



**THE CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS AND
FOREIGN POLICY MAGAZINE PRESENT**

**“THE TERRORISM INDEX: A SURVEY OF THE U.S.
NATIONAL SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT
ON THE WAR ON TERROR.”**

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PROGRAM AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

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MR. JOSEPH CIRINCIONE: Good afternoon. Good afternoon. Thank you. My name is Joseph Cirincione. I am the senior vice president for national security and international policy here at the Center for American Progress. On behalf of the Center, it's my pleasure to welcome you here and I join with *Foreign Policy* magazine in presenting the results of our first biannual survey of U.S. national security experts on the war on terror. I have a few administrative remarks and then we'll get right into a discussion of this program.

First, as you can see through the conveniently supplied glass panels, the food has arrived and is being set up. And as soon as they're done, please, anytime during the program feel free to get up, get a sandwich, a salad, a Coke, and come back and we'll just eat sort of family style here.

Second, I would like to introduce very briefly the panelists that we have here today and then David and I will – David Bosco, to my left, will present the results of the survey and then hear the comments from the other two panelists. David Bosco is the senior editor for *Foreign Policy* and has been in that post since 2004. He reported recently from Bosnia and Afghanistan on the results of the peacekeeping missions in those countries. He's had a distinguished career, including getting a law degree from Harvard School of Law and serving as an attorney at the firm of Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen, and Hamilton with a focus on international arbitration and litigation, and he studied judicial reform in Chile as a Fulbright scholar. He's been a journalist and media commentator for many years before becoming the senior editor of *Foreign Policy*.

David and I will walk through the slides with you and then I'm going to turn to Michael Scheuer, who is better known as Anonymous, the author of the best selling *Imperial Hubris*, which he originally published as Anonymous as required by the Central Intelligence Agency. He's also the author of *Through Our Enemy's Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam and the Future of America*. Before resigning from the CIA in 2004, he served as the head of the CIA's bin Laden Unit and worked for nearly two decades in national security issues related to Afghanistan, South Asia, and the Middle East.

To his left is Lawrence Wilkerson, who is currently the Pamela C. Harriman visiting professor of government at the College of William & Mary, as well as a professional lecturer in the honors program at George Washington University. His last position in government was Secretary of State Colin Powell's chief of staff. He also served then as the associated director to the State Department's policy planning staff under the directorship of Ambassador Richard Haass. Larry has served previously for 31 years in the U.S. Army, including as a deputy executive officer to Colin Powell, when he was commander of the U.S. Army Forces Command, as a special assistant to General Powell when he was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Both Larry and Michael were respondents in our survey and so we asked them to come here and share some of the insights: why did they answer the questions the way they did, what they think of the views that the other experts gave, and some of the general observations on how we're doing on the war on terrorism.

Let me tell you a little bit about the survey. We conducted this between March 8th and April 21st of this year and we surveyed a cross section of the top U.S. experts on terrorism and balanced it to make sure that we had an even distribution of liberals, conservatives, and moderates. And in the booklet that we're handing out today we give you the list of the participants and the actual questions that we asked, cross cut so you can see how liberals, conservatives, and moderates answered them as well as the total. We made sure that we weighted the samples, so that each was accorded 33.33 percent of the answer. David actually did quite a bit of the actual questioning, formation of the questions, and conducting of the surveys. Is there anything you want to add here about the methodology we used?

MR. DAVID BOSCO: Well, I would just say that this is one in a series of indexes that *Foreign Policy* magazine does and I think the advantage of these – you know, however, and all of these methods or techniques are imperfect to a degree, but they allow us to spot trends, to collect often scattered wisdom. I mean, you can read a dozen stories about terrorism and the response to it and see experts quoted, 12 different experts quoted. Here we've tried to bring those people together. It's kind of like a wisdom of the crowd's approach, but it happens that they crowd in this case is a very distinguished and knowledgeable panel of experts.

MR. CIRINCIONE: All right. We're going to walk through some of the key results of the survey. There is a lot in here. This is a gold mine of data that we hope you and our colleagues throughout the field will use for their own studies and their own work on terrorism, but right off the top, the number one finding is that an astonishing 84 percent of the experts think that we are not winning the war on terrorism. I think that finding more than any other surprised us, and we found that that worked out pretty evenly across the political spectrum, whether you were a conservative, a liberal, or a moderate. The overwhelming majority of the experts disagreed with the statement and here is the statement we asked them: "President Bush has stated that the United States is winning the war on terror. Please tell us whether do you agree or disagree with this statement" and 84 percent disagreed.

A related question is how they answered this issue, "thinking about the present situation, would you say the world is becoming safer or more dangerous for the United States and the American people?" Again, an overwhelming majority, 86 percent believe that the United States is now more dangerous. And I thought these two results were particularly striking because it's not as if some of the questions you do see a breakdown – a divide between liberals and conservatives. On these two it was rather unanimous across the board.

We then wanted to probe a little deeper into this and we asked people if they felt it was more dangerous, what were the threats they worried about? What were the single greatest threats to U.S. national security? You can see that nuclear materials topped the list with 26 percent putting that – nuclear materials – as the number one threat, followed closely by the general category of weapons of mass destruction, so it's the things that they worry about first and then it's the terrorist groups, so specifically people picked out not just terrorism in general, but Islamicism, al Qaeda in particular, or jihadists and then 15 percent thought it was terrorism in general.

One of the interesting things about this is this was an open ended question, so people could respond as they wanted to and so we did – you see, at the bottom of that slide, you know by 5 percent thought that economic decline was our single greatest threat. And interestingly, only 4 percent thought Iran was our single greatest threat, which is in dramatic contrast to the attention that Iran gets and to the focus of government resources on Iran and how it does often portrayed as our single greatest challenge or our single greatest threat: only 4 percent of the experts seem to agree with that view.

We then went into how these threats might manifest themselves. What was the single most likely method of future terrorist attack in the United States? Sixty-seven percent of the experts said a suicide bombing attack, 66 percent said an attack on major infrastructure. And by the way, before I joined the center I was the one of the respondents in this survey and I was in that 66 percent. I listed this. This is my greatest fear: that we're going to see another terrorist attack involving conventional means on a major infrastructure. And then I would also agree with the 60 percent of the experts who were worried about a dirty bomb – an attack with a radiological device. In fact, I'm a little surprised that this hasn't happen already, given how easy it is to do.

Down at the bottom, you'll see that only 6 percent answered an attack with a nuclear weapon as likely. Again, I would agree with this, too. I think many experts will say this is a very unlikely event, but because of the very high consequences of a nuclear attack, when you plug it into a standard risk-assessment formula of risk times consequences you still have to devote an enormous amount of resources to worrying about this threat, which is why if you go back and you look at – when the single greatest threat, nuclear materials, goes up at the top of their list, even though the likelihood of a nuclear attack is very low.

Top motivating factors for a terrorist. David's going to take over from here.

MR. BOSCO: This is something that we're going to want to discuss quite a bit, I think, with our two experts, but just in kind of skeleton form there, I think, was a consensus that extremist religious beliefs were the most important factor motivating terrorists. It's interesting that there was not a high degree of consensus about which U.S. policies, if any, were motivating factors for terrorists. Some people thought Israel, Palestine, Iraq, and then a more general kind of opposition to U.S. cultural and economic domination, but there wasn't consensus on that point. And it's also interesting to note that the regimes in the Middle East as a motivating factor came out on top of any single

U.S. policy, and so that, I felt, was an interesting response. I should note that down at the bottom “they are evil,” took in a relatively small number of respondents. I don’t think – to be fair to our respondents, I don’t think that indicates rampant moral relativism; I just think it’s a sign that that’s not a very useful analytic in looking at what motivates them.

