

UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE
1200 17TH STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036-3011

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The Imperative for Action

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An Update of the Report of the Task Force on American
Interests and UN Reform

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Tuesday,
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Renaissance Mayflower Hotel
Colonial Room
1127 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.

Speakers:

NEWT GINGRICH	Co-Chair, Task Force on United Nations
GEORGE MITCHELL	Co-Chair, Task Force on the United Nations
ROD HILLS	Task Force on the United Nations Member
MALCOLM WALLOP	Task Force on the United Nations
RICHARD SOLOMON	Ambassador, and President, United States Institute of Peace

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

1
2 AMBASSADOR SOLOMON: Good morning. We
3 appreciate this very substantial turnout on
4 unfortunately a rather gloomy, gloomy fall day but with
5 the holidays coming, it should brighten us all up. I
6 think many of you know that it was just about a year ago
7 that Congress directed the U.S. Institute of Peace to
8 establish a bipartisan task force to look at issues of
9 United Nations' performance and reform, and the hope was
10 that we could find a way to strengthen the ability of
11 the institution to meet the high purposes of its charter
12 which, of course, was drafted 60 years ago.

13 And we were asked to report to Congress six
14 months after the establishment of the task force, which
15 we did in June of this year and this publication, which
16 may be rather familiar to many of you by now is
17 available in stacks at the back of the room.

18 Now, I also might note that the initiative
19 and the congressional leadership for this effort came
20 from Congressman Frank Wolf, Chairman of the House
21 Science State Justice Commerce Appropriations
22 Subcommittee, who just happens to be in charge of the
23 Institute's annual appropriation, and we're very

1 fortunate to have here this morning the distinguished
2 Co-chairs of our task force, Speaker Newt Gingrich and
3 Senator George Mitchell.

4 As well, we have a number of other members
5 of the task force, Senator Malcolm Wallop, Rod Hills,
6 Danielle Pletka, I believe is going to be joining us
7 shortly and also several members of the task force
8 expert group, two individuals who are absolutely
9 critical to the writing of both that report and the
10 follow-up effort today, Vince Haley and Lee Feinstein.

11 Now, our task force report in June made a
12 number of concrete actionable recommendations for
13 reform. And the report came out at the time, of course,
14 when there were revelations of a range of serious
15 management problems and it was in that context that the
16 report was very well received by the Congress, the
17 Administration and even by a good many up at the United
18 Nations and I should say especially by the Secretary, by
19 Secretary General Kofi Annan and the task force report
20 reinforce many of Kofi Annan's own recommendations for
21 reform and there seemed to be a widespread recognition
22 of the need for making some major changes in the way the
23 Institution is managed and there was also a heightened

1 sense of motivation.

2 So our hope was with this mood, with the
3 revelation of serious problems, there could be a
4 significant reform process take hold. Now it was in
5 that context that this past September there was a United
6 Nations summit meeting to celebrate the 60th anniversary
7 of the organization and while I don't want to pre-guess
8 some of the discussion that we'll hear this morning, I
9 think it's fair to say that there was a good deal of
10 disappointment that the so-called outcome document of
11 that summit did not come to grips with many of the
12 needed reforms that were identified in the task force
13 report and, indeed, reforms that had been proposed by
14 Kofi Annan himself some months earlier.

15 So it was in that situation that urged on
16 by Congressman Wolf and others to keep the efforts of
17 this task force alive, that we instituted an assessment
18 of where the UN reform process was heading to take the
19 June reform recommendations that were in our initial
20 report and match them against what had come out of the
21 summit meeting in the so-called outcome document.

22 And so we asked the experts from the six
23 public policy institutions who were the collaborators in

1 this task force; the American Enterprise Institute,
2 Brookings, the Center for Strategic International
3 Studies, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Hoover
4 Institution and the Heritage Foundation, to assess the
5 outcome of the summit in relation to the reform
6 recommendations.

7 And their assessment also available in the
8 back of the room is now in public and will be the focus
9 of our discussion this morning. I just also might
10 observe that we're not the only ones tracking the
11 process of reform. The UN Foundation represented here
12 this morning by Kathy Bushkin, is also doing that kind
13 of an assessment and on their website Unfoundation.org,
14 you will find a matrix in which the Foundation is also
15 assessing prospects reform.

16 But today we're here to give Speaker
17 Gingrich and Senator Mitchell and our other colleagues a
18 chance to give their own take on the status of the
19 reform effort. And let me just note that the June task
20 force report put forward as a major proposition the
21 quote "firm belief that an effective United Nations is
22 in America's national interest", unquote.

23 And the sense that we have following the

1 September summit is that it will take considerable
2 concerted leadership by the United States, acting
3 together with out countries who see the need for an
4 effective United Nations to insure that the
5 opportunities for reform that may have been missed that
6 were not given enough weight at the September summit are
7 not lost.

8 So with that as a welcome, let me turn the
9 podium over to Co-Chair Senator Mitchell and the we'll
10 hear from Speaker Gingrich.

11 George?

12 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: Thank you very much,
13 Dick, not just for your introduction today but for the
14 outstanding work of the United States Institute of Peace
15 in connection with this task force report and in a wide
16 range of other activities. The USIP is proving to be a
17 powerful spokesman for peace, stability and prosperity
18 and we're pleased and honored to be associated with your
19 organization.

20 The Speaker and I have routinely alternated
21 the order in which we would appear and today is my turn
22 so I'm going to make a brief statement. We have agreed
23 on and distributed to you today a joint statement by the

1 Speaker and I. We will not attempt to read that to you
2 since we are confident of your ability to read it
3 yourselves. We will make individual statements that
4 supplement the joint statement and of course, in some
5 areas overlap with it.

6 Following our statements, we're honored to
7 have other members of the task force here, former
8 Senator Malcolm Wallop and Rod Hills and assuming she
9 arrives before then, Danielle Pletka. Each of them will
10 be offered the opportunity to make comments and then, of
11 course, we'll take questions on any aspect of the
12 report, both the initial report and the follow-up report
13 that's being distributed today.

14 The American people continue to support a
15 United Nations that plays an important role in building
16 as safer, freer and more prosperous world. As you know,
17 the Speaker and I were privileged to serve as co-
18 chairman of the Bipartisan Task Force on the United
19 Nations which was authorized by Congress. The task
20 force spanned a wide range of political and ideological
21 perspectives reflected by some of the task force members
22 here today.

23 After six months of fact-finding and

1 deliberations, the task force issued a 126-page
2 consensus report. We were not able to agree on
3 everything and we still don't agree on everything but we
4 do support and stand by both the initial and the follow-
5 up reports. But as we say in the statement we're
6 releasing today by the speaker and I, what was most
7 striking was the extent to which we were able to find
8 common ground, including on the task force's most
9 important finding which was, and I quote, "The firm
10 belief that an effective United Nations is in America's
11 interest".

12 Given these high hopes, it should not be
13 surprising that there has been disappointment and even
14 frustration in the United States with the results of
15 last month's summit meeting in New York. As we note in
16 our report, the so-called outcome document was not the
17 sweeping package of reforms called for in the Secretary
18 General's report of March, in Larger Freedom. It lacked
19 the boldness and vision of the report of the high level
20 panel on threats, challenges and change. And it fell
21 significantly short of the recommendations made by our
22 own task force.

