

# HUDSON INSTITUTE

*Event Transcript*

## “THE WAR OF IDEAS FOR THE MUSLIM WORLD”

*With*

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*The following is an edited transcript of an event sponsored by Hudson Institute’s Center on Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World on October 22, 2004. The center, which is directed by Hudson senior fellow Dr. Hillel Fradkin, was established in 2004 to research and analyze the ideological dimension of Islamism and radical Islam, and to encourage and support the development of moderate and democratic alternatives within the Muslim world. This event was the first in a series of lectures sponsored by the center’s Project on Islam and Democracy.*

**HILLEL FRADKIN:** Good afternoon. I’d like to welcome you to Hudson Institute.

I’m Hillel Fradkin, the director of Hudson Institute’s Center on Islam, Democracy and the Future of the Muslim World. That’s a mouthful.

Before putting you in the able hands of our speaker, I wanted to say a couple of things about this center and how it provides the context for today’s talk.

The center has a variety of concerns and a variety of projects that stem—it will surprise no one—from the events of 9/11 and the policy issues for America, both abroad and at home. One of the most important of the center’s projects is a project on Islam and Democracy. It is concerned with what has been called “The War of Ideas.” I’ll say in passing, I think there’s actually several of such wars—that is, there are several wars of ideas going on at the present, or should be going on at present.

But the war we are concerned with today is the war of ideas within the Muslim world. One party to this war is by now extremely well-known. It consists of radicals hostile to the West generally and America specifically—hostile to what they regard as America’s corrupt principles and institutions, and hostile to any trajectory within the Muslim world which would lead to some kind of accommodation between fidelity to Islam and those principles and institutions which characterize the West and, now, a great variety of non-Western countries.

This group wants to chart a course which allegedly takes its bearings by a return to the past. Now the vision of this—the views of this party, the party of the radicals—has enjoyed great influence over the last 30 years. I think it’s fair to say, and Husain will correct me if I’m wrong,

that the radicals have had practically no adversaries over the last 30 years. And, of course, it's out of this background—out of their domination of at least the intellectual and theological plane of discussion in the Muslim world—that terrorism has emerged.

Now there are other parties to this dispute who see things in a different light. Not necessarily—and I want to stress this—out of special love for America or for the West, but out of concern with their own people and their own faith. They have a fear. There are many views these people hold—and probably, they hold somewhat different views from one another—but I think that one of the things they hold in common is the fear that the path that the radicals pursue means disaster. Disaster of a variety of sorts.

Now this party is, as yet, organizationally smaller than its rivals, but it does have its warriors. And we are privileged to have one such warrior—a most distinguished, thoughtful, and courageous one—with us today. He's also a good friend of mine, Husain Haqqani. And I've asked him to come speak to us today about his views of what the character of the struggle is, what are the risk proportions, and also, where it stands today. I won't ask him exactly for advice on laying bets on who will win and who will lose and how quickly, but rather, I will ask about the overall trend lines at the moment and what might affect them in the future.

Before turning over the mic to him, let me just cite a few of his many distinctions. Husain Haqqani is a leading journalist. He has been a diplomat and also an advisor to several Pakistani prime ministers. He is at present a syndicated columnist for *The Indian Express*, for *The Gulf News*, and *The Nation*, which is a Pakistani publication.

He has in the past and probably still does write for *The Islamic World Review* and has been a correspondent for *The Far Eastern Economic Review*. He is also, of course, published widely in Western publications—*The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *L.A. Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, where an article of his appeared this past week, and *Arab News*. And he also appears regularly on various broadcast media, BBC, CNN, NBC, and ABC.

Husain served also as Pakistan's Ambassador to Sri Lanka from 1992 to 1993. He has many publications so I'm not going to bother to list them. But he does have a book forthcoming about the politics of Pakistan. I know I eagerly await its appearance and I think everyone should as well.

Please welcome Husain Haqqani.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** Thank you very much, Hillel, for the kind words, and thank you all for coming.

Since 9/11, the United States has had more discussion about the world of Islam than the preceding 50 years. Of course, when you have such condensed versions of complex historical and theological as well as practical political questions, then you don't always get—you get a lot more sound than you get fire—a lot more fire than you get light, or whatever.

The point is that there is a lot of discussion about what is happening in the Islamic world. And I would just say that, actually, what is happening in the Islamic world—and here I am not focused purely on the Middle East, because statistically, the Muslim Arab population accounts for only 18 percent of the world's Muslim population. The largest Muslim populations are in Indonesia, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

Russia will end up becoming a major Muslim country in terms of percentages because, demographically, even though the Muslims are only about 15 percent of Russia's population today, Russia's population has a negative growth rate and the Muslims have a very strong positive growth rate. So in a few years, we will see Russia having more than almost 20 to 25 percent of its population as Muslim. That would be a very significant minority. France is another country which already faces a major problem in terms, again, demographically.

And so, we are looking at a world that already has more than 1.2 billion Muslims. We really do not have exact numbers on it for the simple reason that countries like China and the former Soviet Union at one time tried to depress the numbers, and now they have to make adjustments in their numbers.

All of these people, of course, are not out to take over planes and fly them into buildings. But they must believe in something—and so we have to try and make a distinction between those who the United States can and should consider a threat to its security and those who do not pose a threat to its security, and then figure out a way of empowering those who are potential allies—long-term allies for the future—and those who are enemies who need to be dealt with firmly.

And that distinction is where the study and the understanding of the civil War of Ideas within the Muslim world is very important. Most of you have read Bernard Lewis's book, *What Went Wrong?*, and I am not going to try and sort of either cite extensively from it or repeat the argument. But the fact remains that much of what we see as the confrontational mold between the world of Islam on the one hand and the West on the other is actually a result of the stagnation of the Muslim world, especially in the last few centuries, which has coincided with the rise of the West.

If in 1004 there had been Nobel Prizes, most of them would have been won by Muslims. At that time, Europe was the backwater. The world of Islam was where the action was. Well, in the year 2004, when we look back, we realize that only two Muslims have won a Nobel Prize since they were instituted in the sciences. And I am not here referring to Yassar Arafat's Nobel Prize for Peace—which probably all of you remember, even though you do not care to.

The two science Nobels was, again, for two Muslims who happened to be living in the West and not in their native countries. And one of them is not even acknowledged as a Muslim by a majority of the orthodox Muslims because he belongs to a minority sect within Islam, which does not believe in jihad and does not believe in several other things that orthodox Muslims consider to be an integral part of the religion. So if you take him out, there's only one Egyptian—a person of Egyptian origin at California Tech who got a Nobel Prize.

Now think of any major invention in the last 200 years that has shaped our modern life. None of them have come from the Muslim world. Look at the economic figures, and I have World Bank figures: The average income in the advanced world on a purchasing price parity basis last year was \$27,450. Israel's average income on the same basis was \$19,320. The U.S.'s average income on the same basis was \$34,260. Guess what it was for the Muslim world—and I'm talking about the 57 Muslim majority countries and all the significant Muslim minority communities. The average income was \$3,700.

And averages, of course, are always disturbing. It basically includes the guy who has a billion dollars in his bank account, and it's averaging him out with a guy who has nothing. Pakistan is a nuclear power—the only Muslim country in the world with nuclear weapons. Its average income is \$2,060 per annum. And no Muslim country—excluding the oil-producing Gulf mini-states who have small populations and more oil wells than people—has an average income exceeding \$7,350.

So there is an economic problem. And when there is an economic deficit, there's a knowledge deficit. For example, at one time, the Muslims, when they were leader in the sciences—how did they become that?

Well, there was this great translation movement in the early history of Islam, as we all know, in which all the Greek philosophers were translated into Arabic. And, in fact, most of Europe got them in reverse translation from Arabic into Latin. The impact of all of these scholars was that the library of Baghdad in the year 1258 had one million volumes of manuscripts in it. This was before printing. One million volumes is a lot of books—even if there weren't any John Updike novels in them.

So, you know, compared with today—*think* that this is the same religion, the same people in some ways. So basically, the knowledge deficit is not about a genetic flaw. It's not about an essential religious flaw because, after all, the same religion at that time inspired them in a certain direction, and now is moving them in a different direction. Since 1900, the number of books translated into Arabic is the same as the annual average translation of books into Spanish alone in Spain—Annual translation *and* 100 years of translation. So there's a deficit in terms of wanting to pursue knowledge.

Go to any Arab capital or, for that matter, any Muslim country and its capital, and you will find most streets are named after generals, historic Muslim generals. More people, whether they are civilians or not, want to be warriors. Saddam Hussein posed in a military uniform never having ever been a military officer.

All the monuments, etc., are to the sword and to the spear. There is this whole warrior culture. And I was very struck by it. In fact, the article that Hillel referred to that was in last Sunday's *International Herald Tribune* was on this very subject.

I was struck by a statistic in the Pew Center's Global Survey of Attitudes this year. It was from my home country in Pakistan. It turned out that, according to the opening survey, 86 percent of Pakistanis like General Musharraf. Sixty-five percent of them also like Osama bin Laden.

How do you square the favorable rating for the quarry and for the hunter at the same time? The only explanation can be that people look upon both as warriors. One is a warrior who is fighting Western ascendancy by actually contesting it militarily. The other is trying to do it with a little bit of deviousness and getting aid from the West in the process. And that's how they look at it. It's a psyche. It's a mindset that is coming about in the Muslim world.

So where are we in terms of ideas? What are the ideas that have shaped it? What caused the Muslims to decline from their intellectual and scientific achievements of the Twelfth, Thirteenth Centuries, Fourteenth Century, and then come down more. For one thing, part of it was actually the result of a civil war of ideas that took place in the Abassid period between the Mutazilites, who were the rationalists, and the Asharites. What had happened at that time was that the Mutazilites said, "Well, now our knowledge has become big." This is always a consequence—If you have science, you go in one direction, and then science leads you into another. And after all, once a scientific discovery has been proven, then you have to adjust your theology to it, rather than the other way around. You have to go back to your religion and your theology and try and readjust that.

