

# Center for American Progress



## **PANEL DISCUSSION:**

### **“THREATS, SOLUTIONS AND AMERICAN POWER: A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY”**

#### **MODERATOR:**

**ROBERT O. BOORSTIN,  
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY,  
CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS**

#### **FEATURING:**

**PETER BEINART,  
EDITOR,  
*THE NEW REPUBLIC*;  
VISITING SCHOLAR, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION**

**DR. LOREN B. THOMPSON,  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER,  
LEXINGTON INSTITUTE**

**LAWRENCE J. KORB, SENIOR FELLOW,  
CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS;  
SENIOR ADVISOR, CENTER  
FOR DEFENSE INFORMATION**

**9:00 AM – 10:30 AM  
TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2005**

TRANSCRIPT PROVIDED BY  
DC TRANSCRIPTION & MEDIA REPURPOSING

JOHN PODESTA: Good morning. I am John Podesta, the president of the Center for American Progress, and I have a little mike problem. As many of you probably know, The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 requires the president to present to the Congress and the American people a national security strategy every year. The Bush administration last released the national security strategy in 2002, when it offered the now discredited doctrine of preventive war to justify diverting our national attention and resources from finishing the job in Afghanistan to pursue the war in Iraq.

Three years later, the effects of the Bush administration's strategy are clear: our ground forces are strained to the breaking point, many of our historical alliances are frayed, budget deficits are ballooning out of control, and our tarnished reputation abroad has diminished our capacity to exercise moral leadership.

The United States needs a strategy to protect our national security that is based on the way the world actually is, not on how some people wish it to be. Today, the Center for American Progress presents a national security strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this document, we argue that the interests of the United States will be best served by following a strategy of integrated power; a new concept that discards the traditional dichotomy between hard and soft power in favor of a multidimensional approach that merges the many and varied powers of our country to best achieve our goals of security, prosperity, and freedom in the face of the threats and opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

By operating with a failed strategy that does not enjoy the support of our people or our allies, and by relying exclusively on a go-it-alone approach to foreign policy, the Bush administration has exacerbated what we label "the forces of fragmentation" and made our world more dangerous. We need to build up the forces of integration, and to do that the country needs a comprehensive national security strategy now more than ever. The need for military force – hard power – is clear. Soft power alone cannot protect us, but military force alone also cannot advance our national interests. An integrated approach will best achieve those interests, make us safer, more prosperous, and freer and ultimately put us in the best position to lead the world.

It's important to note that the strategy we present today includes several policy recommendations in a variety of areas that build on the several of the studies in national security that the Center has produced in the last six months. We reference those reports as appropriate for those of you who are interested in pursuing some of the specific recommendations in greater detail; they are available on our website.

I am going to turn the podium over now to Bob Boorstin, our senior vice president for national security, who with Larry Korb led the effort to produce this report, and to introduce – Bob will introduce our panelists, but I want to express my personal thanks to

Peter Beinart and Loren Thompson for joining us here today for this important discussion.

Bob?

ROBERT BOORSTIN: Thank you, John. Good morning everyone. If people in the back want to come up and take seats, there are still some seats here in the front. I want to start, if I can beg the panelists' pardon, by thanking our national security team, which has been part and parcel producing this strategy.

This has been something of an ordeal for some people; for others, it has been an exciting adventure, but in any case all of us have contributed to it and I just wanted to recognize the folks who are here. Peter Rundlet, our vice president for national security, who did not see his family for week or two as he was responsible for editing this document; senior fellow Gayle Smith, who is somewhere out there, who did most of our work on conflict prevention and developing countries' issues; senior fellow P.J. Crowley, who does our homeland security issues; our program directors and analysts who have each helped on different sections, and I may call on them in the question and answer period to help us out; Nicole Mlade and Brian Katulis on democracy promotion; Caroline Wadhams on global terrorism; Andy Grotto on nuclear nonproliferation; Ken Gude and Peter Ogden on international rights and responsibilities; Jake Caldwell on global resources; and Antoine Morris, who you will see walking around this room from time to time, on just about everything.

Also, I want to thank our domestic team, in particular, Ana Unruh Cohen and Alyss Campaigne for their help on the energy chapter. One of the things that make this different from other national security strategies that you have seen in the past is that we view energy as part and parcel of national security policy. Finally, let me thank Max Bergmann, Rebecca Shultz, Brooke Lierman and Matt Brown, who did absolutely incredible work in keeping this document going, keeping us all going, and putting things together. They did a great job for us, so I thank them very much.

I want to introduce the panelists now. To my left, Larry Korb, senior fellow. Larry is responsible for the fact that we are all here this morning. It was his idea that we do this and I appreciate that. He is going to try to give us a picture after I talk for couple of minutes of how the United States – separate policies of the United States might be different today if we were operating under a strategy of integrated power.

To his left, Peter Beinart, who is the editor of the *New Republic*, now on sabbatical – I guess you call it – from the magazine and a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution where he is trying to, as I understand it, turn his article of “A Fighting Faith,” which many of you may have seen, into a book. Peter's article, which I recommend to all of you if you haven't read it, was seminal in my thinking about why we need to produce a national security strategy and we can talk about that more, but essentially he has argued that progressives ought to take a close look at the problem of terrorism and put it at the center of our thinking as we move forward.

And to his left, I should say physically, but not ideologically, Dr. Loren Thompson, COO of the Lexington Institute. Dr. Thompson has taught at Georgetown and Harvard, specializes in military affairs and in technology and security and Peter and Loren, after Larry and I talk for a few moments, are going to hopefully offer some trenchant and mean comments about what we have to say.

First, a bit on the document itself. Why did we undertake this? Well, there were three primary reasons and the first one was personal for me. It takes me back to 1981 when the man to my left here, Larry Korb, was assistant secretary for manpower at Ronald Reagan's Pentagon and I was a graduate student in England trying to explain to people in Europe why not all Americans actually agreed with what Ronald Reagan was doing. And I figured that if Larry and I could come together and reach some kind of agreement on what a national security strategy should look like, well, that was progress in and of itself to pull progressives together. This is a strategy that not all members of our team will agree with every little bit of, obviously. We all have objections to different pieces of different recommendations, but we have come to an understanding that I think is quite interesting in terms of the agreement that we reached about the need to move beyond the past, to move beyond ideas about hard and soft power, as John has said.

Second, the reason we did this is that the Center wants to provide a concrete answer to all of the people out there who say that progressives are good at complaining, but have no good ideas about what to do with our national security. The American people deserve to know that there is a different and a better path to keeping our country strong and to spreading democracy and prosperity around the world, and we are for one path here in this document.

And third, we wanted to produce a national security strategy because the Bush administration frankly has failed to produce a coherent approach to national security, and, as we argue in the introduction to our document, has put Americans at greater risk by weakening our military, draining our treasury and severely damaging our global influence and power. I should say that the portion of this document that is devoted to a critique of the Bush administration is very small, but it is not tame.

Consider for example how we address the president's war in Iraq and his goal of democracy promotion, and I will quote just briefly from the introduction. "President Bush has cast aside the Wilsonian goal of making the world safe for democracy in favor of imposing democracy by military force. That Saddam Hussein no longer rules Iraq is a blessing; that the president wants to spread democracy is laudable, but in the past two years we have learned that it matters a great deal how you achieve your goal. Every day the American people are witness to the terrible cost of the president's simplistic worldview and the blind certainty that drives those around him. The situation the United States today faces in Iraq is what happens when ideology trumps the facts and when a country acts without a strategy."

