

**CENTER FOR  
STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
(CSIS)**

**“PAKISTAN’S POLITICAL FUTURE:  
AN ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVE”**

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**SPEAKER:  
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PAKISTAN TEHREEK-E-INSAF PARTY  
(PTI – MOVEMENT FOR JUSTICE)**

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TERESITA SCHAFFER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Good morning and welcome and thank you for turning out bright and early on this cold morning. For those of you who are new to CSIS, I am Teresita Schaffer and I am director of the South Asia program here. And we have the great honor of joining forces with the Asia Society represented here by Jack Garrity to sponsor a discussion, and I hope that in spite of the excellent house for you, sir, that it will be a discussion with the leader of Pakistani Tehreek-e-Insaf Imran Khan.

Now, Imran has been here before. It was about eight years ago. And we got an excellent house at that time as well. There was some discussion at that time about what percentage of the group were cricket fans wanting to see one of the all-time legends. There may not be a huge number of cricket fans in relation to the U.S. population, but this certainly is a passionate and specialized group. In this case, however, I think the topic is primarily not going to be cricket, but will be a field in which the concept of being cricket is under much intense debate. The theme for this morning is Pakistani politics and where Pakistan is going.

Imran Khan went into politics a decade or two ago.

IMRAN KHAN: A decade.

MS. SCHAFFER: A decade ago. His party has taken a strong stand on many of the issues of the day, and particularly on the importance of democracy, meaning not just elections but how government is conducted. He has also become very well known for the charitable enterprises that he has launched, particularly the cancer hospital in Karachi. And I'm very pleased to present to you Mr. Imran Khan on behalf of both the Asia Society and the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

(Applause.)

MS. KHAN: Thank you, Ambassador Schaffer. I also want to thank the Asia Society for inviting me and for giving me an opportunity to put across my views at what is probably the most critical juncture in Pakistan's history.

Just to briefly introduce my political career, I played cricket for almost 21 years, international cricket, and I recognize that in the U.S. not many people understand much about cricket. All they know is that it has a similarity with baseball, but it's only that both the games have a bat and a ball, but that is where the similarity ends.

I joined politics in 1996 because I felt that you can have elections but you don't necessarily have democracy. And my party was called Movement for Justice, the idea being that unless you have an independent justice system, you cannot have either free and

fair elections or a genuine democracy, because as you know, there are a lot of countries that keep conducting elections and don't have democracy.

Pakistan was going through the similar situation when I joined politics. We were going through the electoral process, but we weren't developing democratic institutions because our judiciary was not independent. So I started talking about an independent judiciary then way back in '96. The main thing we took was that the reason why there was so much corruption in our government was because there was no check and balance. Whenever someone came into power, the judiciary basically became a team player with the executive and so there was an incentive for criminals to come into power. There was an incentive for criminals to join politics because they knew that once they became part of the governing structure, they were immune from any judicial review.

So when we joined, we – the party was only five months old when elections came and we brought the issue of corruption into politics and accountability and that was adopted then by all of the political parties. It was another matter that they only adopted, but they never implemented any of the recommendations, which was an independent justice system.

So we went – the first election came; we were only five months old. We participated in the elections. We were wiped out. (Laughter.) Then General Musharraf staged a coup in '99. This was '97. In '99, General Musharraf took over with the slogan that he was going to remove – he had removed a sham democracy and was going to bring in a genuine democracy. We supported him. For two-and-half years, my party supported General Musharraf until we realized that we were being taken for a ride because instead of bringing a genuine democracy, we had even a bigger sham.

We first had a referendum in 2001, which was completely discredited. Then we had 2002 election, which was heavily rigged, and that is when I won a seat in my constituency and went to the parliament. And then, for five years, I was in a parliament which was a rubberstamp parliament, that was not really consulted on any of the main matters which affected Pakistan like, for instance, sending troops to Balochistan, troops to Waziristan, things like, you know, the parliament discovered – I mean, I discovered and I spoke in the parliament. When I read a report from the New York Times that Pakistan had been given \$10 billion aid by the United States, which the parliament never knew in five budgets – was not presented to us. And also other things like a new GHQ being built in Islamabad on 2.5 thousand acres worth a trillion rupees.

So the Parliament was always bypassed, and whatever we were – whatever the military establishment wanted to be discussed, only those issues could be discussed in Parliament.

Now of course we have elections coming up, and that is the reason why I came to the U.S., because I felt that this is a critical juncture, and it's going to – from where Pakistan goes now, it's going to affect both Pakistan and the U.S. The U.S.'s primary concern is the war on terror and the spread of terrorism especially along the tribal belt of

Pakistan. Pakistan's main concern is also terrorism now – was not on 9/11 but today, the way terrorism is spreading today, we Pakistanis for the first time are feeling that it could actually threaten our very existence. Just in the last one year there have been almost 67 suicide attacks. Not only the security forces are not safe, even right on the doors of the GHQ in Pindi, there was suicide attacks, which targeted the ISI.

Then the commando base in Haripur, which is like a fortress, right – the suicide attacker got right inside the commando base and killed 15 commandos – and so no one is – and then of course the tragic assassination of Benazir Bhutto. So there is a great sense of insecurity in the country and there is a great sense of uncertainty. There is a feeling that where – for the first time, you feel no one knows where we are headed.

So this concerns both Pakistan and the U.S. If this keeps going like that – the way the trend is going – increasing terrorism – it's going to affect the U.S. war on terror, the way it's evolving in Afghanistan, and also the capability of Pakistan being any sort of partner because Pakistan soon is going to be fighting for its own survival.

In my opinion, it's very important that the people in the U.S. realize, the – (inaudible) – realize that strategy of backing one man rather than the democratic process is deeply flawed because what is happening now is that as General Musharraf's popularity has plummeted, especially in the last one year, starting with the – well, it's really started sinking was – the date was 9<sup>th</sup> of March, when he sacked the chief justice, and then started a movement behind the chief justice primarily by the lawyers of Pakistan and then followed by the civil society. The media, independent television media played a heroic role in this whole struggle for democracy.

And so, since then, General Musharraf made a series of mistakes which have today brought him at a point where he's at his lowest point in popularity. According to the polls, IRI did various surveys. According to them, today, more than 75 percent of people want him to leave. And at the same time, 75 percent of the people want the chief justice to be reinstated.