23 But I believe it is far too early to write

1 off the effort to reform the United Nations. That would
2 misjudge the kind of sustained effort that will be
3 required to succeed in overhauling the Institution to
4 meet the very different threats and challenges of this
5 new century. The problems of failed states,
6 catastrophic terrorism, the persistence of crimes
7 against humanity and ethnic cleansing and the promotion
8 of democracy.

9 It would also, frankly, let the member
10 states of the United Nations off the hook. This is a
11 quote. "While it is easy to blame the UN as an
12 institution for some of the problems we confront today,
13 we must recognize that ultimately it is its member
14 states that must take action and therefore, bear
15 responsibility". Those are the words of Ambassador
16 Bolton in recent testimony before the House
17 International Relations Committee.

18 UN reform is a daunting challenge, but
19 genuine and deep reform is possible if there is a
20 coalition of democracies, the United States centrally
21 among them that will persevere in the development of an
22 accountable and effective United Nations. I will now
23 turn briefly to the outcome document and what we believe

1 remains to be done.

2 The task force's experts have provided a
3 balanced assessment of September's summit agreement and
4 these are included in the materials that have been
5 distributed to you today. I thank them for their
6 continued and invaluable efforts. Without addressing
7 each of their points, I will highlight four areas that I
8 think are of special significance; genocide prevention,
9 management reform, human rights and development.
10 Unquestionably, the most important achievement of the
11 September summit was the strong endorsement of the
12 principle that has come to be known as the
13 responsibility to protect. This principle has two
14 parts. First, that every government has the
15 responsibility to protect those within its borders from
16 atrocities. Our task force called on the US Government
17 to press for acceptance of this language, and I'm
18 pleased to say they were largely successful.

19 The outcome document was clear on this
20 point and it is worth restating its language. It reads,
21 quote, "Each individual state has the responsibility to
22 protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic
23 cleansing and crimes against humanity. This

1 responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes
2 including their incitement through appropriate and
3 necessary means. We accept that responsibility and will
4 act in accordance with it", close quote.

5 The second element of the responsibility to
6 protect goes to the moral responsibilities of the rest
7 of the world. In certain circumstances, a government's
8 abnegation of its responsibility to its own people is so
9 severe that the responsibility of others to take action
10 cannot be denied. The outcome document embraced this
11 point as well. I would also add that although the
12 outcome document calls for action through the Security
13 Council, its language is not inconsistent with the
14 further finding of our task force that the failure of
15 the Security Council to act must not be used as an
16 excuse for the world to stand by as atrocities continue.

17 Of course, embracing the concept of a
18 responsibility to protect does not insure that the
19 nations of the world and the UN will live up to their
20 responsibilities. A good place to turn principle into
21 practice is Darfur where recent attacks on peacekeepers
22 and other indicate the precariousness of the current
23 situation. Our task force recommended a series of

1 immediate initiatives for the United States, the United
2 Nations and others, including establishment of a no-fly
3 zone over Darfur. Action is urgently needed in Darfur.

4 The second issue I'd like to address is
5 management reform. Unfortunately there was little
6 progress on this critically important issue. The
7 outcome document fell short in virtually all of the key
8 areas identified in our task force report. These
9 include an authoritative independent oversight board
10 that will have all the authority of an independent audit
11 committee, empowerment of the Secretary General to
12 replace top officials and the creation of an effective
13 chief operating officer and modern personnel system,
14 effective whistle blower protection and ethics and
15 disclosure standards for top officials and transparency.

16
17 Sunset provisions for all programs and
18 activities mandated by the General Assembly, and
19 identification of operational programs that should be
20 funded entirely by voluntary contributions. As I've
21 said recently, management reform is not a favor to the
22 United States. It is essential to the vitality and
23 integrity of the United Nations. Without it, other

1 reforms are much more difficult to implement and to
2 sustain. In the area of management and reform, the next
3 few months will be critical.

4 Progress on the Human Rights Council was
5 also disappointing. Establishment of a Human Rights
6 Council is to prove to be more than cosmetic. Its
7 mandate and membership must be substantially different
8 from that of the wholly discredited Human Rights
9 Commission. That means that members of the council must
10 meet minimum human rights standards and the work of the
11 council should focus on egregious human rights
12 violations. Congress' assessment of the credibility of
13 UN reform will turn largely on getting this issue right.

14 Our task force devoted considerable energy
15 and attention to the critical issue of development.
16 Addressing the needs of the developing world is not
17 icing on the cake, it is a key challenge for how one
18 billion people in wealthier nations will share the
19 planet with over five billion people in poorer
20 countries. The United States has substantially
21 increased its government assistance in the developing
22 world in recent years. Private American citizens
23 demonstrated the generosity and response to the Tsunami

1 and more recently the earthquake in Pakistan. The
2 outcome document reflected a better balance than some
3 other documents between the importance of assistance
4 from the developing world on the one hand and good
5 governance on the other.

6 That is to say, it is critically important
7 that those in the developed world continue to make and
8 increase their contributions but it is of equal
9 importance, perhaps greater importance that those
10 receiving the assistance advance toward good governance
11 so that is it not wasted and that a private sector can
12 be developed that will make any improvements sustainable
13 over time. I personally disagreed with the
14 Administration's opposition to the goal of .7 percent of
15 gdp in development assistance but wherever one comes out
16 on this issue, there can be little disagreement that
17 this debate has become a distraction from the goal we
18 all seek, whatever our view on the target which is
19 greater opportunity and self-sufficiency for the world's
20 poor.

21 In this regard, a critical priority must be
22 ending unfair barriers to trade. Despite the halting
23 start in New York last month, I am still hopeful about

1 the prospects for reform. First, for much of the past
2 decade, the United Nations has been a polarizing issue
3 on the American political landscape. Differences remain
4 but a consensus on the elements of reform is developing
5 and it crosses party lines. It encompasses conservative
6 and liberal points of view. Our task force and today's
7 event is testimony to that fact.

8 Second, there is support of reform at the
9 United Nations itself. Serious UN personnel problems
10 tend to overshadow that constituency inside the
11 organization of competent officials who want reform. It
12 is a fact of life that controversy and controversial
13 statements make news. Consensus and positive support
14 does not. And we must recognize that as we evaluate the
15 reactions. The people I've met at the United Nations in
16 connection with the work of this task force, understand
17 the need for change and strongly support it although, of
18 course, not all of them agree on the definition of what
19 change or reform is necessary.

20 And finally, just the United States and
21 perhaps even more so, others in the world need a United
22 Nations that works. The United States, by virtue of its
23 principles, its power and its prosperity will inevitably

1 play a lead role in addressing problems in the world in
2 the coming decades. But with rebuilding challenges
3 abroad and at home Americans, now more than ever,
4 recognize the need for and value international
5 partnerships and cooperation. In that effort, the
6 United Nations, an effective, transparent United
7 Nations, can play a key roll. Thank you very much for
8 your attention and I'm now pleased to turn the podium
9 over to my friend and colleague, former Speaker of the
10 House Newt Gingrich.

11 (Applause)

12 CHAIRMAN GINGRICH: Thank you, Senator
13 Mitchell and let me join Senator Mitchell who it has
14 been a real pleasure to work with on this project and to
15 develop an effort to represent an effective American
16 view and I think it's important to recognize that. We
17 see our assignment starting with Congressman Wolf first
18 creating this effort, to be one of understanding what is
19 in America's interest as it relates to the United
20 Nations. And so we approach the United Nations in terms
21 of America and I agree, as we stated emphatically, and I
22 want to reinforce that an effective, transparent,
23 accountable United Nations is in the interest of the

1 United States. This is not something we do just in
2 order to be helpful to others, but it is actually an
3 American foreign policy interest in our effort to get
4 things done around the planet, to have a United Nations
5 which is honest, accountable and effective.