Now let me move on to the strategy and describe the document very briefly to you. The first section of the document puts out the idea of integrated power. We begin with the statement of goals and then we identify what we see as the three greatest threats to the American people today. Those are global terrorist networks, extreme regimes, which other people have called rogue regimes, and weak and failing states. We argue that these forces of fragmentation, as John said, pose a greater threat to the American people today than does any single power or any group of powers. We go on to argue that the United States has the opportunity to make great strides if we can turn to our advantage to 21<sup>st</sup> century forces of integration, and the forces that we talk about are globalization, democratization, the rise of new powers in the developing world, and the power of technology.

We also lay out three primary principles that should guide our national security strategy: to protect the American people first, to prevent conflicts whenever possible, and to leave vital alliances and modern international institutions. Then taking the threats and opportunities and these principles into account, we content that the interests of United States will be best served by following a strategy of integrated power, and by that we mean a strategy that discards traditional concepts of hard and soft power and use them as essential partners and not alternatives; a strategy that consciously uses the unifying forces of globalization to defeat the forces of fragmentation; a strategy that says the United States best increases its power when it integrates its actions with those of its allies; a strategy that says we cannot continue to divorce defense policy from energy policy, homeland security, development assistance or diplomacy; and a strategy that matches resources to priorities. And in this document we come out in favor of a unified national security budget, of ending the current way of budgeting for national security.

So by integrated power we mean a strategy that applies both to what we do in the world and how we make national security policy here at home. And it's, finally, a strategy that integrates policy with cold, hard realities rather than a series of actions, as we have now, that are disconnected from each other and disconnected from the world itself.

In the second part of the document – and here we draw from many of the reports that the Center has produced – we offer concrete recommendations for actions in six areas: attacking global terrorist networks, quarantining nuclear and biological weapons, securing the homeland, preventing conflict and advancing shared prosperity, promoting democracy, and finally, achieving energy independence. Having said all this, let me offer the requisite caveats.

This strategy is not an attempt to be comprehensive. In some places we summarize huge debates and reports and analyses that have gone on for years in a single sentence or paragraph. We do not offer a new budget here; we do not offer detailed discussion of military transformation or a new nuclear posture. We will however, later this year, put out our own version of a QDR and an NPR. And the strategy is not like other recent national securities strategies in that we do not do a tour of the world and offer comments region by region and country by country. Having written one of those

during the Clinton administration, I can assure you that I did not want to relive that experience.

And with that said, I am going to turn it over to Larry

LAWRENCE KORB: Thank you very much, Bob, and thank you all for coming out this morning.

You know, when you are developing a national security strategy, it reminds me of a story I heard recently when I went down to give a lecture at a place called the Sarasota Institute for Lifetime Learning. That means retired people. And when I was down there they were telling the story about these two mature ladies sitting in their apartment one day and one said to the other, she said, "I have got news for you." The other one said, "Well, what's that?" She said, "I am going to get married again." She said, "At your age? He must have a lot of money." She says, "Nah, he just has his Social Security." She said, "Well, he must be really good looking." She said, "Ah, he's just kind of average." Somewhat sheepishly she said, "Well, he must be a great lover." She said, "We haven't even made love yet." She said, "Why are you doing this?" to which the other replied, "Because he can drive at night." (Laughter.) And in many ways we have to look at the world the way that it is, not like the way we want it to be, in developing a realistic national security strategy.

Now, let me also pick up on the point that John made, which I think is very important. When that act was passed in 1986 to reform the Pentagon, the way we do business, Congress said, we cannot make intelligent decisions about where to spend our resources unless we have a strategy. We want one every year. And in the first 15 years that Goldwater-Nichols existed we had 12 strategies. In the last five years we have had one. So even if you agree with the strategy or you like it, it's outdated, and Congress knew that, and at least we, the American people deserve it. Henry Kissinger just had a recent article in the Washington Post and he said, you know, nongovernmental organizations have got to get involved in this debate about strategy, and so this was what we are doing.

Now, I am going to make a few remarks about, okay, if, your strategy was in existence, how would the world be different? Well, first, everybody is concerned about Iraq. Well, we wouldn't have been there because Saddam Hussein was contained. People said that before and now we know it. It was an unnecessary diversion from our conflict with these radical jihadists who don't like our policies. But if we went, we would have embraced – actually what people call the Powell doctrine, it's really my old boss Cap Wienberger's doctrine. After our horrible situation in Lebanon and as a result of Vietnam, he laid down a strategy for using military force: if you are going to go, make sure that you get the American people onboard ahead of time by telling them what it's liable to do. In other words, when you go to war you do not plan for the best – you might hope for the best but you plan for the worst – use all of the force necessary to achieve the objective, and have a clear coherent exit strategy.

Now, if you take a look, even recently I am reading articles that troops – you know, people over there say, we don't have enough troops; we never have had enough troops. And more than that, we did not train the troops. We talk about defense transformation; that was a big issue in the 2000 campaign. Well, part of the transformation should also be for the manpower forces that you have. We did not have enough people trained for peace-keeping and stabilization; we had to make it up as we went.

Similarly, we would not have the same problems with North Korea particularly, and I would also argue with Iran. Why wouldn't with – North Korea we just ignored it. In the fall of 2002, when they said we have nuclear weapons, we said, well, you know, that's – stay away; we are getting ready to go to Iraq now, okay? We are not going to be bothered with this. And basically we said, we are not going to talk you directly. Can you imagine if during the Cold War, presidents had said, you know, we are not going to talk to you, Soviet Union, unless we can get, you know, NATO and SEATO at the table. No, you have got to be able to talk to these people directly; you need to have a strategy that puts down carrots and sticks. Similarly, when you label countries the axis of evil and then you invade one, that gives these people more of an incentive to develop these nuclear weapons.

Third, as Bob mentioned, we would have a different budget. And we have a reference in there to an event we had here a couple of weeks ago with working with the Center for Defense Information on Foreign Policy in Focus on a Unified National Security Budget. We reference it in here; it's a terrific document. What would we have done? We would have ensured that the spending went along with our priorities. Does it make more sense after 9/11 to spend more money on national missile defense than the entire Coast Guard? Which is a greater threat? Does it make sense not to be spending what you need to dry up the fissile material in the Soviet Union and the former republics? The Pentagon this year, when they were told to cut the budget, that's the first thing they put up. I noticed yesterday Tom Kean came back and he said, they still haven't put enough money in to securing the nuclear weapons. We would be spending more on development and assistance meeting in the Millennium Development Goals because one of the things we talk about, forces of fragmentation, are failing states, and failing states can become – among other things, they can become havens for terrorism.

One of our recommendations is that we meet the goal of having 0.7 percent of our GDP by 2015. We wouldn't be broke in terms of the way that we are doing business. We are becoming so dependent on foreign sources of money. As, you know, we point in here, 50 percent of all of the Treasury bills are owned by other countries. That's going to limit our freedom of action in dealing with situations, for example if something should happen with Taiwan. If we had an energy policy we would be less dependent on regimes like Saudi Arabia and would have more freedom in dealing with what happens in that part of the world. Nor would we be putting ourselves in a situation of potential conflict with China and India if we had a better energy policy that reduced our dependence on imported oil and developed new technologies that we could share with countries like China and India. We wouldn't be as unpopular around the world.

