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EUROPE 1989-2019:
LESSONS LEARNED 30 YEARS AFTER THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL
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PARTICIPANTS:

Welcome and moderator:

THOMAS WRIGHT
Senior Fellow and Director, Center on the United States and Europe
The Brookings Institution

Conversation:

SUSAN B. GLASSER, Moderator
Staff Writer
The New Yorker

JAMES GOLDGEIER
Robert Bosch Senior Visiting Fellow, Center on the United States and Europe
The Brookings Institution

VICTORIA NULAND
Nonresident Senior Fellow and Senior Advisor to the Director of Foreign Policy
The Brookings Institution

CONSTANZE STELZENMÜLLER
Senior Fellow, Center on the United States and Europe, The Brookings Institution
Kissinger Chair, Library of Congress

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. WRIGHT: Good afternoon. It's great to see everyone here today. My name is Tom Wright. I'm director of the Center on the United States and Europe here at The Brookings Institution. It is a great pleasure to welcome you this afternoon for a discussion on the legacy of 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War.

This past weekend, as everyone here knows, marked the 30th anniversary of the accidental opening of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989. Following a confused press conference, East Germans rushed the Berlin Wall and more than 140 of their fellow citizens had died trying to cross and demand that they be allowed through.

The 30 years since that night have been marked by incredible progress toward this goal, but also immense challenges remain as the European order is deeply challenged from both within and from without. Today's discussion will not only focus on the legacy of these events, but it will also seek to determine what this legacy means for the next 30 years of transatlantic relations.

We are fortunate to welcome such a talented group of Brookings scholars to the stage to discuss their takeaways from this momentous event. Jim Goldgeier is the Robert Bosch senior visiting fellow at Brookings and one of the foremost experts on the subject of NATO and U.S. policy toward Russia since the end of the Cold War.

Victoria Nuland is a nonresident senior fellow at Brookings and also a senior counselor at the Albright Stonebridge Group. She served as assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian Affairs in 2013 to 2017. And she was a key architect of President Obama's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

My colleague Constanze Stelzenmüller is the Robert -- a senior fellow at The Brookings Institution. Sorry, slightly out of date by a week there, but an expert in Germany and transatlantic relations. She is currently on leave at the Library of Congress to write a book. And she has also just written a fantastic essay on her personal reflections on 1989, which I highly recommend to everyone and which we'll discuss here on the panel in a moment. And you can download that from the Brookings website.

And finally, we're delighted to welcome Susan Glasser of *The New Yorker* to Brookings

to moderate the discussion. Susan is the author of the book *Kremlin Rising* from her time as a correspondent in Moscow and also is the author of the forthcoming book next spring -- summer on James Baker. And few people have the depth of experience and perspective to tackle this issue like Susan, so thank you for joining us today.

And putting together this event we are thankful for the support of the Robert Bosch Stiftung. This event is part of the Brookings-Bosch Transatlantic Initiative, or BBTI as we call it, which aims to expand our networks and work on how best to further transatlantic cooperation to address global challenges.

So now to leave plenty of time for conversation, I will also join the panel. I'd like to ask the panelists up here and Susan to begin the moderation. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. GLASSER: All right. Well, Tom, thank you so much for that good introduction. We're going to embarrass Constanze more by shamelessly flacking more for her essay called "German Lessons," which I do highly recommend, as well.

But I think it's also -- I mean, it's a great starting point for any conversation to think that it's been 30 years. Clearly, we're all too young for that to have been the case. Let's just stipulate to that.

QUESTIONER: Totally. Exactly. We were 10.

MS. GLASSER: You know, nursery school was very big on the fall of the Wall. But when I think about the range of foreign policy challenges, you quote Timothy Garton Ash in this essay, Constanze, talking about this night of wonders. In many ways it was a year of wonders and then some, a year and change of wonders. One that it's hard even to convey to a new generation who has spent the last decade-plus immersed in a constant drumbeat of what appears to be revanchism and bad news to convey what it was like to grow up or to be in a university setting, graduating, moving into the world at this moment of great optimism. You know, that's a lifetime foundational event that I almost feel like even that itself is worthy of a whole conversation.

So I thought, I was recently discussing this 1989 year of wonders with someone who said to me, you know, it was probably the best year of our lives. We just didn't know it at the time. And so I thought we might as well start out, you know, with a sort of foundational moment question about that because we all carry those assumptions and those experiences of 30 years ago with us, I think, as we're

talking about the unbelievable challenges not only in Europe today, but also in the United States in terms of how we even think about Europe 30 years after the end of the Cold War.

Constanze, we know what you were doing on that night courtesy of your essay. I don't want to spoil it, but it turns out you and I were in the same place, although we did not know each other.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Well, yeah. Can I just first make an acknowledgement? I am here because of the really excellent quality of the double-layered thermal underwear of a very well-known New England brand, without which I would not have survived three Massachusetts winters. (Laughter) I did get pneumonia at least once, but, you know, I made it through.

But yes, that is exactly where I was, I was going to graduate school and really thinking that I didn't want to go back to Europe. I had left a Germany that I thought and a Europe that I thought was hidebound, depressed. I thought the political atmosphere was polarized, was leaden. We were the second largest generational cohort to come on the labor market. We couldn't explain to our parents, who had been sucked up by the labor market in the late '50s and early '60s, that it would be very hard for us to find a job now no matter how good we were.

And a lot of us had fled to other countries to go to graduate school. And certainly those of us who had gone to America thought, you know, we're totally staying here and this whole baggage of European depression, the end of growth, the end of sort of the upward mobility, we want to get rid of that. And, in fact, some of my age cohort did do that.

But as I wrote in this essay, I was completely caught off guard by the Wall coming down. Of course, I had -- you know, because I had been flying back and forth to Europe because of an illness of my mother's, I had grasped the importance of what was happening in Poland and the Czech Republic, but I think all of us thought the East Germans were going to stay there forever because the East Germans had always been the best Communists in the entire Soviet Bloc, and even the Soviets thought that.

If you look at Mary Elise Sarotte's book about the collapse, an historian how's now at SAIS, she interviewed a number of the people who were actors at the time. And there is a Soviet policymaker from the Kremlin who went to East Berlin to talk to the Honecker government, I've forgotten his name, and who came back saying these guys are geriatric. They're so rigid it's impossible to talk to them. And, frankly, they were insulting to me. They're going to have to deal with this.

And guess what. It happened after all.

