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AND SOCIAL STRIFE IN THE 21st CENTURY

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. WEST: Good afternoon. I'm Darrell West, vice president of Governance Studies at The Brookings Institution and the author of a new Brookings book entitled *Megachange: Economic Disruption, Political Upheaval, and Social Strife in the 21st Century*, which has to be the longest subtitle in recent history. (Laughter) But the book deals with the large-scale change that's taking place today in the form of Donald Trump, ISIS, Brexit, and attitudes towards globalization, among many other things. And in the book I argue that we live in dangerous times because there are so many different fundamental changes that are taking place.

And I think the book is timely in light of all of the large and dramatic shifts that have taken place in recent decades. So in the book what I try and do is to put many of these contemporary developments in a broader historical context. I try and explain how we reached this point where so many unusual things are taking place.

And then secondly, what do we need to do in order to move forward? In the long run, I'm actually an optimist, despite all the things that seem to run in the contrary direction, if we are able to improve our governing processes, and I'll come back to that point in a minute.

In recent decades, we've seen a number of momentous events. In 1991, we saw the fall of the Berlin Wall. It was an event that altered alignments around the world. We have seen the collapse of Communism; the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009 and it's aftermath, which still very much colors political attitudes in this election; the rise of ISIS and how that represents a different type of non-state actor coming to power; more recently the United Kingdom voting to leave the European Union; and then in this election Donald Trump shaking up the political establishment.

So in the book I argue that we're living in an unusual time period where

big stuff is happening on a regular basis. I suggest that it's no accident that we're experiencing many different examples of megachange.

We live in unusual times because many of the long-held assumptions that we typically have are being shattered and events are taking place that surprise both political and economic experts. Many of the things that used to anchor both domestic and international affairs have grown weaker, and so that has allowed us to move beyond the era of small-scale incremental change into a time period where we are experiencing tidal waves and tsunamis.

Because of that, the times in which we live are quite risky. We are seeing the rise of authoritarianism. Russia is becoming much more aggressive, annexing Crimea and now hacking to try and influence U.S. elections; the rise of right wing forces in Europe and the power of some of the ultra-nationalist parties there in response to the refugee crisis. And then on a global stage we're seeing fundamental challenges to a globalization itself. People are worried about trade and how well they and their country are doing.

I travel to a lot of different countries and it amazes me that virtually every place where I go, their country thinks they're losing. And in a regime when everybody thinks they're not doing well, this is not a good recipe in terms of how people are going to feel moving forward.

One of the things that I talk about in the book is we're seeing a lot of interactions between domestic and international forces, that in the current digital era it's very easy for grievances that used to be local complaints or local abuses or local problems to go viral and affect the entire international community. We often are seeing extremism in one place generate extreme reactions elsewhere.

One of the examples of this took place last November after the San

Bernardino shootings when Donald Trump issued his famous comment that basically we should keep Muslims out of America. Almost as soon as he said that terrorist organizations around the world included that video footage in their recruiting videos to basically argue this proves what we've been saying all along, the United States is anti-Islam and so, therefore, you need to join our terrorist organization in order to fight this. And so it's just an illustration of this extremism begetting extremism cycle that is creating a lot of problems.

Now, this is not the first time that we have experienced a megachange. Just when you look at America history, certainly in the 1850s and 1860s, the fight over slavery involved very fundamental issues; the 1930s and how we responded to the Depression; the 1960s, a period of great cultural change. But I argue that one thing that's unusual about our current time period is the degree to which our policy challenges are being aggravated by poor governance all around the world.

Certainly in the United States we have major problems in this regard in terms of political polarization and hyper-partisanship. In Europe, the rise of right wing parties has destabilized a number of different countries and is altering the electoral politics in those nations. Russia is becoming very aggressive; Turkey is now moving in a more authoritarian direction since the coup attempt. And so basically, we're in a situation where people have to alter their expectations regarding the speed and the magnitude of change. It's very difficult to deal with both the dramatic scope and the surprising character of these global and domestic developments.

I argue that we need to rediscover history because oftentimes our civic memories today go back 25 or 30 years. That's what we can easily remember, kind of the experiences that took place in our adult lives, but we're now facing events that in order to find the examples of this you have to go back 100 years, 250 years, or 500

years. So we need to get more into history in order to understand what's going on today because in many respects it's those events a century ago and beyond that can help us understand what we're seeing today.

The challenge for governance is that we now have slow institutions during an era of rapid change. There's very much a misalignment between our governing institutions and our political processes and the scope of the challenges that we are attempting to face. So the book concludes with a few recommendations of what we need to think about as we move forward and try and deal with these high rate of change.

One recommendation involves what I call de-radicalizing civil society. When you look both in the United States, as well as many places around the world and certainly including many places in the Middle East, when you look at the schools, the churches, the synagogues, and the mosques, they have become training grounds for radicalization and extremism and oftentimes violent behavior. And in the United States, we often blame our politicians for all of the polarization, but I suggest that we see polarization both in the society at large, as well as in our culture and in our media systems.

