

U.S. Global Leadership Coalition

Investing in the Future: A Smart Power Approach to Global Leadership

**Panel 6: Presidential Campaign 2012 – Republican Foreign Policy
Roundtable**

Moderator:

**Michael Gerson,
Board Member,
U.S. Global Leadership Coalition**

Speakers:

**C. Boyden Gray,
Representing Jon Huntsman**

**Brian Hook
Representing Tim Pawlenty**

**Pierre Richard Prosper
Representing Mitt Romney**

**Mark Rodgers
Representing Rick Santorum**

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JEFFREY COLMAN: It my pleasure to welcome you to our panel on the “Presidential Campaign 2012: Republican Foreign Policy Roundtable.” I am Jeffrey Colman of AIPAC. We are a proud and founding board member of the USGLC.

The first primary still may be months away, but there is already a great deal of interest in the current field of candidates and their views of the United States’ role in today’s complex world. As we heard this morning, the USGLC has launched Impact 2012, which builds on its remarkable successes four years ago to engage all the candidates for president on both sides of the aisle on the importance of American global leadership.

While we know that a great deal of the election debate will focus on our economy, we are truly honored to host today’s foreign policy roundtable to talk about the GOP candidates’ views on America’s role in the world. We are honored to have several representatives with us today. Each of their candidates has already contributed to this important discussion, and they are joining an audience keen to work with you to advance America’s interest in the world. The USGLC, often known as “the strange bedfellows’ coalition,” draws together leaders from business, military, humanitarian, and faith-based communities, to an American foreign policy that draws on all our tools – defense, diplomacy and development – to deal with today’s global challenges.

We have an outstanding panel with us today. I’m not sure where they are, because they’re supposed to be up here right now, but I will introduce them anyway, and hopefully they will come. Representing the – they’re coming? OK. Representing the Jon Huntsman for presidents (sic) campaign: the Honorable C. Boyden Gray. Representing the Tim Pawlenty for president campaign: the Honorable Brian Hook. Representing the Mitt Romney for president campaign: the Honorable Pierre Richard Prosper. And representing the Rick Santorum for president campaign: Mark Rodgers.

And to moderate our discussion, I’m very pleased to welcome and thank Washington Post columnist Michael Gerson for being with us – or for almost being with us. Yes, now they’re going to be with us. As many of you know, Mr. Gerson was President Bush’s chief speechwriter and a senior policy advisor from 2001 to 2006. And he serves as a member of the board of directors of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition.

So I’d like to turn it over to our surrogates from the four presidential campaigns and Michael Gerson to moderate. Michael. (Applause.)

MICHAEL GERSON: Let me start by thanking all of the campaigns represented here today, and all the surrogates who have joined us. This is the first discussion of its type in the 2012 campaign season, and it really could not be kicked off with a better panel of people.

I just returned last evening from south Sudan for their independence celebration. I think it was worth the jet lag. It was an extraordinary thing to see the birth of a new nation. And since the 1950s, that country has really been a symbol of some very bad things: of civil war, and famine and genocide. And now it’s becoming a symbol of some other things: the importance of successful diplomacy across administrations, a real kind of achievement there; and the

importance of development in their future because in the absence of that successful, effective foreign assistance, we're going to – we could see a failed state in a very important region.

There's no doubt that the economy is going to dominate the presidential election, as others have pointed out. But with one in seven American jobs related to exports, it's not possible to talk about the economy without talking about U.S. global leadership. And even if foreign policy issues don't determine the outcome of a presidential election, they can determine a president's place in history.

No president gets to suspend the challenges of the world to focus on jobs and debt. presidential election to end the Great Depression can be – a president elected to end the Great Depression can be called on to win a world war. I saw a president save millions of people from AIDS and malaria, even though few demanded or expected it, and it's now one of the proudest parts of his legacy.

So today we want to consider all the tools of American power, the military, diplomacy and development. And I'll spend the next half an hour or so posing some questions to our panelists, then I'll turn it over to the audience for some questions. There are cards at the tables. Write down your questions. Make them tougher than the ones I'm going to ask. And I'll read them, and we'll ask the representatives here.

So let me get started. Ambassador Prosper, in Mitt Romney's book, "No Apologies" – it's always dangerous to quote a candidate to someone representing them – he said, it's a – "It's long past time for America to strengthen and effectively deploy our soft power. There should be no misunderstanding of the fact that soft power is real power, that it can and does affect world events." So how would Governor Romney strengthen America's soft power to affect world events?