The British ambassador to Italy, in what he thought was an off-the-record session, said, you know, our invasion of Iraq was the best recruiting tool that Osama bin Laden could have. And we would also be less unpopular around the world if we had consulted more with our allies. We now know, from what British intelligence told us in the summer of 2002, while the president was getting ready to go to the United Nations they had already made up their mind to go to war and basically were trying to structure the intelligence to support that. We would also be spending more on a realistic public diplomacy program that would ensure that people around the world understood who we are and what we stand for. We would not have embraced what I would call “Wilsonianism on steroids.” The idea, yes, you should support democracy, you should want to have democracy, but you cannot make it happen through force of arms, and sometimes, the best thing you can do is not even to let people know that you are involved in there.

And finally, we would be paying more attention to our relationships with China and India. We shouldn't just sort of take a hands-off attitude on what's happening between China and Taiwan or between India and Pakistan in Kashmir. And then finally, our aid to Pakistan will be contingent on AQ Khan telling us where he proliferated all of those weapons.

Thank you.

MR. BOORSTIN: Peter.

PETER BEINART: Thanks very much, and it's a pleasure to be here.

I am going to kind of say what I like about the document, which is a lot, and then kind of give a few categories where I felt like I would have liked to know more, questions where I felt like the document didn't answer questions that I feel like are out there, at least that are out there for me.

I like the idea of integrated power a lot, primarily because it focuses on the importance of domestic strength in foreign policy, which is I think is one of the great weaknesses, not just of the Bush administration but of kind of conservative thinking and writing about foreign policy in general. There is very little attention, it seems to me in the commentary that I see, on this question of energy dependence and also on this question of America's fiscal position, America's economic position in the world and whether in fact the very ambitious kind of national security ideas that seem to come out of the Bush administration and conservatives in general are in any way matched with a policy of essentially a continuation of the policy going back to the 1980s of trying to defund government.

So you basically have a kind of libertarian domestic agenda in which you want to try to create a fiscal crisis so that you will have to tamp down government without recognizing that tamping down government, we were able to do it at the end of the Cold

War because the Cold War ended. Tamping down government dramatically is not a good strategy if you believe you are in a generational war and you are going to continue to need to devote huge resources to the military, to homeland security, to other things.

The questions I have, or the areas that I felt like the document was partly or totally silent, come in five categories. The first is the question of preeminence. Second is this question of fragmentation. The third is about deterrence. The fourth is about the concept of a war on terror, and then the fifth is about the category of weapons of mass destruction.

To start with the first, it seems to me that the concept of preeminence or primacy has really been at the heart of what the Bush administration and neoconservatives have really been about and interested in since the end of the Cold War. If you go back to the defense planning guidance in 1992, even before the war on terrorism, if you look at Bill Kristol and Robert Kagan's kind of important article, "Towards a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," what they basically say is, we don't know what the threat is, we don't know what the threat is going to be; that doesn't really matter. What matters is preserving unipolarity, preserving American preeminence or primacy in the world because that is the fact from which good things flow, and that needs to be maintained as a good in and of itself. It may not be sufficient for the world we want, but it's necessary for the world we want.

I don't really know where integrated power – where this document falls on the question of whether preeminence and primacy is a good in and of itself, or whether in fact we could achieve the goals we want in a world that was more multi-polar. I think this is a particularly important question because it has framed, I think, to a large degree, the Bush administration's response to international law. I think that the Bush administration and the right in general have seen the expansion of international law, particularly coming out of Europe over the last decade, as I think Charles Krauthammer called it, a kind of effort by the Lilliputians to bind Gulliver; that it's basically an effort to keep America from really being preeminent, from really having primacy.

Europe's international law project is the closest thing we have to a great power emerging against the United States in the absence of China, that being too far down the road. And that, it seems to me, has structured a lot of Bush administration's actions, this idea that in fact – and I think Bolton has said this pretty explicitly, if you go back to his writing in the late 1990s – that we need to be opposed to international law because international law is a threat to America's freedom of action and our freedom of action is the key to our ability to remain preeminent in the world. And it seems to me this is an important thing for liberals and progressives to think about because it is in a way the place where hard and soft power collide.

One can want to have an integrated strategy that goes beyond hard and soft power, but I think we would agree there are times when there was a trade-off between hard and soft power, and one of the hallmarks of the Bush administration has been – I think Donald Rumsfeld said he didn't know what soft power was – always choosing hard

power over soft power. And the international law question, it seems to me, is central here. For instance, on something like the International Criminal Court, clearly the United States' opposition to that and our campaign against that around the world has cost us some soft power. It has cost us some goodwill. It has cost us some legitimacy. However, it has preserved, to some degree, our freedom of action, our ability to not have to worry about what our troops in far-flung places do and worry that they might be hauled before some kind of international tribunal because of human rights issues, a question that was raised again now by Amnesty International in its suggestion that if we don't do something serious about Guantanamo, it would suggest that other countries do.

It seems to me this question of preeminence and a view on preeminence is related to a view on international law, and a view on international law is related to how one deals with those very difficult times in which hard power and soft power come into conflict, in which your freedom of action to use hard power, to use military power, conflicts with your legitimacy, and the hallmark of the Bush administration has been to always err on the side of maintaining America's freedom of action, not to focus very much on legitimacy at all. And I wonder more about how this integrated power idea deals with that difficult collision.

The second question I have is about fragmentation. It seems to me another hallmark of the Bush administration has been to move away from the focus on globalization as a guiding framework for the world, that one of the things you saw a lot during Clinton years was the notion that it was globalization and state weakness – which is what I interpret fragmentation to mean – state weakness that in fact is creating many of the new threats that we face, not traditionally state power; that it's the inability of states to – as I think the document talks about – the inability of states in fact to do the things that states are required to do inside their borders that then spills outside their borders and threatens us, whether it would in the form of terrorism or refugees or the spread of fissile material or disease or whatever. And the Bush administration, by contrast, has really, I think, rejected that idea and argued that in fact, no, it is still state power that threatens us, not state weakness, not globalization and the fragmentation that it creates, and that's part of the reason that it has been so inclined to see the threat of terrorism as still a state-based threat, as to basically believe that terrorist networks can't do anything without states and states are what you have to focus on.

The question I have about the fragmentation idea that's really at the heart of this document is I understand how fragmentation relates to terror networks. I think that's the right understanding of terror networks, that in fact they can operate very powerfully without states. They are often a response to state weakness. They are the result of state weakness, not just state power. And I certainly understand how failed states, which is the second in this triad, relates to this question of fragmentation. What I don't understand is how fragmentation explains extreme regimes or rogue states, countries like Iran or North Korea. It seems how you manage to incorporate a problem like Iran or North Korea or the problem that we had with Iraq under the rubric of fragmentation. They seem to me to be more – to be classically problems of state power. These are countries that want to increase their power for deterrent capacities or maybe for something else. And we are

not dealing, in the case of Iran and North Korea, with a problem of state weakness; we are dealing with a problem of state power. So I wonder how that relates to the notion of fragmentation as the fundamental kind of prism through which we should view the threats that we face.

