

Populism, Islamism, and "Indigenismo" vs. Democracy in Latin America

Tuesday, June 30th, 2009

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

JAIME DAREMBLUM: Good Afternoon, I am Jaime Daremblum, director of the Hudson Center for Latin American Studies. It is a pleasure to welcome you to today's conference in which a distinguished team of speakers will analyze the phenomena undermining democratic institutions in Latin America.

Populism, Islamism and Indigenism as well as the political role of extra-hemispheric actors, such as China, Iran, and Russia are forces aligning against democracy in the region. The bios of today's speakers have been distributed, and I trust you have had a chance to see them.

As a key note for today's event, we are very honored to present his Excellency Gustavo de Aristegui, a leading parliamentary, diplomat and intellectual from Spain. He has been for several years the Foreign Affairs spokesman for the *Partido Popular*, the main opposition party in the country. He is the author of several books in Islamism, the latest of which, *Contra Occidente* that hopefully we will see in English soon incorporates a comprehensive conceptual framework, the social-political factors which are the focus of this conference.

Commentary will be provided by our own, Hilel Fradkin, director of Hudson Center on Islam, Democracy and the Future of the Muslim World. He is also the founder and co-editor of *Current Trends of Islamist Ideology*, the leading journal on contemporary Islamism. Dr. Fradkin has a very distinguished announced background in academy. The next commentary will be from Douglas Farah. Among his very professional achievements is a legendary journalist who you might know that in the 80s or 90s as a correspondent of the *Washington Post* covering the conflicts in Central America. He is an experienced observer and a leading expert on narcoterrorism and the criminal dangers that today hover in our region. This promises indeed to be a very rich and lively colloquial.

After the three presentations, we will begin the questions and answer period. And without any further due, let's welcome Dr. de Aristegui.

(Applause)

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: Thank you very much, Jaime. It is a great honor and a privilege to be here today once again. I am a frequent visitor of the Hudson Institute and I have the greatest admiration for what you do. [I] want to thank the CEO of this distinguished think tank for organizing this event and my colleagues and the panel, Hilel Fradkin and Douglas Farah.

There are some great experts in the room, and I greatly appreciate their presence. Some very distinguished high ranking officials that served in different administration in the United States of America, and all the distinguished ladies and gentlemen here in the room.

We live uncertain times, and I do think that sometimes people, analysts, historians, politicians, and even journalists want to ignore that. My presentation today will not have any political

connotations; not Spanish and not in the context of US politics. I am a politician, and I am proud of it, and I do have a central-right ideology, and I am proud of that too, but I am not going to use those to taint my words today. I am a career diplomat, I am an analyst, I am an author, and I am a scholar, and I am going to try to give my words the most unbiased possible nuance.

I think that we are living some of the most invisible threats that western democracy and advanced democracies in the world have experienced in the last decades. I have seen in the last years many coincidences between radical parties, movements, regimes, and individuals, and I started investigating this, and researching this about two years ago. And the conclusions are very disturbing. I did see that some people thought that these were disconnected and unconnected movements and parties. In the end, they were not. And this was very obvious to me in the internet. In the internet, which is the new *Plaza Mayor* as we say in Spanish, the square of civilization where people meet, not only good guys meet, but also bad guys meet. And when that happens, in fact what you see is a whole network of radical movements and parties that are connected through the internet in ways that you can not even start to imagine.

You see links that go from radical pop groups and rock groups in the Basque country where I come from, related to ETA, a terrorist organization that are linked to the Bolivarian Youth in Venezuela, and this one to the Youth of Evo Morales in Bolivia. You can see the speeches delivered by the people that ETA sends to Bolivia, a message to the Bolivian people. It is in my book and it is, quite frankly, scary.

One of the worse mistakes that a democracy can make is to ignore its enemies, and to ignore the blue print of their enemies. I've been saying this in different books, I've recently read – I mean not that recently actually, when it came out actually – *Knights under the Banner of the Prophet*, the book of Ayman Al-Zawahiri, and you know, it probably is not the best of examples, but if the world had taken *Mein Kampf* seriously we would not have had probably a Second World War. And I assure if we do not take seriously what Ayman Al-Zawahiri says in *Knights under the Banner of the Prophet*, well some day serious consequences may occur. I can absolutely guarantee you that.

Some politics, politicians, analysts think that *Tropical Stalinism* is a joke that we should not take serious. Some others think that regimes that practice and enforce and implement *Tropical Stalinism* are real democracies. Well, none of the above. To be a democracy you don't need only summon in to the pools every four years. You need to have rule of law, independent power, checks and balances, independent courts of justice and so many other institutional democratic foundations that these nations do not have. And I do remind you of what happened in Venezuela only some months back, when the Human Rights Watch report on Venezuela's Democracy and Justice came out. The director for Latin American Human Rights Watch was kicked out; he was expelled from the country. But what really is scary, we knew that these things happened, we know that these things happen in regimes, not governments, like the Venezuelan one. What really happened in fact is that 200 American law professors contested and challenged that report. So we do have a problem within, not only outside. And one of the contributions that I make in my book- if I may say that - is that I have tried to just signal out some very prominent anti-American Americans. I started wanting to make a chapter on anti-Western westerners, but the list

was so big that it was actually almost Cairo's phonebook. (Laughs) So I had actually to just stick to some very prominent names that are in my book.

Some people thought that such intergenious movements, regimes, ideologies or radical individuals as radical islamists, populists, indigenists, extreme left-wingers, anti-system alliance members, anti-globalization movements, or simply anti-system organizations were simply not compatible. Well, they were wrong. Of course in the beginning the anti-system alliance, the anti-western alliance wasn't bigger, not so compact as it is today. Some kind of centrifugal force has been expanding the less radical elements, those that the hard-core members of the western alliance call the anti-tourists, and you can see this internet. And actually the Venezuelan organizations that talk about anti-tourists, the alternative life-style organizations, the attack network that was created by the former editor-in-chief of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, something that really is quite striking, Ignacio Ramonet. But he became a full flex member of the alliance and one of its leaders, bringing the attack movement a (inaudible) beyond its limits when he wrote a front page editorial in defense of Hugo Chavez Frias in July of 2007. What he said about western democracies was outrageous, but what he said about the regime in Venezuela was even more outrageous. So let's go to a very brief analysis of each one of these elements of the anti-system alliance.

How do they come to life? They have a coincidence of enemies, hatreds and phobias. Their anti-American and, of course, their anti-Western beliefs and ideology is the fundamental axis of the alliance. At the end of the Cold War they felt that most probably their anti-Western big brother would die, and that anti-Western big brother was the Soviet Union and its Western allies. Most of these western allies of the Soviet Union have been transformed magically into pro-Castro and pro-Chavez activists. There is an obsession in the extreme left and in other members of this alliance worthy of conspiracy theories; there is always some black hand behind everything that moves and happens in the world, and of course it is the capitalist democracies that are behind all the disgraces and problems of the earth. There is a very worrying fascination in left-wing movements with radical Islamism. Radical left-wing movements, of course, I am not talking about social-democrats, don't get me wrong. But in these movements, they see that radical Islamism – not Islam, don't get me wrong there either – is in fact the only force that can bring the West to its knees; the only one that really can, effectively attack western style democracies.