PIERRE RICHARD PROSPER: Well, thank you. First, on behalf of the governor's campaign, it's great to be here and be invited to such an important conference.

I think the quick answer to your question is to use the soft power. Governor Romney believes that soft power has been underutilized by the United States. That's not to say that soft power should replace hard power; you actually need both, because the more credible your hard power is, the more effective your soft power is, the more effective your – more credible your soft power is, the more effective or realistic your hard power is.

So he thinks that we should be out there and use every tool at our disposal – diplomatic tool, economic tool, business tool – to effectuate the change that we want to see around the world. We need to be prepared to use these economic instruments as points of influence or levers to get governments to be doing what they should be doing. He also believes that we need to be creating an environment, a business environment, that's friendly for American businesses overseas. Right now, we're in obviously competition with China that's actively seizing business opportunities in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and we need to be able to compete.

The next point that the governor believes in is that our aid – which is very important and with malaria or other issues of the day – needs to be effective. We need to continue to be out there helping people, helping the cause, because it has two factors. One, it's the right thing to do; it helps people who are in need. Secondly, by committing this aid, we are also increasing the awareness and the influence of the United States. People are happy, and as mentioned, the malaria, HIV/AIDS issues under President Bush, the credibility and the, I guess, the gratitude that we received from those programs were measurable. They were remarkable.

So what the governor wants to do is he wants the aid to be focused. He wants to see a better coordination, because, as we know, you see this aid being dispersed by USAID, Department of Justice, the State Department, DOD. But he feels that we can be more effective by trying to consolidate our approach and have a coordinated approach where every dollar is spent well and is accounted for.

MR. GERSON: Thank you.

Brian, in a recent foreign policy speech, Governor Pawlenty said: History has repeatedly warned us that in the long run weakness in foreign policy costs us and our children much more than we'll save in a budget line-item. But as you know, there are a lot of pressure on line-items right now. And the only thing Republicans and Democrats seem to be able to agree on in this process are discretionary cuts, including cuts in foreign assistance. So how does a Republican make the case for funding the civilian tools of engagement?

BRIAN HOOK: Well, when the – when the governor made that statement, he was largely referring to defense spending. He does not believe that we should be cutting defense spending. The governor has said often that national defense is the first priority of the federal government. And we now have talk on both sides of the aisle calling for cuts in defense spending and in the international affairs account. And this calls into questions America's commitment to its leadership role and its presence in the world.

And these are difficult economic times. And we even have a good chunk of the Republican Party calling for retrenchment. The governor doesn't accept that view. He believes that we ought to maintain defense spending and maintain the international affairs account. And I would take a step back and just share with you two of his core beliefs which shape his approach to international affairs and to – and to defense.

He believes that America is an exceptional nation, it is the indispensable nation, it has an exceptional role in the world, and that is a leadership role. It's not always popular, it's not always easy, it's not always inexpensive but it is strategically important for all of the reasons that the Global Leadership Council understands and promotes.

The second sort of core belief he has is that when it comes to rogue regimes, they understand one thing, and it's strength. They do not respect weakness, and they exploit weakness. And so when we project a foreign policy that is equivocal or timid or non-committal, we invite potentially more mischief, more confrontation, and more danger.

And so Governor Pawlenty believes very much in projecting an American foreign policy that is – that is very much focused on clarity and strength with the capabilities to back it up. And that means not cutting the international affairs account and defense spending. It is possible to be fiscally responsible and not compromise our security. And I think that political leaders need to be honest with voters and acknowledge that we are not going to pay down the deficit through savings in the 150 account.

MR. GERSON: Great. I'm – Mark, I remember during Senator Santorum's time in the Congress he was really a leader on issues such as PEPFAR and global health. Can you talk a little bit about why that that's a personal commitment of the senator's and what leadership role America needs to play, particularly in those issues of global health and – (inaudible).

MARK RODGERS: Yeah, thank you, Mike. You know, I think – the Senator gave a speech recently at the Press Club called "Resetting Our Course." And he called our commitment to foreign assistance a pro-life foreign policy for a number of reasons. I think, you know, one of which – when you deal with PEPFAR in particular, you are – you're able to correlate directly foreign assistance and the saving of lives. And if we are as a nation committed to the equality of all human life and we are committed to that here in our country with a number of protections, we have to be committed to that in terms of the global scale and where that's most threatened.