Now, the point of U.S. backing one man, the U.S administration backing on man rather than the democratic process in my opinion is flawed because it is a similar situation to what happened in Iran at the time of the Shah because we felt if the government keeps backing one man and if he manages to get to rig the elections and get his own party into power, the problem is that it's not going to – it's not going to ease the situation; it is in fact going to exacerbate everything. The chances are that we would have a Kenya-type situation, where people are not going to accept their election results.

And so therefore, the country will sink into a deeper crisis. And so my whole – you know, what I've been trying to – I've met various senators and congressmen, and I've tried to insist that what they must try and ask the Musharraf government, that they must reinstate the judiciary. As you know, on November 3 – or you might not know – General Musharraf declared an emergency in which he sacked 60 percent of her superior

judges. The chief justice of the supreme court was – is still under house arrest, along with about six other judges of the supreme court.

And then he appointed his own judges, who then gave him the power to amend the constitution, and he has made several constitutional changes, which would mean that if the opposition wins the election, and even despite the rigging, which all of the opposition – this has never happened, that before the election, the entire opposition is saying that there is pre-poll rigging going on and there will be massive rigging on 18<sup>th</sup> of February. Benazir Bhutto actually presented, before death, a dossier of the way the rigging was taking place.

But what we want basically is the reinstatement of the judges of the supreme court and the superior courts because that is the only way you can ensure free and fair elections, otherwise by just General Musharraf saying I will ensure – I will make sure there will be free and fair elections, who is going to decide whether the elections are free and fair or not. And this is – and to think that international monitors can be any sort of check to rigging a past – the 2002 elections, if you look at the report of the European monitors who – the report clearly states that there was rigging done.

There was a 2005 local body elections in Pakistan. There is a report by the International Crisis Group, which says that any and every which way the elections could be rigged, all of those ways were used to rig the elections. And then it further goes on to conclude that the whole purpose of the 2005 local body elections was to have a network to ensure General Musharraf winning this general election, which is now coming up.

So in my opinion, it is in the interest of U.S. and the interest of Pakistan that the U.S. does not back any parties or any individuals. I think this is also flawed, that the U.S. open – the U.S. administration open – sided (?) with Benazir Bhutto because I think – of course, one aspect of that is that of course her life was in jeopardy because all of those forces that are now opposing this whole American war on terror would have then gone after her.

And secondly, I think it's an unwise philosophy because surely any democratic government would want to work with the U.S. They might not be as pliant as General Musharraf has been. They might agree on some aspects and not agree on other aspects, but that is also beneficial for the U.S. because the way the whole war on terror has been fought, if there was a democratic government in Pakistan and if there was debate every time the U.S. wanted Pakistan government to take some action, there was proper debate in Pakistan, the decisionmaking would have been much better. I don't think we would have made the sort of mistakes we have ended up making where the whole war on terror has increased terrorism and it is growing at a phenomenal pace.

So what I feel the steps should be taken are that there should be – the U.S. government should insist that the legitimate judiciary, which is still, according to the constitution, the chief justice of Pakistan, who is Chief Justice Iftikhar, and all of the judges should be reinstated. And they should then supervise free and fair elections in

Pakistan. In my opinion, that is the only way out of this quagmire. Any other way, the situation is going to get worse.

Ambassador Shaffer, I think if there are any more questions, I'd rather take them rather than go on and on. I could go on and on.

MS. SHAFFER: Would you like to remain standing or do you want to sit? Whatever you're comfortable with.

MR. KHAN: I'd like to stay.

MS. SHAFFER: Well, let me, in that case, exercise the prerogative of the chair and kick things off. I know there won't be any shortage of questions as always. Already hands have been going up. But I would like to ask you, sir, to go back to your comments about how if the present situation continues, Pakistan can't be a valid partner to the United States on counterterrorism because it will be fighting for its own life. My question is: What do you believe would constitute an effective policy by the government of Pakistan? What would you do if you were put into power to deal with the problem of violent domestic militants and to deal with the border areas?

MR. KHAN: See, I feel that you can only win the war on terror if the terrorist is, as Chairman Mao once made a statement, that the terrorist is a fish out of water than fish in water. In other words, the people from whom the terrorists are operating from, they should also consider them terrorists. That's when you're winning the war on terror, if the terrorist becomes mujahideen or heroes or martyrs, then I'm afraid you're losing the war on terror. In other words, the hearts and minds war also has to be won.

Terrorism – the war on terror is not a conventional war. It has to be a two-pronged attack, policing as well as winning the hearts and minds of the people. So unfortunately, the way the war on terror has been fought, people are being pushed towards the terrorists. Rather than isolating the terrorists, people are being pushed in that direction. The classic case is in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Now, anyone who is acquainted with the history of the tribal area knows that revenge is an integral part of the Pashtun character. In fact, the whole society, it's like a balance of terror. Because of the fear of revenge, actually, these are basically crime-free areas.

I keep reading the "lawless" tribal areas. Actually, there is complete rule of law in the tribal areas. In 1935, the British governor, Olaf Caroe, he gave a statement – he wrote in his book that a week's crime in Peshawar, which was under the British control, was more than a year's crime in the entire tribal area. And it is actually, if you look at the rates of crime in the tribal area, they are crime-free areas. And one of the reasons is that if someone kills a family member, then the whole – they know that the family will then seek revenge.

Now, what is happening is that the way this war on terror is being fought is, there clearly is 80, 90,000 Pakistani soldiers can never be enough in a tribal belt which spans

almost 1500 miles all along the Afghanistan border, the most rugged, the most hostile, mountainous area. And I've been everywhere; I've also done a book in the area. My mother's tribe originally comes from Waziristan. So I was invited there. I've seen the whole area. It is the most rugged area and the tribes are spread all over these mountainous areas. And also, they are extremely tough, the people; they are mountain people, very tough. Everyone carries a gun.

And so, the two aspects of the tribal society should be known. One is that they are completely democratic. In other words, every – it's a devolved democracy – every village has its own parliament which is called the jirga, their own jury and the parliament. And so, they are completely – there's been no case where there is some sort of set – they have accepted any central authority. And they have never, ever been conquered; they've always been independent, free people and resisted every conqueror from Alexander downwards.

