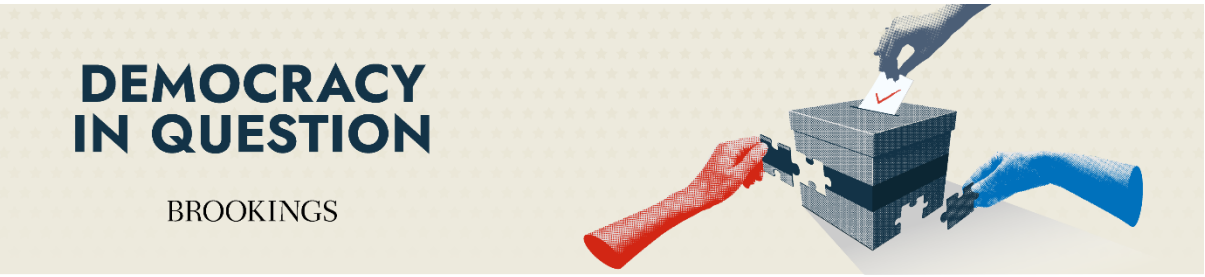

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
***Democracy in Question* podcast**

"What does America's foreign and military policy have to do with democracy?"

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Guest:

MICHAEL E. O'HANLON
Senior Fellow, Director of Research, Foreign Policy
Philip H. Knight Chair in Defense and Strategy
The Brookings Institution

Host:

KATHRYN DUNN TENPAS
Visiting Fellow, Governance Studies
Director, The Katzmann Initiative on Improving Interbranch Relations and Government
The Brookings Institution

Episode Summary:

Since its founding, the United States has significantly expanded its global influence and military power, especially in the 20th century. In this episode, host Katie Dunn Tenpas and guest Michael O'Hanlon, a senior fellow in Foreign Policy at Brookings, explore how the history of U.S. foreign and military policy has interacted with democracy at home and abroad, and assess the current state of democracy amid rising competition with Russia and China, trade tensions, and ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza.

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TENPAS: Hi, I'm Katie Dunn Tenpas, a visiting fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution and director of the Katzmann Initiative on Improving Interbranch Relations and Government. And this is Democracy in Question, a podcast where we examine current events through the lens of America's political foundations, thinking about how recent events fit into broader stream of democracy that runs throughout our history. You can find episodes of this podcast at Brookings dot edu slash democracy in question, all one word.

Today we're diving into the question, what does America's foreign and military policy have to do with democracy? If you've ever wondered how decisions about war and peace are actually made, and who ultimately has the final say, this one's for you. When it comes to foreign and military policy, most people assume the president calls the shots. After all, the Constitution named him commander-in-chief but gave Congress the sole power to declare war.

The reality is more complex. The Constitution lays out a nuanced separation of powers that governs how the U.S. interacts the world, one that involves checks and balances and shared authority, but ultimately rests in friction among the president and his administration, Congress, and the courts. We'll dive into some historical context from the War Powers Resolution to key moments where the courts have or haven't intervened when the branches clash. And we're at a pivotal time for U.S. foreign policy with escalating competition with Russia and China, rising tensions over trade, and ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza.

To help us unpack all of this, I'm thrilled to welcome Michael O'Hanlon to the podcast. He's the director of research and a senior fellow in the Foreign Policy program at Brookings, specializing in U.S. defense strategy, military affairs, and national security policy. Mike, thanks so much for joining us today.

O'HANLON: Katie, it's great to be with you. Thanks for having me.

TENPAS: Yeah, well let's just start at the top and maybe if you can provide a broad answer to, hat does America's foreign and military policy have to do with democracy?

[2:22]

O'HANLON: You know, we've been trying to answer that question for 250 years. And there was a time, going back to the founders—as I think you know better than I, and with your UVA affiliation and the Miller Center, you folks think about these things a lot—there was time when we had early debates: to what extent are we the unique country that is undertaking this experiment in governance that the world had never seen before, and we just want to get that right here for ourselves, or maybe be a role model for others who might someday adopt some of the same concepts while, meanwhile, Europe is still run by monarchies that are always at war with each other? Or do we want to be more messianic and missionary-like in our promulgation and promotion and export of democracy?