6 I want to join in thanking Ambassador
7 Solomon and the entire team that he has at the U.S.
8 Institute of Peace which has done remarkable work in
9 supporting this effort and I want to say that we're
10 delighted that Senator Wallop and that Rod Hills are
11 both able to be with us today and we hope that Dannie
12 Pletka can join us presently, but they did tremendous
13 work on setting some bench marks of what the reforms
14 ought to be like. Let me start by reminding you that
15 the conclusions we were reaching were not in isolation.

16 I want to quote a series of quotes from Paul Volker
17 based on his investigations and give you a sense of
18 Chairman Volker's judgment.

19 Quote, "But our investigation has confirmed
20 enough to indicate not only particular problems with the
21 Oil for Food Program but to suggest that those problems
22 are symptomatic of deep seated systemic problems in
23 United Nations administration." He went on to say

1 further, quote, "The committee's simple conclusion is
2 that administrative reform is indeed urgently needed if,
3 indeed, the United Nations is to be looked to in the
4 future to deal with large humanitarian, environmental
5 and genocidal and other threats.". He went on to say
6 that the, quote, "Our investigation so far as I know an
7 investigation unparalleled in intensity of a major UN
8 program, and clearly an international investigation,
9 provides unambiguous evidence of a systemic problem".

10 Volker went onto say, quote, "I do think
11 that some kind of benchmarks have to be set out so that
12 you have some tangible measure of whether real action is
13 being taken or not." We decided in that connection that
14 there are two concrete things that ought to be done
15 within a year, can be done within a year and that this
16 is the chief operating officer idea and the oversight
17 board idea.

18 And both of those suggestions are not
19 unique with us, but I think all our work reinforces
20 that. And a lot of good things, hopefully, can follow
21 from those two recommendations being implemented. He
22 went onto say, quote, "And it's why if we say if the
23 Security Council isn't confident enough in the

1 secretariate, to carry out a program, maybe you should
2 have the program because they'll mess it up to put it
3 very simply".

4 And finally Volker said, quote, "Look, I am
5 being over-simplistic I understand, but cleaning it up
6 takes a big effort, involves individuals, some
7 individuals have got to go", close quote. Now I cite
8 all this because here you have former Chairman of the
9 Federal Reserve brought in by the Secretary General,
10 given unparalleled access, issuing five reports, having
11 a thorough understanding of the system and he basically
12 came down at least as firmly as we did in favor of very
13 substantial, very direct change.

14 In that context, I have to say that the
15 failures of the September summit after all of this
16 effort with all of this evidence, to achieve real change
17 are palpable and I think it's very hard to defend what
18 was accomplished in September as in any way being
19 adequate. I would also note that the letter of the
20 Group of 77 and China to the Secretary General is not
21 encouraging in the sense that it essentially on every
22 single front -- this is the letter of the 8th of
23 November, on virtually every front it calls for going

1 slower, doing less, being more careful, as though the
2 Volker Commission never existed, the scandals never
3 existed, the information never existed and the various
4 failures did not exist.

5 Having said all that, I want to come back
6 and re-emphasize the point that Senator Mitchell made.
7 These kind of processes are frustrating, time-consuming
8 and difficult and the job of the United States is not to
9 say, "Well, they had their chance, let's quit. The job
10 of the United States is to pick up the ball once again,
11 think through what we have to do to continue to press
12 for reform, move forward in a systematic organized way,
13 recognize that because of our unique constitutional
14 system, with a legislative and an executive branch, we
15 need to engage both of the branches in the process of
16 bringing pressure to bear and that there are active
17 things we can do.

18 And I think it's important to start with
19 reinforcing what the Congress has begun. Senator
20 Coleman in the Senate and Chairman Henry Hyde in the
21 House have both worked very diligently to raise the
22 issue of reform of the United Nations. I think it is
23 helpful when they continue to hold hearings. It is

1 helpful when they continue to bring light on these
2 issues, but I also think the Administration should work
3 with members of Congress on a bipartisan basis to insure
4 that there is a parallel effort to raise the question of
5 the countries which theoretically signed this letter to
6 the Secretary General, as individual countries are much
7 less likely to defend the letter, than a block.

8 And so every American Ambassador should be
9 asked to work directly with the country to which they
10 are assigned to convince that country not to sign the
11 letter again in the future, to convince each country to
12 become more pro-active. If you look at the list, there
13 are an amazing range of countries. Remember that the 40
14 countries in the United Nations which contribute the
15 smallest amount collectively, contribute \$400,000.00.

16 So a country that gives \$10,000.00, may not
17 have a great interest in reform since if it can simply
18 get one job in the Secretariat, it gets back more than
19 the total amount it's donated. But in the long run,
20 that's a very short-sighted view at three levels. It's
21 short-sited first of all because corruption,
22 inefficiency, and ineffectiveness in the United Nations'
23 implementation capabilities directly hurt that poorest

1 countries and the poorest people in the world.

2 So this is not an American interest simply
3 to save money but if you are sincerely interested in
4 helping the poorest people in the world, if you're
5 sincerely interested in helping health around the world,
6 if you're sincerely interested in maximizing the rate of
7 development, there's a very real interest in having an
8 effective United Nations.

9 And so one of our arguments to these
10 countries, an argument that I hope every member of the
11 House and Senate would make whether they're on a
12 congressional delegation trip, whether they're being
13 visited by leadership from a foreign country, every
14 member of the Congress should have a congressional form
15 checklist that they raise every time they meet with non-
16 Americans. And that would begin to communicate a sense
17 of seriousness and the terms of the debate ought to be
18 not about wasting the American taxpayer's money, it
19 ought to be about wasting the money which should be
20 available to directly help the poorest people in the
21 world.

22 The second reason there's an interest is
23 that the greatest vulnerability to human rights

1 violations, to genocide, to mass killings is in the
2 poorest countries and therefore, having an effective
3 United Nations capable of responding on behalf of
4 humanity is extraordinarily important to the weakest and
5 the poorest people in the world. And an ineffective,
6 unaccountable, non-transparent United Nations weakens
7 the capacity of the civilized community to protect the
8 weakest of us from the risk of mass murder.

9 Third, for the poorest countries in the
10 world, the United Nations matters vastly more than it
11 does to the United States because for the poorest
12 countries in the world, the United Nations General
13 Assembly is the one place where they stand and talk with
14 a voice that's fully as loud as any other country. And
15 therefore, they should be reminded over and over, it is
16 in their interest to have the General Assembly in the
17 United Nations respected. It is in their interest to
18 have the strongest possible platform from which they can
19 speak about their concerns. And to the degree that
20 their defensive corruption, their defensive
21 inefficiency, their defensive bureaucracy that's not
22 accountable, their defense of hiding behind a lack of
23 transparency weakens the respect of the United Nations.

1 It weakens the one venue in which they have a genuinely
2 effective opportunity to be represented.

3 So I would hope that the Congress and the
4 Administration would jointly work and would pick up the
5 challenge and would move to the next round of pushing
6 for reform and would do so country by country, not
7 merely in New York and would do so as a part of every
8 visit and I would hope that the Secretary of State would
9 take every occasion of having a foreign minister visit
10 Washington or every occasion in which she's visiting
11 another country to make sure that she has United
12 Nations' reform on the agenda and I would hope that
13 every meeting of the G8 would have on the agenda United
14 Nations' reform.

