

HEARING OF HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE
SUBJECT: IS THERE A HUMAN RIGHTS DOUBLE STANDARD? U.S. POLICY TOWARD SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN, AND UZBEKISTAN.

CHAIRMAN: REP. WILLIAM DELAHUNT (D-MA)

WITNESSES: AMR HAMZAWY, SENIOR ASSOCIATE AT THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE; MARTHA OLCOTT, SENIOR ASSOCIATE AT THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE; THOMAS MALINOWSKI, ADVOCACY DIRECTOR AT HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH; THOMAS LIPPMAN, ADJUNCT SCHOLAR AT THE MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE

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REP. DELAHUNT: This hearing of the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight will come to order. Today we're continuing a -- in our series of hearings on the disparate treatment by the United States government with respect to countries with troubling human rights records. Our first hearing in the series addressed U.S. policy towards Equatorial Guinea and Ethiopia. In our hearing today we will hear testimony on -- relative to Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Uzbekistan, and I noted that one of our witnesses also added a section relative to Pakistan, and I welcome those observations. Before I read a rather brief statement pending arrival of my friend and colleague from California, the Ranking Member Mr. Rohrabacher, why don't I proceed to introduce our witnesses?

Let me begin with Tom Malinowski, who is the Washington advocacy director at Human Rights Watch. Prior to joining Human Rights Watch, he was a special assistant to President Clinton, and senior director for foreign policy speechwriting at the National Security Council. From 1994 to 1998, he was a speechwriter for Secretaries of State Christopher and Albright, and a member of the State Department policy planning staff. He's also worked for the Ford Foundation and as a legislative aide to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. He studied at the University of California at Berkeley and Oxford University, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. And the gentleman who just arrived who's now sitting to my right -- let me introduce Mr. Rohrabacher, the ranking member of the subcommittee.

Amr Hamzawy is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He has previously taught at Cairo University and the Free University of Berlin. He received his Ph.D. from the Free University of Berlin where he worked as an assistant professor at the

Center for Middle Eastern Studies. He also holds Masters degrees from the Institute of Social Studies at The Hague and the University of Amsterdam. He obtained his Bachelor of Science from Cairo University. He has been published frequently, and it includes titles such as "The Saudi Labyrinth: Evaluating the Current Political Opening", and "Human Rights in the Arab World."

Martha Brill Olcott is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, D.C. Her book, "Central Asia's Second Chance", examines the economic and political development of this ethnically diverse and strategically vital region in the context of the changing security that's post-9/11. She is professor emerita at Colgate University and has previously served as a director of the Central Asian American Enterprise Fund. Prior to her work at the Carnegie Endowment, Ms. Olcott served as special consultant to former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, who actually was a witness earlier today before the full committee, and she holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

Tom Lippman is an adjunct scholar at the Middle East Institute. He spent over 30 years as a reporter and editor for The Washington Post covering the war in Iraq, and served as diplomatic national security and Middle East correspondent while based in Cairo. He is the author of "Inside the Mirage: America's Fragile Partnership with Saudi Arabia" as well as "Madeline Albright and the New American Diplomacy", "Egypt After Nasser", and "Understanding Islam". He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and received his degree from Columbia University.

I've had the opportunity to read the written statements submitted by all of our witnesses, and I must acknowledge that I was very impressed with the scholarship involved and the experience that it reflected. We look -- obviously look forward to hearing from you and engaging in a conversation.

With that, why don't I turn to my colleague, Mr. Rohrabacher?

REP. DANA ROHRBACHER (R-OH): Mr. Chairman, again, I thank you for holding this particular hearing and making the decision to look into this issue and bring up this matter of importance for discussion. Today we are asking whether the United States treats Saudi Arabia differently than we do other countries and specifically Uzbekistan and Iran.

Is there a double standard in our policies towards Saudi Arabia as compared to those other countries?

Since Franklin Roosevelt first met with King Saud back at 1945, every American president seems to have had close ties with Saudi Arabia. From Lyndon Johnson, John F. Kennedy, Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and both of the Bushes. Every president in the last six decades seems to have been determined that an alliance with the Saudi royal family is in the best interest of our country.

Yet, as we all know, Saudi extremists were mostly responsible for the atrocities of 9/11. We've also seen a radical form of Wahhabism being financed and spread throughout the world in an effort to beat back moderate Muslims -- all of this of course financed from Saudi Arabia. Saudis operate under surreal law, where there is no democracy, no freedom of press, no freedom of religion. The cultural and religious

police monitor the average citizen in Saudi Arabia. Apostasy is a capital crime and women are treated like property, so I look forward to hearing from our panelists in terms of how we should approach Saudi Arabia and is there a double standard.

Mr. Chairman, as we discuss this issue, which is based on human rights and a standard of human rights that we believe that there shouldn't be a double standard of human rights, we should not overlook the fact that this week, a senior member of our committee this week hosted a reception to honor a delegation of Communist Chinese National People's Congress.

Now I was astonished when I received an invitation to this event, which as I say being hosted in the United States Capital by one of our own members, and it is giving status and establishing a personal recognition of these members of the communist party's apparatus that controls China.

And when we talk about double standards -- I mean, this is a double standard that is right here in our midst, right here -- right among us as members of Congress. Should we be treating people who are representing a regime -- not the people of a country but a regime that is the worst human rights abuser in the world?

I mean, if Saudi Arabia is a human rights abuser, which it is, China is the worst in the world. And even though the Saudis repress people of other faith, the communist party in China represses people of all faith, and Saudi Arabia at least doesn't arrest Falun Gong or people who want to worship God in the way that Falun Gong does and then sell their organs and murder them and sell their organs from prison.

Yes, we need to talk about double standards and I'm very happy we're going to be discussing that double standard that we have with Saudi Arabia today. I appreciate your leadership on that, but we need to make sure that if we do talk about double standards, that we don't turn the blind's eye to this type of double standard with China, as we should know that of course, the business community of the United States drives our policy towards China, and they could give a damn about human rights abuses in China. And I would say that probably today we may learn that maybe the same driving force that has to do with our relations with the Saudi royal family. So let us note that this isn't the only double standard that surrounds us.

With that said, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to hearing the witnesses today. Appreciate your leadership in bringing up this issue.

REP. DELAHUNT: I thank the gentleman for his statement.

And does the vice chair of the subcommittee Mr. Carnahan wish to make any opening remarks?

REP. RUSS CARNAHAN (D-MO): No, I'm confident that the Chairman and ranking members has covered --

REP. DELAHUNT: Has covered it all?

REP. CARNAHAN: -- covered it very well and look forward to --

REP. DELAHUNT: I haven't actually made a statement yet.

REP. CARNAHAN: Then you've definitely covered it well Mr. Chairman.

REP. DELAHUNT: Okay, let me just briefly address the subject of today's hearing.

When President Bush in his second inaugural address set forth his vision for his foreign policy, he pledged America to the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. And his speech last week in Prague, he recommitted himself to what he called a freedom agenda. And I do not doubt his sincerity. Let me be clear on that.

Let me read a quote uttered by President Bush.

"All who live in tyranny and hopelessness can know the United States will not ignore your oppression or excuse your oppressors. When you stand for liberty, we will stand for you. By our efforts, we have lit a fire, a fire in the minds of men. It warms those who feel its power, it burns those who fight its progress. And one day this untamed fire of freedom will reach the darkest corners of our world."

As I said, I commend the president for this vision. And I would note the eloquence of this statement. It's a vision I dare say that's shared by all America, members of Congress, and all those who are concerned with America's global role, including myself obviously.

Where there are deficiencies, however, in this vision's implementation. We can't bring fire to those dark corners of the world on a selective basis when in some of those dark corners we are not offering the fire of liberty. We are not even providing a flash light because when we closely associate ourselves with some of those leaders who preside over those dark corners, and do not give voice persistently and constantly for the values of freedom and the necessity for respect for human rights, we open ourselves to the accusation of not practicing what we preach, but being hypocritical.

And let me suggest that this undermines the very goals that were articulated in that eloquent remark by President Bush. It results in a glaring dichotomy between our rhetoric and our deeds and makes us vulnerable, as I said, to the accusation of double standards. Even our friends inevitably question the sincerity of our commitment to human rights and the rule of law; the very values which are the cornerstone of our democracy and the very values which I would suggest have made the United States an inspiration through our history. And it provides fodder for those who resent our observations of their conduct visa vise human rights.

I noted last week a statement by President Putin, and this is what he had to say in response to a reporter at the G-8 Summit.

"Let us not be hypocritical about democratic freedoms and human rights. I already said I have a copy of Amnesty International's Report, including on the United States, there is probably no need to repeat this so as not to offend anyone."

I don't want to continue on, but -- and I also want to be clear that I'm not questioning the integrity of the report that are issued by our

Department of State in terms of the various countries.

But when we see disparate treatment based upon policy considerations, without a concomitant, persistent voice to those with whom we ally ourselves about their behavior, we hurt ourselves, I would suggest, in the long term, because it erodes the respect that the rest of the world has in terms of the implementation of that vision that was articulated by President Bush.

Well, let's begin.

Mr. Lippman. We do have a five-minute rule. If you're able to -- I can see Dr. Olcott just had a look of disbelief -- that we honor in the breach in this particular subcommittee. But if you can be somewhat concise we'd appreciate it so that then we can have a conversation.

