

# The National Conversation--9/11: The Next Ten Years

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>> Good afternoon and welcome to The Wilson Center, the Chairman of the Wilson Center Joe  
Gildenhorn is here and many of the Wilson Council members are behind him and we have an overflow  
attendance this afternoon, some are in another room. For those that can hear me in that other room  
please know that your questions also will be conveyed to our moderator, David Ignatius, and he will try to  
ask as many questions from the audience as possible. I am Jane Harman, director, president, and CEO  
of our nation's living memorial to our 28th and first internationalist President. Yesterday no one missed it,  
we marked a terrible and sad anniversary for the United States and the world. There are only a handful of  
dates each century that need no explanation, and that define an era. 9/11 is one such date. • As the  
towers were falling and the Pentagon fire was burning, I was walking toward the US Capitol I was then a  
member of Congress, a senior Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee and my destination was  
the Intelligence Committee rooms in the Capital Dome, the place most believe was the intended target of  
the fourth plane which, as we know, thanks to the heroism of its passengers went down in Shanksville,  
Pennsylvania. My staff called to alert me that the Capital had just been closed as were the house office  
buildings. So I, and most of Congress, probably including Mike Rogers, milled around on the lawn in front  
of the Capital. No evacuation plan. And as I frantically tried to reach my youngest daughter who was then  
a D.C. high school student and my older kids who were living in New York City, there was no cell  
coverage either. We have surely come a long way in the 10 years since. I'm proud of my own role in co-  
authoring the 2004 Intelligence Reform Law I think which is a centerpiece of our intelligence capability  
that is now far more robust, insisting that the Bush administration abandon efforts to work outside the  
Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act pressing for more privacy and civil liberties oversight and urging that  
the full intelligence committees in Congress be briefed about our CT activities. I'm also in awe, and I think  
all of you are too, of those in government as well as first responders and average citizens whose vigilance  
has forced many attempts since 9/11 to harm us, only some of which can even now be revealed to the  
public. We all know the list of things left undone like making fully functional the President's Privacy and  
Civil Liberties Board and creating a national interoperable emergency communication system. Terrorism is the only way  
shockingly, still does not exist. But today's panel will employ a broader lens, a purposeful debate on threats  
and strategies to combat them. Despite the solid track record in preventing attacks since 9/11, everyone  
should understand that there is no such thing as a hundred percent security. To improve security, we need to

the next 10 years. Please welcome associated editor and columnist and noted author of several books.  
Five?

a little bit about what he wants to do next. Next to him is Jim Zogby who is the founder and head today of the Arab-American Institute and who is well-known as a pollster at home and internationally with Zogby Research Center. And finally Bruce Hoffman who is a professor at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown, for many years was at the RAND Corporation and is widely regarded as one of the country's most experienced and wisest terrorism analysts. And I'm going to ask Bruce if he would start us off. As





effect of weakening what the intelligence community would call our liaison partners. To an extraordinary extent the United States depended duri



our political response in the period of the Arab Awakening. So we are not hypocritical saying empowerment of the people, change can occur through nonviolent means and that our diplomacy, our aid, our intelligence work is aligned with those messages which are clearly appealing as illustrated by the Arab Awakening.

>> David Ignatius: I can't resist asking you whether you think in this delicate process you're describing of standing back so that these larger forces can operate and perhaps giving up some tactical advantage. What you think the right stance of the United States is towards Syria. You're out of government now so I'm hoping it's a fair question. You know, that's an enormously consequential country. It's in a period of potentially violent transition, what's your thought?

>> Mike Leiter: Well, there are always incredible competing interests here. There are tactical interests that I don't want to completely dismiss. Some more actions in Yemen are critical to protecting the American people today. And you can't just play the long game, you have to take bad guys off the battlefield. Second, you don't want to say too much and promise too much if you can't actually influence the game. Because that just makes you look like a paper tiger. So I think our options with Syria early on were not wonderful, and I think the gradually escalating statements of U.S. condemnation combined with international condemnation, accepting that we are only going to do so much to change it ourselves, I think is probably hitting about the right place. I think I would, like Steve Hadley has said I think pretty eloquently, being a little bit more vocal about how atrociously bad the Assad regime has been and I think ultimately that will carry the day and we have to make quite clear, so we are not hypocritical, where the United States stands, and that is supporting the people against an incredibly oppressive dictator who has only brought ruin to his country.