Moving on to – you know, having diagnosed what is motivating terrorist attacks, looking at what are the critical elements in winning the war on terror and I think it’s no surprise given the answer that we saw in the previous slide that a rejection of extremism by Muslim populations is most people believe the key to victory. I thought it was quite interesting here that a relatively small number of respondents saw democracy in the Muslim world as the key and, you know, we can only kind of speculate and perhaps later we’ll get from our two experts what their view is, but that could reflect a lack of confidence that democracies will be stable or it just could reflect the view that democracies will perhaps reflect a radical ideology and that perhaps the radical ideology has enough purchase in these countries that a democratically elected government will reflect it.

Also relatively limited support for the view that decapitating al Qaeda would be itself the key to winning the war on terror and I think that’s quite interesting and it seems to be vindicated as we look around the world and see the London bombings, these arrests in Miami – these seem to be homegrown cells and so decapitating al Qaeda itself would not end the war on terror.

Taken together, I see these as kind of indicating that to a significant degree the war on terror is out of our control. It’s not necessarily based on U.S. policies and it appears the respondents think we have a relatively limited ability to win the war on our own: a large degree of what has to happen is for there to be a change among Muslim populations.

Moving quickly through some of the other questions, rating the U.S. government on national security, here, and we’ll see this in some of the subsequent questions, there is a good degree of skepticism about U.S. government capabilities. Five I should say – a score of five represents an average score and so the respondents are indicating five that the government was doing a decent job. Here we see that responding to global natural disasters and military readiness were the only ones that were above average, everything else below; particularly public diplomacy, which comes in at an astonishingly low 1.8.

Then moving from there to a more specific look to U.S. government agencies and institutions again, only one, the National Security Agency, comes in above average. State Department in USAID do significantly better than kind of the hard power instruments – the Defense Department, National Security Council. It is interesting to note that the two major architectural changes to a national security apparatus; notably, the Directorate of National Intelligence and the Department of Homeland Security, both come in quite low and I think that’s something we’ll want to discuss a bit later as well.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Let me just say before you switch, I had to present some of these findings to a group of officials from the Department of Homeland Security and so they obviously wanted to know why they came in so low. Now, we don't know the answer to this. We just know what the experts are telling us. Now, this is speculation – and tell me if you agree with this, David – the answer may be because this is a relatively new agency and so you tend to be more critical with these agencies as they start up. We were asking this – we were conducting this survey fairly close to the Hurricane Katrina and the failure of the department in that catastrophe could have influenced it, but it may also reflect, you know, a really expert knowledge of what's going on inside the department and may be an honest reflection of how well this department actually is doing.

We're going to keep asking these questions, so we're going to probe this issue continually. This is the first of a biannual survey. That means every six months. We're going to do this every six months and some of these questions we're going to keep asking so we develop a pattern over time. And based on the interesting answers we got to some of these, we're going to dig deeper and probe and develop more questions, so if you have some questions you'd like us to ask, let us know.

MR. BOSCO: Yeah, and I should say that *Foreign Policy's* website, www.foreignpolicy.com, will have that update as it comes in and it will be very interesting to see whether those institutions see a bump up as they kind of consolidate.

So given the responses that we've seen, we then ask respondents what should the U.S. government give higher priority to and this was, I thought, really striking. Reducing dependence on foreign oil comes in at the very top. Improving intelligence capabilities also a very popular response. Strengthening the UN and other institutions came in significantly higher than I had thought it would. This is one where there was a significant ideological divide. Liberals and moderates were much more interested in strengthening the UN and related international institutions than conservatives were.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Yeah, but here on this reducing dependence on foreign oil, you can look at this – this is actually question nine in the book – and although we gave people the choices, this was not our top choice. You had to go all the way onto the bottom of the list before you got to choose this and still it came out on top and it cut across ideologies. So whereas the total was 82 percent, 79 percent of conservatives thought this was the hot – this should be given a much higher priority. This should be our – if I see the question – should they give a higher priority to this issue? Seventy-nine percent of conservatives said yes, 82 percent of moderates, and 84 percent of liberals.

MR. BOSCO: And so then from there we take it to – that's a kind of a larger breakout of variety of different responses and I think this is mainly notable because we see that increasing the capability and size of the military comes in relatively low as does promoting democracy in Muslim countries, and this goes back to that point that we were discussing earlier: that the experts seem to have a high degree of skepticism about

whether promoting democracy is possible and what its results will be, which I think was one of the notable findings.

MR. CIRINCIONE: It's also notable for the fact that you can't possibly read that. (Laughter.)

MR. BOSCO: Right. And so when it comes to where should – you know, when the robot hits the road, where should funding be increased? It seemed that there was a distinct preference for what might be considered instruments of soft power or traditional diplomacy – State, USAID, the Millennium Challenge Program. The military comes in significantly below that. And when I looked at this I wondered whether there might be kind of a bias in terms of the respondents. You know, when I looked at the list, do we see more traditional State Department types? Is this kind of the revenge of the Foggy Bottom crowd? But I don't really think that's the case because there are a good number of participants who are military or intelligence. I didn't see a strong bias in favor of people who'd been in the State Department and so I think this reflects a view that in a large part what can be done militarily in the war on terror has been done or is being done and that the remaining challenges are often going to be outside of the military realm.

And I think with that – those are kind of the slides we wanted to go over in detail – I'll hand it back to Joe.

MR. CIRINCIONE: And let me hand it over to Michael. We'd like to get your observations on this. What are your thoughts after looking at this survey and after participating in it? Michael?

MR. MICHAEL SCHEUER: My view on this quick summary of the slides that you presented is that there is some good news and there is some bad news, which is not a very startling conclusion. One of the most important things is that there is a resonance in here about the role U.S. policy plays in this confrontation with Islam, whether you define that broadly or more narrowly to the terrorists, and that, to me, is the beginning of wisdom. I also tend to think that the slide that noted that the war is somehow out of our control is disturbing because it follows along with so many things in the country today that are too hard to do. It's too hard to control borders, it's too hard to secure the Soviet nuclear arsenal, it's too hard to do almost anything and that's kind of I think not a good thing.

I think the most important point – when you look at all this material, so much of what's going on in the war is – we are able to control. We are not the primary target of this war. We are primarily the target because we are in the way of what the enemy wants to do and the idea that oil – something should be done about energy I think should be apparent to everyone. Israel – all of these things are out there, but they are not being spoken very much outside of your survey and I really think that America has its future in its own hands, which although it's a generally somber foreign policy outlook at the moment, any nation-state would love, I think, or should love to find the fact that they control their own destiny. This is not something that's not controllable.

The one thing I also find disturbing is that there still continues to be across these sheets the whole idea that somehow if we could just have a new deal in the Middle East, if we could put people to work and give them schooling and have health clinics and provide more development aid, that's going to make a difference. That is a tragic leftover of the last 30 years. It hasn't worked. It won't work, and I would have been much happier for my own purposes if that had been found lacking in any of the responses.

The final point I would make is that we vastly underestimate the amount of killing we're going to have to do yet. The idea that somehow the military has done all it can do is a mistake. It hasn't done all it can do because the politicians won't let it, and many more of the people that oppose this have to be killed before we bring this thing to a tolerable state and to (brook?) that reality is dangerous for America and I think just the pipe dream. So I'd leave it there for now.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you. Colonel Wilkerson, could you add – give us your thoughts on this?

MR. WILKERSON: Sure. Am I on?

MR. CIRINCIONE: You should be. You shouldn't have to do it at all. Oh, by the way, before Wilkerson talks, could I make sure that all your cell phones are not on? Turn them down to buzz or off, please. Thank you.

MR. WILKERSON: As far as the results go, I don't think that I found them too much of a dramatic surprise – maybe in points and in areas, and in those points and areas I'd probably want to dig a little deeper with regard to the way the question was asked or, you know, usual polling things.