And of course, in modern times, the most recent incarnation of this debate was with President George W. Bush and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, the effort to bring, you know, a freedom agenda to the Middle East, even using American military power to try to catalyze it. Most of us have subsequently decided that's not the right way to do this. The costs are too high, the results and outcomes are not particularly promising.

But in other ways, we have been successful historically, and the best example is after World War II when we not only defeated Japan and Germany, but turned them into democracies, to the point where they've become some of our best friends, and frankly, where we have a lot to learn from them today by some people's accounts. So, this has been at the center of how we think about who we are on the world stage for our entire history.

And the one last one I'll mention in this opening is, of course, with the Civil War we almost ripped ourselves in two over our own differing views, North and South, about what democracy really meant and to what extent did it need to cover African Americans and to what extent did this promotion of the rights of the individual require the abolition of slavery or at least the containment of slavery. So we fought our worst, most lethal, and bloody war in our history over the very question of how do we define democracy even here and in the western territories that we were expanding to competitively north and south.

So I haven't really answered your question except to say that it is a central question in American foreign policy that I think constantly is answered differently. And sometimes there are cycles. Sometimes you go back to debates that we've seen before. Sometimes we march off in new directions. The one last big broad framing comment, and I'll really stop, is that, of course, the world has become much more democratic over the course of our lifetimes, but a bit less democratic over the course of the 21st century. And so, if you net that out, we're still in a much more democratic place globally, but there's a long ways to go. There are a lot of imperfect democracies, including, of course, perhaps our own, and this is therefore a work in progress.

TENPAS: And can we talk a little bit about foreign policymaking, and maybe you could take us on a history lesson trip. It seems to me that over time we have a president who is much more powerful and influential in the realm of foreign affairs. So maybe trace it from the beginning with George Washington and talk about how we got to where we are today.

[5:22]

O'HANLON: You know, in some ways, Washington started us down the path of getting more involved in world affairs because he began to build a navy, which we had dismantled after the Revolution, what we had of it. And we had basically dismantled our army, except for a few hundred soldiers in the federal force. And Washington wanted it that way. He wanted to dismantle it. And one of my favorite books is a book by my classmate from Princeton, Joel Achenbach, who wrote about what Washington did the year or two after the Revolution. And what he did was he traveled out west, and he put on his surveying hat again. And he had property out there out in Ohio, modern day Ohio. And he was fascinated with the Potomac River

and its origins and what you could do by way of major waterways connecting the regions and creating this more powerful United States. So Washington himself was primarily focused on America's internal development, like a lot of the Revolutionary War and founding father figures.

But Washington also in 1794 approved this idea of building six frigates for a couple of reasons. One of them being the Barbary pirates over in the Mediterranean Sea. So we were already showing our global interests at a time when supposedly we wanted to stay out of the troubles of the old world, but yet when a few American ships got taken hostage or their crews did, we decided we wanted the means to go back and enforce the law and justice in modern day Libya and so forth.

But also then the French. In 1794, that was the year of Jay's Treaty, and we finally made our true peace with Britain at least for 18 years until the War of 1812. But this was when the French were going through their multiple rounds of revolution, some of them more friendly to the United States than others. And the very country that had helped us defeat the British just a decade before wound up being a concern of ours because they didn't like that we were trading with Britain that was becoming their enemy again. And so they started encouraging pirates in the Caribbean, to coin a phrase, to go after American shipping. And we decided to build a navy, partly to be able to use it against the French, if necessary.