>> David Ignatius: Jim Zogby, I thought I saw you nodding your head as Mike Leiter was saying that we have our Syria policy about right. Is that -- would you agree with that and more broadly your polling frankly scares the heck out of me.

>> Jim Zogby: Good.

>> David Ignatius: And I would ...

>> Jim Zogby: I have a book too.

>> David Ignatius: ... like you to scare the heck out of our audience, you know, just to throw out one thing that I just noticed in a poll you did several weeks ago. If I'm not mistaken favorability ratings for the United States in key Arab countries are now lower than they were at the end of the Bush presidency. So maybe



you could talk about those results, but also just talk what are people feeling in Syria and Egypt and Libya about the United States as you measure it as a pollster.

>> Jim Zogby: We don't poll in Syria. We haven't polled in Syria, it's too difficult. But I would agree with Mike that I think presented with limited option we did about as good as we could do to handle it. I mean, this is a game that ultimately will be shaped by, and we hope in a constructive way by Turkey, by Saudi Arabia, by some neighbors in an effort to kind of find a regional stabilizing solution. I mean, Iran and Iraq are not being helpful right now but -- and Lebanon is on the brink. It is -- it is vulnerable to what happens in Syria. But in any case, the polling, you're right, it scared the heck out of me too. The fact is is that numbers were very low. The victory of Barak Obama spiked them way up, doubled, tripled in some countries [inaudible]. And those expectations have been dashed. And so in a sense when you say, you know, what should we be doing, remember, the last lunch I had with Karen Hughes when she was leaving her job and she had just done a piece that day in the Post it appeared, and the paper saying we're winning because al-Qaeda's favorable rating in Turkey was down to 9%. But ours was too, it was 9% in Turkey and so they may not be winning, but we're not winning either. And the point is is that it goes back to the very earliest polling we did in the Middle East. They like us, they like our values, they like our products, they like everything about us. They hate our policy, they're convinced we don't like them. I got called by a reporter during the time of the Mubarak turmoil and she said to me, if we dumped him now would our favorability rating go up? And I said you got the question backwards. We're not in trouble in Egypt because we supported Mubarak. He's in trouble in Egypt because he supported us. He supported us with the Iraq war. He supported us with Gaza and keeping his population quiet over things Israel was doing. He became a way-station on the road to rendition. These were things his people knew about and did not like. While the unpopular policies delegitimized leaders in the region, we were able to work with them because they frankly didn't give a damn what their people thought as they protected the interests of their regime. Now Arab opinions will matter after the Arab Spring. I mean, that's the one thing that has changed. Governments may not change but whatever governments are there are going to be more responsive to their own people and if not they will face a very uncertain future. And I look forward to, I think, a very uncertain decade. I don't think we know how this comes out whether good or bad and we may get some surprises yet in some countries that turn out better than we expect. But some will turn out maybe a little worse. But one thing will be sure, the policies of these governments will be more responsive to their people because they're now more afraid of what happens at home. I mean, even look at the Gulf Cooperation Council and the way they operated in Yemen and the way they've operated in the Horaine [assumed spelling] and the way they're operating vis-a-vis Iran and Syria. They're making their own way. We've lost the ability to lead in that region in part because our ratings are so low. Just one quick story. I remember in 2005 we had American rating, America's favorable rating of 5% in Jordan. That was when one of our officials went to Jordan to preview the speech that Condoleezza Rice was going to give in Cairo a couple months later. She started before this



>> Bruce Hoffman: Well, I think that a lot of the assumptions about Zawahiri were more wishful thinking than empirical analysis. There was some debate whether he would succeed Bin Laden. It was a no-brainer. In 2001 he merged Egyptian Islamic Jihad with al-Qaeda. They were colinears. We may have liked to have styled him as the number two, or as the deputy but, in fact, they operated in tandem. So I think it was a given he would succeed. Often I think people rise to the occasion of leadership. I hope -- I'm hoping that he won't, but someone like Zawahiri w

>> David Ignatius: Mike, within the limits of what you can say in a public on-the-record session like this, as you reviewed the cache, the enormous cache of materials taken from Osama bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad. What's the thing that we most need to know that you discovered looking at those materials?

