

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

FASCISM: A CONVERSATION WITH
MADELEINE ALBRIGHT AND STROBE TALBOTT

Washington, D.C.

Friday, September 7, 2018

Welcome:

CHRISTIAN HÄNEL
Senior Vice President, International Relations America and Asia
Robert Bosch Stiftung

Introduction:

JOHN R. ALLEN
President
The Brookings Institution

Discussants:

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT
Chair
Albright Stonebridge Group

STROBE TALBOTT
Distinguished Fellow in Residence
The Brookings Institution

* * * * *

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. HÄNEL: Good morning. Ladies and gentlemen, a very warm welcome to all of you on behalf of our host, the Brookings Institution, and the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the Robert Bosch Foundation from Stuttgart, Germany. And a big thank you to our colleagues at Brookings for hosting us today. My name is Christian Hänel; I'm senior vice president, international relations America and Asia at the Robert Bosch Stiftung. And today's conversation on fascism is embedded in our Brookings-Bosch Transatlantic Initiative, BBTI. The BBTI aims at promoting dialogue and cooperation on current topics of trans-Atlantic relevance, and whoa, how timely and relevant Secretary Albright's books is, ladies and gentlemen. And I would say on both sides of the Atlantic.

It is my conviction that as a German foundation we carry a particular responsibility to protect and promote human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. We do this in the spirit of our founder, the entrepreneur and philanthropist, Robert Bosch, who some 100 years ago declared as his guiding principle "never forget your humanity and respect human dignity in your dealings with others". Given my country's history, we carry a particular responsibility in keeping us all alert and when strongmen and autocrats are on the rise.

Mark Twain allegedly (laughter) -- allegedly once had said -- we all know this -- history does not repeat itself but it rhymes. Demagogues who divide and conquer societies and its institutions are not a historical phenomenon limited to the 20th century. As a matter of fact, they're enjoying a pretty strong showing today in the old world and in the new world. Secretary Albright's book is identifying parallels that help understand and effectively tackle the challenge in front of us. Uncomfortable parallels between past and present and between Europe and the United States. We all must pay attention to her warning so that future historians will not write they did not see or they underestimated the warning signs when they write about us one day.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm a historian by training. I'm a big fan of Secretary Albright's and I think the topic of her new book is one of the most important issues for our societies today. So I could really, really dive deeper here, but I won't (laughter) because the BBTI is a very strong, fruitful, and trustful partnership and I don't want to endanger that partnership by going over time because my -- and this is what it says in my logistical orders here, no more than three minutes please (laughter), and my no more than three minutes please come to an end.

I have the honor of turning things over to General John Allen, president of the Brookings Institution. As you know, of course, John Allen is a retired U.S. Marine Corps General and the former commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan. Throughout his career John Allen has come to know and understand the challenges to social cohesion across the globe. And he has demonstrated a deep commitment and leadership in the context of civil discourse, collegiality, and international collaboration. We at Bosch proudly share these values.

John once stated, we must be a force for unity in America, for a vision that includes all of us. We must choose hope. These words are a strong reminder for the need for inclusive politics and facing the challenges of today.

General, the floor is yours.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

GENERAL ALLEN: Well, good morning, ladies and gentlemen. And, Christian, thank you for that wonderful set of introductory remarks and my introduction as well. I am very grateful for that. A warm welcome to you all, whether you're in the audience today or joining us over webcast. We are very grateful for you joining us this morning and to be part of this day.

But, also, let me take a moment to thank the partnership that we have and to acknowledge the partnership and to thank the Bosch Foundation. We're able to do things together here at Brookings which would not be possible without the support and

the partnership that we have with your organization, Christian. So we're very grateful. And we think that there's much work to do and we look forward to continuing that work together.

We are very honored this morning to have with us Secretary Albright, who will in fact, as Christian said, discuss her book. She has had an extraordinarily distinguished career. And no single introduction can do justice to all of that, but I will say that her service in that long and distinguished career on the National Security Council, as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, and as the first female secretary of state, are just way points in a career that continues to make a difference on the world stage every single day. I had the pleasure to get to know Madeline in the last several years and it's been enormously shaping for me. It's helped me to understand my responsibilities not just as a military officer, but more importantly as a public servant, but very importantly as a citizen, not just of the United States but a citizen of the world. And you set an example for all of us in doing that.