MS. GLASSER: Yeah. One thing I was struck by was the extent to which for you it really was even almost a question of an identity that you weren't ready to take up in some ways as a German. You said like, you know, your gaze was not eastward into East Germany, that in some ways it was as far away for you as Arkhangelsk or Siberia.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Yeah. Well, part of that was generational and part of it was personal. The generational thing was that for many of us, we had literally grown up with the Wall. I was the same age as the Wall. And while the official policy of West Germany was to not relinquish the notion of eventual reunification, de facto what we were doing was rapprochement with East Berlin. And Ostpolitik was a very careful balancing of our membership in NATO and finding a modus vivendi with the East Germans and with the other Eastern Europeans. And, frankly, the assumption was this was going to be there forever. It will never change.

And then in my personal case, I had no family on the other side of the Wall, unlike others that I knew. I was going to a really conservative hidebound law school in Bonn, the capital, at the time. And some of the guys from families whose fathers were politicians in the CDU, who were revanchists and who would give speeches in the Bundestag saying we want parts of Poland back. And I wanted no part of that and so I kept a long distance from these guys.

And also, of course, you know, my law school teachers were the star students of men who had been deeply implicated as jurists during the Third Reich in the maintenance and the building of the Third Reich and its killing apparatus. And I found that to be profoundly offensive.

And I remember, actually, I went home my first Christmas -- and the other thing, I was a Foreign Service brat, so my parents were outside the country. And I went home my first Christmas to Madrid, crying and saying, listen, this is all too horrible. I want none of the historical baggage. And also, they're all really right wing and the ones who aren't, are always in the streets protesting against the Pershings, and it's horrible. And my parents said, you know, sorry, we don't have the money to send you to America or to England. If you don't like it, go back and change it.

And I was lucky enough to get a scholarship to America. And I thought this is my escape. I am never going back to this. This is all too awful.

MS. GLASSER: Yeah. So it sort of gave you Germany back in a way that you couldn't have anticipated at that moment.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, completely.

MS. GLASSER: And yet, Victoria, I want to come to you because this expectation that even Constanze had of somehow we knew it was both unsustainable and yet we kind of felt like it would go on forever. That was kind of the Cold War. You were just starting out as a -- in the Foreign Service as a young Soviet expert at this time.

MS. NULAND: Absolutely. So I come into the Foreign Service in late 1984, speaking Russian, so the Foreign Service in its wisdom sent me to China. (Laughter)

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: As they do.

MS. NULAND: And it took me, you know, five years to make my way back into the Soviet business. And so I was on the Soviet desk 1988, '89, an amazing Soviet desk, in fact, as we go back and think about it. Sandy Vershbow was the director, John Tefft was the deputy director, Steve Pifer was the external chief, and John Herbst was my boss in the economic section.

MS. GLASSER: All names, if you've had anything to do with Russia over the last two decades, you've run into all of those people.

MS. NULAND: All went on to be distinguished ambassadors in probably a total of 10 countries and shapers of the post Cold War response, I would say, and mentors.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: And so did you.

MS. NULAND: Well, thank you.

MS. GLASSER: But there was --

MS. NULAND: But interestingly, our response was a little bit different because the summer before that, I had spent -- you know, we obviously were watching the Balts rebel. We were watching what was happening in student movements. I'd written my thesis on Solidarity, which to me felt like the beginning already back in 1979. So there was this maybe naïve, youthful hope that we would live through a period where there would be an opportunity to have a real relationship with all of these countries. And particularly for somebody like me, who'd gone to a university and fallen in love with Russian language and culture and wanted to have the opportunity to build a better world together and not

have this hidebound system between us.

So on our Soviet desk, which was, again, '88, we were working with Bob Zoellick, who had the portfolio to work with Gorbachev on perestroika and to see if we could support this economic opening. Now, what we thought was going to happen was that you would -- like folks who opposed the embargo to Cuba, that somehow if you did more trade, that lifestyle would begin to change politics and that the economics would be the driver. We didn't imagine the politics would be the driver.

But on the other side of the desk we were also doing a huge amount of arms control then. It was the completion of the Reagan mandate and the CFE Treaty and all those kinds of things. So there was a sense of real promise with the Soviet Union even at that time.

But more importantly, for me personally I had been on the first team to open our new embassy in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, in the nine months before that, so before I got to the Soviet desk in '88. And the experience we had there, none of us knew the country, none of us knew much about it, so we sort of did that first political and economic mapping. We were an embassy of two. I was the junior member of the team. I was the political officer, the economic officer, the cultural officer, the defense attaché, and the junior GSO.

But the way we worked it, my boss at the time, Steve Mann, was talking to all the leaders and I was talking to all the young assistants to the leaders. And those younger folk were beginning to say we want what is stirring in Central Europe. We want change. These guys are giving us nothing and we're going to fight for it as soon as we get the chance. So you could feel in our generation already this incredible hunger.

MS. GLASSER: That's a great story. And so just on the question of Germany, though, and the fall of the Wall, you mentioned Zoellick. He would keep for months afterwards, after the fall of the Wall, he famously kept a memo from the European bureau that you would go on to head many years later, saying basically everybody wants reunification and nobody thinks it will happen in our lifetime. That it was not something that expert sentiment, you know, had called.

MS. NULAND: Yeah, I mean, I think the first question was whether Germans actually wanted in, which comes up quite clearly in your essay, Constanze, where you've sort of been looking at each other warily. There's a lot of complex politics and history generation to generation.

So I think what -- you know, we didn't assume that it would happen anywhere near as quickly. But, of course, being who we are or perhaps who we were, the minute the Germans themselves said we think we can do this, we want to do this, we wanted to be the major support. And whereas it's well known, it was not an easy decision for the UK and France to support, so I think we were important to that conversation. But the German people and the German leadership on both sides were the essential factor.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: That said, I think we have to acknowledge in retrospect that none of us had any idea what we were taking on. I mean, Helmut Kohl, then the chancellor, famously said, you know, we will have *blühende Landschaften*, blooming landscapes in Eastern Germany and it won't cost us a penny. And if I were still paying taxes in Germany, which I don't because I live here, but I would still be paying the so-called Solidarity tax.

And in the end, I mean, it has been a huge effort on all sides. And arguably, what we're seeing now in both the economic, the demographic, and the political data coming out of Germany and Eastern Germany and the region elections there shows us that this is still very much an ongoing effort and that we're still excavating problems. In fact, in many ways there is now literature about the economics of reunification or about the politics that literally took, I think, three generations to tackle.

There is this one young East German author called Christian Bangel, who has written a very moving piece called "The Baseball Bat Years," *Die Baseballschlägerjahre*, where he writes about the endemic violence in the villages and in the cities of East Germany where, suddenly, the caretaker state had retreated and all hell had broken loose. And people are now trying to understand why that happened and why it's still feeding into electoral politics to this day.