15 And I say this because I think it's very
16 important for the United States not to merely act in
17 isolation. There is, for example, a proposal that if
18 the Human Rights Commission is not reformed, that we
19 should simply not attend the next meeting. I think
20 that's a legitimate challenge to make to the United
21 Nations. But I would want us to reach out to every
22 democracy, to every country that has a sense of genuine
23 decency and genuine concern about the rule of law and

1 organize a collective effort not simply an American
2 effort.

3 When we do things in isolation it's easy
4 for our opponents to say, "That's the just Americans
5 being petulant". But if we are in London and Paris and
6 Berlin and Tokyo and elsewhere, and we're making the
7 case, how can you go to a Human Rights Commission
8 meeting in which Sudan is a member? It violates the
9 very concept of the human rights. How can you go to a
10 meeting in which Cuba is trying to set the agenda? I
11 think this is a dialogue we have to win. I think we
12 have to understand it's perfectly legitimate in the
13 modern world for countries to have to win the argument
14 in public so that they have the moral authority to
15 engage in the actions that they believe is and I think
16 it should be an effort to create a multi-lateral
17 democratic commitment to transparency, the rule of law
18 and human rights.

19 I also think we have to recognize and we
20 should all be very sobered by a comment that Kofi Annan
21 made about the September conference and I want to quote,
22 it's a very sobering quote he said, in speaking about
23 the issue of terrorism, quote, "It was disgrace that

1 our leaders could not agree even on a single sentence
2 about how to tackle one of the most urgent challenges of
3 our time, the threat of weapons of mass destruction.
4 New efforts in this area are absolutely essential",
5 close quote.

6 Now, I think this is particularly important
7 because of the emerging stark threat from the Uranian
8 government. Any of you who have read what the new
9 Uranian president, Ahmadinejad has said in which he has
10 described defeating the Anglo-Saxons and eliminating
11 Israel, I think you have to take very, very seriously
12 the failure of the United Nations General Assembly to
13 find a clear and convincing condemnation of terrorism.

14 The United Nations did adopt at the General
15 Assembly the following statement, quote, "Each
16 individual state has the responsibility to protect its
17 populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing
18 and crimes against humanity. This responsibility
19 entails the prevention of such crimes including their
20 incitement through appropriate and necessary means",
21 close quote. Well, any of who you have seen the recent
22 Iranian cartoon on Iranian television, actively
23 encouraging children to become suicide bombers; any of

1 you who have the series of statements by the Iranian
2 government on literally eliminated Israel from the
3 planet would have to ask what did this sentence mean?
4 What does this statement mean and what actions will the
5 UN take to enforce these violations by one of its
6 members?

7 Let me say in closing that I think this is
8 a very serious challenge because one last quote from
9 Sherman Volker, he says, quote, "If it reforms itself,"
10 referring to the United Nations, "I think it has
11 positive budgetary implications potential. Near as I
12 can see, the UN get squeezed in the budget often because
13 people don't have confidence in its administrative
14 ability including with some reason, the United States",
15 close quote.

16 I believe we should, as a country, both
17 have a continuing campaign in every capital of every
18 United Nations member so that our ambassadors are
19 directly assigned a responsibility for working to get
20 the right votes and to get the right letters rather than
21 the wrong letters. I think that we should have -- this
22 is not an Ambassador Bolton problem. This is an entire
23 United States diplomatic initiative across the plain. I

1 believe every member of Congress who wants to see a more
2 effective, more transparent, more honest United Nations
3 should have in every conversation they have with non-
4 Americans, an indication of how seriously we take this.

5
6 I think we should make the case on behalf
7 of those who are most directly effected by a weak,
8 inadequate and often corrupt United Nations and that is
9 the poorest people of the planet and the most vulnerable
10 people of the planet. I believe this is a cause worth
11 spending a great deal of time and effort on and while we
12 made only limited progress since September, I think
13 those are steps in the right direction and I think the
14 challenge to us now is to accelerate and increase the
15 pressure to reach out to other countries and make it a
16 multi-lateral effort and to do everything we can to
17 insure that the United Nations continues to move towards
18 greater accountability, greater transparency and greater
19 effectiveness. And I appreciate very much the chance to
20 work with Senator Mitchell and the members of our
21 Commission. And I think I will now call on Senator
22 Wallop if that's acceptable, to comment.

23 (Applause)

1 SENATOR WALLOP: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

2 I wish somehow or another, that we could
3 get the entire group of 77 in a room like this and hear
4 the arguments as to how reform of the United Nations is
5 in the interest of the poorest people on the planet and
6 not a threat to them. I mean, it's just amazing what
7 the group of 77 letter said and hear them arguing
8 against their own specific interest. If the UN is to
9 have any usefulness in the world at all, it's got to be
10 useful to the poorest of the planet.

11 Absent that, the wealthy countries can take
12 care of themselves and leave the poor countries behind.

13 And so to see a letter such as that that came from the
14 group of 77, which is just so discouraging when you
15 think of the reforms recommended and the necessity for
16 reform, I just -- I mean, I do agree, Newt, with your
17 idea that it's a diplomatic problem for the United
18 States in its entirety and all our ambassadors and all
19 the meetings that we have with the Secretary of State
20 and others, but somehow or another, this interest must
21 be made clear to those in whose interest it lies.

22 Senator Mitchell said that he was hopeful
23 for reform and I guess I would say that I am hopeful for

1 Senator Mitchell's hopefulness but I remain pessimistic
2 in search of effective leadership and action within the
3 UN. And so it does take the place of your
4 recommendations and those of Speaker Gingrich to get on
5 with reform and to press for it.

6 The hopefulness for reform enlists
7 pessimism in me at least in the immediate future because
8 Secretary General's term is coming to an end and the
9 arguments over replacement will be taking more time and
10 more interest than will the interests of reform.

11 However much we may be pushing it, I just think the
12 timing at this moment in time is not really -- not
13 really likely to elicit really great success. That's no
14 reason not to continue to press as both speakers just
15 said. I mean absolutely it must be continued, the press
16 for reform must be continued. But the expectations of
17 it ought not to be so high that failing would turn us
18 off of the effort to continue to press.

19 And that's what worries me the most, is the
20 likelihood of failure in the near term is part of the
21 political process that is likely to bring arguments and
22 opposition to any further efforts within the UN. So my
23 hope really is that the pressure for reform remains that

1 United States' principle effort with regards to the UN
2 in all its operations.

3 Management reform is so totally necessary
4 right now that the meetings that we have in New York at
5 the UN and other hearings that we had here in Washington
6 would tend to tell you that really there is not a lot of
7 interest from those who hold management positions in
8 reforming their positions. It's one of those typical
9 things that bureaucracies worldwide tend to do whether
10 they're in a state or in the UN.

11 The peacekeeping operations are not working
12 well and just are in desperate need of reform and when
13 the UN sends a group to operate in that interest, such
14 as we went to Haiti, you find that often as not they
15 don't have any respect because they don't have any
16 positive role that would protect the people supposedly
17 being protected. It was really discouraging to see the
18 UN vehicles cruising the streets of Port au Prince and
19 finding that they would never get out. No matter what
20 was happening, they would never get out of their
21 vehicles. They would only be a witness to what was
22 going wrong and make a report which is of very little
23 help to the people who are theoretically being

1 protected. And reform and peacekeeping is necessary.
2 Reform in the Human Rights Commission, as Newt said, is
3 just incredibly necessary and the idea somehow or
4 another that we would have a Human Rights Commission
5 that was composed of the current members is absurd on
6 its face and it really is visible whether they like it
7 or not in the poorest countries of the world.