And so in most political systems you can't expect the politicians to be better than the society in which they are operating, especially systems that are based on democratic elections. So we need to think about ways we can de-radicalize civil society because if the only thing young people are experiencing is this exposure to radical ideas, extremism, and violence, it doesn't offer a whole lot of hope in terms of going forward.

Secondly, we have basically gotten into a situation of winner-take-all politics and winner-take-all policies these days in which the few do well over the many. And I suggest that this is a problem for our governing system because this winner-take-all mentality basically encourages politicians to move to the extreme on both sides of the

political aisle. It's probably happened more on the Republican side now than on the Democratic side, but it's an issue in both parties. And we need -- we've kind of lost sight of those important skills of bargaining, compromise, and negotiation, which in the post-World War II period, when the United States was doing better, you know, we had those traditions and we had political processes that helped us engage in that type of compromise.

And then the last point I'll make is just the need to fix basic governance. In the book I suggest that we need institutional reforms, electoral reforms, and media reforms; that a lot of our problems today in terms of governance basically deal with each of these things. And so I make a number of concrete suggestions of things that we need to undertake.

On the institutional side, reducing filibusters. So, for example, in the U.S. Senate now, in order to get anything done, you need 60 votes out of 100. Essentially we have moved from majority politics to supermajority requirements. No democracy can really function under that type of situation because the level of consensus within society as a whole isn't that high. And so when you have a highly polarized situation and a situation where individual senators can stop action by threatening a filibuster, putting a secret hold on Executive Branch nominations, this is a very bad recipe in terms of what that government can do, and so it really is a fundamental governance problem.

We need to improve our election system in terms of addressing the role of money and politics. Thinking today about the greatest thing that incumbents worry about is not a general election defeat, but a primary defeat because of the low voter turnout and the fact that it tends to be more progressive voters who are turning out in Democratic primaries, more conservative and populist voters who are turning out in Republican primaries. And then we wonder why we end up with a Congress that is

polarized.

And we also have to address the inequality aspects just because of the political consequences of that type of inequality.

And so I think that there are lots of things we can do. I'm optimistic that we can address these things. All of these problems developed over a period of time, but they developed because of specific things that happened, specific policy changes that we made, various social and cultural developments that took place. And so in order to reverse that, we basically need to address these types of issues.

So for more details you can consult my book page at InsidePolitics.org. We're also selling copies of the book outside the auditorium at the end of the event. And we're now going to have a panel discussion, and I'd like to invite our three panelists to come up on stage and we will continue this conversation. (Applause)

So to help us understand what is happening today and what we need to do, we have three very distinguished experts. Ed Luce is a Washington columnist and commentator for the Financial Times, Jill Lawrence is the commentary editor at USA Today, and David Corn is the Washington bureau chief of Mother Jones.

So, Ed, I'd like to start with you. This has clearly been a very unusual election, so how do you explain the rise of Trump here and what does his existence tell us about American politics?

MR. LUCE: Well, thank you for inviting me and congratulations on your book, your 22nd book I note, which is extraordinary output. And thanks for the introduction. Please don't call me an expert. That word is toxic nowadays. (Laughter)

Why is this happening? I tend to think, as you'll guess from my accent, I tend to project a little bit from my own country, and what we saw in Brexit, you know, obviously was something that nobody expected and nobody who's described as an

expert wanted. But I think there are great similarities between the political crisis there and the political crisis here. I don't think Trump's going to win, by the way, but I didn't think Brexit was going to happen.

The fact that large numbers of people who work for Japanese investors in Britain -- for Nissan, for example -- and large numbers of fishermen, you know, living in Cornwall in the north of England, both of whom benefit directly, manifestly, and to their undoubted knowledge -- this wasn't ignorance -- from membership of the European single market, the fact that they voted for Brexit and against membership with the European Union I think shows that something is happening here that's way bigger than the economic deterministic explanations that we're all accustomed to, which are part of the story: the middle class squeeze, the hollowing out of the middle, the anxiety of middle-skilled people. I mean, this is very much part of it.

But I don't think it's the whole story and I do think it's something that people who attend Brookings meetings are particularly, and us on the podium, aren't attuned to accepting because we have bought into a story where we'll get increasingly more progressive, more tolerant, more multicultural, and more liberal. And that was the story of my own hometown, London, bought into. It's the story that most of urban American has bought into. And so it's hard for us to accept that there is something over and above purely the economic, very understandable economic anxiety that you see across the Western world, namely a fear of others, a fear of social change, a fear of modernity, a particularly male tone to it.

I think it's very telling that this campaign is focused a lot on what is essentially an unfulfillable promise, which is bringing back manufacturing jobs, male jobs that have been lost. There are 77,000 jobs in the steel sector. Mostly male jobs have been lost. It used to be a couple hundred thousand. And focusing very, very little on how

to make the actual jobs that are being created -- for example, the 810,000 home health aides, mostly female -- how to make them more secure and give them better ladders into a better job market.

So I think there's a mix there of economic and social anxiety that is -- I don't know whether it's going to go on. I mean, you know, the assumption is with these trends that they always end with a bang. My profession tends to always prioritize things that end with a bang. But often things end with a whimper and that's an equally plausible possibility.