Mr. Lippman.

MR. LIPPMAN: (Off mike.)

REP. DELAHUNT: Mr. Lippman, can you hit the button?

MR. LIPPMAN: There. Is that better?

REP. DELAHUNT: Good.

MR. LIPPMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear today and offer my views on this very interesting and important subject. This is a summary of my written testimony, which you have.

The question before the subcommittee is whether there's a double standard on human rights in American policy towards Saudi Arabia, Iran and Uzbekistan. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the answer is yes and there always has been under every American president since the 1930s. The U.S. relationship with Saudi Arabia has never been measured by our own standards of human rights, individual liberty or religious freedom. If we used those tests, the Saudis would fail them all, but we don't use those tests and we hardly ever have.

In fact, our official policy has long been to do the opposite, to make allowances for Saudi Arabia's internal system rather than confront it. In 1951, the State Department issued a comprehensive statement of policy towards Saudi Arabia that stipulated that the United States should, and I quote, "observe the utmost respect for Saudi Arabia's sovereignty, sanctity of the holy places and local customs. In all our efforts to carry out our policies in Saudi Arabia, we should take care to serve as guide or partner and avoid giving the impression of wishing to dominate the country."

That has been our policy pretty much ever since. And therefore, while all the negative findings about Saudi Arabia issued every year in the State Department's reports on human rights and religious freedom are true, they are essentially irrelevant to the bilateral, strategic and economic relationship.

And we should not assume that the citizens of Saudi Arabia desire to order their society according to our standards of individual liberty and personal freedom. They are driven by other imperatives. When I was there last month, I was reminded again that Saudi Arabia is an evolving society, not a static one. The Saudis wrestle every day with fundamental issues of justice, individual opportunity, political evolution and women's rights. They will decide those matters according to their own standards based on Islam and Islamic law, the family, Arabian tradition and economic imperatives. They are only marginally susceptible to input from us on those subjects.

When Americans first established a presence in Saudi Arabia, exploring for oil in the 1930s and building a military relationship in the 1940s, the country's founding king, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, laid down the terms for our doing so in a famous dictum: "We will use your iron," he said, but leave our faith alone." What he meant was that Saudi Arabia wanted and needed American technology and American capital to develop what was then one of the world's poorest countries, but it had no interest in becoming a liberal, democratic, pluralistic society. It is a religious, hierarchical, traditional society where Islam is the purpose of the state. And as far as I can tell, it does not much wish to be anything else.

In the 1920s, King Abdul Aziz had to take to the field of battle against his own fanatical militias to establish the principle that non-Muslim's could be admitted into the sacred land of Arabia for any reason. Having done that, he sought to placate his xenophobic people by limiting the work of those foreign infidels to economic development and minimizing their social and cultural impact on his subjects. All his successors have sought to follow the same path.

Saudi Arabia gave American companies the right to develop the Saudi oil fields. Saudi Arabia invested billions in American goods and services, and Saudi Arabia stood by the United States during the Cold War, always on condition that we keep our hands off Saudi domestic and social affairs.

By and large, the United States has adhered to that agreement for more than six decades. This has not been a partisan issue in this country. Every president since Franklin Roosevelt -- of whatever party -- has basically decided that Saudi Arabia is too important to alienate. At times, our deference to Saudi Arabia has bordered on the obsequious, especially in the policy of the State and Defense Departments until the 1970s to refrain from assigning Jews to work there.

President Kennedy came the closest to any serious effort to promote reform in Saudi Arabia. He put pressure on the Saudis to abolish slavery, with considerable success, and to end their ban on Jewish visitors and workers with almost no success. Yet, even Kennedy did not approach a serious breach in relations over human rights. On the contrary, he supported Saudi Arabia in his proxy war against Nasser's Egypt during the civil conflict in Yemen.

Even President Carter, who made human rights the cornerstone of his foreign policy, praised the rulers of Saudi Arabia effusively and refrained from pressing them about internal affairs. When he arrived in Riyadh in 1978 -- and I was there at the time to watch this -- President Carter greeted his hosts with these words, quote, "Seeing the generosity of this welcome, I feel that I am among my own people, and I know that

my steps will not be hindered because I walk in the same steps as your majesty toward a common goal of even greater friendship among our people, between our two countries, and of peace for all the people of the world."

The reason President Carter swallowed hard and uttered those words of praise was that he wanted something important for the Saudis, namely support for the Camp David Peace Initiative. If the Saudis mistreated women or stifled the press or tortured prisoners, that was troubling, but not sufficiently important to prevail over more urgent concerns.

Sometimes we Americans have wanted access to Saudi oil. Sometimes we've wanted Saudi political and moral support to keep communism out of the Arab world. Sometimes we've wanted Saudi money to finance the Afghan Mujahedeen in their struggle against the Soviet Union or the Nicaraguan Contras. Today, we want Saudi help in the so-called war on terror. Always, there seems to be some imperative in Washington that trumps our concern for human rights. Saudi Arabia is not Burma. Saudi Arabia is important and we need the Saudis, and that's why this happens.

The attacks of September 11th prompted many Americans to look beyond the longstanding don't ask, don't tell policy about Saudi Arabia and examine that country more closely. Many did not like what they saw. Editorial writers, strategy analysts and some members of Congress called for the United States to get tough on a country that appeared to be fostering extremism. But after the onset of domestic terrorism in Saudi Arabia in 2003, the Saudis to some extent saw the error of their ways and tried to get right with Washington. They modified their education and financial policies and their banking rules, more or less in cooperation with the United States.

And now, after the 9/11 commission report has exonerated the royal family, and after repeated testimony from Bush administration officials that the Saudis are more help than hindrance in combating terrorism, the public clamor in this country has receded and Saudi Arabia is once again in good standing, even though internally, it remains much the same.

When Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz -- then crown prince and now king -- visited President Bush at his Texas ranch in 2005, the two issued a joint statement that basically gave Saudi Arabia a free ride on the issue of human rights and domestic reform -- democratic reform. The United States, it said, considers that nations will create institutions that reflect the history, culture and traditions of their own societies and it does not seek to impose its own style of government on the government and people of Saudi Arabia.

In my opinion, President Bush and all his predecessors for the past 70 years have made the right choice. The people of Saudi Arabia are incomparably better off today in every economic and material way than they were in their grandfather's day. How they run their country is and will remain up to them.

Thank you very much.

REP. DELAHUNT: Thank you, Mr. Lippman.

Tom Malinowski.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. Thanks for having me.

I'll start my statement by saying that I agreed with your remarks, Mr. Chairman. We have a president now who believes that promoting democratic freedoms, particularly in the Muslim world, is essential to fighting terrorism.

And like you, I don't question the sincerity of that belief; I think he is a true believer in that principle. I also think he happens to be right.

But given this conviction on his part, you'd think that the more central a country was to the fight against terrorism, the more vigorously the administration would promote democracy there. More often than not, the opposite has been true. That the more the administration has needed another country in the short-run to capture or kill individual terrorists, the less eager it's been to press that country to reform in ways that will dry up support for terrorism itself.

Now I don't think there could ever be perfect consistency in life, unless you want to be consistently unprincipled. Doing the wrong thing all the time is easy. Doing the right thing all the time is very hard. And I'd rather have a foreign policy that's inconsistently right than one that's consistently wrong.

I also don't think the United States should treat every human rights violator exactly the same way. We need to do what's effective in each particular case and that's going to vary from country to country. But while our tactics may vary from country to country, from place to place, I don't think our voice should be varying. There's no reason why the United States can't speak honestly, clearly and publicly about human rights to every country in the world, including its closest allies.

But the United States is most effective in promoting liberty around the world when people out there believe that we're rising about our own narrow self interest, when they believe that we're defending universal ideals. If instead our rhetoric about democracy is seen as a weapon that we only use against our enemies, people around the world become extremely cynical about everything we do in the name of freedom. Under such circumstances dictators in places like Cuba and Iran can much more easily deflect U.S. criticism by saying that we're being selective. And dissidents in these countries also don't really trust that we're really on their side and they have a harder time working with us. We become less credible, less effective.

So with that in mind, let me focus on the countries, on the examples that you've put to us, briefly. With respect to Iran, I think that the administration's strong public focus on human rights is completely appropriate. By speaking loudly and clearly about human rights there, the United States can connect with the many Iranians -- especially young people who are themselves eager to live in a more open society.

Now America's human rights message can drive a wedge between the Iranian people and their leaders. What undermines that message is the administration's saber rattling, which does the opposite -- it unites the Iranian people and their leaders. Threats, of force give the Iranian

regime a longer lease in life, in my view, than it might otherwise have if it couldn't use tensions with the United States to distract its people from their grave domestic problems.

Now here's something else that doesn't help in the case of Iran -- the administration's constant public assertion that it's providing financial assistance to those who are struggling inside the country for democracy and human rights. In fact, no U.S. aid money is actually reaching dissidents inside the country. It couldn't -- and they wouldn't accept it even if they could. But the Iranian government has used these in public announcements to accuse its dissidents falsely of taking U.S. money and it's persecuted them for it. These dissidents, including Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, have been begging the administration to stop making these claims but somehow those appeals have fallen on deaf ears. It's long past time for that to stop.