8 Lastly, I would just say that the letter
9 from the group of 77 cannot be thought to be the last
10 word in reforming the UN. I think both speakers
11 indicated that they would not agree with that and would
12 press for individual countries to be made to answer
13 individually and not in and as a group. There's a lot
14 of comfort in doing something in and as a group because
15 you don't really have to answer to anybody except the
16 letter as a whole as it exists.

17 So if the work that we did with the help of
18 you, Ambassador, is to have any effect, it is going to
19 have to have the kind of passion and pursuit that was
20 described by the two speakers before us and it's going
21 to take time not only with the Ambassadors of the United
22 States, around the world and the Secretary of State but
23 within and around the Congress because somehow or

1 another, the need for and the usefulness of reform is a
2 thought but not yet a passion. And I think it needs to
3 be defined as a passion if there is to be a United
4 Nations and if it is to be the United Nations in which
5 US interest as of the rest of the world are represented,
6 and I thank you for the moment.

7 Rod.

8 MR. HILLS: Our Task Force is Chapter 3 the
9 mundane chapter. (Inaudible) I think about poverty,
10 weapons of mass destruction, peacekeeping, but if you
11 don't have good management, you can reform all you want
12 but the United Nations will not be effective, as
13 effective (inaudible) why is the United Nations so
14 really poorly managed? Well, two reasons; first the
15 General Assembly does micro-managing, the inability to
16 break free of personnel policies that are archaic but
17 it's also a lack of culture of management in the agency
18 itself.

19 We don't hire Secretary Generals because
20 they manage well. Their deputies are not hired because
21 they manage well. We don't send the managers to
22 executive education courses as most companies send their
23 top people. So it's a two-fold issue. It's a need to

1 establish the culture of management as well as to loose
2 the reins of the General Assembly folks and the
3 Secretary General.

4 I'd like to talk just briefly about the two
5 things that Speaker Gingrich emphasized, the need for an
6 oversight and the need for a Chief Operating Officer.

7 And the latter point should be apparent. How can you
8 run an organization unless you have somebody in charge?

9 Who decides whether or not procurement policies are
10 being followed? Who decides whether the budget was
11 being spent the way it should be spent? A simple
12 obligation to say, "You're in charge of that", is so
13 clear. It's impossible to understand why the group of
14 77, why the General Assembly is not excited about having
15 somebody in charge.

16 And there is a case in which I believe that
17 the Secretary General could do more in that respect. He
18 could make sure that all employment projects allow him
19 to fire his deputies. He should not have people in
20 charge of something if the Secretary General loses
21 confidence in him.

22 Let me dwell for a minute on the idea of
23 the independent oversight board. The group of 77 seems

1 to reject the idea of the bureaucratic layer that's not
2 needed. The Secretariat seems to like the idea and they
3 call it an independent advisory committee which sends
4 shivers down your back a little bit about what they
5 really want. We don't need advice. We need an
6 oversight board and audit committee, if you will, with
7 real authority, with real skill, and the ability to
8 control the external audit and the internal audit.

9 You can't have the internal audit. The
10 OIOS of the United Nations is working a lot better than
11 it was before. It's way short of what you would want in
12 an organization such as the United Nations. If we're to
13 externalize, by comparison, it consists of the
14 controller general or the auditor general of three
15 different countries. But the auditor general has no
16 place to go either. They have no independent source.
17 And so you have an internal audit and an external audit
18 going to the general assembly of 191 nations saying, "We
19 need so much money to audit this place", and if
20 something comes up in the middle of the year, there's no
21 money to do it.

22 If the internal audit sees something wrong,
23 they have to go to the Secretariat and say, "Gee, you

1 know, that personnel office is doing terrible. I need
2 some money to investigate that trouble", there's nobody
3 to go to. And you can't really say to them, they could
4 all spend their own money. They would grow to a
5 monstrosity. So you need an independent audit. The
6 experience we have in this country is kind of
7 interesting with the independent audit committee.

8 It came into being in 1975 because a whole
9 lot of American companies were found to be bribing
10 foreign officials, some of them vulgar like Lockheed's
11 bribing of the Prime Minister of Japan with 20 million
12 bucks; some -- 15,000 bucks to get a million dollars
13 worth of goods off a dock because the harbor master
14 won't let it go. The common thread was that they were
15 all made in secret bank accounts. And so the
16 independent audit committee was created. The FCC
17 convinced the New York Stock Exchange to do it and they
18 created internal controls so you couldn't have secret
19 bank accounts any more.

20 And that worked pretty well. We had better
21 companies with independent directors on them, but then
22 we've got Enron, we've got Rocon, we've got Waste
23 Management. We've got these terrible scandals. Why?

1 Because the audit committees didn't quite work. They
2 didn't take control of the audit. They sat there very
3 nicely and if somebody came to them and said, "Hey,
4 there's a problem", you go down and say, "Well, we've
5 got to fix that". But the external auditors didn't look
6 to the -- didn't look to the audit committee to hire
7 them. They looked to the management to fire them.

8 The same thing is true of the internal
9 audit. And so along came (inaudible). Some people
10 think it's too excessive in some respects, I don't. But
11 what is did was say, "Hey, you guys, you big four audit
12 firms, you work for the audit committee. They'll set
13 your salary. They'll tell you what you can do. Internal
14 auditor, you're hired and fired by the audit committee".

15 And so now they've taken control of it. That's what
16 the United Nations needs, to take control.

17 They need authoritative people. We propose
18 that instead of -- that the audit committee should
19 consist of people, including say three controller
20 general, three auditors general, from three different
21 countries. So you have a board of external auditors
22 composed of the controllers general of three countries,
23 an audit committee consisting of that and maybe a couple

1 of finance ministers with respect. They have to have
2 respect and they have to have authority. The
3 International Auditing Standards, which are widely
4 accepted as good but widely ignored, is that you cannot
5 have an effective audit unless you have effective
6 internal controls and you can't have effective internal
7 controls unless you have an independent body overseeing
8 the process.

9 So, in fact, all we're asking for is say
10 create a body with authority with respect and let them
11 decide whether or not something needs to be audited and
12 let them decide how much budget the people need. Let
13 them have enough authority so the General Assembly won't
14 dare turn them down when they say that and let's make
15 sure that the external auditors say, "We can't audit
16 this place. We don't have the internal controls we
17 need. We can't do it". There's material weaknesses.
18 That's the discipline we're trying to put in place.

19 And one more point, the question of who
20 audits all the other bodies, oil for food for example,
21 the other issues it's common to say well those are
22 voluntary matters, so they can be audited if they want
23 to be audited. Well, the United Nations is an important

1 name. It means respect. We suggested that no United
2 Nations official should work in any field, there should
3 be no oil for food acceptance unless an effective audit
4 plan is there with effective oversight and that simply
5 is all we ask for.

6 SENATOR WALLOP: Thank you, Rod.

7 AMBASSADOR SOLOMON: Thank you very much.

8 We have about a half hour for some questions. If you'll
9 raise your hands, I'll identify or recognize you and if
10 you'd come to one of the microphones and identify
11 yourself and your organization, we'll have an
12 opportunity to talk, have a dialogue with our task force
13 members. Any hands going up? Please identify yourself
14 and your organization and make a pointed question,
15 please.