MR. WEST: Jill, so we've talked about economic anxiety, social anxiety. What's your take on what's happening now?

MS. LAWRENCE: Well, I agree with all of what you said. And again, thanks for having us here and having this discussion. I think it's really important.

Maybe this is because I'm a baby boomer and I kind of came of age as a national political writer during the Clinton administration, that was, I think, one of the first big changes, one of the first big change periods. And one of the sayings that Bill Clinton made famous was make change your friend. And I think that was easy to do if, you know, in the '90s, when the economy was expanding, it was a little easier than now. It was easier to do if you were in favor of gay rights, if you were in favor of women's rights, in favor of civil rights, Affirmative Action. You know, it was hard even then, I think, for some of the people that we're seeing erupt not just in anxiety now, but in anger.

And in my own family we have Trump supporters, we have conservative Christians, we have people to whom abortion is the most important issue. So, you know, there's a lot of cultural roots to this.

And I think that the paralysis in Washington has not helped. You know, people see a government that doesn't work and they want something to happen.

One of the most striking things that I came upon when I was actually doing a big negotiations piece for Brookings about the budget agreement that Patty Murray and Paul Ryan worked out was Republicans going home before anyone knew what was in this agreement. No one really knew what had been done, but people were very happy. They said thank you so much for doing your job. Thank you so much for avoiding a government shutdown. It's like we don't care what's in this thing. We don't know, but you're doing your job and the government's going to stay open. And if all of you agreed on it, you know, how bad can it be?

So I think, yeah, there's a craving for things to move. And I do agree with the whole idea that economics are not determinative. There was just a real eye-opening piece about the Kentucky governor's election recently, I guess it was last year or the year before, where people who had no health insurance and very little health care before the Affordable Care Act were, nevertheless, voting for Matt Bevin, the conservative Republican, even though he had promised to get rid of it. And they knew that he had promised to get rid of it and they just said, well, maybe he won't. And guess what, he didn't. He changed it, but he didn't.

So, you know, people are really willing to take some risks here, I think, just to get big change. I don't know how many people would agree with me on this, but I think the last time this happened was in 2000, where we had, you know, a President who had some character issues and some legal issues, but we had a good economy and we were not in any kind of major war and things were going well. And the Democrats were joking, you know, what don't you like about peace and prosperity? And for that very reason enough people decided, well, what the heck, let's go for this George W. Bush. He seems nice and we can just get rid of the whole Clinton era and it won't matter.

And then, of course, you know, it was so consequential that, you know,

you really hope people won't start voting for change for change's sake in the near future knowing what happened last time.

MR. WEST: David, what's your hypothesis on what's going on now?

MR. CORN: Well, there's a lot to unpack. I think economic anxiety is related to cultural anxiety and back and forth. So over the past 10, 20, 30, 40 years, I think in America there's been a shift and a weakening of people's general sense of economic security. The idea that you could go to high school, get a good job after that, if not go to college, stay with a company if you want for 10, 20, 30 years, move up progressively, have a decent middle class life, your kids could do better, go to college if you hadn't gone to college, that's all kind of been tossed out the window.

And I remember, you know, in the Clinton years when the progressives of the Clinton administration were trying to address this, and you had Secretary of Labor Robert Reich saying, well, we will train them. If we train them, the jobs will come. Well, I think the issue was for a lot of people they don't want to be trained. They liked the way their life -- they thought their life would go. And globalization has continued over the last 30 years to eat away at people's sense of security.

Even in sort of the middling recovery that we're in the middle of now, you know, people still feel that if you're 30, 40, 50 years old, anything can happen at any point in time and there really is no sense of security. We don't have guaranteed pensions anymore. It's all 401(k), so we're all held hostage to the people of Wall Street, who we now know truly don't give a damn about us, if they ever did. And you also worry about your kids, whether they've gone to college or not, being able to earn a good living.

And so I think in technical terms Americans are wigged out and they're looking -- and when this happens, I think some, I don't want to say they cling to guns and God, but they hunker down within cultural affiliations, some might call it tribalism, and

look for answers. They look for a sense of community and they don't see it happening in Washington. And I would say that's not, you know, an issue in which both sides are to blame.

I think your colleague Tom Mann and Norm Ornstein have done a great job of saying no, this is not an everybody-does-it type of problem. These problems are not being addressed out of a political strategy. And I would track that back, we're talking a lot about the '90s today, to the Clinton years.

I think there is a direct line from the Clinton impeachment to the Obama obstructionism. And I think basically in the '90s conservatives and Republicans had this visceral reaction to Clinton, to our first baby boomer President, that was driven more by cultural issues than politics or ideology. He was a drug-smoking, dope-smoking or inhaling/not inhaling, draft dodger who was, you know, from the Northeastern schools, who also had been the Manchurian candidate. And all the things we see today about Obama started with Clinton. He and Hillary had killed people. He had fathered a black child out of wedlock. All these conspiracy theories that were used to delegitimize him, which didn't work. And then so they had to overreact with the impeachment. They couldn't help themselves.