So in that same speech, he made the statement, and I'll just read it directly, that: We need to keep our commitment to humanitarian aid, especially in Africa. China and Islam are competing for the hearts and minds of much of Africa, and we cannot turn our back from the investment and commitments we have made. And that includes not just, I think, in the area of foreign assistance, but he laid out four particular areas in which America is uniquely positioned to contribute to the flourishing of societies that are otherwise struggling under issues of poverty and health issues.

First, free markets. You know, it is essential that we both promote them and we also understand how our policies distort them. And so he had taken a strong position when it comes to ag subsidies that might destroy those markets.

Secondly, the importance of religious pluralism and civil society institutions. And you know that those are essential to the stability of countries. And they are in many cases the primary agent to address those humanitarian issues.

Thirdly, that we are committed, as a nation, to our humanitarian assistance and we need to continue that. He did that not only through support for PEPFAR and MCC but also addressing third-world debt, and relieving third-world debt. That was a priority for the senator in the Senate.

And finally, we have a unique model here of governance and integrity and transparency. And that is another soft power that we need to export, if you would, in terms of how – what we have to contribute to developing countries.

MR. GERSON: Ambassador Gray, Governor Huntsman has served our nation for two years as Ambassador to China, one of the most important diplomatic posts in our government. Can you share how that experience has shaped the governor's view on U.S. global leadership and what tools are important for the U.S., particularly in light of powers like China, India, Brazil, other rising nations?

C. BOYDEN GRAY: Well, I think he views his experience in China – both this time as Ambassador and previously in that area; he's been in that part of the world quite a bit during his life and speaks fluent Mandarin – I think he believes that, and he – maybe have a – he maybe has a unique perspective – but his experience in China, I think, has led him to believe that in order to maintain its leadership, the United States really does have to get its act together here in the United States, needs to really instigate a whole renewal of innovation and productivity to get our people back to work, to get our economic prowess back to the level that can compete with China.

So it starts here. What are the tools? Regulatory reform, getting government – unnecessary government, intrusive, out of the businessman's business; it means reforming the tax code, lowering rates, flattening the scope in order to free up creative entrepreneurship; and to push, not so much for complete energy independence, but to reduce OPEC's pricing power over our economy.

We have huge natural resources; we're almost drowning in alternatives to oil. We've got to put it to use, and I think these are the tools that he would – that he would employ to regain our competitiveness, to put our people back to work, to allow us to maintain our leadership – our leadership abroad.

MR. GERSON: Let me ask a few questions that anyone can jump in. I want to raise the issue of trade. We – nearly half of all U.S. exports go to the developing world now. What are the practical ways that U.S. policy can open and strengthen new markets – new and emerging markets as we move forward?

MR. GRAY: Well, I can start – just to finish up where I left off. Obviously trade agreements are critical to this. Right now there – I don't know why there's labor opposition to some of the trade agreements that are pending, because we're opening doors abroad, not vice versa. So I think Governor Huntsman would be very keen on trade opening. That was what he's – what he had done when he was in the trade rep's office previously. I'm not sure he's unique in this, I suspect everyone up here would agree with this. But certainly trade agreements are absolutely critical.

MR. PROSPER: Well, trade agreements are critical. Governor Romney believes that. But also we need more American leadership throughout the world. As I mentioned before, we are in a competition not only with China, but, as you said, we have India, Brazil – other countries that are actively seeking not only resources but business agreements throughout the world and in various – in various places. The result of China in Africa, for example, by building a road, by building a hospital, by building a bridge, is not only are they – are they actually serving a need, but they're gaining influence in those societies. And influence equals not only political influence; it equals also trade influence, business deals.

So what we need to do, the governor believes, is have a policy where the government – the United States government, is fully behind U.S. businesses and helps them access and navigate these foreign markets because it is in our interest. Not only does it – does it help our economy, but it also increases our soft power in those areas.

MR. GERSON: Before we go on, let me just remind the audience to write their questions on cards. We have people going around and collecting them. And then we'll get to as many as we can. Anyone else on the trade question?

MR. RODGERS: You know, Mike, you know, when the senator was a congressman, he represented a very industrial area of Pittsburgh; it was a steel mill town. And even in that position, he supported the North American Free Trade Agreement. And he believes strongly that, in terms of global economy, that free trade will benefit all and that in that sense a rising tide will – you know, all boats will rise. And so in terms of poverty alleviation, I think that, you know, the center of our policy has to be economic development in developing third-world countries, and free trade is essential to that.

