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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. JONES: Good afternoon. My name is Bruce Jones and I'm the vice president and director of Foreign Policy here at Brookings. It is my pleasure to welcome you to today's event. It's an interesting day in foreign policy. I don't know if any of you have had the chance to read the page-length tweet that our president sent to the chairman of North Korea today. Sort of interesting times in American foreign policy, and Europe is not exempt from the interesting times in American foreign policy. And I think that's the subject of our discussions today, which we've entitled "America First, Europe Alone?" -- And the question mark is very important -- organized by our Center for the United States and Europe in collaboration with the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

This event is part of an expanded partnership we have with the Bosch Stiftung. We've created what we call the Brookings-Bosch Transatlantic Initiative, which has been a transformative effort in Brookings to build out our research and programming platform to understand the dynamics of the transatlantic relationship and to give ourselves a greater capacity within the transatlantic community to think about common challenges. We designed this before the current political moment. It strikes me as particularly relevant in the current political moment, which has brought with it a degree of question about the nature of the political west, about the western led order, and about the U.S.-European relationship itself, which is I think new in American foreign policy.

Like everything we do at Brookings, the core of what we do is the work of our scholars, and I'm delighted that we have both of our Robert Bosch senior fellows, Constanze Stelzenmüller and Amanda Sloat, on the stage this afternoon. And they're not only part of this great panel, but they are a part of our core team working on Europe, led very capably by Tom Wright. And this group of scholars, and several others who are part

of this center, have given us real I think heft and intellectual firepower to address the question of U.S.-Europe relations at this very unusual moment.

We're also delighted to have colleagues from Bosch here with us this afternoon, including the Foundation's senior vice president international relations, Christian Hänel, who will offer remarks in a few moments.

And I think what we'll learn this afternoon is that the divergences in the transatlantic relationship have actually intensified. They were strained and now they've intensified. The United States' withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, despite key European allies bending over backwards to try to meet what the Administration said were its requirements to extend the deal, I think has alienated and dismayed allies and placed them in a very uncomfortable -- and at one stage unthinkable -- position where they're more closely aligned to Russia and China over the Iran issue than they are with the United States. But it's only the latest in a long series of policy divergences, from the Paris Climate Accord to the trade tariffs and the Trump Administration's rhetoric, frankly, on Europe and on German freeloading on defense spending.

The relationship has been tested before in Iraq over the Balkans and it has withstood the test of those pressures. I think the question now is whether these divergences are so profound that they top the calculus on one side of the Atlantic or the other about the economic, the political, and the security stakes at play in the relationship. And Constanze Stelzenmüller, as part of this effort, has a very important paper, "Normal is Over", challenging the notion that we will be able to continue as normal despite this moment of flux and of crisis.

So I think these questions add urgency to our commitment to be deepening the engagement within the political west and in the transatlantic relationship with a robust research agenda and policy dialogue. And that's the purpose of today's

event. So I'm looking very much forward to it, and in a couple of minutes we'll turn over to our moderator, Edward Luce, of the Financial Times. But before doing so, it's a pleasure to invite our friend and partner from the Bosch Foundation, Christian Hänel, to offer a few remarks.

And I will just add this, Brookings places a huge value on its commitment to quality and independence. And I'm always enormously grateful to our partners who understand and respect our independence and recognize that the value we offer is an independent scholarship. And Christian has been a superb partner in all respects, but including in that respect. So my huge thanks to him.

And, Christian, over to you. (Applause)

MR. HÄNEL: Good afternoon. Bruce, thank you very much for the kind words. Distinguished panelists, friends, and colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, a very warm welcome also from me. Christian Hänel is the name; I'm senior vice president international relations America and Asia at the Robert Bosch Stiftung of the Bosch Foundation. It is a pleasure to see so many members of the transatlantic community here in D.C. for this panel that the Brookings Institution is hosting in cooperation with Bosch and the Hudson Institution. Where is Ken? I want to thank you very much as well.

As Bruce has said, the event is also part of the Brookings-Bosch Transatlantic Initiative, the BBTI, which aims to build and strengthen transatlantic networks and reinvigorate dialogue and collaboration of the most pressing transatlantic issues of our time. Within the frame of the initiative Brookings scholars expand the research in and on Europe and publish independent policy analyses and recommendations. Among these outstanding scholars are our two Robert Bosch Senior Fellows -- I want to mention them again -- at Brookings, also some of our panelists today, Amanda Sloat and Constanze Stelzenmüller, who all sit together on the great panel -- I'm

very much looking forward to it -- together with Ken Weinstein, president and CEO of Hudson Institute, Célia Belin from Brookings, moderated by Ed Luce. As I said, very much looking forward to your insights on today's topics.

Well, this year's BBTI annual convening, as we also call this, takes place in quite turbulent times for transatlantic relations, in which the future of the partnership is -- well, lively discussed on both sides of the pond, which me being the eternal optimist, says something positive I'd say because for years, at least at the Bosch Foundation, we saw the biggest problem in transatlantic relations that we didn't have an interest anymore and the other end of the partnership was running but there were no impulses, no new ideas, no real controversial things to talk about. I think this has changed, which can also be a good thing. But, of course, mounting policy differences, for example, on the Iran deal or the Paris Climate Accord, but also growing trade disagreements between Europe and the United States have become the new normal. Niels Annen, the newly-appointed State Secretary at the German Federal Foreign Office, recently noted that "the decisions of President Trump are more frequently standing in contrast to European interests". Last week, I guess you all heard about this, Donald Tusk, President of the European Council and normally also a very strong proponent of the transatlantic relationship, said that "looking at the latest decision of President Trump, someone could even think with friends like that who needs enemies". And Bruce has already quoted Constanze Stelzenmüller, who concluded in a very brief, to the point way in her recent BBTI publication with regard to the Transatlantic Partnership, normal is indeed over. However, just to quote another great mind from this side of the Atlantic, Brookings' James Kirchick, he recently wrote two days ago, which I as a European found very interesting, "Europeans want to break up with America. Deep down they should know that they can't."

All of us have, of course, seen ups and downs in transatlantic relations over the course of the last decades. Europe and the U.S. have traversed through some rough moments before; nevertheless, I think it is beyond doubt that we're currently facing a very difficult challenging period for the Transatlantic Partnership, at least on the political level.

I want to point out, though, representing a nonprofit private foundation that has been active over decades in fostering civil society exchange, that in the civil society sphere the interest and exchanges and cooperation is from our perspective at an all-time high. A sign that makes us optimistic for the future, because we at the Bosch Foundation think -- no, we believe that the people-to-people exchange across the Atlantic is the foundation of a sustainable partnership. A people-to-people exchange, by the way, that needs to go way beyond Berlin and Washington, D.C.

So, what do we make of all this, where do we go from here? Is the transatlantic alliance dead, is it dead as Wolfgang Ischinger, Chairman of the Munich Security Conference recently asked his audience on Twitter, or are things not as bad as they look? Can Europe and the United States overcome their growing estrangement and the gaps that currently divide them? Well, I think today's panel will offer insights into these and many more questions. I'm thus very much looking forward to the discussions and I thank you very much for your attention. (Applause)

MR. LUCE: Thank you very much, Christian, for that introduction. It is indeed the perfect day to discuss troubles in the transatlantic alliance. Last night, of course, the Trump Administration, the Commerce Department, announced these upcoming punitive tariffs on auto imports, targeted clearly at Europe and Japan, America's allies on national security grounds. So I couldn't think of a better day to discuss this subject.