And then one last piece of this early story, but it goes into John Adams. When Adams became president in 1797, things were heating up again with France. Washington had retired to Mount Vernon, finally gets his couple of years of peace before his death in 1799. But he had a guy, a good friend, named Alexander Hamilton, who of course has been celebrated in modern American history. But there was an issue that Thomas Jefferson and John Adams really had with Hamilton. And Hamilton wanted to build a big federal army, not to go to Europe and fight there, but to be more effective at maybe pushing the Spanish out of Florida or the French out of Louisiana, which we hadn't yet bought from them, or whatever else. And John Adams, President Adams, Vice President Jefferson, back in the day when the second place vote getter was the vice president—

TENPAS: —that was an interesting era.

[8:18]

O'HANLON: It was an interesting era, and they were not really friendly. They became good friends, and then pen pals after both their presidencies, dying on the same day, July 4th, 1826. But this is way before that. They didn't agree on much of anything in the 1790s, except they both hated Hamilton, and they both did not trust him with an army. And so the minute that President Adams, had the chance to negotiate peace with France and call the whole thing off, he jumped at it because it prevented Hamilton from getting this federal army. Because what they were gonna do is have Washington be the nominal head of it because everybody loved Washington still at that point and always, but Hamilton was gonna be like the chief of staff and therefore be the field commander.

And that's one thing that neither Adams nor Jefferson could tolerate. They thought that Hamilton was an egomaniac and dangerous. We Americans tend to think of

going out West as domestic policy, but at that point it was really foreign policy, because we didn't control those areas and they weren't part of the United States. And so already these debates are heating up in the 1790s.

TENPAS: And then fast forward sort of when do we have an army and why, what's the impetus behind developing an army, and a navy, and an air force?

[9:25]

O'HANLON: We built just a big enough army to fight the War of 1812 and then stood it down. And for the most part, through our first century, with the exception of the Civil War, and that's the huge exception that I'll come back to, we basically had enough federal force to man the forts out west and help militias and settlers fight Native Americans and increasingly consolidate control of those territories, and then of course fight Mexico between 1846 and 1848. Which then gave us not only consolidation of our affiliation with Texas, which had already gained its independence from Mexico, but then we basically forced the Mexicans to give us New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, I think parts of some of the mountain states as well. And so we were in a very expansionist mode up until about 1890, when we sort of finished the job, except for then taking Hawaii from the Spanish and Puerto Rico in the last couple years of the 19th century.

So, don't let anybody ever tell you Americans are peaceful. We may be good. I like to hope most of how we use force serves a larger purpose, and on balance a beneficial one most of the time. But we are anything but deferential on the world stage and we never have been, we never had been, from those early days onward. But the armies that we needed to do this kind of work were always small, except in the Civil War. To the point where we get to the end of the 19th century, and only with the Spanish-American War of 1898 did we build up a force that was more than just a few tens of thousands of soldiers. Meanwhile, all of the European and East Asian nations are in the many hundreds of thousands. Typical European military was at least 10 times the size of the U.S. Army still at that point.

TENPAS: And do you think that sort of having these armies and this kind of military buildup enables us to protect our democracy and to spread it as well? Or what's the link between democracy and having this military force?

[11:18]

O'HANLON: Well, I think with the world wars, you have one narrative that comes out of that, which is that we see that if we stay disengaged from Europe and Asia, the powers there get rivalrous and competitive with each other and can't really or at least couldn't manage their own affairs very successfully. And so if we believe in keeping our own security, but also a world to our liking that Bob Kagan would describe as Americans have always wanted to live in a world that sort of is moving in the direction of our values and vision, and therefore, we'd better get involved in European and Asian security, because otherwise, you're just gonna have these ongoing world wars and the bad guys might win.

And then that leads, of course, to all the Cold War institutions that were designed to protect democracy, especially in Japan and Western Europe, and then see if we

could gradually spread it in some other places too. But mostly, in other places, keep the communists out. So it was often more of a defensive vision, because we had plenty of autocratic friends, like, you know, Mobutu in Zaire, or Marcos in the Philippines. So we were not really wedded to the idea of democracy everywhere, but we were adamant it had to be protected in Europe and in East Asia. Meanwhile, Taiwan and South Korea become democracies over the course of the Cold War. And then that sort of has a happy ending.