The First moment in which the anti-system alliance was perfectly aware of its power and its influence was in December of 1999 in the chaos – I would like to call it something else – that happened in Seattle when 50,000 demonstrators of all kinds of different radical origins coincided over there and practically destroyed the city. To them, the IV World War started that day. You can read this in the internet; I am not making this up. If you don't believe me, there are some links to some very radical websites that I am sure the Hudson Institute can provide you with. That was a different theory, those that are closer to Chavez think that the IV World War started in Nicaragazo in 1989, and some think that it actually started ten years later in Seattle. Be, that it is to them the I World War was what it was, the II what it was, the III was, of course, the Cold War, and the IV is this one. And now, these radical movements are calling on their members to go a step further, and if you read what the Bolivarian Youth of Venezuela says in their communiqués and in their website, it is very frightening, because they are not only talking about Latin America, they are not talking about the oppression to the poor or to the indigenous

populations - which yes, have been prosecuted and ill-treated for centuries, I am Spanish and I can absolutely acknowledge this – they are asking their members to go a step beyond; to become real activists and to start violence. They want to take up arms, basically. They say: the issues are not if the poor or the indigenous are in a good or bad position in Latin America, the issues they say, are Iraq. If we want to expel the American forces in Iraq, if what they call the insurgents – and let me tell you something about the semantic crap in which all media in the world are, excuse the redundance crept, because we use their language, in which way Al Qaeda and its allies are in any way insurgents. Let's call them what they are, they are terrorists. And when the new strategy of the United States of America changed, and they were able to divorce Sunni tribes from Al Qaeda and started defeating Al Qaeda in Iraq, then why keep on talking about insurgents? They are not. Okay, you could have a confusion when the Sunni tribes were the allies, not anymore. I believe that not even then. So, they were saying, “should we not, should we forget these who are fighting against our common enemy? Should we not do something about this? The Palestinian cause, of course the bad manner of approaching, of course, the need of a long lasting and stable peace in the Middle East. Their support for Hamas, and of course their alliance with an Islamist regime, and it is an Islamist regime which is Iran. You do know that there is a direct flight; well it stops over in Damascus, between Iran and Venezuela. You do know that Hamas and Hezbollah have offices, official offices in Caracas, and you do know that the regime has been prosecuting the Jewish community of Venezuela very actively, and that some 15-20 thousand have decided to leave the country because they do not think it is safe anymore for them to live there.

So all these things are very clear symptoms of what we are saying. I do want to stress that those that think that the populist regimes are a joke, are ignoring something extremely important. Populism in Venezuela is a mixture of two things: it has a fascist political structure; it has all the elements of a fascist regime. It has the tendency to create or the will to create a single party, a very strong political police, as they call it, which is a very ruthless Secret Service. They have the monopoly of political violence on the streets, be it with the *Discipulos Bolivarianos* or with the two different kinds of militias that they have in Venezuela, that they are only answerable to the *caudillo* himself. The fact that he has divided and politicized the armed forces to his advantage, and the fact that he is foreseeing the other branch of the military which is actually a military police, which is *Organizacion* – which is using right now, and we do have the former drug czar in the room, to make the Colombia-Venezuela border, let's say, easy to cross, to put it mildly. Because we do know today that 50% of Colombian cocaine leaves through Venezuela today. And that is a fact. SO, it's not only about oil money anymore, it is about drug money again. And drug money is oiling the machinery of the Venezuelan regime, at least in its Western regions. But again, if you come to think of it, the monopoly of information, the persecution of the opposition and treating them as terrorists and dissidents, and not as opposition. The fact that he banned 300-and-something from running in the elections where he was defeated in popular vote, not in results, of course the most populated areas voted for the opposition and the least populated areas voted for the Chavez's regime. And this sounds pretty much like the Council of Guardians of the Revolution, banning 475 candidates from running in the presidential elections of Iran that were recently held.

There was a very good article by Moises Naim that probably appeared here in the United States, it appeared in Spain in *El País*, where he said: “how can two countries that are so different, like

Venezuela and Iran, be in the end so much alike?" One drinks rum and the other one doesn't; one you have beaches filled with people in bikinis and bathing suits and the other chadors and hijabs. (Laughs) But still, in the end, the structure of the regime is the same. They disguise themselves as democracies and have not a single one of the elements that is needed to be truthfully called a real democracy. So, yes, populism is the central axes of the alliance, but it is not the only one. But Chavez wants to be the leader of it, and he has some very powerful tools to become the leader of it. Much more when the barrel was US\$ 150, a lot less now that is around US\$ 72, but still a very powerful tool. And PetroCaribe, PetroAmerica, PetroSur, PetroAndina are all parts of what we call Mr. Chavez's oil diplomacy. It's not my term; it is Mr. Nicholas Kozlov, one of the many left-wing biographers of Mr. Chavez. It starts, it seems to start when he is, in his book as a neutral, objective, unbiased book, and it ends up like a propaganda piece, one more of the regime and all of its allies. But it also has TeleSur, and I do want to explain to you what TeleSur means, and what the potential of TeleSur can be. One of the founders of TeleSur was Uruguay, and after 24 hours of being on the air Tabare Vazquez, who was supposed to be left-wing but he is a moderate social-democrat, pulled out. He saw that TeleSur was full of hatred and violence, and incitation to violence. So, he decided to order his country out of TeleSur.

Venezuela has been the main defender of the need of creating a new OPEC, the Gas OPEC. And who are the countries who want to follow the steps of Venezuela? Not surprisingly Bolivia, but there are some surprises in those that did want to create a Gas OPEC: Qatar, which is a very contradictory country and we will just leave it there, and Russia. Other countries, like Egypt and Indonesia – Muslim countries, by the way – opposed, strongly opposed the creation of the Gas OPEC.

Islamism is the odd element; I will come to that at the end because I always call this the Five Element Alliance, just to... as a tribute to I think it was Jean Luc Besson, the director of the movie "Fifth Element". But this is the odd one out; the others, of course, we know a lot better, but we have despised, neglected and underestimated for much too long. Now they have some States, not just one – no matter how poor Bolivia may be, it has two basic commodities in the world: natural gas and silicium, which is mandatory to make solar panels. And it is the biggest producer in the world of that commodity. But, let's not stay there. They do have several countries that follow very much what we call the populist model: you gain power through the poles, you reform constitution and you make it, you design it to your image and needs, you amend the constitution again, so that you can take over all powers. Populist regimes, for some strange reason, do not believe in Montesquieu. There are not three branches of government but five, or whatever, but they take over all five branches of government, and then they try to ban political police, to ban opposition, media and to persecute everyone that has different ideas, even within the radial coalition that is in power.

So, what about the anti-system and the anti-capitalist movements? They've been almost marginal for years, but they've been organizing themselves, thanks to the internet, in a very efficient matter. And there is a fundamental contradiction in these movements. The anti-system movements are in fact the most systematic movements that are know in the radical left (laughs), and the anti-globalization movements are in fact the most globalized of all movements that are know in recent years. So, that much for anti-globalization and anti-system, both are pretty much what they hate.

Indigenism that is the new element and some people tend to confuse it and to put it in the same group of people as populism, and in fact it is different and not all indigenism is alike. The only indigenism that is part of this alliance is the Marxist indigenism or the Stalinist indigenism, for that much. And the ideologist of this movement is in fact not an indigenist, a member of the indigenous populations of Latin America; he is a man of Spanish origin: Alvaro Garcia Linera, the vice-president of Bolivia who claims to be a Stalinist. I mean, how can you claim to be a Stalinist in the 21st century, but, you know, there is people for everything as we say in Spanish. Well, this gentleman has established this new regime. They used a populist method and is doing exactly the same things as Hugo Chavez has been doing over ten years, he is doing it over a much shorter period. Rafael Correa is doing it in an even shorter period, and of course Mr. Zelaya in Honduras was doing it even faster, and we will talk about that, if you want, in the debate.

What [we] must focus on right now in the indigenist movement in Bolivia is that they do not believe in the checks and balances of democracies and the separation of powers, or the fact that there should be independent courts of justice. They are enforcing what they call the community justice, which means that somebody can be tried and sentenced to death in a couple of hours, and the sentence carried out immediately by the elder of the village where this happens. Well, I want to know if that is real justice or not.

Well, coming to an end, I would like to give you some of the examples of the obsession of the anti-system alliance. The list is pretty long, but I can assure you this is just an indication of many obsessions and enemies that the anti-system, anti-western, anti-democratic alliance has. Some of the main characteristics of the alliance's victimism and their claim for revenge, the reactionary character of the alliance, its anti-western and its anti-system militancy. It is supposed to be anti-imperialist – whatever that is. It is anti-capitalist, anti-free-market and it has in fact a very profound hatred for market itself. It has radical esthetic and their icons tend to be revolutionary. There is, as you have seen, the new fashion of reviving Che Guevara and his legend. It has a very rigid organization and discipline; very much unlike people may think. And I will come here; I will open a small parenthesis: those demonstrations that seem to you spontaneous on TV are far from being spontaneous. Since the Prague demonstrations of 2002, these people have organized in thirds, not exactly mathematical thirds, but in three different styles of protest: you have one, the classics, which go out with signs and... the classic demonstration that is normally non-violent. Then you have the fun demonstrations, the guys that disguise and make jokes and what have you. And then you have the urban guerrilla demonstration, which is the bigger part of the demonstrators. And these are perfectly organized; they are dressed in a manner to prevent the instruments of the anti-riot police from being effective, but what is even more important is that they immensely outnumber, they grossly outnumber the anti-riot police in the different countries where they operate. They actually summon each other by the internet, so you have, of course, the locals plus those that come from abroad.

