

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

ASPEN IDEAS FESTIVAL

GLOBAL AFFAIRS: OUR AGE OF INSECURITY
IN CONVERSATION WITH SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY

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IN CONVERSATION WITH SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY

(9:20 a.m.)

(Applause)

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you very much. It's a great honor and pleasure for us to have a man I've admired -- lots of us have admired -- for many years, a man who, U.S. naval, served in Vietnam, won a Purple Heart -- I mean three Purple Hearts, the Bronze Medal, the Silver Medal, has been a senator, candidate for President, and now our Secretary of State.

In the past 2-1/2 days he started in Rome to meet with Netanyahu and help seal the deal with the Turks, and then unscheduled after the Brexit vote went to Brussels and London, then back to Washington, and then is on to Ottawa tomorrow morning for the summit. So we are deeply grateful that he could -- you know, that he came and decided to talk to us -- the U.S. Secretary of State -- 68th secretary of -- 69 if we count Ben Franklin -- 68th Secretary of State of the United States. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. Well, good afternoon. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: Well, let me start by apologizing for bringing you into the tent from the outside. I think that's a sin against nature and instinct. Good afternoon to all of you. Walter would -- you're disappearing? Thank you. Thank you for your warm introduction. Thank you especially for your leadership role here at the Aspen Institute. And I am delighted to be back in Colorado where I was born about 25 or 35 years ago.

(Laughter)

MR. KERRY: It still feels that way, actually, which is good. Frankly, I am at a bit of a disadvantage compared to all of you because I had to get up early and

fly here from Washington having done a four-country visit yesterday and instead of partaking in morning yoga.

(Laughter)

MR. KERRY: So what can I say? Life is really hard. In fact, I began yesterday morning in Rome with meeting Netanyahu where we met. And then I flew to Brussels where I met with President Juncker and with EU High Representative Mogherini; then to London in the afternoon where I met with my counterpart, the Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, and then with Prime Minister Cameron. And then back here -- back to Washington obviously. And now here I am and I -- as Walter said, go on to our important North American Leaders' Summit tomorrow in Ottawa.

But I want to just share with you that genuinely, coming to an Ideas Festival is a treat for me. And I hope we actually can share some ideas and have a little give and take here which is what is refreshing and timely. And I think that's where you come here and that's what makes this valuable. After arriving here I want you to know that I haven't thought once about the alleged scientific evidence that a whole lot of flying shrinks your brain.

(Laughter)

MR. KERRY: Some of you may be saying to yourselves, well, that would explain a lot.

(Laughter)

MR. KERRY: But I only mention it to establish a very plausible line of defense for when we get the Q&A going on. You have an extraordinary syllabus here. I was looking at it -- from Obama's foreign policy -- I think it's "The World According to Obama," "The World According to Star Wars," if I recall, "Ripple and Einstein's Legacy," "Mandarin in 60 Minutes," "Futuristic Farming." I mean you run the list -- it's pretty extraordinary.

And that's what makes this event both so stimulating and so much fun. But needless to say, I intend to be a little more prosaic and I hope not pedantic, and talk to you about the world as I see it from my vantage point as Secretary of State, which I've been privileged to do now for 3-1/2 years. Now, unless you all spent the entire week hiking and sleeping without your cell phone -- which is very enticing, believe me --

(Laughter)

MR. KERRY: -- you have undoubtedly been reading, thinking, and talking about Brexit. And maybe in the Q&A we'll talk about it in a little bit. I mentioned I talked to the leaders from the U.K., EU. I left out NATO. I met also with (inaudible). And my message to all of them was very simple -- that America's commitment to the EU and to Great Britain is as strong as ever to both the Transatlantic Partnership and to our special relationship.

And the Brexit vote, in my judgment, and I think President Obama's judgment, does not affect the agenda that we share with NATO, the G7, the P5, all -- and by the way, the NATO leaders, we will all be meeting in about a week in Warsaw for the NATO summit. And it actually makes that summit more important. It makes much of what we will be doing to reassure the front line states and to make it clear how important that alliance still remains.

So we will continue to collaborate with both the British and the EU. And I want to just emphasize, as I did in England yesterday, the values that we have shared for so long with our friends, the Brits, and that we shared in the vision of an EU and the interests -- and its interests in values that make up foreign policy and its interests in values that brought us together, they are the same today as they were before the vote last Wednesday -- didn't change a thing.