Last week, of course -- well, earlier this month Macron and Merkel visited the White House, talked to Trump. One of them flattered him, the other didn't. Neither appeared to work because he pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal a couple of days later and now we've got Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, in a speech earlier this week threatening, you know, the hardest possible sanctions, secondary sanctions, on those who refuse to follow America's lead. And, of course, next week, on June the 1st, we have the deadline for the steel and aluminium -- or aluminum -- I keep getting corrected (laughter) -- tariffs. Again, on national security grounds, so this is a far cry from the kind of panel we might have been having two years ago about T-TIP or how to strengthen NATO's response to Putin's actions in Ukraine. And I couldn't think of a better panel to get the sort of range of transatlantic views that we're going to discuss than the one that we have today.

On my far left, Amanda Sloat, who is a Senior Bosch Fellow here at the Brookings Institution, formerly spent many years in government in the Obama Administration, working with Victoria Nuland at the State Department on Europe and the Middle East. And has written something about Scotland and Europe, which I might get into with you later.

To my immediate left is Célia Belin, who is a Visiting Fellow here at Brookings. Again, a very distinguished scholar and also you have quite a lot of experience in French government too, right, at the policy and planning. So a delight to have you here.

To my immediate right, Constanze Stelzenmüller, who will be familiar to most of you. Another Senior Bosch Fellow, formerly of the German Marshall Fund. Too many transatlantic credentials to mention here, but take it from me, they're solid.

And then, finally, on my far right, Ken Weinstein, the token male on the panel (laughter) and also the token conservative, which is perhaps -- are we stereotyping?

SPEAKER: How would you know? How would you know?

MR. LUCE: How would I know he's conservative or he's token?

SPEAKER: Yeah, the token. (Laughter)

MR. LUCE: That was just my facetiousness, forgive me. I know you're not token. He is head of the Hudson Institute.

Now, not because you're male, but because you're a conservative, I am actually going to start off with you, Ken, by asking the question, as a conservative, how you deal with Trump. Two, three years ago the conservative movement and the Republican Party was pro free trade and hawkish on Russia. Today, you are following a protectionist stance as a party and you are dovish on Russia -- at least your President is dovish on Russia. This is quite a disorienting switch. And I imagine you must feel disoriented, and Europe certainly is. What is your advice, as a conservative dealing with Trump, for how Europe should deal with Trump?

MR. WEINSTEIN: Well, thank you, glad to be here, even as a token male, the token white male. It's a rare position to be in, but no, I'm delighted to be here at Brookings. I especially appreciate the partnership with Brookings and with Bosch on transatlantic issues in the workshop we had this morning.

I guess, first, to begin with, I don't find myself as disoriented by Trump as I think a lot of people in the conservative movement are. I mean I understand him. He comes in as a disruptor, as someone who comes in without a policy background. You know, when I speak in France, I say he didn't go to (inaudible), he didn't study policy, he doesn't do strategy, he hasn't done that all of his life, but he comes in as an outsider,

willing to ask tough questions, and to do so across the board on a whole array of matters. I don't always agree with every decision he makes, but I think that that's the understanding one has to have of him, that he comes in as an outsider willing to ask questions. He thinks that people like us on this panel, people like the folks in this audience, that we are people inside the system who are used to playing by the system's rules and that we therefore don't think as boldly as we ought to about the policy options in front of us. And I think, to his credit, he at times comes up with bold policy options that can change the equation in a given area. And so that's how I understand him.

On Russia, I don't see him nearly as weak as you do. I mean he's increased the European Reassurance Initiative, he's now, you know, giving assistance to the Ukrainians, which they weren't getting in the last Administration. He has certainly spoken out with force on Nord Stream, to the chagrin of some of our allies. So I actually don't see him as weak on Russia as he is made out to be. And I don't think he thinks of himself in that way. But, again, that's -- so advice to the Europeans. I think one has to really look for ways to work together with the Administration to the extent that it's possible and I think that there are clear ways to do so. It requires, you know, listening, willing to make more significant concessions than one normally might have otherwise. But I think that there are truly ways to work with this Administration if one thinks creatively in various areas.

MR. LUCE: Could you give an example?

MR. WEINSTEIN: Sure. WTO reform I think is the clearest area. I think that the Administration, this has been Ambassador Lighthizer's big sort of theme of his work on trade for the last few decades if you read his writings. And I think that the President certainly has spoken about how China benefits from the unfair trade system. And one place that I think there could be significant reform of the WTO, I think that would

be something the Administration could think about more concretely with the Europeans, also more concretely I think with the Japanese, who might be interested. And that's an area where the President has spoken up and it's an area where I think with a serious package of reform some progress might be made.

MR. LUCE: Okay. I'm going to sort of get back to you on that, but I want to move onto Constanze. A year ago, or a little bit more than a year ago, your Chancellor, Angela Merkel, was the first American ally to come out and say, look, we're going to have to take our destiny into our own hands. And she has since repeated various iterations of that sentiment, that Trump is a game changer. So something very different to your reading, Ken. (A) was she right? and (B) in what sense is she actually taking Europe's destiny into its own hands?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Those are two very good questions. I believe, and this is where I disagree with you, Ken, that this is indeed a game changing moment in transatlantic relations in the post war history of the west and in the history of Europe for the simple reason that while for the last decades we have been disagreeing about means, about when to use force, and in what kinds of coalitions we're now disagreeing about the ends. We're disagreeing about what relationship we want to have with the world, whether globalization is a fundamentally bad thing or a good thing whose negative implications need to be managed. And that is the single biggest wedge of the transatlantic relationship that I have seen in my lifetime as an analyst and observer of the relationship.

In other words, this is a truly serious disruptive moment. We are in a hinge period and I think very few of us have any idea of where we're going to end out. And I would also say that I am firmly convinced that things can get a lot worse over the next weeks and months as we move into a series of summit meetings where if they go

the way of the North Korea summit, things are not going to be great. And so I think, yes, we ought to be a little bit worried.

Now, what is Merkel doing about this? I think Merkel was the first to say, you know, please don't apostrophize me as the leader of the free world, I can't do that. And, in fact, the German elections on September 24 showed that her political bandwidth at home and in Europe is dramatically limited and, indeed, reduced compared to what it was before. She is presumably also in the waning years of her tenure on power. It is also very probably that Germany itself is undergoing profound social, economic, and political changes in our party system or institutions. And I think that she is cautiously, and in many ways quite intelligently, trying to manage an orderly transition, but a transition it is. And like most leaders in the west, she is forced by her own voters to pay attention to their demands and that drastically limits the bandwidth that she has for foreign and security policy, including in relations to Europe, where us, you know, the evil experts, think it's badly needed.

MR. LUCE: So we have it's not as bad as it looks and it's worse than it looks

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Yup. (Laughter) Deal with it.

MR. LUCE: Deal with it. No, no, it's ideal for a moderator. I should say we have two Europeans, two Americans. And as it should be, a Brit moderating the difference between the two.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Absolutely. (Laughter) You're very special.

MR. LUCE: Very special. Célia, your President, Macron, finds himself in the unusual position of being a French President who has got the closest relations, a special relationship is now Franco-American. It was under Obama, I think, fair to say more German-American, and historically more British-American. He's clear put and

invested an enormous amount in being, if you like, the Trump whisperer. You know, the sort of body language between them, the contrast between their body language and Trump-Merkel and Trump-May body language is night and day. Yet he doesn't seem as yet to have borne any fruit from that approach.

Talk to us a little bit about what the French diagnosis of is of whether this is a big disruption, it's a real game changer in the transatlantic story. And where you think Macron is going to try and go with it, particularly after last night's national security action.