What I do find in the results is something that I think has been inchoate and incoherent and not very well developed by people like me in the academic field, people like me in the military, people like me in the general American public and elsewhere, and that is that there's been a fundamental change in the way America addresses the world not just post-World War II, which is what I teach after all and is pretty much recognized this by historians, but as of January, 2001. I've even called it a radical departure from the compromising methods that presidents used, compromising between the needs of the national security state and the needs of our democracy and our republic as we know it and as it was conceived by our founding fathers. There's been this tension ever since World War II and presidents and national leaders in making their decisions about national security, about foreign policy and related fields, have compromised more or less.

They've also had another factor to consider in their compromising. Probably Dwight Eisenhower spent more time talking about this factor than any other president, and incidentally managed to balance the budget three years out of his time in the office – an unprecedented event, but that's the budget. Perfect security, as Eisenhower used to

say, will bankrupt you. You cannot have perfect security. It's an impossibility. Technically speaking it's probably an impossibility, but it's certainly a impossibility if you care about your fiscal situation. And lo and behold, he had a hell of a lot bigger threat confronting him than George W. Bush has today. You know, one could argue it was an existential threat. It was a threat that could liquidate your and my way of life instantly or near instantly.

I remember as a ten-year-old going down at the basement of my school, putting my head between my legs, and trying to cock my eyes so that I can see the symbol on the brown baseboard box that was in the corner that contained all of the supplies I needed in case a nuclear attack occurred. We were serious back then. People were actually building holes in their backyard and bricking them up and concreting them and so forth so they could hide in them. This was a really serious threat and yet we didn't bankrupt ourselves. We managed through a number of presidents to compromise between the needs of the national security state and the needs of our democracy.

In January, 2001, we threw the compromise to hell and essentially said – and read the national security strategy – that we were going to be the world's hegemon. That alone is probably a bankrupting objective. And why do I paint all that history? Just to say that I think what I see in here is the beginning of a recognition of what I would call – and remember, I spent 31 years in the Department of Defense – the militarization of American foreign policy and the tendency of presidents to turn to the military instrument before they turn to anything else regardless of the nature of the threat.

Someone at DOD the other day told me we had used the military 48 times since the end of the Cold War. That's considerably more than we used it in the Cold War. I've got to check that statistic, but I don't doubt that. When I was working for Chairman Powell, we used it a number of times just in those four years. Operation Just Cause and Desert Shield/Desert Storm being the most prominent times, but I can remember the Philippines and a number of other, too.

So you have a president who is becoming more and more an imperial president, you have a new and ahistorical interpretation of Article II in the constitution and you have the military instrument as the instrument he most often can turn to to do his bidding and to do his will in the world.

You also have an incredible discrepancy in resources. Some \$450 billion plus going to the Department of Defense and about \$30 billion going to the State Department. That's an incredible imbalance and I think some of that's reflected in here and there is an attempt in the answers given here to rectify that imbalance, and I think also a tacit recognition of that imbalance perhaps caused some of the problems we are confronting today and caused the failure of some of the methods we have used to confront these problems. So I see that coming out of this.

I also see questions – I like to tell my students that sometimes questions, if not all the time, questions are more important than answers. There are lots of answers and many

of them will work, but you can't get to the answers unless you ask the right questions. What does winning mean? That very first question. What does winning mean? It certainly doesn't mean what the president – our current president has said over and over it means. You're never going to kill every terrorist on the face of the earth. You're not even going to take out Jemaah Islamiyah, Abu Sayyaf, al Qaeda and a host of others. Incidentally, Hezbollah is lurking out there in the background and Hezbollah's capabilities that would stagger you in terms of al Qaeda's. They make al Qaeda look like a piker. So if Hezbollah ever makes the decision, as it were, to go global, we've got a real problem on our hands.

So first of all, what does winning mean? Well, it probably means something like this – getting terrorism, especially terrorism with a global reach, down to a level we can all live with it. Do you think any president's going to say that? Hell, no. But that's probably what it means. It means getting it down to a level that we can live with; kind of the level you might contend it's down to in Europe right now. It's down to a number of other places that have a whole much longer history than we do with terrorists in their midst, from Sri Lanka to Kashmir to you name it probably.

So, if that's what winning means, how do you best go about this? And I come back to the very first briefing I got at the Central Intelligence Agency post-9/11. It was by a young lady who had spent her time at the agency to that point studying al Qaeda and the phenomenon that they represented. And I recall a two-hour briefing where no one asked a single question. We were all mesmerized. First of all, this young lady knew her business; and second, she was telling us things that we simply weren't aware of. One of the things she told us as she depicted it on a graph was at the bottom of the graph, which was sort of like a triangle, was the base and at the top was al Qaeda. Well, al Qaeda means the base so that was a little bit of a contradiction there until you understand what she was trying to show.

At the base was 1.3 billion Muslims in the world and as you worked up the diagram, you went through Muslims in the world, groups, associations, institutions, you name it, charities, that believed in killing innocent men, women, and children for political objectives and those who didn't and increasingly you got through those who did until you got to al Qaeda, where you could say their *raison d'être* was that.

And the first question asked at the end based on what the young lady had said was "Well, what's in that 1.3 billion? How many of those people are supporting the tip of the spear?" And she said "Conservatively, 40 million; liberally, 100 million." And how do they do that mostly? Well, she said there was another box in every mosque in the world virtually and everyone who puts money in that box knows to whom is going. She said "Let me use that metaphor for you." And then I said "You mean, we might have 100 million Muslims who are supporting – even though they don't believe in killing innocent men, women, and children, they're supporting al Qaeda through their monetary contributions?" "That's what I'm trying to tell you," she said.

And from that briefing I took away that bombs, bullets, and bayonets are not the answer to this problem. Yes, there have to be existing in places like Afghanistan, maybe in places like Somalia again, maybe in places like the Philippines and other areas where there is a clear threat and intelligence and military operations can mesh to take out that threat, but the basic way to get a win – remember what I said about what winning is – is not with bombs, bullets, and bayonets. It's going after that 40 or 100 million or whatever it happens to be that nests itself in the 1.3 billion Muslims and trying to convince them. And I think this reflects that: that killing innocent men, women and children for political objectives is not the way to do business, and you don't do that with my military, your military, the armed forces. You can kill people that are going to do something imminently or you can get the intelligence and operational expertise to do in a specific area, like we did in Afghanistan, but it's really a dangerous thing to believe that we can keep our republic and continue to use the military instrument with an imperial presidency such as we have right now and not in the end do exactly what Osama bin Laden would like us to do, which is to commit suicide as a democratic republic.

That is a distinct possibility along with the other possibility that we're going to spend ourselves to death. I was with the Republicans – 30 of them – at the Capitol Hill Club the other day and they'd asked me to come talk to them because they were in a rage – they were in a – they're fiscal conservatives. They were from Ohio, Texas, Tennessee, North Carolina, and they were in a rage about this White House's spending.

One of the oldest members of the House had just come from a floor where he had given a speech and I said "What was your speech on?" And he said, "The gold standard." I said, "The gold standard? You talked about the gold standard?" He laughed and he said "I didn't want to return to it. I just said I wanted some standard rather than the amount of ink and paper we have. Do you understand that the value the dollar has depreciated 60 percent just in the last five years? \$11 of every barrel of West Texas intermediate is caused by a depreciation of the dollar and not the rise in the cost of oil." And he went on in that vein.