And I remember, as I wrote in the essay, very vividly as a junior reporter at a daily in Berlin called *Tagesspiegel*, being sent to cover a neo-Nazi thug trial and seeing these young neo-Nazis sort of lolling around in front of the judge and the prosecutor, and thinking, wow, they're clearly trying to prove that they're unimpressed. And then afterwards, I head out with my notes to phone into the paper and I see sort of these busloads of guys converging for both sides with baseball bats and proceed to chase each other around the courthouse, beating each other up. This was truly stunning.

MS. GLASSER: Essentially the outbreak of politics that neither side really had any

framework for thinking about --

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Thinking of, exactly, precisely.

MS. GLASSER: -- because it was so new.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: And which we ignored and denied for a long time.

MS. GLASSER: Yeah. Well, it's interesting. It's almost like, to me, that scene you're describing is actually very similar to something I experienced in the southern Iraq city of Basra in the 48 hours after the departure of the Saddam regime. You know, something very similar, which was that there were thousands of people in the streets in protest marches and you realized these underground political factions had immediately come to the surface. This group was allied with this group in Iran. And we, and I think probably the U.S. Government, had basically no idea about this eruption, this volcano of suppressed political activity that would come to shape this place in ways we barely understood. That and the former Baathist generals that were sitting at home doing nothing, beginning to plan the resistance.

Jim, how much do you think the incredible heady, but also disorienting experience of 1989 to 1991, how much did it shape this current generation of American foreign policy thinking? You know, how much did we embrace a narrative at that moment and a series of choices that we're still living with right now? Was that your perspective, that that was this foundational moment? Or did you think history was over and you made a disastrous career choice?

MR. GOLDGEIER: Well, I actually in the fall of '89 was on the academic job market for the first time. I was finishing my dissertation and right about the time the Wall fell I did actually get a job at Cornell University to teach Soviet foreign policy. I started there in January of 1991. I taught it for a year. That class moved over to the History Department and I moved on to other things. (Laughter)

But I think the power of that moment for American policymakers really came through the pro American, pro-Western sentiment that was clearly there across Central and Eastern Europe, the desire to be part of the West, the desire to have what America had. And I think that that proved incredibly important in the early 2000.

You mentioned Iraq. You know, a lot of the people who were in the government during the time of '89 to '91, and saw the reaction from Central and Eastern Europeans, were in the government in 2003, thinking that, you know, the Americans would be greeted as liberators in Iraq and that we would

repeat the story there that we saw in Central and Eastern Europe. And all you need to do is let people be free and they pull down the statues and they want to be part of what we've got. And you started your remarks today by just noting the incredible optimism of the time and the optimism about what people thought of us, which, as you mentioned at the outset, for a younger generation would seem rather perplexing today.

MS. GLASSER: That's right. Well, in fact, my own experience of that night in Berlin was -- I was doing what college students do and I took a nap, which one does in college. And woke up two hours later to see a security guard at the front door of our dorm with a small TV that had suddenly materialized on his desk. This was not a guy with a TV normally. He's just shouting over and over, you know, oh, my god, oh, my god. What is it?

And this palpable sense once I figured out that, you know, World War III hadn't broken out, that when do you go to sleep in one world and wake up in another world? It's just not an experience.

But, of course, Tom, we could have had an alternate narrative of 1989, which was the story of Tiananmen Square and the rejection of democracy, which, arguably, is one of the grand stories of the time, the Chinese choice from that same year. And yet, clearly here in Washington and the U.S. we embraced a different narrative. For us, it will always be the first month of the Arab Spring, you know, that moment in time.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, without skipping too far ahead in our conversation, there was one man, as you know, an American who looked at what happened at the fall of the Wall and sort of regretted it and would later say that it was a shame that the Russians did not respond, like China did in Tiananmen Square, and he is President of the United States today. So it wasn't a uniform welcoming.

MS. GLASSER: You know, Tom, you had to bring that up. (Laughter)

MR. WRIGHT: But I can't possibly resist.

MS. GLASSER: So it wasn't me. It wasn't me.

MR. WRIGHT: But, no, you're right, bar that one person, I think Americans did see this as a very positive development. And, of course, the Soviets weren't willing to pay the cost in blood that it would have taken to put that down. I think that is not something that we can take for granted when we look today around the world where there still are sort of the authoritarian regimes. Most of those regimes,

I think, would behave in a very different way if they were challenged.

And what it shows, I think, is that it's really partially the mindset of those dictators or autocrats and how they would sort of respond. And while obviously that was a very evil regime, I think the choices that they made at that time were very significant.

And I think, you know, when we look back at it and there's a lot of discussion now about whether or not that legacy has been frittered away or whether or not it's been somewhat of a disappointment, I think we've got a very good sort of long period of time. You know, 30 years, 25 years, by historical standards is a very long sort of era. And to have been guaranteed that level of sort of democracy, peace, and prosperity in Europe up until, I guess, around 2014 or so is not nothing. So I think as we look at the challenges today and all of the problems, you know, I don't see that as sort of a repudiation in a way of the legacy of 1989. That's just the way history evolves. We'll always have new challenges and problems.

But I think they would have been, and this gets us into Jim's work, but I think had different choices been made by the United States and by Germany and others after the fall of the Wall and those problems would have probably been much worse. In fact, I think actually, for the most part, the policymakers did really well on consolidating the gains from that pretty amazing moment.

MS. GLASSER: You know, it's very interesting, actually, because if you go back and read it all into that time, as I'm sure it was interesting for you, Constanze, working on this essay, the big debate was not Russia, which is our conversation and I'm sure we'll shift to that now, and how it would feel about the reunification of Germany and the collapse of the Wall. But it was really are we going to somehow unintentionally set ourselves up for the return of the German question, having been the dominant theme of European security debates over the previous century and a half?

And, in fact, it was -- you know, Victoria, you mentioned it was the British, Margaret Thatcher, and the French who were the most concerned about a fast unification of Germany at this time.

And I'm curious, Constanze, like did you find or, as you sort of excavated that period, to what extent do you think the questions about Russia were answerable? It's like, you know, Putin has a narrative about this moment that has become foundational for him and his grievance. What is your view about whether that was even a relevant discussion at the moment? I mean, obviously, the Soviet Union

still existed in November of 1989, but it was also clear that it was in dire straits.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Right. Well, obviously the German question is my favorite question. (Laughter) All of us Germans ask ourselves that and we're going to ask ourselves that for the rest of our lives, I think.