But then, of course, this century, the happy ending is not so much, right? It's more about whenever we think we're using military force to spread democracy, we fail, at huge cost. Blood cost, dollar cost, reputational cost, losing the moral high ground in much of the world that we thought was sort of innately ours because of our Constitution and our values. And so I think most Americans would agree at this point that the effort to spread democracy through our more assertive elements of strategic and military policy has been a failure and we should get out of that game because it doesn't work and even if might work a little bit here or there, it's not worth the cost.

TENPAS: And what about the Constitution and its creation of these powers that are separated but shared for Congress and the presidency—how would you say that relationship has evolved? It seems to me, it strikes me from what you've just sort of summarized that as the military grew, so too did the president's authority in the realm of foreign affairs. Congress just simply can't act quick enough. And over time, there have been precedents where presidents have acted without consulting Congress. And so now we have a president that's incredibly powerful in this realm. Can that ever change? Is that something you agree with? And how would you describe that evolution?

[13:38]

O'HANLON: I definitely do not agree with the idea of the executive having more and more power on matters of war and peace. As I did my current book project, because I did a history of U.S. defense strategy, going back to the Revolution that's gonna come out later this year—it's called *To Dare Mighty Things*, and that steals from a Theodore Roosevelt speech—but as I did that book, I realized that we actually already started to use military force without formal declarations of war against the Barbary pirates. And so already the original sin of using force without congressional permission happened back in the very first and second presidencies of our country. But this was seen as limited, more like a police action. And Congress, after the fact, did more or less approve of what the presidents were doing—President Washington, President Adams—and provided the funds to create this new navy. And so there was, from the get-go, more or least congressional permission and acquiescence and support.

But you're probably well aware of the times we've declared war in our history: the War of 1812; the U.S.-Mexico War, 1846; the Spanish-American War of 1898; World War I; and World War II—five separate conflicts. Those are the only times we've ever declared war. It didn't make much sense to declare war in the Civil War or the Revolution, because we were either not yet a country or breaking apart as one. And then, we have never declared war since World War II.

The relatively better cases of congressional involvement, interestingly, have happened more under Republican administrations, because whether you like the wars or not, the first President Bush did ask Congress for permission to carry out Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and evict Iraq from Kuwait. And the second President Bush asked Congress for permission to overthrow the Taliban and al-Qaida, go after al-Qaida after 9/11, and to overthrow Saddam. And we sometimes forget that we had pretty strong bipartisan support for all those, although it was actually a close vote under the first President Bush for Operation Desert Storm. That one was razor thin in the Senate. But with the invasion of Iraq, it was quite bipartisan in both houses.

Democrats—I'm a Democrat—Democrats have been a little worse on this score because Harry Truman did not ask Congress for permission to fight North Korea when they invaded South Korea. He had a UN resolution. He claimed that was gonna be good enough. And then Lyndon Johnson had only the Gulf of Tonkin resolution for Vietnam, which was a resolution that came out of a skirmish between a couple of ships in 1964 before we even had American forces in any numbers on the ground. And Johnson used that as his only authorization for the rest of the Vietnam War, the rest of his part of the Vietnam war.

And then, in the more modern era, President Clinton did not ask Congress for permission to carry out the Kosovo or Bosnia operations in the 1990s. He got permission after the fact in the form of appropriations to continue the operations. And then President Obama, despite being a very good lawyer himself, decided that the American role in trying to pacify Libya and prevent Muammar Gaddafi from killing a lot of people there, ultimately leading to Gaddafi's death and overthrow, that that did not require congressional action because it was below the threshold of what you would consider a real military operation. Then it winds up lasting six months and looks like maybe it should have been blessed.