Now with respect to Uzbekistan, the story is a bit more complicated. Immediately after 9/11, I think you could say would be a good example of a double standard. We needed Uzbekistan as a launching pad for military operations in Afghanistan -- they gave us a base; we gave them increased assistance; the administration muted its criticism. But that policy began to evolve. The Congress tied aid to Uzbekistan to human rights progress.

Administration became more critical -- eventually it suspended aid. Then in 2005 we had the terrible massacre of unarmed protestors by the Uzbek security forces in the city of Andijon. After that, the administration condemned those events very vigorously. It staged an airlift of some of the victims of those events out of the region against very angry objections of the government of Uzbekistan. As a result of that, the Uzbeks kicked the United States military out of the base. And to its credit the administration didn't mute its criticism at that point in order to save its military relationship.

Nevertheless, the administration didn't follow up on that by imposing sanctions on the Uzbek government, as the European Union did immediately after the events in Andijon. The Pentagon still had over-flight and drive-through rights in Uzbekistan, it argued against any further measures that might alienate the Uzbek leadership. And I think the rest of the administration basically lost interest in the country. We're now paying almost no attention to Uzbekistan.

I'd say that the current policy is basically to wait for the current dictator of the country, Islam Karimov, to pass from the scene. And I think that's not a -- it's not a wise policy -- it's not a policy at all. I think there needs to be more support for civil society inside Uzbekistan and more pressure, including targeted sanctions on its government. There's legislation in the Senate being introduced by Senators McCain and Biden, that would do that and I hope that the House would follow suit as well.

I'd also say, as an aside, that there is a lesson of our experience with Uzbekistan that we might want to apply now to another military relationship we're developing with another country in the region, and that's Azerbaijan. You all have heard the proposal on the table that the Russians have put on the table to put a -- the missile defense system in Azerbaijan. I've no idea what the administration is going to do there

but I sure hope that they've learned the lesson that they're betting our long-term security on a long-term military partnership with an inherently unstable country in that part of the world -- inherently unstable authoritarian country -- is a very bad idea.

Now Saudi Arabia represents a much more obvious double standard, as my friend Tom Lippman explained in much more detail than I will. For years the Saudis were basically exempt from our global human rights policies. That did change very slightly after September 11th and I'd say, to be fair, that quiet U.S. pressure has contributed to a very modest beginning of an internal reform process in the Saudi kingdom.

One very modest example of that is that my organization, Human Rights Watch, has been able to visit Saudi Arabia in the last year -- conduct interviews with Saudi citizens, even visit some penal facilities. And the administration has quietly raised human rights issues with the Saudis in the last few years, but the key word here is "quiet." This is done behind the scenes. There isn't public criticism. The administration has been much more reluctant to speak publicly about Saudis problems than it has been with any other close ally in the Middle East, including Egypt.

There's a strategic dialogue between the United States and Saudi Arabia. It has many working groups on many issues but not on human rights. We've cited them for violations of religious freedom -- most recently human trafficking, but they haven't been sanctioned for those violations. Again, I agree with Tom Lippman's analysis on why that is.

I don't agree that it's the right thing, though. I mean, I do think that while we need to take care in HOW we speak to the Saudis about human rights, we DO need to speak to them about it. That our silence on human rights in Saudi Arabia doesn't resonate well actually with the growing number of ordinary Saudis who want change in the kingdom. And it resonates particularly badly elsewhere in the Middle East. It makes it seem as if, again, we only care about human rights abuses when they happen in Iran, when they happen in countries we don't like, but we don't care when it happens in country that we do like. And therefore people conclude we're not being sincere.

As you said, I did want to throw one other country into the mix and that's Pakistan because I really think that today, this week, it's probably THE most egregious example of a double standard. We are right now in the middle of a remarkable and growing movement in Pakistan that's been led by the country's lawyers to try to bring about a return to democratic government in that country.

Last week President Bush was asked about this, he responded by praising General Musharraf's democracy and dismissing these protests as, quote unquote, "posturing."

Those kinds of statements, in my view, align the United States behind one man in Pakistan against virtually every decent segment of society there, against the very people who are most likely to be friendly to the United States. And given General Musharraf's growing reliance on the Islamists in his country and his consequent refusal to crack down on the Taliban elements who are killing our troops in Afghanistan, I'd say this policy is as contrary to our security interests as it is to our values.

We need a very clear statement in the next few days from the president, the State Department and from you all about the need for a return to democratic institutions and the rule of law in Pakistan. It's not about General Musharraf or any other individual. It's about those institutions and our need to defend them.

With that, I'll close. And thank you again for the opportunity to testify, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to your questions.

REP. DELAHUNT: Thank you so much, Mr. Malinowski.

Dr. Olcott.

MS. OLCOTT: Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today. And I will make some general points and then do an abridged version of my testimony.

Four quick points. First, obviously I don't like human rights abuses or human rights abusers. Secondly, I don't like double standards. Thirdly, I recognize that the U.S. has to protect its national security interests. But fourthly, I don't believe we can get states to alter behavior we find troubling simply by criticizing them. And I have really spent the last 20 years grappling with the question of how we get a state like Uzbekistan in particular to change the way it treats its citizens.

I was really struck by the chairman's remarks about the double standard. I think that in the Uzbek case, the Uzbeks firmly believe that their relationship to the U.S. has been -- that they've been a victim of a double standard by the U.S.

They really believe that the U.S. has ignored human rights abuses of other states in the region if those states have been more strategically important to the U.S.; for example, if they have oil and gas. And the example the Uzbeks always point to when they're criticized on the question -- I mean, their country of particular concern on religious rights -- what makes them angry, it's not that they've been labeled that way, but the Turkmen weren't and they were. You know, so these states do look at how we treat neighboring states and their treatment.

That said, I think the story of the Uzbek-U.S. relationship is a story of misunderstandings and miscues on both sides, and it's really a story in which the Uzbek people have paid the biggest price.

The question I see before us is what the U.S. can do to increase the prospects for Uzbekistan's development of democratic political and economic institutions, and do it in a way that doesn't sacrifice U.S. long-, medium- or short-term security.

I think that the situation in Uzbekistan is quite different from either Saudi Arabia or Iran in that it's more akin to the problems we find in other post-Soviet states and those post-Soviet states in which they're still ruled by a founding communist-era political figure.

So that gives us hope. In a sense, it gives us more ability to maneuver. It's not a system that's rooted in several generations of transfers of

authority within a single elite.

The miscue is -- and I think this has really hampered the process of political developments in our relationship -- is that Karimov really -- Islom Karimov, who rules Uzbekistan -- really thought that he could become a friend to the U.S. somewhat akin to what Pakistan was in the Cold War. And that has really -- was a goal throughout, a goal that he thought he achieved at 9/11, and then again discovered he didn't.

I want to skip through the history to try to get to the present. I think it's important to remember that Karimov did give lip service to democratic goals during his first year after independence, and even participated in a contested, albeit neither free nor fair, election for his presidency, so that in theory it is possible for them to do different things than they have done.

The relationship with Uzbekistan -- to leap forward, I think the security relationship with Uzbekistan really predated 9/11. And I think it's really important to note that this cooperation was not simply because of the attack on Afghanistan. In fact, the U.S., under President Clinton, sent armed unmanned drones looking for al Qaeda from Uzbekistan, looking for bin Laden. So it was something to build on in the immediate aftermath with 9/11.

I think that the prospects of U.S. pressure for economic -- I mean, then you had 9/11 and this new friendship. I think that this new friendship was really seen by the Uzbek elite, by pro-reform elements within that elite, as something that they viewed with real enthusiasm. And I think that they expected something of a double standard with regard to the enormous political commitment they made. I mean, they signed this document in March 2002, agreeing within a five-year period to have free and fair elections and a democratic Parliament and a whole host of things that the elite themselves recognized was impossible.

But they hoped that this would push the government towards making reforms and not become a litmus test for future funding. I mean, they really didn't understand the process by which Congress makes decisions.

But the central focus of this elite was really to get the Karimov government to jump-start economic reform. And here again you have a tale of frustration, where the World Bank and the IMF came in and they set new granting target for the Uzbeks and the Uzbeks did not meet these benchmarks for reform. They felt that the benchmarks didn't give them enough resources. And I can talk about that if anybody's interested. And then the World Bank and IMF felt that the benchmarks themselves were fair and had to be met.

In this environment, it did not take long for the U.S.-Uzbek relationship to go sour and both sides to walk away unhappy. The Uzbeks really expected massive assistance in the aftermath of September 11th. They expected a double standard. They expected to get the kind of money that a state like Israel or Egypt got. That's what they thought they were getting.

And I think in that environment they would have swallowed what they saw as a bitter pill of human rights reform; you know, that they would have done something, I believe, but this is like other people don't. And

again, we're going down, as I said in my testimony, Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken." You know, you can't talk about what didn't occur. And this is very definitely something that didn't occur.

But I think that it's important to note that the military partnership was in deep trouble before Andijan and that there was a good chance we would have lost the base even at that point, even if Andijan had not occurred. In fact, in the draft of my book that was going to press at Andijan, I already talked about the base possibly being lost. So I think we have to get the timing of the events right.

That said, Andijan creates this enormous hole in the relationship that doesn't go away, the fact that the Uzbek government used excessive force to quell largely unarmed civilian demonstrations. Whether things would have occurred differently if we had been in the middle of a multi-year retraining program for Uzbek security forces when these demonstrations occurred or if the security relationship was healthier, would the Uzbeks have allowed an international investigation?

