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IS U.S. PRIMACY FADING? SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS AT HOME AND ABROAD

12:45 – 1:30 P.M.
NEW THREATS, NEW CAPABILITIES?

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WILL TALBOTT: Good afternoon, everyone. If we could have your attention, we're ready to move forward with our program. My name is Will Talbott. I am the junior fellow for the Trade, Equity and Development Program here at the Carnegie Endowment. And it is my pleasure to introduce our next panel, titled, "New Threats, New Capabilities."

For this panel, we are joined by Dr. Stephen Biddle and Ms. Olga Oliker. Stephen Biddle is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, where he is an expert on state-to-state conflict. Previously, he was a professor at the U.S. Army War College, and before that, he taught at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has also held research positions at the Institute for Defense Analyses at Harvard University.

Ms. Oliker is a senior international policy analyst at the RAND Corporation, where she assesses the effectiveness of different counterterrorism strategies. She is an expert on conflict-related reconstruction and security, Iraq, political insecurity issues affecting Russia, Central Asia, Ukraine, and the Caucasus, transnational threats, and U.S. and foreign defense policy.

Our moderator for this panel will be George Perkovich who is the vice president of studies for economic development and global security here at the Endowment. And with that, I would like to thank each of our panelists again, and turn the floor over to George – or whichever panelist will be beginning.

GEORGE PERKOVICH: Yeah, this is the toughest job in Washington. So Steve, are you going first or Olga? Steve is going first. My work here is done. (Laughter.)

STEPHEN BIDDLE: Fair enough; fair enough. Okay, our marching orders as I understand it are to say something provocative for about 10 or 15 minutes and then field questions. So provocative is easy; 10 or 15 minutes is harder; but I'll see what I can do.

As a rule, any time there is a war, people's interpretations and reactions to that war always cast a very long shadow over the post-war defense debate. Certainly, Vietnam shaped U.S. defense policy and the debate over U.S. defense policy for essentially a generation. And I think given that, Iraq is almost certainly going to have a similar effect. So one interesting set of questions to chase down for at least a little while this afternoon might be, what will be the contours of the post-Iraq U.S. defense debate, and in what ways will the experience of Iraq shape or not shape the things that people are arguing about five, ten years from now?

Now, as a way of tacking into that, if we just assume for the sake of the argument at the moment that five years from now, the U.S. role in Iraq will be greatly diminished and the experience will be largely perceived as having been a failure – accurately or inaccurately, I'll leave to other discussion – I think that experience is likely to give rise to at least two large schools of thought in the subsequent defense debate to come. And the first one, I think, could be characterized as a never again argument. I think there will be a sizeable number of people who will argue that we lost the war in Iraq – again, we're assuming that it's perceived as a failure after the fact – because the war in Iraq was unwinnable in the first place. And the lesson of that experience therefore is just don't fight these kinds of wars again. Don't make this mistake a second time around.

Now, one possible policy implication of a never again reaction to an unpleasant experience in Iraq might in principle be a rise of isolationism. I actually don't think that's likely to be a central theme in the post-Iraq debate for a variety of reasons, not least of which being the reach of international terrorism in this domain. I think there is going to continue – I expect – to be a widespread perception in the U.S. electorate that the United States retains important security interests abroad, that events abroad can continue to affect us, and that some form of continued U.S. engagement in overseas politics is going to be necessary.

But I think there is going to be tremendous resistance to the idea of pursuing that form of engagement by sending 130,000 U.S. soldiers any place else. And what that means, I think, is there is going to be great interest in highly discriminating uses of U.S. power to influence outcomes, preserve U.S. interests overseas, but without getting us bogged down into something that will look, smell, taste, feel like the bad experience of Iraq.

Now, this kind of general policy argument after Vietnam led, in fact, to the renaissance of the U.S. military, and the U.S. Army in particular, as the U.S. military abandoned the mission that was perceived to have been such a failure and left such a bad taste in people's mouth, and reoriented itself around a new mission in the form of major combat in the plains of Central Europe. I don't think that kind of evolution is going to happen this time around. I mean, you might in principle imagine a similar routine, whereas the military says getting involved in a counterinsurgency effort in Iraq was a catastrophe. We're not going to do that again; let's rediscover the virtues of interstate, large-scale mechanized warfare. The problem this time around will be that it was precisely interstate, large-scale mechanized warfare in Iraq in 2003 that led to the counterinsurgency that is going to be perceived as having been the disaster that needs to be remedied by not doing it again.

