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ORDER FROM CHAOS:
BUILDING "SITUATIONS OF STRENGTH"

A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY FOR THE UNITED STATES

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. TALBOTT: Good morning, everybody. I'm Strobe Talbott, and I want to welcome you and thank you all for coming to today's discussion of a brand new report sponsored by the Brookings Institution.

Launches of this kind are fairly common in this auditorium, but the report we are featuring today is quite special and particularly timely. It lays out a consensus that has emerged from a year and a half of brain storming on how the new administration can reverse the deterioration of the post-World War II American-led world order, and how also to deal with rising crisis around the world.

A word about the authors of the book, that is the brainstormers themselves. They are not just experts in foreign policy. A number of them are practitioners who have served in high posts in government, in both Republican and Democratic administrations. That goes for our panelists today - Derek Chollet, Eric Edelman, Michèle Flournoy, Steve Hadley, Kristen Silverberg, and Jake Sullivan.

The idea for this project came back in 2015 from four of my colleagues here at Brookings, our Executive Vice President Martin Indyk, Bruce Jones, Bob Kagan, and Tom Wright from our Foreign Policy program.

Tom will give you a quick overview on the findings of the report, and then Jeff Goldberg of The Atlantic will moderate the discussion. Jeff, double thanks to you, both for your participation today and also running Uri Friedman's article on the report in your latest issue.

With that, let's plunge into the substance and the recommendations of the report itself. Over to you, Tom.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you very much, Strobe. I think you all have copies of the report. It is 63 pages long with 37 footnotes, so I don't intend to walk through it line by line, nor do I intend to talk through the executive summary line by line because I think that is six or eight pages long.

What I'd like to do is talk you through a little bit of the logic of the report, of our discussions, over the last 18 months or so. We hope that this report provides a bipartisan blueprint for the Trump administration as it crafts its national security strategy, and we hope that this report contributes to the conversation within the administration as they debate different models of U.S. strategy and foreign policy.

The Trump administration has been pretty clear that it wants to put America's interest first, and our overarching message is that is best accomplished through a renovation and revitalization of the international order that the United States created and led after World War II.

That order consists of security alliances, an open international economy, and support for democracy, human rights, and other values, as the cornerstone to the international order.

What I'd like to do is just talk you through sort of eight very brief points that try to sort of explain our logic and where we come at.

The first is when we started this project, about 15 to 16 months ago, we were brought together out of a shared conviction that something fundamental was happening in the world that necessitated a rethink of U.S. foreign policy, and our primary takeaway is that of all of the different challenges and threats and issues. The most important development is the return of interstate competition, major state competition, particularly with Russia and China in East Asia and Europe, but also within the Middle East that we see that play out after the failure of the Arab awakening, and this creates a very changed context from the 20 years after the end of the Soviet Union.

This is not the only thing that is going on in the world. It's not sort of a comprehensive answer to U.S. foreign policy that needs to address all of the other sort of threats and challenges, too, particularly ISIS, terrorism, climate change, but that great power competition creates a different context, and really we need to grapple with, and that the 45th president, whoever they turned out to be, would need to address, because it challenges some key assumptions of U.S. foreign policy after the Cold War.

The second point is we also recognize that there was growing domestic dissatisfaction with the international order, with America's global role; and that these concerns were not imagined, that they were real and they were based on reality, that there was legitimate question marks around U.S. foreign policy, particularly because of the ambiguity about what is America's purpose now that the Soviet Union has gone away. Why is the United States engaged in protracted and difficult conflicts that don't seem to come to a successful resolution?

Perhaps most importantly of all, the international financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, which for many people destroyed sort of the value proposition of internationalism, the notion that the international economy would work to their benefit, would work in favor of prosperity and economic growth.

So, those questions are real, and those are ones, I think, that we have to address, and we tried to address in the report, the future of internationalism or the future of support for the international order must take those onboard.

The third point is as we sort of contemplated that return of great power politics and a more contested international environment with persistent terrorism and other threats, and as we looked at the declining sort of support or increasing nationalism both in the U.S. and around the world, and as we look to sort of what the foreign policy choices are, the question wasn't just about specific policies. It was also about what type of world do we want to create, what type of international order do we seek.

We concluded that there are essentially two different models. The first is some continuation of the postwar order, albeit reformed and renovated as we lay out. The second is a spheres of influence order in which China is much more preeminent in East Asia, has much more control of the regional order there, and in which Russia enjoys preeminence in Eastern Europe, where the global economy is more Balkanized and more mercantilist in orientation and less open, less universal, and where the world is more contested and more nationalistic.

Those are, I think, the two different types of international order that we could have, and which one occurs depends on the foreign policy choices that are made. So, a certain set of policies you might select for the first and others for the second.

Both have benefits, actually, and both have disadvantages. We need to recognize that not all good things go together. There is a price tag for each. The question really is which price tag are we willing to pay, which type of future do we want to create.

The fourth point is as we looked at that choice, our view very strongly was that the United States continue to support the postwar international order, that that is a preferable outcome over sort of a spheres of influence, more sort of 19th century approach.

The reasons for that were several. The first is that the spheres of influence order -- actually, any order that is based on spheres of influence is inherently unstable, largely because the lines of demarcation are blurred, and the transition from what we have now to that model is likely to be extremely fraught and extremely difficult.

There is simply no roadmap for how that could be accomplished in a stable way, and that

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the levels of cooperation that we see and the economic growth that we see around the world - low as it is - all of that will be detrimentally impacted by an erosion or an unraveling of the postwar order.

So, all of these questions need to be looked at relatively. It's not just the international order, good or bad, but it is relative to the alternatives. We believe that it continues to offer strong benefits and particularly relative to the alternative.

The fifth point is as we sort of look at how to renovate that order and how to support that order, the question is why should the U.S. have to do all of this. How do you sort of think about American interests?

We sort of argue that we need to look at specifically what is likely to happen, not just what we think should happen. Of course, everyone should agree that if the U.S. did less, other countries should step up; but do we expect they will, or do we expect there will be an erosion. As we look at sort of the challenges to the order, what are those systemic challenges, and what are sort of not systemic, that can be specific problems that seem small and marginal, like the rise of ISIS initially, that actually turn out to be quite systemic and quite important.

It is not enough just to distinguish between core and peripheral interests. We need to take a more sort of holistic approach of understanding the threats to that U.S.-led international order.

The sixth point is our strategy, and the title of the report, which is "Situations of Strength" - Building "Situations of Strength." It is a quote by Dean Acheson from 1947, where he was trying to explain that the United States should work with like-minded countries to try to build healthy regional orders. It was only at that point after those situations of strength had been established that the U.S. could deal with adversaries and negotiate from a stronger position than maybe otherwise it would have been the case had it started out by negotiating with the Soviet Union.

We believe that provides for a good template for today - that the Trump administration should focus on building U.S. positions of strength with like-minded countries: on the security front, to deter revisionism, and to push back in East Asia, in Eastern Europe; to try to play a constructive role in building a positive equilibrium in the Middle East that transcends maybe just narrow notions of U.S. interest; and also on the economic front, that I will come back to.