And the other aspect, as I mentioned before, is revenge. Now, the British understood this. When they used to have, do a military action against the tribes and when they used to bomb the areas, they would day earlier drop leaflets to tell the tribes that we are coming to bomb you the next day. The reason is they understood that if there was a loss of life, they know that then the tribes would retaliate. And so bombing was a deterrent, but not a (materiel/material ?) deterrent; a (materiel/material ?) loss rather than a human loss.

Unfortunately, the Pakistan army started to – because the area is so widespread, they used helicopters gunships, even sometimes F-16s to bomb those areas. The result was collateral damage, human loss of life. And so you found within one-and-a-half years, the Pakistan army went there in 2000 for, I believe – I think 9<sup>th</sup> of February, 2004, the army went in. And from a year later, the backlash started. And the backlash started by first, amongst the young there was a rebellion and they started targeting all of the pro-government maliks. Maliks are the sort of – who are not hereditary tribal chiefs, but sort of who are elected tribal chiefs.

So first these maliks were targeted. They kill 160 maliks in a period of one-and-a-half years. And then, the whole area virtually turned against the Pakistan army. Then Pakistan army tried to change the tactics by trying to do a political settlement with them. There was a famous agreement, the Waziristan Accord, which actually I thought was working and should have been built upon. But somehow because in Afghanistan the situation was volatile, getting worse, more pressure was put and the government, again, sort of used military to – now, the situation is such that Pakistan armies literally besieged there. I don't know whether you read just about a week or so ago, two forts fell to the Taliban.

Now, these are not to be confused by the Afghanistan Taliban. This side of – when Taliban were ruling in Afghanistan, there was no Talibanization in any of the tribal area. This is a political Talibanization going on where people, in reaction, to seek revenge from Pakistan, are moving onto the other side. So I think this is a flawed policy.

I think, initially, this should have – like the, all of this material the British have left behind, they should have relied on political negotiations. I know that on the eighth of February 2004, the tribes were about to sign a deal with the government that they would not hand over any foreigners that were living there because they felt they were their guests and there had been – there were intermarriages between them. These are the people who had stayed behind.

After the Afghan jihad, foreigners would come over, would settle in the tribal area. And the number wasn't more than a thousand or so. But the tribes guaranteed – they were signing this accord to guarantee that they would not allow people to go across to Afghanistan. I believe that that is – that should have been pursued as the British had done before, incentives should have been given to the tribes, they gave subsidies to the tribes. I think it could have – that was the right way of dealing with it rather than using military action because military action has exacerbated the situation.

Also, there are various areas now – for instance, in Swat, there is action going on. Swat is a settled area of Pakistan. But in Swat, until 1969, it was run on the tribal lines. Pakistan laws did not apply in Swat. Until 1969, it was run as a state with the similar sort of system as prevails in the tribal belt. And so, in Swat the movement was not related to the Taliban or related to al Qaeda. It was basically, as the governance system collapsed, people had no access to justice. A majority of the people were too poor to afford lawyers as they became part of Pakistan.

Before that, in the old tribal system, as exists in Waziristan, there is a jury system which any cases they go straight to the jury, village jury which decides that people have access to justice. When they became part of Pakistan, the sessions – (inaudible) – the lawyers – most people were deprived of justice. So it was a movement for justice that started in Swat area. But what is now happening is that they do now because the common enemy is Pakistan army. They are all joining hands; there is now Talibanization going on in Swat, too. And then there was a case of the Lal Masjid, the Red Mosque affair, where, I don't know, the government line was that this was, again, Taliban extremists. These are not extremists; they were fundamentalists. These people, fundamentalists or reactionaries who feel that their way of life has been threatened by an alien culture.

So Musharraf – this was a real reaction to Musharraf's Westernization. And this should have been dealt differently. But, when that Red Mosque was stormed, where there were women and children and no one still knows the number is anything between – is quoted between 800 to 1400 people who were killed in that mosque with the women and children, there was another reaction from there. Karen Armstrong has written a very good book about the battle for God. Well, whenever you suppress fundamentalism militarily, it turns violent. And so, there was a sharp reaction from that Red Mosque thing, again, not related to Taliban and al Qaeda. But the theories that they're all morphing together – no.



And then, there's Beluchistan, where the army is also facing a more or less a movement for separation now. And so, you know, the army's stretch, these movements all have one enemy in common which is the Pakistan army and General Musharraf. And I feel that, you know, this is the wrong approach because I think a political government would negotiate politically with people, not resort to arms, and then try and work and isolate the real terrorist. And the strategy should be to isolate the terrorists rather than pushing these people towards them.

MS. SHAFFER: The lady in the pink glasses?

Q: I'd like to ask you a bit about your visit to Washington. You mentioned meetings in Congress. Can you tell us a bit, give us a flavor of who you're seeing and what kind of reaction you're getting from them?

MS. SHAFFER: Can I ask you to identify yourself and other questions also to do that?

Q: I'm Anne Gearan with the Associated Press. I'd like to ask you a bit about who you're seeing in Congress, what kind of reaction you're getting from them and whether – (off mike) – the administration in the White House?

MR. KHAN: Well, I did – you know, I'm not really acquainted with U.S. politics so I'm – it's my colleagues who actually invited me here. I'm part of my political party who is based in the U.S. And the Pakistani community living here said that I should come here and try and give the lawmakers an alternative viewpoint because they're getting fed only one sort of viewpoint so far. So that's why I actually came.

And I met Senator Harry Reid, Senator Joe Biden, John Kerry, Tom Harkin, and Senator Casey. I met them all together. I met various other lawmakers, which, you know, they would be able to tell you, and trying to put my point of view across. And I actually got a very good response. I was surprised, especially by Senator Joe Biden, who actually understood the issue very well. I mean, he understood clearly that it should be a people-to-people relationship rather than backing one man as opposed to 160 million people.

And also, this whole idea of giving aid, you know. If U.S. has given \$10 billion, I in the parliament knew nothing about it. And if I in parliament knew nothing about it, the people know nothing about it. And so what's the point of giving so much money when you're not actually earning any goodwill? In fact, all of the anti-Musharraf sentiment is also going against the U.S. because the statements, you know, I regret to say that came out of the administration after the emergency posed by Musharraf who himself confesses that was violating the constitution.

None of the statements from the State Department or from the U.S. administration spokespeople like Condoleezza Rice, none of them talked about the reinstatement of the judges. Yet the whole country is standing behind the judges. And so, to say – they kept

saying, look, Musharraf should lift the emergency; Musharraf should hold elections. But no one talked about the crux of the whole thing. The whole reason for the emergency was to destroy the independent judiciary. And so, no one talked about reinstatement of the judges.