So I just use that to illustrate that there are some people over in the Congress of both persuasions who are very concerned about our fiscal profligacy right now because we are spending and spending and spending. And if it weren't for the Chinese and to a certain extent, the Japanese and others, we wouldn't be able to do this. And one wonders what's going to happen when we and the Chinese break from this deadly embrace that we're in and it is inevitable that it'll happen. So there are lots of things that go into what the survey results show I think, but those are some of them in my view.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you. Thank you very much. I'm going to open it up in just a second, but first I want to go back to Michael and ask him about one particular answer we've got, which is on what the experts think that the motives of terrorists are. Why are they doing what they're doing, which is part of what you have to know in order to figure out how to get them to stop doing what they are doing. And I want to ask you about this, Michael, because I was reading your book again just last night and I know right in the beginning of your book you talk about this issue – about what they're doing,

and you say that bin Laden has been precise in telling America the reasons he is waging war on us. None of the reasons have anything to do with our freedom, liberty, and democracy, but have everything to do with the U.S. policies and actions in the Muslim world and if I'm reading the results of this survey right, most of the experts agree with you.

When you ask them what motivates them, they say extremist religious beliefs and then government rulers in the Middle East, opposition to U.S. policies in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, opposition to U.S. policies in Iraq, and very, very few of them believe that this has anything to do with the rejection of American democratic values or the fact that the terrorists are just plain evil. And I was wondering if you could just tell us a little more about your view of this and what you think is motivating the terrorists.

MR. SCHEUER: Well, I think that what you have in the Islamic world is a religion that is pervasive in life – in daily life and you have 1.3 billion Muslims who are engrained, who – their religion is their life and I wouldn't put – motivating factors for terrorists, I wouldn't put extremist religious beliefs anywhere on that list because I think what we're seeing is religious beliefs that are activated by U.S. foreign policy.

The impression that whether it's our occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan, the presence of American troops on the peninsula, our unqualified support for the Israelis, our support for Russians in Chechnya, or the Chinese in Jing Zhang (ph) – all of those things are seen as an attack on Muslims and on their faith and that is the strongest – indeed, the only indispensable ally Osama bin Laden has is our foreign policy. As long as our foreign policy remains as it is, he will continue to be a winner and not a loser. And it's extraordinary to me that none of our leaders that I have heard during presidential campaigns or otherwise from either party have ever raised that issue.

You remember after the bombings in London last year, the president and prime minister came out like two trained parrots and said "They hate us for our liberties, not for what we do." And to show you that idiocy is transatlantic, after they took down the cell in Toronto two weeks ago now, the Canadian prime minister came out and said "Well, they hate Canadian values. That's why they're doing this." No, this doesn't have to do with that. It has to do with what we do in the Islamic world.

And I think that what's extraordinary about it is the polling information that's available from Pew and Gallup and the BBC and other reputable Western firms show near unanimous support in the Islamic countries that are polled for bin Laden's view of U.S. policy; not for his actions against us, but the perception that American foreign policy is an attack on Islam is nearly universal and I think this is a very good development to see at least some of the people who have followed these issues recognizing that – that this has really nothing to do with women in the workplace or having a Budweiser after work, or voting in Iowa early every four years. They couldn't care less about that.

Osama went to school on the Ayatollah. Khomeini tried to get a jihad going against the Americans for all those reasons and people aren't going to blow themselves up because we have ladies in this audience without coverings. Hezbollah even – you know, they attacked under the cover of Khomeini's rhetoric when they killed our Marines and destroyed the embassy, but they're basically a nationalist group. They wanted us off their turf. So the whole – the governing elites' focus on telling Americans that if we don't do what we're doing now, your children are going to be in burqas or only learning the Koran rather than engineering is just a lie and there's nothing to support it.

MR. BOSCO (?): Can I interrupt you for one second, Michael? I mean, I've been following events in Afghanistan recently quite closely and one of the consistent themes in the attacks that you see there is attacks on coed schools. Any school that educates women is vulnerable, particularly in the south of Afghanistan, to being burned down. Now, in your view of the world, those attacks I take it are anomalous or are they really an attack on U.S. foreign policy? How do we explain that?

MR. SCHEUER: They are an attack on the U.S. government in the sense that we are – one of our foreign policy goals in Afghanistan is to establish coeducational systems.

MR. BOSCO (?): But coeducational systems are not alien, why is that then –

(Cross talk.)

MR. SCHEUER: They're not – what I'm saying is that America is not being attacked for that reason. We can have all the women in the workplace and all the women in schools we want. We're not going to get attacked because it happens here. When we try to impose it in a conservative Muslim culture that doesn't accept it, it is an entirely different story. It becomes and exercise in imperialism. Frankly, I've never understood why we give a damn whether a girl goes to school in Afghanistan or not. That's not a national interest of the United States. It's no interest to the United States. That is – you know, it's extraordinary to me. Just before 9/11, our foreign policy towards Afghanistan was basically controlled by Jay Leno's wife and the Hollywood wives. That's what controlled the Clinton White House when they thought about Afghanistan.

Frankly, the security of my children or your children or all of us here has nothing to do whatever with making sure that a girl can go to school in Afghanistan.

MR. BOSCO (?): But it's an important human rights concern and a –

MR. SCHEUER: It's not a national interest.

MR. BOSCO (?): – and a lot of people believe that human rights should be an essential part of U.S. foreign policy. That doesn't mean using military force to achieve it, but to say that human rights and issues like equality of women and the treatment of women – and we're not just talking about whether they go to school together; in a lot of

these societies, we're going to be much worse than that – that for many Americans, I believe, is a central element of what we are and what our reform policy should reflect.

MR. SCHEUER: It will ultimately lead to war and if Americans believe that armed conflict – it's worth going to war for women to go to school, then so be it, but I don't think you're going to find many people to take that point of view.

MR. CIRINCIONE: I'm going to open it up now for questions and discussion from the audience and I just ask that you stand and we have some microphones that we'll give to you, so just wait to get a microphone before you start talking, and just identify yourself and ask your question. Any questions? If you can just wait – Antoine, why don't you just pick them? Thank you.

Q: Thanks. Bob Deans with Cox Newspapers. First, if I could, just a sort of housekeeping – if you guys can tell us where you fall in the spectrum of liberal, moderate, or conservative and whether it matches up with how *Foreign Policy* sees you. But secondly, I want you to address explicitly the Iraq situation. The president continually calls it the central front on the war on terror. I'd like you to comment if you would on the extent to which the continuing fighting in Iraq is impacting the broader war on terror. Thank you.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Do you remember how you identified yourself?

MR. SCHEUER: Federalist. (Laughter.)

MR. CIRINCIONE: You do get problems when you ask that sort of open-ended questions like that?

MR. SCHEUER: No. I'm a very conservative Republican.

MR. CIRINCIONE: And, Larry, how did you identify yourself?

MR. WILKERSON: I'm a Republican who would like to wrest his party back from the people who have captured it, along with people like Chuck Hagel and others.

MR. CIRINCIONE: So, would you – you know, pick one of the three: moderate, conservative, or liberal.

MR. WILKERSON: I'm a fiscal conservative and a social progressive. (Laughter.)

MR. CIRINCIONE: Okay. That's an easy question.

MR. WILKERSON: Who the hell wants to be labeled?

MR. BOSCO (?): I identified myself as a liberal, but it's true I had some problems with that label, too. And so the question itself was Afghanistan?

Q: Iraq.

MR. SCHEUER: Iraq broke our back in the war against terrorism. Iraq has made everything much more difficult and the threat much more existential. The invasion of Iraq, we knew beforehand and everyone just ignored it in both parties, by the way, that the invasion of Iraq fitted the classical definition of what a defensive jihad is required for: an infidel power invading and occupying a Muslim country for an unprovoked reason. We now have in the heartland of the Muslim world a magnet for people to fight us and our allies for the foreseeable future and a breeding ground that will far exceed anything we saw in Afghanistan because of the Soviets.

At a more tactical level, al Qaeda will use Iraq as a conduit for the first time to be able to reach into the Levant and to have contiguous territory near Turkey and into the Arabian Peninsula. If there's a more desperately incorrect policy than the invasion of Iraq, I can't imagine what it would be.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Larry and David, could you give a comment on that?