So remember that as we go forward. And I reminded both parties how critical it is to remain steadier. The steadiness of our purpose I think is evident and embraced by all. And the ability to rely on

capable partners right now in this world that we're living in is more critical than ever because it is increasingly clear that pundits and practitioners alike understand more and more of how we are living in a much more complex world than at any time in our history.

For years -- if you go back to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the great changes that came about thereafter, you know, Tito, Yugoslavia -- I mean societies were compressed by the Cold War, by the entire post World War II order. And a lot of societies were shielded by absence of communication, by the slow pace of doing business, if they did business at all effectively, and by the simplicity of the bipolar East-West divide which defined the world for the latter part, and even for most of -- since 1917 for most of the 20th century.

Now, as every single one of you knows and as you talk about in every which way as we contemplate various disrupters in our lives and in society, we are dealing with a world which speeds up politics, speeds up the flow of information beyond the capacity of most people to digest it. And believe me, that was underscored by the fact that I noticed that the largest Internet Google search in England the day after the vote was what is the EU.

(Laughter)

MR. KERRY: I'm serious. So this is a world where globalization and instantaneous communication are connecting people in more ways than ever before. You know, the kids in Tahrir Square -- that wasn't motivated by any religious extremism, nor were the kids who originally came out in Syria to demonstrate for a future. The fact is that we see more people connected in more ways than ever before, and so everybody knows what everybody else has, and that underscores what you don't have.

It facilitates both incredible technological progress but -- and obviously economic growth for those with it. I was just in Silicon Valley last week with various CEOs of major companies there listening to this discussion about these disruptives which was fascinating.

Any of you in the retail business understand what I'm talking about. But at the same time, there are a whole bunch of folks who believe they've been left behind. And in many places, my friends, they have been.

And they're increasingly turning to a narrow-minded tribalism to aggressive nationalism and even medieval thinking that reminds us of a very distant and bloody past. So we have no illusion, I certainly have no illusion about the challenges. They are real in this 21st century. And while there are a lot of Cassandras around, I really don't believe the road ahead is defined only by turmoil and strife.

After all, it really wasn't long ago that we saw a rapidly expanding nuclear program in Iran only months away from having enough weapons-grade uranium to build 10 to 12 nuclear weapons. And we were on the cusp of confrontation. Now, because of the joint comprehensive plan of action, Iran's path to actually building a bomb has been closed off -- and I say closed off because you can't build a bomb with 3.67 percent limit on enrichment and with 300 kilograms of a stockpile.

You just can't do it physically. And because we have 130 additional inspectors and all kinds of different ways in which we will know what is going on. By taking away the potential of a nuclear weapon in a country that we still have other issues with -- nobody pretends they've been erased -- we have changed the strategic equation. Last December representatives from more than 190 nations came together in Paris to express their commitment to build a new low-carbon energy future for the world in which greenhouse gas emissions are curbed and the worst consequences of climate change are prevented.

Last October, after 7 years of negotiation, the United States joined 11 other nations along the Pacific Rim in signing and sending to the Congress the Trans-Pacific Partnership. A trade agreement unlike any trade agreement we've had before. And I, in 28 years in the Senate, voted for all the trade agreements. But this is unlike any of those I voted for, because within the four corners of the agreement there are labor standards, there

are environment standards, and it encompasses nearly 40 percent of global GDP. It's a game changer.

Last August I had the privilege of traveling to Havana to raise the American flag above our embassy for the first time in 54 years -- a change of a policy that has already had a profound impact in the world.

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: And together with a broad array of partners around the world, we have mobilized a coalition to stop the spread of Ebola and save countless lives. And remember, last year the predictions were by Christmas time a million people were going to die. But President Obama had the courage to send 3,000 American troops, and they had the courage to go and be part of this effort, and we stopped it together with Great Britain and France and the help of other nations around the world through PEPFAR and other efforts. We now stand on the brink of the first AIDS-free generation from AIDS.

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: So ladies and gentlemen -- so I just say this to underscore to you that the world is not witnessing global gridlock. We're not frozen in a nightmare. And the facts and the lessons are clear that where we are engaged with a clear strategy and where we use our power thoughtfully, we're making progress most places -- not going to pretend everywhere -- and I'll talk about where we aren't. But nobody said things would be easy or that we will be all get it done all at once.