MR. HOOK: I would add and echo what my colleagues have said here, that trade is essential. You have one in five jobs that are tied to trade. Trade – our global – the U.S. economy is very dependent on trade. And Governor Pawlenty is, I would hazard a guess, probably the most well-traveled governor for trade missions; it's really an astonishing number of countries that he's been to during his two terms as governor, and has been a strong proponent of free trade agreements with Columbia and South Korea and Panama.

MR. GERSON: Let me raise a different set of issues. It's now clear that the lack of economic opportunity, high food prices, contributed to what we're seeing the Arab Spring, in North Africa in particular. And it's equally clear that the gains – the democratic gains, that we're seeing could be threatened if you don't see economic progress in the aftermath of political and social change.

So how can investments and development programs help consolidate progress and strengthen particularly fragile states and democratic change?

MR. RODGERS: Let me just – Senator Santorum, when he was senator, again, was an active proponent of democracy building, whether – again, he introduced a bill that focused on democracy building in Iran, in Syria.

You know, part of our foreign assistance has to be in the area of democracy building in a – in a way that is structural, systemic and sustainable. I think – you know, it is – it is one of the few areas in which we have, I think, under-resourced some of our efforts. And it's an area that has to be increased in terms of our commitment – (inaudible) – administration.

MR. GRAY: Well, I think it's hard to know which is the cart and which is the horse. It's very important to have the basic rules of law – the rule of law, basic property rights to create the opportunity for subsistence farmers, say, in Africa, to have any chance at making – at making a

go of it in life. And so having those civil society tools are as important as, I think – or a prerequisite to building democracy.

And if you look at the opportunities in Africa, they're limited, in part because they don't use – or, in a sense, by some of the European farm policies, they – farm, not foreign – are kind of precluded from using the latest GMO advances that could take advantage of the unique conditions in Africa, the lack of water and whatnot. So – and there are a lot of practices that our farmers use in the Midwest that need to be exported, which is another trade issue. We have a lot to teach the world. But I think farmers in the poor sections of the world have to learn to feed themselves in order to feed democracy.

MR. PROSPER: Well, the governor – Governor Romney believes that economic stability equals security, and – you know, throughout the world, because once you have a stable economy and people are able to feed themselves, be self-sufficient, it creates a stability and it creates the ability for people to advance in their own society.

I think a great example of this is, you look at Rwanda. Rwanda is a place that had a genocide that saw a million people killed in 100 days in 1994. You go to Rwanda today and you see a completely different picture. Since 2005, Rwanda has averaged 7.3 percent growth, economic growth, every year. And the result is that it's now one of the most stable countries in Africa because they're trying to use the economic tools. We have U.S. businesses doing business in Rwanda. You have Starbucks; Google is there to help with – on tech issues; Costco is buying Rwandan products and put them into our stores. And it is – it is helping the people. The money is going back to the people. And we're not in a situation where we were in 1994 where you had the population that was literally at each other's throats.

MR. HOOK: Well, Governor Pawlenty has publicly and repeatedly said that he is not somebody who believes that we should be eliminating or cutting foreign aid. He believes that a strong and effective civilian capacity can really help prevent conflicts before they occur.

And Mike, you mentioned the Arab Spring. And here we see kind of the real-world consequences of pulling back. Governor Pawlenty would not have cut funding for democracy and governance programming in Egypt by more than half in 2009, from 50 million (dollars) to 20 million (dollars) or conditioning U.S. support for these NGOs to whether they're registered with the government. It's very important for us to be actively engaged with these organizations to help them with the rule of law, to help them with sound economic policies, party building, fighting narcotrafficking. And there's a number of areas where we can cooperate. And we need to be fully engaged, I think, on areas that are within the international affairs account.

MR. GERSON: Given the budget constraints that we've all been talking about, the effectiveness of aid has never been more important, both to get past the Congress but also for its own sake. How would your candidate improve the coordination and the effectiveness of foreign assistance programs? This has been a large topic in the last few years in trying to determine how to move forward.

MR. PROSPER: You know, as I, you know, mention in the – with the opening question, it's really about better coordination, because again, what you see is a situation where foreign aid is no longer simply the purview of USAID. You have a situation now where you have, as I said, DOD, Department of Justice, obviously, Department of State, AID and others that are out there externally giving aid to various countries on various issues, particularly if you have a crisis at hand.

