



Center for a
New American
Security

**“DAVID KILCULLEN BOOK LAUNCH:
THE ACCIDENTAL GUERRILLA”**

INTRODUCTION BY:

**JOHN NAGL, PRESIDENT CENTER FOR
A NEW AMERICAN SECURITY**

MODERATOR:

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FEATURED SPEAKERS:

**DAVID KILCULLEN, AUTHOR OF THE ACCIDENTAL
GUERRILLA, CNAS SENIOR FELLOW, AND
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MR. JOHN NAGL: Good evening everyone. I'm John Nagl, the president of the Center for a New American Security and it's a great honor to welcome all of you to what promises to be an extraordinarily meeting or discussion about some of the most important issues facing America today. With counterinsurgency campaigns in Iraq, and Afghanistan and the global counterinsurgency campaign against Al-Qaeda. And we couldn't have a better pair of thinkers tonight to guide us through these minefields.

David Ignatius is a columnist and associate editor of the Washington Post, where he writes on global politics, economics and international affairs. His award winning column appears on Thursdays and Sundays. David is also the creator and co-moderator of "Post Global," an online conversation about international affairs at washingtonpost.com, which shows that he knows where the newspaper industry is heading. David is particularly well informed on events in the American intelligence community with which he has particularly close ties. David worked for 10 years as a reporter for The Wall Street Journal before joining the Post. He's written six novels, including most recently Body of Lies.

David will be talking tonight with Dr. David Kilcullen, a long time senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security and author of a book, which is most definitely not a body of lies.

Dave's new book is the reason we're here tonight – The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One. David is a former Australian army officer in combat in Indonesia as an infantryman, and in many other places in many other roles.

I met Dave at the Pentagon, where he was the irregular warfare advisor to the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review. Since then he's served successively as chief counterterrorism advisor at the State Department, as counterinsurgency advisor to General David Petraeus during the surge of troops to Iraq and as special advisor for counterinsurgency to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Having seen the influence he exerted on American counterinsurgency and counterterrorism policy and practice over the past four years, I can pretty confidently state that no foreign citizen has done more for the United States in time of war since Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko helped insurgent army liberate the East Shores some 200 years ago.

The two Davids will discuss The Accidental Guerilla for about 30 minutes before turning to questions from you, the audience, for about another 30 minutes. And once the Australian is thirsty, we will adjourn to the foyer – (laughter) – which could be now – (laughter) – having known him for a while. (Laughter.) When he's really thirsty, we'll – Dave's going to sign books in the back, and the rest of us will have a beer. And if everyone could help him and make sure that he always has a beer or two, that would be much appreciated. Gentlemen?

MR. DAVID KILCULLEN: Well, let me actually start by thanking John and also the Center for a New American Security for putting me the event on and, in particular, Shannon O'Reilly – I can't see you Shannon. Where are you? Hiding behind the pillar,

slip out from the shade for a second so that we can see you. Hi. Shannon truly put this event together and I really appreciate it and I appreciate the efforts of the whole CNAS team.

(Inaudible) – asking some questions, I just got back from Colombia at 1:00 AM this morning, where I delivered possibly the worst counterinsurgency conference keynote address in history, the reason being that I bought his novel, *Body of Lies*, and took it with me on the plane. And I was reading the thing and thinking, “I’ve got to stop reading this novel, so that I can write my remarks for the conference,” but I just could not put it down. And I actually have it with me in my briefcase. Im going to need you to sign it afterwards. (Laughter.)

MR. DAVID IGNATIUS: Not a problem. (Laughter.) I didn’t pay him to say that. I promise you.

This is a treat for me and I think for all of us and I want to just jump into this by asking Dave to explain the title of his book, *The Accidental Guerilla*. What’s an accidental guerilla?

MR. KILCULLEN: An accidental guerilla is one of about the 90 percent of the people that we’ve been fighting since 9/11 who are fighting us, not because they hate the West or because they support the ideology of Al-Qaeda or one of the other Takfiri terrorist organizations, but rather because we just turned up in their village or their valley unilaterally with military force. We killed their cousin. We disturbed their livelihood. We did, in some other way, something that has alienated them and pushed them into the arms of local radicals who are now exploiting them and pointing them back at us. And I use a number of examples in the book, ranging from Iraq and Afghanistan, Southern Thailand, Pakistan, even into the slums of Western Europe to show that conservatively 90 to 95 percent of the people that we have ended up fighting since 9/11 are people that we probably did not need to fight.

And just to sort of summarize this – the opening comment Carl von Clausewitz, who we always quote in sessions like this said, “the first, the most of – the supreme and the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesmen and the military commander have to make is rightly to understand the nature of the war in which they’re engaging, not mistaking it for or trying to turn it into something that it’s not.” And the even greater philosopher Confucius said, “the beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right name.” And then of course the supreme force of a Frank Zappa said – (laughter) – “if you’re fighting a world, put your money on the world.” (Laughter.) So the book is trying to understand what is the nature of the war that we’re engaged in and try to, at least in the case of the Muslim world, stop fighting the Muslim world and start working with the 98 percent that are not part of the problem.

MR. IGNATIUS: I don’t think Frank Zappa has a typology quite as elegant as yours, but you have in your book a description of a four stage process that creates these accidental guerillas that, as you said, didn’t begin with a quarrel with the United States, didn’t intend to be fighting us, but end up fighting us. So maybe you could, as we’re just beginning to think about these ideas, explain that four part process.

MR. KILCULLEN: So the first chapter of the book is kind of dry. I have to warn you. And I look in a lot of detail at how you might seek to understand the conflict environment. And I theorize that the accidental guerilla, as I call them, emerge from a four stage process. The first stage is infection, in which a preexisting conflict, societal breakdown, a civil war, some kind of other problem is infected by a very, very small number of people from an external source, in this case Takfiri terrorists like aAl-Qaeda, who will come in. They are not part of that society. They're not necessarily particularly popular in that society. Often they displace the preexisting leadership group who dispossessed and feel aggrieved to them and they start to exert their influence borrowing into society. That's the infection stage.

If that was all that was to it, we would just stay like that, but what then happens is the next stage, which I call contagion, is where the influence of that terrorist group, which is a very, very small numerical group, but has a substantial influence, often because of globalization pathways like world television, easy travel, transmission of funds from country to country, their influence spreads. And in the case of a Al-Qaeda, we saw them establishing a presence in Pakistan and Afghanistan before 9/11, the infection phase. We then saw this contagion effect where the violence and radicalization sponsored by that group spread around different parts of the world.