The third question I have has to do with deterrence. The document says – and I think this is fairly non-controversial – that terror networks can't be deterred. The Bush administration I think, without being totally honest about it, has basically made the move to say that basically rogue states can't be deterred either. And this obviously goes back to a kind of a long-standing skepticism about deterrence that you see in the Cold War, people, you know, like Wohlstetter, who obviously had a big impact on Wolfowitz and Pearle, a skepticism of deterrence, the desire to build a missile defense instead, that has deep roots on the right.

I don't quite know where integrated power comes down on this question of deterrence. The document says that we should try – about Iran and North Korea – to pull these countries away from their pursuit of deadly weapons through a kind of a carrot-and-stick engagement, and I think that makes sense, but if one feels that the chances of doing that are in the real world – we have been talking about the real world – reasonably fairly bleak that the chances that you really are going to use carrots and sticks to get North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons or to get Iran to not build one, then it seems to me you fundamentally come down to the question of whether we still believe in deterrence. And I think that's something that – a kind of an argument that liberals have in a way – progressives shied away from a little bit in the past few years. Do we still believe that basically this should be the guiding doctrine; that it works as well vis-à-vis North Korea and Iran as it worked vis-à-vis the Soviet Union? That was the core idea for much of the Cold War, but certainly for the center, kind of liberal center during the Cold War. And it seems to me that conservatives have moved against that, and I don't know where integrated power comes down if essentially carrots and sticks fail and the choice comes down to deterrence, along with the hope that these countries are not going to export, versus whether in fact there is kind of some military option that you think about.

The fourth is the war on terror. The document says – and I would agree – that the war on terror is a bad framework, that we are not fighting terrorism; terrorism is merely a tactic. It begged the question for me, if then war on what? What exactly – I think the problem that people who have said the war on terror is a bad framework have had is in, in fact, replacing something with it in defining what it is that we in fact are in a war on. And I think answering that question is very difficult and has great ramifications, as does the previous question, whether in fact the notion of a war itself makes sense. That concept has been extremely powerful, remains extremely powerful, and I think that one of the questions that the document doesn't deal with it that I think is very interesting is in fact whether progressives and liberals should – regardless of the domestic political consequences of that, there's a question of national security strategy should in fact self-consciously discard that strategy, or if they should embrace it but say it's a war against something else.

The last point is about weapons of mass destruction. One of the interesting things about the document is that it pays a fair amount of attention to nuclear threats and to biological threats and even to radiological threats and says almost nothing about chemical threat. So it's really deconstructing this notion of weapons of mass destruction, and I think it should be – the authors are to be applauded for that. I think that the kind of mindless conflation of these threats has probably done a lot of harm in the debate over Iraq and the debate in general. But I wanted more of an explanation of an argument for why in fact we were kind of deconstructing this notion of WMD and focusing instead simply on nuclear and biological, and to some degree radiological; what the conceptual difference is here and whether there is a new way of formulating that, because just like war on terror, WMD has had enormous conceptual power as an idea, and it seems to me if one is going to try to move away from a focus on WMD, one needs to come up with some other conceptual idea to focus on the kinds of non-traditional, non-conventional threats that we are really worried about.

Thanks.

MR. BOORSTIN: Loren, over to you.

LOREN THOMPSON: Well, Larry, Bob, John, thank you very much for inviting me to be here today and participate in this discussion of the Center's proposed security strategy. I'm appearing today in my capacity as a swing voter, representative of that uncommitted centrist element that both parties must compete for if they hope to win the White House. Like many swing voters, I vote as much on the basis of what I don't like as what I do. So in 2000 I voted for Bush because I thought Gore was too liberal and in 2004 I voted for Kerry because I thought Bush had made too many mistakes. I was particularly unhappy in 2004 with Mr. Bush's performance as commander in chief, which struck me as sort of a chronicle of missteps made worse by the ideological biases of his subordinates. But my vote is very much up for grabs in 2008, and it's in that capacity, that spirit, that I would like to discuss this document.

Since many of you haven't had a chance to actually review the strategy, I will very briefly review what I understand to be its key points and then render a verdict based on a few observations. But before I do any of that, I think I should explain to you why I view this as being a very important document to the Democratic Party.

To date, George Bush's performance as commander in chief has been a disaster: the biggest terror attack in history, a nonstop series of intelligence failures, a war that didn't need to be fought, a near-collapse of the Western Alliance. I could go on. So what does it tell you about the Democratic Party that after perpetrating this debacle, George W. Bush was re-elected mainly on the basis of his defense policies? I can't find much evidence in the polls that the public supports Bush's domestic policies. He won reelection because he was viewed as strong on national defense during a time of national danger. The Democrats were viewed as weak and naïve, or worse. That perceived defect is the biggest single barrier to Democratic Party success in 2008. As things stand today the party basically has two options: it can hope that something happens that refocuses the

public on domestic policy, or it can change its defense policy. I view this document as, I guess, a vote for the latter option. It's a first step toward convincing people like me that Democrats can be trusted with national defense even at a time of considerable risk to the republic.

So let's see how well the proposed strategy succeeds by summarizing its main points, and I will do that in only 30 seconds.

The document begins by citing a paradox that although America is the world's largest military power, its biggest economy, most influential culture, somehow we have failed to frame a national security posture that leverages those advantages. It traces that paradox essentially to two things: a simplistic worldview on the part of Mr. Bush and his subordinates and a policy process that Balkanizes rather than unifies the many initiatives that collectively comprise our national purpose. Because these defects existed, our government has failed to cope effectively with forces of fragmentation in the international system, which you have already heard described – terrorism, extreme regimes, failed states – but it says there are also forces of integration in the international system, powerful forces like economic globalization, political liberalization or democratization, the impulse of states with shared goals to form alliances, and the power of emerging technologies.

So the document proposes a strategy of integrated power that brings together all the resources at U.S. disposal within a comprehensive, realistic framework to leverage the forces of integration encountering those fragmenting influences. And it consists essentially a three overarching goals: to protect the American people, to prevent conflicts, and to lead alliances and modernize institutions. Having set forth that basic framework, it then goes on to apply it to half a dozen generic challenges that we face in the world, everything from homeland security to breaking up terrorist networks to energy independence.

Well, that's the basic framework of integrated power. It is an elegant approach, far more so than the rather baroque national defense strategy that was released in March by the Pentagon. That latter document doesn't even purport to have the scope of this document and yet it's a lot harder to follow. It's really kind of like a Christmas tree of diverse concepts, not to mention contradictory. So at least on a rhetorical level, integrated power is already better than what the administration offers, but what about its substance? There I have a few complaints. I will mention five.

The first problem is sort of good news/bad news story. The good news is that the partisan divide that has haunted American security policies since Vietnam seems to be dissipated. The bad news, at least for the Center, is that integrated power sounds pretty much like the Bush security posture. There isn't much here to differentiate Democrats from what Bush has already done or is trying to do. For example, the Pentagon is currently conducting a congressionally mandated quadrennial defense review of the nation's military posture. Secretary Rumsfeld has directed that that should be ordered at focusing on four core problems: building alliances to defeat terrorism, defending the

homeland in depth, shaping the behavior of emerging powers like China and India, and the preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Does that sound familiar? It sounds very much like the priorities in this document. Now, maybe that is a good thing, but it does raise the obvious question of how Democrats can help to differentiate their security policies from those of the Republicans.