[17:03]

And so, anyway, I don't mean to make too big of a partisan point of it, and certainly there's a lot of room for debate about which of those examples was the most egregious, but I would say that the Vietnam case was the most egregious because we really had no idea in 1964 with that Gulf of Tonkin Resolution what we were getting into. And we had no what the war was gonna look like. And Johnson winds up putting a half million Americans on the ground in what ultimately is a failure eight years later. And I think probably our most divisive war in our history and in many ways most painful and our least well fought. Partly because we did not debate what are the various realistic strategies, how do you define victory, et cetera. We didn't have those debates. At least until after the fact, two and three and four years in.

So that would be, for me, a short history. And I get nervous that presidents are going to claim, you know, in an era of nuclear weapons and blah, blah, blah, that there's no time to consult Congress. But I think there's plenty of time to consult Congress when you're contemplating a new military operation. If President Trump were ever gonna use military force to put American troops on the ground in Greenland, heaven forbid, he has plenty of time to ask Congress, because that debate's already there. He's already made it, at least a quiescent or, you know, on-again, off-again debate. So that he would have no excuse just because electrons move fast and we're in a world

of AI and nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles to say that somehow he doesn't have time to consult Congress.

And yet, presidents of both parties don't like the restraint that's sometimes been imposed upon them. As you know, the 1973 War Powers Act was an effort by both houses of Congress to require a president to come back to Congress for permission to carry out any military operation longer than 60 days and to notify Congress within 48 hours of undertaking that. That was seen as a compromise. Nixon vetoed it. Congress overrode the veto.

TENPAS: Yeah, that was big.

[18:55]

O'HANLON: Yeah, and yet, you mentioned the courts at the beginning. The courts don't want to touch this issue because pretty much every president that I'm aware of who's ever spoken about it doesn't think it's constitutional and certainly doesn't find it convenient because it takes away their ability to be commander-in-chief as they interpret the prerogatives from the second article of the Constitution. But as you said at the beginning, the first article gives Congress the exclusive power to declare war. And even if declaring war seems a little bit old fashioned, the idea of the Democracy weighing in as a country into any decision before we put American lives on the line, that seems like a pretty rock-solid principle that we ought to preserve. So I want to see executives be more constrained, not less constrained.

TENPAS: And the capacity to see that in the future, though, doesn't that largely depend on a healthy Congress that's willing to assert itself?

[19:44]

O'HANLON: Great point. I mean, I can't do more than just agree with you. And the only other point I would add, since otherwise I'm just sort of, you know, maybe beating a dead horse or a horse that doesn't want to have this debate right now, because Congress doesn't seem to want to have this kind of debate these days, but just to remind people that there have been plenty of cases historically where the president didn't get it right and needed help. And even his own party should have wanted to help him before, you If you're in a hole, stop digging. And certainly Johnson didn't appreciate it when his fellow Democrats started putting pressure on him over Vietnam, but he needed that. I mean, maybe the war would have gone on even longer without that congressional role. It was painful that it happened when it did, you know, sort of too late to prevent the tragedy, but it was necessary to have that debate as soon as possible to end the tragedy.

And I think there are other cases like that as well where having a debate, and for example, one more case from the past, when President George H.W. Bush went to war not to overthrow Saddam, but to evict Saddam from Kuwait, the Operation Desert Storm we mentioned earlier. When he asked Congress for permission to do that, he had to write down what he intended to do. And that required some specificity and some parameters and some constraints and limitations. And of course, people debate whether we got it just right, but that's what led in part to reaffirming in Bush's mind that he could not march on Baghdad and overthrow Saddam because neither

the UN resolutions nor the congressional resolutions that had been passed to authorize this war, neither of them envisioned that kind of a regime change.

And then of course the second Bush team came in and decided they had to make up for lost time and should do it anyway. But I think the congressional debate that essentially circumscribed Operation Desert Storm looks pretty good in hindsight. And I would say, you know, even though Bush got pretty good support from his fellow Republicans in back in 1991, because that vote happened just, I think, five days before the war began on January 12th or something like that, he got pretty good support. But the process itself required him to think through the parameters of the conflict. And that was good for a democracy going to war.