And that was what was going on—a knowledge explosion was taking place in the Muslim world. And guess what city it was where this battle of ideas between the rationalist Mutazilites and the Asharites took place? It was in the city of Baghdad.

And the Mutazalites said, "Look, Islam is a system of spiritual concepts. But, having given us these concepts, Prophet Muhammad said this is the final word that is going to come from God—the word of Moses, the word of Jesus, and now the word of Muhammad, are all a continuum." And therefore, since this is still the day of judgment, they built into their theology and philosophy a flexibility, the notion of changing ideas, and the acceptance of change. But the Asharites responded, saying this was going too far. We have to define a religious dogma, they said, there has to be tight parameters within which change can or cannot take place.

The Asharites, of course, prevailed and, in many ways, that was the basic change that came into the Muslim world. The desire to explore, the desire to go beyond, died down to a very, very dogmatic approach to religion. The institution of the madrasah, which came into being about this time, the 12th Century, actually had a strict and specific frame of reference of what can and cannot be studied. It's very interesting.

The core curriculum of the madrasah comprised the rational sciences and the revealed sciences of the Quran, of the Hadith, which is the same as the Prophet Mohammad, and understanding *fiqh*, which is Islamic jurisprudence. Although Islamic law did not arrive in a codified form, it was something that was, and should have remained, evolving because of the very fact that it was not meant to be dogmatically codified into a book of law. The Quran, moreover, was a book of exhortation, of principles, rather than a book of law. And yet, here were all these jurists who started interpreting it in a purely juridical manner and in a very legalistic sense.

Well, times started changing. Till such time as the empires flourished, there was not such a big problem. But then, major issues started arising. Take, for example, the invention of the printing

machine. People arrived with the printing machine in the Court of the Ottoman Sultan and asked him, “What do you think? We want to sell this in your great kingdom, in your great empire.”

And, of course, after consultation, [the printing press was rejected.] Part of the reason of this had to do with unions—because the Caligraphics Guild in Istanbul thought that it wasn’t a good idea. But other than that, it was also kind of a revulsion towards technology. Do we really need so much technology? Do we need to go beyond? We do a good job of writing, after all.

Then there were those who actually gave an argument on a theological basis. They said, “we revere the Quran. We hold it high. We respect it. If it is going to be printed in this manner, it is going to be slashed around. We don’t know what is going to happen to it.” And to this day, ironically, there are people in the Muslim world who argue about whether the Quran can be treated like other books, whether it can be left on a floor or not, whether there should be a pedestal where it should be physically kept.

Now, that attitudinal change was being reflected here. Anybody else would have realized, thought a bit and said, “Well, if we don't have it and these Europeans have it, knowledge will grow much faster there. Words will be printed and get around much faster.” But they chose censorship. They chose limiting knowledge. They thought sticking to the old ways was better.

And so, the printing press was not introduced into the Ottoman Empire, and it wasn’t introduced in the Muslim world for quite a while longer. And when it was introduced, it first was introduced for the religious minorities. So the Armenians could have the printing press, the Jews could have the printing press. The Muslims could not, however, and Arabic printing didn’t come about for quite a while.

Ironically, something similar happened in India, where the Mughal Emperor Akbar was faced with the same question. Portuguese traders brought him the printing press, and he consulted his people. And the same thing happened, although Akbar didn’t know that the Sultan in Turkey had turned it down for certain reasons.

The fact that two Muslims located in two different places came up with the same conclusion obviously meant that their process of thinking was somewhat similar. Both of them were going through the same arguments, and the theologians who had once made the argument were interconnected in terms of what they thought and what they believed.

So, this basically leads me to say that, throughout Muslim history, there have been different groups within the Muslim world, those willing to expand and understand and relate to change, and those who think that there is a golden period of Islam, and the closer you stick to it, the more biased you are.

Now, how does this play out in the present era? Let me just say that, right now—and I'm using some of the categorization that has also been used by Sheryl Bennett book, *Democratic and Civil Islam*—that there are several factions, or trends of thought, you can see within the Muslim world.

There are, of course, the fundamentalists—people who believe that there is a Golden Age of Islam, which is the closest time to the Prophet, and that, basically, anything else is *Bid'a*, is innovation. And the less innovation you have, the better Muslims you are. The consequence of this attitude is that, in this thinking, history becomes a part of theology, meaning that whatever the early Muslims did becomes a part of the belief system rather than something that may have been a requirement or an exigency of the political, social, economic, or whatever circumstance that prevailed at the time.

And in many cases, for example, the core argument for the belief and the theology is derived not from scripture, not from an understanding of what was God's intent in giving that injunction, but rather on the basis of how people practiced it. And how people live and how people behave in modern sort of concepts of knowledge, is the purview not of theology, but of history.

So in the fundamentalist way of thinking, history is an integral part of theology and, when it is manifested in the political world, as I'll explain a little later, it actually creates very interesting dilemmas and problems—*because*, for example, if you start thinking in terms of Islam's conquest is inevitable, Islam's success is inevitable, and there is no going back. Well, it hasn't worked that way in history. So what you do is you say, "Well, that is just a passing phase. It is an unending cycle. We have to keep turning the wheel back and turn it in a different way."

And you'll find the argument, as you'll find in some radical Islamic literature these days, that Spain was a Muslim country and Muslims were expelled, and so, now it's obligatory for us to restore Islamic sovereignty to Spain. Tough assignment.

But you simply can't do it through any relevant rational means. Because you made history a part of your theology, it is a very complicated phenomenon, and its manifestations are very complicated. So there's the fundamentalists.

Then there's the traditionalists. The traditionalists don't always make an argument and do not look for a theological argument for everything, but they are more comfortable with the way that things have been handed down to them. So they are still more comfortable in their flowing robes and in their turbans, and they are still more comfortable in living life as they knew it. They are also uncomfortable with modernity. They do not like many things that are coming in. And while they do not necessarily offer an ideological argument against innovation and *Bid'a*, in practice, they try to do whatever has been going on for a while. So basically, the traditionalists are relatively passive, whereas the fundamentalists are relatively active.

The third category of Muslim that I would talk about is the secularist. This is a new category that has come about only after extensive interaction with the West. You must understand that the Middle East in particular, especially after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, came under Western domination. And until the Ottoman Empire had to face Napoleon and had to deal with the Europeans when they arrived in Egypt—which was in the 19th Century, in a serious way in the 19th Century—this question had not arisen about secularism, about what is the role of religion in the political sphere—Is there a difference between private religion and public religion, etc., etc.?

The secularists ended up becoming the favored party of most Western powers everywhere. They were easier to deal with. Anybody who could learn English, who put on a tie and had a wife who was willing to come to the party without her head covered—these were our allies. And the secularists ended up dominating most post-colonial governments in the Muslim world.

And even to this day, there is this whole attitude, you know: Attaturk is the right guy. He did the right thing about the Muslims, and he knew how to deal with them: He used force. But in my opinion, it also had another consequence. It has pushed a lot of people who would otherwise be traditionalists into the fundamentalist corner—*because*, after all, this Jacobin type of secularism that has come to the Muslim world has said that there are certain things that are within the sphere of the government, and there are certain things that are within the sphere of the theologians.

It aims actually to try and roll back the influence of religion: Government intervenes against religion in this particular radical version of secularism, instead of the American version of secularism where the government does nothing to intervene in religious matters, but religion flourishes. And in fact, here in America you can have a church-going man as President. It's just that the process of legislation is still a secular process. If the majority of Congress wants to vote or make laws on the basis of what they think are biblical laws, fine, but the law doesn't become law simply because it is something that is provided for in the Bible. That is the concept of American secularism. People can be religious, yet the state is not run according to religion, and there is no state religion.

The European version, or the French version of secularism that spread in the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East, was the Jacobin version, which says that the state has an obligation to keep religion at bay. And especially Attaturk, and then many of his successors: Bourkeba (sp) in Tunisia, King Amanullah in Afghanistan, the Shah in Iran, Suharto in Indonesia—all of them did one similar thing, and that was to roll back the frontier of religion, to try and say that religion is less relevant to contemporary reality.

The fourth category I would say are the modernists, people who realized that maybe there are three or four centuries of learning and analysis missing in our history, and that we need to catch up. And that includes making adjustments and understandings of our theology in a more contemporaneous light.

For example, for a long time there were no significant Muslim minorities living in non-Muslim territories. So there was a very simplistic paradigm: You were either in Muslim territory or a non-Muslim territory and, sometimes, the Muslim conquered a non-Muslim territory like India and ruled it. So even though they were a minority, they were the ruling minority rather than the ruled-minority. How do you deal with a modern world in which there are large Muslim minorities living, working, and having no official threat from the State against their religion? A question that—because it had simply not occurred in 13 or 14 centuries before—it simply had not been addressed.

And so the modernist will say, “We need to address all of this.” The modernist would say, “I will adhere to the religion but, at the same time, make adjustments and bring it more in line with

the contemporaneous reality of how I practice it.” The religion doesn’t change. It’s always the practice of religion that changes.

Now, modernists actually were people who made tremendous gains at the end of the 19th Century and the early 20th Century. Sayyid Ahmed Khan in India was a modernist. Because of his insistence on scientific learning, he was nicknamed a “natyry,” which was derived from the word “naturist,” because he always said “this is in the nature of things.”

He wrote a treatise to justify how—to say if Darwin is proven right—he was a contemporary of Darwin—he said, if Darwin is proven right, it won't be in contradiction with the Quran, because the Quran's language is metaphorical. And because it is metaphorical, if he is proven right he will still be right, and if he is proven wrong, he will be wrong, because this is a metaphor which is for us to interpret.

And he had tremendous success in appealing to a broad sort of Muslim opinion in India at that time. Mufti Abdul in Egypt, Rashid Rida in Syria—these were people who came up with this idea of we will adhere to our Islamic values, but we will interpret some of them and their practical manifestation and application in light of modern ideas.