Given that, I think the result is going to be much reduced enthusiasm in the United States, both for large-scale insurgency efforts and for a return to something like traditional major combat of the kind that the U.S. military was structured for prior to 2001. Instead, I think what we're likely to see is large and growing enthusiasm for other ways of pursuing U.S. interests, and in particular, the recent conflicts in Afghanistan in

2001 to 2002 and in Somalia over the last 12 months provide very interesting models for where I think this debate is likely to go.

Great interest in either pursuing our aims via proxies as we have done in Somalia – proxies initially in the form of anti-Islamist warlords didn't do so well; subsequently the Ethiopian military, which did better; but at the end of the day, either of these approaches have both significant advantages, but major disadvantages as we're witnessing in ongoing chaos in Mogadishu today. But also, in concepts of military operations like that used to overturn the Taliban in Afghanistan in which we made heavy use of indigenous proxies, but we committed some – but very different kinds of – U.S. military assets to the conflict as well, in the form of small numbers of Special Forces operators harnessing American standoff precision firepower in the form of Air Force and Navy aircraft to deliver firepower against precise targets, enabling them to overturn a regime without the kind of 130,000 soldier U.S. military involvement that is likely to be perceived as a route to quagmire in the aftermath of Iraq.

This particular realization of a never again argument will have powerful backers in the form of the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, and the American Special Operations community across services, all of whom already show evidence of finding this to be a very attractive way to pursue U.S. interests abroad in a way that can sustain our requirement for engagement but without creating the 130,000 soldier quagmire phenomenon that people will increasingly associate with Iraq.

That's not going to be the only school of thought. A second argument that I think is likely to emerge from the embers of Iraq is a get it right next time school. And I think the heart of the argument behind the get it right next time school is going to be something like some form of low intensity conflict is the way of modern warfare; it's not going to go away; it's going to be with us for a long time and it's going to challenge U.S. interests in ways that proxies and Special Forces operators directing precision guided air strikes aren't going to be enough to deal with. If you can't avoid it, and you're going to have to deal with it again, we ought to restructure the U.S. military in a way that will allow us to be more successful at it than we were between 2003 and whenever you think this is going to wind down – 2008, 2009; pick your favorite time window.

And I think the policy agenda that will go along with this argument and this perception includes, but it is not limited to, a substantial expansion in the size of the conventional Army and Marine Corps, a redesign of the conventional army in particular, but also the Marine Corps, to lighten, to orient it more towards low-capital, high-labor, close contact, retail counterinsurgency on the ground, rather than the kind of fast-moving, quick outcome-oriented, heavy mechanized military that we had designed prior to 2001, and a retraining program to go along with this restructuring to make the people that make up this military be better suited to this kind of conflict as opposed to the kind of conflict that the American military that we inherited was oriented to.

This agenda is also likely to have powerful and influential adherents, especially in the form of the conventional army and the conventional Marine Corps, both of whom

stand to lose greatly if the never again school becomes the predominant theme around which the U.S. military of the future is designed. Now both – the five-minute sign is coming up; how convenient since I actually had only two bullets left. Stretch, stretch. (Laughter.) When in doubt, babble on.

My last two bullets, in fact, are neither one of these schools is unproblematic. There are significant intellectual and logical issues confronting either one of them. The first one being – PhD candidates, insert your doctoral dissertation topics; there's been very little research done on how to go about doing either of these things – but especially how to go about waging proxy war effectively. Proxy war is already the most common form of warfare around the world, but especially in places like Africa. It has been for generations; it is almost wholly unstudied. Now, I'm planning to go on and study it, so don't any of you write anything before I can. But doctoral dissertations fortunately take a while, so I would encourage one and all that there is a lot of interesting research to be done on the pros and cons, merits and demerits of these schools.

But I think at a minimum, one should note that cross-border interstate warfare, although it's never been the most common form of international conflict, has not gone away nor is it likely to go away any time soon. If we end up with a fight with Iran, it's going to involve cross-border warfare. Similarly, Taiwan Straits, the Korean peninsula – there are all sorts of flashpoints around the world where major conflict may still be required, and there will be times and places in which the demands of this sort of conflict and the threats to U.S. interests that they pose won't be needed through some combination of proxies and Special Forces operators on the ground. Identifying those conditions under which this concept will work and this concept won't work is an important piece of the intellectual agenda for the future, and an important problem that a failure to answer that kind of question is going to confront this debate with when it arises.

