

SECOND DAY INTRODUCTION

Thursday, October 22

Welcome to the Focusing the Presidential Debates Initiative. I am John Norton Moore, a former United States Ambassador and Deputy Special Representative of the President, who will serve as your host to the Press Conferences held by the Initiative.

Once again this Great Nation has embarked on a journey to elect a new President. The candidates have come forward and the debates are under way. It is in the interest of all Americans that the candidates and their debates seriously address the grave national challenges and opportunities now before the Nation. We cannot afford politics as usual, with candidates vying to be the most immoderate in their Party. The challenges are unforgiving and the opportunities fleeting.

The experts participating in this initiative are deeply concerned about the problems facing this Great Nation and have come together to present suggestions and raise questions for the Presidential candidates; Democrat and Republican alike. The papers being distributed to the Press today are being sent to each of the declared candidates in both parties. The campaign organization of each candidate, as well as the Democratic National Committee and the Republican National Committee, have also been notified of this initiative and invited to send a representative to the press conferences.

Each paper reflects the view of the presenter. There has been no effort to coordinate views; nor is any presenter responsible for the views expressed by other presenters. Some of these papers may appeal more to Democratic candidates and some may appeal more to Republican candidates. The subjects, however, have been chosen for their national importance, and the presenters for their recognized expertise.

It is hoped that as the debates progress in and between both parties that the candidates, and the Nation more broadly, will reflect on the range of serious problems and will consider the questions and/or specific recommendations presented in these papers. We here today are not able to individually participate in the debates, but we hope to be heard by the candidates and the American people through the great institution of America's free press. It is in that spirit that we have invited you today to this press conference at the National Press Club.

This Initiative is holding three press conferences at the National Press Club from Noon to 3:00 p.m. each day. On Friday, October 16, after reviewing priority national problems and opportunities, we focused on issues concerning Economic Growth and Domestic Policy. Today, Thursday, October 22nd, we will focus on Foreign and Defense Policy, and finally, tomorrow, Friday, October 23^d, we will focus on The Criminal Justice System, Community Policing, and Reducing Crime.

All of the expert papers on each of the subjects we are discussing are already on line at the Initiative Website which is www.FocusingThePresidentialDebates.com We are also videotaping all of the presentations at the National Press Club and they will be added to the website shortly after each press conference.

Each of our presenters today will speak for approximately 30 minutes and then leave about 20 minutes for Q and A from the press or representatives of the candidates or parties who have been invited.

Priority Issues in Foreign & Defense Policy

America today has numerous foreign and defense policy challenges; a rogue Russia under Putin's leadership waging unconventional war on Ukraine, bombing to support a genocidal regime in Syria, and threatening elsewhere; an Iran seeking to become a nuclear power and continuing its support for terrorism, destabilization of the Arab Middle East, and implacable hostility to Israel; an intransigent

Israeli/Palestinian dispute; an unstable nuclear North Korea continuing to add to its nuclear arsenal; a China doubling down on assertiveness of its oceans claims against Japan in the East China Sea and its ASEAN neighbors in the South China Sea; an out-of-control series of cyberattacks against the West aimed largely at theft of both security and commercial information; a radical Islamist movement (ISIL) currently controlling large swaths of Iraq and Syria, dedicated to a new “Caliphate” setting aside national borders, and seeking to inspire terrorism in North Africa, Europe and America; and finally competing radical Islamist terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda supporting global terror, among more localized violent movements.

As though this panoply of threats is not enough, American credibility (and resulting ability to deter) has eroded through both Republican and Democratic Administrations. It is today clear that the War in Iraq was a serious miscalculation, and a subsequent Administration has compounded the problem by walking away from a red line for Syria not to use chemical weapons in its civil war and failing to develop a timely Syria strategy, not intervening in a timely manner in Iraq to prevent the virtual explosion of ISIL, failing to deter Putin in Ukraine, and concluding an arms agreement with Iraq opposed by a majority of the Congress and by both our Israeli and Arab allies in the Middle East. No one believes these decisions were easy, or that they were not taken in the belief that they were the right decision for the Nation at the time.