MR. WILKERSON: I don't want to disassociate myself from those comments. I agree with a lot of what he said – what Mike said. I think Iraq has turned out to be the central front on terrorism because we made it and I think bin Laden, in whatever cave he's in in whatever Pakistani region, is probably chortling that we've done so because we've given him the rationale if he needed it and the place to perfect his theories and we've given it to him on a plate with knife and fork and a stick of dynamite.

It's incredible what we've done and it's incredible in retrospect how we allowed ourselves to get in a mess that in '90 and '91 we had thoroughly rehearsed before another President Bush and had that President Bush before we had even finished the rehearsal say, no, I'm not going to do it. I'm not going to Baghdad. The repercussions, the consequences, I'm not prepared to suffer and I'm not prepared to put the American people through and so forth. And yet a few years later, we went ahead and did it. With all those things still vividly in many minds, certainly in the minds of the people at Central Command – still on the shelves of planning documents at Central Command, we went ahead and did it.

And then, given that it was going to be so dicey in the first place, we screwed it up as probably America has never screwed up military operations in its history. Vietnam pales beside this I think and we haven't got it right yet, although we are doing a lot better now, but as my colleagues in Iraq tell me, it may be too late.

MR. CIRINCIONE: David?

MR. BOSCO: Just a brief comment. I would say that the idea – I certainly agree that Iraq has become a central fund and I agree with all the criticisms that have been made, but I think it's an illusion to think that Iraq is somehow the leading factor. We are facing determined opposition in Afghanistan despite the fact that that was endorsed by the UN Security Council, despite the fact that NATO is there. In fact, NATO troops are in the south of Afghanistan right now and they are facing a wave of violence directed at them precisely because the Taliban remnants want to attack NATO, so I would just say that the idea that somehow it's all about Iraq is not true. And Afghanistan is seen as – the international forces there, despite having legal sanction and being a multilateral operation, are facing the ire of Islamists there.

MR. WILKERSON: Let me just add, if I can, one of the reasons we're having the problems we're having in Afghanistan right now is Iraq. I had a British brigadier to dinner the other night who has been given the portfolio by Prime Minister Blair and £1 million to do it with and a country to start it in to do what the UK is going to call security reform. And this brigadier had just come from several months working for the people in Iraq who were training the Iraqi military and the Iraqi police force and so forth. He's steeped in these things. He used to be a Hong Kong policeman before he joined the British Armed Forces. And he said it's a hospital pass. Does everybody know what a hospital pass is if you're a rugby player? In other words, we passed the ball to NATO knowing they were going to get smeared. It's a hospital pass. And we did that because we can't do Afghanistan and Iraq together.

MR. CIRINCIONE: More questions. Antoine, there you go. Thank you.

Q: I thank you. My name is Mike Frottle (ph). I've got a small group that advises insurance companies in private security fronts that tries to give them a second independent opinion about terrorism threats and one of the questions we face is one that you might want to include in your next survey and is pretty troubling.

When you make predictions and forecasts about threats, if and how we're going to be attacked again, after a while you have clients coming back to you and saying "Well, we haven't been attacked yet." And this whole question of trying to figure out where we stand in terms of vulnerabilities and threats, over time you need to address this issue of credibility and I think that one of the problems that we're having here in terms of this debate about whether we're doing a good job about the war on terrorism is that people outside the policy circles think about, "Well, have we been attacked again?"

And that's why probably the president thinks there is some credibility in making his point that we haven't been attacked 9/11 style, which, you know, you could describe – what is this? – multiple, simultaneous, dramatic attacks throughout the American continent. So is there any thought about including, asking people whether they have an opinion as to why we haven't been attacked at home again.

MR. SCHEUER: You know, I think I would say one think about that is that the politicians in both parties have done a marvelous job in obfuscating the reality of this war

by defining it simply in terms of explosions inside the United States. If you are Osama bin Laden and you are looking at the United States, the United States has been under attack every day since 9/11. We're mired in two wars we're losing overseas, the budget deficit is spiraling up, we are plagued with an immigration problem that's probably shielding the entry of the enemy into our country, so I think we look too narrowly at the threat and we certainly don't understand the patience and endurance of the enemy.

One of the signal failures of American counterterrorism within the U.S. government is to assume that because someone hasn't attacked us it's because we're winning or because they can't. I just think the politicians have made this a manageable thing for them. Explosions, we're losing; no explosions, we're winning. And I don't know how to quite get around that, but you're probably – you're exactly – you have a problem that's worth – certainly worth looking at.

MR. WILKERSON: I want just to add that the Indonesians and the Australians and certainly the Spanish and the English would not agree with you that there hasn't been another attack, but I won't take it away from this administration in terms of essentially three ingredients: special operating forces, the conventional military, and some of the plans that DOD and others in the interagency process developed and are executing. They have had an effect. I'll just sum it up by saying it's very difficult to plan, very difficult to finance that planning, very difficult to recruit, and very difficult to train when you're constantly harassed. And in that sense, the military is doing a bang up job and it has to be a part of why we haven't been attacked.

MR. CIRINCIONE: That's a very good suggestion and we would like to ask that question next time. One of the – we didn't highlight this, but we found that 84 percent of the experts thought that it was likely or very likely that we would be hit again on the scale of 9/11 in the next 5 years – the next 5 years.

MR. BOSCO: And I wonder – looking at that result, I wondered how much of it might be kind of what I think you're alluding to, which is a bit of posterior covering by experts, because it's better to say – it's better to have said that we're going to get hit than to have said we're not and then get hit. I mean, I think – so I wouldn't be surprised if that's an element in there.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Next question. Why don't you come around up here and then we'll go back to the back. Put your hands up again so I can see. Okay, thanks.

Q: Thanks. I am Gary Mitchell from the Mitchell Report. I want to ask a question and prior to that come back to the exchange between David Bosco and Michael Scheuer and make an observation which I think links to the question and that is that I can't think of an action that is any more important in the long run to America's national security than doing everything it can to make sure that young girls in the Middle East, Africa, and elsewhere are educated.

The question is to a statement that I think I heard correctly from Michael Scheuer, which is that all of this has nothing to do with extreme religious perspectives; it has to do simply with the conduct of American foreign policy.

MR. SCHEUER: No, I said one triggered the other.

Q: Then my question would be what would an American foreign policy look like – what would be the principal components of an American form policy that wouldn't create these problems?

MR. SCHEUER: I think disengagement is one thing. We've clearly bitten off more than we can chew. We need an energy policy, for example, that gets us as far out of the Arabian Peninsula as quickly as we can. Who would care if every Arab killed every other Arab on the peninsula?

MR. BOSCO (?): I would.

MR. SCHEUER: There's nothing on the peninsula that's worth the life of one Marine or one soldier. Energy policy is the key. It gives us maneuverability in the Middle East. Right now we're locked there. We get nothing for our local support for Putin in Chechnya. What do we get out of that? If we – there's no trouble with keeping silent. Why do we support people who are aggravating the situation?

Q: (Off mike) – I understand the criticism –

MR. CIRINCIONE: Sir, could you wait for the mike? Wait for one second.

Q: I'm sorry. I understand that some of these observations and criticisms and some I may share, but my question is, at some point, if you're a president, you have to decide what you're going to do about Putin and saying – and what I want to know specifically with respect to Putin and some of the other questions that you're talking about, what would you do and what would that foreign policy look like?

MR. SCHEUER: I think the first thing any president has to do, it would be useful to tell the truth that this war has nothing to do with our society and democracy and it has everything to do with what we do in the Islamic world, and then you can have a debate.

Ultimately, it's up to the American people about whether they think it's worth spending the lives of their young men and women, so that – you know, I disagree with you entirely, but to spend the lives of very young men and women so some woman in Afghanistan or Somalia can vote. I can't imagine a lot of people signing onto that, but I'm generally wrong about everything.