We're going to have a conversation here in just a few moments and I'm reminded, as we began the process of inviting Secretary Albright here to be interviewed by our most recent former president, Strobe Talbott, on a previous panel that I had the opportunity to serve with you on a couple of years ago. You are conscious of anniversaries and it's almost two years ago to the day Secretary Albright shared a panel on which I was the least consequential member and it was about humanitarian affairs and global development. And she was a very rigorous moderator. And my fellow panelists were Federica Mogherini, the high representative of the European Union, Amina Mohammed, who was the deputy secretary general of the United Nations, and Bono. (Laughter) And I have to tell you, Bono is a great international humanitarian. And I learned a lot from him that day. And that was a great conversation; it was a conversation I think would many ways set the standard for how we should be thinking in those heady days of the summer of 2016 about the international environment, global development,

and humanitarian affairs.

And so we're deeply honored that you could be with us this morning, Madam Secretary. And we're also honored that Strobe Talbott can conduct this interview. We're also honored by the presence of Jonathan Colby, who chairs our Foreign Policy Leadership Council here at the Brookings Institution. And we think this will be a wonderful conversation for you today.

A couple of administrative remarks. We are live and we're on the record. And the views expressed by our speakers today are theirs alone.

So, ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming to the stage Madam Secretary, Secretary Albright, and Strobe Talbott. (Applause)

MR. TALBOTT: Well, Madam Secretary, Madeline, you I think are right up there with Bono as a rock star. (Laughter) And he doesn't wear pins.

MS. ALBRIGHT: But he sings.

MR. TALBOTT: Let's get started if we could on something that has to do not just with the topic today, but of Madam Secretary's career. I would say not just her career but her whole life. You have in various ways have been living with the subject that we're talking about, from your youth as a scholar, as a diplomat, as somebody who was promoting and trying to protect democracy around the world. And a few years ago, and I can remember a number of conversations we had with each other, you were concerned that democracy was on its back foot, as it was. When did you become concerned that American democracy is on its back foot?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, before I answer that, let me just say how pleased I am to be at Brookings and very pleased with the Bosch Foundation. Have been doing other things and it's a fantastic operation and the combination is great. General Allen, thank you so much, and I remember that panel. But I also remember the other times we've talked and I think it is fantastic that you're here. And Strobe has been a very dear friend for a long time. We've gone through many things together and I don't think you've

ever interviewed me.

MR. TALBOTT: Even being shot at.

MS. ALBRIGHT: We have been -- yes, right. But, anyway, I'm delighted to be here.

First of all, I am, for all kinds of reasons, a great supporter of democracy. My whole life my father was a Czechoslovak diplomat who had to leave his country twice because of authoritarian dictators, the first time the Nazis and then the communists. And when we came to the United States my father said he was very worried about the fact that Americans took their democracy for granted. And so I kind of grew up with that concept that it was a gift, but that we had to really cherish it and do something about it.

I'm chairman of the Board of the National Democratic Institute and that is an organization set up by President Reagan, who in 1983 spoke at London at Parliament and said that democracies were not real good in terms of protecting themselves and defining themselves vis a vis communism. And he came back and he started the Endowment for Democracy that has four institutes: the Democrats, the Republicans, the business, and labor. So then the question was, what would we do abroad? And you can't impose democracy, that's an oxymoron. So promoting democracy. And one of the things that has happened recently as we've been in a number of countries, and we talk about the elements of democracy, the nuts and bolts of it, I say to people, coalition building and compromise is good. And they said you mean like you guys. So all of a sudden we are not the example of how democracy should work as the world's oldest democracy.

And so I am concerned about the fact that we are taking democracy for granted, that we don't fully understand, for whatever reason, the various elements that require democracy, and compromise definitely is one of them. And how democratic systems and the economy work together. So I am worried, and every day I'm worried more. And I have to say, I do make myself really try to listen to things I disagree with. By

the way, I did drive here and I listened to right wing radio, so it's dangerous. (Laughter)
But I was very troubled because last night I decided to watch television and to watch
President Trump in Montana in which he actually told people that so that he wouldn't be
impeached, people need to vote. That is a really weird way to summon people to
democracy.

MR. TALBOTT: Wow.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Yup. Other than that, I have no views. (Laughter)

MR. TALBOTT: You referenced the NDI and, of course, there is IRI as
well. We lost a great American who was your counterpart as the chairman of the IRI.
Are you and your colleagues on the other side of the aisle, if I can put it that way, working
together to make sure that that mission succeeds?

