

**HEARING OF THE HOUSE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE'S NATIONAL SECURITY
AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE**

SUBJECT:

**“SIX YEARS LATER: ASSESSING LONG-TERM THREATS, RISKS AND THE U.S.
STRATEGY FOR SECURITY IN A POST-9/11 WORLD”**

WITNESSES:

**WALTER ISAACSON, PRESIDENT AND CEO, THE ASPEN INSTITUTE; ROBERT
LIEBER PROFESSOR AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FIELD CHAIR,
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY; JESSICA MATHEWS, PRESIDENT, CARNEGIE
ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE**

CHAired BY:

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN TIERNEY (D-MA)

LOCATION:

**2154 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, WASHINGTON, D.C. TIME: 10:05 A.M.
EDT DATE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2007**

Copyright (c) 2007 by Federal News Service, Inc., Ste. 500 1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA. Federal News Service is a private firm not affiliated with the federal government. No portion of this transcript may be copied, sold or retransmitted without the written authority of Federal News Service, Inc. Copyright is not claimed as to any part of the original work prepared by a United States government officer or employee as a part of that person's official duties. For information on subscribing to the FNS Internet Service, please visit <http://www.fednews.com> or call(202)347-1400

REP. TIERNEY: Good morning. A quorum now being present, the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs will conduct its hearing entitled "Six Years Later: Assessing Long-Term Threats, Risks, and the United States Strategy for Security in a Post-9/11 World." The meeting will come to order. And I ask unanimous consent that only the chairman and ranking members of the subcommittee be allowed to make opening statements. Without objection, so ordered.

I ask unanimous consent that the hearing record be kept open for five business days so that all members of the subcommittee be allowed to submit a written statement for the record. Again, without objection, so ordered.

I'm going to make a brief opening statement. I'm going to submit my remarks for the record and ask unanimous consent that they be included in the record. Without objection, that's so ordered.

The Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs hearing is an attempt to have a series of meetings and witnesses, as esteemed as those before us today, who are going to come in and discuss our strategy going forward.

Even with the amazing amount of money and energy that's been spent, and so far lives lost on military engagements, homeland security, intelligence since 9/11, there remains somewhat of an inescapable sense that our national security policy may be adrift.

We have rising extremism, gathering terrorism storm clouds. There's a question about whether or not al Qaeda will have a resurgence in Pakistan. There are innumerable anti-American attitudes. And more than six years after September 11th, we still really don't have a bipartisan consensus on a comprehensive long-term strategy to combat the grave threat that exists or to put those threats in context, assess the priorities and move forward.

In the words of one of our panelists today, we have yet to act with the burst of creativity that was the trademark of the United States at the beginning of the Cold War. We have studies that have been commissioned, including the work of the 9/11 commission. Analyses have been offered. Strategies have been published. The hard work of formulating and forging and implementing a bipartisan national security strategy, however, still remains lacking.

Many people feel that we haven't even yet had a robust bipartisan dialogue about that. And so, in part, that's what these hearings are about, an attempt to start that dialogue and get people's attention focused. We encourage all the members on the panel, those present and not present yet today, to share their own ideas with future witnesses so that we can have a robust discussion. I want to hear from top experts, people with real-world experiences and innovative, creative ideas.

I think our three witnesses today hit those on all points, and I think we're going to have a robust discussion.

There are a number of questions. I won't enumerate all of them right now, but -- you just go on, I think, in the introductory memo for members of the panel here that we had sent a number of those out that we'll no doubt be exploring with our witnesses here today. And we have to determine what's the process for evaluating our performance as we move forward. We have to talk about how our military may or may not be stretched beyond the point that it should.

And we should talk a little bit today, hopefully, about the attitude of the rest of the world toward the United States. The Pew poll in August 2007 found 68 percent of Pakistanis hold an unfavorable view of the United States. Seventy-six percent of Moroccans have an unfavorable view. Ninety-three percent of Egyptians share that unfavorable view. Sixty-four percent of the people in Turkey, a key NATO ally, believe that the United States poses the greatest foreign policy threat, and a whopping 83 percent have an unfavorable opinion of the United States, up 20 percent since 2002.

Polls obviously aren't the end-all and be-all of how our success should be defined, but it certainly gives us some indication what's going on with our attempts to win the hearts and minds. So we have serious challenges. We have to use all the tools in our tool kit, as the 9/11 commission said. I look

forward to the comments that our panelists are going to make here today, and I invite Mr. Shays to make his opening remarks before we do hear from the witnesses.

REP. CHRIS SHAYS (R-CT): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I have just tremendous respect for you and the efforts you're making on this committee. And I just want to thank you first for conducting this hearing; also tremendous respect for all three of our witnesses and the institutions they represent.

Having, what, about 40 copies of "Benjamin Franklin: An American Life" and given it to a number of my friends, I just wish I had brought my own copy to have Walter -- have you sign it. But I'll get back to you on that.

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you, sir.

REP. SHAYS: A great book that gives perspective on a lot of things. I'm stunned by the fact that Benjamin Franklin's own son didn't see the light and was a Tory. And it was troubled times.

MR. ISAACSON: But we parents understand those things sometimes.

REP. SHAYS: Well, the fact that you can understand those times then tells me you understand these times now.

Almost two years ago, before the attacks of September 11, 2001, the Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction, headed by former Governor Gilmore, concluded the United States lacked a coherent, functional national strategy to guide disparate counterterrorism efforts. In testimony before this subcommittee in March 2001, the commission's vice chairman, retired Lieutenant General James Clapper, said, quote, "A truly comprehensive national strategy will contain a high-level statement of national objectives, coupled logically to a statement of the means used to achieve these objectives."

During that same period, the U.S. Commission on National Security Strategy, led by former Senators Hart and Rudman, and the National Commission on Terrorism, headed by former Ambassador Bremer, also concluded that the executive branch required a comprehensive national strategy to counter terrorism.

Mr. Tierney, I really appreciate you holding this hearing and continuing the examination of U.S. national strategy begun by this subcommittee before September 11th. In January 2001, the Bush administration inherited a loose connection of presidential directives and law enforcement planning documents that were used as a strategic framework for a national strategy against terrorism, but that fragile construct collapsed with the World Trade Center on September 11th.

The brutal nature of the terrorist threat shattered naive assumptions terrorists would be deterred by geographic, political or moral borders. A new strategic paradigm was needed. Containment, deterrence, reaction and mutual assured destruction no longer served to protect the fundamental security interests of the American people. In fact, it would be absurd to think it could.

In September 2002, the Bush administration National Security Strategy for the United States of America was published, taking into account the events of September 11th. This strategy was updated in March 2006 and is a fundamental statement of broad administration policy encompassing many goals, including the need to counter terrorism.

Along with President Bush's first National Security Strategy came a proliferation of individual strategies to counter terrorism. In March 2003, witnesses told the subcommittee the Bush administration had developed no less than eight high-level mission statements on national security, military, strategic, global terrorism, homeland security, weapons of mass destruction, money laundering, cyber security and critical infrastructure. So by early 2003, what we had was an overarching strategy and a proliferation of individual strategies to counter terrorism.

We held another hearing in March 2004 continuing to examine these national strategies. In the realm of national security, a large number of counterterrorism strategies does not necessarily mean we are any safer. Only if these strategies guide us towards clearly articulated goals will they help secure our liberty and prosperity against the threat of new and dangerous (terror ?). So we begin our hearing today using, as a basis, previous examinations of national strategy and asking if the national security strategy of the United States of America has the fundamental characteristics of a coherent, strategic framework, one that clearly states a purpose, assesses risk, sets goals, finds needed resources, assigns responsibilities and integrates implementation.

Once this examination is accomplished, we should evaluate the success of all our current counterterrorism strategies. If the answer to some or all of these questions is no, then we need to change our approach in countering terrorism.

Again, I'd like to thank our witnesses and just to say that I think the biggest problem is not only the lack of strategies that are clearly understood. There is no debate in Congress, other than what you're doing here; no debate in the public. We look at whether some performer should have control of her child and not have her children taken away; whether Anna Nicole Smith -- who was the father of this child. We get into the most absurd debates at a time when we need to have meaningful dialogue.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Shays.

We're now going to receive testimony from our excellent panel of witnesses. Let me begin by introducing our panel briefly, because if I went into everybody's credentials, we'd be here for the entire hearing.

Walter Isaacson, noted historian, former head of CNN, former editor of Time magazine, and current president and chief executive officer of the Aspen Institute, for a very abbreviated introduction.

Professor Robert Lieber, former State Department consultant, author of 14 books on foreign policy -- even reading all the books' titles would probably keep us a while -- and currently professor --

MR. LIEBER: I've got time. (Laughter.)

REP. TIERNEY: You've got time -- (laughs) -- currently professor and international relations field chair at Georgetown University.

Jessica Tuchman Mathews, former undersecretary of State for Global Affairs, former journalist and columnist, current president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and again, I could go on and on.

And I just thank -- welcome to all of you and thank you. It's the policy of the subcommittee to swear you in before we testify, and so I -- just to keep with policy, I'll ask you all to stand and raise your right hand.

REP. SHAYS: The only one we didn't swear in in 20 years was Senator Byrd. I chickened out.

(Laughter.)

(The witnesses are sworn in.)

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you. The witnesses have all answered in the affirmative. Your full written statements will be put in the hearing record and Dr. Lieber, I say that for you also because when I started to read yours, it took me the entire -- a half-hour's very long and very comprehensive and good on that. So that written statement you put on the record -- you have five minutes. Obviously we're going to be liberal with the clock as we can and I make mention now -- I think we'll be liberal as people are asking questions, also. I there's no objection, we'll go to 10-minute questioning intervals and accept some interventions. If people have a question they want to ask on point (or ?) something that's going on, we're going to open that up a little bit and have a discussion here if we can.