MS. BELIN: Right. I think the French take the position that it's worse than it looks, but we're okay with it. (Laughter) At this point, contrary to other big European neighbors, certainly contrary to Germany, France has given Trump the benefit of the doubt from the get go, mostly because they were not that happy with Obama. I'm not talking about the French public, but mostly about French diplomacy that has been frustrated with Obama on Syria, for example, and on other fronts. And they also realize that they could share some goals with the Trump Administration, however disruptive it could be, on Syria, in counterterrorism -- Syria, it remains to be seen where it goes, but there was the clear moment of the punitive attack after the use of chemical weapons -- and many other fronts where the proximity between the two Presidents, but also between the two diplomacies and two militaries, was really useful. And, as you saw during the State visit, the State visit was a debauchery of sugar and love going into physical proximity and all of that. But it also guarantees French access to the U.S. President.

What happened afterwards is, of course, the pull out of JCPOA and the sort of a rebuke of all efforts by Macron to negotiate and offer what he called a new deal, so which was sort of an accommodation and potentially a face saving mechanism for Trump if Trump was deciding to pull out of the Iran deal, but was ready to accommodate

his European allies. And Macron realized, as much as everybody, that Trump was not ready to do that. And therefore the State visit now cuts both ways. So it has the great proximity to the U.S. President, but Macron has spent a lot of political capital, both international and domestic, on this visit. Internationally because I think with the new deal and the idea of integrating the three other pillars to the JCPOA he has weakened French position on the nuclear issue, actually. So he was lucky to get Merkel and May on board to strengthen his position, but we see given the Iranian reaction that it's not working very well anyway. And he has spent a lot of domestic capital on this. Trump's approval ratings in France are terrible, it's about 14 percent. And after the pull out of JCPOA, 55 percent of French people said that they disapprove of Macron's strategy in cozying up to Trump.

So he's losing political or he is spending political capital that he needs, and he needs them on other fronts, mostly with his European agenda. But that's the paradox, right. For Macron, I think at this point, is that he's losing all this political capital but at the same time he doesn't want to get into a confrontation with Donald Trump because his European agenda and economic agenda for France are to be a higher priority than the Iran deal or the agenda in the Middle East. So he's not ready to go all confrontational with Trump. He said so in the press conference in Sofia, where he said we're not going to go on a trade war with the United States over Iran, which was a typical position of, you know, complex thinking by the French President, a typical (inaudible) at the same time we're going to be firm on JCPOA but we're not going to go at the same time on trade war with the U.S. And so he has this sort of too clever by half position that is not helping reading his views. But what I get out of it is that Macron's priority remains Europe and European sovereignty and he doesn't want to be hijacked actually by a transatlantic fight at this point.

MR. LUCE: So a little bit later I want to get into the degree to which Macron can channel Europe and act as Europe's leader in that regard. And we'll get a little bit more into Europe.

But, Amanda, so the broad context for this is that at least in the early months of the Trump Administration there was this feeling that either the adults will take over or even when they don't this is just an aberration, Trump is a one off, and we've just got to be patient, we've got to tiptoe around, we've been America's allies in Europe and elsewhere. And, you know, after four years, if not before, you know, we will resume business as normal. I presume that line is less easy to hold up as time goes on.

What's the advice you give now to your European counterparts and colleagues?

MS. SLOAT: I think sort of compared to my colleague's summary up here, my one line summary would be it's that bad, but the problem is on both sides of the Atlantic.

So I was in Brussels a couple of months ago and had a meeting with a European Union official responsible for policy with the U.S. and I asked him how he would characterize their policy, and he said that Europe's policy is to engage with the U.S. in areas of shared interest, to be vocal where there are areas of disagreement, and to stay true to values. Now, I worked on Turkey for many years while I was in the State Department and this policy description made me quite sad, because it sounded like how I used to describe U.S. relations with Turkey. And I understand the rationale for Europe of having that approach, but I think in looking at the lessons learned from U.S.-Turkey policy, it's instructive in the sense that what I used to say to people is that it is a danger to look at bilateral relations in the singular person of the president. And I think in the same

way Erdogan doesn't represent everybody in Turkey, it's also true that Trump does not represent everybody in America.

I was never supportive of what was often a republican talking point of ignore the Tweets, ignore what the President is saying, look at what the policy is because I think the President is ultimately the decider. And, as you said, what we're seeing now moving into the second year of his presidency is he seems to be moving on some of those advisors in the form of Tillerson and McMaster, who disagreed with some of his policies, bringing in people like Pompeo and Bolton, who are much more like minded. Yet at the same time there clearly remain a plurality of views within the country, within congress, and even within the Republican Party, that you have this large number of Never-Trumpers.

So, on one hand, yes, we do have to deal with a President and some of his cabinet members that have difficult views on policy issues that we're going to have to address. At the same time, I think what we are seeing is broader trends on both sides of the Atlantic. And I think Europe in many cases is one bad election away from being a similar place to where the United States is. We have the AFD in Germany, we have Italy this week forming a government with far right parties, and we have attacks on democratic trends in Poland and Hungary.

And so I would expand on what Constanze had said, because I agree that we're in a very unique historical moment, but I actually think it's a bigger moment when there's similar questions being asked on both sides of the Atlantic about the benefits of globalization, about the benefits of some of these international organizations. You know, we have Brexit going on with people in the UK clearly asking questions about the utility of being members of the EU. I just returned from two weeks in the UK and I heard a lot of people articulating similar frustrations on the economic front and the

migration front to what is happening in the conversation here in the United States. So to me there are two separate questions. One is how the EU and European member states deal with Trump specifically on some of these problematic policies, but secondly, and I think this often gets missed in this, there is a broader question for those of us that care about the transatlantic relationship to actually look at what is going on in terms of a lot of these challenges that are common across all of our countries and how we find a way to address those.

MR. LUCE: So a good point. And if I could just recap, it's better than it looks, it's worse than it looks, it's worse than it looks, but we're okay with it, and both sides are bad?

MS. SLOAT: Yes.

MR. LUCE: Okay. Constanze, Amanda makes a very good point about Trump not being American. I mean if you're going to see beyond Trump and deal with the Trump era constructively, that something like what Justin Trudeau did when Trump announced last year that America was withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord, as he said he expressed in a statement disappointment at the action of the U.S. federal government. He then went on to see Jerry Brown and Rahm Emanuel and carry on at very different levels of America, engaging very effectively I think, less so maybe on NAFTA, but.

Is that a fair point, that we should actually be looking in a more sophisticated way at America?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: It's a fair point, but I think we're all doing it. You know, I mean to continue in Amanda's vein, Trump is not America, Merkel is not Germany. We all have these divisions between sort of liberal outward looking mainstream and increasing sort of number of voters who are fearful of the encroachment

of the world on their prosperity and on their safety and who in some cases are perfectly willing to accept authoritarian solutions to what they see as an increase in loss of control by European and American institutions over their lives and over governance. That is I think something that we, you know, all of us sort of liberal mainstreamers have cause to be very concerned over.

The Germans have significant trade and direct investment all across America and spend a great deal engaging underneath the federal level with state governments, with municipalities. German industry is responsible for 700,000 jobs in America. Conversely so is American industry for jobs in Germany. You know, the relationship is far deeper and broader than just the governments. However, we're currently all of us faced with a sort of incredibly difficult and urgent foreign security policy problem where, you know, the Mayor of Chattanooga isn't going to cut it, or the Mayor of (inaudible). It has to be Washington and Berlin and Brussels and Paris, and so on. And we're going to have to use the cards that we have been dealt, and those cards are a very mixed batch.