The second problem is that the document begins with the premise that America is the world's biggest economy and preeminent military power, and it has almost nothing to say about preserving those advantages. In fact, it seems unaware of severe strains in our military posture and trade performance that could compromise the whole structure of the strategy that it proposes. In the case of the military, our arsenal is aging due to chronic under-investment. You may think that Secretary Rumsfeld is spending a ton of money on weapons, but a good deal of that money is being squandered and a lot of rather obvious things are not getting bought. Meanwhile, the ability to recruit forces for our all-volunteer force has become very problematical. Yet integrated power calls for an increase in the size of the Army and says nothing about the fact that the Air Force's fighters are so old that they are operating with flight restrictions now due to metal fatigue and corrosion. Its aerial refueling tankers are so old that many of them trace their origins to the Eisenhower administration. Its cargo planes that carry our troops are twice the age of the commercial aircraft fleet and are getting harder and harder to keep in the air. Similar problems are apparent in all of the services and they are at least partially traceable to Mr. Rumsfeld's mismanagement of military modernization. Now, the fact that integrated power doesn't even mention those issues makes me wonder whether the authors are aware of it.

Similarly, America's trade deficit has been growing at about 1 percent of gross domestic product per year during the Bush administration. One out of six manufacturing jobs has disappeared. You can walk up and down every aisle at Best Buy and not find a single product made in America, at least till you get to the CD section; there you will probably find a couple of hip hop anthologies from America. Now, it seems to me it very unlikely that the United States is going to maintain its global standing and strength unless it arrests the rather rapid deterioration in its trade performance. Surely a comprehensive strategy for security in the years ahead should focus first on those issues rather than on bringing peace and prosperity to Darfur.

A third problem with integrated power is that it says protecting the American people should be the government's first priority, but it seems ambivalent about many of the best ways of doing that. I have already mentioned the dearth of discussion about the deterioration in our military capabilities despite the astronomical amount of money we are spending at the Pentagon, but the document also attacks the Bush administration's reliance on preemption, it attacks the Bush administration's efforts to build missile defenses, and it attacks the Bush administration's domestic security measures. It's a little hard to see how you can do a good job of protecting the American people if you aren't aware of the military's need to modernize, you are inclined to preempt threats, you don't want to build defenses against enemy missiles, and you think that any sacrifice of constitutional rights in the face of imminent danger is undesirable.

This compendium of objections to current policies is a clinical example of why swing voters like me have difficulty trusting Democrats with national security. For example, the ritual incantation that national missile defense is, quote, “speculative and destabilizing,” unquote, is utter nonsense. It’s a throwback to a time when threats were deterrable and when technology was a good deal less developed. Today the opposite is true. In fact, integrated power gives abundant evidence that the opposite is true today. So arguing that your top priority is to protect the American people while saying you don’t want to defend the nation against ballistic missiles or cruise missiles sounds at least contradictory.

A fourth problem with the document is that it exaggerates the real-world value of multilateral alliances and collective security arrangements. It would be nice to have strong allies that would bear some of the burden of our collective defense in this period of national need. It would also be helpful if the United Nations and regional security organizations could assume more responsibility for policing places where terrorists and other wrongdoers might seek sanctuary. But we have learned the hard way over the last 20 years that the more cases you include in a category the less any two of them have in common. So I think the wave of the future is probably bilateralism. Even when NATO confronted the looming menace of a Soviet invasion, it had a lot of difficulty maintaining a common strategy for its defense without the danger – that danger to impose some discipline and urgency on efforts at multilateral acts, and the Atlantic Alliance is slowly coming apart.

Now, integrated power draws a distinction between established alliances and what it calls coalitions of the willing, but, you know NATO actually was a coalition of the willing. It’s just in the case of NATO, what made it willing was a threat that persisted for two generations. Now, though, that threat is gone and European NATO is increasingly becoming a coalition of the unwilling, not to mention the unable.

This dynamic actually reminds me a great deal of what happened to many Sub-Saharan African countries after decolonization. During the colonial period they seemed unified, but once the imperial powers departed, they discovered that other than opposition to colonialism, they didn’t have much in common to give them a shared identity. That’s the problem with NATO; terrorists and extreme regimes just aren’t enough of a challenge to force unity among an otherwise diverse collection of states, so the alliance is running out of steam. And if you can’t forge unity among the states collectively comprising the West, then how likely is it that you are going to achieve unity out of the much more variegated membership of the UN?

The problem here isn’t Bush; the problem is human nature – which brings me to my fifth and final problem with integrated power. Although the document alludes frequently to various economic matters, I don’t detect much understanding here of how markets work. That’s important because if you don’t grasp how various fiscal or security policies will impact on market performance, you could do more harm than good. Let me offer a few examples drawn from the document.

It says that we must return to the fiscal discipline of the 1990s without acknowledging that balanced budgets back then were made possible by a stock market bubble and by military cuts associated with the end of the Cold War. If we try to balance the federal budget today, the economic growth would stop. It's slowing down as it is. It says we should increase regulation of hazardous chemical facilities, transportation lines and energy plants without acknowledging that these measures will further reduce the competitiveness of an already shrinking manufacturing sector. Today there is exactly one chemical plant worth over a billion dollars planned for construction in United States over the next decade. You know how many chemical plants are planned for construction in China over for the next decade of that value? Fifty. Now, why would you want to even further accelerate the de-industrialization of the United States, given that trend is already severely damaging our competitiveness and our trade performance?

Also the document says we need to invest in a range of clean and renewable energy initiatives without acknowledging that few of those options is economically viable in the absence of market distorting subsidies. Now, since few experts think that energy independence is a real possibility anyway, it seems that such measures could impede economic performance without improving our security. I actually like many of the energy initiatives proposed in the strategy, like the clean nuclear power initiative, but I don't find much evidence here that the authors trust markets or they analyze what their security policies might mean for economic competitiveness.

Well, after hearing this litany of complaints, you probably think I don't much like the strategy, the basic structure, or the specific prescriptions. Actually, the reason it sounds that way is because I figured everybody else would be positive about it so I wanted to be critical. I actually like most of it. I think it's coherent; I think it's elegant. I think it is incomplete, but you ought to read the Pentagon's national defense strategy. (Laughter.) It's a mess. It is really a mess. I mean, you really ought to read it. It's hard to believe that this is what a superpower thinks is a strategy.

So I think this document is pretty good. Unfortunately, much of what I like, President Bush has already said or done, and the parts that I particularly don't like are areas where the public thinks that Bush is stronger, like maintaining an adequate defense. So I guess my bottom-line assessment is that this is a good start, it's a coherent document, it's thoughtful, but it needs to pay more attention to underlying trends and economic performance and in military preparedness, and maybe it needs to trust markets a little more. Thanks.

MR. BOORSTIN: Thank you, very much, Loren. I'm trying to make here is that the idea of the United States asserting itself and of being a strong power is not necessarily antithetical to the idea of also following international law. I mean, they definitely – I think the Boltions of the world have a view that you can't have both, that you can't be strong and operate within the framework that the rest of the world accepts as a framework that's, you know, going to help people out in the long run. We are not saying that they are not points where things collide. I couldn't agree with you more there. And we had a

particularly interesting discussion on democracy promotion, and there is piece in the democracy promotion that chapter that directly get's at this: what do you in a situation where you need a country's help but that country is undemocratic? We come down in favor, in this document, of putting your long-range goal of growing democracy to the side, for the moment, while you get done what you must get done in order to protect the American people.