So Mr. Isaacson, please.

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for doing this, Chairman Tierney. It's an honor to be here, and I want to thank Ranking Member Shays for those kind words. Also -- last time I testified before Congressman Shays. It was on New Orleans recovery, and you were very open-minded. I appreciate that as well. And I think that it's particularly relevant that it's this committee because it's one of the few committees where the ranking member and a chairman who I can see can work together in a bipartisan way for important national security and strategic concerns. I also want to thank the staff. I spent a lot of time with the staff of this committee and they were deeply involved in preparations for this and I think I learned more from the staff than they learned from me, which is why I was surprised to be invited on this panel. I'm a little intimidated by the other two people on the panel who are great foreign policy intellectuals. I'm particularly in
timidated by Congressman Cooper, who -- for those of you who don't know, was at graduate school with me studying international relations and did much better than I did. And I think he's here because the last time I felt this way was when I saw somebody about to give me an oral exam and they were sitting up on a podium like that. So I fear that the Congressman from Tennessee has been waiting 30 to give me an oral exam on what we studied together.

About 60 years ago, the world was faced with a whole new global threat -- the threat of the expansion of Soviet communism. And it came upon us rather suddenly. We had just been allies with the Soviet Union in the greatest military victory over fascism, and the new president of the United States, Harry Truman, was hit with the fact that at Yalta and then at Potsdam and then in the Polish

elections, we were faced with another threat that was global in nature and a threat to our very existence and our way of life. And he gathered a group of bipartisan people called the Wise Men and -- who worked together with Congress -- with Republicans such as Vandenberg and Democrats -- in order to create a new national security strategy. That's what I see Chairman Tierney and Congressman Shays and others using this committee to do.

It's particularly important because in this day and age, we're not doing that burst of creativity that we saw in 1947 to 1949. They were faced with a global threat that came upon them rather suddenly, and what they did was create institutions that were totally thought up and totally brilliant to counter the threat that they saw. For example, they created a military alliance, NATO, a brilliant strategy of likeminded nations who were going to contain the threat that they all saw and perceived alike. That NATO military alliance worked very well, but it was part of a context and that context is what you're trying to do today, which is a clear definition of the threat and as Congressman Shays said, figure out the purpose, the risks, the goals, the strategies, the tactics, the commitments and the resources that will be needed for that.

When they did that, they started with the intellectual underpinnings. People like George Kennan, the Jessica Tuchman Mathews of his day, were able to define why we were in a struggle and who that struggle was against. It was just as controversial as now trying to figure out who the enemy was. Was it Russia and an expansionist 600- year-old duchy of Muscovy that had become a Russian empire? Was it communism as an ideology? Was it the spread of Soviet communism that was the threat? And so with the help of George Kennan and others, they defined the spread of Soviet-backed communism as the clear nature of that threat. They then went about forming a doctrine for how to counter that threat, known now as the Truman Doctrine. The Truman Doctrine was something that was accepted in a bipartisan way by President -- I think nine presidents, starting with Harry Truman until the Cold War ended with Ronald Reagan and the first President George Bush. They also came to a very clear document -- NSC-68, which we every now and then ought to go back and look at -- which was a national security council document that explained, as Congressman Shays did, exactly the type of military resources, domestic -- the risks, the strategies, the tactics we would have to use.

Then they created new institutions like the Marshall Plan, done in such a bipartisan way that when it was invented and being kicked around, Harry Truman thought it was a great idea not to call it the Truman Plan but to call it the Marshall Plan because it would get bipartisan support. And he said to Robert Lovett, his undersecretary of State, "It means those Republicans won't be able to throw it up against our face." At which point, Undersecretary Lovett said, "You forget, Mr. President, I am a Republican." And that was in the days when Republicans and Democrats could work together and form a policy and forget which party each one was. We see that on this committee sometimes with the chairman and the ranking member, but we don't see that in this Hill as often as we should.

They created financial institutions because they knew we were trying to win a struggle that was not just a military struggle of who could have enough troops at the Folda Gap to prevent an invasion of Europe or enough missiles. They knew we had to have a economic strategy in which our side would succeed. So besides the Marshall Plan, there was the World Bank -- the XM Bank and other Bretton Woods institutions that helped us win a struggle not just for military might, but for the pocketbooks and loyalties of a new economy. And it was a combination of realism and idealism. If you ask, "Was the Marshall Plan part of a realist tradition or an idealist tradition?", the answer is "yes" and serve both our national interests and our national values. And finally, they realized, too, that we had to win the

struggle for people's minds. They reinvigorated Voice of America. They created Radio Free Europe. They created all sorts of institutions that were totally creative and the wonder -- that we would win this struggle and convince people that our values were shared by them.

We've now been hit on September 11th with an entire new global struggle. You can debate whether it's as much of a threat as the threat of the spread of Soviet communism or more of a threat or less, but it is a new type of threat and we're using the same old institutions instead of being creative in order to try to counter it. As much as we may love NATO, it was mainly designed to stop tanks in the Folda Gap, not designed to win a struggle in the Middle East and other places against the spread of global terrorism. In fact, we haven't done what at the very beginning we should do and it's been longer since September 11, 2001 than it was between the -- Stalin's decision to cancel the Polish elections and the creation of all the Wise Men's bipartisan policies in the late 1940s. We still even haven't defined the threat very well. You get disagreements, you don't have bipartisan consensus on whether it's radical Islam, whether it's Islamic Arab world, whether it's terrorism in general that is our threat. It would be nice to define that. It would be nice to define a set of institutions in which we balance commitments and resources to say, here's what we need to fight that threat.

What we also should do is try to be just as creative. If we went down a checklist we could look at -- okay, they had the Marshall Plan, what economic programs do we have to win in among the moderate Arab world so that we can win the struggle against Islamic fanaticism, as we're struggling to do.

I'm involved with the State Department now on U.S.-Palestinian public-private partnerships and investments. I think those are good ideas, but they're no where near the level of the Marshall Plans, the World Banks and the XM Banks that we tried to do. I commend the State Department. I look forward to working more on those. I commend the Congress for funding those, but it's not nearly at the level that the people of a previous generation did when they were faced with such a struggle.

And I could go on, but there's only one more point I would make in terms of what they did. In terms of just winning the values struggle, we're sitting here wondering who's going to run Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. We should be enlisting the people who created Facebook and Google; we should be enlisting people who know -- understand social networking; we should be creating a counterpart to Voice of America that will win the hearts and minds of people around the world.

In 1989 when I was covering the collapse of Soviet communism in Eastern Europe, I remember being in Bratislava, in one of the hotel rooms where they put foreign journalists. And it was one of the few hotel rooms that had a satellite dish, which is why they put us there, so we could see from the outside world. I was asked by one of the people working in the hotel, could they use our hotel room, my hotel room, because the kids liked to come and watch -- the students liked to come and watch music videos in the afternoon.

I said, well, sure, that would be fine. And I came back early to, sort of, meet some of the students. They weren't watching music videos in my room, they were watching CNN and what was happening in the Gdansk Shipyard and what was happening in the rest of Eastern Europe. And I realized that the ability to have a free-flow of information was going to be the strongest asset we had in that global struggle. Likewise, when I went to China a few years ago and was in Kashgar, a tiny

village, I walked into a coffee shop and saw four kids behind -- by a computer screen. I asked what they were doing -- they spoke Uyghur, we were talking through a translator -- they said they were on the internet. I said, well, let me try something. I typed in CNN.com and it was locked. I typed in Time.com, it said "Access denied." One of the kids nudged me aside and said, "Chooom," typed something in it -- boom there's CNN and there's Time. I said, what did you do? He said, well , we know how to go through proxy servers in Hong Kong that the censors are clueless about.

We should be making use, as our previous generation did, of the new information technologies to win the struggle we have. When you -- to go back to Benjamin Franklin, somebody I once wrote about, Benjamin Franklin realized that he too faced a great global struggle that he was dealing with in 1776, right after they wrote the Declaration of Independence and he was sent to Paris to get France in on our side in the war. We had to enlist to countries back then as we do now, and even back then France was a bit of a handful, so they sent old Dr. Franklin over there.

And he carried with him the document they had just written. He and John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were put on the subcommittee to write the document. With all due respect, it may be the last time Congress created an awesome subcommittee like that, but Jefferson, Adams and Franklin wrote a declaration explaining why we were in a war of independence. It was pretty clear what they were doing from the very first sentence because they said, "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind," is why we're writing this document. We have to bring them into our side.

And they did a beautiful job writing that document, even in balancing the values we were fighting for. The famous second paragraph that says, "We hold these truths" -- Jefferson writes the first document, you can find it in the Library of Congress, the first draft said, "We hold these truths to be sacred" -- you see Franklin's printer's pen crossing it out and saying, "We hold these truths to be self-evident." And they're trying to explain that's it's a new type of values that come from the consent of the governed in rationality and reason. We're not enshrining the dictates of any particular religion in our new values.

But the sentence goes on, they're "endowed with certain inalienable rights," and there's John Adams handwriting, "endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights." So even in that sentence, they're doing a strategy statement and a values statement in which they're balancing very carefully the role of divine providence, the role of values and religion, the role of a new type of nation that depends on the consent of the governed.

And what Benjamin Franklin does when he gets to Paris -- besides writing memos to Vergennes on the balance of power and why the Bourbon-pact nations have to come in on our side, is he builds a printing press and he prints thousands of copies of that document, which were a public diplomacy document, a propaganda document saying, here's the strategy, here are the values, here's what we're fighting for.