Either way, I think the merits and demerits of something of something like this kind of dichotomy, these two likely schools of interpretation with respect to the war in Iraq, is likely to define the defense debate after Iraq for a long time to come. And with that, I'll stop. And I never got the one-minute sign. Victory. We've been successful somewhere.

MR. PERKOVICH: Thank you, Stephen Biddle for being so timely. Olga, no pressure. And I suppose you could have his minute, but please.

OLGA OLIKER: I'll try not to need his minute. I would overlap a little bit with what Steve has said. I'm going to take a little bit of a step back. We were asked to talk about new threats and new capabilities. And there are entire courses – I know; I teach one – there are entire graduate programs of studies centered on new threats, transnational threats. And it includes everything, right? It's cybercrime; it's corruption; it's global warming; it's child soldiers; it's terrorism; it's nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons proliferation; it's small arms. On the one hand, it's a range of things that don't fit very well into either the neo-realist or neo-liberal paradigm, just pretty state-centric, or it's things that do fit, like proliferation at the state level or terrorism for that matter, but to

which we don't have very effective state solutions. These things aren't necessarily transnational and they're not necessarily new, right? I mean, sometime we group insurgency into this; insurgency has been around for as long as warfare has been around.

And there is a lot to be said on this issue. I think it is very useful and important to examine how threats affect at different levels – the human level, the state level, the systemic level – and how responses could also happen at all of these different levels. And I'm actually – I looked at some of your readings. I think it would be great if we could discuss some of this in the Q&A.

But because it's so huge, what I thought I'd focus on is something that really does specifically affect U.S. capabilities. And it's an issue that is a big part of U.S. response to at least a component of this body of transnational or new threats. And that is the issue of building capacity and security structures abroad, which also goes to this proxy war issue. That's not all it goes to.

Now, why is it important to think about capacity to build security structures abroad? Well, it's important because if you are talking about transnational threats – that is, across borders – you're not going to do very well with responses that aren't transnational. If the U.S. or any other country takes all the right steps, but aren't able to isolate themselves from the world, which I don't think was ever possible – certainly is impossible now – they're still at risk as long as other countries don't take those steps. Right – global warming, drug trade, spread of disease, radical groups – all these things cross borders and demand global responses. Now, ineffective, broken, failed, conflict-torn countries, they're generally countries with broken security structures. They not only foster the development of these threats; they make it easier for them to move around the world. Radicals travel from place to place; they fight each other's battles so they can train up to fight the bad guys back home. Disease thrives in poverty, and then mutates to drug-resistant strains, which then cross borders and affect the rest of us. Corruption, health, international criminals, radicals, others, find safe havens, transport, and so forth.

The other reason it's important is even if you don't buy any of the policy arguments why it's important, the fact is we're doing it. We've been doing it for a long time; we're going to keep doing it. We do it in conflict environments like Iraq and Afghanistan. We've been doing it in post-political change environments, like post-Communist Eastern Europe. It's part of our global engagement strategy. That's what we do when we make friends with countries; we help them build their security forces.

We do it for a few reasons, aside from kind of the broad strategic reasons. Kind of the tactical thinking on this is that we need foreign forces to be able to fight dangers at home and to help us fight them abroad. Proxy war is part of this. But just if they take care of the problems in their own regions, we don't have to deal with it. And that's a good thing, right? Now, part of this assumes that they agree with us on what these dangers are, which can be a bit of a problematic.

And then, there's another aspect to this, which isn't necessarily what we think, but it's certainly what we say, which is a transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights are part of the effectiveness of security forces around the world, that more accountable security structures are going to be more effective.

Now, the other interesting thing about this is we're not very good at this. We have failed miserably in all sorts of cases to effectively build security structures abroad. Why aren't we very good at it? One of the reasons we're not very good at it is we persist in focusing on building military forces.