MS. ALBRIGHT: The answer is yes and it's much more complicated
than meets the eye. Let me just say -- and I'm so pleased you did mention Senator
McCain. He and I got to know each other well before we were both chairs of our
institutes, but very much associated with it, to go and monitor the elections in
Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1990. And I was born in Prague and I had been able to
go there a little bit earlier and meet with Václav Havel. By the way, I was handing him a
book my father had written about 20th century Czechoslovakia, and as I'm handing it to
him Havel says, I know who you are, you're Mrs. Fulbright. And I said no, I'm Mrs.
Albright. (Laughter) And that is how it all started. But the fun part --

MR. TALBOTT: "Al" is better than "Ful".

MS. ALBRIGHT: But what was interesting was to be there with Senator
McCain and give him a chance to -- for me to take him around the town I was born in. It
was an amazing time. Paul Simon was singing in the old town square. And there's an
incredible of Jan Hus, who is a first Protestant reformer, and there was always the
question about Catholicism and Protestantism. Jan Hus was the first Protestant reformer
and there's a thing that is written there that says Czechoslovakia will be saved when

Saint Agnes comes to visit Jan Hus. And there was a sign that said Saint Agnes was here. (Laughter) But basically the idea that the United States could go and monitor elections -- and John and I did that together and became very good friends, and did in fact do a lot to have NDI and IRI do work together. And you didn't know this, but I have now spent the time yesterday and the day before on the Hill talking to members of congress about how to protect the democracy money because the plan is to take it out. And even though Secretary Pompeo had said during his hearings that he was interested in keeping the democracy programs and Secretary Mattis has been very interested in keeping democracy programs, it really is a question. And so I do think that it is something that we need to understand, not that we are imposing democracy or militarizing democracy, but that the United States, the people of the United States are better off if other countries are democracies.

MR. TALBOTT: As a former Secretary of State, I assume you are appalled at what is happening in that institution. Are you finding friends and colleagues, again in the other party, who agree with that? That we must have a strong Department of State?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Yes, actually. And, by the way, we were good partners when you were Deputy and we worked together on so many things and understood the value of the people that work at the State Department, the Foreign Service Officers and the civil servants, and how important they are obviously to America's diplomacy. I have found -- I do try to do many bipartisan things, and there are many republicans that fully understand the importance of that. And I think that people are speaking out. The problem is the following -- by the way, I teach a course at Georgetown and I say foreign policy is just trying to get some country to do what you want, that's all it is. So what are the tools? And I go through we are the most powerful country in the world and there are not a lot of tools in the toolbox. And diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral, is the bread and butter tool. And you can't do diplomacy if you don't have diplomats. And so I think the

problem at the moment, there are an unbelievable number of vacancies now in very high level posts. We don't have an Ambassador in Turkey or in Saudi Arabia and others that are vital in terms of our policies. And the whole nomination process has been held up. And despite the fact that I think that Secretary Pompeo is trying to give the State Department back its swagger, I think that there are real problems with that.

I have to say I'm very proud of the fact that one of my students, David Hale, has been confirmed to be Under Secretary for Political Affairs.

MR. TALBOTT: In your teaching do you have students coming up to you and saying, you know, I really wanted to be a diplomat, a foreign service officer, but it doesn't look like it's a profession that's going anywhere?

MS. ALBRIGHT: I unfortunately do, Strobe. I mean there are those that ask me whether they should go forward with their Foreign Service exams or push in order to really get in and that they are not sure what the career is, but also whether they want to be identified with the policy. And I urge them to go and be a part of what is a great history of our diplomatic service and our civil service. I do tell them they won't actually be accused of being part of the policy, they'll be stamping visas for a while (laughter), but the line is that they really -- I think what bothers me a lot and had bothered me from the beginning when there all the sudden was a freeze on hiring and that there really was a question, and that basically it isn't just an issue of who is ready to be an ambassador now, but that the pipeline will be bent and damaged in a way that we will not have a functioning diplomatic service in 15-20 years. So I am definitely worried about that.

And, by the way, one of the kind of ceremonies that the U.S. Institute of Peace holds is for what they call transferring the baton from one national security advisor to another. There was a dinner the night before and I was at a big table and I was doing something my kids always accuse me of, "eavesing", which is eavesdropping on a conversation. And the people at the table said, well we have to -- I don't know who they were, but they said we have to get rid of all those people that worked in previous

administrations because they're not loyal. And I couldn't help what happen when you "eaves", is to interrupt (laughter) and say that basically that's an outrageous thing to say, that these are people that are loyal to the United States and carry on very difficult jobs. So there really had been kind of the sense of not having those that have been in there before. And then, just generally, underfunding what is one of the most important and basic tools of our foreign policy.