The penultimate point in terms of where we come out in the report is one of the very

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significant questions is if the U.S. is sort of engaged in a more geopolitically competitive world, how do you do so in a way that doesn't create a spiral of tensions, how do you do so in a way that does preserve stability but also advance U.S. interest.

We say very clearly we need to recognize that there are certain occasions where the U.S. may disagree with other powers, but those disagreements are legitimate, and the U.S. should try to constructively engage and accommodate them in some way - and on other occasions where the U.S. should push back.

The line we draw is that when a rival power tries to change territorial borders or fundamental principles of the international order with force or coercion, the U.S. should be uncompromising or push back quite strongly. Not in a tit for tat way on every single problem, but by trying to change the overall strategic situations so those endeavors fail and the international order is reinforced.

On those occasions where other countries advance interests that may be opposed to U.S. interests but they do so in legitimate ways and through legitimate avenues, the U.S. should be more accommodating and more constructive. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the One Belt, One Road are sort of examples that we cite here.

Finally, we place a great emphasis on economic power and on the role of economic power in U.S. national security strategy. We believe there is a lot that can be done here, and the threat of a financial crisis is always on the horizon.

The Trump administration needs to be prepared to have a cooperative international approach to respond to that; needs to recognize a strong national economy, which is a priority of the president requires a healthy global economy; and then for all of the issues that President Trump has with the international economic order, with China or others, it makes sense to work with like-minded countries to address those problems. Whether it is Chinese state owned enterprises, or various distortions of the market, or race to the bottom, that there are ways to work with European countries, to work with allies in Asia to try to build situations of strength and negotiate collectively with China and others.

So, that is sort of a broad outline of where we come out. There are many specific recommendations in the report. I hope you all get a chance to read it, and with that, I will turn it over to Jeff who will lead a panel discussion. Thank you very much. (Applause)

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MR. GOLDBERG: Thank you. Thanks very much. Thanks, Tom, very much for that presentation. Strobe, for having us. Derek, Eric, and Jake, for being here. Sounds like a boy band. (Laughter) Thank you to our panelists who are all esteemed in this field.

I want to welcome you to the first live taping of Revenge of the Blob. (Laughter) Which is going to be a huge hit on Netflix, I think.

I want to jump right in with sort of the most obvious question of all. I've read this report. It reads like a repudiation of the Trump world view, particularly as refracted through the prism of Steve Bannon's world view.

So, what makes you think they would do any of this in the coming four years? Maybe I can start with Steve and then work our way (Laughter) leftish.

MR. HADLEY: I don't think and we hope that it is not viewed as a repudiation. We would like to see it as an invitation to a conversation with the administration, between Republicans and Democrats, between the president and Congress. Quite frankly, a conversation within the American people about what is the best approach for securing our interests in the world, because we all agree U.S. foreign policy should be about advancing U.S. interests in the world. That is what President Trump says. That's what I think we would all agree on.

We think that part of the framework for advancing American interests is an international order, and we have had one for the last 70 years. The opportunity for the Bush administration -- sorry (Laughter). Old habits die hard.

The opportunity for the Trump administration is to pick up the challenge of adapting and revising and renovating that international order in a way that addresses the concerns that President Trump has articulated, that our allies are not doing enough, that our trade arrangements were advantageous to our trading partners and not to us.

So, what we think this can be and what we hope it is is an invitation for a conversation about how to adapt and revise and revitalize that international order so it can better achieve and advance American interests, and do it in a framework that also has the benefit, as the order has for the last 70 years, of bringing unprecedented peace and prosperity to the globe. That's what we hope will happen.

MR. GOLDBERG: Kristen, whether or not they are predisposed to agree with this

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ideologically, do you think that reality at a certain point intervenes, and they realize the benefit of renovating this order rather than tearing it down?

MS. SILVERBERG: I think there are some strains in Trump's worldview that have been remarkably consistent over 30 years. One of which, by the way, is disdain for the foreign policy establishment. He gave a series of interviews in the 1980s and 1990s calling attention to the stupidity of our foreign policy as the Berlin Wall was collapsing or following when the Soviet Union was collapsing. The other thing that jumps out from those interviews is questioning the value of the global trading system and of our alliances. At the time, his sort of target was Japan rather than China, but the language is very consistent from what we saw in the inaugural address.

Is President Trump likely to embrace every last word of the report? No. I do think there are some things that are up for grabs, and there are variations on the theme; so there is a version of sort of his economic nationalism that is quite manageable. He's a little tougher on enforcement actions, and actually a lot of us would welcome that. He reopened some of our trade agreements, NAFTA, for example.

Then there is a version that is actually quite difficult where you see the U.S. pulling out of the WTO, launching sort of trade wars. Our sense is these things are up for debate in the administration. There is a kind of hodge-podge of ideologies in the administration. There certainly is going to be a debate with Congress, and we would like to have a broader debate with the American people as well.

MR. GOLDBERG: Michèle, do you think there is a possibility of having a broader debate with the American people? The American people seem to be hard to generalize – 330 million people but they seem to be either uninterested or adopting to some degree to the level of frustration with the current international order, especially on economic issues, and certainly on free rider issues that Trump articulates. Do you think there is a possibility this is going to be an open question? And then you can obviously grapple with... [gestures to other panelists].

MS. FLOURNOY: I don't think the American people are disinterested. I think they are increasingly dissatisfied and disturbed. I think they have expected -- you know, globalization was originally painted as a universally good thing, and it has had many benefits for all of us, but it has also had some downsides. It has created dislocation in certain sectors of the economy and so forth.

There is also a sort of aging of the knowledge, the sort of understanding of the post-World War II institutions that the United States architected and the benefits to us of the United Nations and the WTO and NATO, and all of these things.

I mean the folks that lived through that and appreciated the value and the ways in which those institutions sort of embodied American values and interests, there is a whole new education process that has to be undertaken, and many of these institutions need to be adapted and reinvigorated to meet new realities.

I wanted to just touch on your first question, which is I do think that when a president is actually in the Oval Office and comes into the situation room having to deal with a global crisis, one of the first things that he or she will realize is no matter how powerful America is, it's very difficult to deal with these crises alone, that we really need our allies and partners.

So, this notion of investing in situations of strength, working with our regional allies and partners to create the conditions from which we can deal with these bigger challenges is really, really critical. And just as an issue of pragmatism, in dealing with the realities this administration is going to confront, I think they are going to at least in practice -- they may not call it this -- but in practice, they are going to come around to some of what is recommended here.

MR. GOLDBERG: Are you under the impression that he has the disposition or personality to approach allies in a humble fashion to ask for their assistance?

MS. FLOURNOY: Not framed that way, but I think (Laughter) --

MR. GOLDBERG: I'll give you a chance, Steve. You will get your chance.

MS. FLOURNOY: I think if you look at the range of people who have been appointed to very senior, and we hope, influential positions over time, these are people with deep experience in the value of practical, real world value of working with our allies and investing in those relationships.