Now sometimes military forces are needed, right? As Steve Biddle said, "War isn't going away." Countries face threats of foreign invasion and they need militaries to respond to that. But a lot of the threats that face countries aren't about military forces, they're about this package -- package of policing capacity, intelligence, courts and prisons, broader development. And even countries that fear border incursions -- a lot of the West African countries, other African countries -- it's not so much about defeating an enemy coming over the border, it's about defeating an enemy with very close ties to people inside your borders. What the enemy is doing is only partly coming over and attacking; it's partly fomenting civil war.

And military solutions to domestic problems are dangerous. Military approaches are about protecting the state, not about protecting people. Military approaches are about destroying enemies, not making communities safe. And solving these threats is about protecting people, it's about making communities safe, it's about making countries work.

Finally, the other reason military solutions can be a problem domestically is that a low bar for domestic use of the military has lead to widespread abuses all around the world. And these perpetuate the problems of underdevelopment and conflict and transnational threats.

We have, globally and in the U.S., drawn this very thick line, a brick wall almost, between security and development. And it's a mistake, because the security sector is critical to development -- you're not going to have any development without basic security. Look at any country after the war ends, its economy grows by leaps and bounds. Why does it grow by leaps and bounds? It's because it's coming from zero. (Laughs.) It's really easy to double, triple, quadruple our economy when you start from nothing, but it's important to do that and it's going to stay at nothing as long as the war is going on.

Another reason why the security sector is crucial to development is that a broken security structure is a drain on the state. No less than anything else -- possibly more because it usually involves a lot of people, a lot of corruption, a lot of waste. Development is also important to security. If you really do buy the transparency and accountability argument, which I do, but, you know, we don't have enough time to go into -- you can't build effective security structures if the rest of your government is broken.

Also, for most people, security is about staying alive. The fact that they're protected against the thugs marauding through the village is great, but if there's no drinking water, they're still dead. So for the average person, these things really are much closer to one another than they tend to be for the international community. And the fact is, you know, we've had people -- governments, agencies within government -- working on all of these issues, but they don't have integrated goals in mind. And if security systems remain uninformed by development, development goals will suffer and so will security goals. I mean, defense and intelligence agencies, when they build other defense and intelligence agencies abroad, they don't do it because they want to develop this country. That may be an interesting side effect, but really they're doing it for their own security and intelligence goals.

And development agencies tend to ignore security goals if they don't understand them. They say, "Hey, spend 3 percent on defense," and kind of, "Stay out of our way." I mean, that is, that's a very common approach. And the other thing that happens is that the three things that are probably most important to building real security for states in transition -- policing, courts and prisons -- fall in the gap because, both on the defense side and the development side, people think it's not our problem.

So we have been trying to do it better. I think there's been a lot of recognition that this is a problem, that this is something we need to learn about; I mean, what I'm saying isn't brand new. But we've been mucking it up and we try to do it better. Why are we mucking it up? We muck it up because we overuse the military. We overuse the military because it's deployable and we have nothing else to use. But when we try to use it as a development tool in a post-conflict situation, for instance, we tell them that they're trying to win hearts and minds. What we don't always tell them is they're not trying to win hearts and minds for themselves, they're trying to win them for the local government. And they don't do that, right? So what they do is they implement reform that isn't sustainable -- they give a bunch of people jobs and then they leave, so then these people are even angrier because they had jobs but now they don't. We dig wells in places where, you know, people can't get to; we build schools for girls, but there's no way for the girls to get to the schools because of the conflict environment.

We use the military to train police, right? We've realized police is important; we don't have police trainers, we use the military to train them. Now all the, you know, all the ways that militaries work and police don't, which I described before, create a problem when you send in the military to train police. Military police are not cops -- some of them may be cops back home, but fundamentally their mission is military and not a policing mission -- and you, you mess up the local police you're building.

We ignore the justice sector. You could build the best police force in the world -- none of these problems. You don't have courts and prisons? What are you going to do with all these people you've arrested? You can either kill them or you can set them free -- neither option is really going to lead to security.

We don't integrate the intelligence sector into any of this. Our U.S. intelligence agencies, foreign intelligence agencies, tend to operate independently from the rest of the effort -- for what they'll tell you are very good reasons. But, nonetheless, a little oversight there would be helpful.

We tend to focus on getting things up and running quickly. We tend not to allow for experimentation and failure, right? I mean it's a very common government thing; we tell people, "Build this." "Do this." "If you screw it up, it's your fault." And when you're doing something that's relatively new, well, you want to try things and sometimes they don't work, and you need to be able to measure that and say it didn't work. And we don't really allow for that.