To me, that's what we haven't yet done in this new global struggle and what I hope this committee will, with these hearings, further that process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. TIERNEY: We have a new document. We're going to call it the Shays document, so -- (laughter) -- some people will throw it back in our face (laughs).

Thank you. And you can tell Doctor, we're not (sic) going to be liberal with the clock because every minute of that was worth it. And I suspect the same will be true in the next two witnesses.

Doctor, please.

MR. LIEBER: Chairman Tierney, ranking member Shays, members of the subcommittee and staff, thank you very much for providing me with the opportunity to present my views on the crucial subject of long-term threats and risks, and U.S. security for the post-9/11 world. You have my testimony, so I'm going to concentrate in broad-brush terms on what I think are the long-term, even existential realities of the world in which the U.S. finds itself, not just now but certainly for the next administration and whichever party occupies the White House.

There are three, I think, realities in the post-9/11 world, and realities which will continue for the foreseeable future. The first of those, and the most important I think, is that we face a lethal and enduring threat which is not going to go away and is not chiefly a response to this or that policy, or diplomatic action or commitment. The threat consists, I think, of three distinct but related elements. The first of these is radical Islamist jihadism as an ideology and in its organized forms.

The second component is mass-casualty terrorism. And the third component is the long-term danger of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons being used potentially by non-state actors, possibly aided by states or even by states themselves. I'd note that in the 9/11 Commission itself, which was unanimous and bipartisan in its conclusion in 2004, stated that the, quote, "The catastrophic threat at this moment in history is the threat posed by Islamist terrorism, especially al-Qaeda, the al-Qaeda network, its affiliates and its ideology.

I'd also note that leading experts across party lines have, for the most part, also observed and warned about this. I could cite numerous studies, but the most recent is the -- in the current issue of Foreign Policy, in which more than 100 leading terrorism proliferation and foreign policy experts surveyed by the magazine said, "of those 100 experts, more than 80 percent expect a 9/11-scale attack on the United States within the next decade." You can agree or disagree about that educated guess, but it suggests that serious people across party lines draw the same conclusion to which I've pointed.

I also want to indicate that while some see these threats as a result of our policies -- good, bad or otherwise, in Iraq, or vis-a-vis Middle Eastern regimes, or vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict -- I think those assessments miss the deep causes of threat. In my judgment, the threat ultimately is a consequence of the failure of major parts of the Arab Muslim world to cope with the challenges of globalization and modernity. This is more acute in recent decades, but it is a very long-term problem and it will take a very long time to sort out.

There is also, in longer-range terms looking backward, the sense of humiliation over four centuries of decline for many of those areas of the world. And I think the consequence is that those who are particularly obsessed or upset with it, express either individual or society rage, which again takes its form in radical jihadism, in the use of terrorism and, I would add, in efforts to inflict mass casualty terrorism. So my first broad point is that we live and are going to live in an environment of lethal and enduring threat and this needs to be a priority as we weigh various kinds of tradeoffs and policies.

Second: Despite the importance of cooperation with our allies, with international institutions like the United Nations, with the European Union -- and I'd add that collaboration is highly desirable and necessary -- many of these institutions remain ineffective in confronting the most urgent and deadly threats. In shorthand terms, I would throw out words like Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur as illustrations of that reality.

Third, the United States has a unique power and capacity -- even now, despite the costs and difficulties of Iraq and Afghanistan; of multiple challenges; of proliferation; the rise of regional powers; the growing strength of authoritarian capitalist powers Russia and China; and our bitter bipartisan or political dissensus in the country, nonetheless, the U.S. continues to possess remarkable strength and, if you like, primacy. It doesn't mean we can do everything, but it means that the U.S. has a unique role to play.

In the post-9/11 world, an American grand strategy has emerged -- sometimes in official documents, sometimes willy-nilly. In broad-brush terms, that grand strategy embodies roughly the following four elements, as for instance, noted by the administration in its national security documents: One, the maintenance of primacy; two, the ability to use preemption, if necessary, in the face of imminent threats; thirdly, multilateral cooperation -- I would describe that as as much cooperation with others as possible, but as much unilateral action as unavoidable or necessary; and finally, support for democracies and democratization. Now, let me note that citing those four broad points does not necessarily give you a good specific answer to a policy question. Implementation will inevitably be controversial, requiring difficult judgments in the midst of incomplete information and uncertainty. And the judgment of history on inept or imprudent choices can be harsh.

But I would also disagree with descriptions that suggest a radical departure from past American history. In response to attacks on the United States, and looking back at Harry Truman and the Truman Doctrine, which Mr. Isaacson has rightly referred to; and looking back at the Kennedy inaugural of '61; at Reagan's State of the Union in '85, I would note there is a bipartisan legacy on which a good deal of contemporary grand strategy builds -- even if there is ample debate about implementation, policy decisions and even prudence.

There are problems, obviously. The U.S. has the capacity to act and lead, but it requires all kinds of things to be effective over the long term: an appropriate fiscal and monetary environment; social cohesion and public support; policy management and coordination of the sort that this committee is seeking to focus on; skilled diplomacy. I come from Georgetown University and there's a saying about diplomacy that skilled diplomacy is the ability to tell someone to go to Hell in such a way that he looks forward to the trip. I would submit that our diplomacy has not always had that exquisite degree of skill and finesse -- cooperation with others to the maximum extent possible, but not beyond that extent. And we also encounter certain deficits now. Our military is stretched; our public diplomacy is a disaster -- a legacy both of the fateful Clinton-era decision to do away with USIA and the inability of the current administration to really turn that around. We need a new USIA or its equivalent. I think that is an urgent matter.

We have an utterly dysfunctional visa system which tends to discourage or shutout the kinds of people with the skills, commitments and backgrounds that we need, while willy-nilly tending to give -- sometimes by the backdoor -- avenues for those who are less appropriate. Importantly, we still lack an urgently needed energy policy. Our energy policy over a couple of decades has been disastrous. It represents a threat to our economy and our national security in terms of the necessity of ratcheting

down our dependent on oil. It can't be completely eliminated, but our current policy strengthens our adversaries and plenty of others. We can cope. America has, despite obstacles in the past, overcome huge challenges: World War II, creating the Marshall Plan, the Apollo Mission and so on, not least because of our attributes of flexibility and adaptability.

Let me conclude: The U.S. faces lethal and persistent threats; neither the United Nations nor any other national organization is capable of effective actions without important use of state power; multilateral responses to common threats -- for example, proliferation -- can be effective and necessary, but they are hard to achieve. The U.S. role and U.S. power are unique. The crux is to use that power skillfully and prudently, but not to assume there is a real alternative to it. Whoever takes the oath of office on January 20th, 2009 will need to adopt a national security strategy that incorporates key elements of the post-9/11 foreign policy doctrine. America's own national security and the maintenance of a decent international order depend on it.

Thank you for listening. REP. TIERNEY: Thank you very much, Doctor.

Ms. Mathews -- you have a minutes -- only kidding.

MS. MATHEWS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I also would like to commend you on the farsightedness of the plan to hold this series of hearings and on the degree of bipartisanship that you and Mr. Shays have established. He laid out the components of a strategy, which begins accurately, as he said, with determining priorities. Of all the steps he laid out, I will stop with the first one and try to lay out for you what seem to me the top priorities for our security strategy.

If it had been me, I would have called these hearings threats, risks and strategy in a post-Iraq world rather than a post-9/11 world, because I think that the events of that day have had far less impact on the real world than they had on the American psyche. The Iraq war, on the other hand, is a very different matter. It will be the turning point that changes the basic parameters of our security picture for decades.

For one reason, the war's monopoly on our political energy, which has now stretched to five years -- an eon in a time of fast-moving global change -- is one of the greatest uncounted costs of this war. The degree to which it has sucked the oxygen from almost every other issue, and unless a major effort is made to reverse current trends, the fissures that are now stretching across the global nonproliferation regimes will, I think, become the worst of these.

Among all the challenges that we face, only nuclear weapons pose an existential threat. And a world of 20 or 30 or more nuclear weapon states holds few prospects for avoiding nuclear catastrophe.

The stability that we enjoyed for 50 years of the Cold War didn't happen naturally. It happened because of unrelenting effort on the part of the two superpowers, and some very close misses. The likelihood that we could achieve that with 20 or 30 nuclear weapon states -- which we could easily get to if the regime fails -- is, I think, very close to zero. And the probability that some of that weapons fuel would end up in the hands of terrorists is, I think, very close to one.

The president has called nuclear proliferation the greatest risk we face; I think that's right. But only sporadic attention has been given in the last half dozen years either to the risks in North Korea and Iran, but more importantly, to the systemic weakness that is affecting the regime as a whole.

We had 30 very good years under the NPT. It kept the number of nuclear weapon states far lower than its authors dared to hope. The bad news is that the last 10 years have been very bad ones, starting with the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in 1998 and then, five years later, the discovery of the A.Q. Khan network revealed that businessmen and scientists from a dozen countries were selling technology, bomb designs, and materials to whomever had the money to pay.

The North Korean and Iranian programs that we came to understand in that period used the cover of the NPT to hide covert weapons programs and underlined what we now know to be the Achilles' heel of the existing regime, which is that no safeguards, no matter how good the IAEA is, can provide real protection when a country has direct access to plutonium or highly enriched uranium weapons fuel.

The Bush administration made a radical change in our nonproliferation thinking and one that urgently, I think, needs repair. In his 2003 State of the Union, the president said "the greatest danger facing America and the world is outlaw regimes that seek and possess nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons."

