THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
BROOKINGS CAFETERIA PODCAST
BEST OF BROOKINGS CAFETERIA PODCAST IN 2019
Washington, D.C., Friday, December 27, 2019

PARTICIPANTS:

Host:

FRED DEWS
Managing Editor, Podcasts and Digital Projects
The Brookings Institution

Guests:

JOHN R. ALLEN
President
The Brookings Institution

AMAR BHATTACHARYA
Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development

TARUN CHHABRA
Fellow, Foreign Policy, Project on International Order and Strategy

MATTHEW FIEDLER
Fellow, Economic Studies
USC-Brookings Schaeffer Initiative for Health Policy

LINDSEY FORD
David M. Rubenstein Fellow, Foreign Policy
Center for East Asia Policy Studies

CAROL GRAHAM
Leo Pasvolsky Senior Fellow and Research Director,
Global Economy and Development

SAMANTHA GROSS
Fellow, Foreign Policy, Energy Security and Climate Initiative

RYAN HASS
The Michael H. Armacost Chair
Fellow, Foreign Policy, Center for East Asia Policy Studies
John L. Thornton China Center

ELAINE KAMARCK
Founding Director, Center for Effective Public Management
Senior Fellow, Governance Studies

SUZANNE MALONEY
Deputy Director, Foreign Policy
Senior Fellow, Center for Middle East Policy,
Energy Security and Climate Initiative

MARK MURO
Senior Fellow and Policy Director, Metropolitan Policy Program

ANDRE M. PERRY
Fellow, Metropolitan Policy Program

ALICE RIVLIN
Senior Fellow, Economic Studies

JAY SHAMBAUGH
Director, The Hamilton Project
Senior Fellow, Economic Studies

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

DARRELL WEST
Vice President and Director, Governance Studies

TOM WHEELER
Visiting Fellow, Governance Studies, Center for Technology Innovation

VANESSA WILLIAMSON
Senior Fellow, Governance Studies
Senior Fellow, Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center

REBECCA WINTHROP
Co-Director, Center for Universal Education
Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development

CHRISTEN LINKE YOUNG
Fellow
USC-Brookings Schaeffer Initiative for Health Policy

* * * * *

P R O C E E D I N G S

DEWS: Welcome to the Brookings Cafeteria, the Podcast about ideas and the experts who have them. I'm Fred Dews.

It's been another fantastic year for the Brookings Cafeteria Podcast featuring 65 episodes, the most we've ever done, scores of guests, a number of guest hosts, and a huge range of topics.

Today's episode is a collection of some of my favorite clips and issues from the past 12 months. I hope you enjoy it and listen to the full episodes that interest you, and also share the podcast with friends and colleagues.

You can follow the Brookings Podcast Network on Twitter @PolicyPodcasts to get information about and links to all of our shows, including Dollar and Sense, the Brookings trade podcast, the Current, and our Events Podcast. If you like the show, please go to Apple Podcasts and leave us a review. It helps others find it.

And now, on with the episode. Let's start with a topic that's certainly on everyone's minds these days, impeachment -- presidential impeachment that is. In an interview with Governance Studies Senior Fellow Elaine Kamarck I asked her what it means to impeach a president and to offer some thoughts on how we arrived at this moment.

KAMARCK: So the Democratic leadership looked at the Mueller report and said well, there's a lot of smoke here, it certainly doesn't look very good. On the other hand, the President doesn't seem to be personally involved and therefore we're going to let the voters decide how they feel about the close ties to Russia. That changed when this Ukrainian phone call came out. And the reason it changed is for two reasons. First of all, the President himself was personally involved. You can't deny that. We don't have to discover that. He can't blame it on out of control rogue aides. I mean he's on the phone call. But the second thing is that that clearly was an

impeachable offense. That was clearly a constitutional problem. When you have the President using his office for his own political means or for money or for whatever, that clearly is a violation of the Constitution. And so congress could no longer ignore it. I mean I still think as a political matter a lot of democrats would just as soon not have this happening and not have the base woken up and intense. They would just as soon wait until November, but there really is a feeling that there is a constitutional duty put your foot down and say, no, President, you've crossed a line that presidents cannot cross and we don't want them to cross it in the future, which is why we're engaging in this.

DEWS: You can get more analysis and insight on the impeachment of President Trump from Elaine and other scholars on our FixGov blog in the ongoing This Week in Impeachment series.

One of the issues we're still talking about after the 2016 election is the security of the 2020 election. After all, U.S. intelligence agencies concluded that Russia did indeed interfere in our political process and is expected to do so again.

I asked Darrell West, the Vice President and Director of Governance Studies, to describe some of the solutions for election security proposed in a series of papers produced under the banner of Cybersecurity and Election Interference.

