

ARAB OPINION ON AMERICAN POLICIES, VALUES AND PEOPLE

JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND OVERSIGHT
AND THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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ARAB OPINION ON AMERICAN POLICIES, VALUES AND PEOPLE

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2007

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
HUMAN RIGHTS, AND OVERSIGHT, AND
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST
AND SOUTH ASIA,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittees met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. William D. Delahunt (chairman of the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight) presiding.

Mr. DELAHUNT. This joint hearing of the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia will come to order. On behalf of my friend and ranking member, Mr. Rohrabacher, I would like to thank the distinguished chair and ranking member of the Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee, Mr. Ackerman; and Mr. Pence for agreeing to collaborate in this hearing entitled, "Arab Opinion on American Policies, Values, and People."

I would like to inform my friends on the Middle East Subcommittee that this is one in a series of 10 hearings that our subcommittee is holding on the implications of a report issued in 2005 by the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office.

The GAO cited polling data demonstrating that opposition to American policies and leadership is, in their words, "spreading and deepening around the world" and that this threatens our national interests because it can: Number one, increase foreign public support for terrorism directed at Americans and America; secondly, impact the cost and effectiveness of military operations; third, weaken the United States' ability to align with other nations in pursuit of common policy objectives; and, lastly, dampen the foreign publics' enthusiasm for U.S. businesses, services, and products.

We have heard, in previous testimony, that globally, in all of the regions we have looked at specifically so far—Europe, Latin America, and Africa—strong majorities oppose the invasion and occupation of Iraq. In addition, we have heard that, in every region except non-Muslim Africa and parts of Eastern Europe, approval levels for

the United States, in general, and for its international leadership, in particular, have fallen to all-time lows.

Most troubling of all, Andrew Kohut, of the Pew Center, appeared before us and said these record levels of what he called “anti-Americanism” may be becoming entrenched.

Today, we are continuing our series with a look at the important issue of Arab opinion about the United States. Our two expert witnesses will help us with such questions of vital interest to the success of our Middle East policies as, is there a clash of civilizations in which Arab majorities and Americans can never reach agreement on mutually beneficial policies, or is there a body of shared values that will allow us to compromise and achieve workable solutions?

Do they hate us because of our freedoms, or are they disappointed in the freedoms we take in determining which government rules them or, in some perceived sense, of unfairness toward Muslims?

What are the policies and processes that seem to provide the most irritation?

Does our support for cooperative but nondemocratic governments, such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, alienate the United States from their general publics, as my friend, Mr. Rohrabacher, pointed out in a hearing yesterday, in reference to our support for the shah of Iran from 1953 to 1979? I would, of course, note that Iran is not an Arab country.

Does general opposition among Arabs to our policies in the Middle East translate into support for al-Qaeda and its attacks on American civilians?

Before I introduce the witnesses, Drs. Zogby and Pollock, who will help us with such questions, let me turn to my good friend, our subcommittee’s ranking member, the gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher, for any remarks he may wish to make.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am looking forward to hearing about the inclinations of the people of this planet who consider themselves to be Arab and Muslims, and perhaps not Muslims but perhaps Arabs who are Muslims and Christians, and that would be something I would be interested in as well, to see about differentiation there in the Arab world between Christian Arab and Muslim Arab thought, if there is such a dichotomy.

I appreciate you holding this hearing. This is one of a series of hearings. I am anxiously awaiting the next of the series of these hearings, to the opinion of those in Antarctica—

Mr. DELAHUNT. The penguins are with us, Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER [continuing]. And their view because we have covered just about every corner of the planet except for Antarctica.

However, let me note that it would seem to me that this finding out the inclinations of the people in the Muslim world perhaps should have been first on our list of countries and regions to look at rather than being the last of the list because perhaps, in today’s context, the opinion of this segment of humanity is far more important than the segments of humanity we have already covered. So Thank you very much.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Rohrabacher. I now turn to the gentleman from New York, my dear friend, Mr. Ackerman, who

chairs the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, for any opening statement he may wish to make.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Chairman Delahunt.

It is clear to anyone who has bothered to read the polling data coming out of the Middle East that the policies of the United States are overwhelmingly disliked. The general view of the United States as immoral, licentious, rapacious, and seeking to colonize the region has long been standard fare for Arab intellectuals and, as a result, for the broader Arab public.

The war in Iraq, the perception of United States hypocrisy on the question of democratization, and longstanding U.S. support for regimes that are generally disliked by their people only serve to cement the views that Arab publics already hold. There are age-old caricatures of the United States that flow from the European socialist left and its affiliation with Arab nationalism, but those ideas are false on their face and could be combated with effective public diplomacy.

Our real problem in the Arab and non-Arab Muslim world is not, as the President has suggested, that people hate us because of our freedoms; it is that they do not trust us to work for and support theirs. Arabs and the broader Muslim world have simply listened to our language for too long and then watched us as we repeatedly failed to deliver on the rhetoric. It is fairness and justice that they are after, and they do not believe that they will receive it from us.

Since the September 11 attacks, there have been too many facile linkages between poverty and hopelessness and terrorism when, in point of fact, the polling data suggest something much more alarming and something much more difficult to address: The most radical individuals among the Arab publics are also those with the most education, those with the most opportunity in their respective societies, and those with some or a great deal of exposure to the West, generally, or the United States, in particular.

This data speaks to an understanding of Western ideology and subsequent betrayal and disillusion, not in their case, as with hopelessness driven by poverty and despair. It tells us that there are people who have been seduced by the promise of liberty and then crushed by the abandonment of those who they thought could and would deliver it.

Almost 3 years ago, the 9/11 Commission Report was explicit about the significance of the foreign policy and especially the diplomatic components of an effective national counterterrorism strategy. Sadly, the Bush administration and the previous Congress thought little of this advice. Public diplomacy was equated with campaign-style spin in favor of the 3-month, diplomatic initiatives designed to address American critics but not Arab or Muslim public opinion.

The administration's still-born attempts to promote democracy in the Middle East have failed to strengthen our allies at the roots of their societies and have failed to create the political space necessary for legitimate democratic opposition to develop and grow. Instead, the rhetorical flourishes of Secretary Rice at Cairo University were followed with silence and then, worse, acquiescence, as regimes throughout the region went back to business as usual.

This is a betrayal that will not be undone by a United States withdrawal from Iraq or a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is betrayal that will not be soothed by a political settlement in Lebanon. It is deeper than a change in U.S. policy could reach and more profound. Arabs simply do not see us as we see ourselves, and if we continue to present ourselves to them as we see us, without taking into account how they see us, then we will never come to the kind of understanding that both we and the Arab and broader Muslim world say that we want.

Thank you, Chairman Delahunt, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses and hope, from the numbers that they represent, the way forward may emerge.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ackerman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GARY L. ACKERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

It's clear to anyone who has bothered to read the polling data coming out of the Middle East, that the policies of the United States are overwhelmingly disliked. The general view of the United States as immoral, licentious, rapacious and seeking to colonize the region has long been standard fair for Arab intellectuals, and as a result for the broader Arab public. The war in Iraq, the perception of U.S. hypocrisy on the question of democratization, and long-standing U.S. support for regimes that are generally disliked by their people only serve to cement the views that Arab publics already hold.

There are age old caricatures of the of the United States that flow from the European socialist Left and its affiliation with Arab nationalism, but those ideas are false on their face and could be combated with effective public diplomacy. Our real problem in the Arab and non-Arab Muslim world is not as the President has suggested, that people hate us because of our freedoms, it's that they don't trust us to work for and support theirs. Arabs and the broader Muslim world have simply listened to our language for too long and then watched us as we repeatedly fail to deliver on the rhetoric. It is fairness and justice that they are after and they don't believe that they will receive it from us.

Since the September 11 attacks, there have been too many facile linkages between poverty and hopelessness and terrorism, when in point of fact the polling data suggest something much more alarming and something much more difficult to address: the most radical individuals among Arab publics are also those with the most education, those with the most opportunity in their respective societies and those with some or a great deal of exposure to the West generally or the United States in particular. This data speaks to an understanding of Western ideology and subsequent betrayal and disillusion, not in their cases with hopelessness driven by poverty and despair. It tells us that there are people who have been seduced by the promise of liberty and then crushed by the abandonment of those who they thought could and would deliver it.

Almost three years ago the 9/11 Commission Report was explicit about the significance of the foreign policy, and especially the diplomatic components of an effective national counter terrorism strategy. Sadly, the Bush administration and the previous Congress thought little of this advice. Public diplomacy was equated with campaign-style spin and flavor-of-the-month diplomatic initiatives designed to address American critics but not Arab or Muslim public opinion.

The Administration's stillborn attempt to promote democracy in the Middle East has failed to strengthen our allies at the roots of their societies and has failed to create the political space necessary for legitimate democratic opposition to develop and grow. Instead, the rhetorical flourish of Secretary Rice at Cairo University was followed with silence, and then worse, acquiescence as regimes throughout the region went back to business as usual.

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I look forward to hearing today's witnesses and hope that from the numbers, a way forward may emerge.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Ackerman.

Unless there is a serious need on the part of my colleagues to make an opening statement, I will proceed to introduce the witnesses.

James Zogby is well known to all of us as the longtime president of the Arab American Institute, but today he appears before us in his role as senior consultant at the Zogby International polling firm.

I note that we have had his brother, John, the president of Zogby International, as a witness in March at a hearing on Latin American opinion.

Dr. Pollock, if you have any other siblings, we are happy to consider them for future hearings. Mr. Rohrabacher suggested Antarctica. I am sure that there is a poll done somewhere of the penguins on America. Hopefully, their attitudes have not been influenced by events elsewhere on the planet that are negative.

Dr. Zogby has designed, conducted, and analyzed dozens of important polls in the Middle East. He has presented his findings at the State Department and the United Nations.

Looking over his very impressive resumé, I must note that he certainly brings a diverse religious perspective to his work in that diverse region. He is a graduate of a Jesuit college, Lamoine, with a doctorate from Temple University's Department of Religion, focused on Islam.

Dr. Pollock is a visiting Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. In 2006, he completed 10 years of service in the Department of State in such key positions as a member of the secretary's policy planning staff and senior adviser for the broader Middle East.

Prior to that, he was, for 10 years, the chief of research for Near East, South Asia, and Africa for the United States Information Agency. I am pleased to see that he received his education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at a little-known university just up from the Charles River.

Dr. Zogby, would you please start us out with your study of the issue? Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF JAMES ZOGBY, PH.D., SENIOR ANALYST,
ZOGBY INTERNATIONAL**

Mr. ZOGBY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the last 5 years, we at Zogby International have had the opportunity to poll regularly and extensively across the Arab world. Some of our polls that have generated the greatest attention have been those that focused on what Arabs think about America, our people, our products, our values, and our policies that affect the region.

Equally significant, however, have been our ground-breaking surveys of Arab values, concerns, expectations, and needs, and I am especially proud of those. We have had the opportunity to measure the region's middle class. We have surveyed business leaders to learn about their investment strategies and their attitudes toward reform. We have polled on issues like women in the workplace and attitudes toward the application of Sharia law. We have even

polled television viewing preferences across the region, and we have polled both during and after elections in Iraq, Iran, Palestine, and Lebanon, and a whole lot more.

What did we learn? Well, we learned, first of all, that Arabs do not go to bed at night hating America and wake up in the morning hating Israel. In fact, what we learned is that Arabs, like people all over the world, have, as their principal political and personal concerns, issues related to their families and their economic well-being, health care, and educational opportunities that are available to themselves and their children.

There are, to be sure, some differences in the order that these priorities receive in different countries, and, over time, they can change, given local events.

Again, we learned that in most Arab countries it is important to note that up until the disastrous summer of 2006, with the wars in Lebanon, Gaza, and the escalation of civil conflict in Iraq, our respondents, in fact, indicated, in answers to what we call “the Reagan questions”—are you better off than you were?—they answered that they felt better off than they were 4 years ago, and they expected that they would be better off in the next 4. But 2006 changed all of that. By December 2006, the sense of satisfaction and optimism changed dramatically and, I think, rather precipitously, sliding downward in most countries.

When asked about the reforms they wanted to see in their countries, Arabs pointed consistently to increasing opportunities for employment, improving health care, and improved education. Political reforms and issues of that sort, however, ranked far lower down the scale.

Now, when Arabs do think about America, it is in terms of how we impact their lives and impact their region, and, here, there is both good news and bad news. We first polled this issue on the heels of a Gallup poll that answered the question, What do they think about us? They hate us. And people were scratching their head and saying why, and some people gave the answer, they hate our values. But we thought the answer deserved a more complex treatment.

So what we did was, instead of asking them how they felt about America, because we thought asking that question, in fact, was like asking the wrong question at the wrong time. It was sort of asking a woman who has just kicked her husband out for being a serial cheater what she thought about men. You were going to get the answer that you knew you were going to get.

So what we did was we pulled it apart, and we asked multiple questions about America, like how America manifests itself in the region, what do we think about American people, what do we think about American values of freedom and democracy, television programs, education, science, technology, culture, et cetera? And then we asked them, as well, what they thought about American policy.

What we learned was that, in almost every case, Arabs like our values, they like our people, our culture. In fact, it was our policies they did not like, and this is what drove down our favorable ratings.

If you look at the charts I have brought with me, science and technology gets over a 70-percent favorable rating. American free-

dom and democracy gets an over 50-percent rating. American movies get 50- to 60-percent rating. Actually, they got higher numbers in most of these areas than we did in France. They really do not like us.

But on issues of policy toward Arabs, toward Palestinians, toward terrorism in general, you got an 8-percent favorable in Saudi Arabia, a 9 percent in Lebanon, a 15 percent in UAE, and a 1 percent in Egypt.

We also learned that when we asked them how they thought America could help them, they overwhelmingly rejected our support in terms of internal issues of reform. What they wanted from us is they want us to help solve the Arab-Israeli conflict, which plagues the region and creates instability. They also wanted assistance in some countries in capacity building, expanding employment, improving health care and education.

We also examined how Arabs learned about us, and this is interesting because we found that Arabs who know Americans, Arabs who visited America, Arabs who even just report knowing about us because they watch our television shows, they tend to like our people, our culture, our products, and our values more, maybe 10 percent more in every case, but none of this made them like our policies any better. In fact, they may create even more alienation because, said one respondent, "I feel jilted. I like you. I just feel you do not like us."

Make no mistake about it, sir, the situation of the Palestinians, our actions and policies in Iraq, our perceived complicity in last year's war in Lebanon, Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, secret prisons, last year's Dubai Ports World debacle all took, and continue to take, a toll on American standing. By 2006, the accumulation of these policies resulted in continued and, in some cases, increased overall negative ratings in the five Arab countries covered in our poll that year, and negative ratings hardened.

Let us look at these charts because what appears from our findings is that Arabs are judging us not on how we live, not on what we say about ourselves, but how we treat them; that is, how they perceive we are applying our values to them.

United States' role versus Iranian role in Iraq. It should not be comforting to us that we do a little bit better than Iran in the region. In fact, the two countries where we do the best are the countries that are most vulnerable, threatened by Iran, and that is Saudi Arabia and the UAE. They give us higher ratings: 31 percent in Saudi Arabia; 25 in UAE, as opposed to Iran, that gets a 19 and a 14, in Saudi Arabia and UAE. But in every country, our role is viewed as negatively and, in some cases, in Jordan, for example, more negatively, than Iran.

Look at the next chart. Our freedom and democracy is liked, our value of freedom and democracy, not our imposing it or promoting it for them, but when they look at America, they think we treat our own people well. But when we asked them, is it important or not important, in terms of how you shape your opinion of America, they say it is important in Saudi Arabia, 49 percent; 75 in Lebanon, 23 in UAE, 39 in Egypt.

But look at the next chart, "Arab Attitudes Towards U.S. Values and Policies." Iraq policy, overwhelmingly—68 in UAE, 94 in

Egypt—is important, far more important, in other words, than freedom and democracy, and policy toward Palestinians: 95 in Egypt, 89 in Lebanon, 81 in Saudi Arabia, 72 in UAE.

Overall, when you look at the importance of values and policies in determining attitudes toward America, they do not judge us by our values. Ten percent is the highest we get on that in Saudi Arabia. In almost every case, they judge us by our policies. It is not what we say about ourselves; it is how we treat them. That is the issue.

So if you look at the overall chart—the last one, please, the last two—overall opinion of the United States in Morocco and Jordan were 38 percent in 2002 in Morocco, 34 in 2005, down to 7 percent in 2006; and in Jordan, it is 34 percent in 2002, 33 in 2005, and down to 5 percent in 2006. In Saudi Arabia and Egypt, our overall approval ratings stayed consistently low. There was not a dramatic shift from 12 in 2002 to 12 in 2006 in Saudi Arabia; 15, 14, and 14 in Egypt.

The bottom line here, sir, is that it is the policy; it is not the values; it is the policy, and it ought to be obvious to us that that is the reason why. The impact of all of this, however, is important to note. There is a hardening of negative attitudes. What were somewhat unfavorable are now very unfavorable, and there is even a downward slide in attitudes toward our people, our culture, our values, and our products.

I wrote an article in 2002. I said, “It is the Policy, Stupid.” My brother wrote an article after our 2005 poll where the downward slide became obvious. He said, “They Are Not Liking Us Anymore, Either.”

There is less confidence that there will be peace and stability, and, as we found in a survey that we did for the Arab Business Council, this is having an impact on domestic attitudes toward economic growth, toward regional stability and people feeling insecure in their own lives, and this insecurity is having a number of impacts.

One is a turning toward religion because religion promises security; secondly, an inward turning, as Arabs are looking more at their own economies and turning away from us. They are, in fact, now, as we interview business leaders, factoring the East more in their future investment plans than in the West.

And, finally, there is a growing pressure on Arab governments, especially those who maintain strong ties with the United States, to distance themselves from our policies, and, yes, it is fueling, if not extremism, support for, or tolerance for, those who carry out extremist acts.

What can we do? Quite simply, I say, listen to what Arab opinion is telling us and take their concerns seriously. You do not have to do everything they want you to do, but you at least need to listen.

We have had public diplomacy folks who have told us, over the years, “I am going on a listening tour.” But when they go they talk at people instead of listening to them first. That is a mistake.

What Arabs want us to do is play the role of peacemaker. They want us to help work to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. They want a responsible end to the Iraq War that promotes national reconciliation and regional security.