And so the truth of the matter is, if we're honest here, there is also an element -- the one I've just described also is true for Washington. European diplomats are trying to reach out to people in the NSC and in the State Department and the Pentagon who they think are sympathetic to the transatlantic relationship and who they think are, as it were, containing the disruption coming from the very top. But, as Amanda said, the President has increasingly surrounded himself with people who are capable of weaponizing his attitudes. That's not to say they won't be at odds with each other on significant points, I don't think. But still, you've got a sort of a much clearer vector of hard line views here at the very top. And that makes the engaging more difficult. And so I suspect -- we were talking earlier this morning in a workshop about the implications of

this for the G-7, for relations between Washington and the EU, and for the upcoming NATO summit in July. And I think most of us, frankly, are sort of holding onto our seats and are thinking, you know, I hope I don't get thrown out of the (inaudible), you know, by the middle of the summit. There are real concerns as to how these meetings will go because of the complete unpredictability of what happens at the top. And the Korea summit is the best case for that.

MR. LUCE: It is indeed a very good example. I mean where the rubber is hitting the road right now is on trade. And after last night's action, it --

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: And the aftermath of Iran.

MR. LUCE: And with Iran. And that's where it intersects with Europe's differing view of its own strategic interests to the Trump Administration.

So, Ken, let me press you on the trade front. You mentioned an area where Europeans were hoping to find different ways of working with Trump would be -- Lighthizer with the USTR, in terms of reforming the WTO. So let me just test you on that. In what sense would putting steep tariffs on European car imports on national security grounds be a building block for that kind of common project of reforming the WTO?

MR. WEINSTEIN: It's not the approach I certainly would have taken, it's not what I would have counseled. You know, I think it's an attempt -- the President feels very strongly about tariffs on imported U.S. cars into Europe, and into Germany in particular. And so this is the way that he wants to get it -- really raise the focus on this issue. I think it's a matter of leverage. You know, again, it's not the position I would have taken on it, and it certainly makes it more challenging to try to sit down and find more common ways to work together. But I think, you know, one could envision coming up with a serious package of looking at -- you know, going through what Ambassador Lighthizer has said on the WTO years after years about the kind of what needs to be

done to speed up the appellate process, what needs to be done to improve enforcement, what needs to be done with regard to China, that one could conceivably work on.

I do want to say one thing. I think the President is actually very straightforward. He keeps his word. During the campaign he said Iran deal, terrible deal, worst deal ever negotiated, we're leaving. Jerusalem, capital of Israel, we're moving our embassy there. And on trade, he's been very clear. Even during the campaign said that if Kim Jong-Un were to give up his nuclear weapons I'd welcome him to the White House. I think he does have a clearer vision on these matters than is ascribed to. I think there has been -- the change internally has now given him the opportunity to look at policy options that are more in his wheelhouse than before, which is disconcerting to the Europeans certainly.

MR. LUCE: You're doing a very eloquent job of defending what he's done and you're right, that he's sort of stuck to what he pledged on the campaign trail. One of the things that he pledged again and again was America first, which is acting unilaterally or bilaterally in terms of what you're recommending in terms of acting in Europe in concert with China, which I think is probably a very necessary thing given the 2025 China ambitions, is multilateral. It is exactly the opposite of what Trump promised.

So my question -- sorry to press you on this, but it seems to me the fundamental sort of diagnosis we're talking about here -- is if the last few weeks and months of Trump are how things will go on for the next two and a half years, what's the transatlantic relationship going to look like?

MR. WEINSTEIN: Great question. No, look, I think the President, you know, will continue to -- look, I think on the transatlantic relationship, I think the key part of the transatlantic relationship is NATO. I think that, you know, that our commitment to NATO is clear, it's strong, it goes -- it's not being challenged. The President certainly

wants NATO members to increase their spending in that area obviously. But I also think that we're not going to -- I think the NATO summits will focus on probably second tier level issues rather than major issues where there could be huge divides and room for uncertainty.

On trade, I think eventually we're going to have to find some kind of way to accommodate some of the things the President wants and I think in exchange that the Europeans will find the President will accommodate them as well as part of a negotiating process.

On the JCPOA, that's, you know, look --

SPEAKER: Not much accommodation there.

MR. WEINSTEIN: Well, there could be. I mean I don't think the door is entirely closed. The President thought that the original deal was doomed from the -- was, you know, tainted by an original sin, which that the Iranians were still allowed to process fuel all along. And so the question is, can a more creative approach be put into place to come up with a deal that doesn't -- that sort of squares the circle and goes beyond -- and goes in the direction of what the President wanted with regard to North Korea. You know, it's certainly a possibility, but it is a significant challenge.

MR. LUCE: I mean I want to encourage you to disagree without waiting for me to moderate, but let me in the meantime just make you the spokesperson for Europe as opposed to just France, because both Amanda and Ken make very good points that Europe isn't exactly stepping up to the place, as the Eurozone, the European Union isn't exactly stepping up to the plate. We mentioned earlier there is an Italian populist government now in place, which, you know, poses a pretty sort of direct threat to the rules of the Eurozone. There are couple of hundred billion euros there of Italian debt that they've talked about repudiating. They are going to probably walk away from the

Russia sanctions, so Italy will no longer participate in the Russia sanctions. And Macron has this great plan to overhaul the fiscal and the banking rules of the Eurozone and revise the Franco-German motor. It doesn't look like it's happening, it doesn't look like Europe alone means much. Lots of Europe is alone. Seems to be a more accurate description.

So if you're somebody advising Trump, saying, Mr. President, Europe hasn't got its act together and it's not likely to, it's pretty hard to argue with that, isn't it? And Germany, of course, is not even planning to spend anything like two percent on defense.

MS. BELIN: Actually, I believe that on transatlantic relations it's a time of awakening for Europeans. It's an understanding that things that might have worked before are not working anymore. And part of the reason is also that, as you pointed out, Europe is in a weakened position itself, because it's inward looking, because of Brexit, because it's facing populist challenges, it's facing emerging political parties that are pushing out the status quo and that are questions basic even foreign policy consensus. That is true, but it's also a moment when Europe starts realizing that now the United States has pushed for an era of competition, and it's competition not only with rivals, but also with allies, also with the European Unions, also with individual European member states. And this era of competition has been pointed out both in the national security strategy of this Administration, the national defense strategy of the Administration, and somehow it took us, you know, the pull out of the JCPOA to really realize that, you know, the interest of European allies will not be taken into account.

And at this point, in this era of competition, I think the question for Europeans is do you fight back, how much do you fight back, and is it worth fighting back, and for what. And where Europeans are united, the fight is not going to be that hard, or

at least, you know, it's easier to be united on climate, it's clearer that Europe needs to be united on trade. But to take some particular example, Iran being one, but also very recently we saw that Jerusalem, for example, being another example of deep division within the European Union and a risk of separating eastern Europe from western Europe, or some division, including on the trade fronts, that could be played out by Americans been French and Germans, for example.

So during that time of increased competition, including with the U.S., it is really important that Europe stays united and it is really important the Europeans project moves forward. So that's where Macron's proposals come in. Obviously, so far, he hasn't had very good answer or no answer at all on the German side, and that's an extremely worrying element. But I think he's trying to keep some sort of unity, at least an apparent unity on some of the main challenges, so that they can continue the conversation on Europe. Because I think we're facing a sort of race against the clock there, between the moment where Europe continues to integrate itself so that it's strong enough to stand on its own once, you know, this order collapses.