>> Mike Rogers: I think I would offer two points. One, the incredible focus and commitment that Bin Laden had to perpetrating a catastrophic attack against the United States. As focused as guys like Stan were and his troops were, and as focused as my troops were, al-Qaeda is just as focused. And they didn't lose that over 10 years at all. He still believed he was in a righteous struggle and they were going to do everything they could to attack us and I think even using unconventional weapons, had they had the opportunity. So I think that is point one. Point two is the organization again of core al-Qaeda was less able to absorb their leader's strategic vision than I think we probably thought. They're still there, they're still dangerous, but he had a grand vision for the organization and it was a little bit like an admiral without any ships, or at least no battleships and a few PT boats. They could go off and do little things and he as a leader increasingly didn't understand that. And also, as Jim said, was really struggling with what they should do about the Arab Awakening. Not quite sure how to play into that. Which I think again goes to the importance of the United States making sure that we don't give them an opportunity that they might not otherwise have.

>> David Ignatius: Let me turn to a question that is at the center of my uncertainties about the Arab Spring, I wanted to start calling it the Arab Transition, because I really don't know what it's in transition to. But my question is, what is the role and potential danger both of the Muslim Brotherhood and of Salafis groups which had been disorganized in places like Egypt but are becoming more so. And Mike, let me start with you. There was a kind of an easy in the days of the Tahrir Square revolt of easy analysis that said, gee, the Muslim brothers are less threatening than we might have thought. Do you share that? What's your assessment as you look at the information coming to you about what the Muslim Brotherhood leadership across the Arab world wants to do?

>> Mike Leiter: Well, it's interesting, al-Zawahiri actually came from the Muslim brotherhood before he separated to take a more violent track and merge with al-Qaeda which is -- which is interesting. And I have a just -- let me back up, just a little bit of a difference of opinion with Mr. Zogby in the sense that to lay at the feet of America all of the small incidents, and they're not small in the sense of the politics, but they're small in the sense of what was the plight of the Egyptian people under a dictator. I mean, corruption was rampant, and the economy was falling apart and there was no future and no hope laid out at the feet of the United States. I just -- I don't buy it for a minute. The Arab determination that you see now is about freedom, and I -- you know, we've always said and I passionately believe that I would always take liberty and freedom over a dictator at any day. And, yes, we've got a very difficult period moving forward in the next months. Really weeks, months, years as we get through this period. But that's where the United States can nurture what we know works. And that is self-governance and self-representation. Is it hard, absolutely. It's hard in our own government. Democracy is hard. It's the hardest form of government we have. And that's why we're finding friends in Egypt that we might not normally have been able to identify with because at the end of the day, it wasn't about the United States, it wasn't about the rendition highway which sounds great, it was about the fact that they were completely

oppressed from freedom to do anything. To have to go down and have a speech in the square about how they were feeling against their government. And so I think what Condoleezza Rice was trying to accomplish, and I'm not saying it was exactly perfect, was to say, listen, we understand that the Arab population's not happy with the United States because we have been supporting people who have oppressed you and oppressed your future. And we are more inclined to believe in liberty and freedom moving forward. So I thought it was -- I just disagreed and as good as you are, sir, I just had to have a moment of disagreement on where we are.

>> Jim Zogby: And I disagree back.

>> Mike Leiter: I appreciate it. But you do polling pretty well and I'll give you that one. So as we move forward it gives us an opportunity. The Muslim Brotherhood is concerning because it is the single largest group that has the organization and the resources to initially hit the ground running. So it gave the secular groups, and by the way, it was led by secular groups. It puts them at a disadvantage politically and so there's -- we have spent a lot of time, energy and effort trying to understand who is the Muslim Brotherhood that is in Egypt. And by the way, they're all a little bit different. I will tell you that their public sentiment and their public statements in the past are concerning. We have seen some rays of hope in the Muslim Brotherhood. We have also seen some things that concern us greatly. And so I argued that as our opportunity to try to engage with the other secular elements of Egypt, let them understand how you run a political campaign and get your feet on the ground and participate in your government, as well as how we challenge the Muslim Brotherhood meets the elements that we're concerned about to play a less prominent role in their future. And again, we do see lots of activity from the Muslim Brotherhood in places like Egypt, and Yemen and other places where they want to see some change and I would -- I've seen it all. I have a hard time coming to the conclusion that we know exactly what the Muslim Brotherhood is engaging in in Egypt and we see it a little different in other places as well. It is concerning, but at the same time there might be some opportunity.