But I think at the time it was in the sort of heady, triumphalist days and months and years after reunification, the idea was this is a problem that we've solved. Basically, what had become apparent in the negotiations with Gorbachev and the Kremlin was just how decrepit the Soviet system was. And part of that was seeing -- negotiating with the price for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Eastern Germany. We paid the Russians billions, I think, to move them all back and, basically, to construct housing for them back in the Soviet Union --

MS. GLASSER: In Russia, yeah.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: -- and then took over the empty bases. And it became clear that these poor people had lived there under really miserable, impoverished conditions. And that gave us, as it were, a tangible insight into just how decrepit the whole system was.

And so I think the policymakers of the time can probably be forgiven for thinking, you know, they are going to spend the next decade resolving their own issues and maybe they will come our way, hopefully. And with somebody like Gorbachev, who was much more amenable to reasonable conversation, than the geriatric regime of the GDR -- and keep in mind, the last minister president of the GDR is still alive, Egon Krenz. And some of the German press has been going and interviewing him and portraying him. And he has clearly learned absolutely zip. (Laughter)

I think he's 83 now. He was in his 50s at the time. And my favorite quotes from one of these recent interviews is, well, nobody complained about East German presidents before 1989. (Laughter) Well, no, you know, because something much worse would have happened to them. I find this astounding.

MS. GLASSER: How has he spent his 30 years?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: I think he's probably -- you know, there is still the matter of the shall we say not inconsiderable financial assets of the GDR regime, which has not been resolved. And I suspect that, you know, I don't know, there must be funding somewhere. I'm going to put that very

carefully because I don't actually have sources for this. But this is one of the unresolved questions post 1989 of the dissolution of the GDR.

So, you know, in some ways the Soviets appeared to be younger, more willing to accept change, more willing to change themselves, and remember that what Gorbachev was doing was truly extraordinary. If you had, like me, grown up with geriatric old fogies like Chernenko and Andropov, I mean, Gorbachev was a miracle of reasonableness and youthful energy, and certainly compared to Erich Honecker, who at that time was more or less I think on his way into dementia. And Egon Krenz, his successor, the guy I've just quoted, was just so much more provincial and hidebound than certainly Gorbachev or Raisa Gorbachev who, you know, made a furor wherever she went, including with the Reagans.

But by the way, I do want to make one point, which I just -- I have yet to read it, but this weekend I was sitting at a dinner with Phil Zelikow and a bunch of other people who made policy in the day, and Phil has just written another book. I'm sorry, he was the director for Europe policy in the White House at the time and was instrumental in the negotiation of the 2+4 Agreement, which led to German reunification and full sovereignty.

And Phil has been going through the archives and said something which I did not know, which is that Reagan had had a second conversation after his famous speech in Berlin in 1987, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." He had had a later conversation with Gorbachev in which he told him, you know, that maybe taking down the Wall hadn't been such a great idea after all. (Laughter)

And Phil found that in the files. Again, I have to read that out. But that is to say that we genuinely benefited from a moment where everything came together and everybody decided to be enlightened, which is why in my essay I say this is a moment of amazing grace, which, I mean, as a deliberate theological reference because amazing grace, and I'm a Lutheran, you know, is something that sort of comes to you from above and you haven't really done anything to deserve it, but you go run with it.

MS. GLASSER: So Jim and Victoria, I want to bring you guys in then on exactly this question of did we do something right? Did we screw something up? Were we just lucky?

George H.W. Bush famously is shown the first TV pictures of the fall of the Wall. And they bring the TV in and they bring the press pool into the Oval Office because they recognize it's an

historic moment. And I believe it's Lesley Stahl who says, Mr. President, what do you think of this? And he says, well, you know, I don't want to dance on the wall, you know, don't want to be too triumphant. No victory dance here. And he got a lot of trouble for that, for days, in fact. They were wondering, you know, does he not process human emotion?

But it's a good question. You know, restraint, in effect, was the American policy at this moment. And yet, at the same time, in the 10 months of negotiations that followed, they were very firm on the idea that Germany was going to be in NATO, you know. Sorry, guys, but that's really how it's going to work out. And that was an unyielding American goal. There was a lot of questions, which Putin has raised about Jim Baker and whether he promised them not to move one inch eastward. But I'm curious --

MS. NULAND: What does Jim Baker say about that, by the way? Having spent a lot of time with him in recent months.

MS. GLASSER: Well, you'll have to read our book is the long answer. The short answer, though, is, look, there was no agreement with the Soviets about this. This was not the American negotiating position. And, of course, both the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union were still in existence at this moment of time. So to contemplate a future without the Warsaw Pact on Germany's borders was not the world in which this negotiation was taking place. Have I represented that correctly?

But I want to ask both of you. I mean, so tell us what -- I mean, I'm just a college student. I'm watching this historic moment on TV and I'm thinking freedom. You guys are much savvier. You're looking at this and is NATO the first word that popped into your heads? I mean, how is it that that because the West's predominant policy response to this?

MR. GOLDGEIER: So I think it's really important to understand for people like George H.W. and those around him, and this would be true again in the Clinton administration that followed, the lesson of the 20th century for those American policymakers was very, very clear, which in its most simple form: post 1919, bad; post 1945, good.

In other words, the United States left Europe at the end of the peace after World War I and two decades later there was another world war. And after 1945, the United States stayed engaged in Europe and helped a peaceful and prosperous Western Europe develop and thrive. And they really

feared that if the U.S. under domestic pressure were to leave Europe, that that would create havoc in Europe. And there were a lot of Europeans who felt the same way, especially in the midst and the immediate aftermath of German unification.

And I think they also saw this as an enormous opportunity. Again, Central Europe as the origin of two world wars and a Cold War. The opportunity after the end of the Cold War, George H.W. Bush had talked about a Europe whole and free when he gave a speech in West Germany in May of 1989. You know, it's sort of this opportunity, oh, my gosh, like we now have this opportunity to fix this darn continent once and for all, and really try to create a more peaceful landscape, which provided the impetus for NATO's enlargement across Central and Eastern Europe, provided the impetus for American support for European Union enlargement across Central and Eastern Europe. And from the standpoint of that thinking, that was an enormous success. The problem was how do you find a place for Russia in all of that? And that proved to be a lot more difficult than I think people recognized until much later.

MS. NULAND: I would just pick up from there and remind that the second big project that was going on the continent from, depends how you mark it, 86, 87, was Gorbachev's effort to transform the Soviet Union itself and to open the system to make it more free to start allowing public debate, to start allowing free enterprise. All of these things that seemed unthinkable themselves. And I think in the White House there was some concern that you didn't want to solve one problem and make it that much harder for Gorbachev.