MR. TALBOTT: President Trump obviously is -- for the office that he holds -- is a major (inaudible) in the problem that we're dealing with. But he's a newcomer. There has been I would say maybe 10 years when democracy was under attack, particularly in the west, which has of course been an area of alliance and certainly an integration and NATO and the EU, and that has weakened over the last 10 or so years. What do you think is the reason for that?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, I think that -- first of all, I do think democracy is complicated and difficult. It takes the knowledge of what is going on, it requires you to have information -- information is power in a democracy -- and just generally in terms of how problems were being dealt with. And so I have kind of talked about two mega trends and their downsides. So globalization, I think we are all beneficiaries of it in so many ways, especially people here. And has brought a lot of people together in capability of travel and exchanges, et cetera. But it does have a downside, it's faceless. And people feel that they have no identity. And so I think we all do want to have an identity in terms of our religious, ethnic, national identity. The problem is if my identity hates your identity. Patriotism is one thing, nationalism is very dangerous, and hyper nationalism is especially dangerous. And I think speaking of Europe specifically and -- talking of anniversaries, it is the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. The country that I was born in, Czechoslovakia, was founded on the basis of national identity and language. And the Hungarians felt that they lost a lot of territory. Nationalism became one of the issues -- I remember in '91 when I was doing surveys all over Europe, we asked the

question, do you believe a piece of your country is in the neighboring country. And I will never forget the Hungarian answer was 80 percent of Hungarians thought so.

And so trying to get your land back and various aspects of that I think is something that has contributed to this kind of sense of who are these faceless bureaucrats in Brussels and what is the EU about. And NATO I think had not been affected by that, but I think the EU specifically.

Then the other mega trend is technology, which is obviously incredible. And I always like to talk about the Kenyan woman farmer who no longer has to walk zillions of miles to pay her bills, she can do it over the iPhone. But what it does is also separate people's voices, disaggregate them. And people get their information through -- they don't know exactly -- social media -- where it comes from. And you see it, for instance, in what happened in Egypt. People were motivated to go to Tahrir Square by social media, they get there, and then -- I never believe I say something like this, but the elections were held too soon. The Muslim Brotherhood was organized and the people that had come to Tahrir Square were all over the place and were not. The Muslim Brotherhood wins. Then the confusion continues in Cairo. And I've made up this kind of middle aged man who wants to come into Cairo to set up his stall in the souk and it's a mess. And he says to hell with this, I want order. And all of the sudden you get a military government. And so I do think one can explain these various aspects. And where democracy needs some aspect of knowledge about what it involves, the responsibility.

And then I did just flat out steal this line from Silicon Valley, it's plagiarized, but it explains things so well, which is people are talking to their governments on 21st century technology. The governments listen to them on 20th century technology and provide 19th century responses. And so the governments are not responding to the issues that have been created by globalization and technology, the divisions in societies. If you get a leader that wants to exacerbate those divisions instead of somebody that wants to find some common answers, it leads towards authoritarian governments and

ultimately fascism.

MR. TALBOTT: By the way, because that was the last word and of course the first word in the book, fascism does not cover all forms of tyranny, and you make that very, very clear. But is there kind of a merging of what you might call the evil of fascism with autocratic and let's say post-Soviet "autocraticness"?

MR. TALBOTT: Well, first of all, I think not every dictator or authoritarian is a fascist, but every fascist is a dictator or authoritarian. I think part of the problem I had just generally in writing the book, was defining fascism. I mean it's a term that's just kind of thrown around and if you disagree with somebody he's a fascist. Or there is the teenage boy who can't drive his car and calls his father a fascist. And so it's just kind of a term thrown around. So I was trying to figure out how one really defines it. And I think the simplest way is that -- first of all, it's not an ideology, it's a process for keep gaining and keep control -- but basically, it is when society is divided and there is a we versus them, one of the groups is basically tribal in some way, an affiliation of people that can agree on some aspect of their national heritage or some aspect of it, at the expense of the other group. And the leader identifies himself with this particular tribal group in order to give them power and take it away from the others. And so, for instance, majority rule without minority rights, but basically very much the division. As I said, the divisions are already there, but they become exacerbated by this leader who identifies himself -- it's always a "himself," frankly. And in terms of trying to figure out, you know, how that group can prosper at the expense of the other.

But the real issue here is the use of violence. And so the willingness of that leader to use violence to accomplish what he want. So one of the simplest ways is a bully with an army. So the use of violence and really thinking it up and then be willing to use it is the defining factor. But the main thing is this division and the tribalism at the expense of another group.