And I think, you know, you skip through the Bush years when conservatives and Republicans kind of had what they wanted, and then you pick up with Obama. And again, it's like how can this guy be President? We have to go after him in a way that's not legitimate, that's not really ideological.

And so we're left with a governing system that was designed to be slow and not able to deal with the megachanges that you write about, and you write about this in your book. So that it is also now being completely abused as what I would say a part of sort of a cultural-political civil war, which, unfortunately, I don't see getting better after

Election Day anytime soon.

And, you know, I think you can come up with great structural remedies: filibusters; I would say gerrymandering is probably the key thing from a political perspective; having a House of Representatives that is actually representative would make a big difference. But right now 40 percent of the public, 30 percent of the public, 45 percent of the public has a veto power. And as long as that happens, our system can't deal with the challenges that you have so deftly and ably and in short book -- I have to emphasize this is a short book; you can read this in a night, so buy it -- that you have sort of laid out for us, Darrell.

MR. WEST: I've discovered short books take less time to write than long books. (Laughter) It's a very easy formula.

Ed, you made a very interesting point just in terms of on a long-term basis we're used to kind of a theory of progress where progress always moves in one direction. You know, we get more open, more cosmopolitan, more secular, more tolerant. But then you also pointed out maybe that's not the case and maybe it's not the case in this particular time period. So I was just wondering, you know, are we seeing the end of progress in that sense of the word?

MR. LUCE: I doubt it. I mean, it depends how you define short term and long term. I share Jill and David's pessimism about the short term. You know, just today I saw John McCain issued a statement or answered a question about whether he would filibuster any Hillary Clinton Supreme Court nominee and he said everybody will, they'll filibuster anybody. I thought, well, McCain is about the closest friend she's got the other side of the aisle.

And the gerrymandering point, you know, it's hard to imagine there will be such an earthquake of state elections between now and the next Census in 2020 that

we're going to get a complete redistricting, a complete change of the districts we have now. So the short term I'm pretty pessimistic.

In the long term, look, I think that demographically, you know, America, if you look at under-eighties I think now, a majority of under-eighties are non-white. I think, you know, that'll be under-18s within a few years, a majority by 2041, '42. Whites will be just another minority. It'll be a majority minority nation.

And at some point the Republican Party, if it continues on its present course, will lose its veto power. What happened to it in California will happen to it federally. And in California, unfortunately, the Republican Party didn't take the market signals as it were from the electorate. Prop 187, the backlash against them, it became an increasingly white party. They didn't respond demographically to the rise of Hispanics, Asian Americans, and others. You had a couple sort of exceptions that prove the rule, like Schwarzenegger, but basically the party retreated, circled its wagons, and eventually now is at a point where it doesn't have the veto power it once had in Sacramento.

So, you know, if you assume the federal Republican Party's going to act no differently, the national Republican Party's going to act no differently, then this could take another 10, 15 years to play out. Hopefully, it will respond to market signals, as it were, and take the advice it gave itself, the Reince Priebus report, in 2012, which is we need to reach out to new ethnic groups, we need to embrace immigration, we need to talk in relevant terms to millennials, and so on.

Hopefully, you know, the second time around with what I imagine will be a pretty clear Trump defeat, hopefully that will start to sink in. But I have to say I'm not very optimistic it will happen quickly.

MR. WEST: Jill, are you an optimist or a pessimist?

MS. LAWRENCE: Well, when you look at the split in the Republican Party, it seems irreconcilable. And so if the Trump Republicans are in one corner and the Paul Ryan Republicans are in the other, that's not a majority party. That's not even, you know -- I mean, that's a tiny slice of America.

There are voices in the Republican Party who have long been saying that their policies ought to be more relevant to working people, that they ought not be so solicitous of the wealthy, you know, that they ought to reach out to minorities. But these people, you know, they haven't been heeded, they haven't been listened to, even people like Paul Ryan. You know, the policies are all very straight, conservative, straight from the Ronald Reagan era.

I mean, one of the things that really is a challenge is for them to get past Ronald Reagan and his policies, you know, which were put into place at a time when taxes were much higher than they are now and Reagan was much more open to compromise than Republicans are now. I mean, I know that all of you probably know this, but it doesn't matter how much it's recognized, it never gets recognized among the leaders of the Republican Party.

I mean, that to me -- to me this whole hold on Merrick Garland is emblematic of the worst. It's kind of like my view from where I'm coming from is do they think that they're entitled to a conservative Supreme Court forever and ever? I mean, how many years have Democratic presidents held the office for the last 20 years and we still haven't gotten a 5-4 liberal majority? And now to hear that they're going to be filibustering and the Supreme Court is really ground zero of all of this, and it's because people don't trust in their leaders.

MR. WEST: David?

MR. CORN: Well, I would flip the telescope around. I don't disagree

with any of this, and say that the problem, of course, is not Donald Trump. The problem is that there are 40- or 50 million Americans that are going to be voting for him. And some of them are just doing that because they're automatic Republicans. They'll vote for any Republican. But a lot of them are voting for him as their champion. I don't know how many that is, whether it's 20- or 30 million, but it's a lot.