The third stage is intervention, where Western powers intervene in that area to try and deal with the threat of groups like a Al-Qaeda. When that happens, the entire dynamics shifts and instead of being an outsider who's dispossessed the local leadership group and is seen with a certain amount of suspicion by the population, we turn up with large military forces, of the nature of things we do a lot of damage, and we end up alienating the population and creating what sociologists call a primary group cohesion response where people essentially bond us to the closer rather than the more distant person, to the person that's more like them, rather than the foreigner. And we end up in a rejection response, where the whole of society ends up turning against us.

It doesn't always happen, and I use a number of examples to suggest that. The first one which is – in the book is Afghanistan and that's the cycle that started with infection, followed by contagion, 9/11. We then intervened and, over a period of time, our rejection response has gradually developed in parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In Iraq, which is the second example, we started it. We intervene. Then there was a rejection response from the population against their intervention, which created space for the infection of that resistance movement by extreme radicals who were not necessarily from there and then in the final phase there was contagion, where violence from Iraq bled out into a number of neighboring countries and also further field.

That's the other example, showing that it can start a new responsive cycle.

But then I talk about Pakistan, about Southern Thailand, and about East Timor, and show how it doesn't just exist in those two big examples that we also talk about, but it exists in a variety of other conflicts and it doesn't always have to be that way. And I show how you can do things differently.

And then the final example in the book is Western Europe and I show that it's not just the phenomenon of the developing world or remote hill tribes, but you can see some very, very similar response in second and third generation immigrant communities in the West. And I suggest that for too long Western governments have been looking at Muslim immigrant communities as like a fifth column or a source of threat. And that, in fact, that's exactly the wrong way to look at it. What they are is an at risk population that's being targeted by an extremely small minority.

And then at the end of a book, I go through a lot of detail about how we can do better.

Now using what my old boss used to call "the passive exonerative voice," since 9/11 mistakes were made, okay? (Laughter.) And I hope we can do better moving forward.

MR. IGNATIUS: We're going to talk tonight about a number of different adversaries and battlefields, but I want to start with the person who's still the leading adversary, at least in terms of the public consciousness, and that's Osama bin Laden. You have a haunting quotation in your book from bin Laden from 2004 that I want to read and then ask you to talk a little bit about bin Laden's strategy as you see it. You quote him saying the following, "all we have to do is send two mujahedin to the furthest point east to raise a cloth on which is written Al-Qaeda, in order to make the U.S. generals race there to cause America to suffer human, economic, and political losses without achieving anything for it of note. So we are continuing this policy of leading America to the point of bankruptcy. Allah willing and nothing is too great for Allah."

Is that, do you think, a summary of bin Laden's and Al-Qaeda's strategy today and how do you think they're doing?

MR. KILCULLEN: Well, I think that al-Qaeda has evolved dramatically in its strategy since its foundation. The Combating Terrorism Center of West Point did a very detailed project called "The Harmony Project," where they looked at internal Al-Qaeda discussion before 9/11, based on a trove of documents that we've discovered in Afghanistan. And they were able to show that there was a very sharp internal debate inside al-Qaeda with some people arguing that the 9/11 attacks would provoke the United States into a series of actions that would alienate the Muslim world and create a mass uprising, where Muslims around the world would rise up against local opposed state regimes, throw them off, and enable Al-Qaeda to act as the vanguard of – (inaudible) – al-ummah, the vanguard of the world's Muslim population. That was the Zawahiri-bin Laden theory. There were other people in Al-Qaeda who argue completely differently and said, "no, the American will come down on you like a ton of bricks and it will completely wreck the progress that we've made in building a consensus to support us across the Muslim world." That group of people ultimately lost that in the debate and then the 9/11 attacks were the result.

Of course the mass uprising didn't happen, but a lot of things that United States did alienated people, probably necessarily in some cases, but in other cases led to a pretty substantial backlash against the United States. And at the end of 2004, bin Laden issues a statement, which I think was to some extent an ex -post facto justification of what they had done, but he said, "the strategy here is to soak the Americans up in a series of unsustainable

interventions all over the world so that eventually they'll run out of money, run out of political capital, and run out of willingness to suffer human losses. And then we, Al-Qaeda, will inherit the caucuses."

I think we have certainly engaged in a series of far-flung interventions. And I think everybody knows that I was not in favor of invading Iraq, although I was also not in favor of leaving it half-finished. But I don't think it's likely that we are going – we, the United States, are going to engage in those kinds of unilateral large-scale interventions in the future. And I think the other very interesting thing that's happened in the Muslim world since 9/11, there's been a very sharp discussion and debate amongst Muslim theological scholars about issues that Al-Qaeda raised, like Jihad, terrorism, and Ulama's discussion of "just war" theory, if you'd like. And we have seen a shift. So that in 2005, King Abdullah of Jordan brought together 500 Ulama, Islamic scholars, and leaders from around the Muslim world who unanimously declared the Takfiri ideology of Al-Qaeda to be heretical and said that Al-Qaeda are heretics and that Muslims should not support Al-Qaeda. And specifically contradicted Al-Qaeda's arguments about Jihad and the validity of terrorism as a form of struggle.

So a lot of people on the West say where are the Muslims? The Muslims haven't stood up and spoken out against Al-Qaeda. They have. It happened in 2005. It's never happened before, unprecedented consensus across the Muslim world.

So what I would suggest is that in fact Al-Qaeda ideologically has lost a lot of ground since 9/11. The leaders are looking over their shoulders. They're running scared in a lot of cases. And the fact that they haven't been able to mount a successful attack on the United States since 9/11 is not only because of the sheer naked brilliance of our counter-terrorism measures, but also because they've lost a lot of support across the Muslim world. People don't support their agenda at the moment.

MR. IGNATIUS: Take that a little further, if you would. There has been a lot of commentary by people who've looked carefully at al-Qaeda – Lawrence Wright is an example – arguing that our enemy has made mistakes as severe as the ones that we've made. That everywhere that Al-Qaeda has had a foothold, it's ended up alienating people. That was true in Iraq and that across the Muslim world, as people look at this Takfiri ideology and the people who practice it, they don't like it and they don't want it. Is that being too optimistic? And maybe you could also just say, for those who weren't familiar with the term, a little bit about what you mean when you define our adversary as the Takfiris.

MR. KILCULLEN: Sure, well, let me start with that. I use the term Takfiri because that's what the Iraqis and the Palestinians and Pakistanis and Afghans that I've worked with in the field call the enemy. And it means – in Islam it means someone who believes in another Muslim who doesn't share exactly the same beliefs system as they can be declared an infidel and can then be killed. We in the West have used terms like jihadists or mujahedin. I don't use those terms about the enemy. That gives them a sacred status, which is exactly what they're looking for. Jihadist means a holy warrior. These guys are not holy warriors by any means. And I'll give you an example of that from Iraq in a minute.