Incidentally, when we polled recently on what Arabs want us to do in Iraq, it was pretty much what Americans want us to do. Yes, they want us out, but they want us out responsibly because there is an enormous concern about Iran, that it has been now emboldened and empowered by this war and a fear that if Iraq spins out of control, the region, in fact, will be negatively affected.

There is also support for regional capacity building. They want us to help. The help they want from us in Morocco, for example, or in Lebanon, for example, is improving their economy. They know we can help make their education system better. They know we can work with them to improve health care, and they want an application of our values to our relationships with them. They want us to be a partner in an effort to improve the quality of their lives and to help them defeat extremists who threaten our mutual security.

This is a tall order. It is a big challenge. It is going to be a long road back, but I think it is the only path before us. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Zogby follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES ZOGBY, PH.D., SENIOR ANALYST, ZOGBY INTERNATIONAL

For the past five years we at Zogby International have had the opportunity to poll regularly and extensively in countries across the Arab world.

Some of our polls that have generated the greatest attention have been those that have focused on what Arabs think about America: our people, products, values, and our policies that affect their region.

Equally significant, however, have been our groundbreaking surveys of Arab values, concerns, expectations, and needs.

- For the Arab Thought Foundation we undertook an extensive eight-country survey of Arab values, concerns and identity.¹
- In partnership with the McKinsey consulting group we conducted a thorough examination of the needs of the middle class in three Gulf Arab countries², as well as an elite survey of business leaders in that region, to understand their investment strategies and their attitudes toward reform issues.
- With the organization of Young Arab Leaders, we looked at the particular needs of young Arabs, examining their attitudes toward women in the workplace, education, and employment opportunities.³
- For the Arab Business Council of the World Economic Forum we examined attitudes toward the application of Shari'a law, and the impact of current conflicts on regional economic and political stability.^{4 5}
- And for a number of Arab media outlets we have polled on television viewing preferences and attitudes toward reform, as well as extensive polling in Iraq, Iran, Palestine, and Lebanon during and after elections in those countries.

We have also polled throughout the region for a number of U.S. clients including the Save Darfur Coalition⁶, University of Maryland⁷, *Reader's Digest*⁸, and a number of private clients, as well.

What did we learn?

¹What Arabs Believe: Values, Beliefs, and Concerns. The Arab Thought Foundation/Zogby 2002

²Zogby, James J. "Shedding Light on the Gulf's Middle Class." The McKinsey Quarterly, 2007 Special Edition

³Attitudes of Arabs: An In-Depth Look at Social and Political Concerns of Arabs. Arab American Institute/Zogby International/Young Arab Leaders, 2005

⁴Survey of Arabs in 6 Countries, Arab Business Council of the World Economic Forum/Zogby, 2005

⁵Survey of Arabs in 6 Countries: The Impact of Middle East Conflicts on Regional Economic Development. December, Arab Business Council of the World Economic Forum/Zogby, 2006

⁶Six-Nation poll of Muslim Attitudes Toward Darfur, Arab American Institute/Zogby, April 2007

⁷Six-Nation poll on Arab Public Opinion, University of Maryland/Zogby, 2005,2006

⁸Survey of Iranian Public Opinion, Readers Digest/Zogby, 2006

On the one hand, we found hard data to validate what we have long assumed: that the unique history and circumstances which shaped events in different Arab countries has resulted in divergent views on some issues. But we also found that there is a substantial convergence of opinion across national and sub-regional boundaries; a series of meta-issues that enable us to speak of Arab public opinion.

Our polling has shown us that Arabs, like people all over the world, have as their principal political and personal concerns issues related to their families and their economic well-being, health care and the educational opportunities available to themselves and their children. In most Arab countries, these are the priorities identified by our respondents.

There are, to be sure, some slight variations in the order given to these priorities in different Arab countries and their rank order can change over time in response to local events. For example, in 2005 we found that Egyptians ranked expanding employment and health care as their top priorities with improving education second. But in the same year in the U.A.E., improving education was the number one concern followed by employment and health care. (See Table 1)

Or take the case of Saudi Arabia, where in 2004 the top rated issues were health care, expanding employment, and improving education in that order. But after the May 2005 terrorist attack in the Kingdom, our 2005 survey found that combating extremism and terrorism jumped to second place (from number seven in 2004) as a national priority.

Table 1. Importance of Issues Facing Own Country—2004 vs. 2005 Rankings

(Ranking)	Egypt 2005	Jordan 2004/2005	Lebanon 2004/2005	Morocco 2004/2005	Saudi Arabia 2004/2005	UAE 2004/2005
Expanding employment opportunities	1	7/1	1/2	2/1	2/1	4/2
Improving the healthcare system	1	4/3	4/2	2/3	1/3	2/2
Improving the educational system	3	2/4	9/5	4/4	3/4	2/1
Increasing rights for women	10	3/8	10/10	5/10	9/6	7/8
Combating extremism and terrorism	5	5/10	3/6	1/6	7/2	6/4
Resolving the Israel-Palestinian conflict	8	1/2	2/9	7/9	4/5	1/6
Lack of political debate on important issues	11	10/11	6/11	6/11	10/11	9/11
Political or governmental reform	9	5/9	7/4	9/8	8/10	8/9
Protecting personal and civil rights	7	7/6	7/7	6/5	6/9	5/5
Advancing democracy	6	9/6	5/8	8/7	4/8	10/9
Ending Corruption and nepotism**	3	5	1	2	7	7

** This question was only asked in 2005

Again, in most Arab countries, it is important to note that up until the disastrous summer of 2006 (with the wars in Lebanon, Gaza, and the escalation of civil conflict in Iraq), our respondents answered what we call the “Reagan questions” in the affirmative. They indicated that they felt “better off than they were four year ago” and expected that they would be “better off in the next four years.” By December

of 2006, however, this sense of satisfaction and optimism had changed dramatically, sliding downward in most countries.

Table 2: Better Off/Worse Off vs. Four Years Ago
(December 2006)

	Lebanon			Saudi Arabia			Jordan		
	2002	2005	2006	2002	2005	2006	2002	2005	2006
Better	9	25	16	34	49	47	28	37	19
Worse	65	39	50	28	12	16	25	16	57

	Egypt			Morocco		
	2002	2005	2006	2002	2005	2006
Better	47	45	14	41	41	31
Worse	20	18	58	9	19	18

Table 3: Better Off/Worse Off vs. Four Years From Now
(December 2006)

	Lebanon			Saudi Arabia			Jordan		
	2002	2005	2006	2002	2005	2006	2002	2005	2006
Better	15	29	24	40	71	56	34	36	27
Worse	46	28	24	18	2	14	15	14	40

	Egypt			Morocco		
	2002	2005	2006	2002	2005	2006
Better	48	29	14	55	51	39
Worse	10	8	48	2	5	5

When asked about reforms they want to see occur in their countries, Arabs consistently point to: increased employment opportunities, improved health care and an improved educational system. Political reforms and matters of that sort are rated lower in importance. This came through quite clearly in the rather extensive poll on reform issues conducted in 2004. (See Table 1)

When Arabs think about America, it is in terms of how we have impacted their region and lives—and here there is both good and bad news to report.

When we first polled on Arab attitudes towards the U.S.⁹ we followed on the heels of a post-9/11 Gallup survey that found that Arabs and Muslims gave America extremely low approval ratings. But because that poll had been limited in focus, we thought it inadequate.

And so instead of asking simply how respondents felt about America, we identified ten ways that America manifested itself in the lives of people in the Arab world. We, therefore, asked how Arabs felt about American people, values of freedom and democracy, television programs, education, science and technology, culture, products, etc. We also asked how they felt about American policy in the region.

⁹ 10-Nation “Impressions of America” Poll, Arab American Institute/Zogby, 2002

What we learned was that in almost every case, Arabs liked our values, our people, culture, and products. They did not like our policies. And it was this that drove down our overall favorable ratings and drove up our negatives. In Table 4, below, selected numbers from four Arab countries establish the striking difference between attitudes toward American science, freedom and democracy, people and movies, on the one hand, and America's Middle East policies on the other.

Table 4: Arab Attitudes Toward U.S. Values, Products, and Policies
(April 2002)

Aspect of America	Saudi Arabia	Lebanon	UAE	Egypt
	Fav/Unfav	Fav/Unfav	Fav/Unfav	Fav/Unfav
Science/Technology	71/26	82/16	81/14	72/18
Freedom/Democracy	52/44	58/40	50/44	56/41
People	43/51	63/33	43/42	60/29
Movies/TV	54/42	64/35	64/32	38/59
Policy Towards Arabs	8/88	9/86	15/76	1/94
Policy Towards Palestinians	5/90	6/89	10/83	1/94
Policy Towards Terrorism	30/57	30/65	37/48	17/81

*Favorable includes both "very favorable" and "somewhat favorable" responses. Unfavorable includes both "very unfavorable" and "somewhat unfavorable" responses.

The numbers are startling. Fifty-two percent of Saudis like our values of freedom and democracy, but only eight percent support our policy toward Arabs. Sixty-three percent of the Lebanese people like Americans, while only six percent approve of our policy toward the Palestinians. Seventy-two percent of Egyptians like American science and technology, and sixty percent like Americans; yet only one percent feel favorably about our policies toward Arabs and the Palestinians.

What we also learned in this same poll was that when asked how America could help meet their country's needs, Arabs over-whelmingly rejected our help in dealing with matters of internal reform. Even those who value our "freedom and democracy" did not want our assistance in promoting democracy in their country. Those who sought our assistance wanted two things: they wanted us to help solve the Arab-Israeli conflict; and they want assistance in capacity-building—expanding employment, and improving health care and education.

We also examined how Arabs learned about us, the degree to which their views were shaped by experience or received knowledge, and whether or not this made a difference in their attitudes. We found, for example, that Arabs who know Americans, have visited America or even just report watching American television programs are more inclined to like our people, culture, products and values. But none of this makes them like our policies better or brings up our overall approval ratings.

Some respondents who know Americans and have lived in the U.S. told us quite candidly that these experiences only make them want to like us more and made them feel more troubled by our behavior. Said one, "I feel jilted. I like you, but feel you don't like us."

Make no mistake: the situation of the Palestinians, our actions and policies in Iraq, our perceived complicity in last year's war in Lebanon, Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, secret prisons, and last year's Dubai Ports World debacle have taken and continue to take a toll on America's standing. By 2006, the accumulation of all these policies resulted in continued and in some cases increased overall negative ratings for the U.S. in the five Arab countries covered in our polling, with negative attitudes hardening.¹⁰

¹⁰ 5-Nation Poll on Arab Public Opinion, Arab American Institute/Zogby, 2005

Table 5: Opinion of the United States
(December 2006)

	2002		2005		2006	
	Fav*	Unfav*	Fav	Unfav	Fav	Unfav
Saudi Arabia	12	87	9	89	12	82
Egypt	15	76	14	85	14	83
Morocco	38	61	34	64	7	87
Jordan	34	61	33	62	5	90
Lebanon	26	70	32	60	28	68

*Favorable includes both "very favorable" and "somewhat favorable" responses. Unfavorable includes both "very unfavorable" and "somewhat unfavorable" responses.

We also learned that the most significant policy issues that shaped negative attitudes were our treatment of the Palestinians, our policy in Iraq, and our overall treatment of Arabs and Islam in general—sometimes citing specific practices (detention, torture, etc.) (See Table 6.) These negative behaviors combine to call into question our adherence to our stated values.

In short, it appears from our findings that Arabs are judging us not on how we live or what we say about ourselves, but on how we treat them; that is, how they perceive that we are applying our values to them. As demonstrated in Table 7, when asked whether their overall attitude toward the U.S. was shaped by our stated values or our policies, Arabs by significant majorities indicate that it is our policies that are decisive.

Table 6: Arab Attitudes Towards U.S. Values, Products, and Policies
(June 2004)

	Morocco	Saudi Arabia	Jordan	Lebanon	UAE	Egypt
Aspect of America	Imp*/ Not Imp*	Imp/ Not Imp	Imp/ Not Imp	Imp/ Not Imp	Imp/ Not Imp	Imp/ Not Imp
Freedom, Democracy	32/51	49/39	31/48	75/20	23/50	39/41
Science, Technology	47/38	59/35	41/34	75/18	50/27	41/42
Iraq Policy	88/7	79/3	68/19	82/6	68/18	94/2
Policy Towards Palestinians	89/7	81/3	71/20	89/5	72/16	95/2
Treatment of Arabs and Muslims	69/14	82/3	61/23	90/4	73/13	87/2

* Important includes both "very important" and "somewhat important" responses. Not important includes both "somewhat unimportant" and "not important at all" responses.

In Morocco on the Western edge of the Arab world, thirty-two percent say our democratic values are important to how they view the U.S. versus eighty-eight percent who say our Iraq policy is important in how they view America. In the U.A.E. on the Eastern edge of the Arab world, twenty-three percent say our democratic values and love of freedom are important in their perceptions of the U.S., but seventy-three percent say that our treatment of Muslims and Arabs is significant in how they view our country.

Table 7: Importance of Values vs. Policies in Determining Attitudes Towards America
(June 2004)

	Morocco	Saudi Arabia	Jordan	Lebanon	UAE	Egypt
	Values/ Policy	Values/ Policy	Values/ Policy	Values/ Policy	Values/ Policy	Values/ Policy
Which is more important: Values or Policies?	18/79	10/86	16/76	9/89	9/75	2/81

As table 7 shows demonstrates: for three quarters to five-sixths of Arabs, our policies are more determinative of their attitude toward us than our values. This is particularly significant if we analyze data from both Table 6 and Table 7. Forty-nine percent of Saudis and seventy-five percent of Lebanese state that American freedom and democracy are important in how they view us, but only ten percent of Saudis and nine percent of Lebanese say that our values determine their view of us. In short, as I once wrote in my commentary on this study, to understand why America's ratings in this region are so low, "It's the Policy, Stupid."

Table 8: Impact of American Values, People, Products on Overall Opinion of the United States
(December 2006)

	American Freedom, Democracy		American People		American Products		American Movies, TV		American Education	
	Pos.*	Neg.*	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.
Saudi Arabia	41	31	18	34	50	24	22	43	40	28
Egypt	21	41	23	28	28	31	34	35	36	21
Morocco	23	46	28	29	36	34	27	40	39	23
Jordan	27	43	31	33	30	41	23	51	47	32
Lebanon	42	32	44	18	34	25	28	37	43	19

*Positive includes both "positive" and "very positive" responses. Negative include both "negative" and "very negative" responses.

Table 8 demonstrates the impact of this downward slide. As opposed to 2002 (Table 4) when attitudes toward these other manifestations of America were viewed positively, by December 2006 only "American education" received a net favorable rating in all five countries. This represents a drop in favorability ratings from fifty-two percent to twenty-two percent for American movies in Saudi Arabia; in Lebanon, the favorable for the American people dropped nineteen percent; and in Egypt the favorable rating for the American people dropped from sixty percent to only twenty-three percent. In Saudi Arabia and Lebanon, the majority view of "American freedom/democracy" and "American products" is positive. In earlier polls the "American people" were viewed positively in most Arab countries. In 2006, this is the case only in Lebanon.

The impact of all of this in the broader region of the Arab world is important to note:

- There is a hardening of negative attitudes toward the U.S. and now even a downwards slide in attitudes toward our people, culture, values and products.
- There is less confidence that there will be peace and stability in the region in the next five years, with growing concern in several countries about the regional consequences of an Iraqi civil war; the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and a mounting concern about Iran's intentions and U.S.-Iranian tensions¹¹

¹¹ Survey of Arabs in 6 Countries: The Impact of Middle East Conflicts on Regional Economic Development. December, Arab Business Council of the World Economic Forum/Zogby, 2006

- There is a turning inward. Arabs are investing more in their own economies instead of in the West, and more engaged than ever before with problems closer to home.
- There is a turning away from the U.S., as Arabs are factoring the East (China, India, and Southeast Asia) more significantly in their future investment strategies.¹²
- There is a growing public pressure on Arab governments, especially those who maintain strong ties to the U.S. to distance themselves from our policies.

What can we do?

Quite simply, listen to what Arab opinion is telling us, and take their concerns seriously. What they want from us is:

- to play the role of peace maker in working to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict;
- a responsible end to the Iraq war that promotes national reconciliation and regional security;
- support for regional capacity building that works to expand employment, improve health care, and increase educational opportunities; and
- an application of our values to our relationships with the people and countries of the region that establishes us as a partner in their efforts to improve the quality of their lives and defeat the extremists who threaten our mutual security.

Given the situation we are in, these challenges present us with a tall order. It will be a long road back; but I believe that it is the only course we have left before us.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Dr. Zogby. Dr. Pollock, please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID POLLOCK, PH.D., VISITING FELLOW,
THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY**

Mr. POLLOCK. Mr. Chairman, distinguished colleagues, thank you very much for the opportunity to discuss this important topic with you today.

Let us start with the fact that almost all Arab polls show widespread disapproval of American policies, both in Iraq and in the Arab-Israeli arena, and negative overall images of the United States, especially since we went to war in Iraq.

On the brighter side, there is some polling evidence that certain Arab publics increasingly reject terrorism, except against Israelis; continue to voice support for democracy, at least in principle; and feel that a clash of Muslim civilization against the West is not inevitable.

My hope is to find a way forward from this point of departure, but, first, just a moment on the historical background. Serious political polling in Arab countries is relatively recent, dating back only to the Gulf crisis of 1990 and 1991. From a research perspective, we have come a pretty long way since then, yet some lessons I learned the hard way back then are still very valid today.

First, we need to take these polls seriously but also take them with a few grains of salt. They are, at best, just imperfect snapshots of what people are willing to say to strangers, and we may not be so adept at understanding them.

Second, we need to pay as much attention to the differences among and within Arab publics as to sweeping generalizations about Arab public opinion.

Third, we need to think hard about the “so what?” questions: How much does the Arab street really matter compared to the Arab

¹²Ibid

elite? How much do these autocratic governments really care about their own public opinion? If they do, have they already adjusted their policies to take popular attitudes into account, or is it possible that we know more about what the political traffic will bear than they do?

How will people's attitudes affect their actual behavior, if at all? For example, while it is clear that unfavorable views of American intervention in Iraq are even more widespread today than they were during the 1991 Gulf crisis, we have seen nowhere near the kind of massive protest demonstrations around the major Arab capitals that were witnessed back in 1990 and 1991.

These are all complicated and important questions, and analyzing the numbers is just the beginning. We should understand that there may well be major differences between American and Arab views, not just about matters of policy or opinion but also about what most Americans would consider simple matters of fact.