WEST: I mean there are things that government can do, that people can do to protect themselves and that the news media should do to make sure we have a fair and open election.

So on the government front, and again these are reforms that come from bipartisan legislation. It's already passed the House, there's not been a vote scheduled in the Senate on these things, but it's basically about providing more money for states and localities so they can upgrade their equipment so we can make sure that we protect our election infrastructure so that we have

the proper cybersecurity protections, so the Russians, the Chinese, the North Koreans, the Iranians, the Saudis, or other people cannot hack into our system and disrupt the election. So those are all things where the government can provide funding, they can provide technical expertise, they can help states and localities deal with the cybersecurity risks that are very serious.

But it's not just a problem of government. Like in the digital world, there's a lot of disinformation that's being spread through social media, and so we need digital literacy campaigns so that people themselves learn what they can do to spot disinformation, how they can help others avoid disinformation. I mean it's a challenge in the digital world. You know, you're surfing the internet, you're looking at a variety of sites. It's hard to know which piece of information comes from which site and how useful or valuable that site is. You know, are they promoting good fact based information or are they promulgating falsehoods. And so people need to become more sophisticated just in terms of how they access digital information, how they evaluate it, how to spot fake sites from real sites. So this is something that schools need to do a better job, nonprofit organizations need to help, advocacy organizations. Like we all play a role in kind of helping our fellow Americans figure out how to do a better job.

And then the last piece is really the role of the news media, because what has happened in past elections is there has been disinformation circulated, it goes viral on social media, and then traditional news organizations have picked up on it and really amplified that message. And so journalists have to be very careful in what they report on because if they're reporting on fake news, false information, disinformation, or just doctored images or videos, they're giving credence to all of that information even though the information is factually inaccurate.

So journalists I think play a very important role in helping us figure out what is more

useful information, what is less useful, what seems to be coming from a legitimate site, versus information that comes from a fringe site or a marginal site or a site that's playing in outright falsehoods. So we all are going to have to work to address this problem. So government plays a role, the average person plays a role, and journalists play a very important role here as well.

DEWS: Another major issue that Brookings experts have contended with over the past few years is an increase in racisms and hate crimes, exemplified most infamously by the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017 that left many injured and one woman dead. On the second anniversary of the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia and in the wake of the murder of over 20 people at a Wal-Mart in El Paso by a man who said he believed Hispanics were supposedly invading this country, I asked Brookings experts Vanessa Williamson and Andre Perry to talk about this language of invasion.

WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I mean the thing I keep coming back to is how closely this of the people who commit these hate crimes mirrors the rhetoric of the President of the United States. And there is a very long tradition that has been blessedly for some decades mostly in the extreme of American politics of neo-Nazi white supremacist rhetoric, right, but it's an enormous step backwards to see that. And I don't think we can pretend that the rhetoric of our leaders doesn't affect these people. One way you know is because neo-Nazi groups are celebrating, right? They're like, this guy is one of ours, you know. And that's something that I would have liked to have seen us have put behind us as a country.

Talking about the policy parts of it, we've got to talk about gun control. And in particular I think it plays into this conversation -- I mean that's a much larger conversation. It's a difficult question under any circumstances. But the access to guns in this country does two things at the same time. One, it means that people like that shooter in El Paso have access to an extraordinary

amount of weaponry. Two, I wrote a book on the Tea Party and so I spent some time with some conservative groups in this country they often were afraid of immigration, but violent people. They were sort of elderly white conservative. They were really afraid of immigrants, they were really afraid of crime. And so the access to guns actually breeds both the violent reaction and the fear at the same time. So it plays this very toxic role in our politics.

PERRY: You know, Trump uses the language that was there, as Vanessa said, that often line on the fringes of society. But this invader language, that is coming straight from white supremacist groups. There's no question about that. But he has a much bigger microphone. He has this megaphone that is blaring loudly on Twitter, on television, on radio; he has essentially a cable station dedicated to amplifying his voice. And reaction to his statements also amplified that language. He is pushing in the mainstream, no question.

And so it's a mistake to say that he is creating this language or he's developing these tools. He borrowed them from a very sordid place and it will have a negative impact. There are those who we don't want in power giving access to guns, giving access to violent language, giving access to social networking communities. And it's no surprise that the research is clear that hate groups are on the rise. And so this language is rallying people in the process. So we're in very dangerous territory.

DEWS: From the impeachment of President Trump to election security to racism in our political discourse, there are a lot of divisive issues in our body of politic. The ideological divide between the two major political parties has never seemed higher. What can we do to find common ground, at least in policy making?