MR. BOSCO: I would just like to say – I just want to say for the record that I think that genocide on the Arabian Peninsula would be of concern to U.S. foreign policy and perhaps even something that we should deploy the military to stop, as we deployed

the military to stop genocide in Kosovo and Bosnia and other places and I think we just have a fundamentally different conception –

MR. SCHEUER: Yeah, you know, the human rights issue is just a fundamentally vacuous issue. People are chasing the United States for incarcerating a few people around the world, but Putin is the legatee of a system that killed 40 million people. It – once the human rights people get that one squared away then they ought to come and talk to the United States about Guantanamo Bay or something else.

MR. CIRINCIONE: The young woman over in the – you. Put your hand up again please, so he can – he can see. I'm sorry. The man in the Hawaiian shirt. I thought it was a young lady. Whoever had the hand up over there – thank you; that guy – right there. (Laughter.)

Q: George Washington said something about having a decent respect for the opinions of mankind. Is disavowing the Geneva Convention, which –

MR. CIRINCIONE: I'm sorry, you are?

Q: My name is Martin Gensler. I used to work for Senator Wellstone and for CIA. Does torturing prisoners, violating the Geneva Convention which we signed, the international convention on torture – what does that do to our image abroad?

(Cross talk.)

Q: What does that do the likelihood that (unintelligible) be attacked by Muslim countries? Or that we have MDs down in – military MDs down in Guantanamo who are looking the other way while they violate both medical ethics and the principles of the practice of medicine.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Let me put your question in the frame of this discussion. Are you asking do those practices by the United States motivate attacks then against the United States?

Q: Add to the motivation.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Add to the motivation.

Q: For those who would attack United States, and sort of deprives us of allies around the world.

MR. SCHEUER: Okay. Thank you.

I would say that one of the most dangerous things that's happening is things like Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, the desecration of the Koran, the burning of the bodies of the Mujahideen because the great thing America has going for it at the moment is that our

policies are hated, Americans are not. But over the past several years we're seeing increasingly that Americans are being hated just because they are Americans.

The issue of Guantanamo Bay, the issue of Abu Ghraib, of course, comes back to the politicians. The very correct way to handle this war is to treat these people as prisoners of war as we treated the Germans and the Japanese because interrogation is almost useless – you never get very good information from it. I think you had a good point and I think that ultimately it comes down to political leadership.

MR. CIRINCIONE: In the red shirt, please.

MR. WILKERSON: Let me – let me just say one thing.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Okay.

MR. WILKERSON: Irving Babbitt made a really quality observation in 1923 as I recall; he said the reason the American does not observe himself as a dollar-chaser and the foreigner does is because the American judges himself by how he feels, the foreigner judges him by what he does. And it is unquestionable that we have lost enormous prestige, power and all manner of other things in the world because of our deeds over the last four or five years, and not just in the Muslim world.

Q: Thank you. My name is Richard Wetzel from the German Historical Institute here in Washington. I have two questions. I'll make them brief. My first one is I generally think it's good news what you found in the survey, which is that most of the experts are on to the fact that we're largely on the wrong track.

My first question is given that that's the case, you know, how do you – this is to all the panelists – explain the fact that the Bush administration is so largely on the wrong track; that is, are these people just bereft of expert advice or do they just willfully ignore it? And secondly, why is it also that the Democratic Party, which one would think would sort of draw on this to elaborate a clearly alternative policy, also doesn't seem to be doing that?

And my second question is about civil liberties, which I was very glad that Lawrence Wilkerson addressed when you mentioned that during the Cold War, it was really a policy of compromise between national security needs and the needs of remaining a democratic country and at times that seems to have gone out the window as we know with various things such as warrantless eavesdropping and so on.

My question is was there a question about this issue in your survey? In other words, there are some of us that think it's not right for the president to simply disregard something like the FISA Act anyway and that the rule of law is important, but if in addition it turned out that the experts think that these various things that have been done disregarding civil liberties are not even effective perhaps in the war on terror, then one would think that might be an additional argument for why we ought to look into that.

Thank you.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you. Two very interesting points. I don't think we asked either one the way you are suggesting, but we'll keep that in mind for the next survey. So even though we didn't ask the experts why is the administration doing so poorly, do any of you experts have an answer for that?

MR. SCHEUER: I just think it's a great deal of – there's a great deal of political correctness in the United States. What could – you can't talk about it. How can you talk about the problem of Israel? That's a martyrdom operation for any American politician.

MR. BOSCO: Can I just press on that point and ask what you think our Israel policy should be?

MR. SCHEUER: Yeah. I think we should call the Israelis and the Palestinians in and say we've had 50 years of your infantile, murderous behavior and we're sick of it. Here's the deal we want and if you don't want it, that's fine. You're both big guys, but fight each other out. We don't have any interest in Palestine or Israel. What possible interest could we have there? If they did both disappeared tomorrow, what would that bother in the United States?

(Laughter.)

MR. BOSCO: But genocide is spreading around the globe as we can continue the debate.

MR. SCHEUER: That's a flip answer, but not an answer.

MR. BOSCO: No, it is a real answer, I mean –

MR. SCHEUER: It's not – it's not a real answer at all.

MR. BOSCO: It doesn't matter to U.S. foreign – you're saying it doesn't matter to U.S. foreign policy if Israel disappears?

MR. SCHEUER: Or Palestine.

MR. BOSCO: Or Palestine.

MR. SCHEUER: Or Bolivia or – or –

(Laughter.)

MR. BOSCO: I don't know what to say to that.

MR. CIRINCIONE: That's fine.

Q: (Inaudible) the war in Afghanistan? (Inaudible.)

MR. CIRINCIONE: Wait. No, no.

ANTOINE MORRIS: Sir, could you please wait until you're called upon?
Thanks.

(Cross talk.)

MR. WILKERSON: Let me – let me just –

MR. CIRINCIONE: Does anyone want to respond to the question of why the administration or the Democrats are doing so poorly in this war?

MR. WILKERSON: Let me make one – just one comment and then respond to that. While the military strategist in me might want to agree with Michael, the historian and academic of American history, especially since World War II, but to a certain extent since about 1912, wouldn't allow me to do that. Our values and our sense of human decency has become and will probably remain a part of our foreign policy that we ignore at our peril because it has also become a part of the very warp and woof of this Republic and the American people, whether individually they'll admit it or not. And if you look closely at polling data across the time I'm referring to, you'll see that.

So as a military man, I might, you know: "Uh, I don't want to do that," but as an academic, an historian, and an American, I have to understand that it is part of the very fabric of our republic that we are concerned with human rights and so forth.

Now, my point: the best way to advance human rights in the world is not with bombs, bullets, and bayonets. The best way to advance human rights in the world is by our living up to the ideal of human decency, freedom, democracy that we purport all the time. And I come back to Michael's point in that regard: only on occasion is military force the instrument to do that with. One of the reasons I didn't mention that we do that so readily is because less than 1 percent of your country is bleeding and dying for you in Afghanistan and Iraq and maintaining the ramparts of freedom around the rest of the world – less than 1 percent. That's unconscionable, but it's the truth.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Let's take some questions from the back and we'll go straight to the person at the – woman in the black, white purse. And since we're starting to get a little short on time, please keep your questions brief and we promise to keep our answers brief.

Q: I had two questions, but I'll only ask one.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Uh-oh. (Laughter.)

Q: My name is Heather. I'm an intern at the Center for National Policy and I've been doing some research on a new phenomenon of – sorry, new phenomenon of homegrown terrorism and, gentlemen, I wanted to know what your opinion is on homegrown terrorism and if you think it's a new mythology that al Qaeda and other terrorist groups will be using in the future? Thank you.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Let's start with Larry.