>> David Ignatius: Let me just go down the row and ask each of you for a very brief assessment of this, of what dangers you see from the Muslim Brotherhood. Just I think I'll put a more general phrase from political Islam in these countries as they become more democratic, more open. Stan?

>> General McChrystal: I think the jury's out, of course, but something like the Muslim Brotherhood which represents that move into politics I think has to have a reason to exist and part of that was, of course, the autocratic leadership that they were resisting against. It will be very interesting when they are in the different role how they evolve. And I think the jury's absolutely out.

>> David Ignatius: Mike, what do you think?

>> Mike Rogers: I think the Chairman captured it quite well and I think the most important thing the Chairman did was show a subtlety of thought and analysis on what the Muslim Brotherhood is in Egypt

and what it is elsewhere. And we have to maintain that same subtlety of analysis in our politics and our policies and not simply say ooh, the Muslim Brotherhood sounds scary, we have to fight all incarnations. The subtlety again identifying the differences, seeing where we can work with them, making sure that they are not pursuing violent means. That's the sort of subtlety we have to have towards all parties, secular or otherwise in all of these nations.

>> David Ignatius: Jim, let me put the question to you, but with this particular focus. One thing that troubles me is somebody who travels a lot in the Middle East and has for many years is I don't see as much sign of tolerance in these countries as I'd like to see and as you could argue as is necessary for democracy to work, and that's, you know, quite of minorities in the Arab world, of Christians, of Druzes [assumed spelling], of Shias [assumed spelling] in some countries. Is that -- what is your sense of the dangers of that? What Islamic majorities will end up huge in the ...

>> Jim Zogby: The dangers are great, and the dangers are a function of a whole history and a sociology that we're not going to get into right now. But let me just respond quickly to the issue of -- and just a personal take on the issue of Islamic religion. I worry across the Middle East about religion and politics period. The politicization of religion and the sacralizing of politics are huge dangers. We're seeing them

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>> Well, that will get me to talk.

>> Jim Zogby: Okay.

>> I agree with absolutely nothing that Jim just said. I think even the phrase drones is almost pejorative. It's an air strike. Air strikes have been the single most effective tool at protecting the American people from core al-Qaeda and other organizations. We have taken people off the battlefield that the host nation, the Pakistanis could not take off the battlefield, who were plotting to attack and kill Americans like on September 11th. We have saved lives because we have employed these tactics. Are there negative repercussions from doing so and have we alienated some and pushed some towards the ideology of al-Qaeda? Absolutely. But there's a short game and there's a long game in counter-terrorism. The short game is killing the guys before they kill you. The long game is the ideological fight. The two are intention, but in my view not perfectly inconsistent with one another. And last but not least, no greater conservative flame-thrower who does not respect civil liberties [inaudible] I think has eloquently defended the legality under international and domestic law and traditional principles of warfare, and I believe Harold and others who have analyzed this closely are exactly right.

>> David Ignatius: Stan, my question, you thought as deeply as anybody I know about the problem of this -- the fight against terrorism of getting the population on your side and fighting an adversary that is imbedded within that population. And maybe in whatever way you choose, you could respond to this broad question of how we keep from making enemies as we kill enemies.

>> General McChrystal: But my silence was deafening. The way you operate does matter and how people perceive you. I do think that we are going to have to use a whole range of capabilities and it's -- I don't take any off the table. I do think, however, that every time we take an action, it has a physical effect, but it has a much greater information effect, and if



>> David Ignatius: Mike Rogers, do you want to speak to this or do you want to leave it be?