What the governor, what Governor Romney believes is that we need to begin to coordinate to have a – have a point person or a special envoy, if you will, that will be responsible for that region, that crisis, that part of the world that can make sure that there is – there is not duplication of efforts, there is not internal competition over how to disperse the funds, and they're dispersed and used in a way that is not only more effective, but it gets to the programs, to the people that we want to help most.

MR. GERSON: Any other thoughts on development or its effectiveness? (Inaudible.)

MR. GRAY: Well, let me just repeat what I said about Governor Huntsman in the beginning, that we have a lot of repair work to do here at home. I was in a conference this morning with some Europeans about the role of the EU and the U.S. going forward. And there's a sense that our aid programs, our diplomacy are less – are going to be less effective than they might have because our own internal model doesn't look like it's so successful at the moment. And how can we project this, how can we say that our aid efforts are the solution when we're not doing so well – (inaudible) – so well here at home? So I'll just repeat where Governor Huntsman is: We need to tender our own garden as we try to maintain or – yeah, maintain our leadership abroad.

MR. RODGERS: If I could offer a couple quick thoughts: The senator, when he gave his speech at the Press Club, mentioned – again, one of our great American exports has been – has been democracy and transparency and the vibrancy and the longevity of this experiment.

And part of that is the leadership – the integrity of leadership. And I think that is essential to the efficacy of our foreign aid, is governance and leadership and – particularly in African countries. And so, you know, that has to be at the forefront of our – of our diplomatic relationship, is the way in which some foreign assistance is not properly spent through government agencies overseas and the need for integrity in governance and addressing corruption.

MR. HOOK: I think it's also important for our development work to be judged not just on inputs but on results. I mean, this is something which President Bush – it was an enormous paradigm shift in how the U.S. did development through the Millennium Challenge accounts and the MCC. I think if we're going to hold other countries in the world to a high standard and ask them to deliver results, we also on our side need to be doing the same thing.

I know that when I was in the State Department heading international organizations and went to one of the U.N. conferences on development – and within that culture, there's still very much a focus on intentions and on inputs. And precious little is spent discussing on results. And

so I think within our development work, there needs to be a real focus on results and trying to create the same kind of shift that President Bush created for our foreign aid for what we do internally with our work.

MR. GERSON: Well, let me get to a few questions here quickly. And I think if we can – whoever wants to jump in on these questions, I want to get to as many as we can.

This is one: We've heard a lot about economic and security arguments for development abroad. How will your candidate make the moral case to Republican voters?

MR. GRAY: Well, let me just say – I can say that if you go back to the origins of free market economics, it goes back to the Scottish Enlightenment, most of whom, most of the stars of whom were sons of Presbyterian clergy. And they all thought that the most moralizing thing they could do was increase commerce and trade, where you have to, you know, observe the golden rule – (inaudible – at the simplest level: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you, love your neighbor, and what goes around comes around. And if you want to behave immorally with your trading partners, you're not going to trading partners very long.

So I think – I think Governor Huntsman believes that economic growth is a high moral calling. It inculcates moral values. That's what Adam Smith was all about. He was originally an ethicist before he became – before he became an economist. His first book – first book was "The Theory of Moral Sentiments." And I think that's where Governor Huntsman is.

MR. GERSON: Can we maybe have one more here? And then we'll go on to some other questions.

MR. PROSPER: Just quickly. The more peaceful the world, the more stable the world, the better it is for America. That's the bottom line, where the threats that we face begin to go away. And the result being – the moral case that can be made is that the more we help or that we're able to help, the greater our soft power is. And our soft power will help us in questions that come up where we need to deal with hard power, where it deals with more – before international arenas and you need to call on people for votes. It helps.

MR. GERSON: OK. Would your candidates pledges to treat the international affairs budget as security spending along with funding for defense?

Any reactions there? Because that's – that was actually something that was done in the Bush budgets; it's done in the Obama budgets. You know, there's an attempt to try to –

MR. GRAY: Are you asking about intelligence functions?

MR. GERSON: No, I'm asking particularly about a unified national security budget that includes both defense spending and development spending.

MR. GRAY: Well, obviously, economic strength is indispensable to any military projection.

MR. RODGERS: Again, in the context of his speech a few months ago, the senator did commit to maintaining the humanitarian aid in the context of our national security interests. And creating a unified approach, I think, is sensible. He didn't speak to that directly, but I assume that would be his instinct.