So the idea of this collision is something that we have struggled with greatly and I think that it's at the heart of something that the United States will struggle with, the question of ugly allies in the war on terror, the question of international law versus national strength.

Go ahead, Larry.

MR. KORB: I think that that's a terrific point. I mean, we talk about the fact that this is realistic; you must take the world as it is. In World War II we allied ourselves with the Soviet Union. Joe Stalin was not exactly a Wilsonian Democrat in terms of what we did. During the Cold War we had to make all of those tradeoffs, and even now we need to that, but I think what happens is we fail on two counts in the current way. One is we claim that we don't, and other people see us as a hypocritical when we make that claim, and not recognize that a rhetoric doesn't conform to our reality. And that's what we were saying in here, that you've got these tradeoffs; you need to be explicit in recognizing them.

On the other hand I think – you know, on this point – you take the International Criminal Court. If you take a look at that and you say, well, gee, if the military was, you know, part of that, we would have – it's not true because the International Criminal Court said only if you do not, you know, prosecute your soldiers or ground troops. And look at how we are; we are prosecuting them all over the place. Amnesty International was not talking about the soldiers on the ground; basically they were arguing about the people writing the torture memos and hiding prisoners. That's what, you know, they were talking about, and they were not referring to the International Criminal Court; it was the Geneva Convention. So we need to understand that a lot of the times when we say we are constraining ourselves it's actually going to help us, you know, in the long term.

Similarly, you know, we are talking about – and Loren made, you know, the point here about, well, our freedom of action. Look how Afghanistan was conducted. People forget that President Bush said to the Taliban, if you turn over al Qaeda, we will leave you alone. We did not go in there to spread democracy in Afghanistan. Now, when they didn't, then we went in. But NATO invoked Article Five; we had the UN approval, and basically – people forget; the only other country to use air power there was France, in Afghanistan and certainly after that war and the conferences, you know, to put aid in, and even today we have got NATO troops in there. Or another model would be the first Persian Gulf War, the way that was conducted.

So it can be done if in fact you put the efforts to it. And even if you believe we should have gone into Iraq, there was no rush. You could have let UN process play out. And I'm absolutely convinced – and if you listen to people like Jeremy Greenstock, who was then the British representative to the United Nations, if we had waited till the fall we would have had much more international support, but we put ourselves in a position where we couldn't because while the inspectors were in there we ended up with, you know, close to 300,000 troops in the theatre and we were in a use-it-or-lose-it position.

And I think Loren made some terrific points here in terms of – we are not saying – you know, for example, with national missile defense, we are saying the thing doesn't work yet, so why go ahead and spend all that money? And if it comes to a tradeoff where you've got a tradeoff, it should not be national missile defense against another defense program. Let's take a look at all of the things that we are talking about.

And I'm not an economist, but I was in government under Reagan – who was supposedly small government – I think we took in 22, 23 percent of GDP. Now we are taking in 17 percent of GDP. I think there is room for the government to take in more money to pay for these things. I have said this, you know, over and over again. This is the first war we have ever had where we not only did not have a draft but we cut taxes. I mean, if in fact you are going to do that you lead to the mess, you know, that we have got now, and I think maybe we didn't make it as clear as we should, but I think that we were making that point. We are talking about a unified national security budget so you can asses all of the tradeoffs. And I know Loren likes it; he and I have discussed the F22 over the years. I agree the Air Force planes are getting old and that's why I would buy the Joint Strike Fighter because you can get them at a more reasonable price and I think that they would fulfill the needs that you have to modernize the forces.

And then I think Peter made a terrific point of that going back to the 1992 document about American preeminence that we have heard. Remember that my kind of Republicans denounced that when it came out. Brent Scowcroft was appalled by it. Bush 41 was appalled by it because basically what you are saying is that that is way too expensive and it's not necessary to – it reminds me of during the '70s when Henry Kissinger made the comment, when people are argue we ought to have strategic superiority in nuclear weapons, he said basically, what the blazes is strategic superiority, and if you have it, what do you do with it? Okay, so you need to have the forces necessary to carry out your strategy, assuming that you've got a correct strategy, but this idea of preeminence for its own sake doesn't make a great deal of sense.

Let me conclude at this point. I just read a terrific article last week in the American Conservative by Andy Bacevich, and he made this point – where you combine American exceptionalism with what you see as preeminent American military power, and therefore you think you can do anything. Well, you find out when you get, even with this supposedly overwhelming power, you get yourself in a place like Iraq. And he made the point, which I think is really terrific: when General Shinseki said you needed 400,000 troops to go into Iraq, one of the reasons why the Pentagon people dissed them was

because they knew they could not put 400,000 troops in there and therefore they couldn't conduct the war the way they wanted.

MR. BEINART: I guess the only thing I would say in response to couple of things, I think that the – on the question of international law you don't – I think that you don't have to be John Bolton to recognize that the Clinton administration had a lot of trouble with this. The Clinton administration had a lot of trouble politically with questions like the International Criminal Court, Kyoto, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and there is a – the Clinton administration, which I would I imagine had many of the same values as this report, was not able to rally support in the country or perhaps even within sectors of its own administration, with the military for instance, to endorse the project of expanding international law that was coming out Europe.

And in many ways the Bush administration is right when they say the Clinton administration ducked some of those big questions, and then the Bush administration came in and very inelegantly and crudely kind of kicked all these things to the side one after another in its first year in office. And it seems to me that it does raise the question of how it is that America is going to shape this project of international law to make it palatable within our own within our own political context, which is very, very different, even if we might not always want it to be, from the European one.

I guess the second one I had has to do with this question of hypocrisy. The document has a line in which it takes shot at Bush's kind of grand rhetoric and suggests that in order to alleviate the hypocrisy gap we should scale down some of this rhetoric on democratization. And that would make it easier for us have to make some of the unpleasant tradeoffs that we inevitably have to make working with countries that are important allies in the war against global jihad, but may be ugly allies, as the document says.

I guess I would kind of make the counter – I think that the document puts no stock at all in the power of rhetoric per se, and it seems to me that's a debate that maybe should be engaged. It seems the Bush administration has made a decision that in fact – simply for the president of the United States to call, in very sweeping terms, for countries to free their political prisoners and to keep badgering them about it publicly over and over and over again, even though it exposes American hypocrisy and even though I think we would probably all agree that America should be pursuing very different domestic policies to make it seem less hypocritical; that it's worth basically having a grand rhetoric that exceeds your actions because there is rhetorical power itself when coming from the president of the United States that has an impact in the world.

Obviously there is a long and complicated, extremely politicized debated about to what degree the Bush administration deserves any credit for some of things that have happened in Lebanon and Egypt and other places. But it seems to me I would probably part company to some degree with the document's implicit suggestion that in fact grand rhetoric about the need for the march of human freedom and democrazation is essentially a bad thing because it makes America look hypocritical. I think it does make America

look hypocritical, and America should try to be less hypocritical when it can be. But I think the costs of the hypocrisy, in my view, are exceeded by the value of putting democracy and freedom on the top of the international agenda in the way that Bush has had. Even despite that the enormous anti-Americanism that has undermined its power, I think it is had concrete beneficial results. And I think it has provided a kind of a morale boost for people in very dark places in the world to know that if they do go and protest their government and get thrown in jail, they won't be ignored; that somehow the spotlight is being shown on them, and that limits – that is safety for them because it limits what the government in power, be it Egypt or wherever, can do to them.