So I think for us the first issue was would Gorbachev tolerate all of Germany in NATO? And I think he was, frankly, so focused on saving his own nation, which, you know, he obviously achieves on one front and doesn't achieve on another given what happens to the Soviet Union two years later. He was like, yeah, yeah, whatever. But also, he understood the practicality almost before London and Paris, that you couldn't take half of Germany. And for us, you couldn't have a NATO without Germany because it was the knitting of Germany in that was the purpose of NATO in the first place.

So the physics and math of it didn't allow for any other option. The question was how could you assure everybody that it wouldn't be a hostile NATO, that it would be a purely defensive NATO and that it would actually give Gorbachev a little bit of time to withdraw his own troops quietly, which he knew he had to do because he couldn't afford it. And, in fact, it was this bizarre boon to his restructuring

of Soviet power that the German side paid for bringing all those folks back to the Soviet Union because it wasn't obvious that Moscow was going to be able to pay for it and do that. He ended up having to pay for pulling them all out of the Baltics and all of that, which was a strain on the budget at a time that they couldn't.

So we were trying to balance a couple of things. And I think once Moscow said, yeah, yeah, we're focusing on our own garden. Just keep supporting our reform, which we all thought would be gentle and take decades. You know, it was a matter of walking and chewing gum at the same time.

MS. GLASSER: Right. And go ahead, Constanze.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Can I interject something here? I think you're both right to emphasize and praise the tremendous restraint that U.S. diplomacy practiced at the time. And I think there is a conversation where actually President Bush -- or a minute of a conversation between Bush and Gorbachev where Bush actually says you realize I was trying to do this, so that you wouldn't get in trouble with all the geriatric, old ideologues back home. And Gorbachev says, yes, I noticed and I appreciated that.

But --

MS. GLASSER: Yes, although -- sorry.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: But at the same time, what Russia also -- in the Yeltsin era what Russia experienced and what Russian civil society experienced was a wholesale dismantling of what they had come to think of as a nasty, decrepit, but still a caretaker state and a sort of capitalist free-for-all in which, among others, German banks basically went for the fillet parts of the Russian economy. And sort of the animal was opened up and the hide was ripped off and everything was distributed. And I think that was the point when ordinary Russians began to think that this was somehow -- that the West was attempting to roll them, as it were.

MS. NULAND: I have just two quick ones. One, back on Bush's caution, I think when Bush's caution gets in the way is two years later when there's the coup against Gorbachev and Washington spends 22 hours trying to decide if it's going to be on the side of the coup plotters or on the side of Gorbachev. And I remember that distinctly because I was a baby political officer in Moscow counting the 250,000 Russians standing in the rain defending their White House and defending Yeltsin

while my own government couldn't decide what side it was on. And that went to this fear of sort of chaos and loose nukes and all of that. So that's the tough moment, I think.

I was going to make another point about -- but on the Russian side, you know, I think there was, and we can get into this if you want to, there was a profound difference in the liberating, if you will, or the liberation of countries that had a historic memory of free markets, of open society, of being European, of being economically knitted in together, if not politically, you know, like Germany, like Poland, versus countries that had been 70 years asleep with no political culture and a complete nanny state or a kleptocratic state or whatever. And we treated them all the same or they thought they could be the same, as well.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Yeah, right. And not just you, but we, also. I mean, I think one of the problems in the past 25 years has been the European Union applying the same framing of transformation and a very onerous sort of body of rules and regulations that some states made huge sacrifices to, as it were, absorb, like the Balts; who joined the euro in the middle of the global financial crisis when it was most painful for them at the cost of huge sort of austerity programs, basically as another -- an added layer of political insurance against Russia.

But the farther we got down, particularly when you look at the Romanian and Bulgarian accession in 2007, it was clear that these were very fragile political economies with a great deal of, you know, fragile civil societies, fragile institutions, and where, arguably, I would say this imposition of these whole, ponderous new body of rules was an additional burden rather than a stabilizing factor.

MS. GLASSER: Well, Constanze, you've brought us almost forward to today. Tom, Putin has said that essentially this period of time was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century: the breakup of the Soviet Union, which, by the way, he experienced the very beginning of which in Germany at this moment of crises when he is a young KGB officer in Dresden. And this is probably the most interesting moment in his "as told to" autobiography. At the beginning of his political career, he describes the crowds, the protesting crowds, surrounding the consulate and the KGB building where he was headquartered in Dresden. No one is there; he takes charge. He gets them to be burning their papers while they're frantically cabling back for orders. What should we do? And Moscow is silent.

And this silence from Moscow seems to have been the defining moment for Putin's

political career. He's made NATO his grievance. He's made it his narrative. Tom, do you think it still matters? I mean, with the passing of the Cold War era of politicians, whether they be Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin or someone else, is this still even a conversation we need to be having about American foreign policy?

MR. WRIGHT: Yeah. I mean, I think it is. I think Putin, as you point out, it is the driving sort of motivation. And no one obviously knew about him at the time or throughout the 1990s, but that resentment built and was part of a broader resentment in Russia and it was a coherent constituency that ended up very much making its influence felt. And when we look back on that, you know, we can forget sometimes that Putin is still a relatively young man. Like he can be there for, I think he's 67, 68, so he could easily be in power for another 10 or 15 years.

And we can have all sorts of discussions on what Russia's national interest is and how much it should have a rapprochement with the West and be worried about China, but I think in many cases it's Putin, not Russia, and his mindset is very firmly rooted in this period and what happened since. And I think that continues to define how Russia as a state thinks of its national interests. And I think as long as he's there, he will have this really almost pathological distrust of the West.

And I think the other part of it is that as we look back about why those ideas of democracy and liberty maybe faltered at some point and are now on the reverse in Europe and didn't take hold in Russia or in China, I think for people like Putin and also like Xi Jinping, you know, they actually understood I think the power of those ideas and that they could take hold and they determined to stop it. Right? So they decided to proactively have sort of a herculean effort to roll this back, Putin in Russia and in Europe and, of course, Xi Jinping in a very different way in China.

But they, I think, were worried about that march of those trends, that end of history, those ideas of convergence. They didn't think that those were empty and they required an effort on the autocrat's part to push back, and I think that's what we're seeing. So we're seeing what Putin has always referred to as the snapback, you know, I think very much still in motion. But I think it is, as you say, sort of rooted in his experience of that time.

MS. GLASSER: Now, arguably, we have seen now three American presidents in a row who essentially have either withdrawn their gaze from Europe or essentially taken a fairly dismissive view

of the degree to which American national security any longer depends upon this. You know, obviously the form and the style is different between Obama and Trump, and yet there is that through line. You know, the pivot to Asia, as I well recall as does Victoria, was not well taken in Berlin or other European capitals.