MR. GERSON: OK. Here's one that no one may want to jump in on. To what degree do the candidates view climate change through the lens of national security? (Laughter.)

I think that that silence indicates something, but it would – would someone –

MR. RODGERS: Yeah. I mean, Senator Santorum has been a skeptic of climate change, at least in terms of the human contribution to it, and I think at this stage would be hesitant to suggest that climate change would be a national security threat.

MR. GERSON: Is there anyone who disagrees with that?

Guess not.

MR. GRAY: Well, I think that – you know, you can have what President Bush 41 did, was, at a time when some of the scientific results were not in – this was back two decades ago – have a no-regrets policy. And many if not most of the things you would do for reducing CO2 and some of the other greenhouse gases, you would do to reduce dependence on oil. So I think that we lose sight of the fact that energy security has a co-benefit of reduction of some of these pollutants. And we tend to lose sight of that, but it is very, very important, on its own, to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

MR. GERSON: Here's another question: How would your candidate seek to improve the image relationship of the U.S. with the Arab street, particularly youth?

MR. PROSPER: Well, the governor believes that we need to have an active policy of engaging and working with the Arab world. We need to work with the people who are opposed to the radicals, opposed to the extremists, people who are preaching the terrorism ideology. The youth is vulnerable in these parts of the world where you see they are radicalized.

So the governor believes that by working with the various governments, perhaps even calling a summit or a conference bringing people together, we can find a common approach to deal with these issues, spread the shared values so that the – as I said, the youth are not radicalized in these mosques and run out and become the next jihadists.

MR. HOOK: Well, I think we're seeing the consequences now of actually not engaging in a very personal way with heads of state and with funding groups in-country. When our secretary of state visited Egypt and there were democratic groups that refused to meet with her, this, for me, was a very disappointing moment. I feel like the United States should always be – should be that shining city on a hill that inspires nations. And we ought to always be on the side of expanding political freedom, religious freedom, freedom of the press, rule of law.

And I think that requires a commitment from the top down on engaging and making clear our views and our values, and doing it in a very unapologetic way, that this is who we are as Americans and not really – not really wavering on that. I think that represents the best of American interests, short- and long-term.

MR. RODGERS: Mike, if I could just add – you know, I think this is important to acknowledge. And that – with that demographic in particular – you’ve gotten back from Sudan – you know, the American government is not the lone actor when it comes to how that generation in particular views America. And I think the senator has been a critic at times of our cultural exports in terms of how Hollywood, in particular – how it – how it exports the image of who we are.

But it also looks at them as potential partners. I mean, the – our communication strategy needs to be intentional and be more robust, again. But it also looks at corporate America as a partner of this project, because there is – there’s no more kind of direct interface that most of the street has, then, through and with corporate America exports and products. And so being in a collaborative way with culture, corporate and our government, is essential.

MR. GERSON: OK. Here is a challenging question. The Paul Ryan budget would have cut foreign assistance dramatically – about 40 percent. Does your candidate support such cuts? Why or why not? I think we’ve heard that from Brian, but I was interested in the others.

MR. RODGERS: I’ll just go back to his statement a few months back. Again, he has affirmed his commitment to maintain humanitarian aid and that cuts should not be, in any way, unequal. It can be – should be proportional, if at all.

MR. PROSPER: Well, you know, for Governor Romney, it’s similar. He – as I said in the beginning, he believes that we need to increase our soft power rather than decrease our soft power. Obviously, these economic questions have large ramifications that need to be balanced with the rest of the budget. But whatever we do, we need to recognize that soft power is an important tool that we need to be using.

MR. GERSON: Right. How can we better educate American students to help prepare them to compete on a global stage in an increasingly interconnected world?

MR. GRAY: Well, I’m not sure, again, that I know enough about the other candidates to say that Governor Huntsman is unique, because I think Governor Romney was in favor of school choice and charter schools in Massachusetts, but I do know that Governor Huntsman really had a very, very aggressive choice policy in Utah. And this is, I think, indispensable. It’s not the only thing, but it’s something we must pursue to give parents a choice over where they send their kids, the same choice that better-off parents have.

And that can be achieved. A lot of the schools that, say, parents in this city are able to choose now because of the – of the revival of the Washington Scholarship Fund – the choices cost less than the public school system had produce much better results with much higher

graduation rates. And I think this is something that Governor Huntsman would pursue for its own sake as well as for the economic benefits for our country.

MR. GERSON: Anyone else on these issues of kind of global education?