So, I think he will be advised, and I think hopefully over time he will come to appreciate that. Already, the tone about NATO, for example, during the campaign, and the tone we just heard in Munich, and at the G20, and at NATO, has changed substantially. So, we will see.

MR. GOLDBERG: Before I go to Martin and before I go to Steve to allow him to throw more shade in my direction, I just want to announce that when Michèle gets up in 45 minutes to leave, it's

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not because she's repudiating the foreign policy establishment. She has another appointment. Although it may be because she's also repudiating the foreign policy establishment.

MS. FLOURNOY: I'll try to look as disgusted as I can.

MR. GOLDBERG: Yes, storm out of here. Steve, you want to respond to that at all. I would note that at the G20 in Munich, et cetera, it was not Donald Trump who was making these reassuring statements. It was people a lot of us already know who come from what you might call "the establishment" or have come up in traditional ways to these positions of power.

MR. HADLEY: Well, I think Michèle is right, the tone has changed, and the tone has changed in terms of also President Trump. I mean a lot of skepticism about the EU. Yesterday he said the EU is a great thing if the Europeans want it. So, I think there has been a change.

John McCain said it was one of the most impressive national security teams he has seen; but they are people, some of whom have come from outside the process, and I think it speaks well for President Trump that he has selected as cabinet officials people who have independent stature, and who are people who will speak truth to power, and it speaks well for him that's who he wanted to surround himself by.

We are five weeks into this administration, and it is an administration that barely filled all the cabinet positions, and all the positions next level down, foreign policy, national security, are empty. There is a void out there, and a lot of things are going to go around.

What I say to people is we need some strategic patience here. This is an insurgent movement that captured the presidency. It means there is going to be a lot more turmoil and dislocations in foreign policy, and it's going to take them time to get their people in place, to get their processes in place, so that these cabinet secretaries begin to participate in the discussions that are going on in the White House, until they get their policies out.

So, I think it's going to be some months before we are really going to know what this administration looks like.

MR. GOLDBERG: Martin, do two things. One, respond to Steve and give us your assessment five weeks in of how they have organized their foreign policy and national security policy, and in the next half hour (Laughter) answer this question, which I don't think is an easy question - did the

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foreign policy establishment fail over the last 4, 8, 12, 16 years to explain to the American people the value of international alliances, the value of multilateral trade agreements? How did we get here? I'll give that question to the rest of you in a second. Martin, if you could do these two things to start.

MR. INDYK: Well, I think Steve's use of the words "strategic patience" indicates something, that it's all very much in play and in flux. It's also highly contested within the administration. We clearly have in the White House, had until National Security Advisor [Michael] Flynn's departure, two ideologues, and now we have one ideologue, who have very clear views about the international order.

MR. GOLDBERG: You're assuming Donald Trump is not himself an ideologue on these issues?

MR. INDYK: I'll come to the president in a moment. I think it's important to understand that Steve Bannon makes no bones about it, he's very clear that he regards the international order as something that needs to be destroyed, deconstructed, that it has damaged the American people, disadvantaged them, and we need to basically go back to what America first means in his view, which is a narrowly focused idea of American interests that sees the international order as a problem rather than an advantage for American interests.

What we are saying in this report, as both Republicans and Democrats, is it's really a forthright attempt to say no, the international order serves the interests of the American people. The alternative is one that will be highly contentious, full of conflict, and very dangerous, and in the end, very bad for the American people.

I think there are now a preponderance of high level cabinet officials in the national security field who actually agree with us, and how it actually is going to play itself out, are we are going to discover every morning as we wake up the danger in this uncertainty.

There are other powers who don't share our interests in the international order who are stepping up very quickly. We heard it from Vladimir Putin's foreign minister at the Munich security conference. [Sergei] Lavrov talked about a different world order, one in which Russia and the United States would effectively divide up the wealth along with the other major power, China, into kind of spheres of influence.

Spheres of influence, if we go back to that kind of world, it is going to be full of conflict,

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and the weak powers, their interests are going to be subordinated, and the spheres of influence are going to be contested. It is going to be a highly conflictual world.

On the other hand, China is stepping in and saying if you don't want to lead the international order, we'll lead it. We will be in favor of a rules-based international order. We think that is a great idea, except it will be China's rules, not American rules, not liberal rules.

While we sort things out here, while the administration sorts out where it wants to go, and indeed, the president is going to have to decide ultimately, the international environment does not just stand still and wait.

We have to be conscious of that, and that's part of the reason why we have come out now and tried to make the case very strongly for this.

MR. GOLDBERG: Can you do the --

MR. INDYK: I tried to avoid that.

MR. GOLDBERG: I know you did. Try again. (Laughter) Why are we at this point? Where did the foreign policy establishment go wrong in its inability to convince the American people that the existing order with all its flaws was preferable to the rather dystopian vision that we all understand could be coming?

MR. INDYK: This U.S. led order has operated for seven decades. That's a very long time, even in the broad span of history. Inevitably, things started to go wrong in fairly dramatic important ways. The discontent with the international order started before Donald Trump even began his primary campaign.

There was a disillusionment on the part of the American people that I think was largely provoked by these two wrong, very expensive wars in the greater Middle East that seemed to have the opposite of the intended effect, and we had a collapse of the order in the Middle East.

So, I think the overall discontent starting with the way in which other powers like China would take advantage of trading arrangements at the expense of American workers, which was happening before Donald Trump came along and pointed it out, all of those factors.

If Hillary Clinton had been president, she would have taken a hard line -- Jake [Sullivan] may disagree with this -- I believe she would have taken a hard line on China's trading policies similar to

Donald Trump.

We're not saying that the international order was by any means perfect. What they are saying is it's better, much better for the American people than the alternative. It needs to be renovated, not torn down.

MR. GOLDBERG: Could you all deal with this question in turn? How do you convince people that this is worth saving, and what was the break point? Was it the two wars that sort of just sent this around the bend?

MS. SILVERBERG: At the origins of the order, so in the early post-war years, the case for it was very straightforward. We needed a system that would prevent conflict. On top of that, we are a major manufacturing power. We are producing a third of the world's goods, and we needed growing export markets.

In the sort of second phase of the order, the sort of post-Cold War phase, U.S. leadership was cheap, so we didn't have to have that debate with the American public. We have now entered the phase where U.S. leadership is expensive and costly, and where the case is less apparent.

I don't really disagree actually with the Trump administration who says basically we're getting less out of this than we used to. I think they have a perfectly reasonable case on that. We are not making the case that the current order is perfect or that it's cost free. We're making the case that it is much better than the alternative, we're making the sort of relative case. It's not clear to me that the American people are just responding to what has gone wrong, to sort of the Iraq War, in a sense, they are responding negatively to what went right.

So, the fact that we have growing emerging markets around the world and they are taking a larger share of the U.S. manufacturing base, that's part of what is leading to this sort of discontentment with, for example, global trading rules, but that actually was built into the design of the order from the beginning, that we wanted a growing global economy.

MR. HADLEY: I think actually Tom Wright said it correctly. I think the discontent is a function of three things. One, what really held the international order was the threat, the existential threat posed by the Soviet Union, and that is something people understood and rallied around.