This new formulation attracted very little attention at the time -- again, because we were already consumed in the national debate over the Iraq war -- but it was a profound change. Past presidents of both parties, all of them, had focused on the weapons. President Bush's new formulation shifted the focus from the weapons to the regimes, from the "what" to the "who." And of course the U.S. gets to decide who the good guys are and who the bad guys are, even though our judgments, we know, change radically over the years, as they have, for example, with Saddam Hussein.

But shifting the focus from the "what" to the "who," from the weapons to the regimes, means that it's a very short step to regime change as the answer. This is the hole that we're in today, one that diminishes our ability to deal with Iran both directly and with other key players who balk at taking small steps in the fear that these would give legitimacy to a U.S. attack, or who make bad deals with Teheran in the mistaken notion that they're serving world security thereby.

But beyond Iran, there are two urgent threats that need addressing. First is the growing disenchantment among the non-nuclear weapon states who have come to believe, 15 years after the end of the Cold War, that the nuclear weapon states never intend to uphold their end of the NPT bargain -- i.e., nuclear disarmament. They increasingly wonder why they should continue to uphold their end of the bargain.

The second glaring need is to strengthen the regime, to impose meaningful penalties on states that abuse it as a cover for nuclear weapons programs, to eliminate direct access to bomb fuel in the non-nuclear weapon states, and to address the unanticipated threats from terrorists and corporate networks.

The U.S., however, right now is in no position to lead on this effort. It cannot command followers. Before it can do so, it needs to reestablish its own credentials in this field, and there are four

steps that it must take. First, renouncing unilateral, preventive war -- preventive war, not preemptive war -- war in the absence of imminent threat, declared unilaterally.

Secondly, renouncing unilateral regime change for the purpose of political change, ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and canceling new nuclear weapons programs; the last because it moves in directly the opposite direction from a treaty commitment that we made and reestablished in writing as recently as 1995.

Reestablishing arms control momentum with Russia is another priority both important in its own right and for movement elsewhere around the world. I have to add that the decision to base an anti-missile system in Poland and in the Czech Republic derails, I think, hope for much progress in this direction for the time being.

Pushing ahead with a system that does not yet work against a threat from Iran that does not yet exist, at the expense of relations with a state, Russia, whose participation is essential if the threat is to be prevented, is a choice that, in my view, can only be called incomprehensible. This, too, needs reconsideration.

A great deal of attention is being given these days to style and tone, public diplomacy, et cetera. These are all important, as is recovering our ability to listen, to really listen, to other countries, and recovering our confidence in our ability to pursue national ends through diplomacy.

But restoring the trust in American leadership that has been lost so widely, as the chairman described it at the outset, will only come from deeds, and it won't happen quickly. The good news in the nuclear area is that the critical steps that I've outlined are all under our control. We can take them alone; they don't have to be negotiated with anybody.

Let me turn much more briefly to three other challenges. Any short list like this is somewhat arbitrary, but to me, these three issues, together with nonproliferation, stand out. First, China.

History has no examples, that I know of, of a rapidly rising new power not producing at least tension and usually outright conflict as it enters the circle of major states. China knows this very well, and it has a strong desire to avoid conflict; hence its slogan, "Peaceful Rise." Conflict is bad for business, after all, and above all, China wants to grow.

Yet if the past is any guide, and I think it is, it's going to be very difficult to manage China's rise peacefully, especially in an energy-constrained world that must begin to deal seriously with climate change.

The only silver lining to 9/11, I think, was that it put an end to another period of a growing sense that China was the enemy, which on September 10th of 2001 was very much with us. That ended overnight and substituted a real enemy for a potential or imagined one.

We are on the right track now, I think, generally, with China. But if by our behavior we, over the coming years, turn China into an enemy; if we get China wrong, that, other than the failure to rescue the nonproliferation regime, will be the single most dangerous, worst mistake we can make.

The policies, on the other hand, that are currently wrong and that urgently need to be turned right deal with the Middle East and the world of Islam. Olivier Roy, the distinguished French expert in this field, points out that the West has tried three different approaches with this area and that all three have failed. We have tried to strengthen the existing authoritarian regimes. We've tried reforming the existing authoritarian regimes, almost, in some cases, to the point of their collapse. And we've tried to impose democracy from scratch. None have worked. What we have not tried to do is to build democracy with the participation of the prevailing political forces in these states, and those forces today are Islamist. They cannot be end-run; they must be engaged. We should be engaged with moderate Islamist forces -- and by that I mean those that have renounced the use of violence as a political tool, even when we find others of their views uncomfortable or even abhorrent.

The other precondition of success in the Middle East will be a much more vigorous and engaged effort on Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking and one that is, and is seen to be, more evenhanded.

And finally we have to tackle climate change, which means that we at long last, as Bob Lieber has just said, need a national energy policy. Voluntary policies are a joke. Research only policies are a copout. Research is necessary but not sufficient. And no serious national objective has ever been pursued on a voluntary basis.

The endless and fruitless debates over whether to use price or regulation to pursue energy policy should end with a recognition that an effective policy requires a mix of both.

The search for magic bullets from oil shale to fuel cells to biofuels should be seen as a recurring hunt for simple solutions to a very difficult problem. That will never work.

And the policy must begin, must be built on, must be based on, the recognition that by far the largest pieces, most quickly accessible and most climate sensitive energy resource that we have is drastic improvement in energy efficiency in every sector.

So Mr. Chairman, thank you for your patience, and I hope that these thoughts are helpful to you as you pursue this daunting security agenda.

REP. TIERNEY: They're incredibly helpful to us, to all three witnesses, thank you very much. I'm almost inclined to just get unanimous consent to let the three of you keep on talking without the questions on that. But being who we are, it's not likely to happen. I think we might retract the 10-minute period thing and go five minute, but keep the caveat that people should feel free to interject an intervention if they want. And as long as that isn't abused, we'll let the discussion flow as freely as possible.

Let me just ask one question to start things off. How would each of you -- how would the threat represented by 9/11 fit into the overall strategic priorities that this country has? If you had to look and say that you have the 9/11 threat, and then you have all the other things you have to attend, where would you fit that in and how would you address that?

Whoever wants to speak? Doctor?

MR. LIEBER: The -- it seems to me that that threat is overriding. Inevitably decisions about policy, large and small, involve tradeoffs. For example there is the genuine debate as there has been

in this country for two centuries where -- about where you draw the line or where you strike the balance between civil liberties and our historical freedoms, and a long continuum vis-a-vis taking strong actions to reduce our vulnerability and so on.

There are not easy answers to that. But I would say that whether on that issue or a wide range of things that the three of us have discussed, the importance of the threat ought to be the overriding concern.

By contrast there are those who have talked about terrorism as a police problem. I respectfully disagree.

So I don't have a specific actionable response for you other than to say that that threat symbolized by 9/11 and incorporating the elements I cited, of which proliferation I think is clearly part, has to be the overriding consideration whether you're thinking not just about wiretapping but about cost and tradeoffs or gasoline taxes or force deployments or what have.

MS. MATHEWS: Mr. Chairman, as I suggested I think 9/11 meant more to us psychologically than it means in purely national security terms, and far less now than does the basket of issues that have been created by the Iraq war.

I don't mean to suggest that terrorism is not important; it is. And Bob's laid out a lot of issues that form around it. But it doesn't pose an existential threat to us, and nuclear weapons still do. And we are on the verge of a breakdown, I believe, in the regime. That's really the crux of the Iran problem. We've got now 12 countries in the Middle East that have gone to the IAEA and expressed an interest in starting nuclear weapons -- in nuclear energy and enrichment programs.

REP. TIERNEY: May I interject something here?

MS. MATHEWS: Sure, of course.

REP. TIERNEY: What's your opinion, if the United States was serious about working toward the imposition of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East, the impact that that would have on the larger problems that we're confronting?

MS. MATHEWS: I think a nuclear weapons-free zone is doable over the long term. Right now we're in no position to push for that or anything else as I suggested. The Carnegie Endowment two years ago did a major study on nuclear proliferation we called "Universal Compliance."

We took the draft of that study to 22 countries. We talked all over the world about it. We had 33 countries at our nonproliferation conference this past June. There is a feeling of utter unwillingness to consider any steps to strengthen the existing regime, and indeed in many cases a sense of real outrage at the nuclear weapons states for not doing their end of the bargain.

These countries are well aware of the United States position, both with respect to the CTBT and the new nuclear weapons program. To lead you've got to have followers, and we're not in a position to command followers right now on this set of issues.

And of course I think a nuclear weapons-free zone realistically will require Israeli-Palestinian peace and some resolution of the current Iranian program. So it's way down the road.

REP. TIERNEY: But you see that as a subsequent step as opposed to an initial step?

MS. MATHEWS: I do.

REP. TIERNEY: Okay, there's very little time left. Mr. Isaacson, I don't know if you wanted to interject on that, on the question of how this fits into the overall privacy -- all right. Mr. Shays. Mr. Duncan.

REP. DUNCAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Georgianne Guyer (ph), the very respected foreign policy columnist wrote in 2003, a few months after we had gone to war in Iraq this time, that Americans would inevitably come to a point where they had to decide whether they wanted the government to provide services at home or one that seeks empire across the globe.

Anne McFeeders (ph), the columnist for the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain, wrote a couple of years ago that we were headed for what she described as a financial tsunami when the baby boomers start retiring in heavy numbers in 2008, and in the years following.

Before the first Gulf War, which I voted for, I heard briefings from General Schwartzkopf and Colin Powell and others about Saddam Hussein's elite Republican troops and how great the threat was. And then I watched those so-called elite troops surrender to CNN camera crews and empty tanks. And I thought then that the threat had been greatly exaggerated.