MR. RODGERS: You know, I will say – again, in his speech a few months ago, the senator said that we – really, with our focus rightly on math and science and some of the other kind of basics that we have been underachieving on globally, that one area that we’ve frankly left off the table on our conversation in terms of the low level of integrity of our education system is in civics classes. How can we export to the world who America is when we don’t know who we are ourselves? And so he reaffirmed the commitment that for us to be active agents in the global stage, our – this next generation has to be more rooted in American civics education.

MR. PROSPER: And just to build on that, I think the other part of this that is important is simply raising the awareness among our youth and the student about the world, right, about not only the United States’ role in the world but what is happening in the world, the fact that we are interconnected, the fact that there are opportunities to do things in the world, to make a difference, the fact that people look to the United States for leadership.

Learning a foreign language is a valuable and important tool. So there are a lot of things that we can do to open the eyes and open the mind of our youth so that they can get out there and compete, because these other countries, their students are learning English. They’re learning about the United States. In fact, they’re studying here. So we need to recognize that there is a competition, and we need to give our youth the tools to move forward.

MR. GERSON: OK, let me get in another question: As a veteran, I’ve seen firsthand the value of civilians working alongside the military. As the military transitions out of the frontline states, how will your candidates support the shift to civilian-led missions in these states vital to national security?

MR. GRAY: Well, I think that Governor Huntsman would like to see a shift away from militarily led nation building into stronger efforts at counterterrorism, which I think means putting a premium on creative trade and aid policies that encourage, empower citizens, as I was saying earlier, to make their own way in life, to feed themselves and to feed their neighbors and to export abroad from wherever they – wherever they are.

So the budget constraints actually call for stronger cooperation on the basic market reforms that we need to see across the – across the globe.

MR. PROSPER: And Governor Romney believes that there has to be a transition, and perhaps a seamless one, between military-to-civilian control. I was with the governor in Afghanistan in the beginning of this year, and one of the big issues that came up – we spoke to the generals, General Petraeus, and they’ll tell you, well, we can win this; we can win this militarily, but the problem is, is what happens when the military leaves?

So the civilian component needs to be in there to help build the infrastructure, as we discussed, to help build that capacity so that these societies are able to stand up on their own. So there is a role for the civilians to play so that the military, after it does its job, can leave, move on and do something else.

MR. RODGERS: Just one slightly different take on this. You know, one of the areas that, you know, again, we've been blessed with in this country in this 230-year experiment is the strength of civil – of our civil society. And it is an area that is frankly squelched in many of these countries that we're now operating in. So it is essential. A good friend of ours, Mike Don Eberle (ph), has been active in this with Afghanistan, I think, and Iraq. But being committed to both partnering with those civil-society institutions and strengthening civil society in general is essential as we look to transition from military into civilian engagement.

MR. GERSON: Let me raise one more area here with a question. While keeping our position as a global leader, how should the U.S. work with Europeans and other countries on foreign assistance around the world?

MR. GRAY: Let me not answer your – go ahead.

MR. : No, no, please, go ahead.

MR. GRAY: I was going to give a non-answer, to say that – it's not a complete non-answer, but it's, we can't work with –

MR. GERSON: It's a partial non-answer.

MR. GRAY: – we can't work with Europeans on these issues externally through the Atlantic until we have a really good economic relationship with the Atlantic to begin with. And we don't really have – the United States does not really have an economic platform parallel, say, to NATO that permits engagement on economic issues across the board. We just don't have it, and it's really hurting this country, and it's hurting the Atlantic alliance.

MR. PROSPER: Yeah, I think obviously you can work with the Europeans on particular projects around the world, but we should also recognize that the European Union, they're using their economic aid as a tool of soft power as well. When you – you know, you pick your part of the world. They're looking to increase their influence. They want these countries to look to Europe first, rather than the United States. And we need to recognize that.

Of course, we don't want to fund projects where there is a duplication of funding and therefore we're wasting our money. But let's be real about this and recognize that they are using their tools, just as we're trying to use our tools.

MR. RODGERS: And Mike, just on Senator Santorum's work on AIDS and PEPFAR, you know, he was also committed not just to bilateral efforts but also to multilateral efforts. The senator supported funding for the Global Fund. There are certain issues where frankly, that level of collaboration is necessary to address the issues.