Tom, do you think -- how would you describe American policy toward Germany and the heart of Europe right now? And aside from getting them to pay up, is there one?

MR. WRIGHT: Well, firstly, I think U.S. policy towards Europe is usually driven by the threats and challenges rather than by taking the region on its own terms and looking at sort of the opportunity and the importance of having what George Kennan sort of wrote about in that very early period, which is healthy regional orders in Western Europe and in Northeast Asia. Right? There's been sort of this notion that it's not really about that, it's really about Europe can do for us.

So in Europe, you know, 10 years ago, it was not really a problem and it's not part of the solution. Basically there's this disinvestment in terms of expertise, sort of a focus on Asia, focus on the Middle East. And that, I think, is sort of natural and, at the same time, regrettable.

But I do worry. Obviously, there's the Trump administration's policy through these ambassadors or some individuals in the administration which is quite hostile. Even if one sets that aside as an anomaly, I do worry that the burden-sharing argument has totally distorted sort of the U.S. view of Europe, right, because we're so fixated on this 2 percent number. And I do think that Secretary Gates and President Obama deserve some blame on this, too, that it's basically consumed everything else and the real sort of challenges are sort of going undiscussed.

So it is a reality that Europe will bear more of the burden over time as the U.S. retrenches in the Middle East. They will have to cope with that regardless. But by focusing on this number rather than on how they will cope with that contagion of instability, I think we're missing something big. So I think that there has been -- it has, I think, been distorted by that, but I think there is still the sense by some, and including people on this sort of stage, that Europe has a healthy regional order just on its own and is an important U.S. national interest. And that if that is in trouble, then that will affect not just U.S. interests in Europe, but globally.

MS. GLASSER: Victoria, if you got a do-over would you get rid --

MS. NULAND: On what, the 32 years? (Laughter)

MS. GLASSER: Yeah, I don't know. No, no, no. But on Europe policy right now, I mean, would you say Tom is right and let's not have this will -- let's not talk about 2 percent, let's try to frame it differently? I mean, was there any moment in time where we could have avoided some of both the conflict with Russia and the bad feelings that clearly exist to a certain extent on both sides of the Atlantic?

MS. NULAND: Well, there's the Europe as in EU NATO Europe and then there's the Russia question. And I think they're two different questions.

MS. GLASSER: Yes.

MS. NULAND: You know, I think there was a little bit of an exhaustion after the Balkan wars where there was a huge amount of effort, belated effort, but nonetheless, in a sense that the rest of the world had been neglected. And so "pivot" was an unfortunate term. What we really wanted to say was to invest equally elsewhere, I think.

But I also think that in 2008, '09, '10, '11, an enormous amount of effort went into helping Europe come out of the financial crisis. But it was a very narrow set of issues and a narrow set of players in terms of the other adjustments that a more integrated European Union was trying to make. And there were vulnerabilities created both on the counterterrorism side and later we find on the migration side by other aspects of the pooling of sovereignty that Europe hadn't yet addressed, Schengen and all of this, that we just weren't invited to be part of, we didn't think was part of what we needed to do.

And, frankly, very few Americans I think understood in that period until later exactly how much Europe itself was changing, how much the pooling of sovereignty would change the way we needed to work together, change Europe's both opportunity for us and its -- but, you know, what would I do now? I mean, obviously, the free world is shrinking. The free world is under threat. The greatest concentration of friends and allies is on that continent. If we want to solve -- you know, work on issues like China, work on issues like innovation, work on issues like ensuring an Internet that favors freedom versus favoring the authoritarians and totalitarians, Europe is our natural partner as well as tackling the challenges we both have, like income inequality and how to handle migration in a humane way that nonetheless stimulates growth.

So this ought to be a moment where we're holding Europe closer, where we're helping

Europe to come together around its own solutions to these issues. You know, when Brexit first happened we were very much involved in 2016 in trying to ensure that the channel didn't boil and that the sides could come up together. And then we sort of decided it wasn't our business.

But by the same token, I also have some criticisms of European leaders themselves. Where when we leave the conversation or become, in fact, hostile to the conversation as we have become now on trade, on NATO, on defense, I don't see any strong vocal champions for liberalism, democratic values, all the things that made us strong and free and prosperous together. You have Macron talking about multilateralism, but that's a different thing than defending this free, open system, and, frankly, standing up to some of the rhetoric coming from this side of the world, but also reminding Europeans that they live the way they do because we all invested in this system for 70 years. I want to see some European pick up the mantle if we are going to be as we are now.

MS. GLASSER: Well, I'm glad you mentioned that. You know, this interview that the French president, Emmanuel Macron, gave this week in which he not only talked of multilateralism as he often does, but actually said that NATO was brain dead, both as a result of challenges to it from the United States, from Donald Trump, but also from within.

So, first of all, Jim, do you think he's got a point? And do you think that NATO will still exist five years from now?

MR. GOLDGEIER: So, I mean, that interview is very much worth reading, the interview that Macron did in *The Economist*. Just the anger that comes through that entire interview is so palpable. And the "brain dead" comment, which he makes at the beginning and then again at the end, and at the end he's very clear what he's talking about, which is very angry at the lack of strategic coordination, especially with respect to the issue of Turkey and Syria. He talked about how the United States, without consulting anybody, went ahead and gave a green light to Turkey and Turkey said, okay, great, we get to go into Northern Syria. And, you know, Turkey is a NATO ally, the United States is a NATO ally. You just see that anger.

And, of course, he's been trying to make the case for a greater strategic capability within Europe, but he doesn't really have partners. And I think the problem with this interview is it didn't -- it's not really designed in a way that would help him get partners. (Laughter) Because, for example, of

course the Germans had to respond, you know, immediately with their strong support for NATO.

And I think, you know, the -- I mean, we bear some responsibility for the level of European weakness that has existed. It was in part by our design. Again, going back to the beginning of the end of the Cold War, the post-Cold War period, we wanted to run the show in Europe as we did elsewhere in the world. So we didn't -- you know, I think we made -- a big mistake we made in the '90s was as Europeans talked about their own security and defense program, that we weren't more supportive because we kept worrying, well, what's that going to do to NATO? And, in fact, we should have been saying you want to do more for your own defense? That's great. You know, we support that. And we didn't. We were ambivalent. Occasionally, there were moments where we supported it.