I also don't like the term Salafi. People sometimes use the term "near Salafist" or "Salafist" to describe these guys. Al-salaf as-salih, the first four generations of Muslims, I believe, by most Muslims represent the most pious generations of Muslim believers. Very large numbers of people in the Muslim world would describe themselves as Salafi. Millions and millions of people in Indonesia, 80 percent of Indonesians who are Muslims call themselves Salafi. And yet there are a couple of 100 terrorists in Indonesia. So I think it's not a good term.

Another term that you sometimes hear is "erhabi" (sp), which means terrorists in Arabic. Again, that describes the violence, but it doesn't describe the ideology.

So when I talk about the ideology of Al-Qaeda, I and a lot of other people that have worked in the field tend to call them Takfiri. And so I would define Al-Qaeda as Takfiri terrorists. Not every Takfiri is a terrorist, but Al-Qaeda are certainly thus.

H.R. McMaster is here I think. H.R., where are you? I defer to you to jump in if I neglect to mention something.

But let me just tell you what the enemy were like in Iraq. We would go into areas in downtown Baghdad and we would find bodies with the first two fingers of the hand cut off and they would be guys be found smoking by Al-Qaeda and killed and had their fingers cut off as a message to everybody not to smoke. We would find women with acid thrown in their faces for wearing the veil a little bit too far back. Children baked alive in a couple of cases out in Al Anbar by Al-Qaeda trying to impose just barbaric control measures on the tribes. People beheaded – you can just go on and on.

We talked to many young men who thought that they were following legitimate jihadi or Muslim principles and would get their messages from the sheikh by email and think that they were following a holy warrior. And one of the most effective things that we did when we detained people and we wanted to break them from following Al-Qaeda was to introduce them to other Al-Qaeda prisoners. And they would realize that the guide that they had thought was a holy warrior was a common criminal covered in tattoos, in some cases smuggling drugs, a guy who was just not worthy of the sacrifice that these guys were putting forward in their name, and certainly not worthy of the barbarity of what they were carrying out. Al-Qaeda were easy to defeat. We just had to show the population what they were really like and make the population feel safe in turning against them. As soon as we did that, their house accounts collapsed, which is why I'm reasonably confident with regard to Al-Qaeda in the long term.

I think that the ideology is so basically unattractive to pretty much everybody. The only thing that could happen that would sustain that ideology over the long term, would be if we were to treat Al-Qaeda as a peer competitor, make bin Laden a martyr, and pump up the sort of Che Guevara value of the ideology.

Unfortunately some of the things we've done since 9/11 have done that, but I think there's still time to come down, take a deep breath, and I think this thing with appropriate control measures, which will include shooting the bad guys, okay, with appropriate control measures will eventually die a natural death.

MR. IGNATIUS: Let's talk in some detail about the campaign plan in Iraq. You're best known to this audience and to the world as one of General Petraeus' key advisors in putting that strategy together in early 2007. We're fortunate tonight to have other people who were crucial in that effort here – John Nagl, who gave the introduction, H.R. McMaster, who Dave just mentioned. But take us back to the beginning of 2007. It's hard now to remember just what that was like, but did it look and feel like in Baghdad? What was your sense of the trajectory of the conflict at that time? And talk about the analyses that you and H.R. and others put together and gave to General Petraeus that led to the change in strategy that we call the surge. We'll talk in a minute about how durable that process is. But just take us back in time and explain how that strategy was put together.

MR. KILCULLEN: I don't want to overstate my role here, and I was just one of a group. And I think some of the key leaders are actually here in the room, so – but the – let me give you some numbers. The worst months of the war for civilian casualties were September to December of 2006. In those periods, about 100 to 125 Iraqi civilians were being killed in Baghdad City alone every night, night after night after night, several thousands per week in the worst months of the war. What had happened was that we had moved into the society. We'd done a lot of damage to Iraqi society in the first year of the war. The enemy had exploited that and had turned what was basically just a resistance against occupation in '04 into a completely catastrophic sectarian civil war by 2006. We were repeatedly about six months too late in coming up with strategies to deal with the situation.

In 2005, it was an insurgency. By the end of 2005, we had that about right and we were working pretty well on the counterinsurgency side. 22nd of February, 2006, with the Samara bombing, Al-Qaeda in Iraq turned it over night into a sectarian civil war, but it took us another six months to catch up to the fact that we were going to need to control that violence.

We went in – a bunch of people who hadn't – in a lot of cases – in my case, for example – hadn't supported the original idea of going into Iraq, but decided, look, the job of the moment is not to cry over spilled milk. It's to help clean it up. And we tried to apply best principles of what you had to do, of protecting the population, and building a political consensus to the environment that we found ourselves.

As I was landing back into Iraq in February of 2007, F-16s were attacking targets on Haifa Street, less than 1,200 meters from the embassy. The embassy was getting mortared than five to 10 times a day. People were getting blown up at their desks in the embassy. And that was just the Americans. The people who worked in the embassy, who went home to districts across the city were terrified to leave. The environment was just incredibly dangerous, and all the trend lines were pointing south.

To turn that around, we realized that we needed to, firstly, break the cycle of violence and just reduce the amount of death and fear. We realized that people wouldn't be willing to put down the weapons and engage in any kind of political process until we have sort of lifted the foot of terror of their neck and made them feel that they could be safe enough to work with each other. And so our first sort of business was to stop the killing of Iraqi civilians, both by us and also by the enemy. To do that, we had to get out on the ground and get in close contact with population and create a genuine relationship of trust

and a local alliance with the population. Quite often, in the early phases of the war, we would turn up in a district and we would kind of swat the local population out of the way. And we'd say, "get out of the way. We're backing up the big democracy truck and we would unpack democracy like a gift." And of course, that didn't work so well.

And at the start of the war, we started the surge. We went in and we had a complete different attitude. We said, "take me to your leader. I want to know who's actually running this district. I want to make a deal with you, so that we can secure your district together."

I had one meeting with three guys who snuck out of Sadr City to meet me and we met in a safe house just outside the green zone. And there was an engineer, a former Saddam-era army officer, and an accountant. And they had snuck out. They were members of the district's administrative council, the DAC, supposedly run by Muqtada al-Sadr. And they came in to see me and they said, "when are you guys going to secure our district? We want you to come in and make it safe. Sadrists are abusing the population and killing people and we really want you to come in." And I said, "well, how long have you been working with the coalition?" And they said, "we've been working with you guys since 2003, but always covertly." And I said, "well, this is interesting because you've got economics, military, and engineering development here. If you were me, how would you secure your district?" And they sort of sat back and went into a huddle and talked to each other. And I thought that I'd offended. And I said, "hey, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to offend you." They said, "no, no, it's okay. It's just no one's ever asked us that before."