MR. TALBOTT: You made a very important point early on, and you

make it in the book and in your other public events, and that is that you are making a real effort to talk to people who are in favor of our current president. Putting him aside, if that could be done, what are you learning about people who think that this is really the way to go and this is the leader that we want?

MS. ALBRIGHT: First of all, I kind of have, as a result of doing the book and learning a lot about the history of fascism, I do think that part of what one has to point out is it comes step by step. By the way, I learned a lot in doing the research for this book. Mussolini I think is obviously the first fascist and very fascinating man in terms of understanding the divisions in society, associating himself with a group against another group and being a very powerful speaker, thinking that he was a steady genius and that he had all the answers. I think the best quote in the book comes from Mussolini, and it is that if you pluck a chicken on feather at a time, nobody notices.

So there's a lot of feather plucking going on now. Those are two words that are hard to say quickly together. (Laughter) And so I think the issue is what is going on in terms of these small steps. So I think the issue from the perspective of the United States is that I don't think that people noticed enough the divisions that were going on in this country. A lot of them are economic, there's no question.

And to go back on the technology issue -- and I must say I think this is an audience of people that writes books and reads books, and the research for doing books is really -- I mean I learned more when I don't write about myself. So I think that I learned a lot through this. And what is evident is that we have gone through a period like the industrial revolution with the addition of media that spreads the story very quickly, but there are huge divisions that we're not taking care of. And I think that when I've gone around to talk to people they really do see that there is an elite group in the United States, that there are people that don't have jobs. And this is the part that really does worry me, if you have a leader who then blames it on somebody else -- because part of the whole fascist aspect is you always have to find a scapegoat. That is one of the things

that happened both in Italy, but especially in Germany. And so you need to find somebody whose fault it is. And how what Trump has been doing is portraying America as a victim.

I think, Strobe, when you and I were in office with President Clinton we never thought of ourselves as victims, we were the leaders that really were able to work with others and understood -- by the way, the indispensable nation thing, President Clinton said it first, I just said it so often it became identified with me, but it never was alone. It was a matter that we needed to be engaged. And all of the sudden we have a president who says that everybody is taking advantage of us, especially foreigners and immigrants, and that were it not for that we could be a great country.

And so I think it does speak to some people that are trying to figure out what went wrong, why they don't have the jobs that they want, and why the educational system has let them down. And I think they really do feel -- and I think we have to listen to this. As I said, not tolerate it, but try to figure out what is really behind it. And I think that's very important.

MR. TALBOTT: Well, those of you who are going to have the excitement of reading this book, you're going to learn a lot of history. I certainly did.

Speaking of Mussolini, I was appalled and fascinated that both Churchill and Gandhi thought he was just the right guy to have, that Italy should have at that time.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Stunning. But I think the thing in trying to get into what really happened is I think we've all grown up with the fact that the Italians have a new government every few months. But what really was happening, at World War I they had been on the side of the allies and they felt that they hadn't gotten anything out of it. They really were disquiet in Italy itself in terms of the haves and the have nots. The part that I think really both blew my mind, that both Mussolini and Hitler had power constitutionally.

MR. TALBOTT: Hindenburg.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Yeah. King Emmanuel asked Mussolini and

Hindenburg asked Hitler. The governments that I talk about now, the Hungarians the Poles, the Turks, the Filipinos, Venezuela, all those were elections. And it's only the Russians, the communist systems, that had revolutions. But otherwise these were elected governments that became authoritarian/ -- depending upon how far you go with the fascist analogy.

MR. TALBOTT: One question more from me and then we're going to open it up. You have a club and you're the chair of the club, and you can tell the audience what it's called. And it's the club of her counterparts who were foreign ministers, and it's global, but there are a lot of Europeans in it. What are they saying to you about the Trump phenomenon? Is it going to -- to use your word -- exacerbate the disintegration of the European dream or are they going to see something that says we've got to get together and go back in the right direction?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, let me tell you about the origin because -- you know this -- I invented something really modern when I was Secretary, which was the international telephone conference call. (Laughter) And during the war in Kosovo I talked every day to the Quint, the British, French, Germans, Italians, and us, about what was going on on an open line. And there were really questions about the ethnic cleansing that was going on in Kosovo, a variety of things that we needed to deal with. And very specifically, we all got to be very good friends through this and collegial in every way, but I specifically -- one of the things that happened, one of the people was Joschka Fischer who I think is one of the most remarkable public servants. What we were doing was talking about what was going on and he on the open line said this is what the fascists and the Nazis did. And coming from him, it really was -- or when one of the members there said we should have a bombing pause over Easter, he said why would we pause to honor one religion while we're killing people of another one? And I think kind of the honesty of that conversation and our friendships was a result of it. And Joschka really remains one of my close friends and is one of -- so this group -- what

happened was I get a phone call at the beginning of the Bush administration and Robin Cooke, who was the British foreign secretary, was out of office and he was head of the European socialists and he came out of a meeting in Brussels and he said, Madeline, people are saying terrible things about the U.S., do something. And then I had a phone call from Jozias van Aartsen, the Dutch foreign minister, and he said I've been hearing terrible things, do something. And I thought, I'm out of office.