But whatever the rationale for these recent American actions, collectively they and other actions have eroded American prestige and credibility around the World. At the same time, budgetary constraints have harmed the readiness of the United States military while problematic actors, such as China and Russia, have continued to increase their military. Other problems in meeting these challenges have included repeated failures, from the Vietnam War, through the War in

Afghanistan and the Iraq War, to the war against ISIL, to follow professional military advice for any necessary war fighting; an embrace during the George W. Bush Administration of a “torture-lite” policy which alienated America’s allies and damaged the intelligence community; reduced effectiveness of the critical National Security Council system for coordinating United States policy on an interagency basis; absence of an effective structure to engender lasting and meaningful democratic governance in post-conflict settings such as Afghanistan and Iraq; and massive leaks in classified materials undercutting our ability to obtain crucial intelligence information and angering our allies.

A PARTIAL LIST OF CRITICAL FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY ISSUES FOR THE NEXT PRESIDENT

A partial list of critical foreign and defense policy issues for the next President include:

- Restoring the United States military and defense communities to robust strength; a strength commensurate with the serious and multi-dimensional challenges facing America today. Readiness, following years of conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq, has significantly eroded while the threat has increased. According to the National Defense Panel, commissioned by Congress to review the *2014 Quadrennial Defense Review*, our military faces “major readiness shortfalls that will, absent a decisive reversal of course, create the possibility of a hollow force;”
- Russia, a major nuclear power, must be an early and important focus. Putin must be deterred from further escalating the crises in the Ukraine, Syria, or elsewhere;

- ISIL is destabilizing the Arab Middle East and parts of Africa, is carrying out in areas it controls a genocide against Christians, Jews and Muslims of different beliefs, is breeding a global terrorist threat, and is working at generating violence in America and Europe. While ISIL likely could have been more easily stopped in its formative period, the challenge today is formidable. An early priority for the new President will be to explore the potential for a global or regional coalition, effective military options, and effective political options to defeat ISIL;
- The conflict in Syria amounts to an ongoing genocide, is generating a massive refugee crisis, threatens a wider conflict, and serves as a base for Putin and Iranian adventurism, and an incubator for ISIL. The United States must explore the potential for a global or regional coalition to address the Syria problem;
- Iran is one of the largest supporters of terrorism in the world today including its support for Hamas, Hezbollah, militias in Iraq, the Houthi rebels in Yemen, the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria, and at least past attacks directly against United States military in Lebanon and Iraq. Iran must cease its terrorism, and its threats of aggression against Israel and neighboring countries, and the United States must leverage the recent, and flawed, Iran Nuclear Agreement to ensure that Iran *never* obtains a nuclear bomb;
- China's provocative actions in the South and East China Seas must be firmly addressed. The United States has a direct interest in protecting navigational freedom in the area and has important mutual defense treaties with Japan and the Philippines. Every effort should be made to have China understand that its own interest lies, not in aggressive actions toward its neighbors, but in cooperative efforts with Japan

and the ASEAN nations to peacefully resolve these island and oceans boundary disputes;

- Effective engagement for peace in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. America has in the past played an important role in efforts at peace in this lingering conflict. America should seek to create diplomatic openings offering promise while continuing to support Israel against aggression and terrorism;
- The conflict in Afghanistan is far from over and likely will require American leadership and commitment for a considerable period. The effort must be to create an effective Afghan Army and a more stable political system able to resist a resurgent Taliban and an ambitious ISIL;
- Similarly, the conflict in Iraq is far from over, with ISIL now controlling large swaths of the Nation and Iraq politically tilting as much, or more, toward Iran as toward the United States. The root of the problem is a substantial loss of Sunni support for a sectarian Government, strong Iranian intervention exacerbating the Sunni loss of support, and a failed Army following American withdrawal. Defeating ISIL in Iraq is a core beginning in achieving political stabilization;
- Libya, following the overthrow of Quadafi, is unstable and a breeding ground for ISIL and for destabilizing Northern Africa. Restoring stability will be a challenge;
- Effective engagement with the United Nations. The United Nations has serious problems, including its blatant discrimination against Israel. But the failure of more effective American engagement has only made matters worse and empowered our enemies. We need a tougher policy of engagement with the United Nations to support American foreign policy and American values, and those of our allies. In this connection, we should examine “collective security” generally with a view to greater before-the-fact deterrence,