I had the privilege this past spring before she passed away in May to interview Alice Rivlin, a Brookings Senior Fellow and one of the Nation's most important public policy leaders

over the past 50+ years. In the interview, she talked about her career in policy and her contributions to making the policy process better.

It seems like the value of nonpartisanship is perhaps even more important today than it ever has been. Would you agree with that or has it always been a vitally important value?

RIVLIN: Well, I think it's been important, but never, never as important as it is now. I'm writing a book, which I hope will come out in the fall, making that point. I really believe that what's happened to our policy making process is a disaster because the political parties are so partisan and they are so focused on winning the next election and making the other party look bad, that they're not working together to improve policy. And we've got some real problems facing this country. We aren't dealing with climate change, we aren't dealing with the growing debt, we aren't dealing with inequality in the way that we should be, and we aren't even talking about them. We are just saying it's your fault -- no, it's your fault. And I think that's disastrous. We've got to get back to policy negotiation across party lines because you need a consensus in order for policy to work, you need most people in the country saying yeah, that's a look law, otherwise it doesn't work.

And I believe that's particularly true of economic policy. You know, there may be other kinds of policies where it's a yes/no question. Economic policy is not usually a yes/no question, it's a balancing act. You have to figure, there are producers and there are consumers and there are people in rural areas and there are people in cities, and economic policy is going to balance all of those interests. And it has to be bipartisan to work.

DEWS: The book that Alice talked about, titled "Divided We Fall: Why Consensus Matters", will be published by the Brookings Press in the fall of 2020. She was working it nearly until the day she passed away.

In the spirit of nonpartisan careful analysis being the foundation of good public policy making, let's turn to episodes in which Cafeteria guests discussed some important domestic policy issues and identified some interesting solutions. These include Fixing Excessive Bail, Fines, and Fees, How Automation and AI Are Redefining Work, Network Revolutions From Gutenberg to Google, Unhappiness Among Nonworking White Men, and Healthcare Policy.

First up, here's Jay Shambaugh, Senior Fellow and Director of the Hamilton Project at Brookings, talking about the problem of excessive bail in the criminal justice system.

SHAMBAUGH: So bail. In most jurisdictions you're going in front of a judge, often there's a prosecutor, the prosecutor may recommend bail in many jurisdictions, in others it's just the judge. So there's certainly variance place to place. But basically you get assigned a bail amount. As you said, very few people have that bail amount in liquid assets. If it's a felony in particular, the median bail amount for a felony is over $10,000. So most people don't have $10,000 liquid. In fact, the median household certainly doesn't have $10,000 liquid. And in fact, lower income households don't even have that much at all in any type of asset. So what do they do? If you can't just pay the amount, you can go to a commercial bail bonds person in most jurisdictions and you go to them. And what's really I think striking that I think most people don't recognize is that you're paying a 10 percent premium usually. That premium is nonrefundable. So you get arrested for something, mistaken identity, you're totally innocent, you get a $15,000 bail. It's a relatively typical felony charge bail assigned. If you don't have $15,000 liquid, you might have a house that you own but, you know, it would take you time to borrow against it or anything like that, so you're just a standard household. You could borrow the $15,000, but you're going to pay $1,500 up front to the bail bondsperson. You show back up in court, the bail is refunded to the bail bondsperson, you're found innocent, you don't get the $1,500 back. So in

some sense there's this very large charge to people just for getting swept in the criminal justice system, not for being guilty, not for anything else. It's this big penalty. And as a consequence there are a lot of people who can't pay it. And therefore they don't get out, they never leave on bail, they're stuck the entire time before trial.

DEWS: Visit HamiltonProject.org to find facts about monetary sanctions in the criminal justice and policy proposals for adjusting these inequities.

Next, Metropolitan Policy Program Senior Fellow Mark Muro, talks about his research on how automation is changing work in America.

MURO: One point we want to make here is that in fact we're already living with the period of automation. Automation is all around us. Everything we're doing is in some way automated now. But, again, that first extremely visible impact has been that of industrial robots in the factory classically, you know, in the period say from 1970 -- we kind of say that period is kind of moved to about now -- but what we saw is, you know, very strong substitution in the middle of the job description. This has been tracked by the MIT professor, David Autor, who shared data with us and whose work we sort of replicated in some ways to connect the onset of automation with the replacement of what are called routine or codifiable or rote rules based work, very much what was happening in factories in the 1970s, 1980s. And that hollowing out of the labor distribution, replacement by these robots, and then we see a final employment impact in which people are displaced from middle skill jobs, middle paying jobs, and wind up making do with lower skill service jobs -- which were not being automated historically in the past.