When the Soviet Union went away, a lot of, I think, energy and stuffing went out for the

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defense of the liberal international order, then we had the protracted engagement in the Middle East, which continues despite our efforts, descend into chaos. Then you had the financial crisis. A very, very long, slow recovery, which we are still not out of. Those things together, I think, put the pressure on it. Look, the elite is very good at talking to itself. We're not so good about talking to normal Americans.

MR. GOLDBERG: Could you not insult our audience, please? They look very normal to me.

MR. HADLEY: I'm insulting myself. I know my limitations. That is what political leaders do. This debate is going to go on with the American people. It is going to have to be done by our political leadership. That is an opportunity for President Trump. I think it's also an opportunity, and I'm going to sound very old-fashioned here, for the Congress of the United States.

There have been times in my life, there have been times in history, when particularly the Senate of the United States has been the focus of a national debate. In the first half of the 19th century, the issue was slavery, and that issue got debated in the United States Senate.

During the Vietnam period, there was a national debate led by the Senate on Vietnam. I would love to see the Congress of the United States decide that it is going through a series of hearings and proceedings in the country to have a national debate about America's role in the world, and answer the question that Tom posed and Martin posed about which model is better for American interests.

It's time we had this debate, and finally, we need to start educating our young people. They don't teach civics any more in high school. I was at a meeting yesterday and someone said when you ask students who was president during World War II, the plurality was Ronald Reagan was president during World War II.

This is part of a broader problem of educating our young people in terms of basic civics, and some understanding of how the world works, how markets work. We're not doing that any more, and we are paying the price.

MR. GOLDBERG: Michèle, can I maybe sharpen the question for you a little bit? I'm wondering if you can answer this. Is the Trump -- I don't want to call it the "Trump doctrine" yet because we don't know.

MS. FLOURNOY: I was going to say, tell me what it is. (Laughter)

MR. GOLDBERG: Yes, first figure out what the Trump doctrine is, and then we will ask the question. Does Trump represent in a strange way a continuation of the Obama administration in his questioning of underlying assumptions of American foreign policymaking, or does he represent a break with the Obama approach?

We all know that Obama to a somewhat large degree, and a completely different way stylistically, obviously, asked these questions about alliances, and had sometimes more frustration with alliances. He didn't glory in them in the same way that traditional post-World War II presidents did.

I might ask after you answer Derek [Chollet] to jump in, or I might ask Jake Sullivan to jump in on some of these China and trade questions. If you could grapple with that for a minute, that would be great.

MS. FLOURNOY: I think, and Steve can correct me, you can go back to the Bush administration in terms of fundamental questioning of the value of our alliances. Remember some of the things that Don Rumsfeld talked about with NATO.

I think there are certain elements of the "orthodoxy," if you will, that President Obama, I think, rightly reexamined and questioned, and now, even the particular point of NATO needs to step up and do more, people need to meet the two percent target and so forth – my old boss, Bob Gates, went to Brussels repeatedly making that point. I think Trump is making it in a particularly sharp way and sometimes too narrow a way.

I do think Americans, if you polled them today, they would say both we don't want to operate alone in the world, we value alliances when we have a problem to deal with, but yes, we want our partners to step up and do more. We want to have fair burden sharing.

I think the thing that we have to do in engaging the American people is really be smarter in how we frame the choices. If you go back to Afghanistan after 9/11, overwhelming consensus that we needed to go in to prevent Afghanistan from being a safe haven for international terrorists who had attacked the United States.

The choices, would it have been better for us to just do that alone, or was it in the U.S. interest the fact that we had a third of those fighting alongside of us coming from NATO partners?

I would argue that was a pretty valuable contribution from NATO. It's not just two percent

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spending. It's NATO was willing to declare Article V on our behalf and send thousands of troops to fight alongside us in a common effort that was outside the NATO treaty area, for goodness sake.

If we're confronting North Korea, would we rather do that alone or would we rather do it with our allies, and China, and others, and so forth?

We have to be smarter in how we frame the choices for the American people.

MR. GOLDBERG: Do you think Trump will have more success than Obama ever did in forcing NATO partners to meet the two percent threshold?

MS. FLOURNOY: I think that remains to be seen. I think certainly we will see allies move in that direction. For a country with an economy as large as Germany's, that's not something you can do in a year. It's going to take time to get there.

Again, I don't think it should be the only metric. It's an important metric, and I wouldn't put it aside, but how that money is spent. Is it invested in modernization and the kinds of capabilities that NATO will need to be effective now and in the future, not just personnel costs? Are our allies showing up and operating alongside us when we have real world challenges to be dealt with?

There are lots of metrics we should use for evaluating the quality of our alliance relationships, not just the overall level of defense spending.

MR. GOLDBERG: Can I ask Derek to jump in on that question about whether President Obama actually in some ways presaged what's happening now, that he was representative of the kind of American who questioned the assumptions of the post-World War II U.S. led order, and that in some inadvertent way, he brought us to this moment? Not that you speak for President Obama, but you do, so go ahead. (Laughter)

MR. CHOLLET: Look, I think he's reflective of it, and I think certainly Trump is reflective of it. If we think back to I think the point Kristen made about the kind of long crisis we have been in since 2008 and what we would argue is the end of the post-Cold War order in some way, from 1989 to 2008; 2008 was a crisis of establishments, both the economic establishment and the foreign policy establishment.

I think that certainly gave rise to President Obama and his very successful insurgent campaign in 2008; but we still have been working our way through this both at home and in the world over

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the last eight years. The Obama administration struggled mightily both at home and abroad with coming up with the right answers and bringing the American people on board.

I think certainly President Trump tapped into that enduring frustration. What we are trying to do in this report is not deny these frustrations, not to say that everyone is completely wrong, but to acknowledge that in many ways the system is flawed.

The question for us is how we engage and try to fix it. This is a full-throated embrace of an American-led world order, of an active American role in the world, but acknowledgement that the institutions, and in many ways the debate we have been having about America's role in the world, has fallen short, and there is still a great amount of suffering at home and abroad that we still need to address.

It's how we go about doing that that is very important. As Michèle said, Trump has a very different way into this debate, and I think some of the things he has said, tweeted, some of the things the folks around him have said are further corroding America's role and the quality of that debate.

But with Trump and Obama and what they share, it is probably one of the few things they share, is a sense that it's important for us to question the approach we have had and to try to engage us in a more constructive way.

MR. GOLDBERG: Could I ask Jake very quickly to address this China and trade issue, and I guess the way I would ask you to grapple with it is to answer the question of were Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump actually not that far apart in their suspicion? Again, not in the way they would apply the suspicion to policymaking, but were they not that far apart in the suspicion they had about China gaming us?

MR. SULLIVAN: Look, going back to long before this presidential campaign, when Hillary Clinton was secretary of state, she was calling out the Chinese for free riding on the international economics system, and for taking advantage of the open markets the U.S. offered without offering the same in return. She was talking about reciprocity as a senator from 2000 on.