>> Mike Rogers: Well, I can't talk about the joint programs, I can tell you this that, you know, the military has air strike capability and this notion of collateral damage is something that is reviewed and reviewed and reviewed and it is wildly exaggerated and it's exaggerated in the press, it's exaggerated in rhetoric and I think it's a horrible disservice to the impact, and I think Mr. Leiter said it perfectly, it has had a tremendous impact on changing the enemies ability to plan, to finance, to train and to engage in terrorist activity. I can't find anything other than this particular air strike capability that's allowed the United States to do that and if I -- if people knew the painstakingly way that -- I'm speaking from a Title 10 perspective here, the painstaking way that these are reviewed for engagement on an air strike, I think they would be absolutely proud of the men and women who wrestle over this and sweat over it and sometimes they decide not to do it because of collateral damage risking American lives when they do it. And it happens everyday and it is a long process and it is well-viewed and reviewed and well -- the oversight of this program is intense. And so, I'm going to plug again, Title 10, for the record.

>> David Ignatius: Title 10 for anybody who's not well-versed in the U.S. Code means military operations as opposed to CIA operations.

>> Mike Rogers: So I can -- I rest assure at night that this is a program that is a tool, and I think Stan McChrystal said it best, you shouldn't take any tool off the table. I hope 10 years from now we're not engaged in any of this, that we keep talk -- we had the theoretical talk about how we engage the enemy, that would be fantastic. The problem is that's not the reality which we find ourself in today. So you have a multi-level engagement not just in the tribal areas of Pakistan or Afghanistan or an [inaudible] or someplace in Africa, fill in the blank, where you have an engagement that may look completely different with the same angle as to try to disrupt a terrorist operation and cell. And every one of those is going to be different and what I found in this town in the last 10 years, [inaudible] my time and I know Jane and I have had this conversation, it's the, you know, the shiny new toy technique, right. This particular toy was really cool and we just got it out of the box, so let's play with this one a lot. And that's a dangerous place to be here and in the future. We have made huge improvement on our ability to perform air strikes and disrupt the enemy from planning and plotting and carrying out attacks not only on the homeland but on our soldiers overseas. Great. It doesn't mean that is the only way forward as we move forward, and it doesn't mean you can plop that up and set it down someplace else and it's going to work exactly the same, it won't work that way. And so, again, I think there's been a lot of focus on it and I'll tell you one of the reasons why is that when we travel overseas and what the bad guys in the, you know, the folks who are committed to this al-Qaeda and other elements, other terrorist groups are terrified of this. They're absolutely terrified of it. And we know they've made entreaties to try to get people to stop doing it. They also have psychological warfare practices that actively engage in saying every time something like this happens, there are huge civilian casualties. Remember, it was a big wedding, it was -- all of that was proven not to be true. They understand how effective it is, we should understand how effective it is and then keep working all the other levels all at the same time so hopefully one day we're not participating in any of them.

>> Dave Ignatius: I do want to turn the audience -- Bruce, I'm going to ask you if you have thoughts about this to fold them into a response to our audience. Yes, sir. Will you please identify yourself and keep the question brief and be specific, if you can as to who you want to answer it.

>> Benjamin Toole: Thank you very much, I'm Benjamin Toole [assumed spelling] a retired U.S. diplomat. The panel is in broad agreement that the past 10 years have shown a substantial technical and physical success in our fight against what we might call terrorism and the al-Qaeda threat. But while the intelligence has been used well and in improved ways and key people have been eliminated, networks disrupted, these things can grow back and my question is, how much confidence do the members of the panel have that in the coming decade the U.S. will make the policy changes to drain the swamp to make sure that there are many fewer people who will be inspired to try to hurt us.

>> David Ignatius: Bruce -- Bruce Hoffman, maybe you could take a crack at it if you have thoughts about the last thing we were discussing, fold them in.

>> Bruce Hoffman: That would have, in essence, be my response to the question of the use of drones. I

>> Mike Leiter: We face, on the terrorism front we face some real challenges, more broadly on Iran we face some really fundamental challenges, national security challenges in my view. The terrorism front, they remain the single largest state sponsor of terror in the world. They continue to support Hezbollah. Hezbollah continues tactic, they continue to support some organizations in Gaza. Iran is sponsoring terrorism in a way that sometimes makes you wonder if they notice 9/11 at all. They've really continued on their way. I think more broadly the challenge you have is how you balance that with the other incredible national security challenges Iran poses. Its growing influence in the Gulf region, its pursuit of nuclear weapons, and I think Iran, no matter what happens in the Arab Awakening, will remain a core challenge for the U.S. for the next 10 years.