explore the Canadian initiative for a more effective stability force as an alternative to unilateral American action, engage more vigorously in diplomatic lobbying in capitals on UN issues, seek to end the Israel bashing which cripples the UN in any Middle East peace process, work to enhance a “democracy caucus” in the UN, and press for more effective UN engagement on promoting democracy and the rule of law;

- Effective engagement in climate change negotiations to ensure that the principal polluting nations, such as China and India, are carrying their fair share of the effort, and that agreed solutions are cost-benefit effective;
- Continuing engagement in promoting freer trade through appropriate agreements which can contribute to American and global growth;
- Prompt Senate advice and consent to the Law of the Sea Convention. This Convention expands United States resource jurisdiction in the oceans off our coasts in an area roughly equivalent to the entire land mass of the Nation, meets all of the security goals sought by the Joint Chiefs, and is supported by all American industry and environmental groups. United States non-adherence to date, in the face of overwhelming international acceptance of the Convention, has greatly weakened the United States ability to engage in critical issues affecting the Arctic Ocean and the South China Sea, and has already lost for the United States two of the four deep seabed mine sites obtained in the negotiations, with strategic mineral deposits of an estimated value of half a trillion dollars, while China and Russia move aggressively to lock up strategic deep seabed sites in America’s absence. The scandalous non-adherence to this Convention to date is a

classic example as to why listening to the siren song of isolationism is a formula for decline;

- North Korea continues to ramp up its nuclear program and its threats against South Korea. The United States, in conjunction with the United Nations Security Council, which still guarantees South Korea against North Korean aggression, should send a clear deterrent message to the leadership of North Korea;
- The United States should work more actively and effectively on promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law;
- Cyber-attacks against America and American industry are out of control and must be deterred;
- America should deploy an effective anti-ballistic missile system, whether land-based or mobile sea-based, to protect against rogue nation ballistic missile threats; and
- The National foreign and defense policy apparatus must be strengthened and modernized. This includes ensuring more effective interagency coordination through a strengthened National Security Council system, a better funded diplomatic corps, more effective ideological engagement against totalitarian ideologies such as those of ISIL, a more effective national capacity to build stable governments in conflict zones and failed states, and, where necessary, more effective war-fighting by ensuring that professional military advice is effectively presented to the President as the constitutional Commander-in-Chief. The Nation should never engage in foreign wars lightly, but once engaged, the Nation must fight to win, and win decisively.

Are There Any Questions on this Brief Overview?

We turn now to our second presenter, Admiral Dennis C. Blair, a former Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Command, one of the largest United States warfighting commands, and Former Director of National Intelligence, the highest intelligence position in the United States Government. Admiral Blair will address “Defense & Security Policy.”

We turn now to our third presenter, Professor Chester A. Crocker, Professor of Strategic Studies at Georgetown, former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, and a former Chairman of the Board of the United States Institute of Peace. Professor Crocker is one of the most respected voices in the Nation on “Foreign Policy,” the subject he will be addressing.

Our final presenter today is David J. Kramer. Mr. Kramer is a former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, and a former President of Freedom House, a bi-partisan organization for the promotion of freedom and democracy founded by Eleanor Roosevelt. Currently he is Senior Director for Human Rights and Democracy at the McCain Institute for International Leadership. Mr. Kramer is a top national leader in promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the subject he will address.

CONCLUSION BY ME

*As we conclude let us remember that America is, and must always remain, a land of opportunity for all, regardless of ethnicity, gender, color, or religion, a leader in the struggle for peace and justice, a beacon of hope to the world, and the home of the free. We must never forget that America's true greatness lies, **not** in its wonderful "spacious skies . . . amber waves of grain . . . and purple mountain majesties," but **in its national values and its unquenchable spirit.***

Thank you for coming.