And if you poll Republicans, you get majority support for the proposition that Obama was not born here. You get a majority saying that Obama's a Muslim, not a Christian. And, of course, you have a majority of Republicans saying that climate change is not real.

So, you know, I suggested doing something with gerrymandering, you know, reforming filibusters, getting Republican leaders to listen to Reince Priebus' autopsy report from 2012. These are all fine things to talk about and advocate, particularly at a place like this.

But to me the real issue is what about these millions and millions of Americans who actually believe what Trump says? When they see him, they don't see a con man. They see a champion. And he's getting to be increasingly -- you know, I've only started using this word in this last week -- fascistic in talking about an international banking conspiracy, saying everything but the word "Jewish" when he says that. And, you know, his people are not running away from that.

So, you know, if you have a large block of people in America who adhere to these beliefs and they make up maybe a majority of the Republican Party -- they certainly do at the moment; I don't know after the election -- but if they're 40 percent, 30 percent of the Republican Party, how do you address that? Are they going to start thinking differently about climate change or about legitimate leadership that's not from their own party or not from their own race? That to me is the fundamental problem here.

And I wish, you know, there was a way to respond to that, but particularly when we live in a society where media consumption is sort of niche-ified into lanes. We all absorb what reinforces our prevailing biases and assumptions. I don't think the addition of Trump TV to the media landscape is going to help that at all except to give Fox viewers another, more conservative alternative.

MR. WEST: Okay, let me ask one last question and then we'll open the floor to questions from the audience. And this is to ask each of you to put on your reform hat. How do we put the pieces back together after this election? Or an alternative version is what the hell do we do about this situation? (Laughter) Is there anything we can do?

MR. LUCE: Look, I have to say that the prospect of the Democrats taking back the Senate with a Hillary victory, but not the House, Ryan dealing with a smaller majority in which the Freedom Caucus takes up a larger share is not a very propitious scenario for him to be what I imagine I think he is, and somebody described him the other day, the Midwestern transactional kind of -- you know, he's not a show horse. He is a workhorse and Hillary is a workhorse, too.

So, you know, I have no doubt that if Ryan and Hillary could make the politics work for them, they would do a big tax deal with infrastructure spending and repatriation of overseas profits. That would provide a great demonstration effect, a stimulative demonstration effect, that Washington could work.

I find that hard to believe, but let's just assume it is a wave election and that the House goes, too, and so, you know, you do have a unified government. She's promised immigration reform within the first 100 days. I do think it's necessary to get that done. I think it will raise the temperature acutely in the short term, but I think it's a very, very important message to send to the American labor markets and the world that

America is still America.

I think that a Marshall Plan for the middle class of training and upgrading, not just infrastructure bills, but stuff that will get America out of this productivity crisis, productivity has been slow and declining for many, many years now. Ultimately, if you've got low productivity, you're not going to have high growth, you're not going to have broad-based growth. You're not going to fix the problem that is afflicting Trump supporters and working-class Hillary supporters. So a Marshall Plan for the middle class.

And I do think that a massive tax reform, a simplification of the system, an ending of this complexity, a purging of special interest loopholes is absolutely critical to America. This is a system, you know, it's full employment act for lawyers and accountants. That's how Washington works. It doesn't benefit anybody except those who've got the lobbying power to rewrite the rules.

And so will any of this happen? Probably not. (Laughter) But it would be great if -- it would be really quite transformative if half of it did.

MR. WEST: Have you thought about running for President here?
(Laughter) That was very articulate. Jill.

MS. LAWRENCE: Well, I agree with everything you said. In terms of the Marshall Plan, I think that if it were my presidency, I would do special ones for the coal country and for the Rust Belt just to show that we care and that we're going to devote special help.

One of the things I was thinking about when I came in is we do this asking our readers every day to respond to questions on Twitter, and yesterday it was what do you think of Donald Trump's suggestion that he and Hillary take a drug test before the next debate? And one person sent in this response that I thought was just brilliant. He said I'd like Donald Trump to take a civics test and Hillary Clinton to take a

lie detector test. (Laughter)

But I thought of that because, you know, just to go a little bit sort of backwards into time when people were in school, you know, civics is a subject that could help us if it was every year, every grade, every school, just really drill in, you know, the history of our country and the responsibilities of citizenship in our country. And, you know, Donald Trump really is kind of an example of people not knowing very much what that is. I mean, he doesn't know the Constitution. He doesn't seem to know much about how to pass a bill or what the powers of the presidency are and are not. So that's one idea that, you know, I think some states are actually requiring that now and there is a movement to include it more in this curriculum. And I think it could be a useful starting point.

The other thing I wonder about is sort of on a global scale. When Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State she really brought women into the mix in terms of making policy and how does this policy impact women? And she was, of course, constrained by American foreign policy and the allies that we need in our strategic interests and things like that. But, you know, as the policy-setter, I wonder whether she would consider realigning some of this and at least offering incentives because the women who are oppressed in the Arab world and other places around the globe, I mean, it could make a huge difference if progress were made with this area. So she'd be the person to do it. I think that could be a real legacy if she did it. There's all kinds of research showing that when women advance and participate in politics and education and the workforce, things improve immensely, so that's one thing.