MR. LUCE: So I mean Iran is probably the area that's got the most fissile potential here. And you've got so far European unity with the EU3, France, Britain, and Germany. You've got a pretty firm line that this is not the right way to go ahead, we're going to stick to together, we want the IAEA to continue the inspections regime in Iran. Do you think that's going to hold? How is that going to evolve in the coming weeks, particularly after today's North Korea announcement?

MS. BELIN: I would say it's a firm line, but it's not the firmest maybe. I don't know if you remember after Trump announced the pullout from the Paris Climate Agreement, Macron went on TV and did a speech in English and talked about make our planet great again, and he did really a push for American scientists to come and live in

Paris, et cetera. So there was a sort of individual provocation against Trump's decision. He didn't do that this time. And I think he's being more cautious and -- being at the time united and cautious, probably because they have already realized that, you now, European companies are going to leave Iran. There's not forcing Total to stay invested in Iran when its interests are much higher on the American market, that they can only -- you know, the roadblocks that they might put in place are going to serve only a few SMEs here and there in Italy and Germany.

And so, at the end of the day, it's important to be symbolically firm on the question, but I bet that the conversation are that other challenges, even more pressing and more important for European interests, such as trade, will come up in this transatlantic conversation. And that's where maybe the fight will get even harder.

MR. LUCE: So it sounds like -- and Constanze and Ken, please also answer this question, but I'm posing it to Amanda -- it sounds line on Iran and maybe other areas, you know, America is still the most powerful country in the world. We can imagine a world after Trump that we're probably going to see more very reluctant and irritable accommodation to this unusual, in European eyes, hopefully uniquely unusual American President, but not a complete open transatlantic breach. Is that a reasonable expectation of how the next year or two is going to play out?

MS. SLOAT: I mean I think we're seeing some of that in the near-term as a European effort to try and accommodate some of what Trump is asking for. I mean we have been seeing an increase in a number of European countries in terms of defense spending. I think Europeans made a good faith effort to try and come a long way toward meeting some of Trump's demands on the JCPOA. I think they have been trying to find areas to compromise on other things. I mean the problem is going to be if this ends up

continuing in the longer-term, having an American President that is overtly seen as being a bully, is going to be problematic.

And to come back to the earlier point that I was making, I think it is going to be really interesting to see how the EU responds. And I completely agree with everything that Celia was saying. I mean the Europeans have had a tendency to develop their foreign policy either in support of or in opposition to what the Americans do. And I think what has caused some confusion over the first year of the Trump Administration is there has been so much disruption and unpredictability that it's been a little bit difficult for the Europeans to know where the President was going to go and how to posture in response. Although, as Ken said, the President has been very good at fulfilling his commitments. And this debate about whether we take him seriously or literally has shown that we in fact need to do both. But, you know, if there was a silver lining for this, the question would be whether or not the EU could actually develop a much more singular and coherent foreign policy and become a much stronger actor on the global stage as a coherent body. But again, as Celia and other here have discussed, a lot of these growing internal ruptures within the EU itself are going to make that challenging.

MR. LUCE: So, Constanze, let me put it to you then. Sorry to put you and force you as a German spokesman, but the new coalition government's refusal to lift the defense spending target, the fact that it's aiming for a Maastricht debt criteria to get Germany's debt to below 60 percent, the fact that that is undoubtedly going to decrease growth by hoarding German savings in the Club Med countries, Italy most notably, this is isn't a way for Europe to take destiny into its own hands, it's a strategy for Europe to fragment isn't it?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Yes.

MR. LUCE: Okay. I was hoping you were going to elaborate.

(Laughter)

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: I can, of course, elaborate.

MR. LUCE: You are not the spokesperson for the German government, you are the explainer.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Look, I am certainly not a spokesperson. That won't stop me from occasionally agreeing with things that the German government does, but I will do that on my own dime, as it were, and when it suits me. And on many of these things that you've just named I think that we are engaging in very short-term sort of very narrowly defined national and actually domestically calculated sort of policy that I think is not in our own enlightened national and European self-interest. It's that simple.

I mean, we can go into endless discussions about each and every one of the points that you listed, but I think what Germans often fail to understand and what I really do think German leaders have an obligation to put to the voter in as stark terms as possible, and the terms that I'm now going to use, is that we are seen, for better or for worse, within Europe as the 800 pound gorilla in the room, particularly with Brexit. And that if you look at the capability and power differentials in Europe, whether they're social, economic, or political, they are immense, they are in fact growing, and that puts an onus of responsibility on Germany that it is currently not carrying. And that is true for I think asking us to have a more expansionary policy for the Eurozone and for growth and reducing unemployment in Europe south. And it's true for defense as well and security.

I think that the two percent goal is one that you can quibble with, but in general we ought to be spending a lot more. And I think the way I put it -- if I were chancellor, the way I would put it to the voters is to say look, European and NATO enlargement in the 1990s had the wonderful result of surrounding Germany with a buffer

of friends. What we have been somewhat slower in noticing is that this has also exported all our security problems to the same friends. In other words, we have delegated our problems to them. We used to be a (speaking in German), a front line state in the Cold War, and all of that is now situated on the borders of the Baltics, on Romania, or indeed on the southern periphery. The Italians are taking care of refugees, et cetera. And we ought to, by rights, to bear a larger part of that burden.

That said, I'm not going to be defense minister or chancellor, so, you know, who cares what I say.

MR. LUCE: Underlying all of this, both sides of Atlantic, is populism. And they are varying causes. Country by country, we each have our own unique forms of unhappiness. But there is a general trend here towards antiestablishment politics. It's gone further in some countries than others. Obviously, the United States, it's in the White House. In Britain, it's in the driving seat. And it's at the wings, quite menacingly --

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: In Germany.

MR. LUCE: -- in Germany and --

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Absolutely.

MR. LUCE: -- France and pretty much everywhere. Who is going to -- what's the common sort of western liberal democratic conversation going to be about? Who is having it? Who is going to stand up for the values of the west that we are used to hearing usually American presidents champion? Who is going to be doing that? I mean I think this is the sort of base of the pudding, if you like, of everything we're talking about. It wouldn't be happening but for populism. And all of you should chip in on this.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: If I might briefly sort of just take the side of people like Merkel and her generation. And I say this because I'm somewhat in between -- and I have mixed feelings about this myself -- I think Germans of a certain generation

have a particular allergy against pathos. The kind of democratic pathos that comes much more easily to the lips of Americans, of Emmanuel Macron, that sounds sort of vaguely Churchillian. I have tremendous sympathy with that. But we are burned by the memories of both Marxism and Communism in eastern Germany and the hollow phrases that were used to seduce or to bludgeon people at the time. And so there is a German sort of refusal of pathos that I think is often misread as a refusal to share the values. I think that that is not true. I think that the Germans are profoundly worried about what is going on. And certainly the foreign and community policy community is in deep alarm over this.

I think that there are very urgent conversations going on everywhere in my own country and across Europe, and indeed in this town, as I think many of us know. But, in the end, this is for political leaders. Political leaders have to take this to the people and to the voters and have to be willing to put down their chips. And I would say that Chancellor Merkel, in the twilight of her long rule, bears a certain moral responsibility to stand in the Bundenstag, or in front of an open mic, and to say to German citizens where we are, and to say that this is an exceptional situation that requires exceptional measures and exceptional commitments and sacrifices. It doesn't have to be sort of the whole blood, sweat, and tears routine, but I think we are very close to that kind of situation.

