Diane Pearlman, co-chair of the Committee on Global Violence and Security for a division of the American Psychological Association and I've written about psychology of terrorism, and I have a question about, or comments and a question about psychological intelligence that you've talked about, predictive intelligence, and some failures in predictive intelligence and planning for worst-case scenario.

And if we're not aware of, say, the dynamics between us, we could also be provoking worst-case scenario, and it seems to me there is an absence of awareness of the Heisenberg principle which is the effect of us on the intelligence system, and that a lot of unintended consequences are due to psychological ignorance, and there are bodies of knowledge in political psychology and conflict studies, specifically tension reduction, that can have an impact in it.

So is there any consideration of applying some of these areas of--it's like we're just waiting to see what's going to happen or for twenty--you know, in 200 years, what's going to happen, whereas there are interventions that we could make that are based in psychology and social science, that can have more of an impact on the system.

MR. : I think Clausewitz got it before Heisenberg did and we certainly understood, I mean it's been well understood in the science of the use of force, that the unintended consequences are the most predictable of the consequences, and the unforeseen consequences.

So I think it's something that policy makers have struggled with for a long time.

I think the challenge, and I say this particularly mindful of my predecessor and good friend, [inaudible] here, for planners, is to try to figure out how you can develop policies which are fairly resilient to the uncertainties, and so that the actions that you take into account the range of potential actions, and rather than betting on one particular outcome or one particular horse, you try to think about ways in which you take actions which can be effective, if you're right, about what you anticipate happening, but also relatively costless if you're wrong.

And that's where I think psychology and the social sciences come in because it helps you think about the range of potential responses to your action and you can use the tools of social science to think about, well, given this range of potential responses if I do X, how do I take a set of actions that maximizes the good results and minimizes the poor results? And I think that's the way in which you can really begin to add a kind of predictive--it's both social psychology and psychology, into the planner's tools in trying to develop a more sophisticated response.

The problem with responses, such as the administration's response in Iraq, is it was a highly effective response if they were right about the intelligence but it was much less clear that it was the right response if they were wrong, and so you have to go

back and say were there alternatives that could have been pursued, that would have been reasonably as effective if they were right about the worst case, but also have a better set of outcomes if they were wrong about it.

MR. STEINBERG: Right there.

QUESTION: My name is Tamil Abarazi from [inaudible] magazine. There are two question. You didn't mention about the Kurd in the north, I mean the basic law which is, you called it the constitution, you know, just give them more leverage on all Iraq, and that's, you know, a lot of Iraqis see it as almost--that's the main result of the war, almost giving Kurdistan of Iraq more autonomy or maybe almost secession.

Secondly about, you know, I've been in most of your briefing about pre the war; you know. You talk too much about Syrian, Syrian support for resistance or insurgency or whatever. We don't see so much Syria now talking about--I mean people talking about Syria. Even the congressman came from Basher al-Assad, you know, told, on the Hill told Secretary of State that Syria really wants to cooperate with you and nobody is listening to them.

So can you tell us about these two--

MR. : On the Kurdish issue, I think it's good actually to point it out, because I think if you look at the Iraq question and the potential for civil war and instability and disintegration which is out there--I mean, you know, obviously it's unpredictable and I wouldn't want to be the one to predict what Iraq is going to look like a decade from now.

It could be a very positive and unified state or it could, you know, fall into civil war and disintegration. Unfortunately, both of these are possibilities.

But if you look at probably the most robust long-term issue in Iraq, in terms of internal division, it has been the Kurdish issue, much more than the Shiia/Sunni. I mean the Sunni/Shiia division is there and it's much more important in terms of the religious differences as well as the division of power within the state, the distribution of resources, and so forth.

But I think one can argue that both Sunnis and Shiias, Sunni Arabs and Shiias have always looked at Iraq, have always emphasized their Iraqi identity, and there hasn't been the challenge, either by the Shiias or the Sunnis to the notion of a unified Iraqi identity.

I think with the Kurds you can make a very strong argument that they've had a very long-term sense of national identity, that has been at odds with the state throughout, even when the state succeeded in managing the conflict, and today it's clearly probably the most obvious one, in part because there is an opportunity for the Kurds, in part because they've tasted more autonomy and less likely to be willing to give it up, and in part because the new federal system will give them potential for more assertion of power, and probably more claims to the resources of the state.