Let me give you an example. The December 2006–January 2007 University of Maryland poll asked about the 9/11 attacks, and about as many in Egypt and Jordan, roughly a third, blamed the United States Government or Israel as identified al-Qaeda as behind 9/11.

Similarly, the April 2006 Pew poll found a solid majority, 59 percent, in Egypt saying they did not believe that Arabs carried out the 9/11 attacks. In Jordan, the corresponding figure was almost as high: 53 percent.

This counterintuitive finding is almost certainly related to another broader one. Egypt; fully 57 percent say that nearly all of what happens in the world today is controlled by the United States. An additional 32 percent, in other words, 89 percent of Egyptians altogether, think that the United States controls most of what goes on in the world today, and, in Morocco, a majority of people, 63 percent, agree.

This is the essential background against which conspiracy theories and other pejorative views of American policy thrive.

We must also be careful about loose talk regarding shared values. Some of the best current examples come from Egypt, by far, the largest Arab country, and one from which several polls are available, probably for the first time ever.

At first glance, there is plenty of encouraging popular support for democracy in Egypt. Pew found 65 percent saying, "Democracy is not just for the West and can work well here."

Similarly, the January 2007 Maryland poll finds 52 percent of Egyptians saying, "Democracy is a very good way of governing Egypt," plus another 30 percent, 82 percent altogether, saying, "It is a fairly good way."

But how does this square with other responses in the same poll? Three-quarters of Egyptians also want "to require a strict application of Sharia law in every Islamic country." And a remarkable 80 percent of Egyptians strongly, I emphasize, strongly, want "to keep Western values out of Islamic countries."

No wonder nearly half of Egyptians think "a violent conflict between Muslim and Western cultures is inevitable," with the other half, but only half, saying it is "possible to find common ground."

The preceding points lead directly to my second set of general observations, which relate to this crucial theme: The differences of opinion among and within different Arab publics are often more important than sweeping generalizations about the so-called “Arab street,” and the ways Arab opinions change in response to specific events, or over time, are often more important than sweeping generalizations about a so-called “growing gap between Arab governments and their own people” or about a so-called “deepening divide between Arabs and Americans.”

For example, in mid-2005, the Pew poll showed 73 percent of Moroccans saw Islamic extremism as a threat to their own country, while just 10 percent of Jordanians agreed. Yet the December 2006–January 2007, the most recent Maryland poll, shows an astonishing low 1 percent of Moroccans—remember, it was 73 percent just a couple of years ago—an astonishingly low, 1 percent of Moroccans today say that terrorism is a very big problem in their country, compared with an astonishingly high 1 percent in Morocco, 62 percent of Egyptians, by comparison, say that terrorism is a very big problem in their country.

What accounts for these huge differences among different Arab countries and over just a year or 2? The difference is almost certainly simply the passage of more than a year’s time since the previous major terrorist incident in Morocco as against fresh memories in Egypt of terrorism in Sinai.

With these general observations in mind, what I would like to do with the remainder of the short time allotted to me is to talk about major highlights that I have found in public opinion from four key Arab countries and then say just a word or two about general regional issues, Israel and Iran. Let me look at Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, and Egypt.

In Iraq, I can say from personal observation that it is not easy to do polls in Iraq these days, but it is possible. Again, taking them with those proverbial grains of salt, this is what the numbers show.

There are sharp differences of view among Iraq’s three major communities: Shi’a Arabs, Sunni Arabs, and Kurds. Kurds have, by far, the most positive attitudes, and Sunni Arabs still the most negative ones, although they seem to be improving just a bit, while Shi’a Arabs are somewhere in between.

Overall, according to the September 2006 Maryland poll, only about one-third of Iraqis wanted United States forces to withdraw within 6 months, but about two-thirds of Iraqis wanted United States forces to withdraw within a year. At the same time, if the United States were to commit to any kind of timeline for withdrawal or, at least, to renounce any desire for permanent military bases in Iraq, then opposition to United States forces would diminish, and the majority support in Iraq for United States military training and development programs would increase further.

Despite all of the hardships in Iraq, 75 to 80 percent of both Shi’as and Kurds, but only one in 10 Sunni Arabs, in Iraq, continue to say that getting rid of Saddam was worthwhile. A more universal bright spot is that roughly three-quarters, even of Sunni Arabs in Iraq, and nearly all Shi’as and Kurds voiced a negative opinion of both al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden in the early 2007 Maryland survey.

Jordan. The most striking finding from Jordan, a very dramatic, 5-year trend, has probably nothing to do with the United States or Israel or Iran or Lebanon or terrorism. It has to do with this: In 2002, 78 percent of Jordanians said they were dissatisfied with the way things were going in their country, and, after that, over the last 5 years, year by year, there was a steady upward climb to 69 percent satisfied and just 30 percent dissatisfied by 2005, before leveling off at 53 percent satisfied and 44 percent of Jordanians dissatisfied in mid-2006.

This major improvement occurred despite the constant turmoil surrounding Jordan on all sides during this period, strongly suggesting that foreign policy issues, whether in Iraq or Palestine, do not figure as prominently in public attitudes, as is statements supposed.

Morocco. There is one clear, positive trend in Moroccan public opinion over the last 5 years worth noting: A steep increase in opposition to most other forms of jihadi terrorism, almost certainly related to Morocco's own tragic experience with that phenomenon in the last few years.

From 2003 to 2005, the percentage of Moroccans who voiced even some confidence in Osama bin Laden was cut almost in half, from 49 percent to 26 percent. The December 2006 Maryland poll tends to confirm that figure. And in just 1 year, 2004 to 2005, the percentage in Morocco saying that violence against civilians is even sometimes justified was slashed by a factor of three, from 40 percent to a mere 13 percent.

I want to emphasize that this is despite the downward trend, as others, including my distinguished colleague, have pointed out, in Moroccan public opinion about the United States and about American policies during that period. Their support for terrorism during that period did not go up. It went down, way down, and that was because of their own direct experience with jihadi terrorism in Morocco itself.

Finally, let me say a word about Egypt, and I hate to end on a sour note, but I am afraid that is what the data require me to do in this case. There is very little good news to report from Egyptian public opinion, either about the United States, about Americans, about American policies, or, in many cases, even about American values.

Egyptian opinion was highly negative about the United States even before the latest Iraq war or the Lebanon war in 2006. Why? One possibility is the virulently anti-American media coverage in Egypt, whether official, semi-official, or opposition.

Another, more speculative explanation is that the very closeness of the United States-Egyptian official embrace and the billions of dollars in annual aid that have gone with it over the last quarter century have actually made Egyptians especially suspicious of American motives. There is a bit of evidence for this hypothesis buried in the January 2007 Maryland survey.

Egyptians and Moroccans were asked their view of this assessment: "America,"—and I am quoting here, this is not my statement—"America pretends to be helpful in Muslim countries, but, in fact, everything it does is really part of a scheme to take advantage of people in the Middle East and steal their oil."

That is the pollster's statement. People are asked if they agree or disagree with the statement. Sad to say, three-quarters of Egyptians agreed strongly with that assessment of American motives, precisely twice the percentage of Moroccans with that attitude, as of early this year.

One other possibility suggested by polling data is that Egyptians are just plain generally more disgruntled lately and that some of this spills over to their views of the United States. There is polling data to support that hypothesis as well, some of which, again, my colleague has pointed to.

None of this is meant to imply that the major reasons behind Egyptian popular animosity toward the United States are either irrelevant or irrational, only that these seemingly extraneous factors mentioned above may be exacerbating the underlying problems with their views of the United States, of U.S. policy, and of American values.

Is there anything that we can do about these trends? Is there any way that we can take better advantage of the bright spots in Arab public opinion, including Iraqi public opinion that I have pointed to in my prepared statement?

I think there are some ways that we can do that, but in order to allow more time for discussion and to respond as best I can to your questions, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members, I will stop my presentation here and look forward to discussing these issues with you today. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pollock follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID POLLOCK, PH.D., VISITING FELLOW, THE
WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman, distinguished colleagues, thank you very much for this opportunity to discuss this important topic with you today. With your permission, I would like to begin with just a word of tribute to the valuable and thoughtful work of other experts in this field, some of which I will cite quite extensively below. And let me also note the outstanding professional support of my previous colleagues, especially Under Secretary of State Paula Dobriansky, and of my current colleagues at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, especially Executive Director Dr. Rob Satloff and my Research Assistant, Ms. Rana Shabb. Of course, responsibility for these remarks is solely mine.

Let us start with the fact that almost all Arab polls show widespread disapproval of American policies, both in Iraq and in the Arab-Israeli arena—and negative overall images of the U.S., especially since we went to war in Iraq. On the brighter side, there is some polling evidence that certain Arab publics increasingly reject terrorism (except against Israelis); continue to voice support for democracy, at least in principle; and feel that a clash of Muslim civilization against the West is not inevitable.

My hope is to find a way forward from this point of departure—but first just a moment on the historical background. Serious political polling in Arab countries is relatively recent, dating back only to the Gulf crisis of 1990/91. From a research perspective, we have come a pretty long way since then. Yet some lessons I learned the hard way back then are still very valid today.

First, we need to take these polls seriously—but also take them with a few grains of salt. They are at best just imperfect snapshots of what people are willing to say to strangers, and we may not be so adept at understanding what exactly it is that they are trying to tell us, or what they may be choosing not to say at all. Second, we need to pay as much attention to the differences among and within Arab publics as to sweeping generalizations about Arab public opinion.

Third, we need to think hard about the “so what” questions: How much does the Arab street matter, compared to the elite? How much do these autocratic governments really care about public opinion? If they do, have they already adjusted their policies to take popular attitudes into account, or is it possible that we know more

about what the political traffic will bear than they do? How will people's attitudes affect their actual behavior, if at all? For example, while it is clear that unfavorable views of American intervention in Iraq are even more widespread today than they were during the 1991 Gulf crisis, we have seen nowhere near the kind of massive protest demonstrations around the major Arab capitals that were witnessed in that earlier episode. These are all complicated and important questions—and analyzing the numbers is just the beginning.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

Even before the beginning, however, a very brief methodological note about Arab public opinion polling is required. Particularly in certain especially problematic cases, we need much fuller information about how these polls were conducted. This should provide full details of sampling frame and methodology, fieldworkers and fieldwork conditions, quality controls, government or other permission or restrictions, sponsorship, full demographics of sample, full questionnaire and “topline” or “marginal” results, refusal rate, and any other pertinent information. If, for instance, a poll is not a true probability sample, but some kind of quota or hybrid one, then we need to know that—it means that the so-called “margin of error” has no statistical validity.

Without getting too technical, let me mention just a couple of other tough methodological issues. One concerns the unusual demographics of some Arab countries. For example, the United Arab Emirates has a total population of about 4–5 million, but expatriate workers living in that country outnumber UAE nationals by the extraordinary ratio of about five-to-one—and by an even higher margin in the work force, which is where most reported survey samples are taken. So, a poll reported from the UAE may not really be a UAE poll at all, but a kind of indeterminate mixture of Arab opinions from many other countries, unless the local sub-sample is somehow explicitly identified. Saudi Arabia poses a similar problem, in that the labor force is probably more than half non-Saudis. Moreover, social controls are so severe in Saudi Arabia that one has to wonder about the authenticity of the responses recorded.

Another issue is timing. For example, some recent polls were conducted during Ramadan, when Arabs themselves will tell you they are often cranky after fasting every day, and also more influenced by Islamic ideas. It is even conceivable that this accident of timing may be partly responsible for the apparent further dip in perceptions of the U.S. from 2005 to 2006. For these reasons, one should be especially cautious about any data from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, or other Arab Gulf states, and pay very close attention to the timing.

In my own remarks below, I will therefore focus on other key Arab countries from which we have better data from several different polls over a longer period: Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, and Egypt. I will then turn to a couple of major regional issues: Israel and Iran. Before proceeding, however, two general sets of observations are in order regarding some broad findings from across the region: First, how much Arab opinions may differ from ours; and second, how much Arabs may differ with each other, whether from one country to another, among different groups within each country, or over time.

DIFFERENT WORLD VIEWS

We should understand that there may well be major differences between American and Arab views, not just about matters of opinion, but also about what most Americans would consider matters of fact. For example, the December 2006/January 2007 University of Maryland poll asked about the 9/11 attacks. In both Egypt and Morocco, only about half said they were even “somewhat confident” they knew who was behind them. And about as many in each country, roughly a third, blamed the U.S. government or Israel as identified Al-Qa'idah. Similarly, the April 2006 Pew poll found a solid majority (59%) in Egypt saying they did not believe that “groups of Arabs” carried out the 9/11 attacks. In Jordan, the corresponding figure was almost as high, at 53%.

This counter-intuitive finding is almost certainly related to another, broader one. In Egypt, fully 57% say that “nearly all” of “what happens in the world today . . . is controlled by the U.S.”; an additional 32% say the U.S. controls “most” of what goes on. And a majority of Moroccans agree, albeit by a smaller margin (63%). This is the essential background against which conspiracy theories and other pejorative views of American policy thrive.

In the April 2006 poll, to cite but one instance of such theories, a little over half of Egyptians and Jordanians said that relations between Muslim and Westerners were generally bad. When those respondents were then asked which side was to

blame for this state of affairs, a majority in each country singled out the Westerners, and a handful said both sides—while around a quarter of Egyptians and Jordanians volunteered the response that it was actually the Jews who are to blame.

We must also be careful about loose talk regarding “shared values.” Some of the best current examples come from Egypt—by far the largest Arab country, and one from which several recent polls are available, probably for the first time ever. At first glance, there is plenty of encouraging popular support for democracy in Egypt. Pew found 65% saying “democracy is not just for the West, and can work well here.” Similarly, the January 2007 Maryland poll finds 52% saying democracy is a “very good way” of governing Egypt, plus 30% saying it is a “fairly good way.”

But how does this square with other responses in the same poll? Three-quarters of Egyptians also want (50% strongly and 24% somewhat) “to require a strict application of Shari’ah law in every Islamic country.” And a remarkable 80% “strongly” want “to keep Western values out of Islamic countries.” No wonder nearly half (45%) of Egyptians think a “violent conflict between Muslim and Western cultures” is “inevitable,” with the other half (49%) saying it is “possible to find common ground.”

In much the same vein, while Zogby shows a majority (59%) of Egyptians saying it is U.S. policies rather than values that antagonize them, other responses in the same poll tell a different story. Half of Egyptians indeed say that U.S. policies in Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq have negative effects on their opinion of the U.S., as against just 20–25 reporting positive effects. But almost the same proportions report negative (41–42%) rather than positive (21–22%) effects from the values of “American freedom and democracy,” or from “American promotion of democracy” in other countries.

Another elusive “values” issue is the role of religion. Arabs, in sharp contrast to Europeans, tend to say that Americans are not religious enough. Yet there is absolutely no evidence that a heavier dose of religion, or even an emphasis on our common faith in God, would improve our message reception among Arab audiences. On the contrary; there is some research suggesting that precisely the opposite would be the case, probably because some Arabs would view that type of outreach as disingenuous or condescending, or simply as coming from bearers of the “wrong” religion.

One other comment about “shared values” concerns the role of the United Nations. Some have argued that a more multilateral U.S. foreign policy, grounded firmly in UN resolutions and international law, would be more appealing to Arab (and other) publics. But the polling data suggest that caution is in order. Egypt’s public, for one, is split down the middle on the UN: 49% favorable v. 51% unfavorable, according to the mid-2006 Pew poll. The same poll shows Jordanians heavily tilted against the UN (30% v. 69%), only a marginal improvement over their very negative view in mid-2004.

Further, there is no evidence that all of the recent UN Security Council Resolutions on Iraq, Syria, or Lebanon have had the slightest effect on Arab public opinion. Iran, however, may be a mildly different case. This is because, as a non-Arab target, there could be some popular predisposition to credit or at least to cite UN action against it, as Arab discourse often does in relation to Israel.

Finally, and maybe most important of all, we must beware of our own ethnocentrism, even as we try to better understand others. We should not assume that attitudes toward the U.S. are all that important, for better or worse, in the overall opinion climate in any given foreign country. This holds true both generally, and in relation to the particular issues of greatest interest to us. In a very thorough study Jordanian and Algerian attitudes, for instance, Prof. Mark Tessler demonstrates that views of their own government are at least as relevant as views of U.S. policy in explaining expressions of support for terrorism, in both of those significant and quite different Arab societies.

DIFFERENCES AMONG AND WITHIN ARAB PUBLICS OVER TIME

The preceding points lead directly to my second set of general observations, which relate to this crucial theme: The differences of opinion among and within different Arab publics are often more important than sweeping generalizations about the “Arab street.” And the ways Arab opinions change in response to specific events, and over time, are often more important than sweeping generalizations about a “growing gap” between Arab governments and their own people, or about a “deepening divide” between Arabs and Americans.

For example, asked by Zogby to rank five political issues in terms of their impact on each country’s stability or economy in 2006, Lebanese not surprisingly ranked the Israel-Lebanon conflict number one in both categories. But that issue was down in fourth place in faraway Morocco. Even more glaring is this disjunction: in mid-

2005, the Pew poll showed 73% of Moroccans saw Islamic extremism as a threat to their country—while just 10% of Jordanians agreed. Yet the December 2006/January 2007 Maryland poll shows an astonishingly low 1% of Moroccans saying terrorism is a “very big problem” in their country—compared with an astonishingly high 62% of Egyptians. Here the difference is probably the passage of more than a year’s time since the previous major incident in Morocco, as against fresh memories in Egypt of terrorism in Sinai.

Similarly, the low level of Jordanian concern was recorded before the November 2005 suicide bombing of a local wedding party at Amman’s Radisson Hotel. By April 2006, according to the Pew poll, 69% of Jordanians were saying they were at least “somewhat” concerned by “the rise of Islamic extremism” in their country—while the percentage saying suicide bombing was never justified had shot up to 43% from just 11% the year before. The University of Maryland poll conducted by Dr. Steven Kull later in the year confirms this reading.

Even within certain individual Arab countries, it can be misleading to analyze public opinion at the national level. In Lebanon, for instance, the cleavages among the Christian, Sunni, and Shi’i segments of society are so pronounced that it makes little sense to speak of Lebanese public opinion as a whole. To cite just two relevant cases in point: In June 2005, Pew found that a mere 22% of Lebanese Muslims had a favorable view of the U.S.—compared with around 90% of Lebanese Christians. After the war with Israel the next year, Zogby found that U.S. policy toward Lebanon was viewed overwhelmingly poorly (90% v. 7%) by Lebanon’s Shi’is, and predominantly poorly (52% v. 31%) by the Sunnis there—but narrowly positively by the country’s Christian community (45% v. 40%). This is such a special case that it requires separate consideration, beyond the scope of this summary presentation. To some extent, such deep demographic divisions are also at work in Iraq today. In that case, however, there are a few recent signs pointing toward a partial convergence of views on some issues, as will be discussed separately.