>> David: Jim.

>> Jim Zogby: The most interesting thing our polling has found, I think, over the last decade has been, and I actually would show you the graph. Iran's numbers have gone this way. Our numbers aren't very good, we've pretty much stayed here, we went out for a period and came down, but there's been a steady alienation of Arabs from Iran and from everything that Iran represents in the region. I think that that's important to note. To some degree, the war in Iraq and other policies pursued in the first half of the last decade caused Iran's numbers to go very high, about 2004, 2005 they were very high, especially when you had, you know, the situation in Iraq, yes, and Abu Ghraib, yes, and almost everything we did ended up not only emboldening them, but we empowered them. Number one, we eliminated one of their big enemies and they became a real threat across the Gulf region and I think people felt it. But alienated Arab masses began to feel that Iran was the defender of what was right and just and when you had 2006 and

>> David Ignatius: Data point, The White House takes this poll-finding that Jim just cited extremely seriously regards the declining support for Iran among Arabs as polled by Jim as a really important point.

>> Jim Zogby: Worst thing to do ...

>> David Ignatius: [Inaudible].

>> Jim Zogby: ... would be to reengage in attacking Iran now that the numbers are low. That would only give them, it's like the Farrakhan factor. You know, the more you attack him the more popular he becomes. I mean, in other words, they're doing badly, leave them alone, they're going badly on their own. Thank you.

>> David Ignatius: Trudy Rubin.

>> Trudy Rubin: The other situation that hasn't been mentioned is Israel/Palestine, and I'd like to ask if the peace process ends or if it has already ended and doesn't restore it, what impact do you think that will have on terrorism in the region both in terms of inside the Palestinian territories themselves whether you might see a linkage, the beginning of a linkage of Palestinian renewal of terrorism linked to international terrorism which there hasn't been before. And also how you think that would affect the region, whether you think it would increase terrorism beyond the kind of thing that Bruce suggested discontent with the inability of the revolutions to move fast enough.

>> David Ignatius: Trudy, do you want to direct that to a particular panelist?

>> Trudy Rubin: Well, Bruce has obviously been thinking about that, I'd like to ask Jim and, you know, anyone else that wants to jump in because it's coming right up the pipe, end of peace process.

>> David Ignatius: Bruce, why don't you start off and then others who have quick thoughts.

>> Bruce Hoffman: Well, I think interestingly in the past few months Hamas has still been active in firing missiles and certainly been threatening to Israel. U think what's worse and as I described earlier the fragmentation of al-Qaeda we also see something in the fragmentation of the Palestinian resistance movement and it would style itself with new and different groups emerging to similarly challenge Israel as well. And I would say in response to your question, that's a process or a trajectory that I would imagine would increase. In terms of international terrorist attacks, you know, it was really the hard core FATA and

some of the rejectionist groups lik

their home government and not the U.S. Embassy or the United States. So fragmentation has negative repercussions, but it can also be positive. Now specifically to the lone offender. It is by far the hardest challenge we face. That's the bad news. I have said before, if you go and find a police officer and you say where are all the banks in your patrol area, he'll be able to tell you. And each one of those banks has an alarm system. And many of those banks have an armed guards. And the FBI investigates bank robberies all the time. And guess what still happens in this country? We have banks getting robbed. Now let's analogize that to terrorism. You don't know what the target's going to be, you can use pretty much any instrument as one of death, either buying a gun or using hydrogen peroxide to make an explosive or just driving your car through a pedestrian area. And there are huge challenges to identifying people before they actually start taking those concrete steps. Just identifying peoples' ideology is notoriously hard. That's why finding a lone offender is so difficult. The community is doing a good job of that. I think people today fundamentally exaggerate how much the federal government and state and local governments are doing intrusive of their civil liberties in the first instance. We don't have the people to be nearly as interested as people think we are. So I think we actually have to be very blunt about the fact that we can't cover everything, that there will be attacks, that the perceived infringement of civil liberties I think is actually much greater than the actual infringement which still poses real problems in terms of ideology and alienation. I'm not dismissing it, but I think we have to be realistic about it. And last but not least, and I say this all the time, we have to be a resilient, political and public culture after the fact. In the same way that we experience tragedies in the workplace shootings and school shootings, some of those shootings in the future will probably include someone who identifies with al-Qaeda. We can't have a spasm, a political spasm. And over the coming 10 years, the farther we get from 9/11 in many ways, the more likely we are to react spasmodically to that. And that will help the terrorists and it will chase people who are doing the work of counter-terrorism out in droves if that's the standard to which we hope.