She's had a long-standing view that the United States needs to do more to enforce the rules of the international economic system to protect our interests and the interests of the American worker, and to hold other countries like China accountable.

I do think there is a significant and fundamental difference between her view and Donald Trump's view, and that is that Donald Trump believes in a fundamentally zero-sum logic about the international economic system. If China is benefitting economically, that means they are getting gains that we should be getting, and we are losing.

Hillary Clinton believes that if the rules are properly enforced, there can be a positive sum outcome in which a strong, thriving China is in the interest of the United States, where we are going to benefit even as they benefit.

So, that's pretty core. That goes to the core of the things that we are arguing in this report, and I think the difference between what you heard from Steve Bannon at CPAC [Conservative Political Action Conference] yesterday and what we are arguing in this report is just throwing up walls and declaring nationalism is the only order of the day is not a long-term strategy for America's security or prosperity. That is a pretty fundamental difference, even if in the execution of particular trade policy vis-à-vis China, Hillary Clinton would have taken a very firm line.

MR. GOLDBERG: Are you saying it's in America's best national security interest to actively fight against the wave of populism that is sweeping across Europe?

MR. SULLIVAN: I absolutely believe that.

MR. GOLDBERG: How do you do that when you seem to have a White House that embraces that populism?

MR. SULLIVAN: I think there are two aspects to this.

MR. GOLDBERG: I'm going to make you a spokesman for Trump, by the way.

MR. SULLIVAN: One is to make the pragmatic case, which this report makes, that if you want to protect America and American citizens, and you want to promote greater prosperity and a greater chance of taking on the very challenging economic environment we find ourselves in globally, this is the right way to do it. That's a pragmatic case.

But I think there is another case that we need to make as well, which goes to the core of who we are as a people, our national character, and what it means to think about being an American in a world in which there are very large problems and we have capacities working with our allies and partners to go out there and solve them in ways that are going to make us better off and make everyone better off.

I think we have to do a better job not just of making the practice evidence-based case for this, but also making a case that goes to our history and our national DNA and says the United States has always tried to step up to big moments and big challenges in the world and represent something more than just a practical question of what's going to be good for us, but a values-based question of who we are and what kind of world we want to see, and what kind of community we want to build here at home as well.

MR. GOLDBERG: Thank you, Jake. I want to continue along the line Jake has established here, to talk about the fact that America does have capacities to influence the direction of events in different regions of the world, and I want to talk about three different issues that are addressed in this report, and all of you can speak on behalf of the report.

I want to start with Martin and ask you a pretty simple question. Is the two-state solution really dead or totally dead? (Laughter) What would you as Dr. Frankenstein do to revive that process?

MR. INDYK: If you did a word search in this report, you will not find the words "two state solution." In fact, although we devote a section of the report to the Middle East, we do not argue that the president should make this [the two-state solution] a priority. He assumes we have a disagreement with him since he seems to have decided that his son-in-law at least should make it a priority.

The reason we take that view, by way of answering the question, is that there are six simultaneous crises going on in the Middle East. There is a collapse of order, failed states, failing states, and deep conflict.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of those, but if you want to try to solve that one, you need to address some of the fundamentals that have impacted the cost of these conflicts.

The strongest recommendation we have, which I think actually President Trump is also pursuing, is that we need to restore the trust with our traditional allies, Israel, the Sunni Arab states, in particular, and on that foundation, we need to start to put in place an effort to restore order. Containing Iran is part of that strategy and working with our allies in the region and partners in the region.

If we were to succeed on those two fronts, then circumstances would improve for dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Plus, there would be time, which is needed, for political changes to take place in Israel and on the Palestinian side.

As things stand today, the leadership and politics of those two political entities, Israel and the Palestinian authority, do not lend themselves to any kind of effective negotiation that can lead to compromises.

We go into that in great detail, but take it from me, because I've worked with John Kerry in trying, and the principal lesson was American will alone cannot solve this problem. It needs the parties to be willing and capable, politically capable, of making the necessary compromises.

President Trump's desire to make this deal in itself is not going to be enough. He would be better off focusing on the other problems in the Middle East and coming back to this one later.

MR. GOLDBERG: Let me turn to another even more important subject, Russia. I want to get you to talk about your recommendations to the Trump administration on Russia. I thought I'd start with Steve and Kristen, and maybe Eric Edelman as well.

One of the most flummoxing aspects of foreign policy observing in this last period is to see a Republican party that had always been steadfast in its skepticism about the Kremlin's intentions in the world, suddenly divide on this question, where you have the Breitbart wing of the Republican Party not aligning with the traditional Republican view.

So, I'm wondering if maybe, Kristen, to start, explain the origins of this new dynamic, because it is one of the biggest mysteries in foreign policymaking these days; and then maybe you all can jump in and talk about how you would ideally like to see a Trump administration that might not be so enamored of how Vladimir Putin handled this situation.

MS. SILVERBERG: I assume that the president is drawn to the idea of some cooperation with Russia around the idea that they would be good partners in our fight against terrorism, and ISIS, in particular, and maybe there is some kind of psychological appeal to another kind of strong man who as some have said is sort of in control of his country, there is sort of the nationalism that might appeal to some parts of the Trump administration.

I think that the president's posture on Russia throughout the campaign and in the post-election period are going to make it much harder that he can actually work any kind of agreement with them. It's not clear to me that the Russians actually need anything anymore in a transaction with us.

President Trump has taken the sting out of the U.S. sanctions by creating a sense that

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the business climate is much better, you know, the ruble is up 10 percent since the election, that business confidence is up, industrial production is up.

I think the Russians basically can live economically, and there are lots of complicated things about the Russian economy, but the sanctions aren't really the driver right now. They can live with the status quo in Ukraine. They can certainly manage a kind of frozen conflict in Ukraine much better than the Ukrainians can.

They are probably reassured that the Trump administration isn't going to cause major problems in Syria. They are assured that there won't be a big push on NATO expansion. There won't be a big human rights agenda because of some issues domestically. So, my sense is they sort of got what they wanted, and I'm not really sure there is much left.

Going back to the title of our report, "Situations of Strength," this reference from Dean Acheson, basically that you build your power and your leverage before you try to do a negotiation. My advice to the Trump administration would be to start from there and start thinking about how he's going to rebuild some leverage with Russia.

MR. GOLDBERG: Steve?

MR. HADLEY: You can go to Eric on this.

MR. EDELMAN: Jeff, I think the vast majority of Republicans still have the view about Russia that you ascribe to them, including a lot of senior Republicans in the Trump administration.

If you look at General Mattis' confirmation testimony, if you look at things that Secretary Tillerson has said since he was confirmed, if you look at his initial choice for a deputy secretary of state.

I mean, I think President Trump's interest in this actually dates back to the 1980s when he wanted to be put in charge of arms control negotiations. I suspect this is at some level a reflection of his desire to prove that he is the master of the art of the deal since he wrote the book on "The Art of the Deal." Well, maybe he didn't write it.

MR. GOLDBERG: Someone wrote the book "The Art of the Deal."