So we have been working with these guys for four years. They lived there. They had all the requisite skills to secure their own area, but no one ever said to them, "hey, how would you secure your own district?" that's the fundamental change. We took a bottom up approach. We worked for the population to secure them, and create the environment in which political progress became possible.

Now, we have seen political progress since the start of the surge. We are nowhere close to being done with that. I think the war has probably got another five to 10 years to run, frankly, but we pulled it back from the precipice, and we also have saved a lot of Iraqi lives. A bad night in Baghdad now is one or two people getting killed, compared to 125, 130 a night back in 2006. So on the most conservative estimate, we saved several thousand Iraqi lives if nothing else by what we did.

MR. IGNATIUS: It's become common among some commentators who write about Iraq to say that it wasn't the surge in numbers of troops so much, as it was the change in tactics and the full embrace of counterinsurgency tactics, moving people much closer to the population that was decisive. It was being able to work with the tribal leaders and flip the tribes. What's your own judgment about that? We'll be debating this for decades, I'm sure, but what's your sense about that?

MR. KILCULLEN: Well, I think it's very difficult to separate those things in reality. We couldn't have done the right tactics without more troops. We needed those additional troops so that we were able to generate the fourth entity that we needed to protect the population. Similarly, in terms of the population turning against Al-Qaeda, I've already described in a very synthesized form what Al-Qaeda were like. It didn't need much thrust to get the population to hate them and want to turn against them.

The Al Anbar uprising that happened in 2006-2007 was actually the fifth uprising to happen in Al Anbar. The reason that previous four failed before the Sahawa was not because people didn't hate Al-Qaeda. It was because there weren't enough of us around to protect them when they turned against Al-Qaeda. So they would turn against them and they'd be killed. What we were able to do was to provide security so that they were able to sustain that movement against Al-Qaeda and throw the Al-Qaeda guys out.

And getting back to the sort of accidental guerilla theme, again 90-percent of the people that we were fighting were accidental guerillas. They were fighting because their community was at threat from another community in this cycle of violence, which had been provoked by Al-Qaeda in Iraq, which is a tiny, tiny group of external fighters led by Turks and Syrians and foreigners had come in and provoked the sectarian civil war. What we had to do was make it safe enough that they'd feel able to reject those guys, and get back to a political dialogue with the other communities.

MR. IGNATIUS: You talk in your book about the fragility of what we've accomplished in Iraq. You just said we have another five or 10 years. My colleague Tom Ricks is in the audience and said that the decisive events in Iraq lie ahead of us, not behind us. So I want to ask you to focus on that question of fragility and durability and maybe in the context of the events of the last week. We have in Baghdad a charismatic, former Al-Qaeda leader Adel Mashadani, a person I heard volumes about in January of 2008 from officer in Rusafa and Fadl districts, who described the story of how he had fought against the Americans and then had defected and come over to us and had given us the names of 11 of the 13 key Al-Qaeda leaders in this area, who were then been killed. And all of a sudden, Adel Mashadani, a symbolic figure in this awakening process, seems to have turned against the government, going off the reservation if you will, has been arrested along with his supporters, and you now have deep anger, at least among some of the Sunnis who had been backing him. You have a comment in your book. I'll just read. It's a final setup for this. You say, "there's an outside chance to tribes that have flipped from supporting AQI could simply flip back or go their own way once the coalition begins to withdraw." Talk about what's happening there now, and about what would concern you going forward.

MR. KILCULLEN: There are a couple of big things that concern me. One of them is that issue of tribes slipping back and the sustainability of the political turn which happened in the Sunni community in '06-'07. Another one paradoxically is the risk of a coup, which we should talk about as well. But again, no one – And I keep referring to H.R., but H.R. can tell the story of what happened after the battle of Talafa, when people in the Iraqi central government tried to undermine some of the things that had been achieved in that area by restacking the police that had been cleaned out and made to respect human rights and work to protect the population, restacking them with sectarian appointees. A similar thing has been happening, in some ways, in Iraq, where ministries in the Iraqi government, which were actually critical to the process of reconciliation with the tribes, have sort of refused to play their assigned role and said, "well, we don't want these guys to be partnering with us. We want to control things. Why should we have the Sunnis having such an important voice in the political process?"

I had a tribal leader once say to me in the middle of 2007, "I'm so happy we've driven those Al-Qaeda dogs out of our district. Now that we've done that, the next step is

we're going to turn on the Shia ,and we're going to cling to finish the job." And I was like, "well, that's not in the plan, buddy." (Laughter.) But part of this is the Iraq war isn't about us. It was never about us really. It's about Iraqis fighting in a combination with each other.

There's an Arab proverb, "there's no friendship without a fight." And I think there will be a need for them to find their own level, and figure out where things sit. And so – as I said, I don't think the war is over. The people in Iraq who have the least appetite for fighting is us. The Iraqis are still ready to fight each other if need be.

Iraq to me today it looks a lot like Lebanon after the Taif Accords. We have a fragile inter-sectarian, inter-ethnic balance of power and a government that is just barely able to police that balance of power and keep things in hand.

If you remember what made the Taif Accords come on stock, it was external interference from another power. And so we need to worry about the role of external powers interfering in Iraq.

Then the final thing I want to talk about is briefly is a coup. The best Iraqi brigade commander that I ever worked with, who I went out with many times on the ground, said to me, "Saddam was a bad man, but he understood Iraq. You guys are good." (Laughter.) And I was like, "okay, I get it." (Laughter.) And I said, "what does Iraq need?" And he said, "we need good Saddam." And this is a very, very common attitude because people said, "look, the politicians aren't democratic. They don't represent the people. They represent their parties." And because of the closed list system they have no constituency other than their own party. They sit there in the green zone and they trade horses and nothing benefits the population. But we the Iraqi army, we are the nationwide institution that looks after the people, cares for the people. That was their attitude.

This is extremely common. This is not an Iraqi phenomenon. This is a conflict phenomenon that we're looking at. It just so happens that the target geometry for a coup's pretty damn good in Iraq. You've got all the politicians inside a big wall with three entrances in it, and a lot of troops in the city. I think one of the things we need to be thinking about is strengthening civil government, rule of law, the representational constituency of Iraqi politicians to strengthen that grassroots democracy in such a way that it does cement the unarmed political process.

And it's worth pointing out on that context that Sunni tribal leaders, who were involved in the Sahawa, are some of the few politicians in Iraq today who actually have a real constituency, whose views they have to take into account.