So I decided, being a groupie, that I would create a group, but I needed an umbrella organization for it, and Aspen is the organization, and it's official name is the Aspen Ministers Forum. Its unofficial name is Madeline and her exes. (Laughter) And so we meet regularly and we did just meet in Versailles because we wanted to talk about nationalism in a place that really personified it in terms of 100 years ago.

And to specifically answer your question, I think that people were unbelievably disturbed about what was going on because it was just at the time that President Trump was touring Europe and yelling at NATO and various aspects of things. And I think that they were saying this was not an America that we know at all. I think the thing that concerned them was how long it was going to take because one the things that really I think is in the process of happening are adjustments in the whatever order we've had to leave us out and not to have us be the leaders of it, but to figure out how to operate without us. And I think that is what disturbed people. We had one of the kind of most vocal times that we've had. We speak without our national positions and it is really - - and we are very honest with each other, and I think we were very concerned about the migration issue and the scapegoating aspect of it, the weakness of the organizations and where America is. And not only that, but where we think that people need to pay in order to be partners, where it's a transactional aspect of it. And then watching what happened in Helsinki. So I do think that -- by the way, remember when you and I were there with President Clinton -- but I really do think that they are worried. There's no question.

MR. TALBOTT: And somebody from Moscow too.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Yeah, somebody did show up, yes. But we had no takers and -- right -- of people that spoke Russian. Any number of things. But I do think that what does worry me is that there needs to be some organization in Europe and our relationship with it, and they are going to go ahead without us unless we begin to get our act together.

MR. TALBOTT: Are they going to go ahead together? That's the real question.

MS. ALBRIGHT: I think that's hard to tell at the moment, because I hate to say this, but there are a lot of faceless bureaucrats in Brussels. I think we always had a hard time as Americans trying to figure out how to deal with the EU. By the way, when I was ambassador at the UN I would go to an EU ambassador -- there were 5 out of 15 there -- saying I need your help on something, and they ambassador would say, I'm so sorry, I can't help you. The EU does not yet have a common position. And then two days later I go back to the same person, I say can I get help now and the ambassador would say no, the EU does have a common position, which before Brexit made me think that the EU should have the permanent seat. But it was always very hard to deal with them. And I think now it's very confusing. What we're going back to are bilateral relations. You were talking about being with Federica, I think it's a very hard job at this point. And I actually think that there was a reason for creating the EU, was to obviate or mitigate whatever nationalist tendencies had created World War II.

And, by the way, one of the reasons I wrote the book is my own experience. As I said, I was born in 1937, two years before the Nazis marched into Czechoslovakia. And one of the lessons for me that I grew up with, this was in the Munich Agreement, which will also be celebrating an anniversary at the end of September, was the British and French making an agreement with the Germans and Italians over the head of the Czechoslovaks and the U.S. was not there. And then as a child, that I spent the war in England during the blitz, everything changed when the

Americans came. And that's, by the way, General, when I fell in love with Americans in uniform. (Laughter) And you and see it as a little girl, I mean there was just no question. Then as a result of World War II there was an agreement made between the Allies and the Soviets to "liberate" the country I was born in. And the U.S. again was not able to do -- so, for me, the role of the United States, without being the policeman for the world, is absolutely essential. And that's what I don't see, and I hate to see some kind of order developed with the United States as the victim on the outside.

MR. TALBOTT: And you're going to be very, very helpful on that.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Yeah.

MR. TALBOTT: Let's open it up. Please keep questions questions and very short. We have only about 12 minutes or something.

MS. ALBRIGHT: You're going to call on them?

SPEAKER: Thank you very much for this great panel. You mentioned Kosovo. So I'm from Kosovo. I'm a visiting scholar here at Georgetown. In my research I always consider -- and I wrote about how Kosovo and Balkans was a success story for America. Of course there's some ups and downs. But what do you think, Secretary, about what is going on with negotiations now between Serbia and Kosovo and all this land swap and this crazy idea?

Thank you.