MR. EDELMAN: I think if you look at members of the Senate Armed Services Committee on the Republican side, like Chairman McCain, like Lindsey Graham, like Tom Cotton, Joni Ernst, Dan Sullivan, they are all, I would say, pretty tough on Russia.

MR. GOLDBERG: One minute of anthropology on where this other strain comes from.

MR. EDELMAN: I think in keeping with what we have said in the report, they all recognize that Russia is now something that has not really been since 1992 – a threat to European security; and that threat has to be met by some actions and some development of capability by the United States, which has not through administrations of both parties seen Russia as an opponent but rather a potential partner in building a Europe whole and free.

Russia now is pretty much categorically not interested in that, and is playing a different kind of role in Europe, and I think most Republicans believe it.

Where this other strain comes from, I think Kristen captured a lot of it in her remarks. I'm not sure I have anything really to add.

MR. GOLDBERG: Steve, very quickly, and then I want to get Michèle in here.

MR. HADLEY: You know, there has always been a strain in the Republican party as well as Democrats, that somehow -- and I know it is reflected in some of the people around President Trump -- that the U.S. misread the end of the Cold War and that we missed an opportunity by NATO enlargement and by the continuation of NATO and then the expansion of NATO into Eastern and Central Europe, that we are in some sense responsible for the Russia today.

I don't agree with that, but there has always been that strain. I think what has happened is if you dealt with Russia when we did in the Bush administration, even Putin would give lip service that I'm going to bring Russia into the West and we're moving in the direction of democracy.

The Russia of this decade, you don't hear that at all. It is Russia has its own destiny, its own values. They're not Western values. They're going in a different direction. I think there are a lot of explanations for that, part of it is what happened in the near abroad, and the color revolutions.

Where we are is in fact, Russia policy doesn't change much. It's the same mantra. We need to cooperate with Russia where we can. We need to confront and stand for our principles where we disagree, but manage those disagreements in a way that doesn't push the relationship into confrontation and conflict.

The question is how do you weight those things. I think President Trump has come in thinking we ought to weigh up the cooperation piece. I think he's getting an education in terms of events,

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about how difficult it is to President Putin, and what we recommend is that because President Putin has seemed to get his way -- I'm not arguing the facts -- has seemed to get his way in Crimea and Ukraine and in Syria, there needs to be a period of time where we create those positions of strength, reestablish some deterrents and some clear limits, and at that point, you will be in a better position to engage President Putin and see whether there is cooperation. That's the recommendation we have made.

MR. GOLDBERG: Let me just sharpen this for a second. Kristen made a point persuasively that Donald Trump talks about a deal with Russia, but it's not quite clear any more that there is anything they really need desperately from us, so talking about coming from a position of strength through this report, what is it that we have, that the United States has, to offer Russia that would moderate their behavior?

Michèle?

MS. FLOURNOY: I think the real question is what is the objective of a deal. The objective should not be just to reduce tensions. Yes, we would all like to see tensions reduced, but we have to safeguard American interests first.

A deal in Syria that sells out our interests would not be, or a deal in the Ukraine that sells out our interests that reduces tension would not be advisable.

I think we have to think hard about what is truly an American interest, and we also have to be pretty clear about Russian intention. Not reflecting the report, but a personal view, I think this administration's or the president's position on Russia defies rational explanation, and can actually end up being quite dangerous. It is not clear-eyed. I think it's one of the reasons we need --

MR. GOLDBERG: What specific danger?

MS. FLOURNOY: -- thorough investigations into the nature of Russian activity and intervention. I'm saying this as an analytic point, not as a partisan point. It doesn't all add up. We have to understand exactly what happened.

In addition, you look at continued Russian behavior now in Europe, Europe is heading into its election season, we will see profound Russian interference trying to influence the outcome of those elections. This is a campaign against Western democracies. You look at the order that Russia would like to see, it's not what we describe in this report. It is back to the traditional sphere of influence of

the former Soviet Union.

You can go down the list. We have certainly areas of common interest. We showed that in Iran. We have shown it in the past on North Korea, non-proliferation, arms control, and so forth. I'm not saying there are no common interests.

We need a very clear-eyed perspective, because if you go for a deal for the sake of a deal that's not clear eyed about Russian interests and intentions and is not really focused on protecting our own, we could end up in a very bad situation.

MR. GOLDBERG: The specific danger is anti-Western values sweep across Europe? Is that the specific thing?

MS. FLOURNOY: It is undermining cohesion and democracy within Europe. It is undermining transatlantic cohesion, and it's basically rewarding and empowering a Russia that has already demonstrated that it's willing to violate international rules of the road to serve its own narrow interests.

MR. GOLDBERG: Martin, very quickly, and then we are going to start taking questions.

MR. INDYK: I just want to focus on the consequences of Trump's desire to do a deal with Russia in particular when it comes to fighting ISIS in Syria. He has made it quite clear that is where he sees the value added.

But he also needs to understand that the Middle East is a very complicated place, so if you do a deal with Russia to fight ISIS -- by the way, Russia hasn't been fighting ISIS and he's only likely to fight ISIS in a way that would consolidate the power and regime of Bashar al-Assad. He is allied with Iran.

So the deal that President Trump wants to do with Russia over ISIS is going to advantage Iran. Now there are people in the White House who will say well, we will wean Russia from Iran. That is, I believe, undoable in Syria, that is not achievable as an objective.

The effect of it will be to put Iran in a corner in which it will attack U.S. forces in one way or another, and lead us into a confrontation with Iran, and the challenge here is not to do a deal in which we try to wean Iran from Russia, but that we try to wean Turkey, our NATO ally, from Russia, instead of advantaging Russia in Syria, we need to disadvantage Russia there and advantage our Turkish ally.

There is a profound consequence in the actual deal that he wants to make in fighting terrorism.

MR. GOLDBERG: I want to go to questions now. There are mics. There is a question over there. Just identify yourself and make it short, and make it really in the form of a question.

SPEAKER: Rafael Leal with the Brazilian Embassy. What should the U.S. do about North Korea? What will the U.S. do with North Korea in your opinion? Ten years from now, we are here for another report release, with North Korea having tested the inter-ballistic missile, having tested missiles from submarines, what could the U.S. do then? Thank you.

MR. GOLDBERG: Steve, do you want to start on North Korea?

MR. HADLEY: No (Laughter)

MR. GOLDBERG: Steve, I'm asking you to start on North Korea.

MR. HADLEY: I'll tell you, this is a real hard problem, and it is going to be, I think, early on the agenda for the Trump administration, and I don't envy them. One of the things is it's going to show them the dilemmas of dealing with China because while you want to confront China over the South China Sea, you need China to deal with North Korea. One of the things they are going to learn is their managing relations with China is going to be very complicated.

Secondly, it is good that China seems to be increasing economic pressure on North Korea in terms of the decision they made to stop taking North Korean coal. I will believe it when I see it that really is pushed to the point of having some real traction.

If we're going to get China to put more pressure on North Korea, we are going to have to convince them that it's more dangerous for China if North Korea has a nuclear weapon and the ability to deliver that in the United States primarily because what the United States and our allies will do in response, which China will not like.