How are these four groups interacting now? Well, first of all, let me talk about the secularists. The secularists, of course, have virtually everywhere been in power. I mean, whether it's the Baathists or whether it's the Arab Nationalists, or whether it is the *Pancasila* ideologues of Indonesia, or whether it is the Kemalists in Turkey—these are all secularists. In my view, by and large, they are Jacobin secularists: People who have believed that the role of the state is to diminish the role of religion in the lives of people.

And there has been a backlash against them. Beginning with the Iranian Revolution of 1979, when the ham-eating, you know, wine-drinking Shah was toppled on grounds of “Hey, this guy doesn't represent our values”—that’s what the mullahs said. Most people who participated in the Iranian Revolution probably hadn't thought that it will now desired in a theocracy, and that was probably their intention, which is why Iran is right now going through the convergence that it is going through in terms of the battle for ideas: All points of view are fighting.

I would describe the secularists as—if I was to give a cliché to each group, I would say the secularists represent the point of view forward without Islam. That's what they want to do. They want to move forward without Islam. I mean—okay, so I have the name Husain because my dad gave it to me. Or his name is Muhammad or Kamal, or Habib—but he doesn't want to be religious, and doesn't want to have anything to do with religion. And the West has generally liked these people. Especially Europeans have traditionally liked them. And, since America got involved in the policy in the Middle East, etc., we've ended up liking these guys because these are the guys that were handed over to us.

But these are the guys who have also created the backlash. And what they have done is they have encouraged and swelled the numbers of the fundamentalists whom I would say can be described by the cliché, “Let's go back to Islam.” So there's one that wants to move forward without Islam, and this other group that wants to go back to Islam.

The traditionalists want to stay with Islam. Whatever is the way our father, grandfather, or whatever practiced—let's just do it, they say. Yes, modernity is there. It's not for us to rationalize it. It's not for us to deal with it. Can't argue with it. Can't handle it. But, you know, we live in our own little passive world.

And then the modernists, who I think are the people that think that we need to move forward with Islam. I think what needs to be done in the current age in terms of policy is that we need to revisit the modernists, because the secularists have certainly not delivered in terms of being able to lead the Muslim world into the modern era. In some cases, we have ended up supporting traditionalists, or who we thought were traditionalists, like the Saudi family, who ended up actually strengthening the fundamentalists.

What is the ratio? Well, I wouldn't be able to give numbers, but I can simply say that, within the fundamentalists, there are two further groups. The radicals, for one, have decided that, since we are rejecting modernity and the West, we actually have to fight it. And if we are going to try and go back to Islam, then what we have to do is eliminate all that that comes in the way of our going back to Islam.

So, for example, their hatred for America and American power is because American power represents the might, the strength, the economic, military, cultural domination of the world by a worldview that does not enable these people to transform their whole societies and move them back to Islam quickly. Because here is somebody who says his prayers five times a day, but also listens to the radio, and listens to Britney Spears' music—and that's not right, because going back means wiping all of this out.

The Taliban were a great example of radicals who actually tried to wipe out virtually everything. I mean, if they had to kill people, they killed people. If they had to blow up buildings, they blew up buildings. If they had to sort of turn off electricity so that people couldn't watch television, they just took away electricity, etc., etc., etc.

And, among them are further extreme radicals who would say, "Well, we can embrace technology, but only the technology of destruction. We will not learn to make planes, or even to fly planes for a benign purpose of taking people from one place to another. We'll learn to fly planes so that we can hijack them and smash somebody else's building." It's a destructive, nihilistic, anarchist kind of attitude that we have to destroy everything else to be able to go back to our Utopian worldview or our roots.

What is happening in the Muslim world right now is that, because of the knowledge gap I spoke about, then there is the major the democracy gap, which everybody recognizes. Of the 57 Muslim countries, only a handful have a fully democratic government. The Middle East is the worst. Of 22 countries, none of the Arab countries—*none* is a democracy.

And in case of the Iraq and Afghan wars, the U.S. government has, on the one hand, declared the promotion of democracy in the Muslim world as its objective, but it has also created a dilemma for itself. The two countries whose governments we didn't like, we have gone and changed their

regimes. And we hope that, by holding elections and encouraging democratic politics, we will build democracies there.

But we still do not have a solution for those Muslim countries that are our allies. So as long as you are our ally, you do not have to fear a regime change and, because you do not fear a regime change, you are not going to reform yourself. And so you remain stagnant. And that stagnation continues to play in the civil war of ideas.

How does it play so far? Try and visualize a bunch of young Arabs in Saudi Arabia, or a bunch of young people in Egypt. The economy is not growing—I've already given you the numbers overall. Nothing's happening. Ideas are not coming about. Not many books are being translated. A lot of books that are being written are just rhetorical books against the West. Every now and then there's a novel that you can read. But the only thing that has any punch in it is religious—and more often than not, it is fundamentalist religious rather than modernist religious. It's not, you know, somebody's book about how we can change the political system within the Muslim world. It is about how we had a great moment in the ninth century and how we can recreate it, how to produce latter day Khalid bin-Walids and Taliq Benazirs (sp)—all the heroes of early Muslim history. That's what the Muslim young people are reading.

So, where will they line up in the civil war of ideas in terms of the four factions? I give this speech in Arabic or Urdu, and I ask people in a Muslim country—500 people, young people between the ages of 16 and 21—and say, “Okay, go into a corner. These are the four points.” So where do you go?

The secularists have failed. They have offered nothing to society. They have not really built any substantive institutions. They haven't brought economic progress of a significant nature, and certainly not something that has trickled down to the ordinary man. In most cases, they represent greed and represent themselves and their own very fancy lifestyles. I mean, very frankly, it was rather difficult to be inspired by the Shah of Iran.

So what do you do? You don't want to go into the secularist corner because the Shah represents the secularist corner. The modernist corner will probably be empty, because no one is actually fighting that battle right now. There aren't any people who are actually saying, “Hey, guys, 21st century interpretation of religious ideas. Twenty-first century application of religious ideas. Forward with Islam. Yes, we will have Islam as our faith, but we will have democracy as our polity. We will have the embrace of modern economic ideas for economic growth. We will encourage our young people to go forth and join the race that is going on in the world, because there is no other race that is going on in the world.”

So there is nobody actually articulating that. There are very few organizations saying that—most of them exist in the non-Arab world. In the Arab world, there are some beginning to assert themselves, but they do not have any traction or momentum. They do not have the resources. They haven't had the wind behind them in the last 50, 60 years.

Traditionalists, well, traditionalists have a lot of appeal, and there are a lot of traditionalists. But the traditionalists are just too passive. And basically, an energetic young man does not get

enough energy spent just by being good, saying your prayers, or going to mosque, or doing your Hajj once in a lifetime, or fasting during the month of Ramadan, or giving your Zakat. You don't have much of an income so you basically don't have to give anything away, anyway. But if you did have an income, you would give 2.5 percent of it away. So that traditionalist thing isn't fulfilling to the young—and so, the fundamentalists really are on an upswing.

Then there are the political factors. Even the secularists have been beating the drums for 50, 60 years, saying Muslims are victims of tremendous injustices and, of course, in some cases the argument of injustice is also valid. But even when it isn't valid, that is what you have heard since you were born. You've been told from your childhood that we are the victims.

Our territories have been taken away from us. We have been colonized. There are Muslims who are living in areas—you know, the Chechens are pushed around by the Russians. The Bosnians have been subjected to a genocide by the Serbians. The Kashmiris are occupied by the Indians. The Palestinians are being humiliated by the Israelis. We are a humiliated people who have a lot of injustice to contend with, and the way we are going to do it is fight it. That is the corner a lot of young people end up going in for that very reason.

On the one hand, there is the theological appeal. On the other hand, there is the organizational appeal. And last, but not least, I think the victim argument also plays in. And unfortunately, in some cases, the people who have been driving up the victim argument have been secularists who have done it for legitimacy in some cases.

I mean, for example, if you are an Arab government and you are doing nothing right, the one thing you can do right is rail against Israel and the United States and, thereby, tell people, “Well, you know, I mean I'm not that bad. At least I have the moral courage to stand up to the enemy.” And so, basically, what you are doing is you are playing up the enemy so that you don't have to face the internal stagnation, and you do not generate ideas.

So where do we go from here? Well I think that the U.S. actually needs a serious strategy of engaging the modernists and investing in supporting them. In some ways we have in the past aided the fundamentalists through specific, short-term policies. For example, by bringing all the radicals from all over the world to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets. We helped give them training and create trainers for further training. And we gave them some of the ideas—in the anti-Soviet phase in Central Asia—thinking that the hardline Islamists who would challenge godless Communism would be a great idea, because that would help bring the evil empire of the Soviet Union down.

So we have to contend with some of that legacy. There are people who will turn around to me and say, “Well why is it our business?” I don't have to go into too much detail, luckily, on that, because I think whoever says that probably hasn't been reading the newspapers or watching television for the last 2-1/2, three years.

I don't think that a military strategy of just locating all centers of power in the Muslim world and destroying them is a sufficient strategy. You can destroy Iraq today. You can destroy Syria tomorrow. Iran the day after. You have already bombed Afghanistan and thrown out the

Taliban. But the problem will continue to rise as long as the ranks of the fundamentalists continue to multiply.

And the way it works is—and again, I'm using this terminology “fundamentalist.” I know Muslims particularly get disturbed by it, because every Muslim who believes in the fundamentalists are not terrorists. I'm just using this terminology in a political science kind of way, so if there are Muslims in this audience who get offended by that label, please don't. I am talking only in terms of categorizing. And essentially, what is happening is a lot of traditionalists are moving into the ranks of the fundamentalists, and a lot of fundamentalists are moving into the more radical groups.

Now, bureau of statistics: One billion people—if only 10 percent of them were hardline fundamentalists, that's what? One hundred million. And if 10 percent of them decided to become violent Al-Qaeda-type fighters, suicide bombers, call them whatever—again, we don't want to get into the label business: There are the suicide bombers, there are the homicide bombers, it depends on what TV channel you watch. But if there's one million of them, there are just too many.