TENPAS: So this is gonna sound a little bit contrarian, but foreign policy compared to, say, domestic policy or fiscal policy, it strikes me as far more anti-democratic in the sense that it's less reliant on public opinion because a lot of times people don't know. They don't know the capacity of the military. They don't really understand the intricacies of other governments across the Atlantic or wherever. And so then, because of that, there's lots of deference to presidents and their choices about where we intervene or where we don't intervene. Can you talk a little bit about that link of democracy, sort of how democratic is foreign policymaking in our system?

[22:31]

O'HANLON: That's an interesting provocation. I would say, I don't usually go out of my way to say nice things about President Trump because I don't agree with a lot of what he's up to, but on this issue, he does seem to have a little bit of an antibody against the use of force in most situations and a view that his predecessors were too willing to use force, whether with or without the permission of Congress. And it was amazing when Trump won the first time that he could go into Republican bastions of pro-military sentiment like South Carolina and lambaste President George W. Bush for the Iraq War and still wind up the party nominee. That was one of the most stunning things about 2016 to me. So Trump has changed that a little.

TENPAS: And tell us a little bit about why you were so shocked by that.

O'HANLON: Well, because, as you say, we tend to be deferential towards presidents, and in the post-Vietnam period, in particular, Republicans became, as they defined themselves at least, the party that would fall back on its national security credentials quite often when trying to win elections. And they had certainly rallied around Bush as long as they could throughout the Iraq War, George W. Bush. And it seemed to be in the Republican DNA, at least since Vietnam, to make the best of whatever national security crisis we were in and try to make political hay out of it as well. And then you had somebody come along asking for the Republican nomination to sound more like an anti-war Democrat in some ways rather than a person who realistically thought he could persuade fellow Republicans to vote for this critique of what a decade before had been the conflict we were all wrapping ourselves in flags about, or at least most Republicans were.

So I thought it was a remarkable transformation and maybe it's a partial pushback against the reality I think you accurately identified which is that in the modern era, in particular but really throughout our history, presidents have often been able to either

shape public opinion or ignore public opinion or ignore Congress and get into conflicts some of which maybe they shouldn't.

You know, again, we Americans we fight a lot. We're not a pacifist or peaceful people. I think we're a pretty good people. And generally speaking, when we fought, I think it's been for, on balance, noble goals, usually. And more often than not, we fought reasonably well, often getting off to a bad start and doing better later. But we're certainly not peaceful. And I think need to just face that, look ourselves in the mirror, because we could get ourselves in trouble if we tell ourselves that we are always reluctant to use force, but then we get into a tiff with China over something, or Russia, and I'm worried we could be a little too quick to conclude that the military option is the way to go. And I also worry about it for the reason, the additional reason you mentioned, that presidents have so much leeway to get us into something before they need to start explaining to Congress, before they need to start getting money from Congress. That's a danger in our democracy.

TENPAS: And what concerns you most right now when you think about sort of, it could be anything having to do with maybe military reform, military policy reform, foreign policy, any areas of the world that you feel that we are particularly vulnerable to some sort of conflict with? What's on your mind?

[25:43]

O'HANLON: Well, a lot of things, and any time an American strategist or voter thinks we've got the next war figured out, we're usually proven wrong. So I try not to answer that question too precisely. But if I had to rank order, you'll hear a lot of American strategists these days say that China is our number one challenge because of its capacity and its technology and its size. And I don't disagree with that. But I think right now, Putin's more dangerous, more reckless. And we'll also have to see where things go with Iran in the next few weeks, months, and years.

But I would come back to China and say that, even though I don't really think Xi Jinping is reckless, there are some things he really wants to do in the Western Pacific, most of all reunify with Taiwan, that do raise the risk of conflict and where I don't think we can rely on current or future American military dominance to prevent that war or to win that war quickly and safely if it happens. I think we're in a complex world where potential conflicts in the Western Pacific have to be avoided because there's no telling who would win or how far they would escalate.