What I find exciting about this moment is that we are staring at extraordinary opportunities everywhere, if we look and make the right choices. So don't forget -- lot of people do -- our boldest predecessors overcame Depression, fascism, two world wars by singularly focusing on the challenge at hand. But today, as I've described, we face multiple overriding challenges of varying origin that require varying approaches all at the same time.

And we're working with countries now -- I've -- just as an example -- we are deeply enmeshed and we have a special envoy that we appointed to work with the government of Colombia to try to achieve a just and lasting peace, a signing just a week or two ago, a few days ago. We hope to have that finished in a matter of a month or two. We've been working with countries to support a new Government of National Accord in Libya.

I was recently in the United Arab Emirates. I think we've come to a common understanding of how to strengthen that government and go after Daesh in Libya. We're supporting Afghanistan and its fight against extremists and support as to a sovereign and democratic Ukraine. And -- so that is why I state unabashedly to every single one of you -- United States of America is more engaged in more places with greater impact today than at any time in America's history, and that is simply documentable and undeniable.

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: Now, this is an Ideas Festival. And I want to talk to you about what I see after years of being involved in public life about the problems we face. Because I am convinced there are three particular challenges, each of which requires that we show that singularity of purpose and focus that our parents and grandparents did in the course of the last century. And that is to have a intense, shared focus.

The first is violent extremism and the emergence of radical non-state actors as opposed to state actors which defined the last century for the most part. I might just comment -- want to make sure publicly that I comment -- that just today a bomb went off at the airport in Istanbul. Ten people we know are -- according to press reports at least -- are dead and some 40 wounded, and we are still collecting information and trying to ascertain what happened and who did it.

And I won't comment further on it, except to say that this is daily fare. And that's why I say the first challenge we need to face is countering non-state violent

actors for a host of reasons. The second is the need more urgent than ever, and more urgent certainly than some national politicians seem willing to admit, to preserve the health of our planet in the face of imminent climate change, happening climate change, and other environmental dangers.

And the third is connected to the other two, and it's part and parcel of how we're going to solve the whole problem. It is a global crisis of governance that will require leaders everywhere to cooperate, fight corruption, earn public confidence, inspire unity, and actually make decisions about issues that are relevant to the people who populate our countries.

Now, I hope in the Q&A we'll talk a little more about the climate and the governance, because they're worth some focus. But let me focus for the moment -- just in these comments and then we'll get into Q&A -- about the struggle against violent extremism. Everybody knows threat -- we've all awakened to the news that I've just announced to you -- how many times have you awakened to it?

Vicious attacks perpetrated by a lone wolf or by a group, inspired on the Internet or otherwise, from Orlando to San Bernardino to the Philippines and Bali, we've seen pictures and we've heard testimony of shocking crimes committed by al-Qaida, by Boko Haram, by Jaysh al-Islam, by Ahrar al-Sham, by Al-Shabaab, Daesh, other groups against innocent civilians, against journalists, and against teachers particularly.

And we're all aware that Daesh uses sexual slavery as a recruitment tool. And it pins price tags on little girls to help finance its operations. This is the reward of going to fight. And we've heard Daesh's preposterous boasts to be the creator of the new caliphate and the leader of all Islam. So two summers ago when Daesh began its rampage in Iraq, please remember, we heard dire predictions of a permanent unraveling in the Middle East, the erasure of national boundaries, a prospect that Baghdad itself might fall and come under the sway of the terrorists.

At a time when Daesh and its black flags and its 50-caliber mounted Toyotas were careening through Syria and Iraq and people thought Baghdad might fall, President Obama immediately mobilized our air power and we moved to save thousands of people at Sinjar Mountain who were about to be slaughtered by Daesh. Then the President directed me to go about build a coalition which is now at 66 members with representatives from across the globe. And we will all be meeting together in Washington in a few weeks -- July 21st -- to measure our progress.

So at this festival of ideas my idea is frankly pretty straightforward. We have to complete the job. We have to defeat Daesh, its affiliates, and its imitators in Afghanistan, Libya, Nigeria, elsewhere, wherever they raise their ugly head. And that is not an option, my friends, that is an imperative. It is critical to our national security, because we know they're plotting. And we know what they will do to other countries in the region who are our allies and friends and important to the stability of the world.