MR. WILKERSON: I have real concern. If you've read Michael Ignatius' really fine little book called *The Lesser Evil*, he comes to a rather dramatic conclusion in that book that his greatest fear is of the federal building in Oklahoma City repeat with a nuclear weapon, of the Unabomber with a nuclear weapon. Because if you think about it for a moment, it's very difficult to uncover people like that – extremely difficult because they don't have connections. They're usually loners and if they do have any connections, they're usually not ones you can detect readily and so his greatest fear is of the homegrown terrorist who would get his hands on a nuclear weapon and we would have to deal with that.

And if you've heard Paul Piller (sp) talk about the two curves in the world – he's a very competent NIO and he studied this for 30 years – the two curves in the world are the curve of terrorism and the curve of what you might call nuclear weapon development in your garage and terrorism kind of occurs in sporadic burst across the millennia and it usually lasts a few years, not much longer than a generation in most cases, and then it sorts of peters out. It's always going to be there, but the burst is gone. If that curve of intense terrorism intersects with the curve of being able to craft a half-KT nuclear weapon in your garage, which he claims will happen in the next ten or 15 years, we're in trouble. And we're truly in trouble with regard to what Michael talks about in that book, which is the homegrown terrorist rather than perhaps the international terrorist.

MR. SCHEUER: I think on the homegrown issue, just very quickly, one of the – one of the penalties we're paying for treating bin Laden as a gangster, a terrorist, a madman is that we have not ever paid attention to what he said and he has always said that al Qaeda has three goals. The third is to attack the United States using its own forces. The second is to train insurgents to fight around the world wherever Muslims are pressed, and the first is to inspire other people to fight the United States and drive it out of the Middle East.

We kind of ignore that, and certainly that has been their primary goal. Bin Laden has said, "I'm just one Muslim, my group's the small one, we're a vanguard. What we need to do is inspire other people," and if you start in November, '05, with the takedown of the cell in Melbourne and Sydney, move over to London and then Toronto and then Miami, none of them had any connection to Osama bin Laden. They all trained by – with material off the internet in their own countries and they're all – there's all evidence that they're all inspired by Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda.

So I think it's a very serious concern. I don't know enough about nuclear weapons to get into that, but clearly the fire that bin Laden has tried to set is increasing in the West and the East for that matter.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Anything, David?

MR. BOSCO: No, I defer to that.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Go to the next question. Just work your way up. Gentleman in blue right there – right there. Just as you give him the mike –give him the mike.

I do know something about nuclear weapons. I don't think we're ever going to build a nuclear weapon in the garage. If Paul Piller's saying that I think he's wrong, but a well-funded, organized group like al Qaeda could, of course, build a nuclear weapon if they can get a hold of sufficient fissile material, but build in from scratch in a garage like a home-hobby kit – not going to happen.

Sir?

MR. WILKERSON: Sure hope you're right.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Please identify yourself and ask your question. Thanks.

Q: Wayne Gagner. I'm the former conference chairman for the Iraqi reconstruction at Whitehall for two years. I'd just like to say I was hammered quite badly by questions – two general areas: terrorism protection in Iraq and then also how do you get money out of the Americans to pay for the other problems and I consider that a big time problem.

The second comment is as a former intelligence officer, I never met an Air Force intelligence officer that made mistakes – (laughter) – however, I met many managers, Congressmen, administrations that were disastrous and I don't know if you're factoring those into the –

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you, we'll just take your comment then. Next, right in front of you. We'll just work our way up.

Q: Lawrence Freeman from *Executive Intelligence Review* magazine. I have a question for Colonel Wilkerson on the question of how you change foreign policy. I think I read some of your remarks on the Hill on Monday on the policy towards Iraq coming from Vice President Cheney's office and there's a long history to that, but I think is pretty conclusive at this point that that is has been the driver of the policy regardless of any practical questions.

Now, given that role that he's played, is it possible that we could change the Iraq policy with Vice President Cheney still there? Is it also possible that other countries

around the world who would like to work with the United States, who do see it as the Great Republic it has been, are they going to be able to work with us with the vice president sitting in office for the next few years? In other words, how do we get out of this mess? Can there be a change toward the foreign policy, which your survey indicates, with this guy in office?

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you.

Q: Thank you.

MR. WILKERSON: That's an excellent question. I think they can and I think Dr. Rice with some opposition, but opposition I think she can overcome, is proceeding along that path right now. The dispatch of Bob Kamen and Phil Zelikow to the United Nations, reported in the *Washington Post* this morning, to essentially plead with Kofi Annan and others to put together a group – a consortium of an international nature that will fund the future of Iraq and help in Iraq is an indication, even as John Bolton blasts Mark Malloch Brown.

We've done this throughout the post-World War II history. We've used the United Nations, often leaking to it what our policy is and then it pronounces on that policy and then we scathingly attack the United Nations for saying what our policy is. We love to do that. But I think Dr. Rice has embarked on a course that could be a vast improvement in what we've been doing and I think that indicates the president has finally decided that the cabal – Rumsfeld and Cheney – are the two who've gotten him in the deepest trouble of his presidency; indeed, maybe his legacy entirely, and so he's trying to fight his way out of that. I am an optimist about that; I think Dr. Rice is going to win.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Questions? Yes, you. Thank you.

Q: Hi, I'm Peter Backof from here at the Center. I guess when I see the survey and read the results, it seems like there's a growing awareness amongst the experts that there's kind of an interconnectedness problem to our national security dilemma and my question is, is the Fortress America model that I think Mr. Scheuer seems to be advocating – is that a viable model for our national security and, if not, can we –

MR. CIRINCIONE: What's the model again?

Q: The Fortress America, where we sort of try to basically get out of the way of what – of the rest of the world that seems to be upset with us rather than being involved in these things. So it seems like there's a relationship between interconnected world and the national security problems that we're facing. So is that sort of a model where we withdraw, is that viable? And if not, then will we ever be able to get the political leadership in this country motivated to try and get the resources that we need to solve the interconnected sort of problem?

MR. CIRINCIONE: Since I'm certain we have different views in the panel, I just want to ask Michael and David to respond to that. Michael, why don't you – well, wait a minute, David, why don't you go first? (Laughter.)

MR. BOSCO: Well, I mean, I think as evident from my remarks I think the idea of retreating in from the world – I mean, you can have harsh disagreements about U.S. policy now; the question is whether kind of retreating in from the world, not engaging on human rights issues – whether that is the appropriate response. I think that would be a disastrous response. I think in many other periods of history, the U.S. has suffered greatly from having retreated in from the world and let forces gather that ultimately we had to confront that would have been much better confronted earlier. So as a general rule, I think a Fortress America approach would be disastrous.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Michael?

MR. SCHEUER: I don't think I meant – I did not mean to suggest a Fortress America. I just thought we should get back to the point where national interests are defined accurately as issues of life and death: Darfur, Israel/Palestine, certainly Iraq before the invasion were not matters of life and death for the United States.

We have enough problems in the world naturally, whether through trade, immigration, and military problems that we don't need to go looking for more. Human rights are important insofar as they're protected and flourish in the United States. We can be all the vocal supporter of these things around the world that we want and we should be. We should be the example for the world. We should not be the installer and enforcer of those things.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Got it. Let me start putting some questions together since you're right there. Let's take that one and we'll bring it up front.

Q: My name is Jon Powers. I'm an Iraq veteran. I work for a program called Veterans for America. The first question follows on what Colonel Wilkerson said and possibly a question for the index is, can America win the war on terror which is now the third longest war in American history if only 1 percent of America is actually fighting the war and there's no war machine in place that is actually getting the American public engaged in what we're doing?

The second piece revolves on youth. With no basic youth policy to engage a country in Iraq where 61 percent under 25, 50 percent is under 18, and of the hundreds of billions of dollars we've spent there, other than schools zero percent has gone towards youth engagement, which is a demographic that covers the whole Middle East.