16 MR. MILLIKIN: Al Millikin, Washington
17 Independent Writers. When nations like the Sudan, Cuba
18 or China, known violators of human rights, attempt to
19 show leadership at the United Nations, isn't the United
20 Nations an ideal world stage to do more rather than less
21 than we have to challenge and confront these human
22 rights violators? If we refuse to take part in -- say
23 in the Human Rights Commission in 2006, how does that

1 set a proper example, particularly if we are secretly
2 dealing with these nations off stage trying to get
3 cooperation in the war on terror or dealing with natural
4 disasters like the recent hurricanes?

5 CHAIRMAN GINGRICH: Let me draw a
6 distinction. If you have a so-called Human Rights
7 Commission being chaired by Lybia and with Sudan as a
8 member during the period when Sudan is engaged in
9 genocide or mass murders on a scale slightly below that
10 of genocide but clearly stunningly unacceptable to any
11 reasonable society, you make a mockery of the very term
12 human rights. And so I would argue that in that arena -
13 - there's a difference between debating in the General
14 Assembly and agreeing to serve on a commission which is
15 chaired by a dictatorship and whose agenda at one point
16 was set by a coalition of Lybia, Syria, Cuba and China.

17
18 Now, that's a dictatorship defense group,
19 it's not a human rights commission. And I think it's
20 very important for us to indicate clearly that we're
21 going to be very blunt and very direct about this and I
22 believe you can get changes. As I indicated earlier, I
23 think the United States should actively work with other

1 democracies and those who agree in the rule of law to
2 say, "If the United Nations will not reform the Human
3 Rights Commission, that we should work to establish a
4 democratically based Human Rights Commission outside the
5 United Nations that would only have as its members
6 countries which, in fact, enforce the rule of law.

7 AMBASSADOR SOLOMON: Other questions.

8 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: The circumstance is not
9 unique to the United Nations that the United States and
10 other countries and public officials frequently have to
11 make a judgment between participating in an event and
12 getting your message across, which is obviously a
13 desirable objective, and lending your name, prestige and
14 status to an event that operates or concludes in a way
15 that produces very undesirable results. So there's
16 nothing new about making that kind of choice.

17 What we have said it that the United States
18 should consider not participating. The Speaker, I
19 thought quite accurately and eloquently stated that we
20 should not do this on our own but we should involve
21 others in the effort and I think it would be a profound
22 error for us to, in effect, take that option off the
23 table and to say now no matter what others say or do,

1 we're going to participate. We may choose to
2 participate, our government, it may choose not to
3 participate but that option ought to be available to the
4 Administration based upon the circumstances which exist
5 at that time and the product of our efforts to implement
6 change prior to then.

7 MR. GOLD: My name is Frank Gold and I'm a
8 U.S. Government private consultant. (Inaudible)
9 especially pointed out that we have a major problem with
10 middle management and top management at UN and this is a
11 problem that's we probably can do a lot if we approach
12 it correctly. None of these people in management
13 position would easily agree to change. They've been
14 working the way they have for 20 years and they've been
15 rewarded or promoted on the basis of that and any
16 suggestion that they will change will not be favorably
17 acceptable by them.

18 What I suggest instead is that we establish
19 a fund, a small group of experts that would select the
20 future managers for the UN. That this group will be
21 combined or consolidate experts from several countries
22 and that they will initially select new deputies for
23 programs that the UN has right now and eventually these

1 deputies will replace the current managers. And this
2 group can stay permanently there and select people at
3 the most important level. Since managers select people
4 very much like themselves, eventually the whole
5 workforce will change. That's the first point I want
6 to make.

7 The second one -- and that's relatively
8 easy to fund and make this change. The second relates
9 to programs, the problem with programs. One is programs
10 have not been evaluated or monitored for years like the
11 Ono (phonetic) Program that has been in existence for
12 six or seven years, just about two weeks ago, the Prime
13 Minister of Lebanon called (inaudible) who is head of a
14 Palestinian group in the West Bank complaining about the
15 Palestinians that flee in the camp in Southern Lebanon
16 and requested that he will change the behaviors of the
17 group who carry weapons within Lebanon only within the
18 camps, obviously a Mosque (phonetic) cannot do that.

19 He issued a statement saying, "You should
20 not do that since you are guests". Part of this problem
21 is that these people living in camps for seven years and
22 nobody look for a way to get them out of the camps, as
23 long as Ono exists. We saw, I think, one possibility is

1 to start with Lebanon, which I think has a pretty good
2 chance to return back to be a democracy if we help them
3 get over some of the problems, and this is a major
4 problem that they have with the Palestinians there.

5 If instead of Ono this program will be
6 dispelled to the HCR, the refugee program it will be
7 solved just as that Means (phonetic) Program was solved
8 by finding countries willing to accept these people and
9 then eventually move the next camp and the next camp and
10 basically do away with Ono.

11 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: Let me speak to your
12 first point. In our Chapter 3 we propose a significant
13 buy-out of a whole lot of people, one time only. The
14 money saves by the fact you don't have them any more,
15 and we propose that there be an effective modern
16 personnel department, human resources. Now that
17 department could, as you say, look for other experts but
18 there's plenty of experts in New York. So the guy who
19 is in charge of human resources could find plenty of
20 skills if he wants to.

21 And I don't quite buy your first point
22 about nobody being any good in the United Nations. Will
23 Rogers once said, "No one is quite as good or quite as

1 bad as they're supposed to be". So there are good
2 people there and there are people that can learn if you
3 do that sort of thing. The issue is the culture and the
4 discipline advantage.

5 MR. GOLD: Well, I'm sure there are many
6 good people there among the managers in the UN but
7 you're right, the culture is a problem and people that
8 behave this certain way in a culture for 20 years will
9 not change very easily.

10 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: We didn't suggest it
11 would be easy.

12 AMBASSADOR SOLOMON: Thanks. First here
13 and then the other side of the room.

14 MR. KRAUSE: Thank you, I'm Don Krause,
15 Citizens for Global Solutions. And I really want to
16 thank the work of the task force for what it has done.
17 The bipartisan effort is incredibly refreshing in this
18 town, so thank you.

19 The comments that you made today one of the
20 ones that I thought really resonated the most was the
21 need for a full court press for all persons in the State
22 Department to members of Congress to members of the
23 foreign service to really push this effort forward,

1 there are many people who have talked about the outcome,
2 the outcome document and some of the glass being half
3 full or glass half empty. In reality it's a glass with
4 the tap still running.

5 And if it is going to be successful, it
6 will be that effort of taking this outside of New York
7 into the capitals around the world. So the question is,
8 have you seen any evidence of this type of full court
9 press actually being developed and if not, who would you
10 recommend to be the person within the Administration
11 really to play point, to lead the charge on this?

12 CHAIRMAN GINGRICH: Well, I mean, I think
13 it's pretty straightforward. Reorganizing an
14 institution which has 191 members against the short-term
15 instincts of a large number of its members in a
16 volunteeristic way because you don't have the power to
17 coerce it, requires that the State Department engage in
18 a worldwide effort and I would recommend that it do so
19 in direct and exclusive partnership with the legislative
20 branch because I think our Constitution pretty well
21 requires that to be effective. And that can only be led
22 by the Secretary of State. I mean, she has to decide --
23 Secretary Rice has to decide that achieving a

1 transparent, effective reform in the United Nations is
2 one of the three or four most important goals that she
3 has.