And make no mistake, this is not a clash of civilizations, this is a clash of civilization against a kind of barbarism -- between civilization and medieval and modern fascism wrapped together at the same time. And yes, between a cultural clash with modernity and the failure of governance to do anything to some of these countries over the last 50 years or more. So it will take years of determined effort, but the effort has to be determined. And it'll take sacrifice to succeed.

But think back to what I said about the last century and sacrifice. The good news is we have absolutely, certainly, without any doubt whatsoever, started down the right path. Last year at this time in the poor areas of Iraq and Syria we were containing the terrorists of Daesh. Now we are moving methodically and authoritatively to destroy them, to take back territory and put Daesh on a definable path to defeat.

To date our coalition has conducted some 13,000 air strikes, we've taken out more than 120 known,

identifiable high level leaders, and we have caused the ranks of Daesh to shrink by one-third. Together with our partners we have pushed Daesh out of nearly half of the populated territory it once controlled in Iraq, in about a quarter of the land that it controlled and occupied in Syria. And I am currently involved in discussions with the Russians now to see if we can change the structure of this current ceasefire and actually make progress with respect to taking out all the terrorists in the country while also trying to find a political solution to the challenge.

We have liberated Tikrit, Sinjar, Ramadi, Hasakah, and Kobani. And Iraqi security forces have just taken back the key city of Fallujah. And local forces in Syria are pressing Daesh in the strategic town of Manbij. And now we understand much better how Daesh operates. And we are enabled to adjust our targeting; more effectively hammer its heavy weapons, its training camps, supply routes, its infrastructure. We have destroyed over 400 of its tanker trucks that were taking oil out to Turkey or to Iraq in order to sell it and fund their operations.

We have cut their revenue at least in half, and without additional towns to plunder, Daesh has less money to buy weapons or pay its fighters. We're also working diligently to destroy Daesh narrative -- the narrative that they are successful, that they hold territory, they are a state, that they are the caliphate of the future. All of that narrative is what has drawn fighters from France, from Germany, from the United States, from Australia, from around the world.

And we are working diligently in a whole counter-narrative strategy together with our friends in the Middle East and elsewhere. So it has been more than 1 year since Daesh has actually launched a full-scale military offensive. And that's because our coalition is moving forward relentlessly on every front. Now yes, you can bomb an airport, you can blow yourself up. That's the tragedy. Daesh and others like it know that we have to get it right 24x7x365.

They have to get it right for 10 minutes or 1 hour. So it's a very different scale. And if you're desperate, and if you know you're losing, and you know you want to give up your life, then obviously you could do some harm. So our fight from Daesh in Iraq and Syria is not over. The big tests are still ahead, especially in retaking Mosul, which is the largest remaining stronghold in Iraq, though we have now surrounded it and we are laying the groundwork for an offensive, and of course Al-Raqqa in Syria.

And let me be blunt. Taking out Daesh is only one part of this struggle. We have to, as a nation, and particularly a Congress and an executive, come together to engage in a far more comprehensive effort against the forces that make terrorism a global not just a regional threat. To confront this challenge I recently created the first countering violent extremism office at the State Department.

And I introduced a new strategy together with President Obama, and the strategy the White House is pursuing, all join together, and our defense department, in order to have one united front to counter this violent extremism. But listen to the words of Henry David Thoreau -- long time ago he got it right: "There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to only one who is striking at the root." Clearly we have to strike relentlessly at the root causes of violent extremism or we're going to play extremist whack-a-mole for years to come.

And we can't do that unless we first understand those roots. After serving in public life now for over 3 decades, I am aware that there are few more reliable and easy punch lines on the stump when you're running for office than to stand up and promise to slash the budget of the State Department or USAID and just say very simply we shouldn't be spending money over there on those people, we need to spend it right here in (inaudible), Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, wherever the hell it is, and everybody erupts and applauds.

That makes sense -- easiest thing in the world. Good applause line, lousy policy -- shortsighted, self-inflictive of harm to our own nation. I know in Washington, particularly the Washington of today, that long-term goals can sometimes get really quickly wiped out by visible, short-term projects or just short-term sponsors. But that's exactly why we need to take the long view, and we need to recognize how relatively modest investments now can improve the world enormously and enhance our security for generations to come.

My friends, we are the richest economy on the face of this planet -- \$18 trillion economy. We spend 1 penny of every single dollar that we spend on all of our foreign aid initiatives, all of our State Department, all of our embassies, everything we do for diplomacy -- 1 penny on the dollar. The richest economy in the world cannot be content to put 1 penny on the dollar into the effort to protect our nation.