And so, I think this is what I tried to get through. And here is a country, when I was in university, when I went first time out of Pakistan and went to university in England, the thing that inspired us most about the U.S. was this whole idea about separation of power and check and balances, which we read in our – when I read politics at university. And so, it's important that this country should stand behind the democratic process and stand behind the independent justice system.

MS. SCHAFFER: (Inaudible, off mike) – talk about administration meetings?

MR. KHAN: No, I haven't had any meetings with the administration.

MS. SCHAFFER: Go ahead.

Q: Amit Pandya from the Stimson Center. First of all, I have to honor you because, like many people, when you first entered politics, I was skeptical that it was an issue of charisma. And I think you've demonstrated by your recent leadership that you really do stand for something fundamental and important. And that said, I think you'd be the first to agree that you don't have a mass following in Pakistani politics yet.

And my question is this: As I look at the political prospects, even if elections were free and fair, there seems to be a real sort of bankruptcy of political leadership. The party with most likely the largest mass following seems to have committed itself irrevocably to the principle of dynastic succession and seems to be led by a seriously compromised leadership. The party with the second-largest following, most likely, appears to have sort of agreed to work within a truncated and neutered democratic process for the time being. And the Islamic parties, as we know, from not only recent experience, but even several decades of experience, have clearly demonstrated a willingness to work with military governments and, again, to sort of cut their cloth to suit the circumstances.

And so my question to you really is, is there any way that you can disabuse me of my pessimism about the prospects for Pakistani politics? (Laughter.) What do you see that would point the way towards some kind of meaningful political embodiment of what appear to be fairly widespread aspirations and sentiments among the Pakistani people.

MR. KHAN: Okay, let me just first say that for most of you, you must understand that in Pakistan because of this whole – when Pakistan was created, got independence, the immediate obsession was security because between 1948 and between 1970, there were three wars against India. And there was a fear that we are up against a neighbor seven times the size. And so, the emphasis shift – our democratic process

suffered because of this overwhelming desire for security. And so, the army then walked in, in 1958, and since then, our democratic process has not been allowed to evolve.

But it doesn't mean that the people have not been – had democratic thinking – because when people say look at the Muslim world; there is no democracy, Pakistan should not be compared to the rest of the Muslim world because we came into being because of a democratic process. It was through the vote. And we should be compared to India because we basically have the same history, culture; the people were the same. So we look upon ourselves, when people say that look, you're not. Look in the Muslim world. We actually compare ourselves with India. And we in Pakistan think, if India could have a democratic process, if they can have 450 million people going to the polls and then have free and fair election, so can we. And also, the people in Pakistan always had a greater political awareness than, say, when you compare Pakistan to other Muslim countries.

Now, in the last three years, not many people have realized that there has been a silent revolution in Pakistan. This revolution has been because of the great heroes of our country who, along with the lawyers, the other heroes have been the independent television channels. These have changed Pakistan. As these channels came – and you know, the credit must go to Musharraf for allowing them in – but when he allowed them in, they favored him. I mean, it worked in his favor because he was at that time popular. The other political parties were discredited. So he comes across well; you know, he has charmed the American public so he also charmed the Pakistani public in the beginning.

But gradually, these TV channels – it's a double-edged sword. So when he is on 9<sup>th</sup> March and the subsequent mistakes, when he kept making – the same TV channels started exposing him. The most popular programs on television in Pakistan – on the independent television in Pakistan – were not soap operas, actually current-affairs programs. The current-affair program hosts became sort of the biggest names on our TV. And so, after the emergency, predictably, where General Musharraf was feeling the pain were these TV channels and he clamped down on them.

Even today, they are not allowed to – the main hosts – the most popular-watched programs are not allowed on the air still. And even now on the TV channels, when I went, firstly, they are very scared to get me on TV on these channels. But when I got on a TV channel just before I came here, I was told very politely that three things you cannot do. You cannot criticize Musharraf; you cannot criticize the army; and you cannot criticize those judges appointed by Musharraf who allowed him to amend the constitution. So it's because of the impact of these channels recognized by the government that he actually clamped down.

Now, what this has done is it has raised the level of political awareness in Pakistan as never before. Now, you are right – my party did not really have that much public support. But if you look at the IRI's polls, by November 2007, we are the party with the second-highest vote bank in the Northwest Frontier Province, or 18 percent, just behind Nawaz Sharif, which is 22 percent. Now, this has only been because of this

awareness on television. It's not – we haven't had any campaign or public campaign so far. But all I'm saying is that how things have changed in Pakistan.

And it was also, you said that People's Party had the biggest vote bank. Actually, it's Nawaz Sharif's party that has the biggest vote bank. According to all the surveys, he is number one; then came Benazir. In my opinion, if we have free and fair elections in Pakistan, at the moment, none of you would be able to predict what would be the result. And the reason is that people still are looking from the old data. They don't realize that once you have a proper election campaign and when manifestoes are discussed with these TV channels coming in, you cannot predict which way the Pakistan public will swing because the voting pattern in the past has declined from a high in 1970 of 60 percent. It's gone down to barely 25 percent now. And that's because the majority have been disillusioned by the democrats.

So I think to sit today and say what will happen in the elections – in free and fair elections – in free and fair elections, there is going to be a huge turnout. In the controlled elections, if elections are held by General Musharraf, I reckon it will be the lowest turnout in Pakistan's history.

MS. SCHAFFER: There was a gentleman in the back who had a clarification he wanted to give. And then, I've got all your hands, but we'll get to you right after that.

MR. : I actually just want to follow proper protocol and name all the lawmakers we've met so far. So first, we were hosted by Senator Harry Reid who is the leader of the Senate. Present were Senator Joe Biden, Senator Tom Harkin, Senator John Kerry, Senator Casey, Senator Murray and Senator Durbin. We also met Chairman Tierney who is the chairman on government reform and oversight for Foreign Relations; Congressman Yarmuth, Peter Welch, and the Congressman Christopher Shays were present in that meeting. We've also been hosted by Congressman Sheila Jackson, Shelley Berkeley, and Congressman Pascrell were also present. And we've also called on Congressman Bruce Braley because he has been kind enough to write two notes to President Bush, firstly, demanding the release of the chairman when he was arrested on terrorism charges, and recently on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January asking for the same level of security for the political leaders of Pakistan including the chairman that he himself enjoys. Thank you.