And I think that feature is a real one. Obviously the Shiias are making a point of it now because they're the majority and they're fearful of this having a potential impact. I'm not sure how this is going to go and I do think that this is going to remain a source of tension that has to be addressed.

MR. STEINBERG: Ken, are we underestimating Basher Assad's willingness to cooperate?

MR. POLLACK: We may be. I mean, I think it's actually a really important point. I would like very much to see this administration doing a better job to at least explore what's going on out there. You know, obviously from my own experience, what the first Bush administration, Bush Sr. administration did, to me, was really remarkable, in terms of waging the Gulf War, winning this tremendous victory and then very quickly making the decision that they are going to use all of the political clout that they had gained from that war to turn around and make peace.

I think it was a brilliant move on their part and I think that much of the success that we and the Clinton administration enjoyed in the 1990s was based on, in part, that initial decision.

Now again, I think we made some good moves on our part, and I think there obviously were some mistakes made in the Bush administration. But this one I think I give them tremendous credit. I would very much like to see this Bush administration learn that same lesson. Take the military victory of the Gulf War, take the point that Shibley and all of us up here have been making, which is that yes, the region isn't quite as bowled over as they were quite when the war ended back in April of last year, and maybe it wasn't quite as bowled over as it was back in the Gulf War.

But nevertheless, there is a sense of, you know, once again, a very strong, assertive United States which the power to do all kinds of things, and if the administration could take that and turn around and show the other cheek and say we want to use this situation, this new situation we've created to move in a very progressive

direction and we want to restart negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, between Israelis and Syrians, between Israelis and Lebanese, I think that could have a tremendous impact on the region in the same way that the Madrid process did after the first Gulf War when, again, you had a lot of Arab regimes who were very nervous about what the United States was going to do with this newfound power and were incredibly glad, grateful, relieved when it saw the United States take that capital and try to put it in this very progressive direction.

And I think, you know, Syria represents an opportunity. Who knows exactly what Basher Assad is actually willing to do? Who knows how much control he has over that country? It'd be nice to find out.

QUESTION: Mark Matthews with the *Baltimore Sun*. For Mr. O'Hanlon, do you expect an American drive to build up the Iraqi security forces as a way of reducing the presence of American troops there? Do you think it will be effective? And for Mr. Telhami, can you tell me what impact a very strong Iraqi security force might have on the development of democracy there?

MR. O'HANLON: Thanks, Mark, and Ken may want to comment on this as well. It seems to me that part of the strategy is correct. We get a lot of Iraqis hired-- they need jobs, we need time to vet them and train them; we give them minimal training--it may be too minimal but at least we're getting started; and then we do on-the-job training.

I think the on-the-job training part is a little weak right now, to put it kindly, and Ken has helped sensitize me to this and others who have been to the region, and my own experiences when I was briefly in Iraq in September. We're not going

enough joint foot patrols, we're not doing enough on-the-job training with the Iraqi police.

But at least the first piece of the strategy to hire them and to get the numbers up quickly and to try to turn over some responsibility to them, I think that's right. But again the next stage is critical and we haven't succeeded in that.

Also with the army, as you know, the army in Iraq now is very, very small, having a great deal of trouble making any progress here. And that raises the longer-term question, Are we going to be able to create truly national institutions? You don't have to do that with city-by-city police forces. You do have to do that with a national army. And so far, we're taking a very patient approach. It is not the first-order problem, and so in that sense we can afford to take a little bit of time. But I haven't yet seen evidence that convinces me we're ever going to succeed with it, and I am getting nervous about the fact that, a full year after the invasion, we've only gotten about two thousand people in the Iraqi army in its entirety.

MR. TELHAMI: Let me see if I understood your question. You're asking if a strong Iraqi security force would help bring about democracy in Iraq.

QUESTION: Or the other way around

MR. TELHAMI: Or the other way around. I think it is an essential element, obviously, for any kind of system in Iraq. Otherwise, you know, the people are going to lose patience and nobody is going to have cooperation. But it clearly isn't sufficient. It is an important ingredient, but not sufficient.