MR. HOOK: Well, I think with – it is important – when you look at Egypt and Tunisia, they – our European allies have as much a stake in their succeeding as we do. And I think that we need to leverage our relationships with our European friends so that we're not shouldering the burden alone – not to suggest that we are, but sometimes it feels that way.

And we need to, I think – we all have a vital stake in the outcome of the – in the – sort of the circumstances around the Arab Spring. And Europe does need to be playing a large role with us. I think it's important for America to lead and to show the way, but there also needs to be a great deal of support from our European allies on this.

MR. GERSON: All right, that was a great discussion. Let me close by thanking all of you for being here today, for taking the time. It is a difficult period to address these issues in a lot of different ways, but a prospective president can't avoid them.

By way of a sobering reminder, in January of 2001, I had been working on the campaign. We had a new administration that took power entirely based on domestic issues. There was tax cuts and education, and then by September of that year, the world had changed. And, you know, history can arrive very suddenly, and the challenge is to shape it before it arrives. And that's really the importance of these issues as we move forward.

So thank you again for being here. And I wish all of your candidates the best of luck. (Applause.) I think we head out.

GARY KNELL: Thank you to Michael and our panelists for a very interesting discussion. Good afternoon. What a day this has been. My name is Gary Knell. I'm the president and CEO of Sesame Workshop and a board member of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition. We try to maintain a little bit of America's export policy through the Muppets. So Liz thought I'd be a good person to close for you all today.

It's another version of smart power, and it's about exporting education and creativity, which we happen to believe makes a big impact about brand America around the world. As we bring this day of the conference to a close, I want to begin by thanking all of you for your attendance and participation in what has truly been an exceptional gathering; and a special appreciation to all of our speakers, panelists and moderators who have made today's discussion so rich; and of course, to the amazing Liz Schroyer and her fantastic team. Let's hear it for them. (Applause.)

Throughout the day, we've had the opportunity to further examine the complexity of America's global leadership. We heard from and had the opportunity to honor our military community this morning, whose powerful voices continue to urge greater support for development and diplomacy alongside defense. Thank you again to the many veterans who joined us today, and let's hear it for them again. (Applause.)

We kicked off the USGLC's Impact 2012 campaign, which will once again aim to inspire the presidential candidates to support a strategic investment in development and diplomacy.

Chuck Todd offered an exciting, if not a little bit depressing report on our current situation and a preview of the 2012 elections. And we were very fortunate to have the wisdom of some of the surrogates here today from the Republican presidential campaigns and gain their insights on their candidates' views on foreign policy.

As the USGLC released its timely report on U.S. engagement in the global economy and its impact on jobs here at home, we were privileged to be joined by World Bank president Bob Zoellick, Land O'Lakes CEO Chris Policinski and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's John Murphy. We were fortunate to participate in a town-hall conversation with the heads of four major development agencies: Raj Shah, Daniel Yohannes, Elizabeth Littlefield and Le Zak.

And if that wasn't enough, of course, we were honored this morning to hear from Secretary Clinton on the linkage between smart power and economic prosperity. As the USGLC's new report shows, we know now more than ever the importance of economic growth in the developing world and the link to America's economy.

And now it's your turn. Whether you live in Washington or in one of the many states represented here today, we need your continued partnership and engagement. We look forward to working together throughout 2011 and into Impact 2012. As the presidential and congressional campaigns crisscross your state, educate them about the issues that we discussed today. Use the many resources on the USGLC website to help you get the message out, and join us and encourage others to participate when the USGLC comes to your home state in the months ahead.

Most of all, I hope you will continue to be a part of our shared journey as we work to make a better, safer world. Just a couple of quick announcements of those participating in the Hill visits tomorrow: If you haven't picked up your Hill visits packet, stop at the Hill visits desk right out in the lobby before leaving today.

Breakfast tomorrow will begin at 8:00 a.m. in the Constitution Ballroom, one level up from here. We will brief all of you on the issues that will be discussed on the Hill and you will receive the appointment schedules then. And after breakfast, we all head up to Capitol Hill in the comfort of air conditioning, I hope, in time for your first appointments.

Let me again take this occasion to thank the staff of USGLC and all their hard work. And now, on behalf of all of us at the USGLC, let me invite all of you to join us at a reception on the on the Smart Power at Work Expo. I hope you will take this opportunity to meet with friends and colleagues and see firsthand how development and diplomacy are truly making a difference in the world.

Thank you so much for attending the 2011 Washington conference, and we look forward to seeing you again next year. Thanks. (Applause.)

(END)