MS. ALBRIGHT: You're not going to believe -- I was listening to right wing radio some of the time, but as I pulled up I started listening to public radio and what has happened, there was supposed to be a meeting between Vucic and Hashim Thaçi and the Serbs cancelled the meeting. And I do think that one of the issues is whether it's a land swap for -- Kosovo was part of Serbia in terms of a land swap to give some of the land to the Serbs to move the border so that Serbia would actually recognize Kosovo.

I think that I have mixed feelings about it if you want to know, which is that I don't happen to believe in homogeneous populations. I do think the multi ethnic

populations are the ones that we need. And I have been back to Kosovo a number of times and I have said to the Kosovars that they can't treat the Serbs the way the Serbs treated them. And that was very important. And I spoke to the parliament there about that. So I don't know whether a land swap is the right idea, but it was very strange that all of the sudden, because Vucic and Hashim had begun to agree on this, they also were saying that there was going to be an additional piece, and I don't know whether that's the reason that it was cancelled. But I think it is a very delicate question in terms of generally land swaps in terms of creating homogeneous populations. By the way, they like me in Kosovo. (Laughter)

And there is a whole generation of little girls whose first name is Madeline. So, yeah, yeah.

SPEAKER: And it was an honor for me in 2008 to meet you with a group of students.

MR. TALBOTT: Yes, right there.

SPEAKER: I just have a general question and I think it's very important.

MR. TALBOTT: I think if you stand up and hold the mic a little closer to your mouth.

SPEAKER: I think diplomacy needs a chance for the future, for future generations. I just wanted to hear your take on it because the United States is being considered a beacon where other countries look up to for their own actions and their own roles on the planet. And I feel we need to work together not against each other because, like you said before, you divide and conquer.

So my question is, for the future, how do you see the role of diplomacy with the actual United States government?

MS. ALBRIGHT: I think it is the essential tool, but at the moment I think -- diplomats, by the way, basically operate on the basis of what national security policy is. There is a process whereby it is decided what the role -- this is not true just for the United

States. I mean diplomats are not kind of people that are out there making things up, but they are the eyes and ears of their own government and are there in order to represent the government and to have discussions with the host country. And I think that at the moment there is confusion about where the United States is going. Partially it is based on documents, and the Trump Administration did put out a national security strategy probably faster than any other. What they have done is made clear that they see that terrorism is no longer the major threat, that China and Russia are, and therefore that affects how the diplomats in those countries behave. I happen to think that what is very interesting is that our ambassador to China was probably the right choice.

I met with Xi Jinping when he came to the United States as Vice President and he talked about the time that he had spent in Iowa and how much he liked it. So Trump names the guy that was the Governor of Iowa to be ambassador, which I think is very smart. The problem is that I think it's unclear what the policy is, whether we're fighting with the Chinese over tariffs in the South China Sea or whether we need them to help us on Korea. There are all these kinds of things that as a diplomat you kind of need to know what you're supposed to do. Even truer as far as Russia is concerned.

And so I do think we need people that are trained in diplomacy. And then the truth about diplomacy is it is about the art of compromise. You have to put yourself into the other country's shoes in order to get some kind of agreement on things. And the things you can't compromise on are the ones that you ultimately use a different tool for. But diplomacy is the bread and butter aspect of relationships between countries.

MR. TALBOTT: Yes, right here; the lady.

SPEAKER: Madam Albright, it's a pleasure to be here and hear your comments. I'm an Afghan-American journalist. From age nine I watched Afghanistan fall apart. My father also was a diplomat and suffered the tactics of the communist regime. So it really is an honor to be here and to hear your comments.

If you would please tell us what do you -- if you could advise the Trump

Administration what advice do you have for the Administration in terms of diplomacy with Afghanistan, diplomacy with Turkey at this juncture? Why is the exchange of religious figureheads being allowed to become sort of the pivot in the diplomacy between Turkey and the United States? And how can the United States change that in a positive direction?

Thank you.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Okay. Let me just say -- and Strobe I think can testify to this -- is I was a Turkophile. In fact, what happened was I was in the Carter Administration, I was there when we lifted the Turkish embargo. And I spent a lot of time learning about Turkey and going to Turkey. I thought that Turkey should be a member of the EU. The Europeans told me to mind my own business. But I really do think there was a problem about constantly moving the goalposts in terms of how Turkey should behave in order to be a member of the EU. They have been a very staunch NATO ally, whether it was in Korea, various places, a really remarkable NATO ally. What I think is interesting, and this goes a lot to the democracy question in itself, is that as much as I liked going to Turkey, it still was run by some elitists, people who lived on the other side of the Bosphorus in the big houses, or the military. And Erdoğan won the election fair and square because the AKP really did do constituency services. And it was fascinating to be in Turkey at the time as the economy was really moving forward.