There is a very interesting statement by one of the anti-system participants in Seattle in 1999, when actually they saw that things were really getting out of control for the police and, as you know. I don't know if it was a State of Emergency, or whatever that was declared for the very first time in a long time on the continental USA. And he said: "You know, I didn't know that

Americans had all this inside of them”. That is what a Mexican anti-system militant said to the press. You know, by the way, the extravagant French politician; Mr. Bové was present there and was one of the most prominent radical leaders of those demonstrations.

They are completely and vehemently against international financial institutions, they are real beasts IMF, World Bank, what have you, of course, the World Trade Organization. It is, they say, anti-conservative and anti-liberal; in fact they are just anti-democratic. They are anti-all religions except of course Islamism, which is not a religion, it’s an ideology. They are messianic and they do believe that they will redeem the world from its sins. They hate armed forces, but they are organized militarily. They are extreme nationalists, but do not understand modern nationalism in other parts of the world. And they do practice, when they come to power, a mafia style kind of pressure: you are with me or against me, and if you are with me you will be wealthy and powerful, if you are against me, you will be poor and probably dead. They are demagogic and they are exhibitionists.

We already talked about the instruments of the alliance, but let’s mention some others. They are very active in what we call counter-diplomacy, not only oil and gas diplomacy, but whenever there is some kind of powered initiative within advanced democracies they always try to counter it. For example, we know of the counter-summits in Porto Alegre, for example, where something quite extraordinary happened. In the beginning of the mandates of Hugo Chavez, when both when to Gigantinho Stadium and the crowd started shouting: “Chavez Si, Lula No”. There was an uproar in the stadium, which Lula did not like at all. But, of course, this shows that when you are a moderate member of the left, the radical left hates you even more than they hate the moderate right.

There are certain offensives that we have to monitor very closely: the anti-western offensive, which is extremely operational, it is in fact almost a military operation. There is an intellectual offensive that we have to monitor too, and there is an economic offensive, which is basically the oil and gas diplomacy and other means, and the commodity diplomacy, if you want, that these countries use. But let’s go to the intellectual offensive, I hope the book will be translated. I will probably be sued by some of the people that appear in the book but I don’t care because, I mean, I only quote their official CVs, you know, I just highlight what they do. It’s not my fault if they say the things they say and do the things they do, it’s their life. But they have to cope with the criticism that others can make of what they do. I will not give the list, I really urge you to look it up. There are some very prominent publications online in this country that are American and are profoundly anti-American. I will just quote one name, if I may, Nicholas de Genova a chair professor of Columbia University. This is not a university in Rwanda, it is one of the world’s top ten universities in the world, and this gentleman actually says that to him the only heroes that he respects are those that try to kill American soldiers. And I find that utterly disgusting, that to him the American flag represents hatred, bigotry and racism. And this is the gentleman that, among others, invited Mr. Ahmadinejad to give a lecture at Columbia University when he said that in Iran there were no homosexuals. Of course, they kill them. They have killed in fact thousands of them, seven thousand I think is the latest figure that we have, since 1979. And I have never seen a left-wing pro-gay movement in Spain protest about this. By the way it is the Popular Party of Spain that I represent the only ones that have passed motions in parliament defending gay rights

in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Of course, the Socialist Party had to follow, because that would have been weird if they didn't (laughs).

The attempt to control the sources of energy is an obsession of the anti-western alliance. Recently there was an attempt to control gas flowing from East to West in Europe, and a new attempt – and I would just stay there, I have to be cautious - to control the gas that was coming from the south, into Spain and from there to the West, so they would have both ends of the gas sources. Extremely, extremely dangerous if you ask me. Energy geopolitics is going to be an essential factor of peace and stability in the 21st century, and we better take this very seriously.

There is a certain light at the end of the tunnel, because of course Tropical Stalinism and all these movements are far from being perfect. And the confrontations within these movements and among them are starting to show. So, in fact I do think that what we do have to do as democracies is: a) to fight with democratic means; and b) to be extremely vigilant on what they do and how they do and specially as far as propaganda and the media that they control is concerned to be extremely firm, and to be extremely serious about banning any kind of attempt to incite violence and terrorism or to defend or to highlight terrorism, like so many websites in the radical world are doing, and I think that we should be monitoring this.

As Jaime and my colleague at the panel know I have been more involved, although I was educated most of my life in Latin America and I lived in several countries over there, but I have been more focused on the Middle East and on radical Islamism and Jihadist terrorism than I am actually on left-wing movements. But the growing connection between radical islamism and extreme left-wing movements is extremely worrying, and the kind of linkage and connections between their websites and merging of their messages that have becoming more and more alike is a very clear sign that something is moving. And just a closing remark on Islamism: why would these movements find themselves so close to radical Islamism when if you compare them probably they are the most far apart movements that you can find. In fact, because again, they think that they are on the vanguard that can actually really be effective in the fight against the west, the fight against western style democracies and advanced democracies. They believe that radical Islamism and Jihadist terrorism is a beautiful black stallion that they have been able to ride and is going to take them to their goals. In fact, it's a dragon and whenever they are – if, and it will happen – they would achieve their goals, first thing that they would do after that is they will eat each and every one of the movements that have been riding along side with them for decades.

I was at Dr. Arabiets' house in Jordan one day for about four hours. He used to be the speaker of the Jordanian Parliament and one of the leaders of the Jordanian Islamists. It was a very long conversation and at the beginning of it he said that they were very democratic because they had an anti-royal alliance with the communists and other radical left-wing movement in the Jordanian Parliament. Three hours later he told me, "you know, radical left-wing movements, and in fact all the left is the most incompatible ideology in the world with Islam". And I told the deputy chief of mission of the Spanish Embassy that was accompanying me to this interview: "I don't know if you just noticed what this gentleman told you. He in fact, told you that they are just playing tactics. That they have forged an alliance with the left-wing movements, extreme

left-wing movements of the world just to defeat the West, just to defeat the system. But they are in no way in agreement with their principles or their ideology”.

So, I will leave it there. I think that it was a bit too long maybe, and I will just leave my colleagues the floor so they can comment on everything else. Thank you so much!

(Applause)

JAIME DAREMBLUM: Mr. Farah?

DOUGLAS FARAH: Well, Thank you Gustavo for that very rich presentation. It's hard to know where to start commenting on that. I think one of the things that radical populist the movement of Latin America has borrowed from the Muslims is the Muslim Brotherhood's famous saying, "hello nos, one man, one vote one time". And that is essentially the model of Chavez and others, as they come in they use the democratic process as long as it is useful to them and then they all move on.

I just would like to touch on a couple of points that Gustavo raised. One is the obsession with asymmetrical warfare that you see now among the radical populist movements in Latin America and Radical Islam. One of the visions that Chavez has put forth, based on a book by a Spanish intellectual called Radical Islam – Asymmetrical Warfare and Radical Islam – which Chavez has adopted as the official military doctrine of his army and is passing on to the armies of Bolivia and Ecuador. And the central thesis, if you read the book, is rather frightening because the author is not a Muslim himself but his essential thesis is that Radical Islam has showed us the way to defeat the empire, and if you want to defeat the empire then this free us from the shackle of conventional thinking. That Osama Bin Laden, through the attacks of 9/11 had showed us that we can, in fact, wage an asymmetrical warfare that will strike terror in the hearts of the enemy, and we can emulate this, and in fact we have the right to atomic weapons to do this.