So better jobs were more suitable for automation in the last period. And I think that's because middle skill jobs led to higher pay, the cost of automation in the last 25 years only made sense to replace those jobs. Now, we're looking forward into a different calculus, but -- so we've

seen this hollowing out this shift into lower end work for many, many people. That was the first effect, not entirely a happy one.

On the other hand, it was not a job apocalypse. In fact, we created 54-60 million jobs in the last period and actually slightly increased the ratio of jobs to workers in the first automation period. So it's a mixed record.

DEWS: In December I interviewed Mark about his new research on how artificial intelligence is likely to impact work in a different way than automation.

Next up, here's Tom Wheeler, former FCC chair and now a Brookings visiting Fellow, with Brookings Institution Press Director Bill Finan talking about Wheeler's book, "From Gutenberg to Google: The History of Our Future". Bill asks Tom to define the three network revolutions he covers in his book, in which he explores how these revolutions and communications have shaped our present and set the stage for the revolution we are experiencing today.

WHEELER: So there are three technologies in two periods. The first is the 15th century, the middle of the 15th century, when Johannes Gutenberg developed a movable type printing press. And it was the original information revolution. It unlocked the information that had been kept stored away in order to increase the power of a handful of people. And then 400 years later amidst the steam revolution comes the steam locomotive. And then steam locomotive was the original high speed network revolution because if you stop and think about it, from the beginning of time, man had been limited by geography and distance. You could go as far as animal muscle could take you and then you had to stop. And all of the sudden, this inexhaustible iron horse, moving at what were unimaginable speeds, was the original death of distance. But then immediately on the heels of that came the telegraph. And if the railroad was the death of

distance, the telegraph was the end of time because it was the original electronic network and it allowed information, again, for the first time in history, to be known simultaneously in multiple places. And taken together, those two created the industrial revolution and defined the 19th and 20th centuries.

DEWS: A number of Brookings Press authors have been on the Podcast this year, including Michael O'Hanlon on his book, "The Senkaku Paradox: Risking Great Power War Over Small Stakes", Bruce Riedel "Beirut 1958: How America's Wars in the Middle East Began", and Kathryn Newcomer and Charles Johnson on their study of U.S. inspectors general.

In March, I interviewed Senior Fellow Carol Graham who looked at levels of ill being among men who are out of the labor force, a distinct category from unemployed men who, by definition, are looking for work. In this clip, Carol talks about the long-term challenges many white men have faced in the labor market.

GRAHAM: So it's the story of the decline of the blue collar working class in this country and they are the people with privileged jobs, with manufacturing jobs, with stable coal mining jobs, tended to be white, they had privileged access to the American dream. Minorities and immigrants were discriminated against.

So they were embodiment of American dream. You finish high school, you work hard, you kind of do the profession your father did. This is a big generalization, but they were the auto workers, the steel mill workers, the coal mine workers. And with the decline of manufacturing, so went these jobs. And with the decline of these jobs, so went the stable families. So if you think about it, Hispanics and African Americans have had more multitasking, they have extended communities, more flexibility in family arrangements over time. They're about the same now, but for the white working class it was the stable job and the stable family, often not always in the

heartland where the jobs went away. And so the jobs really went away because of technology driven growth, the rewards to high skills going up, the rewards to low skills going down. Trade was a factor, but not the only factor. There's been a lot of temptation to blame immigrants or minorities for taking those jobs. That's not the jobs disappeared.

But it turns out that this group in the U.S. lost not just stability, they lost status, they lost the narrative of their lives. And they feel they're being caught up with. They report that they live worse than their parents do, they don't trust the government, they have lower levels of wellbeing.

And then if you look at trends in the same places where they are concentrated, they are places where population density is going down, when the big firm pulls out, the mom and pop shop die. So if you stay there it's a tough picture without a future.

DEWS: One of the top issues of the last year, if not the last decade, and one which is certain to play a part in the 2020 presidential election, is healthcare.

In November, just about a year out from the presidential election, I interviewed two health policy experts at Brookings about their work on health policy issues, including how to reduce costs and surprise medical billing.

First, here's Matthew Fiedler, a Fellow with the USC-Brookings Schaeffer Initiative for Health Policy.

FIEDLER: So I think it's an issue we touched on and this electoral cycle may actually be better than some past ones, but we really should be talking more about how to reduce the prices of healthcare services. You know, in a lot of healthcare policy debates insurers and pharmaceutical companies are the standard boogie men and there's plenty of waste in both areas that policy makers should be thinking about how to get at. But ultimately three-quarters of what we spend on healthcare goes to providers of healthcare services, so doctors, hospitals, and the

like. And as I alluded to before, there's good reason to believe that the prices we are paying providers, particularly hospitals and physicians in certain specialties, are higher than they need to be to get care of the quality we want. How to reduce those prices is a harder conversation politically because doctors and hospitals are much more sympathetic than insurers or drug manufacturers and, frankly, because hospitals are often one of the largest employers in any particular community.