And we fail to get local buy-in for what we're doing. Reforming corrupt and broken and post-conflict systems is really hard. There's a reason these systems get that way and that's because people benefit from it. Local incentives are to fight reform, not support it. And we assume they want to change and, generally, what they want is our dollars and our weapons.

So how do with do it better? I'd say the first thing is recognizing the interdependencies -- the security sector as a broader issue, not a military issue, different needs of different countries -- but "security needs" as a broad range, as part of the development agenda. Part of this is not doing it alone. The fact is that there are other countries who have capabilities and similar interests, and can help develop things like the capacity to deploy police trainers, the capacity to build justice and court systems. Integrating these capabilities in a way in which -- the military has a role, to be sure, but the military may not be the central or leading role. And that's a tough thing to take on-board, but I think that it is, if we're going to do this right, a critical thing to take on-board.

Need to learn from past assistance-led efforts in development, in politics -- things that like, incentives, conditionality, appropriate aid -- and that ties into being able to fail and succeed, and also having appropriate oversight and measurements so you can tell what works and what doesn't. First you need the incentives for the people implementing the programs, that they can admit that things aren't working. And second, you need the capacity for people elsewhere to say, "Okay, that's not working, we're going to stop doing it. We're going to do something else."

And finally, you need to be able to prepare for failure. If you don't get this country fixed, how do you mitigate the damage of the fact that they can't do what you wanted them to do? This is certainly not the solution to all -- fixing this isn't the solution to all transnational threats, but it's going to be an important component of our toolkit if we really are going to be serious about mitigating the dangers and protecting ourselves. It's an important example of how the Internet -- understanding of national security has evolved, and it's going to continue to evolve beyond military solutions and to a broader range of issues. And it is going to be one of the critical issues on the national security agenda.

Thanks. (Applause.)

MR. PERKOVICH: I want to thank Stephen and Olga for two outstanding presentations -- very provocative, full of content, and done very quickly too, which is terrific.

One thought and then I want to open it wide up. But as I was listening to both, but especially Olga, it struck me there's this kind of categorical issue, which you guys are very clear about, but which Washington often isn't, and that is to identify the nature of the problems that we're confronting, and those which can be solved by military force and those -- (word inaudible). And what we tend to forget about is that militaries are designed to destroy things -- that's their job, that's what they're designed to be able to do -- but most -- or many of the problems we're talking about are construction problems. They're attempts to build things.

And yet we civilians basically order our military to go out to perform missions that are, in their essence, really construction, when all they're trained to do and all their tools are based on destruction. And then we get angry or perplexed that somehow they, like, they screwed it up, and then you keep, you know, bringing in new generals and stuff. And it's basically a categorical confusion, and I kind of end up hearing that in different ways and it applies. And we'll open it up. But to the proxy issue, in a sense of -- I mean, proxies are in some ways a search for another way to, like, you know, solve a problem without confronting that the problem is different than we've defined it in some instances. But I just -- all that's to thank you guys for really setting the table here.

And so let's open it. Please raise hands and we'll kind of deploy the reserve microphone so we can go one after the other. Let's start there, Anirudh, and then this gentleman here -- (word inaudible).

Q: (Off mike) – with the National Democratic Institute.

MR. PERKOVICH: I think people can't hear you.

Q: We're waiting for the microphone. It's better?

MR. PERKOVICH: Yeah.

Q: All right. My name is Jeff. I work for the National Democratic Institute. My question could be for both speakers, but I'm curious to know what you might think the role for private contractors are in the -- either the emerging schools of defense strategy, or, have contractors -- perhaps for Ms. Oliker? -- have they been an advantage, an asset, or a detraction from our ability to enhance security structures abroad? I mean, the Blackwaters, the URGs, the Triple Canopys, are they a legitimate component of the total force or will they kind of fade away after the experiments in Iraq with contractors?

MR. PERKOVICH: Let's do this second question here. We'll do two at a time, and --

Thanks for speaking. My name is Brandon. I'm with DFI. And I was wondering if both of you could comment on this maybe -- Ms. Oliker, you noted the changing uses of different military specialties in-theatre, and Mr. Biddle about military transformation. I'm a long-range surveillance scout. And having participated in both of our country's engagements, and having also rarely, if ever, engaged in operations outlined in my job description -- I was wondering if you could comment on how these sorts of different threats are going to affect the transformation of different jobs within the military spectrum, both from a perspective of size and specialty, if you could.