MR. IGNATIUS: Let me turn to Afghanistan. I've written that I think this book is really the best guide to the policy choices that we face in Afghanistan. We now have President Obama's announcement of what his Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy will be after a review process of several months. And I want to put you on the spot a little bit and ask you to comment on that policy with this preface: To me, as an observer, it seems as if the president is leaning in two directions at once. You talk in your book about an enemy centric strategy that would focus on Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and a population centric strategy that would get you more in the nation building area. And I've been trying, ever since the president's speech to figure out which of those – this strategy really – as most

folks have done – and I've decided both. It really is leaning in both ways at once. But you were part of this process. You've consulted with officials, but separating yourself from that. Give us your thoughts about what the strategy is, whether you think it's wise, what concerns you have about the details of it.

MR. KILCULLEN: In a discussion about the strategy, I kind of made the point that we are at a fork in the road. We can decide to do more, to commit, to escalate, and to try and actually protect the afghan population. Or we can give up that endeavor and just focus on dealing with Al-Qaeda.

The difficulty with the first option is we might not be able to afford it, okay? It takes a long time to do this kind of thing. It takes a lot of troops. It would take a lot of money to do it right. And it's something that perhaps the country doesn't have the appetite for.

The problem with the second one is it's not going to work. (Laughter.) And bear with me for a second. I know a lot of people in the audience, like me, used to do this for a living, but I want to explain to people how the process of counterterrorism intelligence works.

If I'm an intel asset on the ground and I have eyes on a terrorist target, I need to know where that target is, not now, but at preparation time, plus flight time, plus approval time for my strike asset. So if my strike asset is a Special Forces unit, that's 10 minutes flight time away, and it takes half an hour to get ready, and it takes 20 minutes for me to get approval, then I as the intel guy need to know where is the target going to be in one hour. If my strike asset is a naval unit, a naval service warfare unit in Indian Ocean and the strike asset needs to launch a missile with a two hour flight time and it takes me eight hours to get approval from the White House, I need to know where the target is going to be, not now, but around lunch time tomorrow. That's extremely difficult, okay? It wasn't ideological facility that caused the current administration not to get bin Laden. It was the fact that the strike asset was naval assets in the ocean and the approval time was too long and you could just never get the fidelity of information to do that. When you are working a terrorist target, you need a close based asset, you a close asset SIGINT, and you need enough relationship with the local population to generate the information to queue all your other assets so that you can bring the strike asset in.

So even the most enemy-focused, completely kinetic terrorist approach, or antiterrorist approach in Afghanistan would require close bases with U.S. forces on them. And let's imagine that that strike asset that I talked about, the Special Forces unit, is 50 guys, which is about what you need to take down 10 terrorists, if it's 50 guys, then you actually need 150 guys because they have to sleep, and you need a base for them to live on, you need somebody to protect the base, you need a road to get all your food and water in, you need headquarters, you need to have some kind of a relationship with the population, otherwise, why are they giving you assistance?

So it turns out – to boil it all down – that if you're going to do counterterrorism, even the most basic form of counterterrorism, you need to also do a certain minimum level of counterinsurgency to protect the population, build a relationship with them, and get them on side before you can be effective. And that certain minimum level turns out to be pretty

substantial. So unfortunately, the neat, clinical, just strike the bad guys approach isn't going to work.

Now, what the current administration has done, I think, is they focused on the immediate crisis, and I think it was actually wise. What they've done is they've said, let's look at the troops we need to secure the environment now, let's look at what we can get from the allies in Strasbourg next week, let's look at what we can sell to the American people as an easily understood explanation for why we're engaging in this conflict, and they've gone with that. And what I think they've done is kept their powder dry a little bit to see how things develop.

And you can fault them for saying, you know, you should be committed both boots in, 100 percent right now, and unless you make that firm, long-term commitment, then people aren't going to side with you. I think there's some truth to that, but I think it's also wise for them to see how the allies react and to see how the situation develops before fully committing.

So you know, I'm, perhaps like the president, leaning in both directions. I think it's not a bad first response and we'll have to see how it develops as the fighting season goes on.

MR. IGNATIUS: And what would it take to convince you – you've – I've quoted you as saying that you think it would be folly to make a very large additional commitment of troops now, but what would it take to convince you that that was a wise course? What would things have to look like nine months, a year from now?

MR. KILCULLEN: Well, I think what's actually most important is the situation in Pakistan. Afghanistan is not going to fall to the Taliban anytime soon. The situation in Afghanistan is bad and it's getting worse, but the real problem is in Pakistan. And I don't mean to suggest that the Pakistanis are the enemy here. I'm talking about something different.

The scale of the problem in Pakistan is huge by comparison to the scale of either Iraq or Afghanistan. Iraq is 31 million people. Afghanistan is 32 million. Pakistan is 173 million people with 100 nuclear weapons and an army bigger than the U.S. Army, an Al-Qaeda headquarters sitting there in the two-thirds of the country where the government doesn't exercise effective control.

So we could do all kinds of things right in Afghanistan and still be completely screwed if we fail to stabilize Pakistan, and, somehow, prevent state collapse and extremist takeover. So I think the focus needs to be on what are we doing about Pakistan and then Afghanistan becomes the adjunct to that broader strategic question rather than the other way around.

MR. IGNATIUS: Well, I have the feeling we just scratched the surface and it's a good time to turn to the audience for your questions. Let me ask you, please, to keep your questions brief because we'd like to take a lot. Please identify yourself in asking the question. Do we have microphones for folks? We do. Yes. So, yes. Please raise your

hand and I will call on people as I see you. Yes, please. Yes. Sorry? If you could repeat your name please.

Q: Rob Smith. I noticed in the book that most counterinsurgency theorists talk heavily about the role of intelligence. And when I read the book, I noticed sort of an absence of that. So you get to the very end and you talk about the need to restructure the intelligence community for purposes of going after non-state actors. Could you elaborate on that a little bit? I was just struck by the absence of the intelligence story.

MR. KILCULLEN: Is Tom Rid here? I can't see him. I'm actually writing a chapter on intelligence for Tom Rid's upcoming book. I haven't got very far on it yet, I'm afraid.

I had a sort of editorial issue in writing the book about how much to say about the intelligence process in conflicts that are currently ongoing. I had a lot of material on how we did intelligence in Iraq, and how the intelligence processes worked in Afghanistan. Ultimately, I decided not to put a lot of that in the book. I felt like I don't want this to become the anarchist's cook book, you know. And so I decided to pull back from putting a lot of that in.

But what I did leave in was all that stuff about the anthropological characteristics of the population and the way that the politics of these groups works. So I tried to leave in a discussion of human terrain intelligence but take out some of that discussion of threat intelligence.

And as you know well, Rob, we probably share similar views on how the Intel community needs to work. I think most of us that have worked in the field have similar views. This is probably not the right venue to put them out. But I don't suggest that intelligence isn't important. It's just something that, perhaps, we shouldn't be publishing on Amazon.