MR. LUCE: And if I could just sort of be provoking, if it's not blood, sweat, and tears, it's German spending.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Absolutely, German spending. And, you know --

MR. LUCE: It's exactly the opposite.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: You know, were we could take this up? Let me respond to that last point. A lot of Germans in retrospect were angry with her pre-

predecessor, Chancellor Kohl, for saying in another earlier seminal moment of Germany unification, this ain't gonna cost us, it will pay for itself, and there will be blühende landschaft, flowering landscapes, everywhere. Now, the current bill for unification is 20 billion euros and rising. And, you know what, it was worth every single frikken cent. And that is what Kohl should have said at the time, and that is what we should say now. Let us not kid ourselves, it is going to cost us and it will cost a ton, but, you know what, the alternative to not doing it is horrific, and we will regret it for the rest of our lives if we don't do this. And so it will be worth every cent. And that is what Kohl should have said at the time, and that is what we should say now. Let us not kid ourselves, it is going to cost us and it will cost a ton, but, you know what, the alternative to not doing it is horrific, and we will regret it for the rest of our lives if we don't do this. And so it will be worth every cent.

MR. LUCE: I like the word "frikken". Thank you. (Laughter)

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: I pulled myself together by my standards.

MR. LUCE: Ken, what's your answer to that question?

MR. WEINSTEIN: First, if Chancellor Merkel would speak the way that Constanze did, I think that the U.S.-German relationship would actually be in a much stronger position actually.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Not quite sure that I can see that, but thank you anyway. (Laughter)

MR. WEINSTEIN: But, look, we're at a challenging moment in world affairs in which leaders are more focused on interests than they are on making the broader case for human rights for the west. But these concepts have been under assault in our universities and elsewhere, so it makes it hard to make this case more broadly. And when you look around the world, there are very few world leaders who are willing to

make the case, one of them being Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel, who was very frank, very up front, and is not immensely liked when he does.

So I would say this though in defense of the President that when is acutely aware when there is -- when he saw pictures of the Syrian children who had been gassed, he is willing to take action. When he met with families of Japanese who have been held by the North Koreans, or with relative of Venezuelans held in prison, he has actually moved on these issues, even though he doesn't think in this broad abstract way and he is definitely someone more focused on interests. But I think he has a sense of some of these things even though he doesn't talk in quite that same way.

MR. LUCE: Okay. I'm going to --

SPEAKER: Well, he also met with the Parkland students and then backed down in the face of the NRA.

MR. WEINSTEIN: Yeah, but he showed a willingness to -- because he's not someone who is totally out of kind of the Washington world, he did show willingness. He doesn't -- he is able to sort of see outside of conventional policy lines at times, even if he did go back to, you know.

MS. SLOAT: Could I just?

MR. LUCE: Please.

MS. SLOAT: The challenge for the left, I mean to answer your question, is who is going to be making the affirmative case for the benefit of the transatlantic relationship, and specifically for the importance of alliances, because right now it is the President that has the bully pulpit, the one who is seen out there. And, frankly, it's a much more emotionally appealing case to talk about how Europe is ripping us off and we're being taken advantage of and that's why we're losing our jobs, and all the rest of it than to be making the case in the other direction.

You know, and to answer your question about where that answer is going to be found, you know, it's certainly not going to be in conference rooms in Washington. So I've been spending a lot of time over the last year, and colleagues have as well, to get out of Washington and to go out into America and to speak with people. You know, I grew up in the Midwest, so I don't have to go any further than home to talk to people that share a lot of the skepticism about what is happening.

And I think memories are short and with generational change there is less awareness or necessarily appreciation of the importance of the alliance. If you look at students who are in college today, you know, most of them were born after 9/11 happened. And so they don't have any memory of the world before 9/11, let alone a generation that grew up during the Cold War, let alone the generation that was there in the ashes of World War II. That was the foundation for the construction of a lot of these institutions. So I think for those of us that care about the transatlantic alliance and remain committed to it, there needs to be a much more affirmative agenda to be able to persuade people why it's important, and also to continue to find ways across the alliance, to focus on some of these bigger challenges that we're facing.

MR. LUCE: What would that agenda be? What would it sound like? How would an updated western transatlantic case sound?

MS. SLOAT: If I had a great answer to that I would write a good paper for Brookings and distribute it. I mean that really is the challenge. And I'm actually quite curious, you know, ten years from now, what we think looking back on that period, because I feel very conscious of the fact that there are shifts under way, but I frankly find it difficult yet sitting in the middle of these shifts to have a clear sense of what is happening and how best to respond to it because you clearly have a large number of

people on both sides of the Atlantic that are questioning the benefits of globalization and trade.

We haven't talked at all about the disruptive effects of technology, which on one hand are positive, on the other hand are only going to continue to get worse as we have more people that are displaced from their jobs as technology continues to grow.

But, frankly, for me, if you look around the world and you see all of the challenges that are facing us, they're simply too big for any one country, including the United States, to deal with by themselves. Things like some of these technology challenges, things like climate change, like terrorism. You know, talking a lot about China and Russia. And so I think these differences that we have between us are important. I think these challenges that we're facing within the country itself are significant. And so there's an ongoing struggle with how best to respond to this. And I think the left in both the United States and Europe has really lost a lot of the explanatory power and the ability to make a compelling case in response.

MR. LUCE: And your point about generation, earlier this year I think the Berlin Wall -- had passed the date where the Berlin Wall had been down longer than it had been up. And to me, I mean as a student travelled there when it was going down, and I had a frikken good time (laughter) on the wall watching your country unify. And that's a long time ago. That is a long time ago.

Célia, what is your -- we're going to go to the audience in a second, what is your sort of bigger philosophical answer?

MS. BELIN: So there's a conversation in France about the liberal world order, even if France was never a big fan of this liberal world order who always felt like a U.S. dominated world order. And when you're talking about the fading starlight of the

American president in being the beacon for freedom, I think the French president is right there and offering himself as a potential candidate for that position.

The fact of the matter is you talked about the populist wave, and Macron was a part of the populist wave. Contrary to the image that he has, that he is the ultimate technocrat coming from inside the system, he was also an outsider, a disruptive figure, who has pushed an anti-establishment agenda to the point that he has obliterated the mainstream parties in France, he has renewed the French political class, including inside the Parliament. And so that's sort of his answer to the populist challenge from the extreme right and extreme left in France, in particular. But it's also an answer that fuels it, because now the legitimate opposition to Macron sort of passed by those one-two extremes.

His answer on a more global scene is actually European sovereignty. And what does European sovereignty -- he talks about European sovereignty, he talks about Europe, a Europe that protects. So it's sort of a protectionist agenda, but at the European level. And this idea is to go out of the sort of typical opposition between nationalist and globalist, right, and he would fit squarely in the globalist camp in that case. And he knows how unpopular that is and he knows also the effect on the population and the backlash against globalization. And the idea is therefore to provide a sort of European unified answer. That's why France and the U.S. have had conversations on the China challenge, on fair trade with China. And that's one of the few areas where maybe a transatlantic positive evolution is possible on China. Let's see if that's even in the works at this point.

But it's clearly the ambition of France at the moment to provide a sort of safe space for Europeans that at least even if they are submitted, as you said, to the risk

of technology and free trade, at least Europe will be the echelon to which they could be protected.

MR. LUCE: Just very quickly before we go to the audience, I'll press you on what I pressed Constanze, unless Merkel responds to Macron's plans to reboot the rules of the Eurozone we're not going to get the kind of growth -- we're actually now getting an America and therefore going to get more populism, right? I mean a lot of Macron's ambitions rest on Merkel's willingness to facilitate them.