Now before this Gulf war, I was at the White House and they told me that Saddam Hussein's total military budget was a little over two-tenths of one percent of ours, most of which he spent -- they didn't say this -- but most of which it turned out later he'd spent building castles and protecting himself and his family.

And now we have hundreds of registered homeland security lobbyists, and we've got thousands of defense lobbyists all pushing us to spend more. And yet we have these estimates that this war is -- we're already at \$750 billion or so, and now we're soon going to be asked for \$200 billion more, and then counting future military costs and medical costs and so forth, you're talking about \$2 trillion.

And then we have some people wanting us to take action against Iran that could potentially be even more expensive.

And what I'm wondering about is this: How do we achieve a balance? Because the politically correct politically popular thing to do is, when they use the word security, always say that we're not doing enough, and always say that we need to do more.

In fact the Wall Street Journal wrote a few months after 9/11 that we should give four times to any bill that has the word, security, in it, because they saw that every department and agency was coming to us asking for more security funds

Yet some of us wonder if we're going to be able to pay our veterans' pensions and our Social Security and our Medicare and Medicaid and so forth in the years ahead if we don't somehow look at these threats realistically and we can't spend the entire federal budget just because somebody keeps increasing this spending just because somebody says security or threat.

And how do we achieve that balance?

Secondly, I read a column by Walter Williams, the conservative columnist, who said that al-Qaeda -- this as a year or so ago -- that al-Qaeda was now less than 3,000 members, most of whom were people living at home with their parents and had almost no money. I heard a talk last week by Larry Johnson, a former CIA analyst who is now a defense contractor who said al-Qaeda was now done to about 600. I know they have thousands of al-Qaeda sympathizers, but I'm wondering if you know how many people are in al-Qaeda?

And then just so I get it all out, thirdly, I'm wondering what your predictions are for Iran? Do you think we will be making what are flatly referred to sometimes as surgical strikes and taking out nuclear facilities anytime within the next two or three years?

I'd like your predictions. That's three questions. Mr. Isaacson, we'll start with you, I guess.

MR. ISAACSON: I think your challenge here is to balance an emotionalism that comes after 9/11 and from the existential threat that we might feel from radical Islamic Jihadism as Bob so aptly described it, and a realism that says, how do we effectively counter it.

And this is a fairly difficult question. If you asked me, is our invasion of and continued presence of Iraq doing more to help or to hurt radical Islamic Jihadism in this work, I'm not sure there's a clear answer.

So it's not simply a matter of spending billions more on military in Iraq. This is not for me getting into the argument about Iraq; it's just that this is a complex problem when you say does it help or hurt the threat of radical Islamic Jihadism.

So I think we have to be very realistic as I think you're suggesting. We need to inject a note of realism in this. This is a threat, but not one that demands us abandoning the economy of the United States and other priorities.

And in answer to both the chairman's question and others, how do you put this in the ranking of priorities, General Powell has said repeatedly that the jihadists cannot destroy American society, only we can destroy American society by getting too contorted in this war against the jihadists. So I think there is a note of realism that you're trying to inject that I would agree with.

On Iran I think that if I look at this panel and this panel, I may be the person least qualified to guess what we're going to do surgically in Iran or not. So I'm not going to -- especially with people recording what I say -- try to -- try to pretend an expertise in that.

MR. LIEBER: Congressman Duncan, let me respond to part of your really comprehensive and vital questions.

First, on the financial side, it's certainly the case that America needs money spent on its foreign policy needs and security to be spent as wisely as prudently and efficiently and effectively as possible.

I would note in terms of affordability that despite the enormous costs that the United States now faces for defense for the war in Afghanistan and Iraq for rebuilding its armed forces equipment, right now we're spending approximately 4.2 percent of gross domestic product. That's contrasted to about 2.9 to 3 percent just before 9/11.

But you have to set it against the prior crises in American history. During the height of the Reagan buildup in the 19 -- mid 1980s the number was about 6.6 percent. And for large portions of the Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, it was into double digits, 10 percent or sometimes more.

We have the capacity to spend that without destroying our economy. But this brings up an issue that Aaron Freidburg of Princeton University has recently written about knowledgeably: the urgent need for a much more effective mechanism for policy management and coordination, which combines military and defense issues, political dimensions, economics and so forth.

Because of the complexity of the way the executive branch is organized, the complexity of the committee structure in Congress, the nature of the issues themselves, we haven't had the degree of coordination that ought to be the case, and compared to what existed sometimes in the past.

Very briefly on one other point, Bruce Hoffman at Georgetown, who is a prominent and superbly qualified member of our faculty in security studies and the country -- one of the country's leading terrorism experts has recently said that al-Qaeda has -- al-Qaeda is back. They were badly damaged initially, but they've recovered a good deal in terms of capacity and so forth. So I think there is a very real al-Qaeda risk.

And finally, I would quote the dean of our Georgetown School of Foreign Service, my colleague Bob Galucci, who was an opponent of the use of force in Iraq, but who has written that he is very concerned about the risk of a concealed nuclear device going off in one or more American cities sometime in the next five to 10 years that's related to terrorism.

So I don't think despite the relatively small size of al-Qaeda overall that we ought to minimize or otherwise overlook the gravity of the risk it represented -- it represents, all things considered.

MS. MATHEWS: (Off mike.)

REP. TIERNEY: You're probably going to have to put that on, your mike.

MS. MATHEWS: Sorry. What to say? Bob is certainly right that as a percent of GDP we have spent much more. We haven't spent it in a globalized economy before, and we have much higher spending on other priorities particularly health care now than we have before.

However, if Congress wanted to save \$200 billion a year it could get the same security we now do through the right cuts in the existing \$600 billion defense budget. But there is a whole lot of politics buried in that. And I think every close student of the defense budget believes that at least a third is wasted. So I recognize that that is a politically unrealistic thing perhaps to say.

Since the others haven't, let me do Iran. I don't think that it's likely that we are going to attack Iran, because I think the arguments against it are so overwhelming, and so overwhelmingly obvious.

I should say that I also didn't think we were going to go into Iraq, because it seemed to me really quite stupid at the time. So you can take this for what it's worth.

But we have a very limited target set in Iran. There are probably facilities that we don't know about. We do not of course have the troops to go on the ground, and air strikes without ground forces are of modest utility.

We are currently dealing in a world of Sunni terrorism, and if we attack Iran we will add a whole new layer of Shi'ite terrorism.

They've made that very clear, and they clearly have the capacity to unleash it.

And finally, we will take a country that hasn't, to the best of our knowledge, made a firm decision either way on whether their security requires nuclear weapons and create one that is absolutely, 100 percent, permanently committed to having them.

And finally, it will underline the lesson to other countries that if you think you have a serious opponent, a serious enemy in the United States, you need nuclear weapons to protect yourself.

So for all those reasons -- I also think the military has a very clear appreciation of all of those points. So I think it's unlikely. I also think it would probably be an obvious catastrophe for the United States.

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you, Ms. Mathews.

Mr. Duncan, I can tell you that we have some plans to perhaps have some hearings on that issue of Iran, and consequences and plans as well. So we'll keep you informed of that.

Mr. Cooper, Mr. Isaacson is ready for his exam -- (chuckles) -- oral.

REP. JIM COOPER (D-TN): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm grateful to you for having this very important hearing. I'm sorry it's perhaps not getting the attention that the hearing down the hall is; that is more involved in using foreign policy security issues as a domestic political club.

I am proud that Walter is here. I've been in awe of his career for a long time. He brought an excellence to journalism that is rarely seen. I'd also like to -- I think it's four books, isn't it? "Kissinger," "Wise Men," "Ben Franklin," and the latest and greatest, "Einstein." If you can humanize that genius, you're an amazing writer, and you are.

So this will not be an exam. I'm delighted to get this wisdom in three parts. And I have a particular personal interest, because on the Armed Services Committee they've recently established a panel on roles and missions, and that's Pentagon-speak for redoing the National Security Act and Goldwater-Nichols, things like that that involve not only the Pentagon but other agencies. So I welcome your expertise in that area as well.

Two questions, primarily. First of all, the list of threats that are on page two of Dr. Lieber's testimony is so startling that I often think that we here on the Hill let down our guard, like if the group of 100 foreign policy experts is correct, that there's a, what, 80 percent chance we'll be -- there's an 80 percent chance of a terrorist attack on the scale of 9/11 within the decade; then another panel of experts, within 10 years, 29 percent chance of a nuclear attack in the U.S., 40 percent of a radiological attack, 70 percent some kind of CBRN event; that plus the Gallucci statement. All those are total game-changers.

So I would like to ask the other panelists if you share Dr. Lieber's perception and grim view of our near-term future, five to 10 years, facing threats with that level of probability.

MS. MATHEWS: I have a modest view of those sort of numbers, because I know how I feel when I agree to answer one of those questions -- (inaudible) --

REP. TIERNEY: Is your mike on, Ms. Mathews?

MS. MATHEWS: Sorry.

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you.

MS. MATHEWS: So I just don't believe them, you know. But, yes, one of the big reasons why nonproliferation is so important is because of the terrorist threat. But terrorism without nuclear weapons is not an existential threat, nor, I would argue, even a strategic one. So, you know, that's the context in which I put it.

Imagine 9/11 without the twin towers designed in the way they were, engineered in the way they were. It would have been a totally different event. So that is one of the serious reasons why I put the emphasis on the nonproliferation need. And there we do face a really serious set of threats that deserves far greater attention than we've given it.

REP. COOPER: Walter, do you have such a --

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah, I would like to say, as Jessica did in a way, that we're entering a world where we are faced with a great deal of threat and hatred from radical Islamic jihadism and a new type of world in which non-state actors and cross-border -- who are not nation-states, but others, are doing that threat.