Personally, I think that they would have, had there been a healthy security relationship at that point. But Karimov had nothing -- he felt he had nothing to lose, and he was willing to lose what he lost. And that really is the problem of reform.

Let me just come to my concluding remarks. I think now, two years after Andijan, those of us who wish to promote change in Uzbekistan are still stuck between a rock and a hard place. While the Uzbek regime does not enjoy its relative isolation under the EU sanctions that were talked about, and at risk of sanction by the U.S., nonetheless, the Karimov regime is much more securely rooted now than it was two years ago, in large part because they've consolidated their security forces.

President Karimov's term ends in December. And if recent constitutional changes in Kazakhstan are at all indicative, and I think they are, then I think Karimov will also amend his constitution to give him the right to stay in power the rest of his life.

And it will be very hard given the relative acquiescence of the U.S. and the EU countries to the changes in the Kazakh constitution -- it will be very hard to introduce any sanctions predicated on changes on the Uzbek constitution. So it's impossible to predict how long Karimov will remain in power. And I believe that the transition after his death could take several years to bring real reform elements to any likelihood of taking power.

Finally, I would say there is not a well-developed alternative political living either inside the country or outside the country. Those living outside the country are relatively few in number and almost entirely lacking in the kind of political or administrative experience necessary to transform Uzbekistan in the presence of a large elite that is largely unhappy with these people. The majority of the Uzbek population and especially those living in rural areas are less educated today than they were 16 years ago unless committed to secular values than the like population was at the same time -- at the time of independence.

The continued isolation of the Karimov regime means that in five to 10 years the rural population will be even less exposed to secular ideas or

more removed from the technology basis force of globalization than they are today. The Uzbek population, I would argue, is paying for the sanctions that we have levied against or will levy against their top leaders. If a half dozen of its government officials can't go to Europe or visit their children studying there then in their minds it is logical that all Uzbeks should have more difficulty getting to Europe or to the U.S. to study. Fortunately, some of the restrictions against study in the U.S., which were indirectly applied, have been lessened but those seeking independent study opportunities in the U.S. is still at a disadvantage when they return home. So who in the end is paying a bigger price for our limited engagement with the Uzbek government -- the top elite or the ordinary population?

One of the problems -- this is my last point -- with our current application of the stick and the promise of a carrot is that even in the best of times, the carrot has been far smaller and less tasty than the one that the government in Tashkan is expected to receive. So its withdrawal is of less consequence than we would like and the prospects for applying a logistic are highly unlikely.

I'm just going to stop right there. Thank you.

REP. DELAHUNT: Thank you, Dr. Olcott.

Dr. Hamzawy?

MR. HAMZAWY: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for inviting me to testify today. Allow me to start by making two general points before turning into Saudi Arabia and human rights conditions in Saudi Arabia.

My first general point is with regard to the distinction between rhetoric and policies on the ground. And I do believe the double standards with regards to human rights conditions in the Middle East cannot be simply addressed by getting the administration to get out consistent rhetoric. This is not an issue of rhetoric. And I must confess that in our part of the world, American rhetoric -- official rhetoric from the U.S. has been discredited especially in the last year. So regardless of whether we have a consistency of rhetoric or not, it's not what really matters today.

What really matters today is action. What really matters today are policy measures that the U.S. conducts in the region, that the U.S. puts forward in the region. And as long as we have the dichotomy between America-friendly regimes and America's perceived enemies -- both of them abuse human rights. We have systematic abusers of human rights in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco -- all these four countries are allies of the U.S. We have systematic abuses of human rights in Iran and other countries which are perceived to be enemies for the U.S. In both patterns, we have abuses -- systematic abuses -- and I stress system -- these are not sporadic abuses -- these are systematic abuses of human rights and conditions with regard to political participation and potential for democratizations that are really depressing.

We just need to look at yesterday -- the sequence of violence which took place in three Arab capitals, in Iraq -- in Baghdad -- in Beirut and moving to Gaza and Palestine. So conditions are similar. We are faced

with autocratic or semi-autocratic regimes. Some of them are America-friendly, some are not. And as long as the distinction in tackling the human rights abusers is based on whether they are friendly or not, the U.S. unfortunately will get nowhere.

Second point is I do believe that even in the case of Saudi Arabia, an ally, which is very crucial for the U.S.' role in the Middle East as of now especially against the background what's happening in Iraq -- and this leaves a big elephant in the room when we speak about Saudi Arabia today -- it's less about oil and it's less about regional conditions in general, it's more about Iraq and the security needs of the U.S. and Iraq -- even considering Iraq and the Iraqi turmoil, there are chances for the U.S. to press the Saudi ruling elite with regard to human rights abusers and with regards to violations of citizens -- civil and political rights.

Let me now turn to basically summarizing the two major points of my testimony which I submitted earlier to the committee. Saudi Arabia -- and here I agree with my friend Tom Lippman -- Saudi Arabia has witnessed a degree of political dynamism in recent years. Since 2002 the government of Saudi Arabia has pursued different reform policies. Most relevant measures have been the reform of the appointed quasi-legislative council, the so-called Shura Council by expanding slightly its competencies, the holding of partial municipal elections. I have a note here that women were excluded as voters and as candidates from the municipal elections that took place in 2005. And finally the legalization, for the first time in Saudi history, of a few civil society actors as well as what Mr. Malinowski mentioned allowing human rights organizations -- Western human rights organizations to partially operate in Saudi Arabia.

So these were significant measures. When we look at Saudi reality and the fact that Saudi Arabia has been lacking any sense of political pluralism, any sense of dynamism -- its public space over the last years. Yet, these measures have not in any substantial way changed or altered the authoritarian nature of Saudi politics. The royal family, El-Sauud, and its allies, the Wahhabi religious establishment, remain in control, repaying their domineering position in society. And they have retained their ability to block reforms, bring them to a standstill and even to reverse them in the case of changing conditions. Human rights abusers, human rights violations have not decreased. Religious intolerance continues regardless whether we look at the educational system or whether we look at the treatment of significant minorities in the Saudi society primarily the Shi'a minority of the Eastern provinces.

The United States faces a set of difficult challenges in pushing for freedom and human rights in Saudi Arabia. One has to confess that the United States lacks in the Saudi case the leverage of economic or military aid that can be conditioned to the implementation of reformed measures or to improvement in the realm of human rights.

On the contrary, the American economy depends on a great extent on Saudi Arabia which has got even more important in recent years promoting democracy, freedom, human rights in Saudi Arabia is therefore inherently difficult -- especially when we add to it the regional picture -- the wider regional picture over the last three years. The U.S. pressed Saudi Arabia to an extent after 9/11 with regard to political reform, with

regard to human rights abuses and violations. But with the development in Iraq -- with the Iraqi turmoil and especially keeping in mind substantial worries that the U.S. does have, the possibility of a total destabilization in the Gulf that the administration has minimized -- especially on Saudi Arabia -- and has in fact minimized its rhetoric on issues pertaining to human rights democratization.

A quick comparison between statements that the administration put out in 2003 to 2004 with 2006 and 2007 makes the case. This is becoming less and less of an issue for the administration, even in terms of threats-- keeping in mind what I said that it's not really about policy actions.

Now, taking all these conditions into consideration, I do believe that there are at least two entry points for the U.S. to press the Saudi royal family, to press the Saudi government with regard to democracy and human rights conditions.

The first point is as a government-to-government level. And Mr. Malinowski mentioned the strategic dialogue which was initiated in 2005 between Saudi Arabia and the U.S. And so far issues pertaining to human rights have been excluded from the strategic dialogue. And one entry point which can be pushed forward and where the U.S. can really make a good case for simply integrating the issue, just discussing the issue in a more systematic manner -- not pressing Saudis in a quiet fashion, not pressing Saudis sporadically depending on regional conditions and whether they need them and what kind of security needs the U.S. might be looking for from the Saudis in any specific moment of time, but integrating in a systematic structure and mannered issues we think the human rights conditions, religious tolerance, status of women in society, political participation of Saudi citizens.

And these are not issues that are invented in the U.S., and here I disagree with my friend, Tom Lippman. These are not issues that are simply invented in Washington, D.C. or in Western capitals. We have homegrown -- homegrown Saudi voices, homegrown opposition movements in Saudi Arabia. These -- they are not organized. They do not have constituencies, but these are authoritarian conditions that do exist, but we have voices coming out -- coming up in Saudi Arabia asking for improvement in the area of human rights, asking for better participation in -- in politics, and asking for a better treatment of Sunni and Shi'a, of majority and minority, in Saudi Arabia.

So we have -- we have an entry point at the government-to- government level. We have a second entry point -- and this is my final remark -- we have a second entry point at the non-governmental level where the U.S. should intensify contact with civil society actors in Saudi Arabia.

I mentioned earlier that one of the minimal -- the four measures that were taken in the last year, has been the expansion, the establishment of Saudi civil society organizations. Many of them are controlled by the government directly or, if not, they are monitored by the government. At least there are a few -- there are a few organizations that are coming up, and there is a need to intensify contact with them. This will necessitate joint efforts by the administration as well as American foundations operating in the fields of democracy promotion and human rights.