MR. IGNATIUS: Let me just ask a quick follow-up and then I'll turn to you. One subset of intelligence policy is the use of predator drones to attack targets in Pakistan, and, in particular, in Waziristan, where the Pakistani Army and frontier corps basically withdrew. What do you think about the wisdom of the use of those drones to kill Al-Qaeda and Taliban targets in those areas?

MR. KILCULLEN: The UAVs are undeniably doing a lot of damage to the senior leadership of Al-Qaeda and to, in some cases, Taliban. Having said that, on balance, I think that we need to be extremely cautious about the use of drones in Pakistan. And I quote in the book Winston Churchill from 1897 when he was working in Bajaur which is one of the agencies in the FATA, and he talks about how we went into this area, and who would have thought it that the tribes didn't like us coming into their area, and they pushed back against us and we had this big battle and at the end, we had to blow their village up because we needed to deny them a base area.

The village that he was talking about was the village of Damadola. If that name sounds familiar, is because in January 2006, that was where a predator drone strike was launched against Ayman al-Zawahiri who was believed to be in a house in that village. We

didn't get him on that occasion. We've since struck that same village another four times since 2006.

So this is the classic ancestral homeland of the accidental guerilla. One of the reasons why these people don't like us is because Western powers have been blowing their village up for about 115 years.

And if you're worried about the collapse of Pakistan more than you're worried about killing Al-Qaeda senior leadership, I think you would have to say that continuing the drone strikes in Pakistan probably has more negative consequences than positive. So, on balance, I'm against it, but I think we should still reserve the right to strike number one and number two, if we see them, but that's a pretty short list.

MR. IGNATIUS: Yes, please.

Q: Hadeh Malek (ph). I focus on Pakistan's counterinsurgency policy at the U.S. Joint Special Operations University. I wanted to stick with Pakistan and UAV as a tactic, but also talk about new strategy announced by President Obama.

It seems to me almost like a slippery slope. So you've got access to all of the seven agencies in about six frontier regions, but then you have the Swat Valley, then you have other areas where they're moving. So if I'm al Qaeda, I would like to move away, further away from drones.

Secretary Gates, Holbrooke, even President Obama has said that the troops, U.S. troops in Pakistan is a red line the U.S. government does not want to cross. But it looks like a slippery slope, like if they move and drone attacks are extended, but are not very effective, what does that all lead toward? And eventually, if U.S. troops do come in, what would be the backlash?

MR. KILCULLEN: There's already been a very substantial political destabilization, as you know, resulting from the presence of the Pakistani Army in the tribal areas and from the drone strikes as they already exist. So I kind of agree with the administration that putting U.S. troops into northwestern Pakistan, or any part of Pakistan, would be just an incredibly destabilizing event.

I want to back up a little though because one of the things we did in Iraq was we stepped back and we said, what's our political strategy? Let's just hold off for a second on who we're going to kill, and let's figure out first what kind of political environment are we trying to create? And what's the end state in terms of what's the political structure we're looking for? And then how do we get there? And then what part do military operations have in that process? And that was again, Gazar Keitchar (ph) and General Petraeus that were very firm about that process.

I'm not sure we've done it in Pakistan. I think we're striking targets because we can find them not because we've decided that we have a political strategy and that's the means to achieving it.

You know this, but I'm not sure everyone in the audience does. The FATA is governed under the Frontier Crimes Regulation written in 1849, amended in 1901, and it's basically a collective punishment, indirect colonial rule system where the basic fundamental deal is that tribes in the FATA sit down quietly under the Malik, the government appointed tribal representative and the political agent, and as long as they're quiet, we're not going to send the Army in to kick your ass. That's the basic principle of how the place is governed.

In 2002, in the Tirah Valley campaign from pressure from the international community, the Pakistani Army, for the first time in Pakistani history, went into the tribal areas in full force in war fighting mode, and instead of fulfilling the bargain of don't cause trouble or we're going to come in and kick your ass, they lost. Now, that means the Pakistani Army called their own bluff. And now the tribes don't respect the army anymore. And one of the results of this process and repeated failed incursions into the tribal areas has been the breakdown of the basic system under which the FATA has been governed.

I've worked up there a reasonable amount and I've talked with a lot of people from the Frontier Corps, and the Khyber – (inaudible) – and Waziristan Scouts, and they say, we're going to get back to the Raj. We're going to re-strengthen the power of the political agent. We've got to get the frontier scouts working again. We've got to fix the tribal structure and go back to the old ways of doing things. I'm not so sure that's right. I think that it was probably a bankrupt structure anyway. The reason the British created that system was not because they wanted a well administered portion of what was in India. It was to create an impenetrable hedge for the Russians if the Russians started to invade.

I think we need to be going back to a sort of grassroots in saying, what do we need to achieve in northwest Pakistan that's going to lead to a cessation of arms?

A very radical JUI leader, who's from Bajaur, sat with me for several hours once when I was in Pakistan, and said, "Why don't you have elections? Let the political parties operate in the FATA. Let us hold local elections. Whoever gets elected can run the place. It'll be like the rest of Pakistan. Why do you treat us like an internal colony?" And of course, the standard American response to that is if we do that, the radicals will get elected, and then the radicals will end up owning it.

But this guy was a JUI politician. In the very next election, in January 2008, they got trounced by the secular nationalist Awami National Party. So I don't think it's a done deal that the radicals are going to get elected. The only thing that I can think of that we could do to increase the chances of radicals getting elected would be to keep on striking them with drones.

MR. IGNATIUS: Trudy Ruben.

Q: Thank you. Trudy Ruben. Can we make progress in Afghanistan without first making progress in Pakistan which was a question that several senators asked General Petraeus this morning? And can we make progress in Pakistan, if the Pakistani Army continues to really reject the idea of a counterinsurgency doctrine and change its strategy, and its tactics, thereby, going in and flattening villages, creating new refugee flows, et cetera?

MR. KILCULLEN: Well, a couple of points on that. Firstly, I think the Pakistanis have actually changed their approach over the last few years and we've seen a pretty significant improvement in some areas the Bajaur campaign and the campaign in Malikan (ph) this year, while they had some problems, were certainly nothing like some of the previous campaigns that were conducted. So I think they're getting better, and we should give them credit for that.

But I think the fundamental problem in Pakistan is not one of capacity. We could always work with the Pakistanis to help them do things better. But first, there has to be a change in some of the motivation of certain elements within the Pakistani national security establishment.

I'm not suggesting that the whole Pakistani Army, or whole of ISI, or any of the rest of the Pakistani national security services are on the other side, but certain key elements within those organizations still continue to tolerate and, in some cases, assist the Afghan Taliban. This has been admitted by the Pakistani government. It's not a secret.

The problem is always to understand is this local rogue commanders, or it is a certain rogue element within the service, or are these people following orders that come from the very top of the Pakistani government, who's giving the orders that are creating that support for the enemy.