I mean, on the downside, I think it's going to take until after Hillary Clinton before we get past some of our polarization because she's such a reminder of the polarized '90s.

MR. WEST: David, what do you think we should do to put things back together?

MR. CORN: Well, I like Ed's, you know, presidential wish list. And to that I would add, you know, a green energy initiative and in deference to my colleague immediately to my left I would say I'm happy to focus some of that funding in coal country and the Rust Belt. So I think we can come up with a lot of, you know, decent policies.

I think fundamentally, assuming that Hillary Clinton wins the presidency and that the Democrats tie or take over the Senate, that Paul Ryan, whether the House is controlled by the Democrats or not, has to make a decision whether he is going to work within the system or side with the Trumpians who will claim the system is illegitimate and that Hillary Clinton should be impeached. I'm not being hyperbolic here. But if you believe she should be locked up and she's in the White House, you know, your only choice really is impeachment because she's not appointing a special prosecutor to throw her in jail and water board her. So that's a really big decision that has to be made.

And I think at some point in time, as a progressive it may be odd for me to say this, but that the business community has to come along and lean on the party that it has given more money to, the Republicans, and say grow up. We need a functioning government. We can't have debt ceiling crises again. We need to get back to where it used to be. The Republicans and Democrats could talk about transportation bills, infrastructure issues. If they can't agree on taxation or social issues, there are certain types of government economic initiatives they could agree on.

And I think the business community, which is certainly not embracing Trump, is going to have to lean on the party that it pays money to, to make a hard decision after the election. And I think in a lot of ways, and you mentioned demographics earlier, it may take a decade or two for some of the fever of the right to burn out. That's

because people are going to die or become too old to, you know, go to gun rallies, and we may have to sort of get by. And I agree with you, too, that Hillary Clinton may not be the transformational President to move to the next period, but we may have to sort of get by the best we can for the next four or eight years, particularly at a time when I don't think any President of either side is going to be able to satisfy a majority of the Americans because the problems are so big and our ways of addressing them are really not adequate to task.

MR. WEST: Okay, let's open the floor to questions. There's a question right here, that gentleman next to the wall. And if you could give us your name and organization.

MR. PREVAJENSKI: Hi. My name's Dmitri Prevajenksi (phonetic). I don't have an affiliation. Thank you very much for a great discussion. I have two questions.

The first one is you talked about the winner-take-all politics. I was wondering if you could give a couple examples and if think some of the issues are avoidable and some of them are unavoidable.

And the second question is about the role of global governance in all this. For example, maybe could a more effective United Nation bring more stability and certainty? We've been talking about a domestic level, maybe on a global level. Thank you.

MR. WEST: Okay, great questions. So on the winner take all, basically I'm talking about the distribution of benefits. So when you look at a lot of policy areas, whether you're talking about education, health care, taxation, or whatever, our policies have been skewed in a direction that often has benefited a small number as opposed to the larger number. And so a lot of the public discontent that we're seeing is because

people are not doing well. The people of average means have not seen an increase in their wages for 30 years now. And so to remedy that, we really need to kind of go through policy area by policy area and just think about ways to adopt policies that help more people because that currently is not the case.

On the global governance question, there clearly is a huge problem there. The United Nations is not very functional, so I would not necessarily call for empowering it because it's hard to know what good would come out of that. But I do make the argument in the book that, you know, after World War II, our country and the world as a whole faced massive challenges.

We did, at that point, create new institutions, including global governance institutions, which then kind of helped with the original Marshall Plan, helped to rebuild areas that had been devastated by the war. And so in the current period we do need to address not only our own domestic things, but think about some of these institutions that actually are necessary in order to address the questions people have about trade, globalization, and so on.

Right here in the front row.

MR. CHECCO: Thank you very much. Larry Checco, Accountability Central. Great conversation and I really liked what Jill had to say about Republicans having to get beyond Ronald Reagan. And trickle down was his signature program, and to Darrell's point, it never worked for 30 years. It's just trickle down misery.

But my point is I don't care about the Republicans. I don't care about the Democrats as an Independent. But I do care about this republic and how much damage has this presidential cycle done to not only the internal concept of the republic, but how the world envisions us.

MR. WEST: Good question. Panelists?

MR. LUCE: I'll give a quick two-pence-worth about how the rest of the world sees this. The last few years we have seen, and this keys a little bit into the governance question, the last few years have seen a shift away from American power. I don't think it's because Obama is weak or feckless. I think there is a relative decline of the U.S. as a share of the global economy naturally, inevitably, as others rise and China, you know, overtook in PPP terms the size of the U.S. economy and others are rising.

And I think that in the absence of reform of the global governance institutions -- like the U.N., World Bank, which is, of course, in the gift it's always an American head, always a European head of IMF -- in the absence of reform China is creating alternative institutions. It might well happen with trade, too, if TPP doesn't pass, and I suspect it's not going to pass.