The Saudi government needs to be pressured to lessen its authoritarian regulations with regard to the international cooperation between Saudi civil society actors and American democracy promotion and civil society and human rights organizations. Without these two entry points, any talk, any rhetoric, even imagining or dreaming that the rhetoric might become consistent in the coming years, this will not add, or change, the picture of lost credibility of the U.S. because of the persistence of closing an eye, if not the two eyes, with regard to allies and focusing on human rights violations that are in fact sometimes, in so-called U.S. enemies, less in terms of scale and less in terms of their impact, as compared to some -- some of America's best allies in the region.

Thank you very much.

REP. DELAHUNT: Well, thank you. Your presentations were outstanding, and I look forward to having a conversation. I know your presentations have provoked a number of questions that will be posed. Before I turn, I'm just going to be -- I just want to ask one question before I recognize the ranking member and then turn to Mr. Payne from New Jersey, who has also joined us.

I have a sense that the term "democracy promotion" has an implication, or an understanding, particularly among -- particularly in the Middle East and in Central -- and elsewhere that raises -- raises concerns, is oftentimes misinterpreted as meaning the United States is prepared to impose a form of government. If we -- if we reconfigured, if you will, the -- I don't want to call it a debate, but the conversation away from democracy promotion to respect for human rights, universally declared human rights -- we have a number of international conventions dealing with human rights that various states, many of whom, from our perspective, according to the Department of State country reports, do not comply with -- would it -- would it have a better -- would it be able to be received in some countries in a different way than it's currently -- than it's currently received? I don't know if I'm being clear, but words do have nuances, and you know, we appropriate money for democracy promotion in various countries that we select. Now, I don't think we select -- I don't think we appropriate dollars for democracy promotion in Saudi Arabia, but we certainly do in Iran. And therefore, I think it provides the Iranian regime an opportunity to point out that democracy promotion is simply a disguise for an American effort towards regime change, as opposed to the promotion of American values. American values -- at least we here believe them to be tantamount to human rights as enumerated in the Helsinki Accords and various international treaties. Wouldn't we be better off as a Congress to substitute or to examine the language that we use in terms of how we present these issues for the rest of the world?

MR. MALINOWSKI: Yes. (Laughter.)

REP. DELAHUNT: I like it when I get that kind of an -- (inaudible).

Dr. Olcott.

MR. MALINOWSKI: You know, the -- the key distinction -- I mean, to me the distinction doesn't matter. I mean, I -- we -- democracy promotion is American language --

REP. DELAHUNT: It doesn't matter to me, either.

MR. MALINOWSKI: You know, it's the way we talk about these things. We talk about liberty, we talk about freedom. This is -- these are the words that resonate to us. But they don't resonate as well internationally. It's just an objective fact.

REP. DELAHUNT: Well, I think you pointed out in your testimony, Mr. Malinowski, I mean, we've -- I've had visits from Iranians who have pled, really, "Do not -- do not appropriate money. We will not take it. It does not aid our cause. In fact, it denigrates our efforts because it provides a -- a rationale for the regime to crack down harder." And it isn't just from Arabians. It's from other nations.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Yeah. Well, there are two separate questions there. One is the language that you use.

REP. DELAHUNT: Right.

MR. MALINOWSKI: And I think you're -- you're right. We're more effective -- and we all want to be effective here; it's not just about sounding good -- we're more effective internationally if we appeal to universal principles that everybody feels are their own, rather than principles that sound like they're just made in the USA. So absolutely. You know, the human rights rhetoric just works better than the democracy rhetoric, even though to me the difference is meaningless.

In terms of the money issue, I mean, I think you just -- you have to listen to people on the ground who are fighting for the values that we care about. There are many dissidents around the world, civil society groups, opposition political parties, that welcome financial support from the United States, and we ought to be providing it. There are many other places where that is absolutely not true, and Iran is one of those cases. Most of the money the U.S. is appropriating is actually going to broadcasting inside Iran, and most Iranian dissidents I speak to are very much in favor of that. They welcome that. What they don't want is for us to be saying that we are sending money inside Iran to help them fight their battle. Number one, we're not doing it. We're saying we're doing it; we're not actually doing it. And two, by saying we're doing it, we're placing a target on their backs.

REP. DELAHUNT: Dr. Olcott --

MS. OLCOTT: Yeah. I'd like to say a few things. I think the move to a more value-neutral vocabulary; i.e., not as tied to American values, is really critical. I think we do best when we're talking about universal values. When we're talking about international conventions that a country itself has signed, we stand very strongly.

I disagree with Mr. Malinowski on some of the questions of the funding. I think we have to couple these conversations. When we tie human rights to the -- giving a particular group legal registration in the country, we're tying our hands. I mean, I think we have to separate our consideration of those questions. It's a question of what increases our ability to get these changes, and I'm not convinced that always -- that making a litmus test the registration of NGOs that we have labeled should be registered is the appropriate litmus test.

I think we have to have the potential for decoupling the two things, especially when we go in in a case like Uzbekistan and we'll give funding to groups that are human rights groups that are also directly tied to notions of regime change, and we won't give money to government groups that also claim that they are trying to do various forms of legal reform. I mean, we just -- we add to the burden at each level of conditionality that we put in, and we have to find ways that at least begin discussion with regimes that we don't like that they're willing to engage on. And then it's easier to take the next step, I think, of conditionality with things that we want them to change. Uzbekistan's a strange case because most U.S. NGOs can't get funded, but -- can't get in, but NBI (ph) still is able to operate there. So -- I mean, I think we really have to be very -- learn how to be more savvy in playing with some of these really difficult cases to reform where they don't have to take our money. And that's the problem.

REP. DELAHUNT: Dr. Hamzawy?

MR. HAMZAWY: I disagree to an extent with regard to the language issue. We tend to ignore that there have been -- and to a very considerable degree -- a development in the region -- in the Middle East throughout the 1990s, especially in the last years where concepts like democracy, human rights have become part of local debates and discussions. Democracy and human rights -- you will find them -- the two concepts -- on every single political platform, be it government-based or opposition-based. So we are not in a way imposing democracy and human rights on that. So the language is used, and at a different level it's very hard to find any value-free concepts. So these concepts -- all of them are loaded -- are value-loaded. The question will be whether we can correspond in a systematic and an intelligent (segue ?), as my colleague Dr. Olcott said, to homegrown rhetoric.

The second issue is the fine line between submitting to the logic of authoritarian autocratic regimes when they play the game of national sovereignty and tell you, "No intervention, no interference, do not fund them." The fine line between submitting to this logic and creating spaces where the U.S. can still reach out to democracy advocates, civil society access, human rights organizations in a country like Morocco, Egypt or Saudi Arabia or Uzbekistan without discrediting them. I am -- sometimes I am -- I feel that we submit too fast and -- in a systematic way to the logic of authoritarian, autocratic regimes where -- when they wave the flag of national sovereignty, and tell the U.S., "Do not -- it's none of your business." It's not true.

REP. DELAHUNT: But my point is in terms of the rhetoric and the use of -- and maybe I'm making a false distinction here, although there seems to be some disagreement when I speak about democracy promotion as opposed to human rights. I think Dr. Olcott -- you know, summed it up better than I did when there's a certain universality regarding human rights. There are -- you know, conventions. There are international treaties with concomitant obligations that regimes, both those who respect and those who denigrate human rights, have signed onto. You know, we talk about sovereignty and in new democracy -- I mean, we're -- I believe in democracy and human rights. But I think -- and I'm guessing, and that's why I'm seeking input from you -- I'm guessing that democracy is so identified with the United States and the United States'

low standing at this moment in time all over the world that in terms of how we market and package what we want to achieve in terms of our goals, which are democracy and human rights, reliance on the term "human rights, civil liberties, political freedoms" is a -- it's a better cause as we engage in conversation and diplomacy.

MR. HAMZAWY: I mean, you need a case-by-case approach. And I will address myself just to the Arab world, and there are two patterns. Let me compare Egypt to Saudi Arabia very quickly. Egypt, I would say in terms of packaging -- promoting civil liberties, political freedoms -- it's acceptable to use the term "democracy." It's not identified 100 percent with the U.S. I mean, Egypt has a different political history. Now Saudi Arabia is a different case, but in Saudi Arabia we run the risk -- when you use democracy and when you use human rights because there have been extensive debates on religious reservations with regard to international conventions and treaties of human rights. And Mr. Malinowski will -- and Tom Lippman will know them. Saudi Arabia has a conservative social fabric -- has had intensive debate on whether human rights in a universal sense apply to a Saudi society that is based on Islam and on religion or not. So we run more or less into a very -- into the very same risk, using democracy or human rights.

And here what I meant by making a distinction between submitting to the government logic -- to the official logic and trying to listen to homegrown voices -- Saudi liberals, Saudi moderates, Islamists, nonviolent Islamists -- who have been advocating democracy and human rights in a universal sense. Leaning on their rhetoric -- using their rhetoric will make it easier for the U.S. or any center of power interested in promoting democracy to make the case.

REP. DELAHUNT: Mr. Lippman?

MR. LIPPMAN: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me as I listen to your questions that you seem to be advocating a process similar to the Helsinki process that we used with the Soviet Union, saying this is what you signed, right?

REP. DELAHUNT: Right.