So, the analysis of Arab public opinion should be conducted mainly on a country-by-country basis, and where appropriate even by different groups within each country. This approach has the added virtue of facilitating a close comparison of several different polls, to look at important questions of how closely the results match or how much and why they may differ (what is known in the professional jargon as “inter-pollster reliability”). And the analysis should focus more on careful analysis of trends over time, rather than single snapshots, while exercising especial vigilance to identify any time-bound results or “one-shot wonders.” Having thus set the stage, we can now turn to the analysis of public opinion in four key individual Arab countries: Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, and Egypt.

IRAQI PUBLIC OPINION

Let me begin with three quick general points about public opinion in Iraq: First, from personal observation, it is abundantly clear to me that the security situation in Iraq makes public opinion polling there very difficult. On the other hand, more Iraqis now feel fairly free to speak their minds than was the case under Saddam, which does help quite a lot. So overall I think there are some valid Iraqi opinion polls with certain interesting results to look at, although these numbers do need to be taken with a few extra proverbial grains of salt.

A second major point: there are sharp differences of view among Iraq’s three major communities: Shii Arabs, Sunni Arabs, and Kurds. At least through September of 2006, Kurds had by far the most positive attitudes, and Sunni Arabs the most negative ones, while Shii Arabs were somewhere in between. In March 2007, one poll reported widely divergent preferences among these three groups for Iraq’s political future. A majority of Kurds (66%) desired democracy, while a majority of Sunnis preferred a “strongman” with unlimited tenure in power; Shi’is were divided right down the middle (41% v. 40%) between democracy and an Islamic state.

Third, Iraqi public opinion, like most others, can change very considerably over just a few months’ time. Two of the best published polls I have seen, for example, show significant changes in attitudes between January and September 2006—including more criticism of U.S. forces, and less optimism about Iraq’s situation, along with a surprising increase in support for Iraq’s own security forces (except among Sunnis). But I would not be surprised today to find that some of these attitudes have again shifted considerably over the past seven or eight months.

Nevertheless, since the September 2006 data (from the University of Maryland Program on International Policy Attitudes) are the most recent reliable and detailed ones available, a few striking findings are worth noting. Wherever possible, I will compare these data with whatever data have been reported from three more recent polls: one cosponsored by USA Today, which was conducted February 25–March 7

of this year; another conducted by the British firm Opinion Research Business in February 2007; and a third conducted by Gallup International, also earlier this year.

For starters, according to the September 2006 Maryland poll, only about one-third of Iraqis wanted U.S. forces to withdraw within six months—but about two-thirds wanted that to happen within a year. At the same time, if the U.S. were to commit to any kind of timeline for withdrawal, or at least to renounce any desire for permanent military bases in Iraq, then opposition to U.S. forces would diminish—and the majority support for U.S. military training and economic development programs would increase further.

The very extensive British poll in late February/early March 2007 lends some additional credence to this overall attitudinal portrait. That poll showed, surprisingly, a majority of Shi'is think security would get better (62%) rather than worse (14%) “in the immediate weeks following a withdrawal of Multinational Forces.” Sunnis were split on this question (42% v. 43%). Once again, the Kurds stood out, with a clear majority (64%) apprehensive that security would worsen at least “a little” in the wake of such a withdrawal.

In the meantime, of the three major Iraqi communities, only the Kurds predominantly (55%) gave U.S. troops favorable reviews. Sunnis (97%) and Shi'is (91%) alike overwhelmingly voiced little or no confidence in those forces. Numbers reported from the early 2007 USA Today poll indicate very little change in this picture, although an exact comparison cannot be made due to probable differences in question wording and other details. Only about one-third of Iraqis in that survey saw their own government as really in charge of the country; nearly 60% attributed that to the U.S. instead.

Yet despite all the hardships, 75–80% of both Shiis and Kurds—but only one in ten Sunni Arabs—continued to say that getting rid of Saddam was worthwhile. More surprisingly, according to the USA Today poll, in response to a slightly different question, a slim plurality overall still said life was better rather than worse (43% v. 36%) today, as compared with Saddam's time. The early 2007 British poll shows a slightly more positive valence: 49% better, compared with just 26% worse. But the demographic breakdown is equally telling: Shi'is are heavily positive (66% v. 6%); Kurds even more so (75% v. 4%); while Sunnis predominantly feel that things were actually better under Saddam (51%), rather than under “the present political system (29%). The early 2007 Gallup poll shows, by comparison, shows generally less positive percentages in response to similar questions.

A more universal bright spot is that roughly three-quarters even of Sunni Arabs, and nearly all Shi'is and Kurds, voiced a negative opinion of both Al-Qa'idah and Osama Bin Laden in the Maryland survey. Only about one-in-five (18%), however, place primary blame for Iraq's violence on Al-Qa'idah or other foreign forces, according to the USA Today poll.

Equally striking, as of last September, a majority (63%) overall said Prime Minister Maliki's government was doing at least a “somewhat good” job—though only one in five Sunni Arabs agreed with that assessment. Mr. Maliki had a personal approval rating of 86% among Shi'is, and 58% among Kurds, but merely 14% among Sunni Arabs, giving him an overall approval figure of about 65%. By March of this year, though, as measured in the USA Today poll, these numbers had declined a great deal. About half (53%) now said the government was doing a bad job; and Mr. Maliki's rating had slipped about 20 points, to just 43%.

The pattern for two other leading Shi'i figures was completely different, going back to the September 2006 Maryland poll. Among the Shi'is, Ayatollah Sistani got a 95% approval rating, and Muqtada Al-Sadr was not far behind with 81% (though only half viewed him “very” favorably). By contrast, Sunni Arabs and Kurds gave both men roughly 80–90% negative ratings.

Asked in September 2006 whether Iraq would stay a single country over the next five years, majorities of all three major groups said yes, but by very different margins: Shi'is, 80%; Kurds, 65%, and Sunnis, 56%. By March 2007, there appear to be some shifts in this constellation: somewhat more Kurds (41%) predicting independence, but more Sunnis (75%) anticipating Iraqi unity, perhaps because of greater government efforts to include and protect that community as internal conflict continues. A plurality of Shi'is (48%) now foresee a federation of regional governments, which appears to be in line with the position of the largest Shi'i political party (SCIRI).

Iraq's key neighbors garner skeptical attitudes that even cross sectarian lines, at least to some extent. Only a minority (45%) of Iraqi Shi'is said that predominantly Shi'i Iran was exerting a positive influence in their own country; and only a minority (41%) or Iraqi Sunnis said the same of Syria, despite its widely reported backing for Sunni insurgents. Iran's influence is viewed negatively by most Iraqi Kurds

(71%, up from 63% in January 2006) and Sunnis (94%) alike. Syria's influence likewise elicits largely negative reactions from Iraqi Shi'is (68%) as well as Kurds (63%).

By early 2007, judging from preliminary reports of the USA Today poll, views of Iran had hardened a bit, with a solid majority (71%) overall saying Tehran is actively encouraging sectarian violence in Iraq. Two-thirds, about the same as before, say that about Syria. And a narrower majority (56%) accuse Saudi Arabia as well of supporting Iraqi sectarian conflict—the first time this important question has been reported.

Altogether, then, from the standpoint of internal public opinion, the picture in Iraq as of early this year appears mixed, trending down and certainly divided, but not hopelessly so. Whether or not this picture will change yet again, and what difference if any that might make for U.S. prospects in Iraq, are good questions for additional inquiry in the coming period. It does appear, to cite one possible conclusion, that emphatic U.S. agreement to forswear a permanent military presence in Iraq, and possibly also to negotiate even a very long-term target date for withdrawal, could have some beneficial effects on the public opinion climate in that country.

Just a word is in order here about the latest data on how other Arab publics see the situation in Iraq. Unlike most Iraqis, they do not think the overthrow of Saddam Hussein was worthwhile; and they roundly reject U.S. policy on this issue. But looking ahead, large minorities in some Arab publics, according to Prof. Shibley Telhami's analysis of the November 2006 Zogby poll, are now inclined to see dire consequences from a rapid American withdrawal. In neighboring Jordan and Saudi Arabia, just over a third predicted that in this case the Iraqi "civil war will expand rapidly." Fragmentary reports about more recent Zogby polling on this subject suggest a similar conclusion, possibly with more emphasis on a perceived Iranian threat.

JORDANIAN PUBLIC OPINION

Jordan is one of the few Arab states for which we have fairly detailed and credible long-term trend data on popular attitudes, although it would be highly misleading to generalize from those data to the region as a whole. In the early 1990's, when serious polling started in Jordan, it was usually both desirable and feasible to obtain separate results for the Palestinian-origin majority and the East Bank minority of the country's population—who often had substantially different views on various topical issues, including the possibility of peace with Israel. More recent data are rarely reported with this demographic breakdown, however, perhaps because inter-marriage and other socialization factors have blurred some of these differences over time. The discussion that follows will focus on the latest five-year trends—always more informative than any single snapshot—in overall Jordanian public opinion.

Regarding attitudes toward the U.S., there was some evidence of a modest rebound in Jordan since the nadir reached right after the American capture of Baghdad. In mid-2005, favorable views of the U.S. were almost back at their prewar level in the low 20% (Pew polls) or low 30% (Zogby polls) range, after having plummeted to single digits in 2003 and 2004. The June 2006 Pew polls, however, showed a slide back to just 15% favorable; and the November 2006 Zogby poll (limited to metropolitan Amman and Zarqa) registered just 5% in that positive category. Surprisingly, only one-in-five Jordanians said the Lebanon war that summer had worsened their view of the U.S.; most blamed U.S. policy in Iraq or Palestine.

In both of these polls, positive Jordanian views of Americans as people have held steady over the past two years in the 30% range, up from barely 20% in 2003 and 2004 (though down sharply from 53% in 2002). Jordan is thus a counterexample to a purported new global trend toward more negative views on this question.

One very dramatic five-year trend in Jordan is the total reversal, in a positive direction, in popular perceptions of "the way things are going in our country." In 2002, Jordanians started from a low point of 78% dissatisfied, as against a mere 21% satisfied. After that, year by year, there was a steady upward climb to 69% satisfied and just 30% dissatisfied by 2005, before leveling off at 53% v. 44% in mid-2006. This major improvement occurred despite the constant turmoil surrounding Jordan on all sides during this period—strongly suggesting that foreign policy, whether in Iraq or Palestine, does not figure as prominently in public attitudes as is sometimes supposed.

MOROCCAN PUBLIC OPINION

Morocco has a large and unusually open society, with around 30 million people of mixed Arab and Berber heritage and a very well developed commercial survey research capability. Yet inter-pollster reliability seems noticeably low here. For ex-

ample, on the key question of favorable overall views of the U.S., Pew reports a drastic decline from 77% in 1999/2000, to just 27% in 2003 and 2004, in the wake of the American intervention in Iraq. This was followed by a large rebound to 49% in 2005, according to Pew. But Zogby reports just 34% favorable that same year—followed by a huge and unexplained drop to a mere 7% in 2006.

The December 2006 Maryland poll, in contrast, breaks this down into favorable views of “the current U.S. government,” twice as high at 16%—alongside widely (64%) favorable views of both “the American people” and “American culture.” Once again, Zogby records a much less favorable result in responses to a subtly different question, showing that just 28% of Moroccans say their view of the American people has a positive “impact on their overall opinion of the U.S.”

Equally intriguing are some of the apparent contradictions (or ambivalence) in Moroccan attitudes even as reported in the very same poll. For instance, the same Pew poll from 2005 that shows just 49% favorable to the U.S. also shows a much larger figure—65%—saying that the world would be more dangerous, not safer, if another country were as powerful as the U.S. And yet, in the same poll again, a majority (56%) of Moroccans also said that suicide attacks against Americans in Iraq were justifiable.

There is, however, one clear positive five-year trend in Moroccan public opinion worth noting: a steep increase in opposition to most other forms of jihadi terrorism, almost certainly related to Morocco’s own tragic experience with that phenomenon in the past few years. From 2003 to 2005, the percentage of Moroccans who voiced even “some confidence” in Osama Bin Laden was cut almost in half, from 49% to 26%. The December 2006 Maryland poll tends to confirm this figure (though an additional 26% voiced “mixed” feelings about Bin Laden). And in just one year, from 2004 to 2005, the percentage saying that violence against civilians is at least “sometimes” justified was slashed by a factor of 3, from 40% to a mere 13%.

Even so, some caveats are in order. An additional 20% or so of Moroccans continue to feel that violence against civilians is “rarely” (or, in the December 2006 Maryland poll, “weakly”) justified. And when the word “civilian” is dropped from the question, support for attacks goes up considerably. When “a Muslim blows himself up while attacking an enemy,” 35% of Moroccans say this is “often” or “sometimes” justified. About the same percentage approve of at least “some” groups in the Muslim world that attack Americans. And both the Pew poll in mid-2005 and the Maryland poll in late 2006 found solid majorities supporting “attacks on U.S. military troops in Iraq”—though of course this is mainly a hypothetical question in distant Morocco, at the opposite end of the Arab world.

EGYPTIAN PUBLIC OPINION

As in Morocco, there are some serious inter-pollster reliability uncertainties in Egypt. For example, the Pew poll conducted in April 2006 shows 69% v. 30% of Egyptians with an unfavorable rather than a favorable opinion of the U.S. The Zogby poll conducted in November 2006, by contrast, shows a worse result by about 15 points in both directions: 83% unfavorable, and just 14% favorable.

One might guess that this reflects the difference in timing, since this Zogby poll was taken not long after the unpopular Israel-Lebanon war. But the previous Zogby poll, taken in late 2005, recorded almost exactly the same highly unfavorable view of the U.S. The difference from Pew may actually be due to the nature of the samples: Pew is truly a national poll, while Zogby is confined to metropolitan Cairo and Alexandria (approximately one-quarter of Egypt’s total population). Question wording also matters a great deal: Zogby notes that just 23% of Egyptians said their view of the American people has a positive impact on their overall opinion of the U.S.; while the Maryland poll from January 2007 shows nearly twice as many (40%) favorable views of the American people per se. (Pew’s corresponding figure from April 2006 is similar, at 36%.)

Regarding “the current U.S. government,” though, there is no good news to report from Egyptian public opinion. The Maryland poll shows a whopping 93% unfavorable. This is even worse than the 83–85% measured by Zogby in 2005 and 2006, and among the very worst ever recorded from any Arab public. Recall that the corresponding figure for Morocco, as of early 2007, is “only” 76% unfavorable toward the U.S. government—and just half feel “very” unfavorable, compared with fully 86% of Egyptians.

The contrast with Morocco is also instructive when it comes to attacks on U.S. targets. In Egypt, 83% say they “strongly” approve of “attacks on U.S. military troops in Iraq”; in Morocco, that number is just 39%. Two-thirds of Egyptians approve of at least some “groups in the Muslim world that attack Americans”; just 38% of Moroccans say the same. In Egypt, 40% voice at least a “somewhat positive”

view of Osama Bin Laden; in Morocco, as noted above, that figure is just 27%. (It must be noted, however, that fully a quarter of Moroccans but just 6% of Egyptians say they “don’t know” or refuse to answer this question.) And one-quarter of Egyptians, as against mere 9% of Moroccans, say they “support Al-Qa’idah’s attacks on Americans, and share its attitudes toward the U.S.”

What accounts for these awful Egyptian perceptions? Dissatisfaction with U.S. policies is clearly a big part of the explanation. Yet curiously, only half of Egyptians themselves told the Zogby pollsters that U.S. policy in Palestine, Lebanon, or Iraq had a negative effect on their overall opinion of the U.S. (rather than the U.S. government). Also, as noted above, only a narrow majority of Egyptians (59%), substantially fewer than in most other Zogby sample countries, say it is U.S. policies that underpin their attitudes. (That percentage in Morocco, to continue with this comparison, was the highest, at 88%.) And it is a fact that Egyptian opinion about the U.S. was highly negative even before the latest Iraq war or Lebanon war: 76% in the 2002 Zogby poll.

So, in addition to Egyptian popular rejection of U.S. policies on any or all of those issues, one searches for some additional explanatory factors. One possibility is the virulently anti-American media coverage in Egypt, whether official, semi-official, or opposition. Another, more speculative idea is that the very closeness of the U.S.-Egyptian official embrace, and the billions of dollars in annual aid that have gone with it for the past quarter-century, have actually made Egyptians especially suspicious of American motives. There is just a bit of evidence for this hypothesis buried in the January 2007 Maryland survey. Egyptians and Moroccans were asked their view of this statement: “American pretends to be helpful to Muslim countries, but in fact everything it does is really part of a scheme to take advantage of people in the Middle East and steal their oil.” Sad to say, three-quarters of Egyptians agreed *strongly*—precisely twice the percentage of Moroccans with that attitude.

One other possibility is that Egyptians are just plain generally more disgruntled lately, and that some of this spills over to their views of the U.S. The bit of evidence for this hypothesis comes from the November 2006 Zogby poll. As compared with the previous year, Egyptian attitudes apparently underwent a complete reversal, from positive to negative, on the twin questions of feeling “better or worse off” today than four years earlier, and of expectations four years hence. In contrast, Moroccan attitudes on these questions, while showing a slight downturn, stayed predominantly positive. It may be that the Egyptian public’s relatively pessimistic overall disposition lately is contributing to their extraordinarily unfavorable view of the U.S. None of this is meant to imply that the major reasons behind Egyptian popular animosity toward the U.S. are either irrelevant or irrational—only that the seemingly extraneous factors mentioned above may be exacerbating the underlying problem.

In the end, are there any positive elements in Egyptian attitudes on issues of particular American concern? Perhaps the most heartening news is that Egyptians soundly (90%) reject attacks on American civilians, whether in the U.S. or in “Islamic countries.” Another rare bright spot is that not only does a large majority (82%) of Egyptians endorse democracy as at least a “fairly good” way of governing their country, but a majority (57%) also endorses, albeit by a much narrower margin, “the laws permitting freedom of expression in the U.S.” But otherwise it is all too apparent that the perceptual gap between Egyptians and Americans is dishearteningly broad and deep.