We're going to have to convince China that it is more dangerous for them to have North Korea with this operational nuclear weapon program and the ability to deliver it than it is to worry about the consequences of pressuring the North Korean state if it goes into a decline and there are refugee flows and all the rest.

That is not where China is now. They think the danger of an unstable North Korea is

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much worse than a North Korea with nuclear weapons capability. We are going to have to change their calculus.

I think we are going to have to do some very tough-minded things to enhance deterrence. I think we are going to have to do some things militarily in the northern part of South Korea that reduces North Korea's ability to hold Seoul and the area of South Korea at risk to rocket and artillery attacks.

I think we have to build up ballistic missile defense to protect our allies, and I think we have to do the same thing here at home, and be willing to take the position that if North Korea launches an ICBM, an intercontinental ballistic missile, in our direction, even as a test, we will take it out.

I think we are going to have to get much tougher in terms of enhancing deterrence in order to convince China to use its pressure and in order to convince North Korea that maybe some kind of negotiated outcome that gets rid of the nuclear program is in their interest.

Two administrations, the Clinton administration and the Bush administration, tried to do a deal with North Korea. Neither of us could hold them in the deal. I'm not optimistic.

MR. GOLDBERG: Michèle, very quickly, is this administration, based on your analysis, ready to confront a North Korea challenge? Do you think they have the systems in place and the personnel in place?

MS. FLOURNOY: No. They need more than the cabinet in place. They need to get their senior deputies and policy people. They need to fill out the ranks, and they need to have an ordered National Security Council process that is really prepared to manage national and international crises and frame options and decisions for the president.

I think Martin made this point earlier. The world doesn't wait. This is something that the administration may feel it wants six months to put in place, but the world may not wait that long. It is of the utmost importance that they start filling out those positions and they start creating a more disciplined ordered process.

I personally think the appointment of H.R. McMaster is a very good step in that direction. I expect given his past track record and leadership he will move towards establishing that kind of process if allowed.

MR. GOLDBERG: Yes, sir. Over here.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks very much. I'm Garrett Mitchell, I write the Mitchell Report. I want to come back to Stephen Hadley's notion of a national conversation, and ask it in this way. Given three sets of circumstances, the first being a populous that is increasingly uneducated – the lack of civic education. Second, a Congress that is divided in a way that makes the kind of Senate-led conversations around the Vietnam War look like we were peaceful with each other in the Congress at that time as opposed to now; and third, we are doing this, both this conversation, your report, and the suggestion of a national conversation, in sort of analog form, at a time when what we know and how people are conversing, and nobody knows it better than Donald Trump --

MR. GOLDBERG: Can we move to your question?

MR. MITCHELL: Yes, whether given those three factors, what's the likelihood that a Senate-led national conversation is going to work with those three factors at play?

MR. HADLEY: I have talked to them, I think there is a core of Republicans and Democrats in the Senate who are willing to work together to provide this kind of leadership, and I think we should all be encouraging them.

Secondly, I think there is an awareness about the need for civic education of our population. We need to be doing that. Third, the media should be turned as a vehicle for provoking both the dialogue and the education we are talking about, and there are ways to do it, and there are organizations that are starting – the Council of Foreign Relations, of all things, is actually starting their online education program, to use technology to get this kind of education and debate going on within the population and our schools and universities. We need more of that.

I'm a policy person, which makes me having to be an optimist, congenitally, as opposed to intelligence people who are all pessimists. I've got to be optimistic and say I think it can be done, but it won't get done if we don't start. Let's start now.

MR. CHECCO: Thank you very much. Larry Checco, concerned citizen. I'll leave it at that right now. It was asked some time during this conversation what went wrong with 70 years of established world order.

I would posit that a lot of it has to do with poor governance and corruption, and finally, people all around the world have gotten tired of being -- excuse the expression -- screwed by their

governments. They are not being moved forward. They are being left behind.

MR. GOLDBERG: What's your question?

MR. CHECKA: I think Donald Trump is a function of that. Does that hold any water with any of you?

MR. HADLEY: Sure; yes.

MR. GOLDBERG: Kristen?

MS. SILVERBERG: Yes, no question. I think the sense that government has existed to serve elites, even setting aside the kind of raw corruption, just the sense that governments have been captured, there is no question that is playing into Donald Trump and it's playing into movements all over the world.

I guess the question you have to put back is: Is this economic nationalism -- is that an alternative that is more or less likely to address that problem? I'd say it is less likely to address that problem. Actually, economic nationalism really allows corporations or particular actors to capture goods from their governments, and economic openness, transparency, free markets, actually are the best anecdote to that.

SPEAKER: This follows up on the last question. My name is Phil. I'm retired Navy interested in the international financial system corruption as it affects national security.

To what extent does the panel believe that threats to U.S. national security are borne from corruption, bribery, for example, and are we reacting appropriately?

Big news items with U.S. Justice Department cooperating with the Swiss to prosecute FIFA officials for big time bribery, eroding norms. Equally as pernicious but very unique situation with the World Chess Federation officials being sanctioned by U.S. Treasury for links of their access into ISIS oil trade, issues coming out of the Panama Papers --

MR. GOLDBERG: I think the question is what is the Trump administration's position on the World Chess Federation. (Laughter) That is a separate panel that will be meeting tonight here in the Lido Lounge.

Through the prism of the report, there is the need or relative need to enforce international standards and norms in a more competitive system in which China and Russia might not play by those

same [norms].

MR. HADLEY: I'll try that. Martin may have a comment on this. I don't think that kind of corruption threatens the national security of the United States directly. I think the problem here is what this gentleman was saying, not that it was corruption in that sense, but somehow the elites benefitted themselves and ran a system that benefitted themselves and not most of the American people. I think that's the complaint against the United States, and that is very corrosive of the legitimacy of our government.

The kind of corruption you're talking about I think adversely affects our interests indirectly because it's undermining a lot of countries. It's undermining a lot of those new democracies that emerged over the last half century, and it is turning the people against them and discrediting democracy and our values as a principle, because it looks like it is being captured by the few rather than serving the many.

That is very corruptive and corrosive of that liberal international order which we have stood for, which is based on principles of democracy, rule of law, good governance.

So, it is a very serious challenge, but I think in that indirect way I've described.

MR. INDYK: We have a process of governance, I think that more than anything else has fueled the insurgency movement that put Donald Trump in the White House. There is an urgent need to address that here domestically.

Unfortunately, and very worrying that Trump and Steve Bannon seem to believe that the best way to deal with this crisis of governance is to tear it down, and resistance to that, which is inevitable if you try to be destructive, is interpreted as a good thing, an indication that you are actually succeeding, when in fact you're not succeeding at all. All you are doing is bringing more people out into the streets, generating greater opposition, creating greater division.

Greater division, we have seen it, we saw it for eight years during the Obama administration. Greater division does not solve the crisis of governance, it only deepens it.

That is what I really worry about here in the way in which yes, domestically and abroad, governments and governance is failing the people; but the solution is not destruction, and here we come back to the report. The solution is to try to find a way to come together and renovate the systems and

resolve these things. There is a lot of common ground between Democrats and Republicans on domestic issues as well as on foreign policy issues.