Right now, we have this major insurgency in Iraq in which we estimate that anything between 10,000 to 20,000 people are actually active in the insurgency. But that's not the only thing. These 10 to 20,000 obviously have a support network that runs into several hundred thousand. And I wouldn't be surprised if these guys' network runs into several million because, after all, the basic sort of rule of thumb of all insurgencies and all guerilla wars is that guerillas—Mao Zedong said it—guerillas need to be able to swim like fish in friendly waters. And if the waters in the Muslim world are friendly towards fundamentalism and towards a more radical back-to-Islam attitude rather than embrace of the future, then we're in trouble. But, after all, 1.2 billion people cannot be without a future. But that future lies in economic progress—That future lies in embracing of knowledge.

We cannot undo the wrong that was committed when our ancestors decided not to introduce the printing press, but we can make up for it and, maybe, look at all the realities of the contemporary world and harmonize ourselves with it rather than just be this bunch of victims complaining, fighting, and trying to rectify historic injustices. That frame of reference needs to actually be pushed in the Muslim world. It won't be done just by governments and regimes, because, again, authoritarian regimes can be our allies in a political sense, but can they be our allies in the world of ideas?

I don't think so, because, for their own legitimacy, they will again—for example, no government in Pakistan is going to turn to the people, especially an unelected one, who doesn't have any support, is going to turn to the people and say, “And by the way, at \$2,000 per capital income on a purchasing price parity basis, we don't really need these darn nukes, which cost us so much to maintain and keep,” because every time there is a political challenge, the opposition is saying we are about to demonstrate in the streets, the President of Pakistan will tell his military to test a new type of missile.

And there will be celebrations in the streets orchestrated to tell the people, “You haven’t got a per capita that’s high, food supply is a problem, no jobs, the streets are all full of potholes, there are no buses for you to get around anywhere, anyway. But hey, look what, we are a proud nation with nuclear capable missiles and by the way, our latest missile can reach all the way to Israel and every corner of India.”

So that is actually part of the problem. It is not part of the solution. And in Washington, D.C., in particular, it’s very difficult, because because the problems of the Muslim world are going to be more and more with non-state actors and less and less just with state actors.

I think one lesson of 9/11 that hasn’t been sufficiently learned is the importance of the non-state actor. There is still this tendency to think [that we can contain radicalism] as long as we can deprive these guys of governmental support, look we’ve got all these people on our side. We’ve got Mubarak, we’ve got the Saudi royal family, we’ve got Musharraf, we’ve got others—but it’s not going to work because the momentum is constantly in the other direction, and we will be fighting these fires for a long time to come.

I think I’ve said enough. There is time for discussion. Thank you all.

**HILLEL FRADKIN:** Thanks very, very much, Husain. I neglected to mention earlier that I am very pleased to say that at Hudson we will be hearing more from Husain, at least at Hudson, and I hope you’ll join us many times in the future, because he has agreed to co-chair this project with me, and I very much look forward to his insight and guidance.

I will turn it over pretty quickly, but I will ask a couple of questions. First, I want to put in a good word for the Madrasah, the old-fashioned Madrasah which, as you said, really still preserves something of that combined tradition of both theological sciences and rational sciences. And what is called a Madrasah today, in Pakistan, is—bears no relationship to it. And in that sense, it’s a further degradation of the tradition, the great tradition of Islamic scholarship.

I have two questions, and both relate to what your task is, if I may put it this way. Because clearly, or it seems to me fairly clearly, that you fall into, again, using your rough categories, the “modernist” camp.

What do you think will be the most telling argument with the young people who are tempted by fundamentalism? Or is it the case that one is simply not sure—that this is an experiment that one has to go forward with. But as in most intellectual and political discussions, one finds out by trying—in a way this is a strictly political process, which is lacking usually in the Muslim world. In a republic like ours, you find out by trying to sell different wares, and you find out what sells.

What do you think, as best as you can tell now, will be the most convincing argument to the people who, as you just recently described, feel that they need to derive some balm for the sense of despair and humiliation that they suffer from? That’s question A. And B, then, is a specific question having to do with the terms—the terms of the debate, as you’ve described it.

And I think it's a very important point to emphasize, as you did, that, in some ways, the framework of this war of ideas within the Muslim world was laid down a long time ago, and we're still operating within that structure. That's clear enough on the side of the radicals because they so frequently cite Ibn Taymiyah—who is, after all, a 13th century theologian—as a present authority, and regard the people with whom he was embattling as their own enemies in the present time.

It was important, it seemed to me, that you bring up the impact of Asharite theology on the long haul. One aspect of Asharite theology was to call into question really the factor of human freedom. Without going into all the precise twists and turns of Asharite theology, it has seemed to me that this is a specific disability that the Muslim tradition operates under in the present time. If it is the case that freedom is responsible for—or is at least an important element of—modern institutions and principles and the progress that the rest of the world is making is, then how does one handle the lack of freedom in a serious intellectual and theological way? Please let me hear your thoughts, then I promise I will throw the floor open.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** Great. I think you are right about the Madrasah. There is a stagnation in the Madrasahs because they haven't updated their curriculum, in many cases. But, for example, (inaudible) has worked quite fine. It resulted from the same tradition of the Madrasah. They need to expand into more contemporary-style education—and basically, theological studies have to be seen as theological studies. But what has happened, of course, is that lack of investment in education as a whole in the Muslim world has resulted in the Madrasah becoming the only source of education.

So, I went to a Madrasah, by the way, and I learned the Quran, and I learned the Hadith, and of course, I didn't graduate because I didn't complete it. So in that sense, I am a bit of a dropout, but so was Mullah Omar and he did quite well for his, and I probably did well on other scores.

But then, there is other things that you learn about. In Pakistan, there were 600 Madrasahs in 1960. There are 10,000 now. The reason is because the state just stopped investing in public schools. And so, the problem of education in the Muslim world is not—as it is erroneously understood in Washington—how do we change the Madrasahs? You basically just change the education. The lack of education is the problem and, to some extent, at least the guy in the Madrasah offers some hope, because he is literate.

Sixty percent of the world's Muslim population is not literate—*Six-zero*. I'll actually back up this statistic, based on national statistics and national averages, and prove that my figure is correct. Six-zero percent of the world's Muslims are illiterate. That means they've not had Madrasah or they haven't had public school. You know, they just cannot read, you know? And that, I think is just—that is the bigger problem.

So, you see, we sometimes get sold these bill of goods by our allies. And so, immediately after 9/11 somebody wanted a nice aid package and persuaded some American diplomat, “Hey, you know, all you have to do is give me \$400 million to reform my Madrasahs,” and so we don't know how much of that money is gonna end up in the next missile test. But for the moment, that is what we are doing. And there are all these NGOs here who start doing these studies, and then

there are all of these sort of semi-educated kind of—anybody who has been to the Muslim world two times is a Muslim world expert these days. And so he gets a job and he writes this fancy little thing of how we're going to change Madrasahs and start teaching the people.

But I once wrote a piece in the foreign policy magazine in which I said I went to this radical Madrasah, where people were being trained for Jihad and I told this young man, “Well, I hear the government is not going to give a grant to your Madrasah to teach you mathematics. What is your view?” And he said, “Well I don't know much about mathematics, but I do know if I learn mathematics, that will enable me to calculate how much reward I'll get when I blow myself up.”

So, I mean, just introducing mathematics and sort of donating country, it's a frame of mind that needs to be changed. And that's only a very minority fringe. So, on the Madrasah, I agree with you. It's a great institution. It just needs to be moved in the direction where it was originally intended to. But more important than that is contemporary education and ending illiteracy, and eroding this knowledge gap in the Muslim world that is serious.

The most compelling argument for modernization in the Muslim world and the whole subject of freedom are interlinked. I think—I think that these—that the Asharite's success—which, by the way, the Asharites weren't a bad lot, but they created the creed, the dogma, you know, and thereby restricted the scope for thought and analysis. Their critique of the philosophers, for example, just took away any role for reasoning and argument.

And among the fundamentalists, there are certain so-called reformers that began—they began by arguing, “Well we introduce to reason again.” But again, they limited their reason and reasoned only within a certain context. So I think that the desire for freedom—which, by the way, is now becoming universal—and opting for freedom does not mean you stop being a Muslim, because, you see, Islam is so much an integral part of the identity of Muslims everywhere.

It's very interesting. Once I was as a journalist traveling in Southern Philippines, in Mindanao, where there was a war going on. It's still going on but, at that time, it was a different kind of war. And I went and I used to ask people, they call themselves Moros, which, of course, was a term of derogation that was used by the Spanish and the Americans for them, but then they adopted it. And they started calling themselves the Moro National Liberation Front. Of course, now that's changed to become the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In those days, the Moro National Liberation Front—so I would go to somebody and I'd say, “So, you know, are you a Moro?” And the guy would turn around and reply to me and say, “Yes, I am a Muslim.” Then I would reverse the question with the next guy, and I said, “Are you a Muslim?” And the guy turned around and he said, “Yes I am Moro.” And so, my conclusion for that was that, for them, it's interchangeable, it's identity. And in the Muslim world, one of the biggest fears is that Westernization—and part of it has to do with this whole Jacobin secularist ideal, that most of the people embracing the West stop being a Muslim.

And what we need to do, I think, is somehow create that idea that you will not stop being a Muslim. You will not lose your identity. Your sisters will not all of a sudden take off their

clothes and start jumping into bed with strange men. That is not what modernity is about. Those are not things we should be afraid of. You should actually look at building institutions and embracing what the world has achieved in the last 400 years when you shut yourselves down.

For example, you know, in Oman, up until 1972, the Oman's leadership was Hajjite. And the Hajjites are old, historic, and very tradition-minded. At some point somebody said, "Well, bad news and bad things happen in the evening," so they used to shut the gate of the walled city. Up until 1972, at sunset, the gates of the walled city in Muscat were down.