4 It's not an interesting thing that she
5 hopes John Bolton will make progress on, but rather that
6 it is significant for the future of the United States'
7 role in the world that we be seen as helping reform the
8 United Nations on behalf of the weakest and poorest
9 people in the world. And I think that actually meets a
10 wide range of American interests in terms of proving
11 our commitment beyond our own national concerns in terms
12 of proving we are capable of being multi-lateral and in
13 terms of standing up for our values of democracy, the
14 rule of law and human rights on terms which actually
15 reflect the interests of most people of the planet.

16 So I would hope that Secretary Rice would
17 decide that this was her personal assignment and that
18 would guarantee you then energize the ambassadors around
19 the world who will not be particularly energized by
20 getting messages from New York from the United States
21 Ambassador of the UN.

22 MR. KRAUSE: Have you seen any evidence
23 that she's moving in that direction?

1 CHAIRMAN GINGRICH: I mean, they certainly
2 have invested far more in the last six or seven months
3 in the UN than you've seen out of the State Department
4 for a very long time and you know, I think that my sense
5 in talking with Secretary -- I mean, I don't know if the
6 Secretary -- or Senator Mitchell wants to come in. My
7 sense in talking directly with the Secretary and with
8 others is that she takes very seriously moving the
9 United Nations towards a more effective and more
10 transparent and more accountable model.

11 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: I share the Speaker's
12 views. The challenge obviously is when a Secretary of
13 State is confronted with a myriad of problems around the
14 world requiring extensive travel, negotiation, that
15 issues of management reform, the type of things that Rod
16 Hills talked about that are in fact, so critical to
17 implementing other reforms and sustaining any reforms
18 can tend to slip.

19 It's true of the President, all top
20 officials in the Administration and Congress and what
21 we've tried to do is to persuade them that this is a
22 high priority and can serve many American interests.
23 They did respond favorably, actively toward our initial

1 report and my hope is that the attitude that the Speaker
2 has described will prevail.

3 MR. KRAUSE: I think you're doing a
4 wonderful job and I hope (inaudible) will keep you going
5 because the job is not done.

6 MR. HILLS: Could I just make one quick
7 addition to that, and that is that I would hope our two
8 co-chairman and you, Ambassador Solomon, would be
9 willing to go make a little stronger effort in engaging
10 the interest of the Congress. It has people that are
11 interested but it is not a Congress that is interested
12 and I think somehow or another we have to get it going
13 in that direction, too, for it to be successful.

14 MR. CASTLEMAN: (Phonetic) My name is Gary
15 Castleman and I write a column for the Washington
16 Times. I have a question for the panel about support
17 for UN reform outside Washington. I know your
18 commission is bipartisan. I know we all think that's a
19 very good idea. I recently attended a UN day meeting in
20 Minneapolis. It was a large meeting of folks who are
21 strong Americans, who are strong supporters of the UN.

22 The guest speaker was a former colleague of
23 Senators Wallop and Mitchell, Lee Botswitch (phonetic)

1 who you probably know is the UN Ambassador to the Human
2 Rights Commission. I think he -- in the last session he
3 made some progress and he made an impassioned appeal not
4 only for human rights, for which he has a long record,
5 but for reform. And he was booed and hissed by the
6 audience primarily because he was a member of the Bush
7 Administration.

8 Whether or not you -- however you feel
9 about that, I get a sense that perhaps the feeling here
10 is that well, most Americans support UN reform,
11 especially people who believe in the UN and I'm asking
12 my question of you and telling that antidote because I'm
13 not sure that the support is as widespread as might be
14 hoped.

15 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: No one, including our
16 panel, can take the issue of UN reform out of the
17 context that exists in this country at the UN and
18 aboard. It is inevitable that people hold views on a
19 wide range of issues and sometimes when they get the
20 opportunity to express an opinion on Issue B, they don't
21 concern themselves that Issue A is what's being
22 discussed. That's not unusual in this country in the
23 political process.

1 My hope is that for those who believe as we
2 do and have expressed that in effect the view and is an
3 American interest and who believe, as the Speaker has
4 eloquently stated today, that it is in the interest of
5 others around the world particularly some of those who
6 are impeding reform, that they'll persevere in the
7 message and get it across, notwithstanding the
8 circumstances that you've described. I think there is
9 broad support in this country, although there clearly is
10 a national trend now as reflected in several recent
11 opinion poles, of Americans wanting to pull back from
12 international activities, which obviously, includes the
13 UN, even though that may not be the precipitating
14 factor.

15 I think we have to persist and persevere
16 and ultimately make the argument based on self-interest
17 that this is in the interest of the American people.
18 That's why we should do it, Not because we want to do
19 anyone else a favor but because it's on our interest and
20 we believe the same argument applies to others around
21 the world once they make the kind of analysis that we
22 have made.

23 Lee Botswitch is a friend of Malcolm and I,

1 we served with him and Newt knows him as well and I find
2 what you say regrettable but you have to persevere
3 through that. You have to understand that sometimes
4 people seize whatever opportunity they have to express
5 frustration even though it may not relate to the
6 particular issue and, in fact, no one in the world is
7 better than that than United States Senators, I might
8 say because the rules of the Senate, as Malcolm will
9 recall, permit Senators to speak on any subject at any
10 time even though it bears no relationship to the
11 legislation under consideration.

12 SENATOR WALLOP: And for as long as they
13 want.

14 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: And for as long as they
15 want. So after six years as Senate Majority Leader, I'm
16 not surprised that people express opinions on issues
17 unrelated to the subject under discussion.

18 CHAIRMAN GINGRICH: Let me say representing
19 an institution with much more limited rules --

20 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: Much more strict rules.

21 CHAIRMAN GINGRICH: Much more strict rules
22 which only allows one to speak briefly and ideally on
23 some point, but one institution which has an equal

1 fervor for hostility, conflict and cheerful attacks on
2 each other, in fact, more so than the Senate I would
3 allege, you really raise two different things. One is,
4 in the current polarized environment and I think one of
5 the reasons Senator Mitchell and I have had some modest
6 success is just the relief of seeing two people who are
7 focused on the national interest and didn't figure out
8 some way to turn it into a campaign fight. And I think
9 there's a deep hunger in the United States for people
10 who are willing to talk about what the nation needs and
11 I would not -- whether it's on the right or left, I
12 would basically ignore the most partisan hostilities and
13 just move forward on the big points.

14 But second, something like reforming the
15 United Nations is inherently in the long run, a
16 leadership issue. I mean, the average American, first
17 of all, if they think of the UN at all, they are vaguely
18 favorable and they don't connect any of the dots. If
19 they then learn about Volker's report, and learn about
20 other things, they're then vaguely unfavorable and they
21 don't connect the dots. They don't think that's their
22 job. They think their job is to elect a President and a
23 Congress which will work together to create environments

1 in which the US is effective in the world.

2 And I think that the average American will
3 be very supportive of continuous efforts to reform the
4 UN and I don't actually worry about interest groups in
5 either the right or the left in that sense. On the left
6 there's a faction that would say be for the UN no matter
7 how flawed, and on the right there's a faction that
8 would say leave the UN no matter how effective it is,
9 and I think both those groups you can safely say,
10 they're facts, they're not problems but the great vast
11 majority of the American people would like to see an
12 effective United Nations actually representing human
13 rights and the interest of the poorest and weakest
14 people of the world and would like to see the US playing
15 a leading role within that framework, not against that
16 framework.