As Gustavo said, it's easy to read some of this stuff and think: "is this serious?", "can you possibly believe this?". But let me adopt this as military doctrine, I think this is, it has serious implications for the region, and I think that we'll see this more and more moving in that direction. The other thing I think that Gustavo brought out that I think is very important is the role of hatred in all of this. There is this vehement desire to destroy, and I think once populism moves down a certain road is certainly hard to ever contain it back because the more you give, the more people want, and you end up in utter chaos. And I think that the genie is out of the bottle and the consequence for much of Latin America is going to be very severe. I think that the other thing that Gustavo raised and I find very interesting to watch, but I think is incredibly disturbing is the shortening time periods. They learn from each other very quickly. I think in my experience in watching Latin America it took Chavez almost ten years to figure out that the political parties were not his enemies, they were in disarray and relatively incompetent; that the church and the free press were his main enemies, and Evo Morales figured this out, or the lesson is learned and was transmitted in about four or five years and I think we'll see as it continuously shortening time period as they work out the mechanism, the knowledge, and share and talk to each other. And the other thing that I think is really important in all of this is that they do talk to each other, and they do share lessons learned, and they do have an incredible amount of

communication among themselves about what they are doing and what they are learning and what the points of weaknesses are.

I think what you see in the broader context of what this talk is you see China and Russia taking advantage of turbulent waters. China wants to acquire the natural resources, and needs to continue with its economic expansion. Russia is desperate for the sale of weapons, to re-create the weapons market, and I think these groups have shown that they don't particularly care who they ally with as long as it is not with the western nations, particularly friendly to the United States. So, I think that those are some of the driving forces, as you see these other countries come in that traditionally have not been there. But one other thing that Iran and every country goes into, as Chavez brings Ahmadinejad particularly, but the Iranians go into different countries and introduces them, is the insistence on two things: one, diplomatic recognition, and now the countries where Iran never had diplomatic presence now has extensive diplomatic presence. The estimate of Iranian diplomats in Nicaragua is about 117 in their embassy and about 100 of them are listed as commercial attaches and there is virtually no commerce among the two nations (laughs). Bolivia also has a very large embassy and Venezuela *ni hablar*, is huge. But I think that if you are looking at it tactically, what this alliance is about. And I think this goes to one of the points that Gustavo was making that there is this... to me one of the explanations for why you have this alliance between radical Islam and radical populism in Latin America is because the radical populist, and Chavez believes that radical Islam can supply them with the tools that they need, the methodology they need to defeat the empire – the empire being the United States. And it is true that the only unifying factor of this disparate religious beliefs or ideological beliefs systems is a hatred for the United States and things western. And as I have been looking at this for a long time and the relationship between Chavez and Ahmadinejad is deeply personal; they like each other a lot, they respect each other a lot and that is all fine but there is something I think, and element much beyond that in this relationship. And you see this as Iran was introduced around the region, and I think the explanation is that the radical populist, as I said, believe that the asymmetrical warfare is the methodology to defeat the empire. They can acquire that methodology, that knowledge, that learning from radical Islam. And I think that that is sort of the underlying level is the chief things they are looking to get from each other: Iran wants diplomatic cover, it wants a place where it can have rebound in forces entrenched and able to move against the United States if they feel that their interests are under threat and different things but I think that fundamentally what Latin America gets out of it is this feeling that there are now learning how to wage this warfare. And I think one of the startling things, and Gustavo mentioned it, is we ignore the blueprints. If you read the documents from the computer of Raul Reyes of the FARC that was killed last March, they outline within their own internal documents the internal structure they have: the *Coordinadora Continental Bolivariana*, a FARC funded and pounded institution which is now is the umbrella structure for many of the populist movements across the continent, and not everyone that joins them know, and the FARC writes very carefully. “don't tell them that this is the FARC. We are behind it, but we have to explain this to our friends don't let the outside world know this is the FARC”. And see, these umbrella groups and you read what they say, if you read this book on radical Islam and asymmetrical warfare, is a plan of action. You may think it's pie in the sky, you may think it is ludacris, the author may not be overly lucid in how he explains how he will get from point A to point B, but the fact is there is now a roadmap out there of what they want to do. And just to close, I think as Gustavo said, we have to take those extremely seriously, because the only thing that these groups have in common is us

and their hatred for us, and their desire to see the liberal-democratic model collapse as quickly as possible. And as you see if you look across what is happening in Bolivia now, Ecuador not quite as fast I would argue, certainly Venezuela well advanced, it is an assault, a systematic assault on democratic institutions that allow liberal democracy to function. And as the political parties are in disarray they become discredited. This didn't arise out of nowhere, the traditional political parties, their problem of corruption, incompetence, ignoring popular demands certainly have fed to the growth of popular... making radical populism appealing and viable for one election cycle maybe. But you see this spreading across the continent very rapidly and I think this is a, I think if we don't pay serious attention to it and take their literature and read what they say seriously, as you said, Zawahiri told us what he wanted to do with the Muslim Brotherhood, he wrote extensively about what their vision for the world moving forward is, and so does this group and it is not a mystery but we tend to dismiss it as being impossible.

In my discussions with the US government and elsewhere my refrain is you thought, you know maybe the traditional thinking was you can't... non-state actors acting at failed states are not a threat to us. And yet, every attack carried out by a radical Islam against us has come from failed states by non-state actors. And we ought to start learning that lesson, because it is one that probably our survival depends on, and I will leave it there. Thank you.

(APLAUSE)

JAIME DAREMBLUM: Hilel?

MR. HILEL FRADKIN: Yes. Thank you Jaime and let me first express my appreciation for Gustavo's talk and Doug's comments. Gustavo has invited us to entertain a very large, extensive reflection, and he is right to do so. Unfortunately large reflections and extensive reflections require a lot of time and obviously it is not going to be possible to deal with this invitation in a proper fashion. The one thing I will say, I will say a couple of things about this but I will thank Jaime for having launched this effort and large reflection and express the hope that he continues to move it along.

Gustavo proposes that there is in the world what we might call a new movement. A movement which aligns radical left elements, maybe eventually extreme right-wing elements... But aligns them with this radical Islamic element, and Islamist movements. But this is a new phenomenon... and the radical left itself has, is moving in a certain way and that it has somewhat different causes than it had prior to the end of the Cold War. In particular they [have] extensive austerity towards globalization, which is very much a strange thing to see on the left as the left itself was the vici proponent of globalization through the communist movement. So that part of it is also new, so the individual elements and their combination are new. And I think Gustavo is really correct, this is a genuine phenomenon, and is a dangerous phenomenon and one which we must try to understand and protect ourselves from.

The question is, one question is or a reason is how solid a thing it is, as it is made out of heterogeneous elements, a radical effort which is presumably secular, even anti-religious in its basic orientation, and a movement like Islamism which certainly claims to be inspired by religious teachings, and certainly claims to have a religious subjective. Is this a question nearly

of the truth of a proverb that... or a saying that is extremely popular in the Muslim world, especially in the greater Middle East is "the enemy of my enemy is my friend". I sit a principle in this case that this alliance has come together, or these allies have come together because they share a common enemy, as Douglas was saying, us, and the west more generally, or is there an will it among anything be break apart or at least be vulnerable because of that fact over the long term That would be an extremely important issue to pursue both for understanding it to the matter that is represent to us but also what opportunities that are to defeating it.

I would like to say a couple of things about this question of how much or how little common ground there might be between these two elements and then turn the discussion a little bit towards the question what this means, practically speaking, in the near term especially in Latin America, where I will have fewer answers than questions for my colleagues.