I think, when you look back at, you know, the day after the regime collapse and the decisions that were made pertaining to security in Iraq, I think that's

going to emerge, in historical perspective, one of the most problematic issues facing the U.S.--that there was no preparation to have security for Iraqis the day after, or maximize that; the issue pertaining to the dismantlement of the Iraqi army, which is going to be debated for a long time whether that was a wise thing or not, from the point of view of Iraqi internal security; and the third, the de-Baathification as it was implemented, which is essentially to [inaudible] making or incorporating even some of the Baathists in the government and therefore to have a lot of important segments of society, who still could wield power, who are outside of the system. And therefore, no matter what you did, you had enemies of the system within Iraq.

And that is obviously one of the problems now, because you see even the Iraqi police force are targets of segments of the Iraqi population that are just going to try to derail any system. And yet you still have people who apply to the police, and you have lines, because people are very often hungry or they just want the \$100 a month, even with the risks that come with that. But don't interpret that as sincere cooperation in a context of an environment of an occupation, because we have found already a lot of people who join and also are still willing to go against the U.S. in that kind of environment.

So it remains to be seen the extent to which a security force in this environment is going to be an actual force for stability. It depends on what happens politically at the same time.

MR. POLLACK: If I could just--Mike, as you know, I have infinite respect for you, but on this one I do disagree with you. And here I'm much more close to what Shibley had to say.

I think that the tack that we're taking is a very deleterious one. If I could do it all over again, I would go in exactly the opposite direction. I think by not having enough troops to begin with, ours and foreign troops, we made it necessary to bring in large numbers of Iraqis. As Shibley is pointing out, we are not vetting these people properly, we are not training them properly. As a result, they are becoming part of the problem, not part of the solution.

A much better way to have done this from the start would have been to have started with much smaller numbers of Iraqis, well vetted, well trained. Put them out in the street in situations where they are bound to succeed, to build their confidence and the confidence of the Iraqi people.

The problem is we have too many people, as Shibley is alluding to, who have joined the police--and don't get me wrong, because there are some very brave, very honest, very good people in the Iraqi police force who have my enormous respect, and, you know, God, I wish we had more of them.

But the problem is we have a lot of people there who are corrupt, who are using the police for their own personal gain, who are extorting from Iraqis, who are participating in kidnap rings against Iraqis. And there are a lot of others who, as Shibley said, they're just doing it for the money. You know, I had senior administration officials say to me that on a good day, about half of the numbers of Iraqi police and other security forces actually show up for the work. Most just collect the salary and never show up.

And the problem is, this becomes a reinforcing pattern. The people lose faith in the security forces, the security forces themselves lose faith in the mission and their compatriots. They don't feel like they can count on anyone and they're kind of, you

know, left adrift by the United States, which increasingly says, You guys have got to do this yourselves.

Again, if we were to change that pattern, it would probably require injecting a whole bunch more American and foreign troops into Iraq to take over the security mission and allow us to pull the Iraqis out properly, vet them properly, train them, and then start to redeploy them, which doesn't seem like something the administration is going to want to do.

But that, I think, personally, that is the solution. And I am very, very unhappy with the course that we're taking just trying to generate numbers. It is just creating a self-fulfilling prophesy that is creating more of a problem, not more of a solution.

MR. STEINBERG: Mike, do you want to come back on this?

MR. O'HANLON: Fair enough. As you know, and as you inspire us, Brookings is a place for debate.

QUESTION: Sam Lewis, American Academy of Diplomacy. I know you don't like to talk about the future. But there is one future I think you ought to make some reference to, and any of you can try this. By January 20th, a lot of things will have happened. If by chance we have a new administration, how much is already so preordained that there is very little maneuver? What real effect can be achieved after January 20th of the process that you all have been describing?

MR. : Well, it's a really interesting question--not only an important question, anyway. I do think that there are some things that are set in motion now that are going to stay regardless of who's in power. I think the priorities in Iraq are going to

remain American priorities in Iraq in terms of our long-term view, in terms of--even including its relations to the Arab-Israeli issue. I do not think there will be a profoundly important shift in how we see our interest.

I think there are two things that will change, and they will change possibly dramatically. One, in terms of the differing views on the role of the Arab-Israeli issue in the regional priorities. This administration clearly has disconnected the two. They think the Iraq issue and cooperation in the Gulf and so forth are disconnected from the Arab-Israeli issue. The Arab-Israeli issue is a secondary issue; it's downgraded in the priorities.