17 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: I just want to add one
18 comment, I apologize for taking this time, but with
19 respect to the latter point that the Speaker mentioned,
20 the importance of helping the poorest and weakest in the
21 world, again, we believe that is not an act of charity.

22 That is in the American national interest. If there's
23 one thing we've learned in recent years, is that such

1 conditions and circumstance breed instability and as the
2 dominant military and economic power in the world, where
3 instability leads to conflict, we are inevitably at
4 least asked to participate and frequently drawn in. So
5 we should take these actions not only because they are
6 morally right, but primarily because they serve our
7 national interest if we want a world of stability,
8 democracy, free markets and prosperity.

9 MR. CASTLEMAN: I just want to say I use
10 the illustration. I know none of us are really in
11 disagreement about any of these issues but I know a lot
12 of your attention is turned towards the world arena and
13 to the Congress and I was just suggesting because the
14 audience when this incident happened, it was you know,
15 entirely composed of very strong pro-UN people, that
16 because you are all public figures of some note and
17 eloquence, that you also -- it seemed to me important
18 that you be also thinking about the American audience
19 outside of Washington for a lot of your ideas.

20 I think it's important that you communicate
21 those ideas as far as you can throughout the country.

22 AMBASSADOR SOLOMON: Thank you.

23 MS. BUSKIN: I'm Kathy Bushkin. I'm with

1 the United Nations Foundation and thank you for
2 everything you've done in moving forward to actually
3 reduce the polarization in this country around reform.
4 I totally agree that management reform is essential and
5 that progress has got to be made toward that. Help me
6 understand your views on the other recommendations about
7 reform and that your report calls for a summit and the
8 document calls for a Human Rights Council, a Peace-
9 building Commissioner, terrorism, all which is on the
10 US' agenda for that summit and that document. I worry
11 that the management reform issue, which is what Congress
12 has focused on so much, may put those behind and those
13 may get tied up as hostage to perceived departments or
14 management reforms, which are happening, and I believe
15 we're seeing a lot of progress but those are equally
16 important reforms, I think, in this country. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: We believe that
18 management reform is essential not just to achieve the
19 specific objectives set forth in the report and
20 discussed in some detail by Rod Hills today, but also as
21 an enabler of other reforms. If you don't make
22 fundamental management changes, it makes more difficult
23 the achieving of the other reforms to which you and

1 others have referred and it also makes the likelihood of
2 the sustainability of reform much less.

3 That is not to suggest that attention
4 should be drawn away from the others. We believe in all
5 of the aspects of our report and we don't control the
6 extent of attention given to various items. I
7 personally -- I've not discussed this with Rod, I was
8 dismayed early in this process when there was little
9 attention given to management reform, in my judgment,
10 insufficient. The fact that some attention is now being
11 directed toward it, I think is not a bad thing and must
12 be seen in the broader context of enabling reform in
13 other areas but we strongly support the areas of reform
14 that are described in our report and we hope that the
15 pendulum doesn't shift from too far one way to too far
16 the other and not have further attention on the
17 important issues that you've described.

18 AMBASSADOR SOLOMON: Please.

19 MS. LELAND: (Phonetic) Good morning, my
20 name is Jennifer Leland from the State Department.
21 First of all, I want to say thank you for your insights
22 this morning. Since the issue of genocide was raised as
23 an issue of particular concern and in the light of

1 recent instances where the US has shown hesitancy to
2 identify the situation of genocide, I wanted to know
3 what your thoughts are about America's responsibility to
4 identify the situation as genocide from the outset,
5 publicly and the sort of implications for UN
6 intervention.

7 CHAIRMAN GINGRICH: Well, I think that we
8 owe it to ourselves to be honest about the world. I
9 thing Rwanda was a terrible disgrace and it does little
10 good to see movies and feel bad if you're not prepared
11 to learn the lesson. The United States was a major
12 problem in dealing with Rwanda because we didn't want
13 to be honest about it. We didn't want to face it. We
14 didn't want to act on it. I think what's happening in
15 Darfur today is a major problem.

16 I believe the threats of the Iranian
17 dictatorship are an enormous problem. And I think lying
18 about it, one of the great lessons of the 1930s is that
19 failure to be honest about language -- there's a
20 wonderful essay by George Orwell "Politics and the
21 English Language", which is really worth looking at
22 because Orwell is writing in the shadow of the great
23 totalitarian threat. And he said basically timid people

1 deliberately avoid telling the truth about reality so
2 they are not forced to do things that frighten them.

3 Well, there are parts of the world that are
4 frightening. What happened in Cambodia under Pol Pot is
5 terrifying. What happened in Rawanda is terrifying.
6 What is happening today while we're meeting in Darfur is
7 terrifying. The threat of the Iranians, if they pull it
8 off, will be horrifying beyond anything that we have
9 seen in our lifetime.

10 And I think when democratic politicians
11 refuse to tell the truth -- that doesn't mean you have
12 to rush out and act on it. It doesn't mean you have to
13 tomorrow morning send troops but if you can't even be
14 honest about the conditions you're dealing with, why
15 should you expect that you're going to have any hope of
16 being able to get anything done about it?

17 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: Not to speak to the
18 Speaker but I think he meant democratic with a small d.

19

20 (Laughter)

21 AMBASSADOR SOLOMON: I think we have time
22 for one more question, please.

23 COL. DOCTOW: (phonetic) First of all, I

1 apologize for being a little late. I'm Colonel Doctow
2 from Foreign Policy Association. And my question
3 concerns the reforms, UN reforms in general. And since
4 Senator Mitchell has permitted that they are prepared to
5 answer any question at any time, I would like to bring
6 up the question of India's Security Council seat. How
7 hard could India be kept away with one-fifth of the
8 population of the world?

9 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL: In our report we stated
10 that there were some issues on which the task force did
11 not agree and Security Council expansion was one of
12 them. However, we also agreed that individual members
13 were, of course, free to express their personal views on
14 the subject. When we released the report, we were
15 asked that and similar questions and I expressed my
16 personal view that I could support some form of
17 expansion similar to that proposed by the high level
18 panel in its second option, which would permit increased
19 membership including longer terms with the possibility
20 of renewal but not including additional veto power by
21 other parties.

22 Since then, as you know from following the
23 issue, there has not been the ability on the part of the

1 members of the UN to reach consensus on how best to
2 proceed. I make no attempt to assess the prospects for
3 that in the future since it's beyond my personal
4 knowledge, but I do expect that the subject will
5 continue to arise not just because of India's size but
6 because of the fact that Japan and Germany, as defeated
7 powers in the Second World War, were deliberately
8 excluded from the Security Council on grounds which were
9 reasonable at the time but have since become large
10 democracies and now have the second and third largest
11 economies in the world and, therefore, they advocate for
12 a position that would provide them with membership as
13 well as India and Brazil.

14 So, to repeat, to sum and repeat,
15 specifically our Panel did not reach agreement on that
16 subject, and we've expressed our individual views. I've
17 expressed mine, and everyone else is free to express
18 their's. Thank you.

19 AMBASSADOR SOLOMON: Any concluding
20 comments? Let me just say on behalf of the Institute
21 and the Task Force, we appreciate your coming here
22 today. We anticipate there will be several other
23 follow-up activities early in the New Year. I think a

1 number of important issues and suggestions were raised
2 here today about things that the Task Force might
3 follow-up on, so I know you'll join me in thanking our
4 Co-Chairs and other Task Force members for their time.

5 (Whereupon, the proceedings went off the
6 record at 1:21 p.m.)

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