Thank you.

MR. BIDDLE: Okay. Do you want to lead or should I?

MS. OLIKER: Go ahead. We'll just keep the order.

MR. BIDDLE: Well, normally one starts with the last question first, but I'll start with the first question first. Private military corporations -- are they going to fade out? Do they have a legitimate role? What about them anyway?

I actually don't think they're going to fade out. I think this phenomenon is actually likely to grow over time quite dramatically. I think the whole private military phenomenon is likely to grow quite a bit. Whether it should is another matter, but if you simply look at the underlying political military drivers of this phenomenon, I think they all point in the direction of long-term continued expansion. Think for example about -- one of the principal barriers to non-state military activity, until fairly recently, was an inability to compete successfully with state militaries. I mean, warfare is ordinarily one of the most capital-intensive of human undertakings. States have the ability to tax, and thus can out-compete, historically, non-state actors in the provision of this level of capital.

The liquidity of the international capital market, on the other hand, is unprecedented by many orders of magnitude right now. And, in fact, the availability of venture capital to organizations like Blackwater -- or for that matter, any of a host of dozens to hundreds of others -- potentially outstrips that of many of the world states. The Google IPO produced more capital in a week than the annual defense budgets of something like two-thirds of the world states. So for that, and a collection of other reasons, I think there's an argument to be made that the phenomenon is a growth industry. And that, in fact, before it peters out, large fractions of military activity in regions of the world like Africa and Asia are likely to be conducted by private firms -- sometimes in the employ of governments, sometimes in the employ of other companies, sometimes in the employ of other non-state entities -- and this is a very important issue for long-range defense planners.

Given that -- one might speculate that by 2040 or 2050, the most challenging opponent for the U.S. military might very well be a private corporation rather than the military of a rogue state such as Iraq or North Korea. Whether this is a good thing or not is debatable on a variety of grounds -- there are all sorts of normative, and ethical, and legal, and regulatory issues associated with this. There is also the simple problem that by allowing this phenomenon to grow, the United States has created competition for its own labor market. Most states, until recently, had monopsony control over their domestic military labor markets -- many potential suppliers, one potential employer. We've allowed this to break down to the point where Uncle Sam now has to compete with Blackwater and Triple Canopy and Aegis and Custer Battles and all the others for the services of people who are interested in a military lifestyle as a career. And the result of that has already been to bid-up salaries, especially among the specialty areas in greatest demand -- I'm not sure long-range surveillance is one of them, regrettably, but -- (light laughter) -- in ways that have substantially increased the cost to the United States of doing military business. So I think there are many prescriptive questions associated with this phenomenon -- as a descriptive matter, I think it's very likely to grow.

As far as transformation, new threats, and military specialties -- the transformation debate, as it's been conducted until recently, tended to be, kind of, two camps fighting it out. There was the "Toys R Us" school of transformation that Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld advocated -- which was oriented towards high capital, low labor, primarily interstate major-conflict kinds of challenges, and which tended to emphasize surveillance, long-range stand-off precision strike, networked information, and to radically deemphasize things like infantry skills, for instance.

On the other side of that debate were folks who said, "We're not going to have major combat between states anymore. The future lies in low-intensity warfare and things like Iraqi insurgencies, and therefore, you know, the high-capital, low-labor approach the secretary of Defense favored is a lousy idea. We ought to go with exactly the opposite" -- large forces, much lower capitalization, much heavier emphasis on retail counterinsurgency.

I think that debate is miscast in an important way partly because -- I think like the secretary of defense believed -- I think major combat is going to continue to be one among a variety of important contingencies the United States needs to worry about, but that "Toys R Us" is the wrong way of waging even major combat. It works very well if you're fighting against inept opponents, as we were fortunate enough to do in Iraq twice in the last generation. It's much less likely to be successful against opponents who are better able to exploit the military potential of terrain to reduce the effectiveness of stand-off precision strike -- as, for example, al-Qaeda proved able to do in the Shah-i-Kot Valley in Afghanistan in 2002.