So can we develop a youth policy as a nation to push that out? It is basic counterterrorism to engage these kids so they're not part of – they're not the paid-for-hire insurgents who are laying roadside bombs.

MR. CIRINCIONE: When did you serve in Iraq?

Q: May, 2003, to July, 2004. I was a captain in the 1st Armored Division.

MR. CIRINCIONE: And where?

Q: Both in Baghdad and Najaf and Adamiyah (ph), which is the focal point of Iraq right now.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you. Now, hold those – hold your answers to those questions. Let's take another one. If you just bring it up, please. This gentleman over here – right up front. I want to just take two – yeah, with the beard, please. Sorry, we'll get to you though.

Q: Will Amatruda, Catholic University. This question is for Mr. Scheuer. You've spoken for the need of a more realistic foreign policy with the clear implication that it creates less enemies for us or at least motivates them less, and yet you've also said that we need to be fighting a lot more people than we are already.

MR. SCHEUER: Killing.

Q: Okay. Well, who do you have in mind – (laughter) – and are you willing to –

MR. CIRINCIONE: We get that. Okay, next question. Okay, thanks. That's good. Let's start with the first question first and then we'll get to Michael. And, Larry, the first question was addressed to you.

MR. WILKERSON: As long as you use a reasonable definition of win – you'll never going to perfect, you know, your security situation; there're always going to be terrorists – I think that America can still bring itself out of this with shining colors.

Some of the specifics right now, as you indicated, are appalling: that the secretary of defense decided that precision guided weapons and the Air Force were the answer two, three years ago when the evidence was screaming at him, the experts were screaming at him otherwise, and didn't increase the sizes of ground forces – the Marine Corps and the Army – is appalling. He should have been fired for that alone. Now, it's too late on his watch. He couldn't even realize the increase in the size of the ground forces.

Let me tell you what he's done with your Special Operating Forces. The four-star general who commands the Special Operations Command stood in front of Grant Green and myself in the Delta Force briefing at Fort Bragg and said we have historical figures on what percentage of the armed forces we can take and make special operators. It hasn't deviated over half a century. So if we're going to increase more – we're going to increase the Special Operating Forces, we got to increase the size that we draw from – the pool we draw from. Didn't do that, but he's going to increase the size of the SOF. Guess

what? His standards are going to go straight down as he tries to recruit new Green Berets, new Rangers, new Seals, new CCTs for the Air Force and so forth.

That's how this secretary of defense deals with needs. He should be fired. He should be fired, but yes, we can still win. The military instrument can still recover.

The reconstitution costs alone, ladies and gentlemen – you saw \$17 billion in the papers the other day, don't believe that. The reconstitution costs alone for this ground force – your Marines and your Army – is probably going to be in the neighborhood of \$25 billion for the new president. That's just to bring them up to speed in Apaches, Black Hawks, Abrams tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, Humvees, five-ton and eight-ton trucks and so forth, that they were up to before they went into Iraq. That's the cost the new president is going to be handed. He or she is going to be not too happy about that, I think.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you. Thank you. Michael?

MR. SCHEUER: On your question, you know, we're fighting an enemy for who this war is a zero-sum game. We've lost Afghanistan; we are going to lose Iraq, primarily because in Afghanistan, we let 40,000 Taliban guys go home with their guns and in Iraq we let 450,000 Iraqis go home with their guns. Now, you either kill them or you don't engage.

I'm beginning to get – to feel – to believe that America can no longer conduct wars. If you read the new book about Iraq, *Cobra II*, any action that might kill more than 30 civilians had to be referred to the secretary of defense for approval. That's absurd. You can't fight a war that way. You certainly can't fight an enemy who doesn't wear a uniform and blends into civilian populations.

So if you don't kill them, what do you do? You'd better stay home. The very fact that you don't use your military effectively will result in a Fortress America situation because you can't go overseas. War hasn't changed since Caesar, for Christ's sake, you know? We'd like to believe it, like Colonel Wilkerson says, you know, precision bombs – precision bombs has won us precisely nothing. At the end of the day, wars are fought in the mud by men and women.

MR. CIRINCIONE: David, do you want to add anything?

MR. BOSCO: Slobodan Milosevic might have a different view of that since bombs pretty much drove him out of Kosovo and prevented –

MR. SCHEUER: A war entirely unnecessary to American interests.

MR. BOSCO: That may or may not be the case, but the point is that bombing forced him to stop his policies in Kosovo.

MR. SCHEUER: Well, I agree with the use of force. I can't (see any differences there?)

MR. CIRINCIONE: More questions? Then we'll close it up. Hold on. We've got one up here and one in the back. Here you go.

Q: Hi, I'm Ahmed Baset with the Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research. I think one of the major reasons why the United States has had high popularity throughout the world before 9/11 is because of our support for democratic values and human rights. I think you provide a false paradox, Mr. Scheuer, when you say that we can't pursue a solid, good foreign policy that would be supported in the Muslim world and at the same time support human values and human rights in those areas.

My question is if the key to winning the war is deradicalizing those 40 or 100 million Muslims, doesn't that require then that we have to – we're in a war then with Osama bin Laden – a race to win hearts and minds in the Muslim world. Don't we do that with the human rights campaign in which we do support the injustices in the Muslim world and try to fix those?

MR. SCHEUER: It was a genuine effort, but as long as we are the protectors, funders, and suppliers of tyrannies in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Algeria, keep on the list. What – it's nonsense. One of bin Laden's strongest suits is – is you know, the Americans, sure they want freedom – that's why they give \$3 billion to Hosni Mubarak every year, that's why they give a military shield to the al Sauds. You know, it's farcical almost to preach on the one hand human rights and freedom and support Hosni Mubarak. Whether or not you have to do it – there might be very good reasons to support Mubarak for U.S. interests, but you can't sing the tune of human rights.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Last question, the young woman in the back, and then I'd like to have our panelists respond to the question and add any other closing remarks they'd like.

Q: Hi, I'm Susie (unintelligible). I'm a resident of D.C., ground zero whether we like it or not and whether the president gives us money or not – and Homeland Security. My question is – I was very interested to learn that – of your political persuasions especially for the third guy who's been sort of all over the map. My question is what – where are you going to fall in November for what political party? You're going to lean for in terrorism in all – in the future for the United States and terrorism.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you very much. Don't get into answering how you're going to vote. (Laughter.) This is a democracy and we still have a secret ballot, but you might want to take this as an opportunity to talk about the political landscape or just give us some closing remarks. Let me start with Larry Wilkerson and we'll work our way down.

MR. WILKERSON: Well, I'll try not to be too wordy about this. I think our political process is broken, too, along with a lot of other things and we don't offer up the best candidates in either party and I don't expect it to change this time, but it's going to depend on the individual and as my students tell me all the time – one of the things I found out about my students that was kind of alarming is their cynicism. Now, they don't vote and they don't vote because they believe what I've just said that – that our political system is broken and it does not offer the best people for elections, whether they are local, state, or national. But I'm going to vote for the best person and I don't give a damn what party he's from – or she. (Laughter.)

MR. SCHEUER: I'm going to vote Republican.

MR. CIRINCIONE: Michael?

MR. SCHEUER: I'm going to vote Republican. (Laughter.)

MR. CIRINCIONE: Thank you. David?

MR. BOSCO: I'm not sure I'm going to say how I'm going to vote, but maybe I was the third guy that you're referring to and I – okay. My foreign policy tends to be kind of a Blairite foreign policy, I guess: kind of assertive in favor of defense of human rights and I guess that's as far as I would go on that point.

MR. CIRINCIONE: And that's all we have time for, unfortunately. There's a – there's a lot more in the index. Please take it home, read the materials, let us know what you think and please join me in thanking the panelists for their insights and commentary today. Thank you very much and thank you for coming. Have a good day.

(Applause.)

(END)