And as we learned in this era, poisonous ideas can come from many places -- an inflammatory sermon, a radical teacher, an angry parent, a woman on a website, or a man in the next cell. They might originate with pictures seen on the nightly news, or from perceived acts of discrimination or repression, or from the desire to avenge the death of a loved one. They might grow out of illness, envy, desperation, or personal craving for fame at the cost of self-destruction.

So here is the question -- how do we help give young people here and across the globe something better to hold on to? The full answer to that obviously would require a whole shelf of books, not brief remarks. But the chapter headings might include the following: first, fight corruption because there is a direct link between corruption and the rise of violent extremism. Nothing does more to undermine respect for the rule of law than the perception that governments consider themselves to be above the law.

How astonishing it is that billions of dollars were stolen -- maybe \$50 billion from the government of Nigeria, maybe \$30 billion from the government of Yemen.

And that is stealing from the education and the health and the infrastructure and the future of the citizens of most countries. And what about the banks that deposit that money and (inaudible) it for those who have stolen it? It's a little wonder that there is great unrest in certain parts of the world.

And if we're serious about fighting terrorism, then we have to expose corruption and protect whistleblowers and prosecute perpetrators and throw the guilty in jail. And at the same time, we have to strive for improved governance across the board. What does that mean? That means preventing graft, strengthening democratic and accountable governance where basic freedoms are protected and people have the ability to express their views openly without harassment and without fear.

After all, if citizens are going to respect their governments, then governments need to respect their citizens. Second, we have to invest in education -- I can't emphasize this enough.

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: Globally right now as we sit here in Aspen in these extraordinary surroundings, 120 million children and adolescents are out of school. We can't settle for a policy, my friends, that plans to get these kids in school in 10 years. If you're 10 years old today, 9 years old, 7 years old, you'll be 17, 18 before somebody starts to teach you something. They need to go to school now, and we need an emergency global education effort.

When I was in Pakistan as a senator I went up to the area of the earthquake, you remember, a few years ago -- up near the mountains of the Himalayas. And I remember these kids would come down out of the mountains. And they were in a tent with desks and a chair and they had uniforms somehow that somebody had gotten them. And half do these kids were in school for the first time in their life. And why were they there? They were there because of an emergency that brought them there.

Well, I'm telling you, I don't think we should wait for a flood or an earthquake. We have an emergency now, and we should treat this as if it were an emergency now and make sure these kids are getting the education that they need. Now, terrorist recruiters are on the prowl -- part of running for office I note that -- I try to, but I'm not.

(Laughter)

MR. KERRY: I'm sorry.

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: Terrorist recruiters are literally prowling around. I have a foreign -- one -- I won't tell you which country, but in Africa my counterpart told me how they grab these kids at age 5 and they pay them and then they proselytize, then they don't need to proselytize because their minds are gone and they've got them and then they don't have to pay them. Then they go out and get the next group. And my counterpart, the foreign minister of this country, said to me, you know, they have a plan for 30 years or 35 years, we don't even have a 5-year plan. So think about it.

To win the battle of ideas, we have to ensure that kids everywhere actually have schools to go to, that schools don't preach hate, radical views, that they offer an opportunity to prepare for a better life. And guess what, that does take a little bit of money -- not as much as people think. But I -- I'm convinced when you think of the other side on which we wind up paying for all of this, it is far cheaper to do it upfront, and far more effective in so many different ways.

Third thing we need to do is close the gap between what students learn in class and the skills that they'll need in the workplace -- in today's workplace. And that means addressing unequal access to unemployment and promoting lifelong learning and on-the-job training not just in other countries, but also right here at home above all.

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: And we need to -- we have a effort called Global Connect which we started, because we're trying to connect the other 60 percent of the people in the world who do not have the Internet yet and need it. Fourth, we have to give entrepreneurs and small business people everywhere the chance to translate their good, new ideas into thriving businesses because innovation is by far -- as I'm sure all of you here know -- the primary source of job creation.

And that means ending the suffocating stranglehold in some countries of militaries and bureaucracies that suck up the private sector to the detriment of the rest of the citizens in the country or the rest of the legitimate business people. It means opening doors to the full participation by women. And there's literally no way we are going to meet the 21st century expectations with 20th century economic policies or 19th century standards of governance.