So we've got already in the context of this election, before this election, a shifting of polls, a tectonic plate shifting East. And that's not necessarily a bad thing. It's an inevitable thing in an American Pax Americana, the people are benefiting from a global economy and growing and growing faster than America.

Unfortunately, the timing of American politics going really haywire, and we've seen it build up since Newt Gingrich, but it's really sort of reached an apogee this cycle, unfortunately the timing does coincide with the rise of powers -- China amongst them, but Russia's resurgence is there, too -- that wish to see a discrediting of the democratic model. And they could have received no better gift than the extraordinary success of Donald Trump. I mean, it's not just ISIS videos. It's anybody wishing to cast doubt on the integrity and the institutional strength of Western democracy in general and the American republic in particular has been given a gift that I don't even think Trump's sort of comprehensive defeat is going to dispel. So I do worry that we are in a period where our model itself is under the spotlight.

MR. WEST: Jill or David?

MR. LUCE: The long run. The long run.

MR. CHECCO: Very honest and I agree with you.

MR. CORN: Well, I think he's dead on and I think it's done tremendous harm domestically to our own national political discourse and what we think is acceptable discourse. Regardless what happens come Election Day, you know, Donald Trump's style of politics has been accepted by almost everyone in his party, even the people he calls cowards, like John McCain, end up accepting him. Mitt Romney, who embraced him in 2012, when he was in the middle of his birther crusade, you know, now speaks out against him, but legitimized Trump and his politics. And Marco Rubio, who called him a con man, Rick Perry, who said he was a cancer on the conservative movement and dangerous, they've all come around to say he's perfectly acceptable and more acceptable than Hillary Clinton for whatever reason.

And I think this sort of normalization of a type of campaigning that is based on nothing except the most hollow of promises and bullying and insults, you know, is going to be hard to escape from. I believe there are going to be other politicians out there who are going to look at Trump and see how far he got and say, huh, I can do it better. If I was smoother, if I wasn't as abrasive, if I listened to maybe one or two other people, I can take this type of politics and go further with it.

So I believe we've kind of smashed a barrier here. And as a progressive it's easy for me to say it is almost entirely the fault of the Republican Party and I could blame a little bit of the media, as well, in how they've covered Trump. But ultimately, the party embraced him and I think that is something that's not going to just sort of disappear.

Often when a nominee loses, a party turns its back and the person becomes persona non grata. You may not even see them the next convention. I think

what Trump has accomplished here is going to live on longer than the legacy of most defeated candidates.

MS. LAWRENCE: Could I be a voice of Pollyanna here for just a moment? I mean, the Trump nomination was the accumulation of so many individual weird decisions, like the decision of the Jeb Bush super PAC to go after not Trump, but somebody else with \$100 million. You know, if the opposition research that is coming out now had come out in the primaries, if there had been a strong chairman who understood the dangers and started talking to people and trying to force him out of the race, so you didn't have 17, 16, 15, 14 people in this race, you know, there were more people who wanted someone else, at least at first.

And I don't think that the leaders of this party have embraced Donald Trump. I think they cannot wait until this election's over so they can ditch him and, hopefully, move on to a more responsible nominee next time. You know, I just don't think they're going to leave things to chance.

And I don't think that -- I think people who are, you know, polling 15th, 16th, and 17th are going to get out and people who are polling 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 are going to get out because it's not -- I mean, this time around it was kind of like, well, we all have, what, 8 percent, so any of us could get it, so let's all stay in. I mean, it was just a real miscalculation on their part and this is what happened. But they see that his ceiling in a national election is 40 percent or lower and, you know, it's just not a winning situation.

So I think that the party and the media, for that matter, have learned valuable lessons. I mean, I did see something about CNN being sorry that it showed all those Trump rallies in full, and, you know, they should be. This is partly how it happened.

MR. LUCE: Are they going to fire Lewandowski? When they fire him, I'll

believe it.

MS. LAWRENCE: He's double-dipping.

MR. WEST: But the irony is Republicans actually for the next cycle may create this category of superdelegates, which Democrats already have, because, you know, that's what helped Hillary Clinton fight off Sanders and that could help a more establishment-favored Republican in 2020 fight off a challenger like a Trump.

This gentleman here on the aisle with his hand up. Yeah, right there.

SPEAKER: Yes, I'd like to revisit the point that you raised in your initial comments concerning historical context. What are the analogies that you think most relevant for us? What lessons should we learn from them? You mentioned one, namely the post-World War II order and the need to create an international global order, but I'm sure that's not the only one.

MR. WEST: I think when you look at past periods of megachange in the U.S. context, the two that come to mind for me are the 1850s and 1860s when we were dealing with slavery and, unfortunately, that took a civil war to resolve; and then the 1930s kind of -- well, the 1910 and 1920s and 1930s response to both the Great Depression on the one hand and inequality on the other. There the resolution was more peaceful in nature and there were farsighted leaders who basically understood that there is this societal and economic transformation that was taking place and that we needed new policies to address them.