MAJOR REGIONAL ISSUE: ISRAEL

There remain two issues—Iran and Israel—so timely and important as to justify an exception to the admonition about looking mainly at opinions in individual Arab countries, instead of at a broad regional canvas.

Israel and Palestine are important to all Arab publics surveyed, but the extent of this importance varies considerably—both from one country to another, and also over time. The Zogby polls of six Arab states from November 2005, for example, showed a truly startling drop across the board in the salience of this issue for views of the U.S., as compared with other, more urgent concerns at the time: Iraq and “U.S. treatment of Arabs and Muslims.”

A year later, after the latest Lebanon war, Arab-Israeli issues were way back up on the Arab popular agenda. Still, there were major differences of degree. In the same six Arab countries—Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—respondents were asked this (loaded) question: “How important is the Palestine issue in your priorities?” Majorities everywhere said it ranked in the top three; but only in Jordan did a majority (73%) rank it their first priority. Elsewhere,

about half (48%) of Egyptians, and only a quarter of Saudis, gave this issue top priority.

What about the Palestinians themselves? U.S. government officials, along with American university and NGO colleagues, can take pride in having helped train and support the first scientific Palestinian pollsters, starting right after the first Oslo Accords in 1993–94. Today these Palestinian polls, many of which remain reliable at least in broad outline, show an important pattern. Despite the Hamas electoral victory in January 2006, a majority of the Palestinian public continues to believe in a two-state solution, one that implies peaceful coexistence with Israel.

A few brave souls have even started serious polling about some of the key sticking points on the path to such a solution—such as the fate of Palestinian refugees. The question is whether they would accept the right to return to a new Palestinian state, rather than to what is now Israel, or else agree to permanent resettlement and compensation elsewhere. The results so far are inconclusive, but perhaps that in itself gives some grounds for hope.

In a similar vein, among other Arab societies, one of the most interesting new findings comes from Shibley Telhami's analysis of the November 2006 Zogby polling data. Surprisingly, even in the wake of the Lebanon war, opinion in all six countries sampled predominantly showed at least a skeptical inclination toward "a lasting and comprehensive peace with Israel" in exchange for "return of all the territories occupied in the 1967 war, including East Jerusalem." Minorities, ranging from 42% in Saudi Arabia to just 16% in the UAE next door, opted for this response: "Even if the Israelis return all the territories occupied in 1967 peacefully, the Arab should continue to fight, no matter what the outcome."

In other words, as Prof. Telhami has described it, when the Saudis relaunched their Arab Initiative of 2002 this year, they were "pushing on an open door," at least in terms of the general public opinion climate in certain key Arab states. Moreover, about twice as many overall (62%) picked the two-state Palestine solution, rather than American withdrawal from Iraq (33%) or other options, as their first or second choice to "improve your view of the U.S. most." As usual, the devil is in the details. But it may be helpful to keep these surprising findings in mind as one considers how far Arab governments can "get ahead" of their publics in possible peace negotiations. Today, unfortunately, just 23% of Moroccans, and a mere 7% of Egyptians, are convinced that "the creation of an independent and economically viable Palestinian state" is in fact a credible objective of U.S. policy.

Also interesting is the extent of apparent popular support for Hamas, or for a Palestinian unity government including Hamas, in another major Arab country: Saudi Arabia. The November 2006 Zogby poll showed a third of Saudis supporting Hamas—more than twice the percentage in Jordan (14%), a majority of whose population are actually of Palestinian origin. Another third of Saudis backed a Palestinian unity government; while barely a fifth picked Fatah and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. This reading of the opinion climate may have something to do with the fact that, a few months later, Saudi King Abdullah secured the Mecca Accord on the Hamas-Fatah Palestinian unity government in power today—a crucial initiative that seems to have caught our policymakers off-guard.

Finally, a brief comment is in place about Arab attitudes toward the legendary "Israeli lobby." Notwithstanding all the publicity it has received lately, only in Saudi Arabia of these six Arab publics does even a slim plurality (40%) see "U.S. domestic politics" as President Bush's "primary motivation" in Mideast policy, as opposed to "U.S. national interests." The 2005 Zogby poll came up with a result pointing in the same general direction. Similarly, only in Saudi Arabia does a plurality (44%) attribute American policy in the region primarily to "Israeli influence." All the other five publics surveyed seem to have an even more "realist" view of U.S. Mideast policy, which may also be a helpful guide to formulating that policy in the future.

MAJOR REGIONAL ISSUE: IRAN

Arab opinion of Iran, and with that the whole matter of a possible Sunni v. Shi'i split, have suddenly emerged again over the past year as among the most talked-about issues on the Mideast policy horizon. There is not yet much hard data to go by, however. The one thing that can be said about it with certainty is that more research is needed.

The mid-2006 Pew poll includes just Egypt and Jordan, and shows Egyptian overall views of Iran to be moderately positive (59% favorable v. 39% unfavorable), while Jordanians were evenly divided (49% v. 51%). In a like fashion, only a third of Egyptians (34%) and somewhat more Jordanians (44%) considered "the current government in Iran" to pose even a moderate danger to "stability in the Middle East." But

these negative Jordanian voices were up sharply from just 16% recorded three years earlier, in May 2003.

Moreover, these Arab publics' views of Iran's controversial leader were even more negative. Two-thirds expressed "not much confidence" or none at all in Iranian President Ahmadinejad, both in Egypt and in Jordan. Even just after the 2006 Lebanon war, he was named as "most admired world leader by no more than 5% in any of the six Arab countries sampled by Zogby.

Nevertheless, at least as of late last year, Arab publics appeared remarkably blasé about Iran's nuclear program. In the six-country Zogby poll in November 2006, respondents in each country predominantly said Iran "has the right to its nuclear program," despite "international pressure." This was the case even though majorities in Egypt and Lebanon, and at least a third in the other countries, believed Iran was in fact trying to develop nuclear weapons. Moreover, at most 20% of the public in any of these Arab states said that one of their top two concerns about the war in Iraq (out of five options offered) was that "Iran is now a more powerful state."

The Pew poll from April 2006 offers some insight into these unexpectedly nonchalant views. If Iran did acquire nuclear weapons, majorities in Egypt (57%) and Jordan (67%) believed, it would probably "use them for defensive purposes only"—or else to "attack Israel" (Egypt, 61%; Jordan, 65%). Only about half thought Iran would likely attack either the U.S. or Europe. And closer to home, just 15–20% in either place thought Iran would give nuclear arms to terrorists, or "attack another Muslim country."

This laissez-faire attitude may be changing, however. A more recent poll reported by Zogby claims that 78% of Saudis, and "more than two-thirds of Jordanians, Emiratis, Lebanese and Egyptians" now give negative ratings to non-Arab Iran's role in Arab Iraq. But further details about this finding have not yet been made publicly available.

Part of the Iran nexus is its support for Lebanon's Shi'i Hezbollah movement and its leader, Sheikh Hasan Nasrallah. While he appeared as a hero on Arab TV screens and websites during the Summer 2006 war with Israel, the Zogby poll taken just a few months later shows that Nasrallah's popularity outside Lebanon was spotty, seeming to vary inversely with distance. He was picked as "most admired world leader" by just 13% in Egypt, 10% in Jordan, and 8% in Saudi Arabia—but by 22% in Morocco, and an amazing 31% in the UAE (perhaps in part because of its significant expatriate Shi'i population).

Strangely, in another Zogby poll back in May 2004, Nasrallah actually had more such votes (18%) in Saudi Arabia, and about as many (9%) in Jordan and Egypt—suggesting that perhaps his star did not really shine so brightly among Sunni audiences as a result of the 2006 war (or perhaps that there are problems with these poll data). In any case, in the nine months since the end of that war, anecdotal information suggests that Nasrallah has lost much of his luster among Arab publics outside Lebanon.

CONCLUSIONS: HOW TO DO A BETTER JOB WITH ARAB PUBLIC OPINION

Overall, the challenge is clear: The U.S. image has declined considerably in several key Arab countries over the past few years. In the long run, especially if this trend continues and impinges more on Arab government policies, this could constrain our policy options in the region. At the same time, there may be some new opportunities on several major policy issues: growing popular opposition to most forms of terrorism against civilians, increasing concern about Iran, and support for a peaceful, two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conundrum. Let me close with just three modest, practical suggestions for how we might be able to do a better job of dealing with this challenge and these opportunities.

First, we can do a better job of understanding Arab public opinion, without either sensationalism or undue apology. It would help to focus more on country-by-country rather than sweeping regional analyses. It would also help to share and compare more information from different pollsters, including all the polls sponsored by various U.S. government offices at State, USAID, the Department of Defense, and others. And it would help to make sure that our best experts, especially those with critical language skills, stay on the job—rather than being excluded on spurious "security" grounds that really reflect improper or illegal discrimination, or even attempts to cover up grave malfeasance by our own security officials.

Second, once we are armed with better understanding, we can do a better job of communicating with Arab publics. We can do this, in my judgment, by focusing more on frank discussion of the issues that divide us, not by vague appeals to supposedly shared values. One good reason to shift in this direction is that Arabs themselves generally tell the pollsters that their problem is our policies, not our values.

Another good reason is that Arabs themselves tell the pollsters that what they do admire about Americans is not just our educational achievements or our technology, but also our freedom of expression. If that is indeed the case, we should stop being shy about freely expressing our views to them, even on the hardest policy problems. My own personal experience in the region over many years leads me to believe that most Arabs actually respect such open exchanges, much more than beating around the bush. One of the highest compliments one hears on the Arab street, or among the Arab elite for that matter, is that someone is speaking “bisarahah” or “dughri”—sincerely and straight.

Third, though this may be a bit beyond the scope of this hearing, we should keep in mind that Arab public opinion is just part of the picture. Even in the Middle East, other publics are paying some attention to our policies, and could affect them: Israelis and Iranians, for example, or Turks and Kurds. And beyond the Middle East, Arabs account for just a quarter or so of the world’s Muslims; there are about a billion others. Their views may matter profoundly to us as well, even if some of their own governments sometimes seem to neglect them. The difficult task we face is precisely to find the right balance among these diverse perceptions and players, in a way that best serves both our interests and our values.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Dr. Pollock, and thank you, Dr. Zogby. I am going to turn first, because I know he has another hearing to attend, to the ranking member, to my ranking member, Mr. Rohrabacher, for any questions that he might have. I am also going to excuse myself because I have a meeting at 10:30, but I shall return, and I am going to ask the chair of the Middle East Subcommittee, Mr. Ackerman, to take the chair during my absence. Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

First, let me note that when it comes to making decisions as to what policy I will support, I do not rely on the wet finger method of decision-making. I think too many politicians do that. If I do not do that based on public opinion, even in my own district, I try to do what I think is right. I do not believe that we should be making policy based on public opinion of what that policy should be, especially public opinion from other countries.

We should be doing what we think is right, right for the people of the United States, what will, in the long term, serve the interests of the people of the world, which, I believe, frankly, coincide with the long-term interests of the United States.

So, with that said, that does not mean we ignore the opinions of others, but that means that we should be doing what we think is right because, in the long run, if we succeed, the world will be with us; if we fail, the world will be against us. That is the problem about being the number one power in the world.

Mr. Zogby, we have known each other for a while, and we have exchanged views on many things over the years. Let me ask you some specifics here about your findings. You found that 2006 was a turning point. Is that correct?

Mr. ZOGBY. Well, a significant turning point in terms of some of the countries and their attitudes toward us, yes. There was an accumulation of factors in that year that was significant.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. What I want to point out is that, and I would like to make sure the chairman hears this right before he leaves, Mr. Chairman, 2006 was not the year that we invaded and got rid of Saddam Hussein. I believe that happened in 2003.

So what we are talking about is not an opposition, and, in fact, I think Mr. Zogby’s poll indicated that there was an upsurge during

that time period in support for the concepts of democracy and optimism in the Arab world, and then it started plummeting in 2006.

Mr. ZOGBY. Actually, no. I would not say there was an upswing at all. What there was was pretty much a holding pattern of negatives. The downturn occurred, rather significantly, in 2006, but, no, there is no way that I find an upswing, unless you account for some domestic factors.

For example, in Saudi Arabia, the better off/worst off improved in 2005, and it did so because oil prices went way up and because the government began a rather earnest crackdown on domestic terrorism and groups of that sort.

So I think that that is what accounts for it there. But in every other country, the better-off/worse-off numbers did not go in any dramatic direction, but one should not take the downturn in 2006 as an indication that things were all rosy in 2002, or 2003, or 2004. They were not; they just got a whole lot worse.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. My theory, and where we have disagreed, over the years, is, I think, a little bit of a pessimistic view of things, and I will just have to say, over the years, we followed each other's opinions. I think that you can look at a glass that is half full or half empty, and I will have to admit that ever since I worked for Ronald Reagan, I have always looked at this glass as being mostly full, but I never did pay attention to that little top of the glass that was empty.

I guess your job is trying to determine where the hell the water level is in the glass, scientifically. I would just suggest that there was not the opposition, and maybe you could tell me whether or not my observation is correct, it was not the opposition in the Arab world to the idea of getting rid of Saddam Hussein, but, instead, it was later on, as, let us say, propaganda mills began working on the other side, and also mistakes of the United States, and every time you do something, there is a mistake.

I will tell you that, right now, the people of France had 2 years of propaganda from wealthy French interests telling them that the American bombing of Normandy, which resulted in, I might add, thousands of dead French civilians, that if they would focus on that, then maybe French public opinion might have swung against America during the liberation. But my inclination is that it seems to me that the Arab world did support the United States' pro-democracy efforts in Iraq.

Mr. ZOGBY. Actually, no, sir.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay.

Mr. ZOGBY. The first time we polled on that question, with any degree of thoroughness, was in 2004, which was about a year after the war started. When we asked them their attitude on the question of the war in Iraq, in Morocco, we got about a 1 percent favorable; in Saudi Arabia, about a 2 percent; in Jordan, it was about a 2 percent; in Lebanon, it was about 3 and a half to 4; in the UAE, it was about 4; and we do not have numbers for Egypt that year.

We did not ask the question, do you like Saddam Hussein? That was not a question we asked, but we did ask: Did you support what the U.S. did, the United States war in Iraq? And the answer was simply, No. In the most recent poll that we did, it was a great deal more authoritarian because we asked them outcomes.

We asked them what they were concerned about most in the world, and the issues that they were concerned about, in addition to those questions about the U.S. role, was they were concerned about U.S. permanent basing, they were concerned, most significantly, about whether or not Iraq would split into three and an ensuing civil war that would bring regional instability.

So, overwhelmingly, what we found in Egypt and Jordan, were calls for an immediate withdrawal, but those were tempered in Saudi Arabia-UAE, where, because they are right on the front line, concern about Iran being so paramount, they are kind of stuck. So I actually wrote a piece then that Arab public opinion in that region is kind of in the same bind that we are, they think we ought not to be there, but feel that leaving, maybe precipitously, is as dangerous as staying, and so they are stuck like we are stuck, looking for a responsible way out.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me suggest that the dramatic decline in support, or a change of attitude, I should say, that took place in 2006, may well reflect that the people did, in their gut level, appreciate the fact that Saddam Hussein was being eliminated.

Mr. ZOGBY. I am sorry. Instead of projecting, I actually asked people why, and we listen to them when we do.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I understand.

Mr. ZOGBY. You cannot eliminate, in 2006, number one, Dubai Ports, which, when we did elite surveys after Dubai Ports, what we were hearing from business people is there is no greater friend in the region than the UAE. This is how you treat your friends? And people were making alternative investment strategies based on the fact that they could no longer count on dealing with the United States as a fair and free market.

Secondly, you have to look at what happened in Gaza. It got reported one way here—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I was about to mention that.

Mr. ZOGBY [continuing]. It looked very differently in the rest of the region, and Lebanon was a disaster for everybody. Now we know it was a disaster for Israel, from the Commission report that came out the other day, but, clearly, people in the Arab world who saw the massive destruction of that country, it was a shock, and it was a hit in the solar plexus, and that was the year, as well, that Iraq went from bad to worse.

So if you take it all and put it together as a picture, this is a region that has taken four body blows in 1 year. That is what accounts for the downturn. In other words, we can project—

Mr. ACKERMAN [presiding]. Mr. Zogby, just for the record, I think you meant to say "Lebanon," not "Gaza."

Mr. ZOGBY. No. I started with Gaza—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes.

Mr. ZOGBY [continuing]. Then Lebanon, then Iraq, but actually before that was Dubai Ports. So the year actually began with Dubai Ports. It then went to Gaza. That was the year that there was the prisoner captured, the Israeli soldier that was kidnapped by groups, we think, related to Hamas. He is being held in Gaza, and then Israel began an assault on Gaza, which lasted over a month and was followed, then, by the Hezbollah capture of the two hostages in Northern Israel.

Mr. ACKERMAN. We took the hit for that.

Mr. ZOGBY. Pardon?

Mr. ACKERMAN. And we took the hit for that?

Mr. ZOGBY. The fact is that when you have a situation in Gaza where, since the Hamas election, there has been virtually no aid going into the country, and they see us culpable for Israel's behavior. They see us as having some paternity in that.

Now, you can argue with it, but when we defend Israel, as we do, when Secretary Rice goes to the region in the middle of the Lebanon war, and it is very clear, as it just was released by former Ambassador Bolton's comments, that we let this go as long as we could, it was very clear in the region that we were not only giving a red light, but we were giving a green light in both instances, and so, yes, we took the hit for it.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me note, Mr. Zogby, that there is one thing you left out of that, and that is just one reason why I do not make my decisions based on wet fingers. You left out the rockets that were sent into Israel from Gaza, and it was not just the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier that led to Gaza/Lebanon. It was also the shelling by Israel of the people of Gaza after the Israelis had, I might say—

Mr. ZOGBY. Absolutely, inexcusable behavior, and no one can justify it. This is not a situation, on my part, where I am justifying what Hamas did. What I am saying to you, though, is that the overwhelming violence that Arabs saw occurring against the people of Gaza, and I think we ought to be able to agree that the misery that was created there is significant, and, therefore, did it have an impact on opinion?

The answer is, yes, it did have an impact on opinion, as did what happened in Lebanon, as did what is happening in Iraq, and when you put it together, you have, I think, a fairly compelling set of arguments, at least, we see in the numbers, as to why people had a downturn in views and began to feel not only more negatively toward us but began to feel, as we asked in the better-off/worse-off numbers, they began to feel worse off and began to project that the future might be less, which—

Mr. ROHRABACHER [continuing]. Which, I think, can be traced back not to actions or decisions by the United States but by actions or decisions made by people who decided to launch rockets from Gaza into Israel.