Finally, we need to draw on the basic ideas that have guided America for centuries. I don't know if you -- I'm obsessed by Hamilton and I keep listening to -- it's magnificent, and it reminds us about those ideas. And if we are consistent in showing the world what we are for, we will never lack allies in the fight against bigotry and terror. And the reason for that is clear. A group like Daesh -- in fact all of these groups -- Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, all of them -- they're all the same in this regard.

They don't have any room for anyone else, folks. If they're allowed to prevail, it would utterly destroy the human mosaic that has existed in the Middle East for countless generations. It castigates Daesh, castigates Yazidis as devil worshippers. It tells Christians, "We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women." It says of Shi'a Muslims, "We have a duty to kill them, fight them, displace them, and cleanse the land of their filth."

Obviously you're here celebrating the best of our country which is a festival of ideas where we have every opportunity to share our opinions, discuss alternative policies, explain respectfully while those with whom we disagree are mistaken. And one of the things I've learned after years of public life is there are no end to the tests for our country. The testing is constant. But compared to 1950 when the Aspen Institute was founded, we have tremendous advantages.

Since then through American leadership and the combined efforts of good people across the globe, average life expectancy is up 50 percent. Infant mortality is down by four-fifths. The number of democracies has really quadrupled. The rate of extreme poverty has just this year fallen below 10 percent for the first time ever. Overall, a child entering the world today is more likely than ever before in history to be born healthy, to have vaccinations, to be adequately fed, to be able to get the necessary education, and more likely to live a long life.

So I think we have every reason to be confident in the future, provided we are willing to make the investments that leaders have a responsibility to make, provided we do not allow the passions of the day to turn our heads and leave us fighting with one another, and provided we draw the right lessons from our own past. We also need to believe in basic facts and science. Sixty-eight years ago --

(Applause)

MR. KERRY: I close just by sharing with you that 68 years ago this week, the United States and its allies launched Operation Vittles in response to the Soviet blockade of ground routes into the encircled city of West Berlin. If we had done nothing, the city would have fallen into communist hands. But the alternative, supplying 2-1/2 million people entirely by air using the very small, slow planes of the era seemed daunting, not impossible.

Nothing like it had ever been done before, but Harry Truman made the bold decision that we were going to

do it, to do it anyway. The allied pilots were not only American; they were Australian, British, Canadian, French, New Zealanders, South African. And imagine their planes like a long line of birds lined up across the heavens from one end to the other, flying 1,398 missions on a single day. There are cargo holds piled full of food, medicine, and coal. The Soviets sought desperately to jam the communications, but ultimately after 320 days of continuous airlifts, they gave in. The crisis was over. The city was saved.

Today we have to act with similar resolve. We have to come to the aid of countries that are on the frontlines or the next in-lines of the targets of terrorist infiltration. We have to improve governance, fight corruption, promote accountability, respect human rights. We have to teach the skills and create the jobs that will make extremist appeals fall on deaf ears. And we have to innovate and build as if our entire generation and the next generation depend on it because guess what, they do. And we have to maintain relentless pressure on Daesh and its allies until they are thoroughly defeated both on the field of battle and in the minds of people everywhere. For these not just to be words, these things I've talked about, we need to get all the institutions of our government pulling together, and above all we need to protect the security of our country and as the leader of the free world live up to our own leadership expectations.

Nothing will speak to the current unease more than getting the things done that need to be done, and I promise you that right up until the last day President Obama and I intend to put our full commitment into doing exactly that. Thank you all very, very much.

(Applause)

SEC. KERRY: Thank you. Thank you very much.

MR. ISAACSON: Thanks. Really excellent. Let's start with your main point which is countering violent extremism, the fight against Daesh, what we sometimes call ISIL, and your emotional evocation of the Berlin Airlift. Do you think we need to be doing more now in Syria to try

to change -- get the change we need in Syria in order to defeat Daesh there?

SEC. KERRY: Well, President knows we need to do more and we're working on precisely what that more is in a number of different ways. He has upped the number of special forces, American soldiers, who are on the ground as enablers, not in direct combat, but enabling this forward progression to take place and much of the progress we've made that I just articulated has come from these terrific efforts of that coordination. In addition we're working with our allies more closely to figure out what they can plus up in order to do this. But the most important thing frankly is seeing if we can reach an understanding with the Russians about how to, number one, deal with Daesh and Al-Nusra. Al-Nusra is the other group that -- Jabhat al-Nusra are designated terrorist group by the United Nations. And there are a couple of sub-groups underneath the two designated, Daesh and Jabhat al-Nusra, Jaysh al-Islam, Ahrar al-Sham particularly who brush off and fight with that alongside these other two sometimes to fight the Assad regime. So we need to create a level of trust and stability about the country as a whole so that the idea of a transition government and something moving away from Assad is not frightening to people because legitimately to some people it is today.