So that is the approach that I would prefer in the sense that when we look back historically we find peaceful means to resolve these things through policy action because all of these things are issues that we can address because we've addressed them in the past. We've deal with inequality. We've had periods where racial tensions were not as high as they seem to be right now. So there are things that we can

do. That's the reason I am an optimist in the long run even though there's plenty of grounds for pessimism in the short run.

This gentleman right here on the aisle.

MR. GOLASH: My name's Mike Golash. I'm with the Amalgamated Transit Union. It seems that in the '30s we were able to work our policy matters which, at the end of the day, the compromise everybody more or less agreed with: Social Security reform, Fair Labor Standards Act, all these things. Today the problem seems to be we've reached these compromises and no one agrees or no one thinks that the compromise is really worthwhile and, therefore, I'm mad at the Republicans, I'm mad at the Democrats. And how do we address that issue?

MR. WEST: But I think when you say nobody agrees, I would dispute that by saying the problem we face now is we have imposed supermajority requirements on our political system. And when we don't reach that 60 percent threshold, then we're not able to do anything and then the government fails and people are disappointed that the government cannot address things. It's the reason why we need to get back to majority rule.

Now, I understand there are problems with majority. Sometimes majorities do trample minority rights. But in this particular situation there are lots of policies that actually would have passed if the threshold was 50 votes out of 100 as opposed to 60.

Right there is a question.

SPEAKER: Hi. My name is Steven (phonetic). I'm from the Maryland General Assembly. I work as a legislative fellow there. And my question is, well, for example, Maryland is dealing with its first divided government in a while. We have a Republican governor, Democratic legislature. And just in this previous three-month

session we passed a major judicial reinvestment initiative, a police reform, pesticide bans, and, of course, equal pay for equal work.

And before I did this I completed an internship on Capitol Hill and I know one major difference is for Maryland General Assembly bills, each bill can only do one thing essentially. So, for example, we can't add an amendment limiting abortion funds on a Zika bill.

So my question is if Capitol Hill followed this example, do you think it would increase their productivity at all? And if that productivity is increased, do you think it would help our political situation?

MR. WEST: Any of our panelists?

MR. LUCE: I'll make a quick point. I mean, where you have a Republican governor and a Democratic assembly or a Republican President and a Democratic Capitol Hill, stuff seems to happen. I mean, David mentioned, Norm Ornstein and Tom Mann's book, asymmetric polarization is occurring. And so I think if Romney had won and there'd been a Democratic Hill, we might have had a relatively productive last four years on Capitol Hill.

Would love to have all the reforms you mentioned. I just can't imagine a scenario any time soon where they're going to happen federally.

MR. WEST: Jill?

MS. LAWRENCE: Well, there is a theory and it seems to actually work that the bigger a bill is, the easier it is to get a deal because so many people can get what they want. So I'm not sure how that would work on Capitol Hill, what you're talking about in Annapolis, but, I mean, we have a lot of examples where, you know, huge things happen because there's 200 people on the Hill who get something they really have wanted and they're willing to trade away for it.

MR. WEST: Okay. We have time for one last question. We have a question here in the front row.

MS. MAZYED: Marla Mazyed (phonetic), University of Washington. I'm also covering the U.S. elections for an Egyptian newspaper. So I do have a question about the cultural element that you mentioned about the phenomenon of Trump.

I would like you to reflect a little bit also about the cultural element in relation to the connotation of Hillary Clinton in terms of a generational aspect. You talked about her as a baby boomer who is making it, who's advancing. And in the circumstance you're describing where security and jobs is not necessarily the default, where the younger generation don't feel that they can make it along the way, do you think that there is actual more of a disconnect than it's been covered so far? And especially when it comes to people advocating kind of going to write your own name or pick someone else, just not as a resistance to just choosing her over the other phenomena. So how much of that do you see is actually playing against also the Trump phenomena?

MS. LAWRENCE: Are you asking me? I mean, it's not her age because we can see with the Bernie Sanders phenomenon that, you know, it's kind of more than whole gestalt of are you calling for a revolution or are you calling to work within the system? And she's just had such a long history. Bernie Sanders has a very long history, but no one has really known about him until now.

So she's representative of a lot of things that people don't like and she's kind of representative of your mom. And I can say this because I am a mom. You know, she's a responsible adult and she's, let's face it, not exciting, although I've actually seen that -- you know, I've seen people talk about how that's actually a good thing in a time like this, particularly if you're going to working in partnership with senators and Paul Ryan.

But, I mean, you know, she -- and her daughter is no longer 22. I mean, she just doesn't really have very many connections to the age group that got really excited about, say, Bernie Sanders or who's considering voting for Gary Johnson at this point. So I think that's part of it and the fact that she's been on the national scene for so long.

But, you know, ultimately, I guess I would say I have confidence in people to figure out what they do and don't want and there's only one way to get it.

MR. WEST: Well, on that optimistic note, we will conclude. (Laughter)
And I want to thank Ed, Jill, and David for sharing their thoughts. Thank you very much.
(Applause)

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