MS. BELIN: Absolutely. And it's a bet. And Macron is famous for doing big bets with very high rewards and very high risk at the same time. And he is just running forward, believing in what he does. Probably that's why he took sort of the easy exit out with the JCPOA fight and not fought to -- you know, he didn't want to be the (inaudible) figure out there of French opposition to the U.S. and have his whole tenure being hijacked by this confrontation. That's probably why he did that. But it's true, he has a very ambitious agenda and he needs the Germans and he will do whatever he can to get them on board, but he's also diversifying, he's going to see the Spanish and he's now, you know, with the Italians going to be even hard. It's a bet and we shall see where it leads.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: And Merkel is currently in China.

MR. LUCE: And Merkel is currently in China. So, yes, questions. I think there are microphones. And making questions, not statements, and short and to the point. So, the gentleman there.

MR. STACEY: Jeff Stacey. When I was at the State Department, like many people in this room, we dealt with our European counterparts in slightly better days. But my first year out of undergrad I went to work in London for Sir Edward Health in his parliamentary office. And for those of you who know, he is the UK's father of Europe, or

was. And just last year I arrived in the UK the day after Brexit to be there for a week, not knowing that that date would in any way be significant. And over the course of the week and discussions with a number of British friends, commiserations, they all sort of said, but aren't you worried about Mr. Trump. And I think like any American would have answered the question, not knowing what we know now, I said don't worry about it. And here we are. Things are much worse, we're all reeling, and we were all wrong.

The question that I have is wasn't Sigmar Gabriel also wrong when he declared that the U.S. is permanently changed, and don't our European friends realize that both parties lost on Election Day. Donald Trump has alienated the entire U.S. foreign policy establishment, almost, and can't France and Germany and a few others do some of the leading until we can sort ourselves out?

MR. LUCE: And is your question on -- who would like to pick that up? Constanze, you want to?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Well, that was a lot of questions. But I mean I think it has not escaped notice that the republican and the democratic political leadership are in some disarray at the national level and that it might take a sort of change at the grassroots, perhaps in the midterms, for there to be some movement there. But it's been one of the shocking insights I think of this election. But then, again, I don't want this to sound as though I as a European am being condescending to the Americans. I am far too conscious of the instability of the party political systems and, indeed, in my own country to think that way.

And I mean, again, we have to deal with the cards that we are dealt. Governments have to deal with each other, we can't go -- you know, we can't sort of deal with an imaginary government, an air government, as it were. That's not an option here. I mean maybe it's a betting option, but otherwise, not for the kind of things we're dealing

with. So I feel that we are going to have to go on, you know, trying to work with the people who we can work with. And I think that -- I mean on NATO issues there were a lot of people that it is possible to work with in this government. On Iran it's much difficult. And I think the challenge that we're finding now with America is that we have to at the same time define our own interests much more clearly and pursue them much more clearly and much more forthrightly, and still keep trying to hold out for areas in which we can find even minimal agreement with the hardliners, or at least figure out how they work.

And if that sounds perilously like what maybe we would describe Prussia policy as, or China policy as, yes, that is one of the problems of the age.

MS. BELIN: May I?

MR. LUCE: Please.

MS. BELIN: I think what Europeans are just realizing, and need to realize actually, is that all of this was also about U.S. domestic politics first and foremost. The decision on Iran was a campaign promise and it was irrelevant that Europeans and Americans had negotiated for months. Trump still went ahead with it and took this disruptive decision. So at some point there needs to be a recognition that there is no point in negotiating when you already know the ending. You should start and maybe preparing the fallout because Trump is excellent at, you know, what I call the hot potato technique. So he is creating burning hot situations and the he's passing it on to rivals and partners for them to deal with it. And so we have to now spend political capital and all of our energy in dealing with situations that we know are going our way, tariffs are going to be imposed, most probably, and therefore we need to know which way we're going after that.

MS. SLOAT: Can I just add? I mean on one hand, you can make the case that things ebb and flow. I mean you had very difficult relations in 2003 between the

United States and Europe over the Iraq war, you could argue Obama almost got a Nobel Peace Prize for not being Bush (laughter), and there was happiness that things were swinging in the other direction. So on one hand some of these things tend to be somewhat cyclical. On the other hand, the longer there is an absence of genuine American global leadership, the harder that is to be replaced. You know, we're only 18 months into this Presidency, it is not inconceivable that Trump could get reelected. And I think we've seen the strength of a lot of the democratic institutions in this country, we've seen the strength of congress, of courts, of journalists, of civil society, but I think people also can get tired of fighting.

And while you have an absence of leadership other countries are going to come in and fill the vacuum. I think you've seen this in Syria. You could also make the case that that predated Trump as well. But the analogy that I've used is like the high school boyfriend who goes off to college for four years and then he reappears on your doorstep and is like, hey, I'm back. It's like, well, my life has moved on in four years. (Laughter) And so for me the --

SPEAKER: A Russian guy?

MS. SLOAT: Yes, I started dated a Russian guy while you were gone. (Laughter)

SPEAKER: And the Chinese are sending flowers.

MS. SLOAT: Exactly, exactly. So, for me, that ends up being the longer-term concern. I mean I believe ultimately there are enough shared values within the transatlantic relationship that that is going to be sustained in some form, despite some of the differences and the turbulence we have now.

My concern is on this broader geostrategic level, what it ends up looking like when you have a lack of leadership by the United States and also if Europe cannot

end up developing a more coherent foreign policy without western transatlantic leadership that others who may be less favorable to us end up coming and filling the vacuum.

MR. LUCE: Ken?

MR. WEINSTEIN: Look, I'd say, first of all, that a lot of the trends that came out in this election long pre-dated this election in terms of Americans wanting to focus at home, not wanting to focus abroad, concerns about burden sharing, which were articulated in a less blunt matter, obviously, by Secretary Gates and President Obama than Donald Trump has chosen to do. But with regard to allies, he has chosen to listen to other allies, he's chosen to listen to Saudis, to the Israelis, about their concerns about Iran. The Iran deal was not a U.S. treaty. President Obama didn't take either the Paris Accord or the Iran deal to the U.S. senate, and for good reason -- they wouldn't have been made into treaties by our country. These were not treaties, these were agreements and the President, given the way the legislation was set up, had the right to abrogate them and chose to do so after a serious consideration of the policy implications, what Iran was up to, what it meant for the broader region, what it mean to the allies in the region we are closest to.

SPEAKER: But if they go with a bomb we're left sitting.

MR. WEINSTEIN: I would severely doubt that they -- I was never convinced that the agreement, such as it was constructed, was going to prevent them from getting the bomb. Within a few months after the deal would have expired they could have gone ahead and put the weaponized material onto the missiles that we allowed them to build. So I would severely disagree.

MR. LUCE: Thank you, Ken. Let's try and get through quicker questions and quicker answers. (Laughter) You I saw with your hand up first, the gentleman in the

front row. And then the lady in the second row and the gentleman in the third -- these are going to have to be machine gunned questions, no biographies please.

SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you. (Inaudible), Belgian Embassy. I wanted to pick up on the last point and the flow of the excellent panel. We have been there before. And you referred to 15-16-17 years ago in transatlantic relations was not just about Iraq, but you had Kyoto, we had (inaudible). So we have been there before, we overcame the tensions, even the threats that were expressed at that time. So I really want to focus my question, what is really different? Could you really go into a bit more depth, what is different? At that time the change of mind eventually came mainly from the sitting U.S. administration. So my question is, is a new change of mind today really excluded?