And as Jessica said, I see the biggest problem there being the spread of weapons of mass destruction, most particularly nuclear weapons. I do feel that it is likely that we are going to have terrorism in this country. There are going to be terrorist attacks. And I'm going to say something that I think would be difficult for perhaps others to say; those of us in think tanks are more insulated. We have to keep that in perspective, that you and I lived in Great Britain in a time in which there were lots of terrorist attacks in Northern Ireland. What makes a terrorist attack an existential threat, as Jessica said, is when it's combined with things such as nuclear weapons.

So I know that Bob Gallucci is talking about chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear weapons as possible (notions ?) of attack. I think that we should not contort ourselves so much to fear

terrorism as an existential threat as instead to define it more specifically as jihadist groups acquiring nuclear weapons and combining that with a desire to attack the United States.

MR. LIEBER: Congressman, may I follow up? Thank you for citing those passages. I think the point is important. I would note, of course, these are educated guesses by smart people. We're not talking about the laws of physics, but I think those guesses or projections or estimates do need to be taken very seriously and with the gravity they suggest.

I have a slight difference with my colleagues on the panel, Jessica and Walter, in that I don't think we should minimize what the disruption of 9/11 was all about, even though it wasn't nuclear. Not only did 3,000 people die, but it paralyzed the American economy, transportation system, communications, for periods of time. By one estimate, it may have cost as much as a trillion dollars in overall effects and so forth.

Obviously nuclear terrorism is in a class by itself. But we should not minimize the peril that mass-casualty terrorism represents to a very complex, very sophisticated economy with considerable vulnerabilities.

One more point. Our European brothers and sisters often point to things like the IRA, ETA in Spain, the Red Brigades, and say, "Oh, you Americans have just lost your virginity and you're overreacting." Well, I beg to disagree. In those instances, the things that those groups were doing did not represent the kind of impact that 9/11 and potential future attacks could represent. And moreover, the things that al Qaeda and radical Islamists want are things that no American government could ever, I think, concede to, because they are so fundamental to the nature of our society.

REP. COOPER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Cooper.

Mr. Higgins. REP. BRIAN HIGGINS (D-NY): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I, too, want to commend you on this very important hearing, an extraordinary panel, and very, very good questions about a profound problem that's not only pervasive but seemingly growing.

I remember the former Defense secretary said that the measure of the effectiveness on the war on terrorism -- are we capturing, are we detaining, are we stopping more terrorist activity than is being created? And it seems like, particularly with the situation relative to al Qaeda, al Qaeda has morphed into al Qaeda-ism.

There are groups that are al Qaeda-inspired, al Qaeda-linked, and they have also found themselves to be a global influence. You know, there are intelligence reports now that say that al Qaeda is in the Sudan, al Qaeda is obviously in Iraq. It's an ideology.

I often wonder if this is an ideology that is based on a twisted interpretation of the Koran, you know, where are the moderate voices within the Arab-Muslim community that are standing up to this? What is our role in helping to influence a challenge internally to this threat?

So the other thing that I'm struck by when you visit places like Afghanistan, when you visit places like Iraq, when you read about places like Iran, is the relative youth of the population. We just visited - a group of members of this subcommittee -- Afghanistan and Pakistan last month, and I was very impressed with the United States military, with their level of sophistication, with their acceptance that you don't win this war by the use of military force alone. This is, as many of you have said in different ways, a battle for the hearts and minds of the population, the imagination of the people there who have been humiliated, who have been disaffected through centuries of oppression. I think it requires, in terms of United States foreign policy, a much more sophisticated mind, a much more strategic approach.

When we left Afghanistan -- after we thought we defeated the Taliban and al Qaeda -- to divert resources to Iraq supposedly to give breathing room for the National Unity government to achieve political reconciliation, it seems as though we gave breathing room in Afghanistan for the re-growth, for the reconstitution of al Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

My question is, is it too late? Have we allowed this thing to evolve to the point where we have lost control of it, because the next al Qaeda attack on the United States likely won't come from Afghanistan? It likely won't come from the Middle East. It could come from Madrid. It could come from London, England. This is a problem. Are we prepared for it? What lessons have we learned and what lessons can we move -- learn moving forward?

MR. ISAACSON: Let me first take a first crack, which is, I don't think it's too late, but I do think that what you've put your finger on is that like the Cold War, this is going to be, as they called it back then, a "long, twilight struggle". It is not going to be in five years we declare victory against Islamic Jihadism and get to come home. It's a 40-, 50-year, generation, two-generation struggle, just like the Cold War was. And that's because it comes in two components, just like the Cold War.

The first is a real security component -- you know, protecting against Soviet missiles in that case; in this case protecting against terrorism with defensive measures and some offensive measures.

But secondly, like the Cold War, it's a long, ideological struggle. And at the moment, as you said, the secretary of Defense's -- former secretary of Defense's question may be right -- we may be creating a broader range of terrorists by some of what's happened recently.

So I think we have to focus on a long ideological fight for our values in a world in which it's going against us right now with the spread of al Qaeda-ism, as you put it. And that includes the values of tolerance -- that people can have different religious or other beliefs and you can live in a society with them -- and the basic sense that individual rights should be protected. And we're going to win that battle economically, morally, and through the expressions of our values, but we have to really engage in that struggle, which is not something I see us doing right now.

MR. LIEBER: Briefly, what we are -- I agree, by the way, completely that it is going to be a long struggle. The analogy with the Cold War is inexact but not bad. It's probably the most useful analogy, if you want one.

It's a struggle ultimately for the future of the Arab-Muslim world, and with some extensions -- for example, Pakistan. We can influence, we can help, but ultimately that struggle is going to be played out within those societies.

It's also worth noting, it's not only or all about us. Think of the murder of van Gogh in the Netherlands, eviscerated on an Amsterdam street, or the threats to the very courageous Sudanese -- sorry, Somali-Dutch woman, Hirsi Ali, or bombings in North Africa, or the killing of children in front of their parents in Afghanistan or Algeria, or the London and German bombers -- London in the case of Glasgow and London airport or the thwarted attempt in Germany, where you had indigenous people with German and British citizenship; or al Qaeda of Iraq killing Shi'ites and blowing up Shi'ite shrines like the Golden Dome in Samara.

The 2002 Arab Human Development Report written for the U.N. Development Program by 15 Arab economists referred to three desperate deficits in the Arab-Muslim world: One, in the role and treatment of women; two, in knowledge and information; and three, in liberty and political freedom. There is a core problem which is very deep-seeded. One other point in passing that I -- I don't think this should all be gloom and doom. I think one very encouraging sign of the past six years is that while there have been a number of instances in Europe and elsewhere where indigenous and sometimes well -- ostensibly well integrated Muslims or Arabs who sometimes were citizens of those countries, sometimes not, carried out terrorist attacks or were interrupted in major attack plans that we have been blessedly largely free of that in the United States, and I think a lot of that has to do with the nature of American society -- adaptable, flexible, and which gives its Arab and Muslim immigrants and citizens the sense they are Americans and are fully accepted. I think that's a strength of America, and it's certainly one element I think of why we have not so far faced a repeat of 9/11.

REP. HIGGINS: Thank you, Doctor.

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. Welch.

REP. WELCH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank all of you.

Listening is -- I don't want to say it's depressing, but I'll make an observation: Everything you're saying that we should be doing, we're not. Basically institution building for the modern threats -- there's been none; the definition of what the conflict is is still debated, but actually there's been I think an operational conclusion that it's all military all the time; and there's been a relaxation on the effort to stop proliferation of nuclear weapons.

I'm interested in whether the other panelists agree with Dr. Mathews on this question of whether Iraq simply has to be dealt with before we're going to be able to address these profound transformational foreign policy questions for security. It certainly is the sense that I have sitting here that it's all Iraq all the time and it's just a powerful impediment to any clear thinking.

And on one of these trips when I -- we were in the Middle East and went over there, we met with the king of Jordan, and I was thinking that he was going to be talking about Iraq and how that had to be dealt with -- of course, they have to deal with 2 million -- with hundreds of thousands of refugees and it's very unstable -- and that was third in his list of problems.

The first one for him was the Arab-Israeli conflict, second was Lebanon and then a distant third was Iraq, and of course, over here it's all Iraq all the time.

So my question, I guess, to Mr. Isaacson and Dr. Lieber is whether you're in agreement that if we're going to even start considering the recommendations you're making, somehow, someway we've got to get Iraq behind us?

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah. I'm not sure I would take fully that premise from Jessica's testimony, so I don't want to put the words in her mouth. But let me address the question --

REP. WELCH: She can respond too.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah. I do believe, personally, that this is a multi-pronged approach. And the resolution of the U.S.-Palestinian -- I mean, the Israeli-Palestinian issue is very important right now and you see some hopeful signs, I would say, in Dr. Rice's trip. I also agree that there's an enormous amount we should be doing that we aren't, whether it's their building madrassas around the world and we're not even close in figuring out how we're going to have education programs, English language programs, technology programs. Things that if we -- the fact that we cannot compete with the madrassas movement, when we know how to do things like that, we're just not doing it, is appalling to me and that we're letting more of their education, as opposed to us having technology centers, education centers. We're doing some of that and I'm involved with some of that, but I just wish it were a hundred times more.

On Iraq, I don't think it has to be solved totally first before we get onto anything else. I think it would be a very unwise approach. I do think that the current implementation of our Iraq strategy and our current occupation strategy -- I don't mean occupation to be a loaded term, but you know, what we're doing there -- is actually very bad right now for us dealing with the other problems.