MR. THOMPSON: I agree with that. Let me go back to the original question, which is about the difficulty of dealing with governments of which we don't approve. It seems to me this is entirely a calculus based on how severe the threat is that we face. If it's a minor threat, then we don't have to tolerate dealing with anti-democratic and oppressive regimes. If it is something like fascism, then we are just going to have to put up with the Stalins of the world. I think we should be less concerned with whether we look like hypocrites and whether ultimately we're getting something constructive done. If you are going to have a realistic strategy, which is what integrated power purports to be, then you have to take the world as it is and decide what's going to get you the best outcome.

Let me just offer you an analogy to our domestic political culture. I have heard Wilsonian internationalism extolled a number of times since the panel began. You know, let's keep in mind who Woodrow Wilson was. He was the guy who sat in Cabinet meetings and talked to the members of his administration about how to get federal government involved in forcing segregation, right? He thought that "Birth of a Nation" was history written in lightning. He tried to fire all the colored postmasters in the South. Now, so why do we extol the virtues of Wilson? Because in international matters he really was a progressive. If we can tolerate that kind of ambiguity and recognize the good aspects of Wilson and try to forget the bad aspects, then surely we can put up with regimes that aren't perfect when it serves our larger purpose.

MR. BOORSTIN: Okay, there is plenty more to discuss, but let's start a question period. I would ask you to identify yourselves and also ask questions instead of making speeches or long statements. And wait for the mike.

Q: I am Charles Sheehan-Miles. I'm with Veterans for Common Sense. And part of what I am hearing about the whole discussion of support of repressive regimes, it sounds a little self-defeating to me because some of the roots of why we are stuck in this war with jihadists are very supportive of some of those regimes. I would like to hear a little bit more about how we actually eventually bring that war to a close, and part of the question there is does that involve actually stepping back from support of for instance the Saudi regime?

MR. KORB: Fools step in where angels fear to tread.

One of the points we try to make in here is unless you have an energy policy, your freedom to deal with the Saudis is going to be limited. We recognize that by saying, if you do that, then your ability to have more freedom – because we recognize that, but I think as long as the Saudis are treated as a gas station, okay, I mean, basically it is going to be hard to, you know, to do that.

And so that's why – you know, we confront these dilemmas and say, okay, you got them. When I was in government we would cozy up to the Saudis so they would pump more oil so that would hurt the Russians – the Soviet economy, okay? So you need to recognize that, but you don't want to just say, well, it's too bad; we are going to have to stay with that forever. No, I think you got to figure, okay, how can we reduce our dependence; how can we, you know, change this?

MR. BEINART: What we try to do in this strategy is to outline long-term policies that can lead us to a point where we have less reason to cooperate with repugnant, un-democratic or ugly regimes. Nobody thinks that this is an easy question. Pakistan comes to mind as a particularly difficult country that we are dealing with right now. But in one way we differ; that is to say with the way that the Bush administration has dealt with Pakistan, which, I believe is they have written them a free ticket based on vague promises of going after the terrorists in various provinces. One suggestion that we make in this strategy is that we condition the fulfillment of the \$3 billion in aid to Pakistan on access to A. Q. Khan. That's the way where we're taking two hard security problems, hard security problems, and we are trying to figure out what is more important here. Is it more important that we know about nuclear proliferation and where all of this stuff went or is it more important that we cozy up to these folks and continue to provide them aid? And we can get in a long discussion, of course, about what is the option to Musharraf and is it a better or worse thing? But as I said, these aren't easy questions.

MR. BOORSTIN: Sir?

Q: David Eisenberg, British American Security Information Council. I address this to Dr. Thompson and Dr. Korb.

It seems to me a problem in the strategy is that sort of like Walt Kelly's character, Pogo on Earth Day back in the '70s – you know, we have met the enemy and it is us – you've got to recognize one of the significant problems, and that problem would simply be tax cuts that were passed back in June 2001. James Fallows makes an excellent point I think in his article in the current issue of Atlantic magazine: basically we have less money after those tax cuts than we did in the preceding 40 years, and we have additional monetary costs that we have to deal with now. It would seem to me any integrated strategy would basically have to take that into account and say this can't stand; this has to be reversed, and yet I see no mention of that in the strategy, that, you know, how do you feel about this? You know, is there a reason you are not calling for these cuts to be abolished? You were talking about our economic competitiveness, or lack thereof. I would appreciate your comment.

MR. THOMPSON: Well, Bush's original tax cuts were necessary to stop the recession from being even worse. They're easily justifiable, even in terms of Keynesian economics. The question is about whether they should become permanent. And, you know, I would say instead of assessing this on the basis of ideology, we ought to try to understand the larger dynamic or what it means for economic growth and competitiveness if we reinstitute the original tax rate or if we keep the taxes lower.

We have a serious problem in this country that nobody seems to grasp, which is that our economic competitiveness is eroding rapidly. You can see it in our trade balance. I mean, our trade deficit last year was \$666 billion – 666. Sounds like an omen to me, you know, and I think that instead of debating whether we are balancing the budget, we ought to be debating what this means ultimately for, you know, our economic competitiveness since our ability to work our way in the world, our ability to defend ourselves, even our ability to have economic or energy independence, is entirely a function of the strength our economy.

MR. KORB: Well, I think that is a terrific point and we do talk in there about you have got to spend more money on science and education and get, you know, Americans competitive. If we take a look even at the Pentagon budget, one of the things that they've cut is basically basic research, and that's not the way to go if you want to improve your long-term competitiveness.

MR. BEINART: If I could just add, I mean, it's one thing – I don't think that you need to believe that we need to have a balanced budget tomorrow to believe what I think many people believe, which is the you have long-term structural deficits which are enormously dangerous as the baby boom retires, compounded potentially by permanent tax cuts that really start to drain revenue 10 years out. I don't think that – I think you could have had a pretty wide consensus in the Bush administration on the need for short-term fiscal stimulus of various different kinds, including tax cuts. But it seems to me that the notion to go for long-term – the effort to go for long-term permanent tax cuts that really kick in just when the government's revenues for entitlements and presumably for the war on terrorism go through the roof was entirely an ideological decision, pretty much divorced from what most economists across the political spectrum were saying, and needs to be revised kind of on that basis.

MR. THOMPSON: Can I make one other point about that? It seems me there is an issue economic philosophy here that needs to be addressed, because this document does end with a series of proposed subsidies for alternative energies that really would have the effect to some degree of rearranging the whole pricing structure in the marketplace. You know, we have experienced subsidies in the past in this country. We gave people a variety of subsidies for homeowning and the price of the houses went through the ceiling. We made college loans easier to get and the price of education went through the ceiling. We created Medicare and Medicaid; now we have the highest healthcare costs in the world per capita.

Now, you know, one way of dealing with this problem is to raise taxes. Maybe another way is to stop trying to drive the market mechanism and stop distorting it so much by stopping creating so many of these programs that drive the cost of everything up.