Well they've opened them up now. It doesn't mean Muscat has gone to hell in a handbasket. But basically, it's saying, hey guys—they wouldn't allow the oil companies to drill for oil for example. Of course, that's why there's this whole theory that the oil companies have actually got the former Sultan toppled so that a new Sultan would open the gates basically for the oil.

But, come on. The point is there's more literacy there as a result, and there's participation that will come. So freedom is a compelling argument, but, at the same time, there has to be reassurance that this freedom will not mean the erosion of your identity, which is why I think that, by backing secularists throughout recent history, we have ended up actually strengthening the fundamentalists, because it forces an either/or choice between supporting Osama Bin Laden or the Shah of Iran. If given that choice, I'd be on Osama bin Laden's side. That's how the people feel, you know. And that choice has to be eroded.

**ZEYNO BARAN:** Can I ask two quick questions? First, on the modernists: I think it's a two-way dialogue, and I'm thinking specifically about Turkey. I would say, right now with the current government and the civil society in Turkey, the modernists are basically in the majority. And what they're trying to do is exactly what you were saying—which is telling Europe that they want to be Muslim, only Europe is only comfortable with a Turkey that is secular. And for any of you following this, there's been a whole set of discussions about the Muslim identity that Turkey would bring into Europe. And, of course, if Turkey were to join in, in about 20 years, it could be the leading nation in the EU, so it's creating a huge difficulty.

How would you deal with this issue? Because, if Turkey cannot be accepted, and it has been one of the leading countries in terms of educational development. I mean, I think Turkey is one of the Muslim countries that probably figures high on the statistics you mentioned. If Turkey doesn't get the right kind of welcome from the EU, what do you think it will do to all of us trying to open up a little bit room for the modernists?

The second thing is, I fully agree that the U.S. has to support the modernists, but the question is how? Take, for example, the broader Middle East initiative. Neither Egypt nor Saudi Arabia, of course, participated and, within existing frameworks, the US ultimately has to work with secular states right now. How do you go about it, then, because these secular establishments obviously don't want to lose any of their controls. How do you go about it realistically?

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** I'll answer the second question first. Look, I am very concerned about how, after Iraq and Afghanistan, there's no American strategy for the forward policy for the freedom and democracy. I mean, okay, so are you going to bomb everybody? I don't see the

United States bombing Saudi Arabia. And so, there has to be another strategy for promoting democratic and stable governments. And my theory is that if you've used nation-building in Iraq and Afghanistan, maybe you need to do opposition-building in the other Muslim countries.

Very frankly, you have an ally, but he's not a good ally, so what do you do? I mean, during the period of separation, it's fine to date someone else, isn't it? So, you basically start looking for alternatives who are slightly closer to the idea of modernity. For example, one of the lessons we haven't learned from the Shah of Iran. I once asked an American intelligence officer who served in Iran, "How did you get Iran so wrong?" He said, "Well, we had a deal with the Shah that we will not go out into the countryside, etc., on our own, and all of our people will operate through and inform the Sawak." And so, the CIA worked through the Sawak almost exclusively, and couldn't realize what ferment was being created down below.

And I think we have still not learned that lesson. We still have all these regimes, and we still trust the regimes to provide for the stability. And when things fall apart, we'll deal with it when it comes. My view is that we need to change that—we need to engage oppositions more seriously and build them where we can. And if the governments get upset with it, to hell with them. We'll still do it, and that's because of the importance of non-state actors.

I mean, for example, Egypt—they've got a classic model. They allow a few intellectuals who speak English to be critical of the government, but they know they're not a serious threat. The only political party they allow to work, even though it's not legal, is the Muslim Brotherhood. So every time the Americans interact with Mubarak, Mubarak's great story is, "Well, it's either me or the Muslim Brotherhood, and all these nice little intellectuals are good for you to invite to conferences," because he will not allow a serious opposition political movement to be organized.

It's time for us to start engaging in that and organizing those movements, even if it involves Congressionally-approved funds. Why should it? Because the message we've given to the Arab and the Muslim world is: "if your government speaks, or is rhetorically against the United States, we'll bomb it and take it over. We'll engage in regime change. But if the government is smart, and behaves and talks to us nicely, then they can get away with anything. Pakistan, they can get away with their nuclear weapons. Libya can get away with anything it wants because now they've done the good thing, and so it's all about how you are with us."

Now, I know that the realist school would argue that that's what foreign policy is about. But, if you are looking for a grand strategy beyond the foreign policy—you did it in case of communism. We went in many places and invested in institutions, some in the private sector in the United States even did it by building institutions and ideological movements. That was how the U.S. confronted communism in countries like Italy and France in the late '40s and '50s, which seemed to have much larger communist parties than they were by the 1960s and '70s. Taking the steam out of them required political engagement. I think that needs to be done by the U.S. in the Muslim world.

On the question of Turkey, there are two sides to it. I know the Europeans have their whole list of arguments against Turkey's accession. But the sooner that Europe comes to terms with the

fact that it has to deal with its Islamic question the better. It's not going to be that all Muslims are going to drop dead one day and wake up as Europeans.

France itself is going to end up with 20, 25 percent of its population as Muslim. The French don't want to produce babies, the Algerians and the Moroccans do. And so, there's going to be a demographic shift whether they like it or not. And they have to come to terms with it. Bringing Turkey into Europe may actually have a positive impact, because it ends the polarization.

Very frankly—and Hillel and I have been talking about this—A Muslim scholar from India who ended up in Saudi Arabia wrote a book in 1963 titled, *The Coming Clash Between Islamism and Westernism*. Long before Huntington, long before anybody else, he said that this clash is desirable for us. The more polarized the Muslim world is, he argued, then when the final choice is between being like the West's little stooge or being Muslim, most Muslims will become radicalized.

So, polarization suits the Islamists and the extremists, and by rejecting Turkey, the Europeans say, "You're—you people are totally incapable of ever being like us. You will never be like us." If that happens, you are actually accentuating the polarization and, the more you polarize, the more the fundamentalists gain ground, in my opinion.

**ZIAD ASALI:** Yes, I am Ziad Asali with the American Task Force on Palestine. My question really is about your dismissing the secularists in your characterization as being the people who have taken over pretty much for the century and have failed. What has indeed failed in the Arab and Muslim world is the state system. What all these societies have in common—whether they are republicans or hereditary republicans, or monarchists and other conservative types of governments—is a system in which the state monopolizes power in all its aspects. But this was not a particular failure of the secularists.

What we did not have in the Arab world and the Islamic world is the emergence of a liberal democratic—small "L", small "D"—institutional tradition. There is no need for assuming an Islamic particularity about needing Islam for a solution. So, I think it will be an admission of failure of an experiment that has not taken place.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** I go a little further than that. Why didn't the secularists liberalize? Why was it so difficult for all of them to see the logic of it? I was trained to ask the question "why" at the end of everything, and I agree with you that the state system failed, but why?

Why was it that, even the most liberal of these people couldn't do it? If there is no Islamic particularity then, why is it that none of them could embrace and think beyond themselves? Why do political leaders in Muslim countries, even when they begin with theoretically different perspectives—whether its Saddam Hussein, or Mubarak—all have in common the question, how can I promote the career of my son when I'm too old? So, there is something there that needs to be inquired into. I don't have an answer offhand.

And I wasn't being dismissive of the secularists. All I was saying was that, at this particular juncture, in the battle of ideas, what ideas are the secularists articulating that are winning hearts

and minds? That's my point. Right now, most of them—a lot of them have embraced anti-Americanism as their ideology. All they do is rail against America. What that does is it also helps the fundamentalists recruit.

So, when I talk to my secularist friends, I just say that, in the Cold War era, you had an ideology. Some of you were socialists, some of you were communists, some of you were republican, some of you were nationalists with a capital N and an underscore. But all of that is gone, kind of, in the hearts and minds. If you pick up a magazine or a newspaper, who is the most erudite? Who is making the most vehement and impressive argument? The impressive arguments are not coming from the secularists—that's what I meant. I didn't mean that they should be dismissed. They are an important factor, if they can get their act together, energize and focus themselves, and then convince people of something other than anti-Americanism, then they can play. And I don't think those things are happening these days in any significant way. Not that it isn't happening, but it's not happening in any significant way.

**LUIS LUGO:** Luis Lugo from the Pew Forum on Religion in Public Life.

Just a quick follow-up question to your response on supporting the modernists. Given the view of the United States that's prevalent throughout much of the Muslim world, wouldn't any close U.S. support for modernists undermine their status within their respective societies? In fact, wouldn't that argue for going the whole way with an NGO strategy—which is to say non-governmental institutions helping non-governmental institutions rather than any U.S. government support? So I just wanted you to clarify what you meant by “we” when you said we need to be supporting the Modernists. Is “we” the U.S. government, or “we” the institutions that are pro-democracy and understand the connection between democracy and Islam?

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** Well, as somebody whose papers are stuck in the INS bureaucracy somewhere, when I use the word “we,” I certainly never speak of the U.S. government. My connection there is very tenuous.

So, what I mean by it is American society. This is a concern because, after all, this war against terrorism is not a war that can be won because it's a war against an idea. Just to give you an idea, I've been studying some of these other movements that have been inspired by similar ideas, There was such a movement in India which started in 1810, and the British in 1870 proclaimed their victory over it.

It was called the “muhajedin movement,” and in 1870, the British took the people and, like Guantanamo, they put them on the Andaman Islands, and created a penal colony there where these guys were kept. That year, the Viceroy decided to visit the Andaman Islands, proclaiming victory because the movement had been eradicated. And guess what happened? One of these guys who'd been a prisoner there for 40 years took a piece of rock that he'd been sharpening and stuck it right through the heart of this man, the viceroy. And this was when the movement had ended! So until and unless the mindset is dealt with, we will continue to have a problem. We think we've killed a few. But there's more coming down the line.