REP. WELCH: Thank you.

MR. LIEBER: I share your sense that there is -- there's a term I like to use: the problem of the -
- (speaking in Latin).

REP. TIERNEY: No. I use that all the time too. (Laughter.) MR. LIEBER: Two years of Latin in Chicago public schools serves me well.

It's certainly true that Iraq is the elephant in the living room. There's a tendency to see everything else through that lens. I think the virtue of the hearings that this committee has called is to encourage us to not ignore Iraq, but try to look beyond it -- especially for whoever is responsible for the presidency in January 2009.

I'd also note, if we look back, that at the time we went into Iraq, 70 percent of the American public, more than three-fifths of the Congress, two-thirds of the European governments supported that judgment. It proves to have been a very fateful decision. The consequences of our involvement in Iraq are still not entirely clear and the judgment of history may be ultimately quite harsh or it may not be.

I'm a little more cautiously optimistic about the current strategy or tactic in Iraq. I think that after the fall of Baghdad there were serious failures in what to do, but that the policy being followed by General Petraeus has at least the possibility that it may be turning things around. I use lots of cautions

and I think the advantage is to know what you don't know. It remains to be seen what will occur in Iraq. There is at least a possibility that the situation will stabilize.

Clearly, Iraq is having an impact elsewhere, but I think it's also the case -- as was mentioned in the question -- that other countries are looking at other issues. I'd suggest that some of them, as Jessica has suggested, others of them, and I think there is more of a willingness to look beyond Iraq.

Lastly, in Europe, for instance -- for those of us who travel and go there a good deal -- the kind of bitterness and heated debate that marked the years 2002, 2003, 2004 has subsided and I think there's a willingness to try to look beyond Iraq rather than focus on that to the exclusion of other priorities.

MS. MATHEWS: I didn't mean to suggest there's nothing we can do. I want to add to my earlier remarks a couple of other things I think we can change. As you suggest, the big cost is simply the oxygen. It's just impossible to get away from. And the amount of political capital that we all, as a country, have to focus on this -- there's very little left over for other huge priorities.

And I am under no illusion that we could stop terrorism by changing U.S. policies, but we can affect it in a big way by a number of what I think are really, really bad policy choices. And I want to add also to the prior question three points: One is the question of a permanent U.S. presence of Iraq. At the end of Iraq week up here a lot of the media said, oh, gosh. Petraeus came and talked for hours and hours and nothing changed. But in fact, in my judgment something very big changed in the president's speech when he said we're going to have fewer troops and a bigger mission. And he said what Secretary Gates said at the beginning of June, which was that we will have "a long-term presence" on the model of Japan and Korea.

The whole Arab world believes that we went into Iraq in order to dismantle the most powerful Arab state and get our hands on its oil for Israel's benefit and our own. That's what they believe already. And of course, one of the reasons that we chose to go in was because of the problem of the American military presence in Saudi Arabia. If we choose to do this, and do it without public discussion, without involvement of the Congress -- and as far as I know, there has never been a national security meeting on this subject or a debate within the administration on the wisdom of building permanent U.S. presence in Iraq. It will be one of the biggest mistakes of this whole business.

The passage of amendments forbidding the spending of money to create a permanent presence is a waste of time, because the administration has figured who can say what's permanent, right? Fifty years is not permanent, but 50 years is a great big mistake -- in my judgment. If it were me, I'd be up here having bicameral, bipartisan hearings on the wisdom of this choice -- not in the context of the administration's position, necessarily, but whether this is something the United States wants to do. I think it has everything to do with the supply of people to al Qaeda.

Secondly, we need a new policy on democracy promotion. In particular, we need a set of policies to separate democracy promotion from regime change, which is what it is believed to be in most of the rest of the world -- not just the Middle East: Russia, for example, China. This is a subject where we can affect our destiny and the likelihood that we will face terrorist attacks.

And finally Pakistan: I am a deep, deep pessimist about our ability to turn around Afghanistan. Again, history tells me this one is going to take 10 times what we're willing to give it. But Pakistan we cannot afford not to be paying an awful lot more attention to. And I think we do have some levers to

affect the supply of terrorist impacts. So my point is just -- while we're paying a terrible price in Iraq and will continue to for many, many years -- there are things that will make it either better or worse.

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Welch.

REP. WELCH: Thank you very much.

REP. TIERNEY: Mr. Turner.

REP. MICHAEL TURNER (R-OH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank you for holding this hearing and the great job you've been doing on this subcommittee. It certainly has been very helpful for all the members.

And I appreciate your last comment about Pakistan. I just came from an Armed Services Committee hearing where the issue is Pakistan, it's stability, our relations with Pakistan and the issues of the war on terror, Taliban and our ability to be effective in Afghanistan, al Qaeda and perhaps even Osama bin Laden himself seeking or having refuge in Pakistan.

One of the discussion topics has been of the problems and difficulties that Musharraf is having in his own country. And I was wondering if you might each comment for a moment on the issue of the difficulties there. And I'm particularly interested in if you decouple his relationship with the United States, does he still have problems and what are those problems? And how should we look to our policies to affect a greater relationship with Pakistan and an acceptance of greater respect and view by the people of Pakistan of the United States as an ally and a friend?

MR. LIEBER: There's a lot of uncertainty here. But in the first instance, it would be my sense that the -- his problems are overwhelmingly internal. They have to do with the nature of Pakistani society, the fact that the military has ruled either directly or behind the scenes that country for a very long time with the very unequal distribution of wealth in that society, which is really quite extraordinary, the role of the intelligence service -- the ISI -- and so forth. The embrace of the United States probably adds something to his problem internally, but in other respects can be a source of strength because of economic and military support.

The problem there, as in some other countries in the Middle East, is that some Middle Eastern Muslim and Arab leaders have used a deliberate tactic -- it's true, I think, in Egypt -- of *apre mal deluge* (ph). That is to say, deliberately cracking down on moderate opposition elements who would like to use the democratic process, be non-violent and so on, in order to be able to say, "Look, you may not like what I'm doing but the people who are out there who would take over otherwise are the really, really bad guys." Sometimes it's very exaggerated, sometimes not, but I think it's something you have to weigh. There's an argument about Pakistan that if Musharraf fell, it would not be the extreme radical Islamists who would seize power, but -- and that there are other oppositional elements -- but the -- both civil and military leaders of Pakistan in the last four decades have left a lot to be desired vis-a-vis their own people.

MS. MATHEWS: I agree with all of that. And certainly his problems go beyond his connection to the United States and I think I just would underline something also Walter said earlier. A huge part of our problem with Pakistan's problem has come out of Pakistan's failure to be able to have an educational system. This is not beyond our ability. When you put it in the context of the Iraq War, those costs of substituting a functioning public education system for the madrassa is trivial. But this is going to be a terribly tough problem for exactly the reasons that Bob just described, as the alternatives are not great.

But I think we should have four years ago pushed Musharraf much harder in the direction of the reforms that he had promised. But it would have required a balancing against our anti-terror goals, which of course is what foreign policy is all about. We don't have the luxury of not giving Pakistan whatever attention it demands because of its nuclear weapons.

MR. ISAACSON: I come at this with a strange historical conflict of interest, which is -- and I could embarrass Congressman Cooper if he were here -- is that when we were in graduate school, the first politics I ever did was that I ran Benazir Bhutto's campaign for the head of the debating union at our graduate school and Jim Cooper helped me. I do think that Benazir Bhutto and others coming back as democratic opposition adds to the turmoil in Pakistan but is inevitably part of the process there, and probably a good part. I agree that General Musharraf's problem is not simply the embracing of the United States because Benazir and -- I mean, Mrs. Bhutto and others are not necessarily running on anti-American platforms as far as I can tell, or trying to stoke up anti-American resentment.

If you look at Pakistan vs. India, you see the model we're trying to create. When I was in India a couple of times ago, I was there for the election. And what happened was a Hindu prime minister was defeated by a Roman Catholic woman, Sonia Ghandi, who stepped aside for a Sikh prime minister who was then sworn in by a Muslim president. That's a pretty awesome shining light of what we have to get to in terms of pluralism in this world if we're not going to have the type of threats that will face us over the next two generations. And I would second -- I guess I'm being egotistical here, but second -- Jessica's seconding of what I said earlier -- (laughter) -- which is if we're not going to win the battle against the madrassa movement by competing with them in Pakistan -- that's where we're surrendering this ballgame.

REP. TURNER: Mr. Chairman, if I might for just a moment, I just want to thank all of you for making those points because I think so many times in our U.S. policy's view, we're so narcissistic as to believe that all problems result from a relationship with our country and that clearly in this instance, there are other factors at play, ones that we need to be paying attention to. So thank you.

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you.

And I just want to make a mention that with the great work of our staff here and a number of the members of this committee on both sides of the aisle, we were able to put a substantial amount of money into the budget this year and to enforce some education in Pakistan. The problem we're now going to have is making sure that that's delivered in an effective way where it can be monitored and actually implemented without great waste or whatever. So we're moving in that direction. We still have some challenges on that, but it's a fight worth having for sure.

Mr. Isaacson, are you still squared away with us here for a while?

MR. ISAACSON: I'm actually hosting a lunch which I wouldn't mind -- I mean, for -- a foreign policy lunch somewhere. So if -- maybe five minutes, if I could?

Ten -- 10. Fine, fine, fine, sorry, sorry.

REP. TIERNEY: Ms. McCollum, you have five and then Mr. Shays will get his five because he's going to grill Mr. Isaacson.

MR. ISAACSON: (Laughter.) It's my lunch. I don't always have to be there.