I believe, by and large, certainly Mr. Kerry and many in the Democratic Party give it a higher ranking. In fact, President Clinton, when he left office and sort of had the final discussion with Mr. Bush, clearly gave the Arab-Israeli issue a much higher priority than the Iraq issue as such. So that would be somewhat different.

And second, I think that's more important, is that if I am right about what is now the source of the lack of cooperation, the sort of reluctant cooperation, one might call it, by Europeans and others in the Middle East, and that is a sense that this is part of a foreign policy that they fear--whether it's the doctrine of preemption as sort on the back of their mind, or the lack of trust--that this is part of a policy that they're comfortable with.

And there is so much resentment at the level of public opinion, as our surveys have shown across the board, that I think if you have a new administration, the one thing that might happen, at least a psychological shift. In some ways, you know, I would compare it in a way with the shift in Israeli politics from Netanyahu to Barak. It's

not that there was a huge shift--you know, a dramatic shift in American perceptions or even Israeli perceptions of interest, but there was so much concern about Netanyahu here that when Barak won--and Jim was in the White House at the time--it's like he was given the keys to a lot of capitals, as sort of a sigh of relief.

I think the level of international cooperation would, at least in the early days, you know, as a matter of just psychological reaction, would grow, and that might open up opportunities for the U.S.

QUESTION: Gary Mitchell from The Mitchell Report. And I'm not sure whether this is--I'm going to assume that this builds on the question Mr. Lewis just asked. And the question rests on two assumptions. Assume that it is eight months from today, November 10th. Three assumptions. Assume it's November 10th, assume that the state of the union in Iraq is somewhere between Michael's 60 up and Ken's 60 down, and third, assume that a new administration in fact won the election and that this group has been asked to put together, in short form, an articulated strategy for the next two-plus, three-plus years, a strategy on the war on terror, on combating global terrorism.

What are the--whatever the magic number is, three, five, half-dozen--essential components of an articulated strategy on global terrorism?

MR. STEINBERG: That's a fitting question. We're two minutes over the time already, but we can certainly answer in one minute each.

MR. POLLACK: Don't start with me.

MR. : Well, I think, first of all, to recognize that terrorism has a supply side and a demand side. If you don't deal with the demand side, you can't win. You can deal with them, organize them, you can confront them, but if you don't

understand that there is a demand side that is borne of particular conditions that make it easier to recruit members and motivate them, you can't win in the war on terrorism.

And the second point that I would make is that if you--there is a lesson to be learned from Iraq. It is: the biggest threat that emanates from al Qaeda kind of terrorism, which is much bigger than the regional terrorism that we have in various parts of the world, is that it thrives in conditions of instability and the fact that it's non-state. States still remain a problem in the issue of terrorism. You want to dissuade them from supporting terrorism. But frankly, states we know how defeat and how to deter and how to give them incentives and threats.

What we can't do and we don't have the ability to do, despite our power, is to confront directly non-state, transnational actors that have increasing potential to hurt us. And unless we understand that the confrontation with al Qaeda-type terrorism isn't really about confronting states but a phenomenon that is beyond states, we can't succeed.

MR. : I don't think it's that hard and I also don't think there's an enormous difference on your variable of who wins, you know, which administration it is. The essential elements, there will be nuanced differences. But it's making a success of Iraq. Whoever wins is going to have to, as part of the war on terrorism, make sure that Iraq is not a disintegrating civil-war haven for terrorists. Stabilizing Afghanistan, same goes. We're going to have to put the resources into making sure that Afghanistan is stabilized and not a failed state. And that goes for other potential failed states as well.

Engagement on the Arab-Israeli issues. Maybe there, there would be a difference. Maybe a new administration would be more energetic and try to get more

involved and take more political risks in order to see a solution. But whoever wins the election, they're going to have to deal with that issue as well.

Homeland security. As part of the war on terrorism, that's going to have to be a priority. Will there be nuanced differences if a new team comes in? Maybe. But the list seems to me very similar.

The Middle East initiative. This administration is putting together a plan for the summits coming up--G8, NATO, US-EU--that will include a number of initiatives to try to transform, democratize, and liberalize the Middle East. I think that a Democratic administration would have a very similar agenda and try to--maybe it would push it in a different sort of way and the elements would be different, but the agenda is highly similar. And whoever wins in November is going to have to go down a checklist along the lines I just said with numbers 6 through 10 as well.