There is also plenty of room for disagreement about the best way to reduce prices, but if we're serious about reducing the underlying cost of healthcare, this conversation about prices of healthcare services is one we just absolutely have to have.

DEWS: And, second, here's Christen Link Young, also a Fellow with the USC-Brookings Schaeffer Initiative, talking about the problem of surprise medical billing.

YOUNG: This is a major issue in U.S. politics right now, and also in our healthcare system. So surprise medical bills arise when you receive care from an out-of-network healthcare provider under situations that you can't reasonably control. You were not able to choose which provider you're seeing and so you're seeing an out-of-network doctor in a way that you couldn't avoid. A common situation is emergency care where you may not have a choice over which hospital you're taken to, or you may go to an in-network hospital but see particular clinicians within that hospital that are out-of-network.

Another type of example, and in some ways the most egregious kinds of examples arise when people go for a scheduled procedure at an in-network hospital, so they schedule a surgery or they schedule to deliver their baby at an in-network hospital, they're seeing an in-network primary surgeon or an in-network OB/GYN, but it turns out that some of the other doctors that get involved in delivering their care are out of network. Unbeknownst to them their

anesthesiologist or their radiologist or a consulting surgeon is out-of-network and, again, the patient had no ability to choose those specialists. They couldn't say I'm sorry, I'd like a different anesthesiologist or I want to run across time to find an in network anesthesiologist. That's not an option at all for these folks. You're stuck with the anesthesiologist that the hospital presents you with.

This is fundamentally a market failure. There's a group of providers that are exploiting the fact that you can't choose which doctor you're going to see in these circumstances to get the higher payment that they can receive by delivering out-of-network care. It's actually fairly common -- about 20 percent of emergency department admissions and 10 percent of inpatient stays involve some sort of care that could potentially lead to a surprise out-of-network bill. Half to two-thirds of ambulance rides are out-of-network. So this is really widespread in pockets of the healthcare system.

It's useful to understand that the dynamic of surprise billing affects costs in two ways. It's really expensive for the people who get those surprise bills. They are hundreds or thousands or tens of thousands of dollars in situations that, again, consumers just aren't predicting and didn't choose. So it's very, very expensive for the households that have to confront this. But it also leads to higher premiums for everybody else because the group of specialties and providers that are involved in these potential out-of-network billing situations leverage the fact that they can threaten these surprise out-of-network bills to demand higher payment rates even when they do go in-network. And so that means all of us pay higher premiums because these providers can credibly threaten to stay out-of-network and surprise bill people.

So policy makers have a bunch of options to end this market failure and make it impossible for providers to threaten to send surprise bills and to send those bills when patients

get care out-of-network.

DEWS: Christen and Matt are co-authors for some health policy explainers we're calling "voter vitals", which you can find on our new Policy 2020 Initiatives website, Brookings.edu/policy2020. Policy 2020 aims to empower voters with fact-based data-driven nonpartisan information to better understand the policy matters discussed by candidates running for office in 2020.

Let's pivot now from U.S. domestic policy to foreign policy. From China to Iran to Venezuela, from Brexit to NATO to the Middle East, from international trade to elections worldwide, from refugees to global education and to climate change, Brookings scholars have on this Podcast covered a broad range of foreign policy challenges.

In January we published an episode about Iran's 1979 revolution and its legacies today, an episode that featured 5 experts talking about different aspects of the Iranian revolution.

Here's Senior Fellow Suzanne Maloney on what the U.S. hostage crisis meant in the context of the overall revolution in Iran.

MALONEY: I think the hostage crisis in the minds of many Americans is synonymous with the Iranian revolution itself, this sense that a government that had been such a long standing and close American ally had suddenly morphed into one that threatened the very safety of our diplomatic representatives on the ground, produced a kind of cognitive dissidence among much of the American public and certainly within the U.S. government, which had in fact been trying to maintain at least a low level relationship with the new government in Iran. The seizure of the embassy by students who were not affiliated with the government but who appear to have had some prior coordination or even encouragement from elements of Ayatollah Khomeini's inner circle provided a catalyst for Iran to move in a much more radical direction, but it also clarified

for the U.S. government that this new regime in Iran was not going to be a country with which the United States could deal in the way that it would with other types of countries.

DEWS: In 2019 the NATO alliance turned 70. To discuss challenges to and opportunities for the alliance as it enters its eighth decade, Senior Fellow Michael O'Hanlon took the guest host mic to interview Brookings expert Constanze Stelzenmüller and John R. Allen, Brookings President.