MR. LIPPMAN: And -- right. And so with -- really, with all of these countries except Saudi Arabia, or many of them, there are -- there's language in U.N. agreements -- the language of their own constitutions --

REP. DELAHUNT: Right.

MR. LIPPMAN: -- is available to say, "This is what we believe in and this is what we'd like you to uphold." I think in this part of the world -- in the Middle East now, it's complicated by the fact that in many ways we don't hold the moral high ground. I -- the -- which you might call the anecdotal impact of incidents like Abu Ghraib, of the violence in Iraq which seems to have followed the establishment of a democratic system that we promoted -- it takes -- it seems to me that it undermines whatever rhetorical position we might otherwise effectively take. It's not a propitious moment for us to pursue that line, it seems to me unfortunately.

REP. DELAHUNT: Mr. Rohrabacher.

REP. ROHRBACHER: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

You know, sometimes I feel like we just can't win, but years ago I remember I was -- reached out to the moderate Muslim community here in the United States and gave speech after speech and talked about democracy, and the importance of the United States promoting democracy in the Muslim world. And I received really a positive response. I mean, it was overwhelmingly positive. That was before we started making moves to try to promote democracy in the Muslim world. And as soon as the United States started promoting democracy in the Muslim world -- especially in terms of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, all of a sudden those people who were applauding the idea -- the concept of democracy in the Muslim world began to turn in a very negative way toward the United States and being involved in the Middle East.

You know, there was -- first of all, we tried an economic embargo against Saddam Hussein, you know. Now it's understandable those people say we should never have invaded Iraq and never used force like this. Well, we tried an embargo and those people who generally are saying we should never have invaded opposed the embargo as well. It was the embargo that eventually brought on -- by the way, the Oil-for-Food Scandal this committee investigated. The -- so we had the embargo, and all of a sudden we heard with the embargo that there was, of course, millions of people who were languishing in squalor and not having enough food and not having the medicine -- the tens of thousands of children that were dying. Of course that was laid on our doorstep, not the doorstep of Saddam Hussein, who we had provided enough revenue from Oil-for-Food to pay for all of those things. But instead, he of course used the money for other things. He stole it and then he used it for military purposes.

But the United States, by and large, by the very same people who had said they were for democracy in the Muslim world, did not side with the United States on that -- chose instead to become the nitpickers of the United States. And then, of course, when we used in-military intervention in order to bring democracy to Iraq, of course, then that was even way beyond that. That was not even conceivable.

I do not know what people in the Muslim world believe -- how they believe that we will have a liberalization and a democratization of these countries that are now -- whether they're pro-American authoritarians or whether they're anti-American authoritarian regimes -- how do people expect there's going to be a democratization? Is this going to be a democracy and human rights are going to be left under their pillow by the tooth fairy and they'll just wake up and it will be given to them as a present without any cost? No. There is a cost.

And maybe we should just give up and just say, this is not our strategy, because the people there aren't going to back us when we may have an attempt to actually get something done. And then of course, if we use the words about human rights -- as the chairman has aptly pointed out -- we use the words about human rights, and then we don't do anything in our actions, which you've suggested that actions aren't taking place -- well, then we're viewed as hypocrites. So maybe we should just shut up and let the world go. No. I disagree with that.

I'm with human rights watch here and the fact is, we need to be strong advocates of human rights around the world. And let me note, for our witness, I couldn't agree with you more about your analysis of what's going on in Pakistan. What's going on in Pakistan? The fact is that the army, which is telling us they're the only alternative to radical Islam, the army is allied with radical Islam in Pakistan. It always has been. Those of us who've been active on that issue understand that it's the secular elements there, the pro-democratic elements that have been the enemy of Islam and the army has been the ally of radical Islam in Pakistan. So if we want to base our policy on what's going to help radical Islam it's let's not support a military dictatorship in Pakistan.

Mr. Lippman, I found your remarks a little bit disturbing because of some of the words you were using about "our standards." I don't think democracy and human rights are our standards. I think it's a universal standard. Using the words "they will decide." Who's they? If we're talking about a dictatorship or an authoritarian country like Saudi Arabia, who is they? "They" isn't the people. "They" is an elite group of people in the royal family, and perhaps some others who they've cut some deals with in the Wahhabi movement there and their cronies. And then in the end, where it said that, you know, they're going to be the ones making the decisions. And the fact is, I don't know, in your remarks if you just assume that what the Saudi government says it doesn't wish to be anything else. It -- what's it? I mean, all the people of Saudi Arabia don't wish to be anything else? How do you know? Do we have an open discussion so we can determine if that's "it" -- it represents the will of the people? If these people are not going to have any type of open discussion and a free election, people willing to talk back and forth, how do you know it isn't the wish of the people to have something else? Maybe it'd be good to --

MR. LIPPMAN: Well, Mr. Rohrabacher, I would -- first I would also suggest that you hear from Dr. Hamzawy on this subject.

REP. ROHRABACHER: All right.

MR. LIPPMAN: His knowledge is greater than mine, but in my experience, I think you'll see that I don't necessarily accept the premise that there's some great gap between the leadership of the country and the masses of the people. Saudi Arabia is not North Korea. By and large, in my experience there -- which goes back now 30 years -- if our standard is that we wish a government to function with the consent of the governed, I believe Saudi Arabia -- the government, the system of Saudi Arabia -- generally meets that standard.

There is, as Dr. Hamzawy said, a constant (free sol ?), you might say, of dissent, of desire to do things better, of distress about corruption. But if you read most of the manifestos that have come out within the limited range of freedom that people in Saudi Arabia have to express themselves, by and large they seek reform and change within the present system -- not replacement of the present system.

Saudi Arabia is a deeply conservative society, which as far as I can tell, is largely content to function according to the rules of Islam and Islamic law.

REP. ROHRABACHER: That's as far as you can tell.

MR. LIPPMAN: Well, as far as one can tell. That is correct.

REP. ROHRABACHER: And let me just say, I will agree with you that when you talk about consent of the governed, which is what we're really talking about here, that it doesn't necessarily have to take exactly the shape -- we're not trying to superimpose our exact type of democracy on people when we talk about human rights and democracy. And consent of the governed is important.

Would you like to comment on that?

MR. HAMZAWY: I agree with what you said. We really do not know. And how could we know? I mean, this is a society where we do not have -- I mean, we have a minimal degree of beginning political pluralism, as I said. A few civil society organizations. We have individual voices, but we have no access to popular constituencies in Saudi Arabia. And in a way, this is the legacy of autocratic regimes. We simply -- we are left to either believe or disbelieve in the logic and rhetoric of governing and ruling elites. We do not know our popular constituencies.

REP. ROHRABACHER: That is precisely correct.

And let me note: If you talk about hypocrisy, I mean, what is hypocrisy about people, except people who, when they leave their country, are deeply involved in all sorts of incredibly anti-religious -- or not anti-religious -- but things that Muslims would consider to be sinful, but then they go back home and they put their robes on and act in a totally different way and act very piously. And we know that many people from Saudi Arabia and the Saudi Arabian leadership do exactly that as they go to Las Vegas and lose millions of dollars at the roulette wheel.

MR. LIPPMAN: Sir, the other way to look at it -- and understand. I hold no grief for Saudi Arabian way of life. I would not want to live that way myself and I wouldn't want my family to live that way. But the other side of the point that you just raised about how the Saudis live differently when they go home is that they all do go home.

You may recall a period when there were -- Southern California had tens, maybe hundreds of thousands of dissident Iranians. People who had come to this country to study. The Saudis were always very proud of the fact that when the Iranians students -- they were so unhappy with their country that when they came here they stayed. And the Saudi Arabian students, when they came here and finished their education they went home.

REP. ROHRABACHER: Well, that happens when the government doesn't confiscate someone's wealth, you know, and that the people who are over here are the sons and daughters of the elite. That's, I think, one of the explanations of that.

Let me note for the record that I had a resolution that I put forward in 19 -- excuse me -- 2003. Unfortunately, Mr. Lantos and I -- originally the ones who supported this -- and it was condemning the lack of human rights in Saudi Arabia. I'll just submit this for the record. I think many of the things that we pointed are still true in Saudi Arabia today.

Look, we have a country in Saudi Arabia -- I saw no problem with during the -- during World War II for us to ally with Joe Stalin in order to defeat Adolf Hitler. No problem with that. I don't find any problem, also, with making short-term adjustments for the relationships with less-than-free societies in order to defeat radical Islam, if indeed in the long run it will lead us to where we want to go: the end of World War II, the defeat of Nazism, and then we had to totally compromise it in eliminating the possibility of a pro-freedom movement in the future -- as long as we're doing that.

Now, unfortunately, what we have to realize today is that with Saudi Arabia, during this time period, they have been financing the war against us. So here we are closing a blind eye to the human rights abuses in Saudi Arabia, while at the same time they have been building these mosques in which anti-American and anti-western sentiment is being stirred up so they can create a whole generation of people -- especially in Pakistan -- who'll hate us and join this anti-western war against our way of life. That made no sense.

In terms of Uzbekistan, I've had a lot -- you know, I know Mr. Karimov and I have had -- was deeply involved with that region of the world prior to 9/11. And I was -- I had a personal discussion with Mr. Karimov and told him the best thing that he could possibly do for himself and the country would be to declare that he would not be a candidate in the next election and declare free and open elections, and he would be known as the father of his country, and everything would be forgiven and he would go down in history as a hero.