I don't think it's one or the other. I think the truth is somewhere in between. And I certainly don't think that the Pakistani civilian leadership under President Zardari is supporting the Taliban.

So that leads me to say that the fundamental problem in Pakistan is that you have a civilian elected democratic political leadership that doesn't control its own national security establishment. And elements within that national security establishment are working against us.

The classic example of this is after the Mumbai attack when President Zardari promised to send General Pasha, the head of the ISI to India to help investigate the attacks. And General Kayani, the head of the army said, no, that won't be happening and essentially contradicted the president in public and kept the ISI out of the investigation.

Until that motivation changes, and I think we're going to see a lot of different performance, what's going to change that motivation? We need to give the Pakistani – or not we. The Pakistanis need to receive a security guarantee that makes them feel comfortable enough to stop mounting the attacks.

Coming back to the Iraq example, if the Sunni community hadn't been given some kind of security guarantee, they would have had no choice but to continue supporting Al-Qaeda. We've got to take a similar approach with the Pakistanis and say, how can we raise their comfort level to the point where they feel like they don't need to support the Taliban anymore?

That will require some pretty tricky bilateral and also multilateral diplomatic work. So thank God we have Richard Holbrooke in charge of that because I would not want that job.

But you know, a regionally based security guarantee to the Pakistanis is probably the only thing that's going to get us to the point where they feel comfortable to not support the Taliban.

Q: (Off mike.)

MR. KILCULLEN: Yes, absolutely.

MR. IGNATIUS: Yes, please.

Q: Paula Broadwell. I'm a research associate at Harvard University and an Army reservist who's been recalled three times. And I mention that because I read this week Michèle Flournoy was advocating for the Civilian Response Corp which would fall under the State Department. And I'm wondering if you could comment on the feasibility and efficacy of such a corps, and how soon we might see it.

MR. KILCULLEN: Firstly, thank you for your service. There's been a lot of discussion about where are the civilians. And there have been successive attempts within the State Department to increase the number of field-deployable civilians who can get into the higher risk environment and do civilian jobs but in a more dangerous context.

Is Eric (sp) Misely (ph) here? I think he is somewhere. No? Eric was the first aid officer to serve with CFC-A, the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force in Afghanistan. And he went out individually carrying a weapon, working with Special Forces patrols, delivering all the aid capability of a normal aid officer, but in a much more high-risk environment.

At that time, he was probably a foreign antibody in the aid structure – I believe it's an exaggeration to say that – and people were very nervous about that.

Similarly, I know a number of state department officers like Dan Green who worked in Afghanistan in '05, '06 who undertook some extremely dangerous activities to do the political reporting, and get the sort of state department job done.

But, again, those guys weren't institutionally supported. They were individuals who were out doing their thing because they thought it was important.

What we're seeing now is a shift to institutionally support those guys. That's the role of the Civilian Response Corps amongst other structures that's happening in state and elsewhere.

The Civilian Response Corps is probably going to change under the Obama administration. And given the discussion that's happened since the inauguration and also during the campaign, I think we'll see more money going into foreign assistance generally and certainly an increase in attention to raising greater civilian capacity.

But I hate to tell you there's no Santa Clause. It's not going to happen soon enough to make a difference for you. It takes time to build these kinds of capabilities. The military is going to have to keep on doing them for most of this foreseeable future.

And actually, although it may not necessarily be the core mission of the military to do this kind of nation building tasks, I think we all recognize that if it doesn't get done by a military in a lot of cases, it's not going to be done. And so, it's about the military bringing the capacity and the other agencies bringing the knowledge, putting those two together and generating a result. Not that the military doesn't have knowledge, but there is a lot of expertise in the civilian agencies of government that we need to bring to the fight.

So you know, I'm pretty positive actually that it's going to improve, but I think it's going to be a slow process.

MR. IGNATIUS: The gentleman all the way in the back.

Q: Thank you. My name is Donald McDonald. You mentioned Damadola and Bajaur. And I'd like to take that on a little. One of the interesting things, I think, about Damadola and Bajaur is that 50 years before Churchill was trotting around there, they became a center of sort of the Dobandi (ph) influence on the frontier, and that was, if you like, a kind of precursor of some of the thinking of Al-Qaeda in as much as it was an alien radical entity in sort of putting itself in a very specific local belief system when it found good roots.

And then, I'd like to move on to a territory that is very much yours, which is Indonesia. And one of the striking things about Indonesia of course is that Indonesian Islam is incredibly varied and syncretic and it has – depending on where you are – there are different variations on sort of the practice of Islam, and the different elements that have come in to build up that local practice of Islam. And I wonder therefore – I haven't read your book yet. I'm going to be buying it, I assure you. (Laughter.) Although your answer may be decisive. (Laughter.)

MR. IGNATIUS: Unfair.

Q: Is it worth building up local belief systems, local interpretations of faith in areas where accidental guerrillas might be emerging, or has globalization basically meant that that's not possible, that those belief systems have lost much of what is distinctive and it's not doable.

MR. KILCULLEN: Well, the answer is very simple. It depends. (Laughter.) But the explanation is a little more complex.

When I was in Indonesia in the 1990s, I was working with ex-members of this group Darul Islam which was a separatist Muslim insurgent organization that was across three different provinces in Indonesia. Those guys were xenophobic, traditional, orthodox, syncretic (sp), they had a strong Sufi overtone to their theology. They believed in amulets and charms. They were very much like traditional northern Malay or Western Javanese Islam in their belief system.

A large number of the people that were working with me back then in the 1990s joined JI, the Jamal Islamia, the Al-Qaeda ally, in 2001. Those guys had an Arab-centric worldview. They were anti-Sufi, had a completely different theology to the JI guys – to DI. And DI was focused only on Indonesia. These guys had a global focus.

You could ask yourself why would people join two such theologically different movements, in some cases, the same individuals, in many cases, members of the same family? Why would they do that? Theology can't be the explanation for that. As if the same group joins two theologically different organizations. It doesn't explain it.

Also, the theological basis for Al-Qaeda has been present in Islam for about 1,000 years. So why hasn't it always been like this? Again, theology can't explain the al Qaeda phenomenon. It has to be something else.

Similarly, if you look at Indonesian history, there are periods of breakout of radical Islam that happen at times of flux and crisis in Indonesian society.

What I suggest is it's those times of flux and crisis and the underlying sort of deep structures of how tribes, groups, social groups work, those things are a much more powerful explanation for what we see than Islam. What I intend to say is Islam is the language not the logic.