In the past, I have been critical of Israel in the past, and, by the way, put myself in a position of being beat up by people who cannot stand any criticism of Israel for anything.

I have been critical of Israel when they have used force and violence in a way that I thought was just designed to intimidate the Palestinians into submission, but I fully recognize that, while that criticism may be justified, what has been going on recently, since the Israelis, I think, have had a turn of heart in the last 10 years, realizing that the Palestinian people need—there needs to be some policy that reflects some justice for them, if there is going to be peace, that the Palestinians' reaction, certainly some elements among the Palestinians, has been just the opposite of what had been hoped for, which is, when the Israelis pulled out of Gaza and

were given this opportunity, instead of looking at it as an opportunity, what happened?

The Palestinians ended up shooting rockets into Israel, and I have no problem, then, in condemning that and supporting the Israeli reaction, and the Israeli reaction and our reaction should not be based on public opinion. I do not believe it should be based on public opinion. Someone is shooting rockets into your territory, and whether we support Israel's reaction to that should not be based on a poll of what that means to public opinion around the world. Is that irrational, on my part?

Mr. ZOGBY. It may not be irrational, sir, but it may also be wise periodically to put your finger in the air just to get a sense of where things are and how, as Ed Koch used to say as he walked down the streets of New York, "How am I doing?" It is pretty good to kind of figure out how you are doing once in a while, and we are not doing too well. That is the issue here.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. One last note before we move on. I would just say that I think that getting rid of Saddam Hussein was the right decision. Whether or not we have made mistakes that have created an elongated conflict, that is another issue at hand, whether we have handled it competently or not.

In the end, we have a democracy in Iraq. I think that the people of that area will think very highly of the United States because of that.

In terms of what we support by the actions of the Israelis or anyone else, it should be based on not whether or not it is popular at the moment but if it will bring about a more peaceful world in the end.

Mr. ZOGBY. The only thing I would say in response, though, is that you can say you think we are doing better, and people are appreciating us. The simple fact is that they are not. So this is not a question of sticking our finger in the air, but we ought not to be sticking it elsewhere as well.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That was good.

Mr. ZOGBY. Thank you. I have been sitting on that one for a long time. The fact is here that we are in trouble, and if we do not recognize we are in trouble, and if we continue to say, "We think they appreciate us for this," when the numbers simply show they do not, I am not here arguing was it good or bad; I am saying that a significant majority, an overwhelming majority, of people are not supportive of what we have done, and we need to rethink how we approach that, and I believe that it matters. I believe it matters how people view us. It certainly matters, I think, for homeland security, how they view us.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much. The chair would make a couple of observations or comments before asking a question. My good friend, the gentleman from California, stated, with regard to Iraq—I think I wrote it down right—"Every time we do something, there is a mistake." We are working to fix that.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Get the human factor out of there.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Let me make a brief but passionate defense of wet fingers. The gentleman from California, my good friend, is probably the most distinguished surfer in the Congress, and I do

not know anything about surfing, but I know you really have to be able to read the waves, and the waves are a lot more readable than the wind. You can see the waves and hear the waves coming but not always the wind.

I think, in foreign policy, we have to very, very conscience of the winds that we do not see. I know, in sailing, if you want to go north, and there is a wind blowing east, you will wind up going closer to northeast than north, and despite the fact that your policy may be to go north, you had better not head north because you will wind up in the wrong direction if you do not know which way the wind is blowing. And I think the wet fingers, if that is what we are going to call the results of polling, is something that we really have to consider.

If we want to know how we will more positively affect the behavior in other places so that it is in the U.S.'s interest, we have to know what the thinking is in those parts of the world and how to weigh that into the equation of our thinking as we do what we believe is in our interests. So I think these are very important adjustments.

I do want to ask a question that was raised before in our colleague's initial statement, which has had me curious for a long time. Does your polling cross tabs indicate any differences, or do you not distinguish between Muslim Arabs or Christian Arabs or other Arabs?

Mr. ZOGBY. Yes, only in situations where it is measurable, sir. In some cases, it is not measurable. It is too small a group to figure in most countries. Lebanon is the one case where it is obviously quite different. In Lebanon, there are significant differences.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Let me include currently noncountries in that.

Mr. ZOGBY. Pardon?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Currently noncountries, the distinction between Arab and Arab Muslims and Arab Christians.

Mr. ZOGBY. Yes. By that, you are meaning the Palestinians?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes. Nazareth and Bethlehem?

Mr. ZOGBY. The fact is, however, that the number of Christians in Palestine has dropped so precipitously in the last 30 years that, again, it factors for a few percent. It is measurable, but I am not sure I will trust, if I am doing a poll of 800 people, and I am getting 15 or 20 respondents who are Christian, if that is going to be a useful figure. But in Lebanon, there is a difference.

Let me just tell you about the Lebanon numbers because I think they are important. The Lebanon numbers are important because the attitude toward the United States among Lebanese Christians and Shi'a, for example, just take those two segments, excluding the Sunni Muslim, are almost the same in terms of attitudes toward the American people. Why? Because there is a significant body of Shi'a Lebanese living in America. They have relatives and family. They know Detroit and Dearborn. They actually consider them home away from home.

Attitudes toward other aspects of America are also similar. Aspects toward policy are similar as well. Neither the Christian Lebanese nor the Shi'a Lebanese or Sunni Lebanese like the war in Iraq, like our treatment of Palestinians.

Where they differ, however, is when it comes to issues close to home in Lebanon, the Shi'a, for example, are much more supportive of Syria, much more supportive of Iran, much less supportive of our policy, whereas the Maronite Christian and Melkite Christian communities, for example, are very hostile toward Syria and more supportive of America so that, overall, you have got almost a red state/blue state phenomenon in Lebanon, but that is the only country where you really can measure Christian attitudes with any certainty.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The comment you made, Dr. Zogby, about the fact that the Christian population in the Palestinian areas is almost statistically insignificant, is, of itself, a tremendous tragedy of whatever it is that is going on. I have a tremendous concern about that, as I know my colleague, the ranking member of our subcommittee, has as well and others on the committee.

I think, not at this time, but it would be really to explore that and the reasons why those numbers have become so small and what the thinking is of the people who are leaving as quickly as they can find a place to go, and we will reserve that for a different hearing.

Obviously, from the comments of each of you, it is not going very well toward the United States. Also, the observation that you made that Arabs do not go to bed hating the United States at night and wake up in the morning hating Israel. But that is very high on the list of things that they want to resolve.

How much of their attitude toward us has to do with Israel? If we are the big devil, and they are the small devil, if we "fix that," in the parlance of the street, does that improve our image? Does that improve Israel's image? How does that work, in the minds of Arabs? Dr. Pollock?

Mr. POLLOCK. Thank you for the question. I think it is an important issue most of the time for most Arab publics but not all of the time for all Arab publics. I think that some of the data that I have looked at, for example, from Dr. Zogby's polls, indicate to me that there are actually very sharp variations in exactly that point: How much do Arabs care about Israel and Palestine as even a top foreign policy priority?

There was a very sharp drop in the salience of that issue for Arab public opinion in 2005, for example. When Arabs reported, in Dr. Zogby's polling data, that it was Iraq or United States treatment of Muslims and Arabs, for example, at Guantanamo or Abu Ghraib or coming into the United States, that those were the issues, not Israel, that Arabs cared, by far, more about in relation to their view of the United States, but that was in 2005.

Then, in 2006, what we saw happening, rather quickly, I think, is something somewhat along the lines, in my view, that Dr. Zogby suggested, that a number of events that were very highly publicized, including what was going on in Gaza, but especially the Lebanon war, made the Arab-Israeli conflict go back up to the top, or near the top, of the Arab public's priorities in terms of foreign policy and in terms of their view of the United States.

But it goes up and down over the years, and it varies from one Arab country to another, and that is not the only thing they care about, even in regard to their image of the United States, and their

image of the United States is not the main thing that they care about, altogether.

So if you ask, as you did, sir, if we did fix this problem, would it help our image in the Arab world, I would say, certainly, it would, and there is good, solid polling data numbers to support that. You have 62 percent, again, from a Europe poll in late 2006, of Arabs in a mix of six Arab countries saying that that is what they want the United States to do the most is to push for a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. That is what they want: 62 percent.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes. Very often you can talk to people, and this is anecdotal, whose life's dream is if they only made \$50 more a week, their life would change, and they make \$50 a week, and nothing changes.

Mr. ZOGBY. Okay. I would have to say that that is obviously a hypothetical, but my guess is, based on the historical record and a certain amount of, I hope, common sense, that you are probably right, that if we did somehow produce a two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, it would help us with Arab public opinion, but there would be other issues that they would still—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Before I turn to the ranking member—

Mr. ZOGBY. Could I answer that, if you do not mind? His reading of our polls, I think, is absolutely correct. I would not disagree with any of that.

I would just add, however, and I think that he was moving in that direction, that, in every one of these instances, whether you are measuring identity, or you are measuring attitudes on a variety of issues, you are dealing with sort of a complex calculus of issues.

They said they do not go to bed at night thinking of America and wake up in the morning hating Israel, but if you say to them, "America," then they start thinking about it. So the question here is not what actually makes them feel better in their lives; it is what makes them feel better about us, and the answer to that is, deal with this question: Ask them, "What do you want from America?" They will tell you what they want, and these are the things that they want.

However, once we begin to move on these other issues, then we can begin to address other concerns they have. They do have concerns about employment, and, actually, in the calculus of things, the first thing that comes to mind when you say, "What is the thing that bothers you most?" my job, my family, my health care. Those are the top-line issues. But then say, "What do you think of America?" Oh, bad. And because they feel, in a sense, that their lives are out of control, out of control because Arab history, for the last 100 years, in fact, has been out of control, as a result of Western powers that have shaped their futures and their destinies, drawn lines in the sand that created states out of whole cloth, imposed regimes—the whole range of issues that have taken control from them, we are the latest in a series of powers that have taken control.

So when David says that they say, America is responsible for this, in fact, that is how they feel it, and what has come to symbolize this loss of control, in their mind, is Palestine. For them, Palestinians are, in a sense, an existential reminder of the fact that

they do not have control of their history. They are like Native Americans when they think of Wounded Knee. It is the one big episode in their history where they lost control, and never got it back.

To restore some of that control, to give them a sense that we understand their history and their concerns, I think it would be helpful, and that would give us an opportunity to work, as I said in my testimony, as a partner with them, to help address the employment issues, the health care issues, and the other questions.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Let me just tie this in real briefly with this question.

Mr. ZOGBY. Sure.

Mr. ACKERMAN. When Arabs indicate, despite the fact that they like Americans and things about us but not our policies, first, when countries and peoples do not do well economically for a long period of time, history seems to indicate that they look to blame other countries or other peoples for that problem without addressing the problem.

But when they say that they do not like the way we treat them, is that because they think we treat Israel better and that Israel is doing better relative to the way they are doing in health care and jobs and education or whatever other standards that might apply in their everyday life, do they attribute the fact that Israel is doing better because we are doing better by Israel?

Mr. ZOGBY. You know, we have polled class, and let me tell you, when you poll class in the region, you find that there is almost no difference.

Mr. ACKERMAN. When you say "poll class," you mean an amount of class.

Mr. ZOGBY. We break out by higher class, middle class, lower class, and we have measurements of what we used to create those. It was a study we were doing on the middle class in the Gulf.

So I would say that it is not a question of better off/worse off; it is a question of a general cultural set of attitudes toward this question. It is not an issue that we like Israel better; it is that we have not paid attention, they would say to us, to what are the issues that they care about, and, instead, turn a blind eye to this, turn a blind eye to that, become involved in a quagmire in another part of their region that threatens instability for everybody, and then add to it Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib and the difficulty of getting visas.

These are people who will tell you that they have worked here, lived here, love America, but now are afraid to come into our airports, et cetera, even though they have business and investments and children who are living here. The whole range of issues combined has created problems, and I think we have to deal with the reality of this as we look to how to fix it.

But, yes, their attitude toward us is a complex of issues, as David noted when he looked at our polling, and it is not just Israel, it is not just the Palestinians, but that is a big piece of it. But if you help solve the Arab-Israeli conflict, and you still are doing what we are doing in Iraq, now we have added that to the mix.

If you solve this, and you have another massive mess in Lebanon, we have to look at the region as a whole because, while people do have differences, country by country, and they do have dif-

ferences, country by country, they also see themselves as part of a larger world, and what impacts one part of that world has an impact on the psyche in another part.

Mr. ACKERMAN. You seem to be inoculating us against the “yes, but” fixes Israel-Palestine, and we will be okay, and then we fix Israel-Palestine, wave the magic wand, and then they say, “But Iran, but Iraq, but something else.” That is clear to me, anyway. I just have a gut feeling that that is what is going to happen.

Mr. ZOGBY. What we have done in Iraq certainly does not help. What happened last summer in Lebanon certainly does not help. The stories of Abu Ghraib certainly do not help. Let us understand here, this is not a question of, “Okay, honey, I will behave, and I won’t do this,” and then you turn around and smack up the car because you got drunk last night. I mean, the issue is, where there is a complex set of what are viewed as bad behaviors, you either begin to address all of them as meets the needs of the region and develop a partnership, but we cannot continue in Iraq with Israel doing what they did in Lebanon, with Palestinians, with the treatment of Arabs’ and Muslims’ secret black holes around wherever the world they are, et cetera, and expect attitudes to change at this point with simply fixing one of the questions.

It is a good start. It is a great start, but I think we have gone down a road for too long a period of time, added too much baggage to our overall relationship with the region. At this point, they have just one fix: We need to begin to deal with all of them. Iraq has made our situation in that region infinitely more complex than it was 10 years ago, and I have to say that honestly.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Dr. Pollock, do you want to take a shot?

Mr. POLLOCK. I would like to just mention a few specific points where I think I have a somewhat different view that is related directly, Mr. Chairman, to your question.

The Palestinian issue is, I want to emphasize, is not always the most important priority for Arab public opinion. Sometimes it is, in the wake of a sensational, prolonged development that is very highly publicized, like the Lebanon war in the summer of 2006.

But the numbers go up and down from 1 year to the next or even over a 6-month period, and sometimes that issue drops really quite far down the list of priorities for most Arab publics, even on foreign policy issues and other issues like terrorism, or Iraq, or United States treatment of Arabs and Muslims, as perceived in those societies. Sometimes those issues come to the fore.

So it is important not to just look at the snapshot but to look at how this changes over time, one point where I think I might have a somewhat different view than Dr. Zogby.

The second point is, I think it is a mistake to suppose, although it sounds good, that they just do not like our policies, but they like us, and they like our values. My reading of the data, unfortunately, suggests that that is simply not the case, that they like Americans and American values a little bit better than they like United States policies in the Middle East, but the percentage in most Arab societies these days, at least, and I am talking about the last 5 years, before the Iraq war, after the Iraq war, before the Lebanon war, after the Lebanon war, the percentage of most Arab publics that say they actually like American people or like most American val-

ues is low. We are talking about a minority of probably 30 percent, at best, not most Arab people in most Arab countries liking us or our values.

The third point has to do, and I think this is also important, with something that you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, which is the tendency to blame others for your own problems, which polling data from Arab societies suggests is really very widespread, and it reflects something about a different world view, I guess, or maybe it is human nature.

In a question that was asked by the Pew poll in mid-2006, "Are relations between, not just the United States and the Arabs but between Muslims and the West, are they good or bad?" You've got a majority in most Arab countries polled saying they were bad, and then when the Pew pollsters went in and said, "Why are they bad? Whose fault is it?" You got, in Egypt and Jordan, which were the two major Arab countries in that poll, and there were some other Muslim countries as well, you got about 1 percent taking responsibility, or accepting blame, for bad relations between Muslims and the West and a majority in each case blaming Westerners, not both sides but Westerners, for those bad relations and about a quarter in each country, in Egypt and Jordan, in that poll volunteering the response that it was the Jews who were to blame for the perceived bad relations between Muslims and Westerners.

That is something, that inescapable predisposition toward scapegoating and conspiracy theories, I am sorry to say, is something that we just have to acknowledge as a reality on the Arab street today.

Mr. ZOGBY. Could I comment on that for just a moment?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Please. I want to hear you out.

Mr. ZOGBY. I think the issue here is to understand where conspiracy theory comes from, or to understand where myth-making, if you will, comes from, and it has to do with that issue I mentioned to you before, the sense of history being out of control.

The chairman noted, when he introduced me, the chairman of the other committee, that my Ph.D. is in religion, and I did postdoctoral work in anthropology, and I did post-postdoctoral work in societies under stress. You will find identical behavior historically among cultures under stress from Native American, in some parts, African-American, where there is a long period of repression or a long period of a sense that I do not control my ability to make history; other forces come to define how history is made for you, and you become susceptible to these excuses because it becomes difficult for you actually to shape history through yourself. You know it.

I think that, therefore, what we have to do here is help understand the need that people in this region have to regain control, and we can be a partner in that, but one of the ways for us to be a partner in that is not to literally dismember a part of the region, as we have done in the last couple of years, and cause the chaos that we have, in part, been responsible for, and then say, "Why do these people feel like they do not have any control?" The answer is quite simply because they do not have any control because, in fact, look at what has occurred in recent years, and you get a sense

here that people, in fact, feel their understanding of reality is pretty much what reality is.

They did not wake up in the morning and bring this down on themselves, and they, frankly, do not know right now how to deal with all of this. They wake up in Jordan, and they have got a million and a half refugees, and they have got turmoil right next door. They wake up in Syria, and it is the same thing right next door. In Saudi Arabia, they are seeing the same thing. The UAE is looking across the Gulf at Iran that looms large, that, in fact, now we have less ability to deal with Iran because of the problems that have been created by Iraq.

So the sense here is that they do not know where to go, and when they look to us one way and saw us behaving another way, I think we have to assume some responsibility ourselves for not looking at their response, as irrational as it is, but there is a certain amount of rationality here. As they wake up in the morning, and they see these developments take place, they say, I think I know where this is coming from. I do not agree with their answer. I think it is overly simplistic, but it does, given the perception they have of what is going around them, it is not as crazy as it may appear.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The bells were for a vote. We will go to Ranking Member Pence. We will recess for approximately 20 minutes for the vote, and come back and take up with Mr. Carnahan.

Mr. PENCE. I will just take a few minutes, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for calling this hearing. For the record, if my wife looks in, another \$50 a week for me would change my life. She handles the books.