And so because of the murkiness of some of the stakes and issues, for example with Taiwan, China has no ambiguity. They consider the island of Taiwan part of China. But we have a lot of ambiguity. We don't have an alliance with Taiwan, we don't even recognize them as a country, but we say through a law, the Taiwan Relations Act, that if they were attacked, we might very well respond, but we reserve the right to decide based on circumstances as they apply at that moment. So deterrence is usually supposed to be more clear cut than that, works better when you say what you will and won't fight over. And in this case, we're hoping that ambiguity will do the job. So for that reason and because of China's growth and impressive, remarkable technological and manufacturing prowess, I would have to start with China at the top of my list.

TENPAS: So this will be the final question. I just want to draw you back to thinking about democracy. Imagine you're teaching high school students about democracy, what is one lesson that you'd want them to leave the classroom with?

[27:46]

O'HANLON: Well, we should still be hopeful about the trajectory of democracy around the world. And even though there have been some setbacks in the last couple of decades—obviously Russia's more or less not a democracy anymore, for example; Turkey, shaky; some people think our country has its own problems with democracy right now. And there are a few other cases.

If you look around the world there are lot of quiet success stories that you never tend to hear described as a success story because the minute you say that, you almost feel like you're jinxing them because the establishment and solidification of democracy is a long process. For us, it's maybe not quite done yet after 250 years. But Indonesia, world's fourth most populous country, gone through several rounds of solid elections, has done very well. India, a country that we've never had a military alliance with, although we have a stronger partnership now. And even though there've been a lot of upsets in our politics in the last quarter century, every American president since Clinton has picked up the baton from the previous president and further strengthened the U.S.-India relationship. But it's been done through non-military means and non-alliance means. India's building its own democracy. India has problems, but it's still incredibly impressive and now the world's most populous country.

Brazil goes back and forth between leftists and rightists, and it's always shaky, has a lot of crime and other problems. But 200 million plus people voting for leaders. Mexico, same thing. Claudia Sheinbaum is becoming one of my favorite world leaders. She's got a lot problems, but it's an impressive democracy.

And so we shouldn't expect democracies to become stable, firm, unblemished governing institutions quickly. And nor should we assume that democracies don't have big problems, like Mexico with crime. But I've just given sort of a partial list of countries that have improved their democracy over the course of my career at Brookings, over the course of this century, that partly counter the unhelpful and undesirable trends in places like Russia and Turkey. And so, on balance, I think what we should try to do is prevent great power war, and then let the quieter, non-military instruments of foreign policy and of human nature have a chance to carry the day, because they're more or less still pushing us on balance in a favorable direction, and I think we should be excited about the prospects for democracy globally.

TENPAS: Right. And so think of it more as sort of an evolutionary process that continues to grow and change. Things are not going to change overnight.

[30:19]

O'HANLON: Right, and there are going to be setbacks sometimes, but the overall trend, I still think, is very good. Some people would say we've had big setbacks in global democracy in the last 20 years. I would say, yeah, we've some setbacks in places that really concern me. But because the Indonesias, the Brazils, the Nigerias,

the Bangladeshes, the Mexicos are big countries with fast-growing populations, we actually have a higher percentage of the human race living in societies and polities that are at least partly free than ever before.

TENPAS: That's an optimistic note.

O'HANLON: That's a good way to finish.

[music]

TENPAS: Yeah, nice finish. Mike, thanks so much for your time. It was really a terrific interview. I appreciate your time.

O'HANLON: My pleasure, Katie, thank you.

TENPAS: *Democracy in Question* is a production of the Brookings Podcast Network. Thank you for listening. And thank you to my guests for sharing their time and expertise on this podcast.

Also, thanks to the team that makes this podcast possible, including Fred Dews, producer; Daniel Morales, video manager; Steve Cameron, audio engineer; the team in Governance Studies including associate producer Adelle Patten, plus Antonio Saadipour and Tara Moulson; and our government affairs and promotion colleagues in the Office of Communications at Brookings. Shavanthi Mendis designed the beautiful logo and show art.

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I'm Katie Dunn Tenpas. Thank you for listening.