MR. KHAN: Well, I just want to add that if it's security like Benazir Bhutto's, then thanks but no thanks. (Laughter.) You know, I'm better without any security.

MS. SCHAFFER: Okay, I've got five questions on my list. And I will try to get to everybody, but I am going to have to ask you to make your questions brief. Even though we appear to have plenty of time, I think we have an inexhaustible well of curiosity. Steve Gachee.

Q: Yes, my name is Steven Gachee. I am at the Foreign Service Institute. In light of this analysis that you've given, what is your personal strategy and plan right now

about these upcoming elections? I understand that you're not planning to take part. But what is that you hope to accomplish and what actions do you have in mind to move your agenda forward under current circumstances?

MR. KHAN: I am part of a coalition, which is called the All-Parties Democratic Alliance. And that coalition has a wide spectrum of parties, not big parties. Nawaz Sharif was part of this alliance. But once the People's Party opted to fight the elections, then he also left the alliance to fight the elections. But we decided – the alliance had made a very clear statement that you cannot have any free and fair elections if your chief justice is under house arrest. And so, we wanted to – we boycotted the elections and would only fight on the condition that the judiciary was restored.

Now, this alliance has all the regional parties in it, the Baluch nationalists, the Sindhi nationalists. It has left-wing parties, the labor party, which was originally the Communist party, as well as Jamaat e-Islami, which broke away from the MMA and came into this alliance. And the agenda is very straightforward: that we will keep campaigning until the judiciary is reinstated.

Q: I am – (off mike) – Pakistani ambassador, now teaching here at Georgetown. Thank you so much for excellent briefing. And I have a very short and simple question. What is the reason for the U.S. administration's overdependence on Musharraf? What is he doing that a democratic government would not do? I mean, why is America so afraid of democracy?

MR. KHAN: You know, I am perplexed as much as you are. Why would a democratic government not want to work with the U.S.? I mean, for me, it's so obvious that – look, if supposing our government came into power, surely we would want to have a good relationship with the U.S. because U.S. is the biggest – our main exports go to the U.S. And in any case, I mean, who would want to oppose the only superpower in town? The only explanation I could come up is that General Musharraf has done a brilliant PR job here where he has convinced the people that he is one man holding these hordes of terrorists, the bastion against these extremists, and that the ultimate fear that the nukes will fall in the hands of al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden and the U.S. is a threat – I think he has managed to convince the people. And I also think that people here do not have a very good understanding of the situation in Pakistan. And they've fallen for it.

I mean, if you look at Pakistan's electoral pattern, every election has excluded the religious parties. And not all of them are extreme, by the way. Having sat in the national assembly for five years and where there was the maximum number of religious parties member of parliament, never have they won so many seats as they did in 2002 election. And it's a very wide spectrum. I mean, even in the religious right, there are various strands there. It's not one sort of monolith thought, which is sitting there.

And I feel that the only way, if you want in Pakistan moderate governments, allow free and fair elections because allow the people to exclude the extreme thoughts. And do not think that a military dictator is going to do that job because always extremism

has grown under military dictatorship. Always whenever you have had free and fair elections, they have been excluded. In fact, in this survey, in the last survey on November, the religious parties' coalition, which was ruling Frontier province, there, vote bank has halved in these five years. So, you know, to think that one man is this bastion of enlightenment in Pakistan where he's beating up lawyers, women, civil society, human right workers, and yet he is the man U.S. should support, it's so bizarre, which is why I ended up coming here at a time when it's actually quite critical in Pakistan for me to remain there.

Q: I'm Karen DeYoung with the Washington Post. U.S. Policy at the moment seems to be to increase support for the army. I don't think they are too enamored with General Musharraf anymore. They seem to be increasingly enamored with General Kiani, and they are stepping up their support both in terms of equipment and in people on the ground. What do you think the reaction is going to be in Pakistan to that and how effective is that going to be?

MR. KHAN: You know, I'm a great believer in democracy. I do not think that the U.S. should support the army directly. These are all sort of tried-and-failed policies, which U.S. had done in the past and all over the world. I feel that it should be a peoples-to-people relationship. There is no reason why the U.S. should earn the animosity of people of any country, and especially, 160 million people. And I also think that this whole idea that the army is going to be able to solve this problem of terrorism, it is unsustainable. How long is the army going to take the sort of casualties it's taking in a war that the soldiers don't understand what they're fighting for, where there's no end, where they're killing women and children, where they are earning the hatred of the population of Pakistan. How long can this go on?

The answer does not lie in having a direct relationship with the army and then making them do all of this, what they are doing right now in Pakistan. The answer lies in backing a genuine democratic government. And I say a genuine. I also don't understand why the U.S. should back any political leader as they back Benazir Bhutto. I don't understand that. Why should the U.S. take sides in a domestic electoral process? It should just back the democratic process. Whoever comes there will want a relationship with the U.S., and that is the best bet for U.S. to fight this war on terror, a democratic government. And as I said which mobilizes the people and marginalizes the extremists.

Q: Hi, Jonathan Landay with McClatchy Newspapers, I just came back from two weeks in Pakistan, and one of the manifestations of the assassination of Benazir Bhutto I found was not so much tensions over the extremism, but was along ethnic lines. There was a great deal of outpourings of anger among Sindhis in particular, and General Musharraf went out of his way to try and address that. You have talked almost exclusively about the threat of extremism, religious extremism in Pakistan. Can you talk about, please, the threat of renewed ethnic tensions and the dangers those pose to Pakistan because as you look at Northwest Frontier, that's mostly a Pashtun manifestation; Balochistan, that's an insurgency in and of itself. Can you talk about the ethnic tensions, please?

MR. KHAN: Well, I mean, that's the main reason I'm insisting there should be free and fair elections in Pakistan and that the judiciary should be restored. And that's why also, I think, this alliance we have, which is the APDM, it's very important that this alliance works because you know, contrary to how the U.S. looks at Pakistan, I don't think that Pakistan is a battle between moderates and extremists. I don't think this is the issue in Pakistan. The main issue is Pakistan is status quo and anti-status quo. People who want a change and want a genuine democracy, people who want to preserve the status quo from which they are benefiting.