So in that sense, yes, we need civil society, NGOs, etc. And if the U.S. government can ever learn to be subtle, maybe the U.S. government can have subtle involvement. But the fact remains that it is in American national interest to engage with the modernizers because, otherwise, we will have several Iraqs and we will have several Afghanistans. I mean, I don't know how many of you remember, just before we got into Iraq, there was this little enclave in the Kurdish area that was being run just like the Taliban ran.

Fallujah as a town has been run like Afghanistan under the Taliban. They're chopping people's hands off and things like that. So, the point is that to have enough traction to be able to create this. How many of them are we going to bomb, and how many—and for how long? Yes, we should if we can, but what it's proving is that there is going to be no final victory. There's going to be no final instrument of surrender on the Missouri, people signing and everything coming together. These are people who are resilient and their ideas are resilient, and they need to be combated—*ideologically*.

That's my core idea. The *how* of it—I leave that question to people who have already sworn their oath of allegiance to the United States and are not waiting for their papers stuck in the INS bureaucracy like me.

**UWE SIEMON-NETTO:** I'm Uwe Siemon-Netto, religion editor for United Press International. I have, again, two questions. Seems to be fashionable here, but they are tied together.

I'm constantly trying to get in touch with modernist scholars and leaders in the Islamic world, here and in Europe and overseas. And it is almost impossible to reach them—well, you can reach them, but they always keep telling you, "Don't quote me."

Give you one example when there was this big story about a woman being sentenced to be stoned to death in northern Nigeria. I got in touch with some modernist Islamic leaders who said, "yes, we have to do something about it, and we have to take a different view of the Qur'an." I wrote this, and quoted one person in particular, a woman. The next morning, she said, "Oh, my God, you published this." I said, "Well, I asked you to." We published this, and she was getting death threats. You will find that they estimate that about one percent of the leading figures in Islam and Europe count themselves among modernists.

The other thing that worries me very much concerns the good remark my neighbor made here about Turkey. There is a phenomenon in the sociology of religion that immigrants become more religious than they used to be when they were in their country. This applies to Europe very much. You have an increasing numbers of radicalized Muslims in Germany, but even more so in France, and both the Germans and the French have so far failed to create a core of imams who would preach in French or in German, and who would preach on the Qur'an.

As a result, you have in those ghetto areas in—around Paris and Lyon, for example—hundreds of radical imams that have infiltrated and radicalized the youngsters. By now, there's an estimate that 25 percent or more of the French ghetto population is radicalized. The area surrounding Paris used to be called the "Red Belt" because it was communist. Now it's Islamic.

**HILLEL FRADKIN:** It's the Green Belt.

**UWE SIEMON-NETTO:** It's the Green Belt now. So, this certainly needs to be addressed. And a further thing I'd like to evidence. There are increasing reports specifically from Italy that the Sharia law is being practiced in Italian populations. You suddenly see people running around with a hand missing, or something like that. Thieves. I am very, very concerned about this because it's all very easy to say Turkey's accession to the EU makes sense. But is European society capable of handling this as well as American society? And where do you find the leadership for Muslims in Europe?

**HILLEL FRADKIN:** I just want to say I am struck by one point you made, and then I'll turn you over to Husain. But at least—your point about Italy in contrast to Turkey. In Turkey, you don't see people running around with a hand missing.

**UWE SIEMON-NETTO:** The Italian Muslims are clearly not Turks. On the other hand, we know from Germany, for example, that Young Turks growing up in ghetto areas in Germany—Kroitzbeck District in Berlin, for example—are infinitely more radical than their parents who immigrated to Germany to work in the open grocery stores, or something like that.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** All I would say on that is that I don't think Turkey, which is making a genuine effort to become modernist, should not be punished for the immigrants who are a different community. I mean, I agree with you that the immigrants tend to be more radical. Secondly, there's another practical problem.

The practical problem is, when these immigrants came, they all came looking for work. Some made their money, and now they're looking for their roots. And when they're looking for their roots, Islam is the answer, so they need the mullah. Once you are prosperous, you build a mosque with your money, and then you need an imam for the mosque. You see, the problem is no one thinks beyond the moment in dealing with these things. I don't know about the situation in France, because I come from Pakistan. But I can talk about the British Muslims. In the 1980s, every radical mullah could get 500 rupees in Pakistan for being an imam. But then they realized they could get 500 pounds on the exchange rate in England—so they decided to go to England.

And so, all of these mosques were being built by the community, because now that people have worked, the first generation worked, they got the money, once they got the money, they built the mosque. Once they had the mosque, they needed the Imam, and they invited the radicals from Pakistan. So, the way to change that, of course, would be to create educational institutions in England where Imams could be trained. Europe needs to do it, and they are trying to work on it. England has to work on it more.

Very frankly, I think that combating the radical ideas with moderate ideas is going to change it. Why is it that radical Islam was able to gain so much strength in Central Asia all of a sudden? What happened was that, under communism, you weren't allowed to have religion. Once you were allowed to have religion, then whoever got to them first and explained to them what your religion is, they won. I mean, here I am sitting in Central Asia knowing I'm Islamic, but

knowing nothing about it because I haven't gone to school. Now, somebody comes and tells me. And it's the radicals that have had the initiative. The modernists now have to take the initiative.

On the answer to your question about people being afraid: yes, there are people who are afraid. Modernist scholars have been killed. They have been killed in this country. They are being threatened. My attitude is—the last time I spoke, somebody said to me, “You know something? One of these days they're going to kill you.” I said, “Well, I do get death threats,” but I tell my audience please remember to send flowers if that threat materializes. I have to go on, and there are others who are like that.

But the momentum to not be afraid always comes. People are usually scared only in the beginning. Once there's momentum, once there's strength in numbers, there's strength in backing up. If I know that somebody threatens me, I can call the FBI. Then I feel a little stronger. Or like a fellow scholar of mine—he was about to go to Kuwait, and he was warned don't go because you're going to be kidnapped while you're there, because the FBI was able to intercept something. So, it's a combination thing but, in general, I understand what you are saying about some of the modernists being a little shy about saying things publicly.

But I am less concerned about what I say to UPI because even though that's important, UPI will be read by people here. I want to be able to say the same thing that I say to you within the Muslim world, and that's my other concern. There are a lot of wannabe modernists who actually speak two languages. When they're speaking in English, they're modernists. When they're speaking in Arabic or their native language, they are traditionalists or fundamentalists. That is a pitfall that we need to really check. We need people who say the same thing in both languages because this war of ideas is not about convincing you that I'm a great modern Muslim. What difference does it make to you? The battle of ideas is about the change I can bring within my own community.

**JAY TOLSON:** Yes, Jay Tolson, *U.S. News and World Report*.

Rather than talking just about the theoretical, we've had three years in which to do something, and we haven't done a whole lot. What I would be interested in hearing, if you could be candid about this, is what you see as the major failing of the past three years in either U.S. government or general social NGO policies to really start engaging in this war of ideas. Do you see it primarily as an intellectual failure, an inability to frame the question in the way that you've framed it today? Have we come to the point of being able to frame the issue and how we should pursue it? Or is it more—and in a more worrisome vein—a failure of will? Even though we've paid a lot of lip service to various programs, including the Middle East initiative, are we really willing to engage Muslim minds in a discussion or a debate? Are there residual ethnocentric fears in this country that are preventing that kind of engagement and barring any real discussion so far?

Is it, thirdly, an institutional failure? There's been a total implosion, as far as I can tell, at the State Department in the Office Of Public Diplomacy—a lack of leadership, really an absence of

leadership. But it's not just in the State Department. There are other institutional failures—at the Board of Broadcasting Governors, and at the news and TV stations.

Fourthly, is it really a case of cowardice? In this case, I was talking to you earlier about the case of Tariq Ramadan. Whether or not he is a dangerous character, he has the audience. He has the mic in Europe. And our refusal of the visa to him has come across, I think to many European Muslims, and particularly to those who are right at that dangerous fulcrum point, as an act of cowardice—that we are unwilling to hear somebody who represents a point of view that might be a little discomfoting. I'd like you to assess those in light of the last three years.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** The answer is “all of the above” in different ways. On one hand, you have an absence of will, of understanding, and of dealing with the enormity of the problem. Everybody wants to do the little thing. Nobody wants to do the big thing. Bombing is the easy part because there you'd really have a major advantage. Changing hearts and minds takes a long time, and who wants to do that? And so, there's that.

Framing the issue is definitely a problem as well. One of the parts of that problem has to do with who are the people in this country who take the most interest in subjects relating to the world of Islam. It usually becomes a subset of the Middle East—of U.S. Middle East policy. It's a major, major problem, in my opinion. For example, when Edward Djerejian went to do this big worldwide survey, his team included only one Muslim. He had one. That was a doctor from St. Louis, a Republican Party contributor who was not a scholar or anything. He just went. The other four Arabs on the Commission were Christian. People tend to forget that there are Arabs who are Christian and not Muslim. And so, this assumption that all Arabs are Muslim, ends up becoming a function of Middle East policy. That kind of pulls it all down in terms of framing the issue.

Last but not least, I think the institutional problem is a significant one, too. There are just too many institutional biases. For example in the State Department, there are the Arabists and then there are their rivals, and they just want to fix and fit everything according to their agendas.

I'll just give you one example. At one meeting I was invited to, I offered what I thought was a very simple idea. The simple idea is that the Rabita al-Alam al-Islami, or the Muslim World League, centered in Saudi Arabia, has been a global network of Islamic groups. And over the years, it has become a global network of radical Islamic groups and conservative radical Islamic groups. So, while technically and theoretically, the Muslim World League has come out with a fatwa against terrorism, they have collected radical ideologues from all over the world, and they have become part of the problem. So I said, “Look, why can't you find somebody—one of the foundations here that is, or USAID—and create a foundation that encourages Muslims who are moderate Muslims to have their rival Rabita: a rival League of Moderate Muslims?”

In the Cold War, we had the problem of communism. Some people started journals to understand it and combat it. Why can't we have a journal of monitoring radical Islam? There are some efforts by young people to try and promote the study of Islam and democracy. But they have been receiving limited funding.