REP. BETTY MCCOLLUM (D-MN): Well, I appreciate you being able to stay and I really found your July editorial in the Washington Post where you argue that America needed a new creative solution to match the challenge of global terrorism very insightful. In the editorial, you outlined several strategies, including the creation of new public diplomacy organizations for the global age. And I strongly agree that we need an effective public diplomacy. It's indispensable in America's toolbox in the fight against terrorism.

And during the Cold War, and we've been -- the Cold War has been discussed -- the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe helped win the hearts and minds by giving invaluable information out to people regardless of their income and their occupation in those countries. U.S. policy was able to spread information about America culture and values, which is democracy. The current crisis in Burma, though, is to me is more than ever demonstrating that a proven low-cost strategy like Voice of America radio is so essential. The BBC reported in recent days that less than one percent of the Burmese people have access to Internet and the government has blocked Internet traffic into and out of the country. Radio Netherlands is reporting that Burmese stores are sold out of short-range radios because people want news and information, and that's the only way that they can receive it. Laura Bush and Chairman Lantos both recently broadcast to the Burmese people on Bush's America.

Now I bring this up because I do agree with you -- we need to look at all the tools in the toolbox. Yet the Board of Governors -- the Broadcasting Board Governors, which oversees Voice of America with absolutely no transparency -- no transparency -- is rushing to close down radio transmitters all around the world.

And I can supply you with the proof. You look shocked; I was shocked to find that out, too.

The BBG is silencing America's voice in a time when reaching the poor and the oppressed populations in the world is even more important.

Now, I've introduced a bill to try to get the board of governors' attention, and it's H.R. 3598. We need to do exactly what you were suggesting, Mr. Isaacson -- make big investments in new public diplomacy efforts. But I believe we must renew our commitment to Voice of America Radio and other proven, cost-effective strategies. Voice of America is -- is only \$10 million in a 688 million-dollar budget. That's less than the inflationary increase of the GBG's administrative expenses in '08, and they're cutting it.

MR. ISAACSON: Wow.

REP. MCCOLLUM : So could -- I know you believe in -- in using everything that's available out there, and I want to make sure that we have your voice heard clear on Voice of America.

MR. ISAACSON: Let me make it extremely clear. I love radio; I think it's an awesome and effective technology. I agree with Bob to my left that the dismantling of the U.S. Information Agency was a very bad problem, and that's another thing that perhaps you could look at. I think that the BBG has not -- has not risen to the task in the past of winning the hearts-and-mind battles. But I absolutely --

I'm a believer in a lot of old technology, including even print, believe it or not. But radio will be, of the next 100 years, an incredibly effective way to communicate. So let's not disparage radio.

MR. LIEBER: You know, I strongly agree with your point about VOA. VOA, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, and other radios are of immense importance. We ought not to be cutting services and broadcasts and budgets, but increasing them. They are an extremely important, long-range investment.

One other point, in passing, with -- again, some disagreement with Jessica about China. China has played a very negative role in Burma, in Darfur, and in some other third world environments, sustaining repressive regimes for reasons that are at times economic, at times political. We don't control the situation in Burma. China is a country with huge influence and, alas, it appears, to the extent we can tell, not to have used the leverage it might have to improve things, rather than allow them to get worse.

REP. TIERNEY: Thank you very much.

Mr. Shays.

REP. SHAYS: Again, Mr. Isaacson, thank you for -- for waiting.

I'd love to ask why isn't there a public debate about the threat and what we should do about it? And whose responsibility -- is it Congress, is it the White House, is it just the press isn't into it?

And then I'm just going to say that it seemed to me, born in 1945, the '50s were kind of like sorting it out. I mean, you know, I came from an area where everybody built, you know, these shelters that were really basements that nobody would want to be in unless they were crazy. So it seems to me that we didn't come to agreement on it until maybe when Kennedy tried to out-manuever Nixon and be on the right side where -- so they were both in agreement. You know, we needed to confront, and so on. So I'd love to know that.

I would love to know if Sputnik wasn't -- did we start out having to be an economic and military effort against the Soviet Union expansion, and then did Sputnik add a third element, education, or was education and technology always a part of it?

And the last question is why are terrorists so unimaginable? And does that suggest that -- that I fear them more than I should? In other words, I could tell you umpteen number of ways to totally shut down this government with a very little amount of work, and yet they don't seem to figure it out.

MR. ISAACSON: Let's not spread the word on the various ways.

I do think that the entire Cold War period -- in this room, for example, whether you're talking about the Democratic or Republican chairs of Armed Services and everything else -- had a great consensus and a discussion of the long-term threat. And that's something that is rarer today, and I don't think it really -- you may be right, but in my reading of the history, having written about the Truman administration into the Eisenhower administration, I think there was a serious understanding of how to deal, or the need to deal with that threat. The --

REP. SHAYS: Well, let me -- let me quickly ask you this --

MR. ISAACSON: Yes.

REP. SHAYS: -- if we hadn't -- if we hadn't gone into Iraq, is that when we kind of got sidestepped -- MR. ISAACSON: Yeah. This is what I was going to say. The reason for the --

REP. SHAYS: I mean -- I mean, in other words, with Republicans and Democrats working together.

MR. ISAACSON: Right. The polarization is what you're talking about, and the polarization is one reason we're not having a reasonable national debate, not just in the Hill.

I left being in the media partly because I realized that our job in a new media age was to shout as much and be divisive as possible in order to get high ratings or readership. I think that the media has not played a unifying role, nor a role of deepening some of these issues. You referred to that, I think, in your opening statement.

But to me, there are many people to blame for the fact that a reasonable, intelligent, non-partisan -- I don't just mean bipartisan, I mean rising above partisanship -- debate has not occurred. I think that talk radio and cable TV, having been a member of that part of the media for a while, is not helpful in that regard. And even though I love the Internet, I think the Internet encourages divisive debates and shouting more than it encourages the formation of consensus.

So I think I'll say we in the media or we in the recovering media is what -- I'm sort of a recovering journalist -- are responsible. I think, you know, Congress, by the way it's set up -- people playing to the base, the districts that are more gerrymandered than they were when I was growing up and you had a person who sat in that chair, Hale Boggs, who had to represent, you know, suburbs as well as inner city -- that whole process has led to greater partisanship and less depth in the public debate. And I despair a bit, but I think there are many ways to overcome that issue.

REP. SHAYS: That should be your next book.

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you, sir. Well, it was my Benjamin Franklin book. You know, that was the point of the Benjamin Franklin book.

REP. SHAYS: Yeah, but do a modern one.

Mr. Lieber?

MR. LIEBER: If I may, the --

REP. SHAYS: Mr. Isaacson, you could leave. I --

MR. ISAACSON: I'll hear what Bob has to say, and then I'll dash for my lunch. (Chuckles.)

MR. LIEBER: America's always had a tradition of robust, even bitter and sometimes unfair debate; the -- if you think about debates going back to the late 18th century. Also, let's not forget that during the early Cold War the architect of the institutions and policies, Dean Acheson, was denounced in 1952 by Richard Nixon, then running for vice president, who referred to Dean Acheson's "college of cowardly Communist containment." There was plenty of Republican/Democratic animosity in the late '40s and early '50s; Reagan was often denounced from the left, Jimmy Carter was denounced from the right, and so on.

I do think, though, in response to your point, that the Iraq war has clearly -- and, I think, dangerously -- intensified the partisan anger and made it much harder to debate these things. I find that, since I take part in a lot of debates, that all too often the -- these very important and difficult issues are framed in ways that are outlandish and hyperbolic.

So Iraq has worsened that situation, but we need to remember that America's freedom and traditions have always involved a good deal of cut-and-thrust, even when there was a rough consensus.

REP. SHAYS: Thank you very much.

MS. MATHEWS: I just would add that I think that the degree of consensus in the Cold War looks much bigger in retrospect than it was living through it -- much bigger. And while there's always value for another Walter Isaacson book, Bill Bradley has written in his New American Story of a lot of the issues that you and Walter just exchanged on. You know better than I how long it may take to change this, but the legacy of 20 years of redistricting has had a tremendous cost on our ability to act in a bipartisan way. So few people represent, really, districts where they need to appeal to both sides.

REP. TIERNEY: Come to my district.

MS. MATHEWS: But I also think that Walter's right to draw attention to the effect of these new technologies in the communications world, because the smaller the niches, the less that you can reach across them. And people are living now in tinier and tinier niches where they only read stuff that they agree with. And this is a terrible cost for the country --

(Cross talk.)

REP. TIERNEY: -- the Internet was --

MS. MATHEWS: I think it's very important to focus on --

REP. TIERNEY: The Internet was an example of that. I had such great hopes for the Internet broadening out the debate and balancing it out, and it went just the other way.

MS. MATHEWS: Exactly. Yes.

REP. TIERNEY: Every -- went to their respective corner, read just the blogs or sites that they thought reinforced their view and intensified dashing back and forth.

We obviously have to vote. Mr. Shays and I may be missing the first vote, but I want to ask one quick question of each of you.

If you had to name one essential thing that this country should be doing differently than it currently is, what would that be?

MS. MATHEWS: Addressing nonproliferation. In the ways that I described here. No question.

REP. TIERNEY: Dr. Lieber?

MR. LIEBER: Taking profound steps about energy security in the way I've referred to.

REP. TIERNEY: I can't thank you both enough, and Mr. Isaacson as well. It's been a very informative hearing. I think that we've all benefited extraordinarily from it, and I hope that we get the chance to have each of you back again to follow up on this and for other reasons. You do a great service to us in your respective roles, and I know you're appreciated by a great many people. So we thank you very, very much.

MR. LIEBER: Thank you. END.