And so you see him, Macron, taking up this mantle of I'm going to help to build this capability. We saw at the beginning of the Trump administration when he started these conversations that, you know -- then you got into this whole European army and Trump getting all angry about a European army and, oh, my goodness. You know, it's really been a very unfortunate debate, but he doesn't really have strong partners to pursue his vision for Europe and so Europe will remain dependent on the United States, I believe. And given the threat that Russia does pose, I think that that will be enough to enable NATO to continue for some time to come.

MS. GLASSER: Five more years at least you're giving it. Does anyone disagree with that?

MR. WRIGHT: Just one thing on that. I mean, I agree with what Jim said, but I thought it was even worse in a way, you know. I mean, if you look at what he said in Article 5, for instance. He said I don't --

MS. GLASSER: The mutual defense provision.

MR. WRIGHT: -- I don't know whether or not it still applies and who knows where it'll be tomorrow? The instance he cites for that is not the President's ambiguity about NATO. It's whether or not Assad's forces attacked Turkish troops presumably in Syria that then Article 5 will be exposed as hollow. But, of course, Article 5 does not apply to that in the same way that it did not apply to U.S. forces in Iraq being targeted by Iran. So it's the type of thing if President Trump said it we'd all be jumping on him for being completely misleading.

And then I think he sort of undermined the case for European strategic autonomy because his entire argument recently has been about rapprochement with Russia and trying to bring Putin back in at a time when Putin has not moderated his ambition or his behavior. In fact, he is doubling down it seems in interference in the U.S. election.

So it's just an incredibly strange thing I think for a leader of a European country to argue for. And I think it actually, in a way, and this is maybe where I do disagree with Jim, it sort of suggests that if that's what sort of autonomy means, then maybe it was not such a bad idea to sort of insist on what was insisted on in the '90s and 2000s, that there would be NATO. The EU is fine as a force if it complements NATO, but this sort of divergence, I think, in the Western alliance is quite concerning, and it's not an isolated incident from the French president. It's part of this pattern over the last few months, which he seems very set on.

MS. GLASSER: So Constanze, I want to bring in the audience, but I have to ask you, you know, is Germany planning to pay up anytime soon, in the immortal language of our current policy debate?

MR. WRIGHT: Feel free to throw money on the table. (Laughter)

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: I just remembered I have another meeting. (Laughter)

MS. GLASSER: You know, I don't have an umbrella, but if I did, you'd be under it.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: So actually, we have an official answer to that question, which is that the current defense minister, AKK as she's known colloquially, because even we don't really like eight-syllable names, Annagret Kramp-Karrenbauer has said we won't make it by 2024 as agreed upon at the Warsaw Summit, but we will make it by 2031.

Now, I mean, Tom's completely right, the 2 percent metric is pointless. And I think, frankly, for Germany it's a trap because we're screwed either way. If we don't pony up, Trump gets angry at us. If we do pony up, everybody will say we're getting militaristic and this is going to be horrible for the rest of Europe. I think this is one we don't win.

But I will say this, that I think that there is a concerted effort underway in Germany right now by some people, including AKK, to really push the envelope on these issues. And not so much on the absolute sum as on what is necessary to be -- you know, for us to be able to be a good ally not just

within NATO, but in particular with regard to our smaller and more vulnerable neighbors who depend on us in many ways, economically and for security. Because in these days, you know, even the big three in Europe can't afford full spectrum forces, and so they have been specializing in boutique forces for a very long time.

I mean, I think that this -- you know, if you look past the strategic autonomy hubris and hyperbole, there are a number of things that we ought to be able to do on our own without American support and that I think we probably can do on our own if we get our act together. And I do see a great deal of movement there and I think that that is to the good.

But I think what this anniversary moment also teaches us, if anything, is that we have spent far too long not focusing on what's necessary to get us through the next 30 years. And that really if we don't do this now, we are facing tremendous future transformations. We know exactly what those are. And if we don't do that, you know, they're going to shape us rather than us shaping them.

MS. GLASSER: So shameless plug again for Constanze's essay, which you can find on the Brookings website, which does go into this more. But I do want to bring some questions in from the audience. Please do us a favor, tell us your name and really make it a question since time is short.

Ma'am, go ahead. Yes.

MR. WRIGHT: There's a microphone.

MS. GLASSER: Hold on, we do have a microphone.

MS. DELLO: My name is Barbara Dello. You spoke about the need for good allies across the Atlantic. I recently returned from a trip starting in Germany, through France, Germany again, Basel, and ending in Amsterdam, from crucifixes to windmills. Everywhere there were signs of World War II either in structure, in historical museums, in dialogue, stories of defeat of evil, and of the unspoken German question. As an American of German descent it brought tears to my eyes. Will the continued humiliation of German people have a negative effect on international relations long term?

And secondly, is there any question Germany will leave the EU like England did?

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Well, I think that one's for me, right?

MS. GLASSER: Okay.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Well, England hasn't left the EU yet. I mean, it's beginning to

seem -- I don't know, the expert on this is sitting over there, Amanda Sloat, but it's beginning to seem improbable. But, you know, I don't think the Germans have been humiliated at all. I mean, honestly, I think that we -- it was appropriate to hold us to -- for Germany, for us to be forced to do an accounting of its guilt and then to do it on its own, which it did, but it took us quite a long time.

And I would actually argue that part of sort of the political turmoil and violence that we're seeing in East Germany right now is rooted in some undigested East German history and that still is waiting for an autonomous free agency accounting. There's a great deal of evidence for that.

So, I mean, I have to say I reject the notion that we're being humiliated. I think that, you know, we needed to do this and the only way to make our neighbors feel safe was for us to do this.

Now, the obverse is, of course, that we have been a little smug about this and complacent. And part of this whole sort of amazing grace moment is, of course, you know, to get back to this theological conceit. The problem is, of course, that amazing grace is often mistaken as in some way being chosen by God because you're special, right? And so what happened to you is preordained because you're the good guy and now everybody else should be like you. And I have to say it is I think not unkind, but, in fact, quite accurate, sadly, to describe some of Germany's self-image and some of Germany's policies in precisely that framework. I could go on, but I think many of you will understand what I mean.

And I think the larger point here is that we've always had choices. We had choices at the time; we have choices now. And what adult people and what adult nations do is exercise those choices responsibly.

MS. GLASSER: Yeah, go ahead.

QUESTIONER: Good afternoon, thank you. My name's Piotr. I'm English and Russian, so the events of Berlin have a personal attachment for me. My father was on the Berlin Wall at the time and then left everything to be with my mother when that led to the dissolution of the USSR. So we like to say from Russia with love, but a bit cliché.

So anyway, my question is something that I asked John Mearsheimer a year ago at CSIS and it relates to -- because obviously I would like, in an idealistic world, for Russia and the West to be more shall we say civil. And I asked him what would it take for that to be the case? And he said, well,

there's only one that will cause that to occur and that would be the rise of China. And I just want to know how much that you guys agree with that.