Now, if you look at the parties that are fighting elections, you will be surprised to know that there is only one party, and that is – (unintelligible) – that is insisting on reinstatement of the judges. Neither People's Party has insisted on that, neither MQM, neither PML (Q), and certainly not the – (unintelligible) –. None of them are insisting on the reinstatement of the judges.

In my opinion, one of the reasons is that most of the status quo is petrified of an independent judiciary. Now, only an independent judiciary, free and fair elections, can save the federation. Whenever you have a strong military dictatorship, you have a centralized government, always there is tension in the smaller provinces. There is not just in the Sindh province, in Sindh, especially because General Musharraf manipulated the whole process to get a minority to take over and the Sindhis felt deprived. MQM, which has 13 percent of the vote bank has 50 percent of the ministries and total control of Karachi. No wonder the Sindhis are really disgruntled at the moment.

Similarly in Balochistan, Balochistan provides gas, which is worth about 300 billion rupees, which Pakistan benefits. And the total budget of Balochistan with 44 percent of Pakistan land mass is only 13 billion. Thirteen billion is the total development budget. Twenty districts out of 25, the majority is below the poverty line, so there is a great feeling of deprivation and they almost feel like a colony. The answer lies in a genuine democracy and a general federal system where there is autonomy. The provinces should get financial autonomy and unfortunately the army, whenever it takes over, there is always the centralized system, which lays stress on the federation. So I agree with you that unless we have, if we have these controlled elections, these rigged elections coming up, the federation will be under further stress.

MS. SCHAFFER: Yes, sir?

Q: Thank you – (off mike) – from India – (inaudible) – in Asia Today. It was a great presentation, today, and Ambassador Schaffer, as always.

My question is that so much has been written about Benazir Bhutto's assassination and also about the situation in Pakistan, judges and judiciary and all that and the think tank, and also in the media here in Pakistan. One, why initiation is not getting the message across? And second, you have not met anybody in the administration other than the lawmakers, and where do we go from here as far as the situation? What

administration is saying, that Musharraf is with them fighting against terrorism. Can you tell the administration today that if Musharraf is with the U.S. during the day and at night he is with Osama bin Laden? (Laughter.)

MR. KHAN: Well, you know, I can't, I basically, I can't say whether – you know, I keep reports coming through that Musharraf is basically, he's playing a double game. As you know, I'm his biggest critic, but I don't understand the logic behind it. Why would he be doing that? Because these guys are out to kill him. They're killing the Pakistan army. Why would he be playing a double game? I mean, why would the army tolerate it? Why would they at one point been killed by them and then they're bombing them right in the heart of Pakistan. They are bombing them in the cities. There are suicide attacks right on the doors of the GHQ. They are bombing the ISI (?) buses. Why would then at the same time the army be helping them?

I mean, it's a logic which I don't understand. I read about it, but I would doubt it. I think that it's just beyond Musharraf's control. The situation is getting from bad to worse, and I think he has run out of options. I don't think that, as I said, this is a sustainable war the way it has been fought. I only think it's a matter of time before something, a reaction within the army, which just refuses to go on with this. And as I said, I think the answer is not just because someone you think is loyal to you, and he's doing your work, and you keep backing him. This is not the answer to fight this war on terror. It's a wrong strategy. I think, you know, they should change strategy and go backing the people, have a people-to-people contact.

MS. SCHAFFER: Yes, sir?

Q: Thanks. Jay Solomon with the Wall Street Journal. Back to the tribal areas, I just had a question on – I can see the point of how the military option is backfiring, but is there really, sort of, leaders there now that can be engaged, who can be talked to about how to bring the tribal areas back under control because it sounds like a situation where, kind of, the centrist-moderates have all been either purged or killed and now you have just got a totally kind of split society in the tribal areas now at a time when the pressure on Musharraf and the U.S. and the Europeans to do something because of all the threats emanating from that area is only increasing. So it just seems that I could understand the logic of what you were saying, but it sounds like this would be an awfully long process at a time when the pressure for the Western world to do something, and Musharraf himself, is only growing.

MR. KHAN: Well, you know, I just go to the governor of Northwest Frontier province, who has just resigned, General Orakzai. General Orakzai comes from the tribal area. Orakzai is one of the agency's seven agencies in the tribal areas. He is the one who broke up this peace deal because he understood that there was no military solution. He had given an interview to Sunday Times where he said that even if you increase 50,000 more troops on either side of the border, he said you will still, all you will have is more casualties. And he understood the psyche of the people and he is the one who started saying, deal with them politically. And actually, I think if that Waziristan Accord that



was signed under Orakzai, if they had persisted with that, I think that was the right way of going about it. It wasn't a perfect system because what is happening is that the whole tribal structure has changed, the youth have rebelled, killed all the men, tribal elders who the government used to deal with, but there would again be someone to talk to because that is how the tribes work.

I mean, it is not one person, it is not one central authority who can go and talk to them, these are, you know, it is a slow process. But it is the only way of dealing with it. As things are going now, not only is the whole of Waziristan on fire, and it is getting worse. But I read reports just before that I was coming, that Mohmand Agency, which is completely different part of the tribal area, even there they are now attacking the Pakistani troops. And the government is suppressing the number of casualties of fear of a backlash in Pakistan because they don't allow any independent journalists to go there. Our party members in Waziristan have given us reports, which say that a lot more soldiers are being killed than they are announcing.

So I know it's a mess. You have to understand this is a mess now. But the way to deal with this is not by sending more soldiers. The way to deal with it is not a, sort of, surge in Afghanistan and Pakistan; it is to actually have a credible government, a government that has credibility, which unfortunately Musharraf government has not got. And then start negotiations again.

Q: Does that mean the process should become more normal because, should normal political parties be allowed to work there because it sounds like it has always been treated separately, but maybe that is bad in the long run.

MR. KHAN: The whole way – you know, this is a completely different subject. You know, you must remember that tribal areas were never conquered by Pakistan. In 1948, the joint Pakistan through a treaty signed then with the founder of Pakistan, Jinnah, whereby only 44 laws of Pakistan apply in the FATA. So, you know when people say why don't we just get them and take over FATA, they don't understand what they're talking about; they don't know the people they're with.