The chairman mentioned the defense of wet fingers. My position is more, to borrow a phrase, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind. I am not much into wet fingers. I am going to do the impolitic thing of quoting a Democrat President in this committee, Harry Truman, whose biography I am reading right now. He said, "I wonder how far Moses would have gone if he had taken a poll in Egypt. What would Jesus Christ have preached if he had taken a poll in Israel? Where would the Reformation have gone if Martin Luther had taken a poll? It is not polls or public opinion of the moment that counts; it is right and wrong and leadership, men with fortitude and honesty and a belief in the right that makes epochs in the history of the world," [1945]. So said President Harry Truman.

What I struggle with, and I would just posit this, is something which Dr. Pollock just mentioned, and, to some extent, I find Dr. Zogby's commentary today very moving and very persuasive. Whether it is on the streets of Baghdad a month ago or whether it was in a town hall in Basra or other places over the last 7 years in my travels in the region, I love the Arab people. I feel very at home when I am amidst people dedicated in their faith and their families.

I do not understand the disconnect between the treatment I receive as an individual American from good, decent people and the polls. I do not question the validity of these polls at all. I do struggle with being especially apologetic about America's role in the world when many of these polls are taken in countries where re-

gimes are far from free, where people are forced to live in conditions that do not reflect the values that they criticize us over failing to live up to.

And I am also very concerned, and Chairman Ackerman and I think share a deep concern here about if you give a mouse a cookie, where does this ultimately end? I do not remember exactly how the chairman put it but with a “yes,” with this conversation. I mean, Dr. Zogby, when you say, “It is the policy, stupid,” as to why we are disliked, well, which policy? Is it being in Iraq or is it being pro-Israel?

And I think Dr. Pollock’s point about the inseparability to some extent between our values and our policies, in a vibrant constitutional republic, in a two-party system, our values ultimately become our policies. And I am troubled and I struggle with that, the intersection of those facts.

I will close in the interest of time, but it seems like we have a much bigger problem than American policy if more than half of Egyptians and Jordanians doubt that Arab men perpetrated 9/11, yet two-thirds of all respondents to a WorldPublicOpinion.org poll express their desire to see the Islamic world unite in a caliphate.

I do not know how this can be laid at the feet of either the President or poor U.S. policy. In fact, at this very moment, Secretary Rice is meeting in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, with regional powers there. She will meet with Syria. President Bush in fact was the first American President to call for a two-state solution regarding Israel and the Palestinians. It seems that many of Dr. Zogby’s policy recommendations are being answered or, at least, begun.

But I would just hope, and I will carefully review your testimony and listen further at the dialogue today, but I think that there is a careful balance between us slavishly responding to public opinion in an extremely troubled and beleaguered part of the world of the last century, which you said eloquently, Dr. Zogby, and us having rather a decent respect to the opinions of mankind, that we ought to reflect on those, pivot off of those.

But my sensibility is to reflect what is right and wrong in leadership, as President Truman said, and I cannot help but feel that the steady advance of freedom and human rights for all of the people throughout that region of the world and holding up a lamp of hope in examples of government that embrace freedom could be ultimately the greatest gift that we could give the good people of the Arab world. And I will yield back my time since there is a vote, chairman.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Brief response from each?

Mr. ZOGBY. Just quickly. My wife and I, I am Lebanese and she is Irish, and she comes with me to the Middle East and I have gone with her to Ireland over the years many, many times. I can remember way back when from the first times we went, Ireland was not doing so well and there was what they called the “Troubles” in the north, and when you talked to people about whatever, it was the “Bloody Brits.” Everything was the “Bloody Brits.”

We began a peace process that begins to show some prospect of working. The Irish economy begins to boom, and people are focused on a different world. They have control over their lives.

I guarantee that if we begin to look at the complex set of issues that are plaguing this region and see the areas where we can make an immediate difference and we can help a peace process as I said in my conclusion come to some fruition, and I think all of us can agree we have not done what we needed to do in the last several years and let it go when we were awful close awhile back, if we had not done what we did in Iraq, but if we now begin to take steps to remedy it, and I think you are right, we are beginning to take some steps now that are important to create regional investment, et cetera, in the process, that is an important way out, and begin to look at some of the other problems, when we improve our bona fides in the region, then we can begin to help address some of these other questions.

And as we do, I can tell you that 10 years from now, people will look at the problems and not say "Damn Americans." What they will say is America was our partner and helped us move forward, and we now feel that we are in a different situation than we were back when. Did I really say that back then? I mean, I think that that is the reality here.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Dr. Pollock?

Mr. POLLOCK. Thank you. Yes. I would like to address one point that—

Mr. DELAHUNT. If you could briefly, because we have to make a mad dash.

Mr. POLLOCK. Very briefly. Just a point that Congressman Pence just made about the fact that it is indeed United States policy to support a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine, and so why is it, I guess, you were asking that we do not get credit for that. I would simply point to one item of polling data from early this year from the University of Maryland poll. If you asked people in Egypt or in Morocco whether they believe that support for a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine really is United States policy in the region, 7 percent of Egyptians say they really believe it, and only, it is a little better, but it is still only 23 percent of Moroccans say they really believe it.

So the point here is that it is not enough to just talk the talk, you have to walk the walk. And although convincing people in this part of the world given the amount of blaming others for your own problems and conspiracy theories and media control and all of that, it is not an easy task, but the only way to at least start doing that is to actually prove that with facts, with actual activities and behaviors that you really mean what you say. That will have an effect over time I believe. Thank you.

Mr. DELAHUNT. We will recess for approximately 20 minutes.

[Whereupon, a short recess was taken.]

Mr. DELAHUNT. The chair apologizes, but we had a meeting with the President of Colombia. And I want to express my gratitude for your patience in staying here. Obviously I heard your initial testimony, and it was illuminating. Let me call on the vice chair of the committee, Mr. Carnahan from Missouri, for whatever questions he might have, and then I will go to Mr. Fortenberry.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am sorry that Mr. Pence is not here. I was going to compliment him on reading Harry Truman's biography. I hope he takes it to heart.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I hope he takes it to heart. Right.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Yes. But I think this testimony has been really illuminating, sometimes alarming, but certainly no doubt instructive as we try to sort out some of these complicated issues in terms of our standing in the world, what it means to us and I guess ultimately what we can do about it.

I have got several questions—I am going to hop around here—I have just kind of developed as I have been listening. You already answered one with regard to really the Arab-Israeli conflict or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and you had divergent opinions on that, but clearly that is one of the weightiest issues. Maybe not the single issue and maybe it varies from first place to second or third, but that seems to be at least a top-tier issue that would make a significant difference in how we are viewed and how serious we are.

The other thing I would like to ask about and specifically Dr. Pollock, you had mentioned in your testimony too about the permanent military presence in Iraq and could we make an emphatic agreement about that. I guess who would do that, and how would that be done in a way that it would be convincing?

Mr. POLLOCK. Well, thank you for your question. The polling data do show pretty clearly that this is an issue for Iraqis that would make a difference if we could find a way to convince them that we did not want to stay in Iraq permanently, and probably from their standpoint, it would be helpful if we could agree with them, with their government I suppose, on some kind of plan, a target date or something for making that a reality.

It is hard for me at least to be more specific about what the required political or diplomatic or military steps would be, but I would say if this is something that we decide to do, and it does not have to be related to a fixed timeline, although it could be, but if we were to announce very emphatically at the very highest levels over and over that we do not intend to stay in Iraq permanently and that we do not want military bases in Iraq over the long-term, that would have, I think the polling data show, a positive effect on Iraqi public opinion overall.

Would it stop the violence in Iraq? Almost certainly not. Would it be in our overall best national interest to make such a statement? That is another question. But would it make Iraqis as a whole more favorably inclined toward the American presence in their country today? Yes, it would.

Mr. ZOGBY. Could I?

Mr. CARNAHAN. Yes. Dr. Zogby?

Mr. ZOGBY. Because we polled on that in Iraq. Actually the first time we polled in Iraq was in October 2003. And we got those numbers then, and they have continued to deteriorate since.

There is a real aggravation in Iraq and a divergence of views among the various communities in the country. The Kurds have a distinct view as opposed to the Shi'a and the Sunni communities, and I think that is also important to note.

I mean, the Kurds are the only group, when you look at the overall numbers, who want to stay and who like us. The overall numbers look like one thing, but when you break them out by the three communities, it is really basically only the Kurds that are in the

group who want us to stay. And so our being there also aggravates sort of the division amongst the communities as well.

But I want to cite the 2006 polling that we have in the broader region where we find that after this issue of civil war, the single most important issue in the Arab world is their fear of a permanent American base in the region. So it aggravates not only the situation in Iraq but also beyond Iraq I think.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Would the gentleman yield for a moment?

Mr. ZOGBY. And I think David's suggestions are really quite important, that we make clear that we have no intention and that we begin to move in a very different direction in how we approach the country.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I yield to the chairman.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Yes. Just for a moment. I think that is a very important question that Mr. Carnahan posed, and I was going to ask Dr. Zogby if he concurred, which he obviously does. But, Dr. Zogby, is there support within the Kurdish community for a permanent base within Iraq, an American base?

Mr. ZOGBY. I think I said before arguing that, the need to understand peoples' histories, understand the needs of the Kurdish community as well.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I do.

Mr. ZOGBY. The Kurds are maybe as much as the Palestinians a beleaguered people, but since the early 1990s for the first time they are in control of their own lives, and they have done it under a protective American umbrella. They do not want to give that up. And one in a way cannot blame them for that. That is the only part of Iraq right now that is stable and blossoming, and it is because we are there and they want us there. They are the only community that want us there.

How we deal with that is a problem. The question is, how do we both provide a continued support for this Kurdish region that is stable while at the same time that presence there not become an aggravation and a source of instability in the rest of the country? That is why the issue I thought, and I am sorry to go far afield from where the hearing is right now, that is why I thought that Baker-Hamilton was so important. It not only found a bipartisan American consensus, but it also found a way to suggest the importance of a regional security compact that invested the neighbors in a way of finding national reconciliation and a mutual security arrangement within Iraq, because if you have the Kurds happy and the Shi'a and Sunni unhappy, if you have Turkey unhappy and Iran happy, it is not going to work. There has to be a way of sort of reconciling them.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Dr. Zogby, we want everybody happy.

Mr. ZOGBY. Well, right now what we are doing is making everybody unhappy.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I understand.

Mr. ZOGBY. That is one you are not working on.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Dr. Pollock, let me ask do you agree with the comment of Dr. Zogby that if there was a clear and unequivocal statement from this government regarding a permanent base, that it was not the intention of the United States to remain and have a permanent base within Iraq, the salutary impact, is it limited to

Iraq, or would it have favorable reverberations throughout the region?

Mr. POLLOCK. I do agree that it would probably have favorable reverberations throughout the region in terms of public opinion.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Right.

Mr. POLLOCK. There are two issues, though, that I would raise that again go a little bit beyond the scope of just public opinion as we measure it in polls. One is if we made such statements, would people believe us? And I raised that issue a little bit earlier when I think perhaps you were not in the room, but the credibility is key and it is difficult.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, we are going to be measured by our deeds eventually as opposed to our rhetoric.

Mr. POLLOCK. I think we would need not only to say it emphatically and repeatedly and at very high levels but to do something that would add to the—

Mr. DELAHUNT. Let me go back to—

Mr. POLLOCK. The other thing if I may?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Sure.

Mr. POLLOCK. The other issue that I would raise is that the public opinion is one thing. Government policies are not necessarily on the same wavelength either here or there. And while making statements like that would make more people I think more sympathetic or at least accepting of American policy on the margins, it might also frighten some friendly governments in the region.

And I cannot think of a delicate way to say this, so I will just say it. They might want us to say that we are going to leave Iraq, but they do not really want us to do that, the governments in the region, because they are worried about what might happen when we do leave or if we do leave. And that means that whatever we do, it is going to be a very difficult balancing act that we have to follow.

If I could just take 10 seconds on the Kurds to follow up Dr. Zogby's comments? I think that is very important, what he said, and I agree completely on that point. The Kurds have a very distinctive view. They are very sympathetic to American policy, to Americans, even to American troops in their country for very good historical and personal reasons of their own.

And so, as we look ahead to whatever it is we are going to do in or about Iraq with the neighbors or without them or whatever, I think we want to try hard to find a way to make sure that we keep up what is good in Iraq and what serves our interests in that part of the region, and that is a stable, peaceful, prosperous, friendly northern Iraq, however it is described, Kurdistan, as a regional government or as part of Iraq or however that may turn out to be. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am also as I am listening to a lot of this testimony thinking to myself are there leverage points where there are opportunities, and so I had a series of things I wanted to ask about.

First, we hear a lot about, we read a lot about trying to empower and support some of the moderate Arab leaders and populations. Do you have kind of a description of what that population is and

what kind of messages would have the most appeal to that population, or is there not enough definition to that?

Mr. ZOGBY. You know, let me suggest that in looking at the data and at the chart on what shapes the attitudes, what shapes them is what we do, not what we say, and therefore, what we are talking about here is not messaging but it is behaviors.

And I think that is so critical to keep in mind because sometimes what we have done is we have taken our friends and with our messaging compromised them. Look, there are some governments in the region that have been close to us, supportive of us, worked with us, literally done everything we have asked of them. Our message on democracy has undercut them and in some cases delegitimized them with their own publics, punishing them for being our friends.

That is a really dangerous and I would suggest even sometimes a dumb thing to do, to hurt your friends, who are only in trouble because they are your friends.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Well, that goes back to the gap that you talked about between many of the citizens of those countries and their leaders, and then the gap between them and us.

Mr. ZOGBY. Well, actually the gap is not as great as we think it is, and I think that that is important to note is that in many of those societies, I mean, when we looked at the satisfaction levels and the confidence levels, they are pretty high. People are doing okay in Saudi Arabia. They are pretty happy with it.

When the government went and did the crackdown that they did after the terrorist attacks in 2005, we polled on that rather intensively, and we found people thought they were doing just the right thing. Get these guys out of our country, they are causing us trouble. And terrorism and fighting terrorism and fighting extremism jumped from No. 7 in Saudi Arabia to No. 2 in importance as a priority issue because they saw it in their own country just like they did in Jordan and it made the numbers skyrocket as well.

So understand that. But I am telling you I am watching just a short while ago President Bush in Amman meeting with King Abdullah, and United States favorable rating at that point is 3 percent in Jordan. And I am thinking King Abdullah is doing a really brave thing here meeting with his ally and trying to strengthen it, because he needs America in Jordan, he needs America to help get this mess in Iraq fixed, but he is paying a price for it domestically with extremist elements in his own country who hold him responsible for the relationship.

So I think this is a complex picture. It requires a complex analysis. And I think the issue is not always messaging, but it is more identifying behaviors that will make change that will improve lives for both our friends and actually improve attitudes for those who are not our friends.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Let me go on the next focus. I would like to ask about the younger generations in the Arab countries. We hear a lot about them being perhaps more open or more exposed to Western ideas, culture, entertainment, being on the Internet and what your breakdown shows with regard to those populations and potential opportunities to connect with them for the future.

Mr. ZOGBY. Actually, the age breakout is an interesting one. I remember the first time we polled them we looked at it. It was Arab

satellite television. There was a commonly held notion that younger folks in, for example, Saudi Arabia were more radical. Those who watch Arab satellite TV would be more radical. It turned out to be the opposite. Those who were wired, plugged into the Internet and those who watched Arab satellite television actually liked us better, and the younger generations also.

When you go to the kingdom today, you see McDonald's, and Starbucks, and Saks Fifth Avenue, and Planet Hollywood bustling with young people, kids wearing jeans and sneakers, and Iverson basketball jerseys, and White Sox or Yankee hats. They like the black and white. It is cool. Our kids do. They do, too.

Mr. CARNAHAN. You mean Red Sox fans, do not you?

Mr. ZOGBY. Actually I am sorry. They have not made it over there yet, but I can bring some if you want, sir. I am sure there would be a market because it is attractive, too.

Mr. CARNAHAN. We can get you some St. Louis Cardinal hats as well.

Mr. ZOGBY. And we can get some Cardinals. I think the bird would be lovely. And we can get Texas Rangers. I mean, the point here is that I always say this, and I have said it to Secretary Hughes, our best public diplomacy is being done by our corporations. What holds our numbers up, the only thing that holds our numbers up, is our way of life, and it is our way of life as found in our products. We are the only exporting country in the world that does not export product alone but exports a way of life. When you buy a German car, or a Japanese product, or a Chinese product—those are the other three major exporters—you are just buying the product.

But when you go to McDonald's, it is not because the food is better, and I am not insulting McDonald's—I mean, they have got really good food in the Middle East—but you do not go for the food, you go because you are sitting there and you are buying a little piece of America.

And that is the point we have to make clear is that our products are our best ambassadors. Our policy and the message that we send out from our policymakers all too often is the worst that we have to offer. And the things we do undercut our businesspeople in the region and their ability to do business.

But we are finding young people, that is what globalization is all about. Young people are buying it. They like us. They like our way of life. But they, like their older generations, do not like what we do, and they are angry at that.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Will the gentleman yield for a brief comment?

Mr. CARNAHAN. Yes. Yes, I yield.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. And I know you are getting ready to yield. I am just going to make this because I am going to have to leave. I want to thank you. This is a vitally important hearing. I came back in order to engage, but I have to go to the floor. I just want to say I hope that the congressional actions of going to the Mideast, going to Syria as the Speaker went, makes a point of action, and I hope we continue to do it and I hope it makes sense for the engagement that we are trying to do as Members of Congress.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I thank the gentlelady. And I want to go to Mr. Fortenberry, who has demonstrated a profound abundance of patience.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Perhaps we all have to take the long view in this regard. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A couple of questions. First of all, I have an observation. Perhaps if you change the labels that you use to describe your efforts from polling to belief assessment or something, it might be met with less skepticism. And I appreciate this hearing because it is extraordinarily insightful, and your attempts at scientific methodology in a very complex set of circumstances are very admirable in my view, and it confirms I think what we know intuitively.

Two questions. One is related to the private conversation we had before. The other is related to Egypt. We are operating off a presumption here that a Moroccan middle-class person, an Algerian Berber, and a Kurdish Iraqi person who lives in Saudi Arabia, have a familial bond. I think you used, Dr. Zogby, an existential bond, that center that flows forth from a common ancestry, a common ethnicity versus a common ideology as found in the religious expression, namely Islam.

And to the degree that there is a significant non-Islamic minority community in Lebanon that seems to hold different attitudes, is the platform to launch this broader discussion about pan-Arab views more appropriately Islamic views? And then I will turn to a question specifically about Egypt because I would like to unpack that further, because some of what you said is deeply disturbing and troubling.