MS. GLASSER: That's a good question. Tom?

MR. WRIGHT: Sure. You know, I think there's, to come back to something I said earlier, there's a Russia-China relationship and there's a Putin-Xi relationship, right, and those are different things, but they're conflated at the moment. I can conceive of a world in which Russia decides that China is more of a threat to it than the West and reorients itself in terms of how it pursues its national interest and pursue structural economic reform and maybe a close relationship to the West.

I can't really conceive of a world in which Putin decides to do that. Right? So I don't think that as long as he is president of Russia that he is going to flip on China. And I think those who advocate that are maybe trying to channel their inner Henry Kissinger on all of this. But I don't really see how it works because, you know, ultimately he and Xi do share the same diagnosis of the threat from sort of global liberalism to their regimes and that Putin is more worried I think about that Western soft power even more than its hard power than he is of China, and he's just willing to make that compromise with that. Maybe other people disagree.

MS. GLASSER: Victoria, do you have any --

MS. NULAND: I mean, unfortunately, now in that -- when you think about a Russia and China coming together or a Moscow and Beijing coming together it's very different than the Cold War period where Beijing was the junior partner to Moscow. Now Moscow is the junior partner to Beijing. So I, frankly, don't think with regard to the issues that the free world has with China, I don't think Russia has much to offer us or to help us with that.

I think what my answer to the Mearsheimer point would be the thing that will change it is a Russia where the people of that country decide that they want to go back to a win-win relationship with us and with Europe, or at least to trying, and reject the zero sum attitude and the expansionist attitude. And perhaps the economic difficulties and the sclerotic nature of the country will eventually lead to that kind of change and we'll get a chance to engage again with the people of Russia, who I think would rather have a better and closer relationship with us than their leadership is allowing.

MS. GLASSER: Okay, right here.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks very much. I'm Garrett Mitchell and I write The Mitchell Report. And I've been sitting here thinking to myself if we sort of take 1989 as the high water mark and jump ahead 30 years to today, you know, to me the obvious question is sort of what the hell happened?

And here we are with liberal democracy in retreat and relatively mediocre at best leadership in far too many places, et cetera, et cetera. If one sort of looks over that period of 30 years, what three, four, two, whatever it is, key factors got us from '89 to 2019? How did this happen?

MS. GLASSER: Jim, you want to give the condensed history of 30 years? Give us like three minutes on --

MR. GOLDGEIER: Yeah. First of all, I mean, just in sort of the big picture of, oh, my god, like, you know, we thought everything was going to be great and now everything's terrible. I mean, we should remember that in Central and Eastern Europe, even with the challenges in places like Poland and Hungary, these places are so much different in a positive way than they were before the Wall came down. And I think it's easy for us to forget that.

I think, again, I would go back to something that I said earlier about how it all seemed so easy then that, you know, these regimes are falling one by one. You know, Romania was a special case where you had a very bloody outcome at the end of 1989. But otherwise, it just seemed like, gosh, you know, the Communists are just giving up and all these people want to be part of the West and it seemed very easy. So I suppose we should have known that nothing is ever that easy. But some of the forces that led to what happened in '89 and '91 and the failures of the Communist regimes was the onset of globalization and technological innovation. And there, again, if you look back to the rhetoric of '90s here in this country about globalization, there was certainly an effort by the Bill Clinton administration to embrace that globalization. Yes, manufacturing jobs are leaving, they're not going to come back, but, you know, we're going to help retrain everybody to become a computer programmer and they're going to have better jobs than they did before. And that wasn't very easy either.

And so the inequalities that resulted from the economic changes in that period were something that we did not adequately address. And then I would also say that from a standpoint of American leadership, the twin disasters of the 2003 Iraq war and the 2008 financial crisis were just huge blows to American leadership and legitimacy, you know, the way people viewed our system. If you look

at the financial crisis of 1990s, the Mexican peso crisis, the Asian financial crisis, the United States was the solver of crises, it wasn't the initiator the way it was in 2008. And so you have that kind of major financial crisis that we started.

The system, you know, people aren't looking at our system thinking, wow, that's so great the way that they did in the 1989 to 1991 period. And I think sort of that 2003 what we did in Iraq and 2008 with our initiation of the financial crisis were tremendously detrimental to what we were trying to accomplish in the world.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Can I add something to that? This is an unfashionable thing to say in this country and, to some degree, unfashionable back in Europe, which is that I think that we for a while in the past 20, 30 years thought that the architecture of the machinery of governance was going to become irrelevant because markets and civil societies were basically going to run things. You know, there was a political entropy. Everybody was going to be like us. And the sort of -- you know, the hidden hand would run it all.

And I think what we're discovering, particularly as economic integration increases, is that you need a state and you need laws and you need institutions and regulations to provide a structure and to provide a sort of supervision over public goods and how they're distributed. This doesn't happen automatically. You know, this I think has turned out -- the notion that this would be an automatism has turned out to be a fantasy.

But I think that the sort of degradation of the state is greater here than in Europe, but I'm seeing evidence for that even in my own country. You wouldn't think that, but I can definitely point to it. And I think that that's something that that's a conversation that we may need to return to.

And interestingly, I mean, again, I think it's something that all Western democracies share this concern. How do we keep this, how do we fix this machinery? How do we make it work under these circumstances of increased friction and competition and interdependence?

MS. GLASSER: I think we're pretty much out of time here.

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: Sorry about that.

MS. GLASSER: No. No, no, no, it's good. Victoria, do you have any last word?

MS. NULAND: Do you want us to have last words?

MS. GLASSER: So I guess we're all 1989'ers. That's the phrase that Constanze used.

MS. NULAND: I have one last word.

MS. GLASSER: Okay.

MS. NULAND: Which is, you know, those were the formative years --

MS. GLASSER: That's right.

MS. NULAND: -- of my professional life, of Constanze's --

MS. STELZENMÜLLER: All of us, yeah.

MS. NULAND: -- and Jim's. You guys are slightly younger than we are. I'm not prepared to give up on the optimism of that period. And I'm not ashamed of what was achieved in terms of liberating millions and millions of people and giving them a chance to shape their own lives. And that is in U.S. interest to continue to expand the community of free nations. We've just abandoned that in a way that we need to come back in our own interest, I think.

MS. GLASSER: All right. I think that's awesome, an unfashionable note of optimism to end this conversation on. And by the way, the word "impeachment" was never mentioned. (Laughter)

MS. NULAND: Well done. (Applause)

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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