Unfortunately, he didn't follow that advice. He was upset about maybe the fact that he believed we were getting -- he was getting shortchanged from what he did expect for his support of us during the war in Afghanistan. That could be an explanation.

Mr. Chairman, that does underscore your point that the war in Iraq -- by going into Iraq, perhaps we didn't have the resources to fulfill the expectations of those people like Mr. Karimov who helped us defeat the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan.

So would you like to comment on that?

MS. OLCOTT: I'm very interested in your comment about President Karimov, because, I mean, I too share your view that he should step down now and he should have stepped down before. But I don't think he's capable, unfortunately, of making that decision, and that's really bad for the Uzbek people especially.

I agree with what you said about the war in Iraq bleeding the resources. I think the whole question to me of reconstruction projects in Afghanistan could only have succeeded if it was a strong regional project, and that would have created the kind of economic incentive.

So it didn't require for a country like Uzbekistan to feel they were getting something out of the relationship. It didn't require the kind of double standard that would make human rights activists mad. It did require a kind of regional approach to rebuilding Afghanistan, which we really haven't done.

So it's not just that we have this relationship that's gone sour, but all the problems we're having in Afghanistan are really part and parcel of not having diverted enough resources, human or material, to that problem.

But, no, I think that if we had done that, we would have created enough economic incentives for the kind of political reforms that the Uzbeks have to do, because, in my mind, that's the line that works best, at least in Central Asia, that if you have economic reforms, you generate a part of the elite to become defenders of the political reform, because they need economic transparency. They need legal transparency.

REP. ROHRABACHER: Well, this type of evolution -- I hope that we can have evolutions like that. I haven't seen much of it happen around the world. Usually there's some sort of coup or death and some general allies with somebody who then decides they can be democratic, but there's been some sort of upheaval in the establishment rather than an evolution by --

MS. OLCOTT: I think Kazakhstan is the test case of whether we get this. I mean, I think there are a lot of hopeful signs that they'll have that kind of evolution, but it's in no way preordained. But I think where you have deeply rooted elites, it's very hard, unless they see it as their economic benefit.

REP. ROHRABACHER: Let me -- (inaudible) -- and then I'll finish my -- end this to just say that -- and then I'll make sure you get a chance to comment, our friend from Human Rights Watch.

Look, with all the talk about hypocrisy and double standards, I accept that there are some -- there's some hypocrisy and double standard in any type of historic situation. You have to make decisions that you believe are going to get you beyond a crisis. If your buildings are being blown up and thousands of people are being slaughtered, you make certain decisions to get you beyond that point.

However, with that said, I think the United States -- it behooves the United States to have a long-term commitment to human rights and not ever to even create a short-term commitment that will prevent us from maintaining that long-term goal.

With that said, when people talk about the United States being hypocrites, I'm sorry, I don't accept somebody being upset about Abu Ghraib, where there was mistreatment of some prisoners, and then we immediately came in and, of course, tried to correct it by arresting those people who were not doing what was right, those soldiers that were not doing right, while those same people criticize us for that while they turn a blind eye or even condone the mass bombings of civilians that are going on in Iraq today.

You know, don't tell me about hypocrisy when people are turning a blind eye to the slaughter of innocent civilians that's going on in Iraq while, oh, yes, we turned people off because we mistreated people at Abu Ghraib. I'm sorry, I'm not going to apologize for that. Once we learned there was something wrong, we tried to correct it. Those people who are attacking the United States for that sort of thing, they need to sit back and see if they're being honest with themselves and honest with the

world.

So, with that, our human rights friend wants to probably comment on something like that.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Is this on? Yeah.

Let me try to introduce some healthy disagreement here on a couple of points. First, on this question of resources, I totally agree on Afghanistan. We should have pumped much, much more there, both economically and militarily, in every possible way. I think, as a general rule, that's right.

But with respect to Uzbekistan, I couldn't disagree more. I think, you know, the notion that if we had paid Karimov more, if we had pumped \$1 billion in there and treated him like Pakistan, that he would have seen the light or felt that he needed to do more for the United States, I think, profoundly misunderstands the nature of that regime.

I think that kind of largess in that situation, in fact, increases the determination of rulers to cling to power, because they get to benefit from the largess.

REP. ROHRABACHER: No it doesn't misinterpret the regime, but misinterprets the strategies that will work. That never worked with a dictator -- smother him with money, hug him, and he's going to become --

MR. MALINOWSKI: Yeah. And I mentioned Pakistan for a reason. I mean, it really has had the opposite effect in Pakistan. It's entrenched the military in a position of authority. You know, they used the largess to essentially take control of the economic life of the country. And, in fact, that kind of largess diminishes the likelihood of real market-based economic reforms that will then empower a middle class, which will then lead to the kind of political change that we want as the opposite impact of what my friend, I think, suggested.

You know, the notion that if we'd done that, they wouldn't have machine-gunned a crowd of innocent people in Andijan, I think, is just wrong. I think, you know, the very same thing would have happened and we would have been faced with the same choice.

In terms of your comment, Mr. Rohrabacher, I totally agree there is no comparison between anything the United States has done and the mass murder of innocent people in Iraq every single day by these bombers. At the same time, we are held, rightly so, to a far higher standard.

You know, when Saddam Hussein was torturing people in this prison, nobody around the world was saying, "Well, gosh, Saddam's doing it, so that makes it legitimate." When the president of the United States -- and forget about Abu Ghraib, but when he defends the use of secret detention, when he says waterboarding is okay, that has a profoundly negative impact on all of our work around the world. When the chief defender of human rights in the world begins to make those kinds of excuses and equivocations, the whole framework begins to fall apart. So I think that's the distinction.

REP. DELAHUNT: Thank you, Mr. Malinowski. And I concur with -- we do

claim a certain moral authority, and we ought to be the standard. We ought to be the benchmark. And we ought not ever to allow an erosion in terms of those standards, because what I believe is America inspires because of those standards. They don't hate us because of our values. They believe us. Rather, they're disappointed because there is a perception that we haven't met our own standards.

And I would submit that's the basis for why we see the perception of the rest of the world -- and not just Europeans, and not just Latin Americans, and not just people in the Middle East, but people here in this country, and a growing number that are concerned about that.

With that, let me yield to the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Payne.

REP. DONALD PAYNE (D-NJ): Thank you very much. And I too concur with the Chairman and the gentleman who witnessed, who said that we are held to a different standard. I think that our ranking member has a lot of passion and he's really worked through the administrations -- going through the Cold War, and he has a distinguished record.

However, I definitely disagree that we cannot wallow down into the depths of dictators and bloodthirsty leaders and say that, you know, because they do it, we can do it. I mean if we ever start to equate ourselves to these people around the world, we're in serious trouble -- I mean, very serious trouble.

As a matter of fact, even growing up as a kid all I heard about was December 7th, "the day that will go down in infamy," the secret attack of the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese forces, the imperial forces of Japan -- and even though we did have a little inkling that there was some aggression being built up. And then for us to say we've got to do a preemptive strike on Iraq, you know, some people around the world are equating what is the difference between that "day that went down in infamy" and the day that we had preemptive strike in Iraq, because someone said there are weapons of mass destruction, biological weapons -- just made up a lot -- the reasons kept changing and finally it came down to regime change.

Well, you start going in bombing countries and destroying them because you want to change a president, you know, where's the world going? So I do think that as we fight this so-called war on terror we have to be very careful in how -- you know, Dante's Inferno there were seven levels to purgatory, you know, I don't know if we're supposed to get down to the lowest level to equate ourselves to our enemies.

But let me just ask, you know, was it Mr. Malinowski -- hope I'm saying it almost right -- about Iran. Human rights activists there said, you know, please let us do this alone -- our concern about being identified with the U.S. You know, in Venezuela we got all involved in the election, and I think even in -- might have been Peru, another Latin America country where the U.S. cozied up to a particular party -- and that was actually used to help defeat the ones that we thought we were helping.

So what do you think about it? The administration has actually asked for \$75 million for Iran to help opposition activists. Now they're saying, thanks, but no thanks. Please let us do it ourselves. What do you --

what -- do you think that the administration should certainly listen to what Iranians are saying? Or do you think that they should continue to try to help with this funding?

MR. MALINOWSKI: They're not listening very well. Here's what Iranian dissidents say to us and what I think they said to the administration. They want the United States to be speaking out on human rights in their country. They want us to be raising this issue -- these issues with the Iranian government. In fact, they don't want to United States to cut a deal on the nuclear issue and on other things that gives Iran a lot of aid without raising the human rights issue as part of that.

And I think most of them are absolutely fine -- and, in fact, supportive of spending money on things like broadcasting into Iran, which increases the flow of information. They also want us to be spending money on exchanges and on anything that increases contact between the two societies because the more -- the more people-to- people contact we have, you know, on things like academic exchanges and other things that are non-political, the easier it is for them to find space to do political activism.

REP. DELAHUNT: Would the gentleman yield for a moment?

REP. PAYNE: Yes, go right ahead.

REP. DELAHUNT: If you can expand just a moment. I don't think many Americans, and certainly not most members of Congress, are aware that there are exchanges that are in existence between Iranians and the United States at this moment in time?