And last but not least, there is always somebody who has his pet Muslim or his pet project, and that may not necessarily be the person with the weight, with the clout, with the gravitas. And that always happens in bureaucracies. Every bureaucrat has his own favorite person to turn to, and so you have quite a lot—if you actually read the USAID annual report, or this or that, there's enough going on, but where is its impact?

And then, there are those who have not yet understood the issue. The issue is ideology. The issue is not just culture. So, for example, when we established Radio Sawa—I had this criticism of Charlotte Beers, and she was personally very offended by my critique—I said, “To think that the methods of selling a credit card and the methods of changing people's religiously linked ideology would be the same is an erroneous view.” And so, what the Board of Broadcasters thought was that if we have long programming with Britney Spears and modern music and whatever, then they will start liking us. But I don't think it works that way because many in the Muslim world already like modern music. You don't need to use official resources for promoting quasi-Hollywood kind of stuff. And then we have *High Magazine*—it's very glossy, kind of a latter-day *Cosmopolitan* in the Arabic language. Well, there are already products like that in the Arabic-speaking world that are produced in France and in London.

Our issue is political and theological. Take the bull by the horns, and if you're not going to do it, all this beating about the bush isn't going to work. So, *High Magazine* actually had thousands of copies lying in bookstores because nobody wanted to read it. This is about ideology, and no one wants to engage in that because of fears and concerns.

**JOSHUA MITCHELL:** Josh Mitchell, Chairman of the Government Department at Georgetown. You used the term “ideology,” but let me try and recast it using another concept that you have raised earlier on several occasions—the problem of honor in an honor culture. I teach the history of political thought, and one of the great lessons in the West—if you look at Kant and Adam Smith and Rousseau and Tocqueville, and the list goes on and on, even Marx in his own twisted way addressed this—was that a lot of blood and a lot of ink was spilt over a period of 200 years battling over this question of whether a society shall be oriented on the basis of an honor. That's what you see in the aristocratic feudal era, and it took us 300 years to solve the problem with the idea of enlightened self-interest.

Now, you use the term “modernism”—and the way in which you use it is to suggest that, contrary to the Jacobin politics of Europe, which tried to get rid of religion, your label “modernism” is one that maps onto the American understanding. And that's great—that allows people in the Middle East to understand that there's a role for Islam and politics. But it in no way addresses this deeper question which is lurking in your analysis—namely, the problem of honor. So, if you go in there, providing an American model and presuming, as we all do in the West, that honor has been vanquished and we now have a society based on self-interest—which is largely the language of liberalism—then how can you speak to that group of 500 young men in the language of honor, which has largely been eradicated in the West?

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** It's a very good question. I think that we have to be sensitive and appreciative of the fact that, while we live in a post-honor world, the Muslim world still lives in

an honor world. And so, all our messages and all our dealings have to be adjusted and accommodated accordingly.

That said, it's still something worth doing. It's still something we have to do, you know? And the reason is because the stakes are too high. I mean, there are the resources questions and the economic issues—you know, oil, this, that, etc. For many Muslims, for example, Allah has a scheme, because the latest oil discoveries in Africa are also in the Muslim countries, lo and behold. Central Asian oil is also in Muslim lands. In East Asia, the three countries that produce oil—Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the major exporters—are all Muslims. So there's some scheme there, and you can't give up your SUV.

So, the point remains that you have to engage with that honor world and understand it and deal with it instead of just turning around and saying we cannot. And yes, it took 300 years for Europe to resolve its issues, but we do understand that when something has been resolved in one part of the world, for example, China where East Asia has taken a shorter period to resolve some of the honor issues...

**JOSHUA MITCHELL:** But China never had it in that sense...

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** Well, not in that sense, but the transition has been much faster in East Asia—and maybe we can service capitalists for a similar transition in the broader Muslim world.

And here, I would say one more thing again. We always focus on the Middle East. The broader Muslim world, excluding the Middle East, is undergoing certain transformations. For example, this whole Islamic liberal movement, as it's called. In Indonesia it's pretty strong—several million active members. I think that thus far, all our strategies for the Muslim world have been focused on the Arabic heartland—if we get that, we can change the broader Muslim world.

Maybe we need to think about a new strategy—one in which we take what is happening in the periphery and bring it back into the heartland. For example, the books that are being written in Indonesia and Malaysia, let's translate them into Arabic, rather than the other way around. The scholars from Malaysia and Indonesia and India and Pakistan who are modernists—they should be introduced to the Mideast rather than the other way around.

So, instead of the heartland to periphery process that has dominated the Muslim world for the last 12 to 13 centuries, we should start a reverse periphery to heartland process. This may have some impact because, if you notice, the Middle East, South Asia and central Asia are still honor-bound. East Asia has managed to dilute honor. It's still an honor culture, but Indonesia, Malaysia, and China with its 50 million Muslims have been able to deal with a post-honor world a little bit better. But the fact remains that it is still a problem, Josh, that we will have to deal with.

**RADWAN MASMOUDI:** Thank you, Husain. I really enjoyed your presentation.

I think the issue that we need to grapple with is the issue of debate in the Arab world and in the Muslim world. I think that if you were to make this presentation in any Arab country, you'd

probably convince the majority of the people. The problem is you can't. I was in Egypt just two weeks ago at a conference organized by Saad Edin Ibrahim, and we had a modernist—Jamal al Bedna (sp), who is the brother of Hassan Bedna (sp)—and he wrote 20 or 25 books on modernist Islam. All his books are banned in Egypt. So at the conference that we had just two weeks ago, we had a mob of people who we suspect were related to the Mukhabarat come in and disturb the conference, and especially the press conference at the end.

So really, in my opinion, the heart of the issue is freedom of expression and free debate, which we still don't have. And I think on this front, the U.S. government can really play the leading role—but it hasn't, and I think we need to focus on that. People in Egypt or in Morocco or in all these Arab countries don't really need our money. They have money, and they can organize themselves. And they have ideas. In many cases, they don't need us to bring these ideas from the U.S. or from Indonesia. They have their own ideas. The problem is they can't speak up.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** The regimes would not let them because they feel threatened by them. One of the strategies would be to set up all these radio services, as the U.S. did during the Cold War with the communist world. All the dissidents, their messages were broadcast.

Why can't the Broadcasting Board of Governors give all these dissidents who cannot reach their people from Cairo, let them reach them through long-distance radio services—or TV services? Give them the opportunity to give the message, which falls, in my opinion, under the rubric of opposition-building. It's in America's interest to build modernist oppositions in the Muslim world that are neither Ikwhan or fundamentalist, and that are not part of the regime and the Mukhabarat culture either. The Mukhabarat, obviously, being the intelligence services, basically just keep a very controlled process—they do not allow the discourse.

And freedom of expression, Radwan, is not going to come just through American pressure. But what the U.S. needs to do is to help circumvent the restrictions on speech. We must understand the policy considerations. The U.S. does not want to give up on Mubarak right now. So, what's the way around? My suggestion for the way around is that the U.S. keeps engaged with Mubarak, but also engages with a viable opposition and provides it with the opportunity to be able to give the message.

**CHRIS BROWN:** Chris Brown from Hudson Institute.

I just had a quick question in reference to the 60 percent illiteracy, and the fact that, to deal with that in a comprehensive manner, it will involve a vast infrastructure investment. I'm wondering if anyone's looking at alternatives—perhaps especially with the proliferation of satellite television throughout the Arab world, we might develop programs to teach literacy using such visual medium the same way Khomeini actually used audiotapes to teach his revolutionary ideas.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** I'm sure it's being looked at. But very frankly, the literacy problem of the Muslim world—I haven't seen anybody addressing it in a comprehensive manner so far. The Arab development report spoke of the Arab world and its knowledge deficit. Every now and then, USAID talks about it—but it's just moving too slowly. And eventually, the Muslim world

does need a functioning educational system that is both contemporaneous and somewhat respectful to tradition.

**FATIMA NIZA:** Fatima Niza. I'm from the Kuwait Embassy.

I was just wondering, in your speech, you did not mention the status of women in the Arab and Muslim world, and if they played a huge role in enhancing the radical movement. So, if you can elaborate on that.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** That's a very complex subject. I agree with you. I mean, every now and then I come across some radical somewhere whose main issue is women, and I think that the holding back of women is one of the biggest problems in the Muslim world. Without women's participation, as some people say, it's a 50 percent no-show. You cannot have the same level of development as other societies if half your society is not going to be participating in it.

I think, in some cases, the radicals have definitely played upon the fears of women's liberation leading to a more permissive society, and they have definitely recruited more people on that. But again, it is for Muslim women and, for that matter, Muslim men, to try and create that concept that just by allowing participation of women in day-to-day life as an equal of men does not necessarily mean the society will lose its moral compass.

**FATIMA NIZA:** One last comment. You said about the modernist Muslims that they're shy and afraid to speak up and to develop this circulative power...

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** —Some.

**FATIMA NIZA:** —Or power of circles. Is this because their government is allying with the fundamentalists and radicals more than the modern Muslims? And would you think now, after September 11<sup>th</sup>, that the governments in the Middle East will be switching their power to have an ally with the modernist Muslims?

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** So far, there is no sign that any of the governments are going to ally with the modernist Muslims for the simple reason that, as long as these governments want to be authoritarian, that fundamentalists are a better ally because they can always use them to turn around to the West and say, "Look the choice is between me and these guys. Do you want these guys? You don't want these guys? OK, then keep me in power. Help me. Give me the military support. Give me the security assistance," etc., etc. It's a little game the governments play.

Secondly, these people can be used for many functions within society. If you don't like an opposition person, these guys can go and beat him up for having made some remark that was un-Islamic. That has been done in Egypt quite a lot. Anybody who becomes a political challenge to the government, somehow, somebody describes him as un-Islamic, and then the radicals go and beat the hell out of him. Then the government turns around and says, "Oh, what a bad thing." Those kinds of games are ongoing.