And if you take that and apply it to Pakistan, Osama bin Laden is one of a long line of cranky guys in caves hiding – (inaudible). The difference between him and the Mad Mullah, or Mullah Fouynda (ph), or Ajab Khan Afridi, or any of the other guys going back to the mid 19th century, is he has the tools of globalization at his disposal. He can beam his message into living rooms in the West by Al Jazeera. He can launch bombers across three or four countries to attack somebody else. He has a reach that people didn't have. And it's in my sort of cycle it's the contagion effect that makes it different.

Infections have always been happening. Radical groups have emerged and tried to take over local groups. It's been part and parcel of life in that part of the world for centuries. The different thing is now there's a contagion possibility which brings a response from the United States and other Western powers.

Now, let me be very clear here. I'm not saying that intervention is bad. The alternative to intervention is more 9/11s. We have to intervene. We have to get involved in dealing with this extremely radical but very small group that's implacably opposed to the West. It's all about how you do that. And doing it while making the local people your ally, the vast amounts of examples in my book that I put forward suggest that that's a much better approach than doing it unilaterally or in a high profile way that alienates them and just strengthens the radical group that you're fighting. So it's all about how to intervene rather than whether to intervene.

MR. IGNATIUS: Yes. The gentleman over there please.

Q: Niviv Vandali (ph), International Peace Operations Association. Thank you for this great discussion. In your book, you recommend getting the lexicon right because of the constraints of names. So I'm wondering, the global war on terror has been dropped and we now have overseas contingency operations. I was wondering if you could speak to that.

MR. IGNATIUS (?): And man-made disasters.

MR. KILCULLEN: Yes. Man-caused disasters yes. You know, it's not human-caused disasters. I think it's interesting. (Laughter.) A little reverse sexism there.

Look. A lot of people have said how idiotic the label "war on terror" is because you know, you don't make war on a tactic and all that kind of stuff. Got that. It was then, it is now, it always has been just a political label. And today we have a new political label. So I think we have to engage with these things on a level of political discourse, rather than as a sort of definitional problem of what are we dealing with.

I think, if you look at what the administration is trying to do, I think they're trying to get everybody to take a deep breath, to calm down and to move away from some of the language of fear and confrontation that's been creating tension. I think that's a valid effort. And I'd remind you that the Bush administration did that on a number of occasions as well. It's not an Obama administration thing. I think everyone has recognized that there's a need to kind of de-stress the discussion.

So call it whatever you want. It's probably going to still be the same on the ground, but if you change the label, it does eventually change the way people think about things.

When I called for a new lexicon, I was talking about something slightly different. I was mentioning the fact that most of the words that we use to describe the threat actually tell you what the threat is not rather than what it is. It's a non-state actor waging unconventional war, asymmetrically. So you know, whatever it is, it's not symmetrical, it's not a state, it's not conventional, it's not regular. Okay. Got that. But what is it? And I think we need to move beyond that sort of un-words language and actually start engaging with what is it that we're dealing with here.

MR. IGNATIUS: The gentleman in the first row, please.

Q: Tim Reid (sp). Just back to the Pakistan again. You have, as the president said last week, most Al-Qaeda is mostly in Pakistan, not in Afghanistan. You have Taliban and al Qaeda leadership in big cities like Quetta and Peshawar, and yet, you cannot have American boots on the ground and you have a Pakistani Army which seems incapable of tackling them. So in practical terms, how do you tackle them? And secondly, what threat do the tribal areas and the northwest of Pakistan pose to the rather fragile civilian government?

MR. KILCULLEN: Yes. Two excellent questions. I think that the key – there are two keys to getting progress in the current situation in Pakistan. One is to strengthen the rule of law and accountability, the judiciary, those sorts of elements of the government and to improve the authority of the elected civilian leaders.

The other one is the Pakistani police. Pakistani military and ISI are externally focused. They're worried about the threat from India. There's really only element in the Pakistani national security establishment whose primary concern is the concern of state collapse and extremist takeover, and that's the Pakistani police. And the Pakistani police

have actually done some very, very good work in community policing, stabilizing the environment and counter-radicalization and most of the good counterinsurgency work that's happened in Pakistan has been done by the police.

And yet, we've under-resourced our assistance to the police dramatically. We've given large amounts of resources to the military which have often been diverted to platforms that address India instead of focusing on the local civilian administrators, judges, the rule of law, police, all those sorts of elements that bring about a safe environment for people.

So you know, I would suggest those two lines of operation: the political line to do restricting and improving the throw weight of the civilian government, and then in terms of assistance focusing on the police and the judiciary.

MR. NAGL: I think our speaker must be getting thirsty. And so, with apologies to people who have questions, you can put them to Dave when you buy one of his books and get him to sign it. I want to end here.

But I want to ask one concluding question of my own. Mark Sageman, former CIA officer, now psychiatrist, who's written very thoughtfully about terrorism argues in his most recent book about the third generation of Al-Qaeda that left to itself this movement is burning itself out, and that if we avoid doing stupid things, that will happen overtime. If we have to be very – continue to go after first generation of Al-Qaeda where we find them, but if we avoid dumb mistakes, this is generationally (sp) going to die out. Do you share that view and if you don't, say why you think it's wrong.

MR. KILCULLEN: I think I do probably share the view. I think we've seen a very substantial drop of support for Al-Qaeda in the Muslim world over the last few years not only for al Qaeda. Every time JI does a bombing in Indonesia, their public approval rating drops radically to the point now where the biggest predictor in Southeast Asia for belonging to a terrorist movement is non belonging to one of the mass Muslim organizations. So it's when people leave the mosque that they become radicalized. I think that shows you that the movement is losing steam ideologically.

Having said that, that doesn't necessarily mean it's going to disappear and fade away over night because a lot of these movements can be sustained more easily as an internal network than they can as a mass movement.

Gordon McCormick, who's a researcher at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, has an excellent study of this where he show how insurgencies end slowly, where you drive the insurgency down, to a point where it becomes harder and harder to find the insurgents and then they can stay at that low level for a very long time, and if the pressure is relaxed, or the situation changes, they can come back.

So I think the threat of Al-Qaeda will continue to go down. It will reach the point where it's no longer threatening the overthrow of international society or any individual state, but it's still a threat there in the background. I don't think that means we can necessarily relax, that is, we, the security services, can necessarily relax. I think that the

majority of people can go about their daily lives but we still need to be vigilant with regard to Al-Qaeda for some considerable future.

MR. NAGL: Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes an extraordinary hour of thinking about some of the most important issues we face. I'd like to thank all of you. It's still true. I said it was going to happen and it did.

I'd like to thank all of you for the great questions and for coming out here tonight. I'd like to thank David Ignatius for typically thoughtful and deep questions.

And most of all, I'd like to thank Dave Kilcullen for all he's done and all he continues to do to help us understand the enemies we face and to fight them more effectively. Thank you all.

(Applause.)

(END)