Mr. ZOGBY. Yes. What I said when you and I were talking is the common issue here is language, but having a common language implies certain prerequisites, that is, a common history.

I mean, there was a conveyor of culture that brought language to those far reaches that became Arabic speaking, and with that common language and common history comes a common culture and certain shared values that are conveyed in the language and even sometimes behind the language because language sometimes brings its own logic. With the common history, the common language, the common culture and the common values comes some shared beliefs.

There is a reason why a Moroccan looks at Palestine and sees something in his own history. I was in a meeting one time, and this may not make some of our Spanish friends feel good. It was a bunch of folks looking at a picture of the "lost Andalous" in southern Spain, and there was an audible sigh in the room. It was a part of Arab history and it is lost and they feel it. It is there. It is like we look at the Alamo. It is our story.

We look at this and it is our story. Wounded Knee became a story for Native Americans generally regardless of tribe, and it was because of this common experience that it was defining.

Now there is some of that that becomes common in the Islamic experience, but there are other issues that are not so common. For example, you will not get the same reaction from a Moroccan about Kashmir that you will get from a Moroccan about Palestine.

Similarly, when United States attitudes improved in Indonesia because of aid for its tsunami victims, they did improve. We saw

that and we measured it. It did not do a darn thing for Saudi Arabia's attitudes toward the United States or for attitudes in Algeria.

And when we polled about what we did for the Bosnians, it did not do a darn thing to our favorable ratings. Yes, it was a good thing that we saved Bosnian lives. It was a good thing for us to do. It was not able to parlay that into PR points in Kuwait. They had their own issue. They Kuwaitis actually were very happy that we saved them. They were not impacted by Bosnia.

So I think that the question here of the common culture creates a common set of sensibilities, that is true. There are some overreaching, overriding Islamic issues. But more to the point here, what we are looking at are the Arab cultural issues, and I think that they are real. There are those who want to argue do not pay attention to them, because they say they are not real.

I think you operate at great risk if you do not pay attention to them. There are differences country by country, but there also are the overarching themes, and we need to focus on both.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Well, I appreciate your answer, and obviously I knew where you were going to go given our previous conversation, but I felt like unpacking that particular answer was important for the public hearing.

Second, Mr. Chairman, if I can ask a question regarding Egypt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Take your time. You have as much time as you need, Mr. Fortenberry.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, sir. I appreciate it. As a much younger person, I was in the Sinai desert, and I went into a former military compound and scribbled onto what has become an all too common scene in the Middle East, a twisted pile of concrete and rubble with the words both in English and Arabic, "Here was the war. Here is the peace." And this was in 1979 after the historic peace accords between Egypt and Israel.

In a well-intended attempt at giving me a very deep compliment, I had people tell me I looked like Jimmy Carter. In other words, the celebratory atmosphere that was so strong there was very uplifting and it was an important part of my early formation as a young person in terms of understanding Arab culture and exposure to Islam.

Given that Egypt in a certain real sense is the historic and cultural center of the Arab world, the numbers that you have described as particularly troubling, 75 percent supporting a movement toward Sharia law, a very small percent upholding America's policy, let us unpack that a little bit further and look for some answers there because, again, I think if this methodology was available 25 years ago, almost 30 now, it would have completely spiked the other way. And I think it is affirming what you were saying earlier in terms of leadership position, that we potentially can help to solve real problems that perhaps transcend religious differences but go to the heart of, the feeling of a lack of empowerment in the Middle East.

Mr. POLLOCK. Thank you. Egypt really is a very tough case and troubling.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. And if I could add one other thing.

Mr. POLLOCK. Sure.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. One of the largest recipients of our foreign aid.

Mr. POLLOCK. Yes. Yes. Right. My reading of the polling data and other data and many years of experience traveling in Egypt and speaking with Egyptians and so on is that a big part of the problem, especially as compared with other Arab countries, is the media environment in Egypt, which is extremely hostile to the United States.

And I am not talking about al-Jazeera here. I am talking about al-Ahram and al-Akbar and government, Egyptian Government broadcast media, not to mention the opposition press in Egypt, which is even more anti-American. It does not have much of a readership, but it still affects the overall tone of the debate, that part of the problem.

I think that general dissatisfaction with the economy in Egypt and the political situation to some extent, but especially the economy, I think that has a spillover negative effect on attitudes toward the United States and toward outsiders in general, unfair as that may be, because we have helped Egypt economically a great deal over a very long period of time.

And I think that these are issues that really defy simple solutions. It is not clear to me at all that anything that we did in a policy direction would have a quick or dramatic beneficial effect on Egyptian opinion. And we need to try.

We need to try to communicate better, to talk, I would personally advise, much more frankly and directly with Egyptians, because they appreciate that kind of talk about, "Hey, we have given you billions and billions of dollars for a generation, does not that count for something?" We should not be shy about telling Egyptians that out loud, and maybe that would help.

We should not be shy about defending the role that in a very public way that we have played in helping Egypt get out of the Arab-Israeli conflict as much as it has and getting them back to Sinai and bringing them peace with Israel, which although Egyptians are not very warm about it, I think they still support it, and about our continuing efforts to do something about those issues.

These are things that in my judgment for some reasons we have tended to kind of pussyfoot around in our public diplomacy and in our other interactions, particularly in Egypt. And we should stop being so defensive and apologetic and start explaining, and explaining, and explaining again that actually we have done an awful lot for Egypt and we deserve some credit for that. I think that might make a difference.

Mr. ZOGBY. Could I try my hand at that as well? You know, Egypt is, you are right, a fascinating case. I remember one time sitting, overlooking the Nile, and I was with a friend, an American friend, a political leader here in the States who said to me, "You know, I have been all over this region, but Egypt is different. It is a civilization." And the fact is that it is a civilization, and it is unique in the Middle East.

And I know I am going to irritate the hell out of my Lebanese ancestors and others, but I have always found when I go to Egypt, that it is the one place where instead of talking about local stuff, which is what you do in every other place—you are in Lebanon,

you are talking Lebanon; you are in Morocco and they talk Morocco; in the Gulf, they are talking Gulf; it is with a stretch that you can move beyond—Egypt is the only place in the whole Middle East where you go and people will talk as freely with you about global warming, South American issues, what is going on with Hugo Chavez, China and is it going to be a threat in the 20th and 21st century, et cetera. They see themselves as part of a much broader universe, and therefore, it is not surprising to me that opinion in Egypt is as volatile as it is.

And while David noted that we did Egypt a favor by removing them from the Arab-Israeli conflict, we never really did. Egypt feels more deeply than any other part of the region, any other country in the region the situation that is unraveling in the Middle East in front of them.

It is no secret that after peace was signed by President Sadat, literally thousands of Egyptians were imprisoned because of that. And within months after the signing, the conflict heated up on the northern front of Israel and Lebanon with the Palestinians, and by 1982, it was a full-scale invasion and occupation of Lebanon. And Egyptians felt that what they had done was freed Israel to go north. That is how Egyptian public opinion felt it.

And understand that it is still there. They do not have a hostility toward their government, but they do feel that their government supports America and what follows from that, and therefore, that is an issue for President Mubarak.

So I think that we have to be wary when we lecture the Egyptians. We have not made it easy to be a friend of America. We have not made it easy to be a friend of America. And people read that back to us in the polling data that we do. And so I want to be respectful of those views and of what I am hearing here. And it troubles me when I look at the Egyptian numbers. I look at them every time I get a poll back, and I say, "Oh, my God, can this be?" And the answer is, "It can be."

I also think that because of the nature of the relationship and because of the nature of the Egyptian people as I have seen and known them over the years, they would be the first to move in a more positive direction if the behavior were more positive. And I think that anyone who goes to Egypt and sees it play out on the streets if you are an American tourist, if you are an American visitor, if you are an American businessperson, understands that Egyptians want to be our friends.

And I can only go back to the quote that I got that I presented in the testimony. There is a bit of a jilted lover syndrome here. I like you, I want to like you, I like your values, I just do not think you mean them for me. And if we took that more to heart and sometimes looked at the log on our own instead of the splinter in theirs, I think we might find ways that we have made those who dislike us dislike us.

That is not self-flagellation. It is simply a fact that we need to do some soul-searching about how we deal with the region and how we look at the problems in the region and maybe what we have done over the last several years at least to help complicate matters there. Egyptians are reading it. They are like canaries in the coalmine. They are maybe the most sensitive public opinion in that

broader region, and therefore, what you get back from them is a good read for how dangerous and volatile the situation has become because of what we have done.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your indulgence. I appreciate it.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Sure. Well, thank you, Mr. Fortenberry, for being steadfast. Mr. Carnahan?

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to wrap up.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I would just note that we are expected to be out of here in 6 minutes.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I can do this quick. I can ask short questions. These should be easy. Just a couple I had left. Do you have any data on folks in the Middle East who have had closer ties or experiences with the United States either through family, through businesses, through education here, exchange programs, in terms of how that plays out later on with them?

Mr. ZOGBY. Yes. I will do a Joe Biden. Yes.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I am going to need more than that.

Mr. ZOGBY. In my testimony as well, I noted that those who either have visited America, who know Americans, have family in America or who simply watch television programs made in America end up having about 10 points better attitudes toward our people, our culture, products, et cetera.

It does not change their attitude toward our policy, nor as we break it out and do the cross-tabs of those who fit those categories versus those who do not, their attitudes overall toward America are about the same because, again, those attitudes are policy-driven, not values-driven. But yes, those who know us, have visited with us, worked with us, have family, et cetera, they have much better attitudes.

And, Mr. Chairman, may I ask if the three—

Mr. DELAHUNT. Without objection.

Mr. ZOGBY.—2004, 2005 and 2006 polling, could be somehow included?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Without objection.

Mr. ZOGBY. Thank you very much.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Dr. Pollock, would you care to respond to that?

Mr. POLLOCK. Yes. I am inclined to agree with the basic thrust of the answer you just heard, in other words, that people who have some direct personal experience with Americans, or with the United States, are generally more favorable by a modest but still significant margin. And I think that is great. I mean, that argues that to the extent that we can increase the kind of personal interaction that we can have with people from the region that that works in our favor.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I know, if the gentleman will yield for just a minute.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Sure.

Mr. DELAHUNT. We had a hearing on the issue of travel and international visitors coming to this country, and testimony was primarily from the business community. We noted that in terms of overseas visitors since 9/11, there has been a decline of 17 percent.

I think it is also clear that in terms of students coming to this country, while it has leveled off, other nations now are seeing huge spikes in terms of the younger generation going there and missing the experience that they have had which they have carried back with them.

And I know Mr. Carnahan and I are hoping to have a hearing on exactly that specific issue, to reenergize our own efforts. Clearly Fulbrights and other scholarships need to be refunded. We have to make this a priority. Not only are we losing economically and in the area of public diplomacy, but relationships with the political elite of the next generation as well as the business leadership of the next generation.

We will be looking, I think it was Dr. Zogby that said we will be looking to the East or we will be looking elsewhere. We are losing at every single level.

Russ?

Mr. CARNAHAN. And finally, Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask about is there any data on Arab-Americans in terms of their attitudes?

Mr. ZOGBY. I am glad you asked.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I am glad I did, too. In terms of how we can also leverage that in connecting with their folks in their home countries?

Mr. ZOGBY. We have polled Arab-Americans probably more than anything, and we will be doing one very shortly actually.

Some of the most interesting polling we have done, though, has been on Middle East peace issues, and we have done them together with Jewish-American groups. We have one coming up shortly that we will be doing.

And what we found when we took, for example, the Geneva Initiative that was signed by unofficial representatives from Israel and the Palestinians, we took it apart piece by piece, and we asked Jewish-Americans and Arab-Americans the same questions. Guess what? They are within the margin of error of each other.

And I think that the attitudes of the communities are very similar on many issues, including their extreme frustration with the policies of the last several years that have caused the peace process to flounder, have gotten us into a war that is going south and has turned a blind eye to American leadership and the need for American leadership.

So I think you are absolutely right, and it is a statement that we have continued to make to this administration. I think, and I am not being partisan here, but the last administration understood the role that Arab-Americans could play as ambassadors, and we have seen a very selective use of that recently.

But I think, sure, I agree with the thrust of the question. We have the data, and I would be happy to share a more extensive view of that data with you at some point.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Yes. I would be very interested in seeing that. I am sure others on the committee would as well.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I would. And let me just make an observation, and I would ask Dr. Pollock to respond. But I would commend to both of you to read Ron Suskind's memoir of Paul O'Neill called *The Price of Loyalty*.

Mr. POLLOCK. Oh, yes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. In one of the most striking anecdotes that he revealed, the one that I found the most disturbing was that days after the inauguration of this President, there was discussion and focus on Iraq and the need for regime change and even discussion of military options, long before 9/11.

But what was as disturbing was comments by the President relative to disengagement if you will in terms of America's role in the Israeli-Palestinian issue. I think it is must reading. I do not know if either of you gentlemen have had the opportunity, but I would commend it to you for your review.

I do not want to suggest that the course of history could have been altered if American had sustained the engagement, its engagement, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its efforts to resolve it, but, Dr. Pollock, why do not I give you the last word.

Mr. POLLOCK. Okay. Thanks very much. I have just a very, very brief comment about what you just said. If you are talking about the years from 2001 until about 2005, I think the problem was Arafat. The problem was not American willingness or unwillingness to engage.

And I think the key turning point in that came when after we announced our policy of supporting a two-state solution when what we actually saw on the ground under Arafat's leadership was working with Iran to provide weapons for terrorists in the Palestinian territories, the famous curine A episode.

And so I would be reluctant to make sweeping generalizations about whether we should have done this or that differently because we depend after all on the players in the region in order to make our own policies work.

A second very brief comment relates to Congressman Carnahan's point about using Arab-Americans in order to better communicate with, better understand, better interact with publics in the region. I would simply respectfully agree first of all that that would be an excellent initiative.

I would, however, point out that unfortunately our Government too often imposes unnecessary and I would say discriminatory restrictions on people, not just Arab-Americans but Jewish-Americans as well and others, for various spurious so-called security reasons and prevents them, excludes them, in effect, from working on the things that they know best and on some of the things that they could actually do the most to support American policy and American interests, and mutual understanding between Americans and peoples in the region, for reasons that really have nothing at all to do with real security, but have to do with discrimination. That is an issue that I would respectfully suggest that the Congress might also want to consider.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you.

Mr. ZOGBY. Mr. Chairman?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Dr. Zogby?

Mr. ZOGBY. I cannot let that go.

Mr. DELAHUNT. You have 30 seconds.

Mr. ZOGBY. I worked with Vice President Gore in the 1990s on Builders for Peace. I could not get into Israel. I finally had to get U.S. Embassy escort before I could go because the treatment at the

airport was humiliating. There is a problem in the region, and it goes every which way.

On the question of Arafat, though, I will remind you——

Mr. DELAHUNT. 15 seconds.

Mr. ZOGBY [continuing]. That Bill Clinton did his best work when Netanyahu was Prime Minister of Israel, elected on a platform to end the peace process. He did everything he could to end it. Bill Clinton did everything he could to change it.

Blaming a foreign leader, whoever it is, makes no sense when America has the power and the leverage to make change if we commit ourselves to make change. We dropped the ball, let the peace process down, and there is no blaming Arafat for it. It was our fault. We blew it.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And with that note of agreement, we will adjourn. And I thank you both so much for your very thoughtful and insightful testimony. It was very helpful. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:35 p.m., the subcommittees were adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE SHEILA JACKSON LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

I would like to thank the Chairmen of both subcommittees for convening this extremely important and timely hearing. As recent analysis demonstrates a decline in foreign opinion of the United States, it is vital that we examine the origins of this disapproval, in hopes of improving our global standing. I would also like to thank the Ranking Members of both committees here today, and to welcome our two distinguished witnesses, Dr. James Zogby from Zogby International, and Dr. David Pollock, from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. I look forward to your informative testimony.

The ongoing war in Iraq has been dubbed by some supporters as a quest for Iraqi "hearts and minds," recognizing the importance of public opinion throughout the Arab world. In spite of this, Mr. Chairman, there is a widespread consensus among pollsters and analysts that foreign approval ratings for the United States have decreased precipitously in recent years.

This drop in foreign approval has grave consequences for US foreign policy. Without the support of other nations, we are hard put to promote our national interests. As a result, it is imperative that we establish whether this declining opinion is a response to the policies of this current administration, or if it is more deeply seeded in either a disapproval of the role America assumes in the world or of American values and people themselves. We must have a complete appraisal of the facts of the situation, and I hope that we will gain that here today.

As I am sure my distinguished colleagues on this committee are aware, there is a great danger in lumping all Arab countries into a single category. Public opinion regarding the United States could potentially differ widely across regions and nations, and we must remain sensitive to these differences. Unfortunately, recent polls have indicated a strong disapproval to current American policies across the entire region.

Mr. Chairman, Arab public opinion surveys tracking the concerns of average citizens reveal anxieties that mirror ours here in America. Respondents to these polls particularly emphasized concerns about employment, health care, and education, issues to which we can certainly relate. We hear these same concerns daily here in Congress, expressed by our constituents across the United States.

Islam is a religion that brings hope and comfort to more than a billion people around the world. It has made brothers and sisters of every race. It has given birth to a multitude of cultures rich in learning, literature and science. I have seen the benevolence that lies at the heart of Islam in many ways. In the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Muslim people and nations extended some of the most generous offers of support that we received. And after the devastating earthquake in South Asia, the entire world watched as thousands of Muslims, deep in the observance of Ramadan, led the relief effort without breaking their fast.

The declining opinion of America seen among the citizens of Arab states is certainly cause for serious concern. But it is not cause for fear. Fear will only lead to increased racial profiling and discrimination against Muslim Americans, both of which we have seen with increasing frequency since the tragedy of 9/11. Fear will not produce productive solutions. We share a great deal of common ground with most of the region's inhabitants, and I believe we have a great potential for cooperation and improved relations.

I look forward to the insight I am confident will be offered by our witnesses here today, and to engaging in a proactive debate with my colleagues on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.

[NOTE: "Impressions of America 2004," a six-nation survey commissioned by the Arab American Institute Foundation and conducted by Zogby International; "Attitudes of Arabs" (2005), an analysis by Dr. James Zogby; and the "5 Nation Survey of the Middle East," submitted by Zogby International to the Arab American Institute, December 2006, are not reprinted here but are available in committee records.]