I do think that tragedy is that power goes to people's heads. And Erdoğan is not the same person, I don't think, at all. And the kinds of things that he is doing now are very damaging in terms of relationships in the Middle East and as a NATO ally and all of those things. I think that there is an internal religious fight in Turkey between the Gulenists and the AKP people and it is being played out, frankly, in a crazy way in terms of blaming Gulenists for everything. I think the pastor is symbolic in some ways, but it is also very typical of the kind of thing -- Erdoğan is arresting journalists. And then being an autocrat in every single way. He is on my list of leaders that I talk about.

Again, the news today in terms of what's happening in Syria and the role of the Turks and the Kurds and everything, I've never seen anything so complicated. And we have no ambassador there and it is unclear what our policy is. And it's pretty tough to see a NATO ally buying Russian arms. At the same time, the whole aspect of NATO in terms of intelligence sharing and various things. So I think it is a truly difficult situation that would require a very consistent and smart policy from the United States and I don't know where it's coming from at the moment.

Not a very good answer, but it truly is an unbelievably complicated thing. And this pastor has become a symbol of a number of other aspects of it.

MR. TALBOTT: All of your answers have been terrific and I wish we could keep going. But some of you are going to get books and Secretary will inscribe something in that, so we're going to have a little time for that. But I know that there's one question that must come up, and that is tell us about your pin. (Laughter)

MS. ALBRIGHT: I don't know whether people know why the pins ever came up as a story. It's all that I was UN -- I like jewelry and I was at the UN at the end of the Gulf War and the cease fire was translated into a series of sanctions resolutions. And it was my job, I was an instructor to the ambassador to make sure the sanctions stayed on. So I said something terrible about Saddam Hussein every day, which he deserved. He had invaded Kuwait. So all the sudden there was a poem in the papers in Baghdad that compared me to many things, but among them an unparalleled serpent. And so I had a snake pin and I started wearing it whenever we talked about Iraq. (Laughter) And so when I went out and talked to the press, they said why are you wearing that snake pin and I said because Saddam Hussein compared me to an unparalleled serpent. And then I thought well this is fun. I lived in New York and I decided to go out and buy a lot of costume jewelry to depict whatever I thought we were going to do on any given day. And so on good days I wore flowers and butterflies and balloons and on bad days I wore a lot of carnivorous animals. (Laughter) And other

ambassadors kind of caught on and they said what are we doing today, and I say read my pins, which is how it all started.

But you'll appreciate this one, Strobe. What happened was that, remember the Russians were bugging the State Department when --

MR. TALBOTT: Oh, yeah.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Yes. So we finally found the guy who was sitting outside, we did what diplomats do, which is do a demarche and complain to Moscow. But the next time I met with Yevgeny Primakov, the foreign minister, I wore this huge bug (laughter) and he knew exactly what I was doing.

So today my pin is Mercury the messenger because I do think that there's some people who think my book is alarmist. It's supposed to be because it is a warning. And the feather plucking and the various things that are going on. And I think we, in order -- I have a paradoxical statement, which is I believe in the fragility of democracy and the resiliency of democracy. It requires a to-do list, and my to-do list is the following, if I may. One is that we have to tell it like it is. I'm asked whether Trump is a fascist. I don't think he is. I think he's the most undemocratic president in modern American history because he doesn't believe in the institutional structure, he is trying to fix the judiciary, he calls the press the enemy of the people. So we need to do something about that. I believe that people that can should run for office and those of us that aren't need to support them. I think on my to-do list is to talk to the people with whom I disagree. And then every single speech or book has a quote from Robert Frost. So the one that I like is, the older I get the younger are my teachers. And what is interesting are the young people now in our country that are out there marching, they don't want to go to school with flak jackets, they want to be able to study. And I think we need to support the young people.

MR. TALBOTT: Before I say a thank you to Madeline, I want to give you a logistical point, and that is those of you who are going to go to the back of the room and

to get books, please go down this line and then she will come around and inscribe them for you.

Madeline, all I can say is you're a lot more than a messenger, you're a leader, and you're a very, very good friend.

MS. ALBRIGHT: But it took me a long time to find my voice, and I'm sure not going to shut up. (Laughter) Thank you. (Applause)

* * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Carleton J. Anderson, III

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commission No. 351998

Expires: November 30, 2020