MR. : I'll just add a couple of points, starting with a plug for Ken's Saban Center and two of the recent things that are on its web page. In addition to his excellent paper on Iraq, there's also a paper recently done on ways to deal with the American image in the Islamic world. I would recommend that paper, including a number of fresh ideas--expanding student exchanges and visas, but also some creative thoughts on how to get American information centers and cultural exchange centers more well distributed around the world.

Another thing on the Saban Center web page is Bill Clinton's fantastic speech in Qatar at your summit this year, in which one thing he did very well, I thought, was to explain--and also try to educate Americans, but to explain what in the West we can admire about the Islamic world, Islamic history and civilization, and also at the same

time explain to Muslims some of their correct and incorrect perceptions about the United States, and that often, when we do things they don't like, it's more sins of omission than sins of commission. We're actually coming to their aid in more of the wars than they want to give us credit for, but perhaps we're too disengaged for much of what's going on in the Islamic world.

So I would recommend those two things. I'll just add one more point, which is that we need more capacity globally to rescue failed states and to stabilize countries that have been in conflict, whether it's Iraq, Afghanistan, or even places like Africa, where al Qaeda can use sanctuary to have refuge for its leaders, training camps for its foot soldiers, diamonds and lumber to fund its operations. We don't have enough global capacity. We need to do a lot more to help other countries improve their militaries so they can do more of the serious peace operation work, because we're pretty much maxed out.

I would add the 50,000 ground troops to the U.S. military and add a couple of thousand of them to Afghanistan as well. But I think we're going to have to try to help other countries do more of their share rather than expecting the U.S. armed forces to do a lot more than they already are.

MR. : Agreeing in full as I do with all the comments of my colleagues here, let me just add a couple more to that. I absolutely agree with Phil's point, with Shibley's point about the need to press forward in terms of transformation of the Middle East and help the people of the region to move in that direction.

Two points I would emphasize there. First, the administration has spoken a wonderful game. I love the President's speeches; they're terrific. Having written very

extensively, spoken myself on the subject, they seem very consonant with my own approach to this. But so far, we have not yet seen the administration put its money where its mouth is. And that is absolutely critical. I'm waiting, I'm hoping that they will start to do so come the spring. But this can't just be rhetoric. It has to be very meaningful.

And secondarily, a critical element of it is actually reaching out to the region to find out from them how best to do this. One of the concerns that I do have about this whole agenda is that, for the moment, it does seem to be very much Made In the USA. To the extent that we're talking to anyone, we're talking to the Europeans. And we're mostly talking to the Europeans because they're talking to us. And they're saying don't we need to move forward on this agenda.

And it's great. We should talk to the Europeans. They do have a lot to add. But at the end of the day, we really don't know what it's going to take to transform the Middle East. This is a point that I've emphasized every time that I've written on this. I can come up with some clever ideas that I think will work. No doubt, everyone on this panel can. No doubt, the Europeans can as well. But we're not--you know, we can't be certain. And until we start talking to the people of the region about what we can do to help them, you know, this has the potential to really run off the rails. And it really has the potential to look like yet another Western-imposed set of changes on a region that immediately bristles at any such kind of initiative.

MR. STEINBERG: Just to reinforce that point and come back to a point that Phil made in his initial presentation, it seems to me that essential to an effective strategy is to back up, I think, the very welcome decisiveness that the administration has

shown in trying to address this problem, with a recognition that if you don't have a perceived legitimacy for your action, the likelihood of success is much smaller. Whether that legitimacy comes from dialogue with allies, working with the people in the region, that we not only have to be right, but we have to be seen to be right. And we have to work very hard at doing that.

I think that what we're seeing is a growing recognition in the administration that that's important, which is why I agree with Phil's point. I don't think this is a question of one party or the other winning the election. I think it's recognizing that we have one element of the tools, which is the recognition of how serious a problem this is and the need to have a very effective strategy to deal with it, but also to recognize that we can't simply cook it up here in Washington, that it won't work unless we have the kind of buy-in and acceptance--not of everybody, there are those who are always going to resist, but of those who legitimately share goals and objectives, but also have a very valuable perspective of their own on it.

I know there are a lot more questions, but I thank you all for your patience and thank the panel for excellent presentations.

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