Here's President Allen reflecting on the anniversary.

ALLEN: So I think NATO continues to be enormously relevant. And when I visit countries in Central Europe and I talk to the young leaders in those countries who grew up in a very different environment and now see that their future could be tied clearly to NATO and clearly tied to the EU and clearly tied to a relationship with the United States, there is just no value judgment made in their minds. There is nothing that is attractive to them in many respects that comes from the East. And so much of their future they believe is tied irrevocably to the West in broad terms, to the EU, to the security that the NATO alliance provides, either as a member of NATO or near the frontier or NATO. And then I think in many respects, until just recently, they believed that they could find common purpose with the United States in so many areas and, in particular, human rights and the rule of law. And I think in many of our partners, our youngest democratic partners are very confused about the example that we're setting.

So I think right now is an extraordinarily important moment. I absolutely agree with Constanze that we should hold out the hope that nations in Europe who are able to adhere to the standards of NATO should always have the hope that there is a future where they're a part of NATO, but I fully understand, Mike, your view that the rapid expansion to the East has in fact created a sense of instability or insecurity in the Kremlin that has in fact generated the reactions

that we have seen. No one's fault. We have no reason to apologize, but I also think the reality of where we are today and where I think NATO will go in the future has to take into account that we have a moral obligation to be prepared to induct those young states that are willing to -- against great pressure from Russia -- adopt a credible liberal democracy that rests on a constitution that reflects the dedication to the rule of law and a commitment to human rights. And if they achieve that, we should be prepared to take them in and Russia should be prepared to accept that we're going to do that.

DEWS: I've had a number of opportunities this year to collaborate with the scholars in the Center for Universal Education at Brookings. The Center is one of the leading policy centers focused on universal quality education around the developing world.

Center Director Rebecca Winthrop went to the LEGO Idea Conference in Denmark earlier this year where she talked with education leaders about the role of parents and the power of innovative approaches like playful learning and pursuing education transformation.

One of the parents with whom she spoke was Ziauddin Yousafzai, co-founder and board member of Malala Fund and father of Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai.

WINTHROP: I first want to introduce you to one of the most famous parents in the world today, Ziauddin Yousafzai, the father of Malala, who, as everybody knows, is a global education advocate and Nobel Peace Prize winner. Ziauddin himself has been a lifelong educator running an independent school in the Swat Valley in Pakistan.

Ziauddin, it's lovely to be with you here at the LEGO Idea Conference 2019 in Denmark. And we met a long, long time ago. I would love to hear a little bit from you about what your history has been and your journey into education.

YOUSAFZAI: Thank you so much, and it's so nice to see you. And thank you for your

support.

My father, so he inspired me and he used to tell me the world is an open book, read it. And I had this stammering problem. When I talked I started stammering, sometimes too much, sometimes less. So he was such a great father that he encouraged me to be a speaker. So he turned my weakness into a power, into strength. So this is something that he gave me and I'm so grateful that I was born in the family of such a father. Himself he was like a cleric in the mosque, a prayer leader, a mullah. And traditionally, if he would have followed the social norms, he should not have given me modern education. Nobody would have asked him why you are sending your son to school, why not send him to a madrassa. So people sometimes asked him why you are not making your son to follow your footsteps to be a mullah, to be a prayer leader in the mosque rather than you are sending him to a school. But he sustained that pressure because I will say that he was the father of the future. He was not the father of the past, of yesterday, he was the father of tomorrow and he knew he had this vision and wisdom that the coming years and the coming time is of modern education and if I want my son to have skills for the quid pro quo for market, he should be educated and equipped with modern education.

So that's how he educated me and that changed my life.

DEWS: For more global education content, check out episodes with Jenny Perlman Robinson on the global learning crisis and also Christina Kwauk's annual discussion with the Echidna Global Scholars, who are leaders in girl's education in their home countries.

The United Nations Climate Action Summit took place during the UN General Assembly meetings in New York in September. I interviewed two scholars about the event and global responses to the climate crisis. Amar Bhattacharya, Senior Fellow in Global Economy and Development at Brookings, and Samantha Gross, Fellow in Foreign Policy and the Energy,

Security, and Climate Initiative at Brookings.

I asked them a range of questions about policy ideas to address global warming, including putting a price on carbon.

GROSS: The idea behind carbon pricing is that you tax the bad behavior, you tax the emission of greenhouse gases. Alternatively, you have a cap and trade system where people trade permits that allow them to emit greenhouse gases.

Some of the Democratic candidates are viewing it differently. Some see it as a clear part of the solution, whereas other see it as too little too late with the pressing nature of the challenge at hand.