It's certainly the case that these elements don't go together easily, and I do think it is the case that a lot of what initially bound them together and may continue to bind them together is what Doug referred to as a common hatred, a common passion. And a common sense that a common hatred for the United States, for the west generally, a common sense that of indignation about the west and the United States, and a common sense that not only can they learn from one another, which is what Doug stressed but also simply help one another, providing different kinds of contributions to the attempt to wage war against us. And there are obviously different elements that can be provided; Islamism provides certain things; a lot of experience at this point in opposing the west and also it has its own resources materially and in the form of faith, like Iran. One of the things that Latin America certainly provides is proximity. And one, I think, of the issues that faces us in the future us how much Latin America may come to be a base for [them] and a serious security challenge to the United States that are somehow either underwritten or supplied by Islamist forces or even Islamic countries which have a greater aware of all the military and the tactical field, including nuclear weapons, nuclear missile weapons and missiles. By the way those are powerful grounds for an alliance, even if somehow the principles don't go together. And it is hard to see how in one sense how those could go together, after all Islamism is really defined by two things in general, with many variations. One is a desire to retrieve the fortunes of the Muslim world from its current lowest fate; to restore them to the condition they were in before the Muslim world's declined, say roughly 300 years ago and to do that, both through a purification of Islam itself and ultimately through purification of the world to prepare it for Islam. Needless to say the ultimate goal of Islam would have to be to make Islam prevail universally; that presumably is not the goal of the Bolivarian movement (laughs). So, and it is also the case that these kinds of alliances are not, the present alliance is not something unprecedented, we have the case and certainly a case to be considered especially in the light of the events of the last few week, we have the case of Iran, which its revolution of 1979 may be forgotten at this point, was brought about through a coalition of Khomeini's forces and the left. I will make this just a side comment at this point, I remember very, very well the events of 79 and there were many, many discussions at the time about the revolution, teachings and so forth. Many I went to at least personally because I had just finished my graduate studies in Islamic studies, and there was a universal conviction at the time that the real meaning of the movement was that it was a leftist revolution, a socialist revolution, a democratic revolution. And that Khomeini's really warm and fuzzy front for the revolution would be quickly discarded in the unfolding of the regime. Of course it worked the opposite way; he got rid of the left. And one

thing I think even the Bolivarian movement might want to consider down the road is exactly how safe alliances are with religious radical movements. I say that for the following reason, it is the last general comment I want to make about this, there is one other thing that really binds these things together; it seems to me. And I think it was referred to both by Gustavo and Doug and that is the revived spirit of utopianism and messianism. What is the complaint about the US the west, about liberal democracy, after you scrape away specific grievances is that it does not deliver justice, it does not deliver pure justice I should mention that this was the ground the longing for and the insistence that justice needed to be pursued was the common ground for the left and the religious forces in Iran, not only during the revolution but also prior to that. And what I think can and probably does, in spirit anyway, binds together these elements of this alliance not really the demand for justice or the longing for justice that we all have that we all should have but the belief that it's deliverable by a political movement. And that's what Islamism and Bolivarianism and these left-wing movements have in common. The belief that perfect and universal justice can be delivered by movements of this world, whether those are religious movements or by simply political movements, and in this respect Islamism is a better fit with radical leftism than left-wing or liberation theology, Christian theology was because one thing that distinguishes Islam from Christianity is a greater focus on worldly accomplishments. My last comment is to in a way turn the conversation back to a practical immediate event, what does this mean going forward for Latin America and the US and other countries' relationships with Latin America and the trouble this is stirring up. And let them start by taking note of a recent important event, less than 48 hours old, which is the events in Honduras. Not knowing very much about this I will stand to be corrected on any point general and particular but it seems to me what's interesting about it within the context of this discussion is that the president or former president was inspired by the success of this alliance or the Latin American portion of it. By the example of Chavez and other people to pursue a change in the constitution, now it turns out the change itself was not unconstitutional it was the pursuit of it. As far as I understand the military which expelled him had the right to do so under the constitution under the direction of the Honduran Supreme Court, but it seems to me to be this is a particularly important not only for Hondurans but for the whole issue because it seems the movement was advancing and the Hondurans seemed to say no further, not in our backyard. It will be very important for the US and the whole region to consider it in that light and do something about it. The other question I want to raise or to bring it back to Latin America is one I already alluded to, it seems to me that each part of the alliance can do us different kinds of harm and the one I worry about the most right now is some kind of version of another Cuban missile crisis, where one or another of the Islamists' allies in this hemisphere decide to make themselves available to Islamists to provide a platform for a much more direct threat than is easily deliverable from the major Muslim regions and which does not require hijacking planes in Boston.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: We're going to open now the question and answer period, we have microphones and we would appreciate name, and affiliation. We're going to follow this strict order. The Gentleman at the end?

QUESTIONER: James Barsey of *Freemarketeros* Latin American blog. Can you tell me where the environmental radical environmental NGOs are in all of this? That question is open to anyone on the panel.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: Well you're very right in this. The radical environmentalist NGOs are pretty close to their radical brethren in Latin America, but there is a fundamental contradiction because so many of these radical environmentalists have all kinds of problems with the west having nuclear energy plants and find it perfect that Iran develops a dual usage nuclear program. The former communists, are pretty communist to me still in Spain, are the perfect example of that. They say they don't want nuclear plants in Spain but they say it's perfectly fine that Iran develops nuclear capabilities. So yes I do think that this is very much one of the cases. There is a second thing would want to comment on this, which is what socialism of the twenty-first century means. The author of this idea that is strangely appealing because it is a completely empty ideology in every sense of the word, the author of it the theorician of this is a certain Jaimen Altruli who is a man of Libyan origin and presently the minister of coordination and planification at the Bolivarian government.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: The lady.

QUESTIONER: Hi, hello, I don't know if this works, well I want to thank you all for coming I really, really enjoyed hearing all your perspectives.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: Could you give us your name and affiliation please?

QUESTIONER: My name is Andrea Conejo, and I am from Partners of the Americas. So I just want to focus my question a little bit more on the practical solutions of the series of threats that we have heard here today. My question is the following: If we were to, and you can correct me completely if it seems wrong, If we were to assume that radical left groups are more anti US more because of the bad governance that there is in these countries rather than the just the mere existence of the US, should practical long term solutions to these threats of violence from the radical left focus more on bottom up institution building in these countries or more on how to bring these radical threats down in the short term? Thank you.

DOUGLAS FARAH: I would say that there's no question that good governance issues gave radical populism a framework in which to insert itself as a viable alternative, and if you look at the election of Evo Morales in Bolivia where he got a good chunk of the middle class vote as well it was an anti-establishment vote, not a pro-Evo vote, so I think if you look at it as people wanting an outlet in a framework and if you look at radical populism in Evo's discourse and Chavez's discourse, it offers a theoretical framework in which you can hang your social situation on and demand redress as empty as it may end up being and as impractical as it may be. So I do think you have to have a bottom up approach for a long term solution but I don't think that means that you don't have short term threats that you have to be significantly aware of and willing to deal with. So I don't think it's an either/or proposition but I do think that, having lived through the return to democracy in Bolivia up close and personal and then living through the central American experience as well in the 80's and 90's there was a genuine yearning for something radically different from the military dictatorships that had been there and it turned into a messy democratic process in many cases, and it became in Bolivia the "democracia pactada" where you had sort of three major groups which sort of alternate in power regardless of who won the popular vote because no one was going to get anywhere near fifty percent and so you'd negotiate then the power structure and you excluded more and more of the social movements that

actually brought back the democratic process, had been leading the democratic process back in. So I think if you do that you set yourself up for alternatives to emerge, of which radical populism I think has become highly... well also in most of these countries with the possible exception of Venezuela, I don't know, there is very little awareness of the ties to radical Islam at the government level. They see Iranians, in Bolivia every Saturday night on state TV they run soap operas in Farsi and people sort of wonder, "What the hell is that?" But there's very little awareness of the broader structure being knit above their heads and their concerned with survival and other things so it may not be that important to them but I don't think this is a mass movement toward radical Islam, even in the populist movements themselves, which are largely cut off from the process above them.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: I'd like to comment just shortly on two or three things. The appearance of populist movements in fact happened as a succession of, you were talking about bad government, well the public opinions and citizens of different countries in Latin America started questioning politicians and the political class as a whole and thus questioning political parties themselves, and finally the system, and that, of course, is when the populist and indigenous regimes came up. There's another thing that you must bear in mind that populists, radical left wing movements, and radical Stalinist indigenists manipulate history, and through the manipulation of history and putting that kind of manipulated message into the official propaganda through the media that they dominate they create a sort state of mind in their public opinion.

HILEL FRADKIN: Um, Jaime...

JAIME DAREMBLUM: Yes.