We have shown in this report that Democrats and Republicans can come together and develop a bipartisan approach, and with a bipartisan approach that will generate support from the American people, and that will strengthen us in terms of our ability to achieve American interests that will benefit the American people.

I think just to bring it back to the report, we are offering an alternative way forward that I think will be far more productive than the destructive instincts that seem to be dominate at least for the moment in the White House.

MR. GAGLIANO: Philosophically, does the European Union and its leadership truly support the philosophy that's embodied in this report, not in words, but in practical execution and leadership, and if so, where does that leadership come from? Thank you.

MR. GOLDBERG: Ask the former U.S. ambassador to the European Union.

MS. SILVERBERG: I would say broadly, yes. I mean it's an incredibly diverse body of now 28 countries, and there are differences of opinion but we built and maintain the international order in close partnership with the Europeans over the years, and I think the commitment is still pretty strong.

One of the interesting things I've watched with the Trump administration is what looks like an internal debate on how we're going to work with the EU. Jake talked earlier about the importance of the values conversation with Europe, and for my tenure, that was an essential part of the conversation, that we share a commitment to democracy, human rights, rule of law.

In this administration, that's a much more complicated conversation because if you would ask parts of the Trump administration, they would say actually, Marine Le Pen reflects our values pretty well, same views on Islam, same views on immigration.

My sense is actually the conversation with Europe might be more productive if it is very pragmatic, so are we better off dealing with a strong and unified Europe or are we better off dealing with now 28 different countries; are we better off dealing with a single market, with our largest trading investment partner, or would we be better off with a kind of populous, nationalist National Front system. Marine Le Pen is running on protecting French companies from competition, including from U.S.

exporters.

Steve talked earlier about the president's public comments embracing the EU, and I'm hoping that's indicating there is some reflection internally about where kind of U.S. interests actually lie in Europe.

MR. GOLDBERG: Do any of you see any evidence of this administration so far embraces traditional American foreign policy values, such as advancement of human rights, advancement of Democratic ideals? It seems very, very transactional. That is not to say, of course, the previous administration, for instance, was overly enamored of a human rights agenda or did enough in Syria or places like that.

Do you see any evidence that they understand in the philosophical sense or moral sense America's role in the world?

MR. HADLEY: Remember, this is an insurgent administration bringing people into power who have never been in government before, we are only five weeks in, there is a huge amount of divergence of view and debates that are beginning to go on, and they don't really have the formal procedures and people in place to have an adequate conversation.

MR. GOLDBERG: With all due respect, we've been listening to them for more than a year though; they've been in office for five weeks.

MR. HADLEY: Five weeks. I was a deputy national security advisor in the Bush administration. I never had a deputies meeting until May, because I didn't have any confirmed deputies to come to the meeting. You know, it takes a long time to organize a government.

If you read Rex Tillerson's opening statement in his confirmation hearing, it was a strong endorsement of American values and principles as a cornerstone of this administration. Now, other people have not talked in those terms. There will be a discussion, I think, in this administration about what is the role of traditional American values.

MR. GOLDBERG: Does Rex Tillerson have any power?

MR. HADLEY: Pardon me?

MR. GOLDBERG: Does Rex Tillerson have any power?

MR. HADLEY: He's been confirmed for three weeks, and people are already deciding

that he's going to be a dead letter for four years. This guy is an engineer, as he said in his testimony, I'm an engineer, I learn the facts, I follow the facts, and I then make decisions. He's never been in government before. Please, give him a little time to learn his job before you pronounce him dead on arrival.

MS. ZABEL: Hi, Stephanie Zabel. I'm a student at CISE. My question is we have seen a lot of democratic back sliding in our allies all over the world, pulling away from the international liberal order, so what does that mean for us and how do we deal with it?

MS. SILVERBERG: Yes, I think it's a good reminder that all of these challenges predate the U.S. elections, including this sort of democratic decline. From my own view, what I'd like to see is full throated advocacy from the U.S. on behalf of the democracy and human rights agenda.

Obviously, I come from the Bush administration. President Bush's articulation of the freedom agenda in the second inaugural was in my mind – really sort of captured U.S. values, and there was criticism at the time that it was unrealistic, he basically called for the end of tyranny in our time, and in my view, realistic or not, it was essential that the U.S. orient our foreign policy around that subject.

I don't have high expectations that's going to be on this administration's agenda; but I think Congress can play a really important role in making sure it doesn't fall off the agenda altogether, and that is everything from scrutinizing foreign aid. It's insisting that the State Department keep its annual human rights reports. It's making sure we run resolutions at the United Nations when appropriate.

Anyway, my own view is we are going to need a sort of Congressionally focused strategy on that.

MR. INDYK: I think when the president said in his inaugural address we are going to put America first, he sent a signal to the world that was probably unintended, but it was certainly, I think, perceived that way, which is it is okay for all of us to put our interests first, too.

That fueled, because the American president has such an important leadership role in the world, a nationalist sentiment. If America is going to go nationalist rather than internationalist, then it's okay for all of us as well.

I think together with the kind of disillusionment about the freedom agenda that President Bush promoted has combined to create another form of erosion of the liberal international order in favor

of these kind of alternatives that are being advanced by Russia and China.

I think it's a very important reminder that American values that are actually universal values when it comes to freedom and human rights and rule of law are the underpinning of the international order that serves American interests.

It's important for people to understand American interests are better served by a liberal international order that is underpinned by these values than they are by a narrow definition of "American national interests" that has such a profound impact on the way the rest of the world operates.

MR. GOLDBERG: Steve, we are going to give you the last word today, and the question is – this is a very good report.

MR. INDYK: Thank you.

MR. GOLDBERG: You're welcome. It is written by 10 of the most brilliant national security and foreign policy thinkers in America. The question is simple, you are launching this out of Brookings. "Launch" presumes that it goes somewhere.

How do you convince President Donald Trump that the international order, to come back to my original question at the beginning of this, how do you convince President Donald Trump that the international order is something worth renovating – but saving as opposed to tearing down? What are the chances of success for this report?

MR. HADLEY: We'll see. We know that there are people, as other members of our panel said earlier, there are people in the administration who believe in liberal international order, and would agree to the notion that it needs to be renovated. We hope we have given them both arguments to use and a blueprint for how that might be done in a bipartisan way.

Secondly, President Trump is meeting with a lot of foreign leaders, and some of those foreign leaders are making a case for American leadership, American values, and for that liberal international order. He is hearing that from some Europeans. So, he's learning. This is a man who seems to be a listener, seems to be willing to learn.

Thirdly, I think there needs to be a conversation in the American people more broadly about what is America's role in the world, because I think that will also have an impact on what happens in Washington.

We hope to have contributed to that debate, to give some ammunition to those who argue with us for a renovated international order, and we will see where it goes.

MR. GOLDBERG: Thank you very much to all of you. Thank you to Tom, Derek, Eric, Jake. Thank you all for coming. Thank you. (Applause)

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