**FATIMA NIZA:** Some will say Muslim states are becoming more liberal.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** Well, a little bit, a little bit. But, I'm somebody who says that change is in the eye of the beholder, and there is change with the intention of change, and there is change with the purpose of pretending to change.

And it was very interesting: I was in Kuwait not long ago. And let me tell you, I went to a bookshop to look for books, and here is what I found. I found all the books that you could normally expect—the magazines, the this, the that—and then I found all the books by Sayyid Qutb, Abul A'la Mawdudi, etc., etc. These were the books there—books on jihad and this and that. And then, when I asked for some of the more liberal works—I said any book by Arkoun, for example—none of that is available.

So, in that sense, I think that the change is not real. It's more cosmetic. Because, after all, these regimes also have a very complicated relationship with the West, so they also have to please the U.S. So, on the one hand, it's nice. And you know, in Pakistan, which I know very well, General Musharraf, to this day, thinks Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif—who are liberals and moderate—are his greatest rivals, even more so than the Mullahs.

And in the Parliament, it's a funny situation. Musharraf changed the Constitution so that the speaker of the Parliament will decide who will be the leader of the opposition—whichever party has the largest members of opposition, that party elects the leader of opposition. And although the largest number of members of opposition are from the People's Party of Benazir Bhutto, the speaker has appointed as the leader of the opposition the head of the Islamic party, so that Musharraf can tell the average ignorant American diplomat when he comes to him each time, "Look, the choice is between me or that mullah—who, by the way, is now on the official payroll." So it's a nice little game going on, and Pakistan keeps on getting \$1.7 billion from the World Bank and IMF, and \$700 million in bilateral U.S. assistance, and \$1.2 billion in rent for use of Pakistani military facilities in the war against terrorism. Great gig. I mean, you know, I wish I could run something like that.

**YEMIS KAMI (sp):** Yemis Kami. I'm from Pakistan, so this is my qualification.

My question is to Dr. Fradkin: Do you think that the Jewish community in this time should think about doing something about bringing Muslim, Christian and Jew together?

I want to give you little background. I used to work on the Hill. I worked for a couple of member of Congress, then I worked for the Republican National Committee. In those days, I used to attend bible study group on the Hill. Now, I consider myself very agnostic—or a seeker rather than a Muslim. Even my family is Muslim, and I used to describe myself either as agnostic or as a liberal Muslim. But now, even I have become very assertive of my Muslim identity, because of the way Muslims are being treated in this country. My nickname is Kami, but now if someone asks me about my name, I tell them my name is Mohammed.

I mean, there is so much hatred or contempt among—before September 11<sup>th</sup>, I felt that it was Jew who killed Jesus. But now I feel like, you know, there might be a turi (sp) in the pipe that would allege Muslim killed the Jesus, not—it wasn't Jews, you know? So, I mean, these are the very

people who are running the White House. These are the very people who—some of them hated Jews, and now these are the very people who hate Muslim.

And, I mean, I want to ask you, give me honest answer, over 3,000 American are killed, and we have killed, I mean, according to some Muslim claim, we have killed at least 50,000 Iraqis, and we have killed, like 10,000 Afghanis. They were innocent, as innocent as the people who are killed in World Trade Centers. So, what kind of book do you expect that would have the mind in Muslim societies when we have no respect for Muslim life in this society? You know? You have to be honest. I mean, there is absolutely no—we are not zero—we are showing zero respect for our Muslim life, so what do you think? Why do you think that those jihadi books won't be popular in those societies? We have to be honest about this. Thanks.

**HILLEL FRADKIN:** Since the question was—I think the question was addressed to me, but the latter part perhaps was to Husain.

I'll state what I believe to be true. I know many people at the White House and in other parts of this government. I don't know any one of them to hate Muslims. I do know people who have been responsible for Administration policy. They are support that policy. That doesn't—has nothing to do with their feelings about Muslims.

On the contrary, whether rightly or wrongly, they think they are assisting Muslims. I believe it's not the case, but let it be the case that, through fighting, 10 or 15,000 Iraqis have been killed who are not combatants. And to be honest, I don't think that's true, because of the precision of the munitions, among other things. I mean, if you look at what happened in the bombing that was done in Baghdad during the initial war, it is quite amazing to see one building completely destroyed with four buildings around it with no damage. So, this isn't to say that innocent people didn't die, but I think that the number was very small compared to other wars.

When asked to weigh that—if one can talk about these things in terms of numbers of human life lost and human suffering—then weigh it against the hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of people that Saddam Hussein murdered and tortured. I'm not saying that we will get a perfect outcome in Iraq. It seems very uncertain at the moment. But, on the other hand, you do not have Saddam Hussein in power. You do not have mass graves, which are being turned up every day, or every week in Iraq, which are never, ever covered in the American press, and I doubt whether they're covered in the European press. Graves that contain 30 to 40,000 people each.

So, this is certainly not a question of hatred for Muslims. It is unfortunate. I do know very well that many Muslims interpret it as such, and there are a variety of things that are responsible for that.

One of the things that Husain was very eloquent on was the problems of education in the Muslim world. He is similarly eloquent, and I think it's an observable fact, that there are certain parts of that education that have been more desolate than others. It is an observable fact that, to the extent there was an investment in education by the governments, it was in technical things. The things that were starved for money and for support were the social sciences and the humanities,

and in particular, history. So, the net result is that all the discussions that take place within the Muslim world about contemporary events do so in abstraction from the course of history.

There is often reference to history, but there's usually an abstraction from it, so that things like what happened in Iraq from 1978 on—or from before that—form no part of the background to the discussion or consideration of what's happening now. I'm not saying now where that leads you or what conclusion that leads you to, but that discussion doesn't take place. And that's the kind of discussion you have to have in order to properly assess what's going on.

I want to say one further thing about Islamophobia. Again, this is a problem. One can generalize from too limited an experience. There are some interfaith dialogues I wouldn't want to see promoted either, where everyone says everyone else is nice, and they don't come to terms with the fact that there are real differences. That doesn't get us any further. I do know that Muslims in this country are frightened. There are some reasons that has inspired this fear.

But I also think it's important for Muslims to look at the real facts of what has happened since 9/11. You have to look at this in the context of the course of American history. I can remember terrible times in this country. I'm old enough to remember terrible times in the South. I'm old enough to remember times when vicious people blew up churches with black children in them. And they murdered them, or murdered people who were civil rights workers and threw them in a ditch. That was a time when there was a good deal more hatred in this country than there is today, and I want to say this candidly.

I believe one of the great beneficiaries of this change has been the American Muslim community. If 9/11 had occurred some 20 or 30 years before, I believe that there would have been a very different public outcome, and a very ugly and unpleasant and also unjust outcome, because these things are always unjust. People are blamed for things that they're not responsible for. I'm, to be honest, impressed by the restraint of the American public and its respect for the rights of its American Muslim citizens—co-citizens—to respect them as citizens. Undoubtedly, there have been some ugly events but, proportionally, they're very, very small.

**HUSAIN HAQQANI:** All I'll say is—I'm not going to get into the detail that Hillel got into—but Kami, just remember, two wrongs don't make a right. And so, if somebody in the bible study group that you're referring to is promoting Islamophobia and prejudice against Muslims, they're wrong, period. Similarly, if somebody's having a Quranic study circle, or claiming that it's a Quranic study circle and promoting anti-Semitism, they're wrong, and I think we should just stop it at that. And one should not be used to justify the other. Islamophobia as a justification for anti-Semitism is wrong, and anti-Semitism as a justification for Islamophobia is wrong.

And at the same time, we should have a sense of proportionality. I think it's very easy to drive people into a frenzy. For example, whenever you create an us-and-them divide, it's always easy to say "us" is right and "them" is wrong. But the truth is sometimes there's a lot more complexity to the situation. I think Hillel rightly pointed out we still need to inquire.

I know, I know that war always has consequences—and by the way, I was not amongst those who was a supporter of the Iraq war. I have been critical. But that doesn't mean that I am not going to face the fact that Saddam Hussein killed more people, more Iraqis than the United States has—and Kuwaitis. The United States has not. There has to be a sense of proportionality.

There are people who are driving prejudice against Muslims in the United States, but let me point out another thing: There are Americans who are also fighting for the rights of Muslims. Who do you think are the lawyers who appear on behalf of the Muslims who are being held in prison? With due respect, many of them are Jewish Americans, so what does that show? It shows that this is just a political debate about hatred. There are people who will hate, and there are people who will not hate.

Let me just say a last thing. As a child when I studied the biography of Prophet Mohammed... I don't know how religious your family brought you up as, but there's that incident about this old woman who always used to dump garbage on the Prophet when he passed through her street. And then, there came a day when he passed through the street, and the garbage didn't land on him. And so, he went and inquired after her health because he wondered if she was sick. And she was.

Now, my point to you is this is an incident from Islamic history that is no longer being taught to the younger generation. We are being taught the eye for an eye thing—which, by the way, will always make the whole world blind. Plus, in many cases, there is a lack of proportionality. A few arrests, etc., but with absolute confidence I can tell you one thing: I'm sure you'll be voting on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, right? Yes, and your vote will be counted.

And you probably have a better chance in the U.S. of going to a court of law than in any Muslim country. I don't know if you know the incident—but Al-Zawahiri's brother is in an Egyptian prison. It was very funny: One day, the Interior Minister of Egypt was talking in a press conference, and in the process he said, “And by the way, we've just discovered that we have Al-Zawahiri's brother in our prison. We arrested him seven years ago but forgot about him, and we didn't remember that he was in our prison and, today, it has been brought to my attention that he's in our prison.” Would you rather live there in that system or here, where even the detainees of Guantanamo have some recourse to rule of law?

So, try and keep that in proportion, and I know that there are Muslims who are upset and angry, but even they should remember that they are probably better off. Even in this relatively bad moment, Muslims are better off in the United States in terms of legal protections and constitutional protections than in countries where there is no rule of law because of what the United States means and stands for.

I think that's a good note to end this afternoon on. Thank you all very much.