MR. LUCE: And this is directed at which panelist?

SPEAKER: You pick. I mean maybe the two ladies to the --

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Why don't we take three questions and then we can --

MR. LUCE: I can't take three -- let's accumulate two or three questions. And the lady in the second row in the blue dress.

MS. ORCHOWSKI: Thank you. Peggy Orchowski; I'm a congressional correspondent with *Hispanic Outlook Magazine*. You haven't mentioned the migration problem at all. And it seems to me that is the biggest challenge to globalization, kind of a "disrecognition" of a sovereignty of a state, which I think what was behind almost of this now. So how are you seeing the handling of huge migration waves in terms of sovereign nation states' rights to control their borders?

MR. LUCE: Thank you. And then the gentleman two rows behind her with his hand up.

SPEAKER: Is it fair to say that the more autocratic a foreign leader is the greater respect Trump has for him?

MR. LUCE: We'll get a fourth in and then we'll sort of do roundup questions. So I've got them in my hand.

MR. DADUSH: Uri Dadush with the OCP Policy Center. My question is Europe needs the best strategy for the next 30 years, not for the next 2. Is much closer ties with China the best strategy?

MR. LUCE: Okay. So is China the way forward for Europe, is Trump really enamored of autocrats, (inaudible) will get you nowhere, migration is the big issue, and what's so different about now. These are different kinds of questions, but you are all skilled synthesizers (laughter). Who would like to weave together some answers?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: That's a dare, isn't it?

MR. LUCE: It was a dare.

MS. SLOAT: I will answer the first question, which I think followed up on comments that I've made, and I will leave it to my colleagues to synthesize.

I mean, to me one of the things that I think is most different, and it's why I focused on this in my opening remarks, is that I think we're seeing challenges to the institutions and some challenges to some of these value. I mean I think we are going to have differences of opinion about where we conduct war, about trade imbalances, about other things. To me the thing that is most concerning about Trump is the challenges to some of these fundamental democratic principles, the attacks on journalists, the attacks on the courts, the attacks on some of the institutions. And, again, if you look at some of these conversations in Europe, there have been some similar attacks and questioning of things. In particular, if you look at Poland and Hungary, where you have had questions about judicial independence, you've had questions about media independence, to me it's

that these things we have taken for granted, even in 2003 when we had some of these policy differences, is that there was a fundamental agreement about the rules of the game, about the nature of democratic institutions, and about the way these battles and disagreements were being conduct. And so to me the thing that I'm most concerned about in the near-term is this fundamental attack, or even questioning of some of these democratic institutions, including the importance of these transatlantic institutions.

MR. LUCE: Ken, go ahead.

MR. WEINSTEIN: The healing of the transatlantic relationship began in my mind after the Iraq War when the National Security Council invited the French in to talk about -- French Ambassador to talk in NSC discussions about what to do about Lebanon. And I think that there are concrete ways that Europeans and Americans can work together. And the President, for all the criticism of him not being a multilateralist and the like, and his own admission that he isn't, has found a surprisingly good working relationship with Secretary-General Guterres at the United Nations where there has been a focus on reform, and in sight of this, has met with him; Nikki Haley talks about it. So I think that there are ways to work on concrete areas of reform in line with this agenda.

With regard to autocrats, he doesn't have a special respect either for, you know, the free leader in Iran, a special respect for Kim Jong-Un. There's a long list of autocrats whom he doesn't particularly care for, Mr. Erdogan, not high on the list. So I think that's a wrong understanding.

MR. LUCE: You don't think he envies them?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Okay, that's an answer.

MR. WEINSTEIN: Okay, that's different question. No, I think there are probably some things that I think anybody in power would like to have, but I don't -- certainly not those autocrats.

MS. BELIN: Maybe if I can follow up on that?

MR. LUCE: Yes, Célia.

MS. BELIN: I think what we are all discovering, especially Europeans, but also Americans, is that the U.S. President is actually more powerful than we imagined, including internally. Sometimes this country doesn't feel that much as this great democracy with checks and balances that you mentioned earlier because Trump has been able to take drastically radical decisions without almost any counterweight. And, actually, he is changing U.S. standing in the world and U.S. position, or the relationship with allies, or the relationship with rivals without much checks. If you don't respect congressional opinion or if you don't respect the opinion of the opposition, if you don't play by the rules, you realize that the U.S. President is a sort of a great autocrat and that he has much, at least as much power at his disposal.

MR. LUCE: On the global stage.

MS. BELIN: On the global stage on foreign policy, I'm saying. Not as much on domestic policy where we see court battles, where we see a lot of pushback. And therefore I don't think he has -- the question is not so much the fascination with other autocratic leaders, it's just that he's very transactional on the world stage. And so whoever can bring an interesting transaction is interesting to Donald Trump.

I think the diagnosis, which is a diagnosis that has been shared by, you know, the Tea Party wing of the Republican Party, is that previous presidents, in particular Obama, did not use American power to its full potential, and therefore obtained suboptimal results with this foreign policy. And therefore Trump is pushing for much stronger American foreign policy using full spectrum of American power, mostly economic though at this point, sanctions and trade, to get the most out of others.

MR. LUCE: Thank you. Constanze?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: I would like to speak to that please. And I was going to say something about migration, but this strikes me as -- forgive me -- actually more important. And I'm going to disagree with you, Célia. And maybe it's because I'm a lawyer and sort of have an abiding respect and affection for the American Constitution. I think that what this current season in American politics shows is that you can have a remarkably good constitution and remarkably well designed institutions, but if your politics have become -- and I'm going to go out on a limb and say rotten, then you will find that it is possible to undermine even the greatest of constitutional of orders. And I think that is what is happening here. I think we have here an American President who has expressed either deliberately or explicitly or implicitly contempt for the most foundational principles of American Constitutional order, the balance and separation of powers, the protection of minorities against the tyranny of the majority, the freedoms, and so on.

And there is one additional point that presidents have tended to respect, and that's -- this quote comes from somewhere else -- it is the respect for the decent opinion of mankind. And I think it is all these things, the obeying the presets that have made previous American presidents great, but it is ultimately the recognition that even they are limited in what they are allowed to do domestically and internationally. And this is the first president we're seeing who is testing that by suggesting and succeeding in exceeding those limits of the decent opinion of mankind and of his own citizens.

And we're going to see where that leads. Right now I think that people are -- institutions and the American electorate are reacting with exhaustion and stress. I think at some point they might bounce back. I'm guessing that the midterms might be a case for that.

And so, forgive me. I don't want to be rude. Again, I can see very similar things happening in my own country and elsewhere in Europe. I'm not in the least

suggesting that America is unique there. But I do think that this is a uniquely concerning situation right now.

MR. LUCE: Thank you. Because I'm innately a fair minded person (laughter), I'm going to take the last question for myself. (Laughter) And I'm going to ask you each just to give a yes or no answer on the most important event in the coming years for the future of the west and transatlantic relations, which is simply, starting with you, Ken, will Trump be reelected in 2020?

MR. WEINSTEIN: Yes.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Possible.

MR. LUCE: That's not yes or no. (Laughter)

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Okay, no.

MS. BELIN: Yes.

MS. STOUT: I'll go with yes.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: So you're not the most optimistic one.

MR. LUCE: I'm going to think of something cheerful in the closing 15 seconds. (Laughter) It eludes me. Sorry. But it was a great panel. (Laughter) Thank you very much. (Applause)

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