So I actually think the "Toys R Us" high-tech approach is a lousy answer to any form of warfare. But the idea that the only two alternatives are high-capital, high-tech for major combat, or, high-labor, low-capital for everything else, I think is a false dichotomy. In fact, the military problems of the future are less distinctive, in that sense, and they tend

to emphasize a great -- to a greater degree than people tend to realize, a common set of skills that involves more traditional specialties like, for example, long-range reconnaissance. So, you know, all is not lost.

MS. OLIKER: Yeah, just quickly, I agree. I think private contractors aren't going away anytime soon. I think, for the United States at least, this is an issue of oversight and regulation. There are real advantages, and will continue to be real advantages to hiring companies to do certain things. Police training is a big part of this, right? If you go to any mission where you have a large CIVPOL structure, where, you know, civilian police are doing something abroad, other countries, some of them can deploy their police forces, they can just tell the regular police to go -- some of them have actual units, they can do that. We hire DynCorp -- and DynCorp hires people, and those people go out.

This is the way we have of doing this. Now there may be better ways, but this is -- you know, DynCorp's found a nice little niche, and other people may rise up to compete with it, I hope that they do. And sometimes they do a decent enough job, and sometimes they don't. I think the real problem -- when you're talking about building security sectors abroad, is a lot of these organizations, what they're selling is the fact that they've done it elsewhere. And they have this cookie-cutter approach of this is how you build a military, and they teach them all how to do the same things -- this is how you build a police force -- they teach them all the same things. It's not particularly situated in the environment they're working in.

A lot of this is about better oversight, better contracting, and more availability of appropriate people. So, I mean, I'm not necessarily opposed to having private contractors be one of the tools used for this; I do think it can be used better. Other ways of using contractors -- using contractors as actual fighting forces raises a lot of these questions of oversight and accountability for the United States.

On transformation, I think one of the interesting things -- if you watch how the Army, for instance, or any of the services really, adjusts to a new role -- the first response of the Army is usually, "Eh, we don't want it. We don't want it." The Air Force will usually say, "Huh, that looks interesting." Now even the Army -- over time, once they realize that money is associated with it -- will say, "Oh, but we don't want to lose the money. I guess this is our mission." And the danger is that sometimes it might be the wrong mission -- that they become enamored of it and, you know, things like stabilization, digging wells, things that really shouldn't be military tasks, you know, they've decided there are resources with it, they've decided they have to learn how to do it. So they've learned how to do it, they've got the resources, and they're not giving it up -- and they maybe don't do such a good job of it.

I would say that there are things that we have learned from the last couple of wars that need to be incorporated as we transform. Stability, operations, and securing populations, and what you do in the immediate post-conflict environment that's different

from what you do in the conflict environment is a very important part of it. I don't think we've taken that on-board yet, but I think if we're going to do it right, that's the core.

MR. PERKOVICH: This gentleman here, and then in the back.

Q: Hi there, my name is Greg Pollack, and I'm finishing my masters at Georgetown. And my question is primarily for Ms. Oliker. There are obviously some embryonic efforts to start organizing the U.S. approach to post-conflict environments in terms of the SCRS Office. But that office and that entire operation has not really received much in the way of support up on the Hill -- either financially, rhetorically, or otherwise. So I'm wondering how we will eventually get beyond the fact that the perception remains that there's no domestic constituency for moving ahead with these kinds of issues and putting our money where our mouth is, so to speak.

Q: Yeah, Ms. Oliker, you also, you emphasized in your talk the importance of building security structures rather than going out and attempting to procure security by military force. And I understood that a big part of that is breaking down this line between our understanding of security, and the importance of development internationally. But I would posit that maybe we've seen a lot of cases where we, and really no one else, can make development happen -- at least to the extent that development is going to create the structures or build a condition that will allow the security structures -- but a security we're looking for. And when that's the case, do we still not turn to military force? What are our options when the development to create the conditions isn't happening?

MR. PERKOVICH: (Off mike.) Okay, let me take one more -- quick, the first hand up gets it. (Light laughter.) (Off mike.) You guys aren't very quick. Go ahead, yeah, thanks.

Q: Hi, Greta Lundberg (sp), Department of State. There's been a lot of talk in the political realm recently amongst the presidential candidates about expanding the size of the active-duty force by about 40,000. And I was wondering what you think of that proposal, and if it adequately addresses some of the new challenges and threats that we will face.