BHATTACHARYA: And at the international level, there's also a lot of emphasis now being put on carbon pricing. There is now a finance minister's coalition on climate and one of the priorities they have set is carbon pricing. I mean what is interesting about carbon pricing is it is so elegant and so simple, and yet it is so difficult. So a lot of the debate right now is how do you address the political economy of it, how do you persuade in some sense the citizens that this is something in their interest? And in the United States, where we are likely to face important fiscal pressures in the years ahead, carbon pricing can be a solution both for fiscal pressures and generating the revenues, but also of course the incentives for changing behaviors Samantha pointed out.

GROSS: Yeah, that one of the great political challenges with carbon prices is getting the prices high enough to make a difference. And so we've seen carbon pricing systems around the world, particularly in Europe, that have been in place for a while, but that have very difficult time keeping those prices high enough to actually change behavior.

DEWS: This year Foreign Policy at Brookings launched its Global China Initiative, a two

year effort to furnish policy makers and the public with a new empirical baseline for understanding China's regional and global ambitions.

To help kick off the initiative, we handed the mic to Lindsey Ford, a David M. Rubinstein Fellow for an entire week of episodes devoted to introducing listeners to a range of issues related to global China.

Here's Lindsey with two of the project's three co-directors, Ryan Hass and Tarun Chhabra.

FORD: So we're going to talk about Brookings' new Global China project, which is going to be a Foreign Policy wide effort that's going to rope in a huge array of scholars over the next couple of years.

So to kick off, just tell me a bit about your goals for the project. What are some of the big questions and maybe voids in the China debate that you really hope this project is going to address?

HASS: Well, Lindsey, as I think about this project, the way that I approach it, I think Brooking is the largest, or one of the largest think tanks in the world, China's rise is the biggest story in the international relations world, and so it's a question of are we going to be able to harness the deep bench of talents that exist on virtually every issue in the human condition at Brookings to grapple with this existential question of what are the implications of China's rise.

And so the hope is that through this project we'll be able to take an all-encompassing empirical assessment of what China is trying to do, where it is trying to do it, what it is hoping to achieve, what happens, what are the implications if it succeeds or if it fails, and how can the United States respond to this challenge?

So hopefully over the course of this exercise we will help develop a baseline of

understanding, grounded in empirical research on China's ambitions that will help inform the public and the policy debate about how to respond to China.

CHHABRA: I would just add to what Ryan said, that I think you see that the debate about China's global influence playing out in a couple of ways. One is trying to identify what China's grand strategy is in the world, what are they trying to accomplish, what are its ambitions in the world, what means are they employing towards those ends. But not a lot of people can actually engage in that debate in a really substantive way unless they're Sinologists. And we do have Sinologists here and we will be enlisting some of them to address that question.

But what we can do is to for a moment just put aside that question and say there will continue to be some debate on that. Hopefully we'll advance the ball in some ways, whether that's looking at China's ambition in East Asia, whether China wants to replace the United States as a global hegemon.

But what we can do with many of our other scholars who haven't necessarily be focusing on China is tell us what is China in your part of the world or the functional area that you've been studying and how have you seen China's role and involvement and influence shift over time, so that we can come at the debate in another way and say we may continue to debate elements of China's grand strategy, either regionally or globally, but we'll put together I think a pretty compelling picture of what is happening in the world. And it may be that some of that is happening through economic incentives, some of that is happening through demand, through trade with China, or influence or security concerns, whatever it might be. But that's going to produce a different world on its own, even if we can't settle the strategy question.

So we're trying to kind of marry both of those to come up with a compelling picture of how the world will be different, and then for U.S. policy makers to help figure out how we

respond.

DEWS: Stay tuned to the Brookings Cafeteria for more special episodes from Global China and learn more at Brookings.edu/GlobalChina.

2019 was an anniversary year for many things, including the creation of the Euro, NATO, Tiananmen Square, the moon landing, and the arrival of the first slaves at Britain's American colonies. November 9, 2019 marked 30 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

This next clip is from an interview with Constanze Stelzenmüller, a Senior Fellow at Brookings and the Kissinger Chair at the Library of Congress, who discussed her new foreign policy essay, "German Lessons: 30 Years After the End of History, elements of an education" and the lessons that were in store for her, her fellow Germans, Europe, and the world.

Here she is talking about what the Wall came to symbolize for Germans and for the East/West rivalry.

STELZENMÜLLER: I think it's easy to forget these days because Germany has been without the Wall now for longer than the time in which the Wall existed, 27 years. And you now have an adult generation that grew up without the Wall. It's easy to forget the feeling of claustrophobia and of oppression that I remember so well from growing up as a West German.