>> David Ignatius: We have time for one more question. The gentleman here in the third row and then I'll ask each of you since Jane Harman tells me that we have only four minutes to make a concluding comment either in answer to this question or others that we've had. Go ahead.

>> Al Beagle: My name is Al Beagle, I'm a lecturer on Iran and I'd like to thank the panel for their very lucid description. I'd like to turn that same focus of the panel to the role of Turkey now and some of the rhetoric that is now coming out, is that going to be translated in the future to action and what can the United States and its allies do about tempering that rhetoric between Turkey and Israel at the present time? Thank you.

>> David Ignatius: Tough question, good question. Mike, why don't you start us off? > Mike Rogers: You know, Turkey has -- they get about a million Iranian visitors a year by visa, and so they've got a unique relationship with Iran, and their feeling that they can be a broker in that particular equation and also on the Israel question, they believe now that they are in a position to take advantage of the turmoil in the region to increase their influence within the region. And that -- that's a double-edged sword for us from both ways. And it is very, very concerning, of course with the expulsion of the Diplomatic Corps there, the Israeli Diplomatic Corps creates a problem that we're not sure how we're going to be able to wind that. And we've, you know, Erdogan has changed quite a bit since, you know, signing to leadership in Turkey. He was very, very pro-U.S., very open. He had his leanings toward his more conservative expression of faith in Islam. And there's slowly, we think through advisors and other things, crept in to his government.

And, you know, in his mind the Arab street, and we've

>> Jim Zogby: It was interesting when we came out with our last poll and retrospectively looked at the 10 years that had preceded. We were focused on the fact that the U.S. numbers had gone up and dropped precipitously and that the Iranian numbers had been continued in a slump. There's only the economists that noted the Turkey numbers, that Turkey's numbers have continued to rise over the last decade in the Arab world. And it is a factor of great importance right now in the region. And only part of it has to do with what began in Davos and continued on with the blockade. A lot of it has to do with the fact that Turkey's exercising leadership and playing an independent role and is a democracy and is presenting itself as a model. And I think that that makes sense to some people. Interesting though, in some of the questions when we ask people options about who -- if not this, who, who should lead? Egypt comes out as the winner, not Turkey. And that is that there is an Arab character to this. Turkey is right now in a surrogate role for Egypt. Egypt's in a little chaos but when Egypt comes back it has the natural leadership role in the Arab world. And just a final word on some of these things that I worry -- I worry about Islamic phobia. I worry -- I thought it was the gay marriage issue in the last election. We'd have it one election and it'd be over. It seems it's going to stay with us. I think we need adult supervision on this one and we have to deal with it. Because what's at stake is the very fabric of who we are as a country. And I think that partisanship plays into it because it's become a wedge issue. We really must pay attention. People abroad are listening to our internal debate and we're not looking awful pretty. And we've got to pay attention to that. It's not the nut job in Florida burning the Koran. It's politicians going around the country talking about Islam, talking about oil deals, talking about building mosques, talking about Sharia, and sending a message that is not who we are and it's hurting us.

>> David Ignatius: Bruce Hoffman.

>> Bruce Hoffman: Well, I'll leverage off of Jim's file points. Sometimes we forget that it's in the parents of some of the people who've gone off to join these groups that have alerted the authorities that they've left. So sometimes the problem is very different than we imagined it to be and the reality. I'll end by going back to my old friend Jerry Post's point and I think he underscores what and how challenging it will be to counter-terrorism in the next decade because we in essence, we have to cover the waterfront. We face a threat from the remnant of al-Qaeda, from its affiliates and associates potentially from new terrorist groups that we haven't seen appear yet, and also from