Thanks.

MS. OLIKER: I'll start. Okay. On post-conflict structuring of CRS, you know it's not just Hill support. It's really a whole bureaucratic structure, it's federal government -- and it's not just us, if you look at the United Kingdom, you look at Canada, you look at the EU, everybody is struggling with this. Everybody is struggling with how you organize civilians for post-conflict if you're not going to rely on the military. And nobody has quite got it right.

There's an awful lot of -- one of the things I've noticed now in all the discussions that I've been part of on this, that there's a lot of focus on how do you plan for this and how do you structure to plan for it, and there's almost none on what do you actually do.

(Laughs.) But, you know, at least the discussions are being held. And I think part of -- before you get to get legislative support -- I mean that's important, that's where the money is -- you need to get to the point where you're empowering these structures sufficiently, that they either have the resources of their own or they can command the resources of other parts of the government. And that's the mistake that's been made here, in the United Kingdom, elsewhere, in trying to build these structures.

On development. Yes, with no security there is no development. In a post-conflict situation, it is not about building wells and schools, it is about making people feel safe. Now our military doesn't do a fantabulous job of it because our military is about making themselves safe and defeating the enemy. And that's part of, kind of -- if you're going to succeed at restructuring, one of the things you have to succeed at is explaining to people and training them to -- how you go in and make people feel safe. And that's the difference between conflict and post-conflict.

And just quickly, on expanding the size of the active duty force, you know, more people can give you more deploy-ability, but it doesn't necessarily change what they can do unless you do it intelligently, and that's just the quick answer.

MR. BIDDLE: Well, let's me give a longer answer then.

MS. OLIKER: Yes. (Laughs.)

MR. PERKOVICH: Well, you don't have to. (Laughter.)

MS. OLIKER: Well, I thought it was more yours than --

MR. BIDDLE: Okay, well a medium-length answer on expanding the size of the military.

The problem with the kind of proposals that are around at the moment -- 40,000-ish size expansion -- is that they give you, in many ways, the worst of both worlds. If you think the right way for the United States to do business in the future is prepare for low-intensity conflict -- to get it right in ways that we couldn't from 2003 to perhaps 2008 -- it's going to take a lot more than 40,000 troops to do that.

You're going to have to restructure the military effort to substantially reduce the capital intensity to enable you to dramatically expand the labor supply, and that's going to require a lot more than an additional 40,000 soldiers. Conversely, if you think we're not going to do that sort of thing at all in the future, and we're going to reorient around indirect approaches like proxy warfare, or an Afghan-model way of doing business, then you want smaller active duty ground forces, not larger, because again you're going to need to restructure in order to enable to do something else.

In this case, you're probably going to want a much heavier emphasis on very highly trained, very independent, small military formations, like Special Operations units,

that can operate without being embedded in a 130,000 soldier expeditionary force. To expand that kind of activity is going to be expensive, and, again, it's probably incompatible with any expansion in total end-strength. So 40,000, I think, solves neither problem. What we're dealing with is a situation a little bit like deciding on which side of the road you want to drive. I mean, the right answer is either right or left -- it's probably not down the middle.

Q: Well, I -- this is a - it's been very - I'm still confused, I'm perplexed, I'm concerned about the world. But you guys have really helped, kind of -- (laughter) – and really kind of defined ways of thinking about it and kind of defined the lanes that are the options. And I think that's fairly heroic work in 45 minutes, so I really want to thank both of you on behalf of everybody else, and I wanted to thank all of you. (Applause.)

MS. OLIKER: Thanks.

MR. BIDDLE: My pleasure.

MS. MASTRO: Well, I'd just like to thank the panelists one more time for providing such a clear discussion of such a complex issue. As you know, we are going to be breaking into our breakout sessions right now, and you all have your assignments in the packet. The Track 1 Breakout Session that will address the new challenges posed by asymmetric warfare and non-state actors. Group A will be meeting in Butler, which is downstairs on the first floor in the back; and Group B of Track 1 will meet in Choate, which is down the stairs right in front of the elevators.

For those of you that have been assigned to Track 2, which asks if manpower or technological superiority will prevail, Group A will meet downstairs in Shotwell, and those in Group B will meet in the back of this room.

Thank you.

(End of session.)