And it was really two things. One, it was clear that we were the ground zero of the Cold War nuclear standoff. And we knew that if there was an outbreak of hostility between NATO and the Warsaw Pact it would be carried out on German territory, on West German and East German territory. And if would be conventional for three weeks at the most and then it would go nuclear and then we would all be a pile of ashes.

That is literally what my generation of young Germans grew up with. And it's I think worth remembering just how oppressive that was. And I think it's why a lot of young people,

including me, tried to flee the country. In other words, basically try and go to university or to graduate school somewhere else and not come back because this seemed like literally an embodiment of what the punk movement of the time -- it's most famous slogan was no future. And we said, yeah, yeah, know what that feels like.

And the other thing it symbolized, of course, was that it was a punishment, it was a punishment for the Third Reich's and the Nazi's committing a world war and a holocaust that killed at least 6 million Jews and tens of millions of other Europeans and people around the world in the most horrific ways, and that is partition and the wall that symbolized the partition was an eternal memorial of the crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Third Reich. It was something that at least in my mind's eye was always accompanied by visions of other guard towers and razor wires of the concentration camps.

And so it seemed that this was not just a forever memorial, but also a fitting memorial. It was something that was necessary to remind us of what was.

DEWS: Well, it's time for the last clip. Since you heard from her first, I want to also give the last word to Elaine Kamarck.

In October she joined Senior Fellows David Wessel and Stuart Butler in a conversation about the Policy 2020 Initiative that I mentioned earlier. In this era of severe political polarization and competing sources of news and information, Elaine talked about the role of a think tank like Brookings.

KAMARCK: Well, I think I see it in two ways. The first way is simply to understand that there are facts, they are justified, and there may be a range of those facts, but there are facts. So, for instance, one of the arguments we'll hear a lot about in this campaign is illegal immigration into the United States. Well, there are methodologies for describing and understanding how

many illegal immigrants there are, since illegal immigrants do not raise their hand and say, oh, please count me. And that gives you a range. And I think that one of the things we're going to try to do here is explain what that range is and how people can come to it.

Now, when you're outside of that range, right, when you're dramatically outside of the range where people on both sides of the aisle would agree, then I think you've got to call people on it and people are just making up stuff. And that is a problem.

I think the second thing that Brookings can do is that there are so many policies that sound great but are really difficult to implement, so they fall on the implementation. Of course the most famous one was Trump's claim during the 2016 campaign that he was going to build a wall and make Mexico pay for it. Well, the making Mexico pay for it was absurd at the time, it's absurd now. And people needed I think to say that more, to be equally bipartisan. If we look at a wealth tax, which is very popular and which we are going to do some writing about, one of the big problems with a wealth tax that has caused some Scandinavian countries to go back on having a wealth tax is it's awfully hard to administer. It's just really hard to figure this stuff out.

So I think one of the things a think tank can do in addition to establish the proper range of facts, is to say add a degree of realism to the political debate.

DEWS: And that's all for this special year end edition of the Brookings Cafeteria Podcast. I hope you've enjoyed it and found it informative. Be sure to visit the website to find links to all of the episodes included here and much more.

The Brookings Cafeteria is brought to you by the Brookings Podcast Network. Follow us on Twitter @PolicyPodcasts and subscribe to the show on Apple podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. If you visit Apple podcasts, please leave us a review. It helps other listeners find the show.

We're on the Brookings website at Brookings.edu/podcasts, where you can find and subscribe to our other shows, including Dollar and Sense, the Brookings trade podcast, the Current, and our Events Podcast.

I want to offer a special thank you to one of our communications interns this semester, Tamari Dzotsenidze, who provided production support throughout the semester and was instrumental in helping me collect the clips you heard throughout the show. Also, my thanks to our other communication interns from earlier in the year, Betsy Broaddus and Julia O'Hanlon. And a big thank you to our 2019 audio interns, Eowyn Fain and Quinn Lukas.

And, of course, my sincere thanks to everyone who makes the show possible every week. The audio engineer is Gaston Reboredo. Our podcast team includes Chris McKenna, Adrianna Pita, Marie Wilkin, and Brookings Press Director Bill Finan, who does most of the book interviews.

I want to pay special recognition once again to Molly Reynolds and David Wessel, who both appeared on the show as a guest or a contributor nearly 20 times combined this year to update us on what was happening in Congress and in the economy.

And also my thanks to the social media team here of Ashley Wood Schelling and Raman Kaur for all they do to help promote podcast content.

Thanks to Camilo Ramirez for his leadership of the Brookings Podcast Network and the vice president of communications, Emily Horne, for her guidance and support.

And, finally, thanks to you, listeners, for downloading, sharing, and I hope enjoying the program.

Until next time, I'm Fred Dews. Happy New Year.

* * * * *

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