MR. MALINOWSKI: Well, at this moment it's pretty much frozen because the Iranian government has been arresting, as you know, Iranian Americans who've been involved in some of these, you know, very below-the-radar-screen dialogues.

REP. DELAHUNT: Do we have Iranians studying in the United States or participating in any exchanges?

MR. MALINOWSKI: There have been -- I'm not sure if they're Iranian students -

(Cross talk.)

REP. DELAHUNT: Dr. Hamzawy, could you?

I'm sorry, Don, --

(Cross talk)

MR. MALINOWSKI: I mean, this is all very much below the radar screen.

REP. DELAHUNT: I understand.

MR. MALINOWSKI: They're -- they're --

REP. DELAHUNT: I'll keep it below the radar screen.

(Laughter.)

MR. MALINOWSKI: That's right. They also, frankly, want dialogue between the U.S. government and the Iranian government. And one reason they want this is because the, you know, the position of the Iranian government, or the Ahmadinejad regime is -- you know, if you talk to the Americans, you're a traitor. But if every Iranian sees on television the Iranian government talking to the Americans, it would be far more difficult for the Iranian government to enforce that point of view with respect to these citizens -- the citizen dialogues which they think are so important.

So they want all of that. The one thing that they don't want is for the United States to be saying that we are sending money inside Iran to help the dissidents to help political activists, to support human rights and democracy, because that puts a target on their back. The truth is we're not sending it in. And yet we say we are.

If you look at -- you know, the State Department put out a fact sheet just about a week or 10 days ago in which it describes how we're spending this money. And there's a line in there, you know, some of this money supports people inside Iran who are fighting for democracy and human rights. And what they mean by that is, well the broadcasting does that indirectly, and they run some seminars outside Iran that Iranians go to -- and so indirectly it does that. And they're trying to exaggerate the impact of these programs by saying we're helping people inside, but the effect that has on Iranians inside is very, very negative. And they've been begging the administration to stop advertising that -- to stop saying we're sending money inside.

So I think, you know, when you all consider the money, and the appropriation, I'm not saying you shouldn't earth appropriating money for things like broadcasting. I think you should be. But I think you should be absolutely clear in what you say and urge the administration to be clear, that this is not meant to be pumping money inside Iran to be helping these groups because it isn't, and because that hurts them.

REP. PAYNE: Yeah, just in the same questioning, the -- there were some recent arrests, as you know -- what was his name, Haleh Esfandiari -- worked for the Wilson Center in Washington, and it was a program being subsidized by government funds. Do you know how this particular case is proceeding and the prospects of the arrest? And do you think that the government did that as a, you know, sort of a -- as a reaction against this sort of funding that they hear is happening?

MR. MALINOWSKI: I don't think they did it because of the funding, they're doing it because they're threatened by these contacts; they're threatened by these exchanges; they're threatened by the notion of civil society. The funding gives them a pretext. The funding gives them a sort of nationalistic pretext to crack down on these groups, which resonates with some Iranians, with parts of Ahmadinejad's base.

So it's not that they -- they would be a kinder, gentler government if we stopped saying these things; they wouldn't be, of course. But this is giving them a pretext that they wouldn't otherwise have. And again, the bottom line is the very dissidents we want to be supporting are asking us please, don't do this. I think that -- that should be enough.

And, you know, there are precedents for this. One -- one story I remember, back in the 1980s Congress appropriated funding to help the Solidarity labor union in Poland. It was a great gesture; everybody wanted to help Solidarity in that difficult time. Money was appropriated; Solidarity said, "Oh, actually, no. We can't -- we don't want to take this, because the Communist government in Poland will label us as a puppet of the United States if we take this money." And so the Reagan administration said, "Okay, very well. What do you want us to use it for?" And Solidarity said, "Well, we have a medical crisis in Poland. We need ambulances. Use that money to pay for ambulances for our national health service," which they did, and Solidarity got credit for what was turned into humanitarian assistance. I mean, that's a good example of an administration that was listening to people on the ground who were fighting for these goals. And I don't quite understand why it's been hard to break through with -- with the current administration on this issue.

REP. PAYNE: Just on -- to continue on Iran before my time expires, the -- it's interesting to note that many younger people, there's a -- there's a pretty pro-U.S. thread that runs through many Iranian younger people. I mean, our -- you know, the styles, the music. They just -- it's not an anti-American sentiment, and I wonder if there's some way that, you know, which is positive -- as a matter of fact, my alma mater, Seton Hall University School of Diplomacy, actually invited the former president of Iran three or four years ago to come and speak at the university and, of course, caught all kind of -- all kind of devilment from people by doing this. But I think that these are the kind of things, as you mentioned, that -- that we should be doing more -- more of. I just wonder, what do you think about the -- about the recent statement by the -- because he's an Independent from Connecticut, Senator Lieberman, who has the bright idea, "Let's just go bomb Iran." I mean, how do you think that'll -- think that's a good diplomatic tool to help us try to win over our people?

MR. MALINOWSKI: Well, as I suggested in my testimony, I think if our goal is to unite the Iranian people with their leadership, that's a really good way of doing it.

REP. PAYNE: Right. Absolutely.

REP. DELAHUNT: Mr. Payne, if you'd yield, I just -- I know that Mr. Meeks has an appointment. I'm going to come right back to you --

REP. PAYNE: Oh. Okay, sure.

REP. DELAHUNT: -- but I want to give him an opportunity, because he's a man with a very frenetic, busy schedule. So with that, let me yield to Mr. Meeks of New York, co-chair of the Caribbean Caucus.

REP. GREGORY MEEKS (D-NY): I -- I come at this, you know, in listening, and I heard what the ranking member, who I respect a great deal, he had to say. But when we talk about democracy, and I can't help but think, as I travel, individuals -- democracy could mean anything to anybody. Just the word "democracy." What are you talking about, democracy? And what kind of democracy and democracy for who? Because you can have a country that is -- you know, that's a so-called democracy,

but yet the people within the country still, or some -- or a fragment of that, really don't see democracy. And so, you know, it takes a lot for the people from within to come together to try to make a difference to do something.

And I think that for me, I'm my country's biggest critic. I think I should be. I think that's part of my responsibility. I would hope that others, you know, would soon be their country's biggest critic. But I think that when folks look at us, you know, they look at certain things. There was a recent report that came out of a group of economists from the Economists Intelligence Unit who are the people that publish The Economist, The Economist magazine -- along with a number of U.S. universities and President Carter, the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Harry Fulbright, et cetera, a number of others, that came up with this program to try to determine, you know who's the most peaceful nation, et cetera. And -- and they did it with 121 countries -- 121 countries. Where did the United States fall? I mean, and I think -- was part of it -- and in there he talked about to determine, it talked about human rights, prison population, violence, access to weapons, military expenditure, and -- and the United States, out of 121, ranked 96 -- 96. And that's what happens when we go out and we start talking to people and trying to tell people what to do without having put or placing the highest standard on ourselves. That's why those of us in this government, if we want others to respect what we say, we've got to hold our government to a higher standard, if we want folks to listen to us and appreciate us. Especially the grassroots folks.

And I've talked to poor people, you know, when you talk to folks over there, they say, "Well, you know, conditions of a lot folks in the United States is not right," and then I just think about our history. Democracy was, I guess, supposed to have been here for over, you know, 200 years, 250 years, but it sure wasn't that way for people of African descent in the United States of America. Surely was not that way, in our so-called democracy. And so people get the question of whether, you know, you're talking about just telling you to do what we tell you to do because we're telling you to do it, and trying to throw it down somebody's throat, or working with people so that they can in fact accomplish what they want to accomplish. And I think that's exactly when you're talking about -- you know, when you said give them ambulances, as opposed to -- well, you're listening to people then. Too often, we don't want to listen to anybody. We tell you how to do it, and if you don't do it the way we tell you how to do it, then you're not with us. That's what, you know, people feel. It's starting to happen now, not only with individuals in the Middle East; it's starting to happen with some of our allies. It's starting to happen with some of the Europeans. You know, they're starting to get upset about how we push this thing called democracy, as opposed to working with people, as opposed to trying to understand.

I mean, I'm concerned. This guy, for example, in Iran, Ahmadinejad, he's a bad guy. One of my questions -- and I just throw that out real quick -- but the way that we're talking about we want to have, you know, democracy. And I was looking at, you know, some time ago, when he got elected, he was supposed to have been just figurehead. His government was in trouble not too long ago, because if you look at the municipal elections, his party was losing a lot, you know, elections. But we put the ships in and different things start to happen and, you know,

Lieberman said what he had to say, and then all of a sudden we see he's getting stronger. So my -- my question, maybe I'm not seeing it right, but do you believe that in Iran that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is gaining power at the expense of the moderates, simply because we are not listening and we are saying, "Do as I tell you to do, or it ain't going to happen"? I throw that question out there.

MR. HAMZAWY: Yes, well, I couldn't agree more. Ahmadinejad has gained over the last two years, at least, from the administration's rhetoric on Iran and from exactly the attitude which you just described -- pushing them, prescribing to Iranians what they should do. And (Hari Maged ?) and his propaganda machinery -- and I -- I use this term in a very conscious way -- have done an excellent job in using and playing out the nationalistic card and portraying Ahmadinejad and his policies as the only way to defend Iranian national interests and Iranian sovereignty against systematic intervention.

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