HILEL FRADKIN: I'd like to say something about this. To weigh up on the Muslim world's experience of say hostility to the United States or and especially toward the state of Israel, and it seems to me almost a demonstrable fact that the Muslim world, especially that portion of it now known as the Greater Middle East managed over a course of decades to destroy a lot of its opportunities for development both economic, political, and social, by these obsessions. That includes, also it seems to me, Iran at this point. There may be all sorts of reasons, there are obviously all kinds of grievances, there are all kinds of needs but once they get formulated into this kind of obsessive hostility they represent a threat to us but they represent a threat to the people that are taken over by them, and I again refer to the experience of the Middle East, which has managed over the course of fifty years to go from a relatively prosperous portion of the world to one of its most backward. It would be a very great pity, and others who know something about Latin America can tell me the degree to which that has had its own effect on Latin America, but it would be it seems to me a very great pity for Latin America, which over a recent period of time has seemed to have shown some movement in the direction of sort of democratic development and development of economic prosperity to lose those essentially through an obsession with the United States and even an obsession with its destruction.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: We're going to move to the right just a second.

QUESTIONER: Samantha Lara, Council of the Americas. I know that, I just wanted to point out that if any of you could answer this for me: What is the effect of the personal background of each leader from these different groups or states that form this alliance, what is the effect of their

personal background on them bonding over and channeling their energy towards the United States?

DOUGLAS FARAH: Well that's actually something written a bit about and thought because I think it's really important to get at, you know, I think if you look at, the critical players to me are Daniel Ortega, Chavez, Correa, and Morales. Morales was forged as the leader of the "cocalera" movement and constantly at war with both his own national police force and the DEA. And I think that clearly forged how he views the United States and his relationship with power and the military, and there's no question that there were abuses committed in the chaparia at different times, certainly not on the scale that he alludes to but it was a difficult life, he had a targetable enemy and much of that time in his point of view it was the United States. Correa's father was a small time drug trafficker who came to the United States, and was arrested and went to jail here and that seems to have forged how Mr. Correa views the United State to a very strong degree. I think if you look at a little bit differently Alvaro Uribe's background, the FARC killed his father after the family paid a ransom, and I think that to think that he's going to sit down and have large scale, friendly negotiations with the FARC based on his personal experience is also fiction, you know I think these things matter, what happens to you as you grow up, and I think clearly, particularly in Correa's case, the fact that his father went to jail here, went back to Ecuador and was humiliated I think plays a tremendous role in how he views the United States. Chavez to me is a little more difficult to find what it was in his background that pointed him in this direction. It may be just getting into power and having power and realizing that there was a niche that he could fill with this, and maybe Gustavo has a little more insight on Chavez personally, but the others, and Ortega lost the war. The United States helped the Contras bring an end to the Sandinista government and then he ran for election and lost in an election he fully expected to win in 1990. So I think that forms Ortega's view of being unseated unjustly by the empire over a period of years, but it's interesting too to remember the last thing Ortega did as President in 1990 as he went out the door, and I wrote about this in the Washington Post at the time was grant citizenship to 892 people, most of them European terrorist, ETA, Red Brigades, and others, and he has, he had at that time in 1990 and extensive history with Iran going back to the beginning of the revolution, and one of the first things that Violeta Chamorro did when she came in was shut the Iranian embassy because of the intelligence operations and dangers she viewed it as representing. She didn't do a lot of courageous things in her administration. That was one of the things she did immediately because she was aware of the threat that posed and one of the first things Ortega did when came back, of course, was reopen the Iranian embassy, just a little bit of history. But I do think the personalities matter a great deal.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: Just a word on Chavez. Chavez's role model was not Castro at the beginning, Chavez's role model was Perez Jimenez, the right-wing Venezuelan dictator, so in fact when I say that Venezuelan populism is the merger of fascist structures and Stalinist ideology that is only recent because at the beginning of the populist regime in Venezuela he didn't really have an ideology, he was just looking for something and creating something so he recruited this guy, Jaimen Altruli who has very confused ideas about socialism, communism, and what we call Bedouin socialism, which is the basis of the Green Book of Gaddafi that, of course as a Spanish DCM in Libya for three years I had to extensively study and I was extensively bored by it, of course, and in fact Jaimen Altruli has imported many of the ideas of the Green Book into the socialism of the twenty-first century that is merged with Cuban Stalinism and

classic Communism. A friend of mine used to say that socialism of the twenty-first century looked a lot like communism of the twentieth century, well in fact a part of it, yes, and so much of it, no. So Chavez has become a radical left-winger because it was the only way to stay in power. Of course he needed a brutal repression structure that he, of course, has today, and he has followed many models and then only after he came out of jail and had read so extensively some left-wing authors in jail that he became fascinated by Castro but he visited Castro and he visited Perez Jimenez in one of his first visits to Spain, so it is essentially a contradiction. This is why Cuban ideologues detest Chavez, they think the he is an impure left-wing revolutionary, they think he's profoundly contaminated and he is, by extreme right-wing ideas.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: Norman.

QUESTIONER: Thank you. Norman Bailey, Institute of World Politics. Mr. Aristegui in his excellent talk referred to the four world wars, he also referred to Mein Kampf, and the fact that nobody paid any attention to it at the time. There was a major failure of will in the West between World War I and World War II, there were many reasons for it, but at any rate it definitely happened, and the result was World War II. From Truman to Reagan there were a series of Presidents of the United States who did not have a failure of will and who confronted the Soviet Union during a four decade period during the third world war. It seems to me there is a major failure of will going on at the present time in the West with reference to the fourth world war and there are so many examples of it I mean I'm not even going to mention, you know the President not seeing the representative of the Cuban visitants and there are just so many different things it's not worth going into. My question is does anybody on the panel see any signs of a development of a will to confront this movement that we've been talking about.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: If I may. I did say this at the beginning of my presentation is that so many politicians, analysts, historians and journalists simply do not want to see reality in front of their eyes. I think that there are so many threats and menaces to democracy and freedom in the twenty-first century and we've just mentioned some, if we could go deeper into it we could talk about terrorism with all its possible excuses, we must never talk of ideology related to terrorism they're just mere excuses and definitely the so-called religious excuses, not a religious excuse, radical Islam is an ideology it is not a religion. You've got proliferation and the risks of proliferation and Iran is the most obvious case, you've got organized crime, and you've got the anti-system alliance and so many others that we're not going to go into. I do think that there is a new version of appeasement, and this new version of appeasement appears in moments of great prosperity. People that live prosperously in rich nations don't want to be told about bad news, they don't want to be given bad news. I have a certain Cassandra syndrome complex, I always write about bad news, and that's not good for politics, but anyway I think I have to do and I will continue doing it, I mean I get reelected so it's probably not such a big problem. The reality is that people want to ignore the risks that they have to confront, and when times of the recession come people focus so much on the economy that they continue to ignore the other kinds of risk so be it for what it may be, times of prosperity, times of recession, people overlook the threats that we face, and this is extremely dangerous, and being diplomatic and reaching out and trying to mend fences is pretty okay, especially because it gives you the right kind of arguments when that fails. The worst thing that could happen to the Iranian regime was in fact that the West has told them so many times, "Hey, let's talk", that is what the Europeans did with what we call the

critical dialogue, this is what happened at the beginning of the presidency of President Obama. But they said “No”, they were really scared to death, and one of the reasons why they are so focused on trying to get Ahmadinejad reelected even if it is such a huge fraud that they have had to implement to keep him in office was because until this moment it really didn’t even matter who was the President of the Republic because the real boys in town were in charge of everything, the Council of Guardians of the Revolution, the Assembly of Experts, the Leader of the Revolution, the Pasdaran, the Ministry of Intelligence, the Ministry the Interior, the Ministry of Defense, so who cares, I mean obviously the President of the Republic is in charge of the Ministry of the Economy, an God knows if he really is, and agriculture and a few things more, so who cares. But right there is an undergoing silent revolution specially for the women that were defying the regime, and they wanted to have everything under control, so this explains to you very much that some people just want to see the bottle half-full and right now the bottle is almost completely empty.