So I think yes, the relationship has to change the way Pakistan deals with FATA. Yes, the political parties should be allowed to work with them and get them more in the mainstream, but not through force. It has to be a political move, not military move. Yes, I agree with it that we, why is it that the political parties cannot work in FATA? Because the government always, whichever government, not just this government, what they do is they have them fight elections as independents and then whichever is the government pro-establishment party, they give them monetary incentives and get them over to the government's side. It's not because they are caring for the FATA region or their welfare; it is just manipulating them politically in whichever government is in favor. I think political parties should operate there and sort of get them more in the mainstream, more development – not through some benevolent government doing it, but actually through a political process, bringing them more in the mainstream.

MS. SCHAFFER: Over here.

Q: Thank you, Elise Lavitt (sp) with CNN. Thank you for doing this today.

I was in Pakistan a few months ago, and one of the things that I experienced talking to young people as you have a big following with the students and also the poor people, is they feel very far removed from, in a lot of ways, from all of this talk about the state of emergency in the judiciary and the political process, and even the war on terror, and they are looking at bread-and-butter issues like jobs and the future and the economy.

And I think one of the problems in the political discourse and also with what the administration here in Washington is talking about is that there is not enough aid going, you know, in terms of not only making – this would make Pakistan a viable partner if it was economically stable, if there was sustainable development, if the country was growing. And I don't think the relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan has really grown in that way.

And I was wondering how you can encompass more of these people that care about those issues, is that going to help the extremist situation in Pakistan? Because if you say that the government is going and giving money to Waziristan and in a sense paying them off. In some ways it could be working because I only hear – the real thing I hear from Pervez Awati (ph) and people of that party is they're talking about those bread-and-butter issues which are gaining resonance in some of the poorer areas. So how can you encompass more of those issues in the campaign?

MR. KHAN: Well, you know, first of all the war on terror – you know, and I keep hearing, and I think some of our political leaders have also given the impression in Washington, that if people had more food to eat and if they were a bit more prosperous, then they would not indulge terrorism. It's a deeply flawed argument because there are different reasons why people are blowing themselves up; it's not because they're hungry.

But it is a serious issue, what you are talking about in Pakistan. You are absolutely right; the gap between the rich and poor in the last eight years has really grown astronomically. The money that should have been spent on human beings has been spent not on human beings.

We have, as I said, a new GHU coming up in Islam, but in 2,500 acres costing billions of fees, when only 1.7 percent of the GDP was spent on education, which is a loss in the subcontinent. The least amount of human development in the whole of the subcontinent, this is the U.N. human development index report, which comes out annually. So this is also the reason why you should have democracy because democracy demands – like, India had 8.5 percent growth rate under the BJP government, but the people in the rural areas said look, it didn't help us and threw out the government. This is the power of democracy, the power of vote. And unfortunately when you have dictatorship, people actually become voiceless, and the money's diverging away from

what should be the right of the people to actually, you know, things like expensive toys, like you know, F-16s and stuff.

In my opinion, this is not going to exacerbate the war on terror, but it will impact the future of Pakistan. We could actually – you know, this is also another one is the federation and trade. The other is the way the economy's going and the way the distribution of wealth is so skewed now in favor of a tiny, rich elite and the majority are being deprived of their basic needs. This is another potential crisis coming up in Pakistan.

Just to highlight, 100 million Pakistanis out of 160 are below the age of 25. And if, you know, the money is not spent on education then this is a potential ticking bomb in Pakistan. In my constituency in Mianwali, I did a survey and found that 70 percent of the state schools in my constituency were closed. And, you know, what are the people going to do if you're in a situation where they can't send their children to government schools. Where else are they going to send the children? And so, if people send their children to madrassas, it's also one of the reasons that state school structures have collapsed.

But as far as U.S. aid goes, you know, I am one of those Pakistanis who feel that we should be standing on our feet. I don't think we should, you know, countries should not rely on aid; countries should have leadership which should just ensure that the money is distributed amongst its own people, and the leadership and the people should give sacrifices together. It should not be a case where the rich elite lives the life as if there are oil wells in the country, and the poor people are deprived of their basic needs. I think that the country has tremendous vibrancy; I mean, I am one of those who is greatly optimistic of Pakistan. I think the country has great potential; people are vibrant. All we need is a system that, you know, that will spend money; we need to spend money on our human beings. And I think they will be able to lift the country themselves.

MS. SCHAFER: Gentleman in the back of the room.

Q: My name is Stephen Shore (sp).

Two brief questions: The first is, let us suppose that we had an independent judiciary again, free and fair democratic elections. Would a definitive settlement with India be likely and if so, what would be the consequences in Pakistan for the war on terrorism?

MR. KHAN: I think there's a consensus in Pakistan, and I also believe there's a consensus in India. I think people have realized that, you know, we cannot settle our differences through guns. There's a consensus that, you know, we have to settle our differences through dialogue. Now, this is not anything to do with General Musharraf or anyone. I think if I thought there was a point when this realization came across the border was actually when the two armies faced each other after the Cargill misadventure. After that, there was a realization that, you know, here are two nuclear armed countries and we could have – you know, we could destroy each other.

And I think amongst the people, and it was reflected in a cricket series which was played after that, I remember when I was – the days I used to play cricket against India. Losing was not an option. (Laughter.) You know, if you lost to India – I remember we lost to India once, and here's now the team on the eve of the departure to Pakistan. The main discussion going on is, how can we get to Pakistan in the middle of the night when everyone is asleep. (Laughter.)

So after this Cargill thing, I saw – I mean, I happened to sort of be watching this match, and I saw Pakistan lose in Pakistan to India, and I saw Indian flags waving around in the stadium. I mean, it was something that was just unimaginable in my day; I mean, the stadium would have burned down. So since then, there has been a change, there's been a consensus, and I think this process with India is irreversible. It'll go through hiccups, but it'll be on the table; you know, it'll be – around the table you will find that there will be ups and downs and this, but I don't think that, you know, the people are prepared to now take up arms again.

MS. SCHAFER: (Off mike.)

Q: I'm a retired diplomat. Excellent analysis of the immediate problems.

My question is of a longer-term nature. I feel that the feudal system in Pakistan has something to contribute to the hindrances in the development of democracy. In India, the feudal system was denigrated (?) to a large degree. Having known some feudals, I won't give the names – (laughter) – they are thinking, and some enlightened ones like Jam Sahab (ph) and the Kalurs (ph), I got the impression that democracy and feudalism don't go very well together, having grown up in a feudal background. The system is such that you will have then nomination of the children or the wife to lead the parties. I think in the longer run, some of the structural changes will have to be brought about; it's not just a simple matter of spreading democracy.