MR. BOORSTIN: We won't get into a debate over basic economic questions like that at the moment. I would refer you, however, to our tax plan that the Center has put out, which deals directly with the tax cuts and with alternative ways to restore the treasury to its former self.

Was there a journalist in the back there who had a question? Please.

Q: Stan Crock from *BusinessWeek*. A couple of quick questions. I would like to get the Center's response to the question about deterrence against North Korea and Iran, and whether the Cold War structure remains useful and how the apparent rapprochement between India and Pakistan, now that they both are nuclear powers, fits into your calculation there. Secondly, there was no discussion in the executive summary of the potential threat from an emerging peer competitor. Is there in text itself?

MR. KORB: Peter made that point. We make the point in there, traditional containment and deterrence can work against established states. I mean, even as off the wall as Kim Jong Il is, he wants to remain in power, and so therefore you have leverage. We make the point in there with terrorists, you can't – they don't have a place that you can attack and many of them want to die, you know, these radical jihadists. And so, no.

And one of the points we make is that after September 11<sup>th</sup>, people threw everything out. They forgot that, you know, we still had an international system and even these so-called extremist states. You know, again, you can go back and you look during the Cold War. There were people who wanted to take preemptive action against the Soviet Union right after World War II. Remember the old famous movie where Patton gets relieved, and he's saying, let's take them on now; we are going to have to fight them later. There was serious discussion in the Johnson administration about taking preemptive action against the Chinese when Mao got his nuclear weapons and said he did not mind a nuclear exchange; you know, he can lose a couple hundred million people; he would still have a billion. So this has come up, but we lived through that, and I think you can with these nations.

Now, with China and India, what we talk about basically is, yes, they are rising powers. They're going to be competing with you for energy, and that's going to exacerbate some of the problems you have with them; that you need to work, particularly China, to integrate them into the international system. But I think one of the key things we said is your relations with China – Taiwan is a big issue, so you can't just stay remote from that; you've got to get involved with that and make sure that the Taiwanese government does not feel that they have a blank check from the United States.

You may remember in the early days of the Bush administration before September 11<sup>th</sup>, the president more or less agreed to defend Taiwan under any circumstances, and he had to pull back. And the same is the situation between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. This is something we need to – you know, do what – we need to be involved in that to ensure that that does not get out of hand because obviously you do not want to have a confrontation between those two powers.

Let me make one another point about India and Pakistan. We come down pretty hard against the doctrine of preventive war. We are all for preemption – the threat is imminent. Preventive war says you have the right to take action against someone who could be a threat. If you believe in the doctrine of preventive war, it seems to me India could make a heck of a case for going after Pakistan. I mean, they support terrorism in Kashmir; it's an unstable regime; they have nuclear weapons. And so I think that, you know, is another point we make about the way the international system of works.

MR. BOORSTIN: Okay. Over here, please.

Q: I am Cindy Valorum. I'm an attorney in town. I think there should be a distinction made between preventive war and the manipulation of intelligence. I mean we've seen an administration – can you hear me? We've seen an administration that has manipulated fear, manipulated terror, manipulated intelligence openly and so what – I mean, I have no clue why anybody would be a swing voter. It's a completely untrustworthy foreign policy predicated on complete deception. I mean, every reason – it's been repeated ad nauseam – has been disproven. We still don't know the clear motivation of it.

So what is being proposed in terms of preventing the obvious manipulation of intelligence for war profiteering purposes or any other reason?

MR. THOMPSON: Well, I did say I voted for Kerry. (Laughter.) You know, I did it because it has been four years – and what was Teresa Heinz Kerry's prediction for the next four years? Four more years of hell. I thought four years was enough. But, you know, I think it's too easy to take a swipe at Bush in the sense that he really thought that the Iraqis were developing weapons of mass destruction and the danger was urgent. So did almost everybody in the intelligence community. So did I. So did many of my friends who were Democrats. And whether you call it preventive or you call it preemptive is largely a function of how urgent you think the threat is, not what the threat is.

This was a tough call. He made the wrong call. I can easily imagine a Democrat making the wrong call. I don't think it was so much manipulation as it was unconscious, but I think that the best you can do in terms of fixing that problem in the future is what the Center's document says. We've got to improve our intelligence, particularly our clandestine intelligence service and our human intelligence agents on the ground, because it's clear all the satellites, you know, are not getting us much.

MR. BEINART: If I could just add – I think this is one of the – this is one of the points that kind of segways to something I tried to say earlier, which is the need to come up with a successor idea to WMD. Because it seems to me one of the things that was – that was very important in that prewar debate was that conflation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

Yes, pretty much everyone agreed that he had chemical weapons. He had chemical weapons stockpiles. Maybe there wasn't really much new evidence, but people just assumed that he hadn't accounted for stuff before 1998 and people figured he probably still had it and maybe he had developed more; maybe biological too.

The nuclear evidence was much weaker. The two big pieces of evidence that were publicly put out there which were the aluminum tubes and the uranium purchase were both disproved by the time we went to war and it was that image of the mushroom cloud, the nuclear part of WMD, which really gave the whole notion of the menace – the potential threat. Particularly combined with the fairly weak terrorist ties, it's hard to see why you go to war on chemical and biological weapons or – and if you do, why you are not going to war with a bunch of other countries as well.

And I think one of the intriguing things about the document is that it moves away from chemical weapons and I think that the explanation for why it sees biological weapons as such a threat is – but not chemical weapons is a really important thing for us to talk about and a very important thing for us to understand in kind of learning the lessons of the Iraq debate.

MR. BOORSTIN: Let me just quickly add that we've written a report on reforming the intelligence personnel system and on getting a better intelligence personnel crowd, recruiting, on new training, and so forth, and I'd encourage you to look at our website at that. We've gone beyond how do you shuffle the boxes, which a lot of people have talked about.

One last question. Sir?

Q: Hi. I am Brian Bode (ph) with Partnership for a Secure America and I was just looking over yesterday some of the polling on these types of issues. PIPA put out some polling that was talking about sort of the different support for these types of ideas of a more balance between hard and soft power and certainly the Bush administration pays lip service to this, but what I was wondering is, why is there a sort of a breakdown that seems between the public support for the types of initiatives that you are proposing in this and what we actually see happening in terms of concrete actions?

MR. BOORSTIN: Well, for my sins, I was actually a pollster for three years and spent some serious time looking at this issue and I can say that I have absolutely no explanation for this. (Laughter.) And I would advise you not to listen to any pollster who tells you that they do have an explanation for this.

It has a lot to do, I believe, with the way the people look to the president for leadership on foreign policy. So people can say the week before the Iraq war began, “I am against any war that doesn’t involve a full team with United Nations and another resolution,” and then the day after the war starts, “Oh yeah, this was a good idea.” Cognitive dissonance is a big thing when it comes to foreign policy and way that people look at it. I appreciate the question. There is a great deal out there we could talk about.

I want to thank everybody for coming here today, especially our panelists, Loren and Peter, and the rest of you for being here and listening to our first presentation of this. It will not be our last. We are going to continue discussions about this document. We welcome your comments on it, complaints, criticisms, and so forth and we look forward to having you back at the Center again.

Thanks very much for coming.

(Applause.)

(END)