HILEL FRADKIN: I would, it seems to me that what you’re describing is partially the result of the hangover after the Cold War and we still have that hangover. What I mean by that is, the period you described when we were steadfast, well from time to time we weren’t so steadfast, but in those moments we stuck it out and we took the enemy we had at the time, the Soviet Union in particular, as a really credible enemy. It’s been difficult ever since then to regard those of our adversaries as up to that level. And that’s especially true because of some of the fantastic things they say, which Gustavo referred to before with various quotations. It’s very hard for us to take seriously the notion that, it was somewhat easier to take the notion that the Soviet Union would bury us, as they used to say, than it is to believe that the radicals will, or that Mr. Chavez will. And if Gustavo is correct, if we’re correct, that this is a really serious menace it will continue to manifest itself and sooner or later people will be forced, in our country anyway, will be forced to face it. One example is the one Gustavo just mentioned, we since under the new administration it has been a policy to, I should say there seems to me to be one other thing, and that is a view that if the United States experiences trouble in the outside world it’s largely trouble of its own making. If the United States was more or less aggressive, more or less arrogant to use a more moral term, if it was more solicitous of other people’s opinions and their demands and so forth, then things would be much less problematic. We’re now in a test of that notion since the President is guided by that view and has acted on it. So far it seems to me to have paid very few dividends, and quite the contrary, and in particular in the case of Iran, we’re getting literally nowhere with the people we engage and with dialogue, eventually we will have to, if it is the case that this is a false view of what we’re facing we will know that, we will in a way have a demonstration of it, and hopefully we will then hopefully reflect on that and draw different conclusions.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: There was a gentleman at the end, on the right.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: No, aqui, atras de la columna. The young man right there.

QUESTIONER: Thank you. I’m Corey Menguel with the World Movement for Democracy. I think while we can argue about the actual chain of causation here I think that we can all agree that there is a definite perception both in Latin America and the Middle East that the US policy is responsible for a lot of unjust regimes, a lot of governments that ignore the needs of the people.

In Latin America especially with neo-liberal policy that increasing equality, there's a definite responsibility here, at least a perception of one among these countries. What I'd like to know is what possible impact could a change in stance by the US government have, where they acknowledge that they have not exactly been altogether supportive of progressive and democratic government across the world, and to the contrary that they have been responsible for dictatorships and for this lack of justice that was mentioned earlier. Thank you.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: Since I'm the foreigner on the panel let me answer to you that I do agree that the West has made some very serious mistakes in the past, but some of those were made a long time ago. When people start making an analysis saying that "I'm poor, or I'm not democratic and not well-structured because I was your colony, or because this or because that, and some countries have been independent for two hundred years and some have been independent for eighty years. And I normally ask them, "And what about your responsibility?" Because you've been independent for two hundred years so you should ask your politicians and your ruling class what they've done and why they have been so extremely inefficient. About neo-liberal policies, this is something that it always comes as an argument in these analyses and these conversations. In the nineties the Washington consensus were implemented in most Latin American economies. The consequence of that was that some of the weakest economies in the world had pretty good macro-economic results. So, in which way, and I ask you, in which way do you think that it is the responsibility of the World Bank or the IMF so that those years of prosperity and good macro-economic figures not be transformed into real social policies, because the World Bank and the IMF do not have responsibilities in implementing social policies it is the governments of those countries that do. So, in which way would the Washington consensus be responsible for not having social policies? Because one of the things that is pretty obvious, and probably this is one of the big differences between the United States and Europe, is that the European center-right does believe in the welfare state and we support it, but we manage it a lot better than the social democrats as is pretty obvious for the results. I'm not going to compare eight years of PP government to the present situation of economic chaos in Spain. But to go to the last part of your comment, in which way if we acknowledge those sins of the past can we move on and forward? Should we admit that we've been supporting dictators East and West; we don't do it anymore. We don't do it anymore. Some people simply have not overcome the Sykes-Picot agreement in the Middle East, but it was signed in 1916, and we're in the twenty-first century, let's see if some people take responsibility for what they do.

DOUGLAS FARAH: I would just add briefly that as Gustavo said the nineteen-nineties were a time when the United States was tremendously supportive of democratic returns across and even going into back in the early the nineteen-eighties in the Bolivian experience, the Peruvian experience. I think it's true that at some point you have to say "What exactly did we do wrong?" Then we were being hammered for the military regimes, fair enough. WE worked very hard to move in a different direction and we're still hammered for the military regimes. Finally I would just say that Chavez has had more money than any government in Venezuela has ever had, the macro-economic indicators have been the worst that they've ever been and the homicide rate is higher than ever, so if you want to talk about the failure of internal political and economic will I think if you look at these and if you look at Evo in Bolivia, too. He's had marginal increases with the budget, probably twice as big as the governments before him that he worked so hard to get rid of and you have to wonder, where is that money going? And that's governments that complain

about internal or external influence, I mean Chavez and the Spanish intellectuals who wrote the Bolivian and Venezuelan constitutions and are guiding that light are much more interventionist than the United States has been in the last thirty or forty years, maybe ever, but certainly in the last thirty or forty years, so I think you have to balance it out with what the reality is now.

HILEL FRADKIN: I would, your question I think is essentially a practical one, and I begin with your use of the term 'perceptions.' Perception is a term that covers, in our usage these days, a variety of things. Actual perceptions of things, and up to and including delusional fantasies, like the notion, for example, held by a small number of people that our own CIA attacked us on nine-eleven. So, there may be limits to what one can do to change perceptions if perceptions are genuinely delusional, or maybe self-serving as Gustavo suggested and Doug suggested where people don't really want to take responsibility for their own doings. But, I would say, though, as an actual practical matter it's a very good question over the next couple of years how much support we will give to the democratic endeavor. The World Union of Democracy, is that what...

QUESTIONER: It's the World Movement for Democracy, it's actually under the NED...

HILEL FRADKIN: Well, that's what I thought, and which reminds me of the fact that in 2004 I believe, on the twentieth anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy, President Bush gave a speech announcing his policy, a new policy concerning the promotion of democracy. That speech and the policy was meant, in a way, to address the kinds of things you've suggested, where we were not supportive of democratic movements. That speech, that policy is now in discredit in this country, and has something to do with the way in which the present administration responded to the events in Iran was the notion that this kind of stance and United States support is unrealistic. I wonder very seriously how much support over the next few years we will in fact give to democratic movements around the world. We may be very much inclined to say that is what people want, have found themselves living under, wherever, in Venezuela, Bolivia or Ecuador, that's up to them.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: The gentleman here in the second row.

QUESTIONER: John Zemko with the Center for International Private Enterprise. I'd like to play a little bit of devil's advocate here. Mr. Farrah just mentioned a few statistics about the dismal economic performance of countries like Bolivia and Venezuela and you might say Iran, as well. I know the public opinion polls in Venezuela, for example, don't support by any measure a movement towards a Cuban model of socialism, and in fact you may even argue that Chavez's acceleration of closing in on the institutions of democracy are in direct proportion to the decline of the economic situation. Facing the fact that these regimes and these movements are based on an economic model, which doesn't work, are they not sewing the seeds of their own destruction? The populations don't seem to be supporting this sort of direction over the long term. Are they sewing the seeds of their own destruction over the long term?