MR. KHAN: Can I say, I think it's very important to understand that the feudal culture in Pakistan that exists is not related necessarily to the landholding because you know, in England for instance, the landholdings are much bigger than, you know, our landlords have in Pakistan. But it is a mindset where whoever is the local power wants to be above law, and they do not believe in the rule of law; it is the might is right; the law of the jungle, the way feudalism thrives. For instance, in my constituency I was fighting against someone who actually behaved completely like a feudal but was a drug baron. His power did not come from the land he owned, he didn't own that much land, but the power came from other sources. So therefore, feudalism can be destroyed by the rule of law. If you have an independent justice system where the feudal is not protected by the power structure as it is right now, and he's not able to appoint his own police officers in his own district, through which he then victimizes his opponents, the whole feudal structure would collapse.

So I think that feudalism can be destroyed by rule of law, and I also think that we do need land redistribution as well because we have – but for a different reason because we have a huge landless rural labor which is moving towards urban centers, and it's causing problems. So I do think that, from that point of view, it's just a way of managing the rural areas. We need a land redistribution and we need end of absentee landlordism, which is a different subject. But I think rule of law is the crucial thing which will liberate the voters from the clutches of the feudal because the feudal depends on political victimization. The moment he can't victimize his opponents, feudalism will collapse.

MS. SCHAFER: We are coming close to the end of our time. I have three questions on my list, and I'm going to ask each of you to state your questions very briefly and then give our speaker the second-to-last word, and the Asia Society the last word.

So, Moahed (ph)?

Q: Thanks for a lucid presentation, and Ambassador Schafer, thank you for hosting it.

My question is on the issue of elections. I think sometimes elections are a grossly overrated remedy for resolving our problems. One election, fair and free, 1970 December, precipitated the breakup of Pakistan, which is considered a fair election. The other election, 1977, under Mr. Bhutto, seen widely as rigged, precipitated his hanging. And also, Doctor, and I have no difficulty with your prognosis; I'm just talking of the remedy. You've talked also of the feudal culture which has been discussed also.

But perhaps I think we do not adequately realize in a feudal society, the money business interests and the monopoly of means and means in our society, as well as in India, where the cost system is a threat to real democratic empowerment. And sometimes these moneyed interests, these big business interests, feudal interests deceive democracy because that's the way they can perpetuate their stranglehold under the hijab of democracy of elections. I think this is the lollipop we should be a little bit afraid of chewing, the lollipop of this conventional democracy and conventional elections, but it's not working. It's basically excluding the majority and empowering and perpetuating the whole of the minority. Thanks.

MR. KHAN: You know, I agree with you, Moahed, that if there is no rule of law when you hold elections, you basically empower the criminals or the power structure; you strengthen the power structure. That's why, in my opinion, you need an independent judiciary which protects an independent election commission. And then, they apply the laws of elections; basically, criminals should not be allowed to fight elections. If you apply the election laws – but they are never applied because the powerful are always with the power structure. And so the whole point of an independent judiciary and rule of law is important also to pave the way for a general democratic system.

And I agree with you that, you know, in our country and most countries – I remember reading Paddy Ashdown's account in Bosnia, where he said that we could not

bring democracy. He was the U.N. representative there to bring the democratic process in Bosnia, and he said we failed because he said, before the elections we did not impose first the rule of law before holding elections and ended up empowering the criminals.

MS. SCHAFER: Good. Can Bernie al Alter (ph) and Perrin de Young (ph) get their questions down to a sound bite?

Q: On the issue of corruption: The civilian parties don't have a really great history when it comes to that. (Off mike) – was thrown out twice, and the last ones thrown out – in fact, when Musharraf came in people were happy because they thought he was honest. Do you think that the political culture has changed now to the point where, if you had more democracy and you had civilian parties, the issue of corruption and an independent judiciary would be finished or would it just be again, a new civilian party subverting an independent judiciary?

MR. KHAN: Well, it's very interesting but as I said, only one party at the moment is asking for the reinstatement of the judges amongst all the parties that are participating in the elections, and that's because crooks cannot afford independent judiciary. They're petrified; I mean, they know they will be caught, and so that's why it's such a contradiction that here they are, democrats, and yet they are not asking for the reinstatement of the judges.

So I think that's why I say it is a battle between status quo and anti-status quo. Actually, what Moahed has just said: The status quo does not want a change of – they cannot afford an independent justice system, including the feudals. And that's why you find this bizarre group together at the APDM where you have nationalists, communists, you know, religious party – I mean, a completely varied group, but actually they want a general democracy. And so I think this is the future; I mean, if we can move towards a general democracy it is eventually going to – I'm not saying that overnight everything will be okay, but it's a move in the right direction; at least, we will be moving in the right direction.

MS. SHAFER: Karen, I'm going to have to ask your indulgence. It seems that we're running up against a tighter deadline than I realized. So let me ask Jack Garrity (sp) to give us a few final words.

JACK GARRITY: I'd like to thank Imran Khan and Ambassador Schafer for participating in this. I think it's been a very, very interesting discussion on a number of levels. We've covered so many different areas, and yet there was still a number of issues that weren't raised: the role of intelligence, Afghanistan. Can you imagine having a discussion on Pakistan and not talking about Kashmir, or India just being raised at the last moment? It shows how the paradigm has shifted entirely in Pakistan. Pakistan has always been one of the most important Islamic countries, but it's always been under the radar screen, sort of cast in the shadow of India and certainly not been the focus since we've been in Iraq.

But you know, we've gone a long way in trying to promote democracy, and I think everybody in this room realizes that democracy is just not holding an election. And we've been trying in a lot of countries, especially Islamic countries, to try to promote the rule of law, transparency, independent media, good constitutions, and in Pakistan we have the basis of all of that. And I think it's time that we really focus on trying to look at how Pakistan can move forward. And I congratulate you on raising these issues, but as you said on two occasions, it's a mess, we all know it's a mess, but there is optimism for the future if things can move in the right direction.

So once again, I'd like to thank you for your good discussion, and thank Ambassador Schafer.

(Applause.)

MS. SCHAFER: Could I ask you please to stay in your seats so that our visitor can leave and make his next appointment before the door gets blocked?

(END)