DOUGLAS FARAH: Well, I think certainly in part, yes. The question is, will there be any institutions left to pick up the remains and move forward by the time they reach that point. Bolivia's gas income will cut into about half now due to their contracts with Brazil and the price that's built into it and they're going to lose a tremendous amount of money. But will that be

enough for the situation where Evo will actually lose an election, assuming he had a clean election, in December, I don't know, he may have enough reserves to get through there, and will he ever have an election again after that, I think is an open question, or at least one that's reasonably contested in any forum. I think Chavez has shown a great ability to measure how far he can go and when he's defeated he goes back *por ahora*, as he says, for the time being until he feels he's strong enough to take the step again, sort of a tactical retreat. I guess my fundamental question is will there be any institutional life left that can oppose them once they reach the point where they are totally discredited in their economic model? And I don't know. I think the acceleration of the destruction of the institutionality in Bolivia, which is much faster I said than in Venezuela because they've learned the lessons I'm not sure there will be anything left by the time they reach that point, that can oppose them internally.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: To continue the comment of Douglas, sewing the seeds of their own destruction? Well, not really. Their inefficiency is simply destroying the Venezuelan, the Bolivian and the Ecuadorian people. But they are doing things in such a way, the populist method, which we have commented on, which is occupying all five branches of government, the five they have in the populist system cutting down on and persecuting and harassing the independent media that is critical with them, and persecuting and harassing opposition and those that voice criticism against them. So, they will eventually become full-fledged dictators so who cares if they're inefficient, who cares if they ruin the economy, who cares if they do anything else because they will not be kicked out, and they will still continue going to the polls. To these regimes the polls are simply means, a means to an end, and the end is not democracy the end is power. They want to stay in power and they want to perpetuate themselves in power, and they will do anything to stay in power. Change the constitution, jail half of the opposition, later jail the other half, ban the best candidates from being able to run; Iran, Bolivia, Venezuela, it doesn't matter. We are in the face of a new kind of dictatorship, the kind of dictatorship that some western analysts and politicians and even university professors think that are democracies. And again, what I said before, going to the polls every four years does not make you a democracy, the rule of law, separation of powers, checks and balances, independent courts of justice, freedom of speech, and so many other fundamental, all fundamental rights and freedoms, their respect and protection is what makes you a democracy, the rest is not a democracy. Hitler won the 1932 elections and that's what took him to power, and he never stayed back. I'll just quote something that my colleagues have said in both their speeches about the Muslim brotherhood. Well this is something that all radical Islamist movements have always said, remember what Basi Madani said in the election he won, "le premier et le demier; the first and the last", that's it.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: One final question.

QUESTIONER: I had a question about something I'd like to put on the table for the consideration of the panel. And that is the problem that we have with definitions.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: There is a microphone, and we would appreciate your name and affiliation please.

QUESTIONER: Frederick Peterson, US Freedom Foundation. The question is one of definitions. We have discussed and I think critique has been laid out that we have a lack of "will", in quotes,

to confront “threats”, in quotes, to “interests of democracy,” in quotes, in Central and South America (background, “in quotes”) The question is, how do we define that will, or is it is there not we’re assuming the question supposes a commonality of will. I would submit that we do not have a commonality of will. We have an accommodation and perhaps even part of the critique there’s a commonality of critique on parts of the American political system with the critique that is made of democracy in Central and South America so we have a split in will to confront here, and secondly, the definition of democracy needs to be common also, because the democracy that emanates from the barrel of a gun is certainly far different from that of the purple finger or the ballot box, one is an exploitation...

JAIME DAREMBLUM: Do you have a question?

QUESTIONER: Yea, I’d like your comments on that and whether we do are working or laboring under a lack of commonality of definitions and whether that’s inhibiting our ability to confront a threat.

JAIME DAREMBLUM: I’m going to ask the members of the panel for closing comments.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: Well just to answer the gentleman, this is pretty much what we’ve been talking about all afternoon. We cannot define Venezuela as a democracy; I think we cannot define Bolivia, for that much, as a democracy. Yes, their leaders win elections, but now we know, for example, that the Smartmatic machines that are used by the Bolivarian regime are easily, can be easily programmed to rig an election. We know that today. As you know Smartmatic is under investigation in this country and elsewhere and I can tell you because a very high-ranking Venezuelan official told a Spanish company that was managing elections in Venezuela before Smartmatic, I can’t say the name of the man because I did not hear it first-hand, but a very high-ranking Venezuelan official told president of Indra, “I cannot use your machines because I cannot cheat with your machines”, basically, and I end quote. So, yes I do agree with you we have to better define what democracy is and you can be sure that Venezuela is not one of those democracies.

DOUGLAS FARAH: Well I think that, just in closing I’d like to say that there’s a lot out there and we talk a lot about failure of political will, and I think that there is, yea, I think the previous administration had its hands full doing a lot of stuff besides Latin America and the problem has (inaudible) to where it is and I’m not sure where this current administration is going, it didn’t happen overnight or in the last six months, but I think that if we don’t start paying attention to it seriously, and I think Norman asked earlier, is there anyone paying attention? And I think the only what you see now is the first signs of people actually beginning to talk about it in congressional testimony and other places for the first time. Last year, or the tail end of the last administration I sat in on three high-level briefings, two at DOD, and one at State Department on threats to Latin America and in neither of the three presentations was Iran ever mentioned. It was just not mentioned as a possible threat. I think that that is gradually starting to change. What that means internally and in policy making and decision making I don’t know but I do think that there is at least an awareness now and that we have to begin looking at it, it’s very late in the game to begin to decide whether you should begin looking at it and allocating resources, that should have been done eight years ago. It’s a long process to get this up the food chain, but I do think that

these types of discussions are incredibly important. I think they're a lot of people, including Norm's group and a lot of others who have done a lot of work on what the Iranian influence and others is in these regions and I think we need to start paying attention to that.

HILLEL FRADKIN: First I'd just like to thank Jaime again for organizing this, for Gustavo for inviting us to this reflection, which I think is something kind of like a reply to the last question. It seems to me the question of will is a rather complicated one. It's also just the issue we might have the will to do something about a problem if we see it as a problem. It seems to me at the moment, what Gustavo described and what Doug described are different understandings of what the problems are. If it's the case some people think we face a challenge, I think perhaps could describe on this panel, others think what we really face are just claims against us and against our past actions. Part of the difficulty we have is in sorting that out. I do think with respect on Latin America I am in no sense a specialist, except as a somewhat elderly American, and what does seem to me that the case is, the claims torments what the Europeans feel with respect to Africa and Asia and so forth. Americans have over my lifetime felt towards Latin America, I am sure whether we had lived up to what used to be called "good neighbor policy". And we need to actually sort that out. I think Gustavo is right, one of the big problems we face is, generally speaking a lot of people find it much easier in a sense is not so much a failure of will, is just an instantiation to blame others for your own situation, not only to get, to allow for the venting of anger but also because it is very convenient, because then you don't have to do anything. And I think what is really important I think from our perspective, or I will speak from my perspective is that we begin to really understand that a lot of the problems in the world are not caused by us, but are caused by, and are not remediable by us. They are the problem of the people who suffer from them and the remedies lie in their own hands, and that is what they have to learn and that is what we have to learn.

DR. GUSTAVO DE ARISTEGUI: Some very short closing comments, I mean; I think this is more of a problem of analysis and diagnosis than it is of definition. I believe that you cannot cure a disease if the diagnosis is wrong; and you definitely cannot cure cancer with aspirin. So, I think that the world is pretty much making that kind of mistake. When I started talking about these things in the 90s some people thought I was grossly exaggerating, to put it wildly. Well, time is definitely not on our side on this one. And we need to seriously give profounder, deeper thought to these threats, and I think that an initiative like this and the participation of such distinguished guests as all of you are, and the panel of expert Hillel and Douglas, under the initiative of our good friend Jaime are essential. And I was absolutely in agreement with every thing my colleague said; I thought they were extremely brilliant in their analysis, but definitely that some countries that don't agree or share the ideology of these anti-system, extreme left-wing radical groups that do fish very efficiently in turbulent waters; and that is, of course, China and Russia. And we know that even those that think that China's aggressive commercial policies abroad is not really a threat, well they are buying commodities or trying to be extremely aggressive in the purchase of essential commodities for example, in Africa. But I believe that in the end is not going to be a problem; I do believe that this is more for commercial strategic reasons. Because I believe that China is more a Confucianist state than a communist state, and at the end, you know, pragmatism is going to prevail, or should at least. Look, I believe that advanced democracies have fundamental disease, and that is the comfort of ignorance. People tend to ignore what is a

threat to us, and if we ignore what the threat is and about we feel, we say in Spanish *ojos que no ven, corazón que no siente*, which is pretty descriptive of what I say.

I just tell you what happened in my part of Spain, in the Basque country, when fishermen when out in steam boats, in the beginning of the twentieth century. Of course, those that reached port first had the best price for their fish, so it was literally a race to get to port first. So they would really push the pressure of their engines to the limit, and when the gauge reached the red part they would take off the bass beret and cover it. So, many of them would just simply explode and kill all of the crew. Are we going to cover the gauge that is telling us we are reaching the red limit? Because the risk is that we may explode.

DR. JAIME DAREMBLUM: Thank you for the panel and the speakers for a very good job done, and thank you for your presence. Let's give them a final round of applause.