MR. ISAACSON: And is Lavrov helping you get the Russians to move?

SEC. KERRY: Well, the Russians, you know, it's a mixed bag and we have to get clarity, and that's what we're working on. We've got -- we're in the middle of discussions right now, I'm not going to go into them in any depth, but I think it is possible to try to create a new paradigm here and that could really change the game if we're able to.

MR. ISAACSON: And what would the new paradigm be?

SEC. KERRY: Well, where we have an understanding about how we move in Geneva at the political table even as we have an understanding of how we can work

more effectively together to be able to get rid of the terrorists.

MR. ISAACSON: And does that mean getting rid of Assad?

SEC. KERRY: Well, I personally believe that you can never unify the country and you can never have real peace if Assad is still there because Assad is, you know, the magnet for much of this jihadism that takes place. It has other overtones and there -- you know, this is what makes this such an extraordinarily complicated challenge because you have -- we have 21 or so entities at the table of the International Syria Support Group. Now among them Iran and Russia, well, they have a different take on Assad, but they're at the table to try to help move the process. We also have Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, who have different take on what their tolerance level is for certain groups. And then you have Kurds who are clearly fighting for their own defined territory with Turkey. And you have Kurds on Kurds.

And so in addition to that you have the overhang of Shia Sunni which until recent memory was not as sharp a line drawn in the region, but it has become that. And then further complicating things you have Arab Persian and Iran. So you've got an overlay of as many different, you know, bases of interest and therefore the settlement becomes much harder --

MR. ISAACSON: Now that Iran is at that table with you, obviously they want to protect Assad a little bit, but they also are very fervent in getting rid of Daesh like we are. Are they being more helpful or more harmful?

SEC. KERRY: Well, I know this -- I mean, look, we have challenges with Iran as everybody knows and we're working on those challenges. But I can tell you that Iran and Iraq has been in certain ways helpful and they clearly are focused on ISIL, Daesh and so we have a common interest actually.

MR. ISAACSON: Do you think the Iran deal helped

get established a common interest?

SEC. KERRY: Well, there's no question that it opened up the opportunity for communication. I mean, you know, when our sailors stumbled into Iranian territory and got held, 2 years ago we wouldn't have known who we could -- we would have called the Swiss. We would have called some other country and said can you help us? And enough time would have gone by and there would have been sufficient level of enmity that those guys would have probably been hostages and we'd have had another situation. But within 30 minutes I had my counterpart on the phone. Within an hour-and-a-half, we had a deal. It was clear they were going to come out and we were going to, you know, not make this a bad moment in what we were trying to achieve. So that's a benefit that came out of the whole process and even now we are working on other things and look, Jason, was I sitting here because --

MR. ISAACSON: Well, Jason -- because Jason is a wonderful *Washington Post* reporter who was held and I think secretary helped get him out. Jason, thank you for being with us.

(Applause)

SEC. KERRY: But this is a -- you know, this is a tough way, but I think we're going to make some progress in the next --

MR. ISAACSON: And can you envision 5 to 10 years from now Iran being more of a partner than an adversary?

SEC. KERRY: I don't want to make any guesses. That's too fraught with, to me, variables. It really is Walter. I mean --

MR. ISAACSON: Sure.

SEC. KERRY: -- look the hope is everybody understands that Iran is going through certain change. President Rouhani and Foreign Minister Zarif have a vision that was a vision that was carried out in the context of

sitting down with us and negotiating. There were those in Iran who didn't want to do that.

MR. ISAACSON: And should business leaders here trade and open up relations with Iran more now?

SEC. KERRY: Well, it's up to them if they have business that they do. It's open to that.

MR. ISAACSON: Would that help our foreign policy?

SEC. KERRY: Well, certain businesses are open to that. It's not generically open to every business yet. We still have sanctions in place from our -- what we call our primary sanctions that were put in place because of state support for terror or human rights abuse or missile shoots or arms embargo.

MR. ISAACSON: And are we better off in those fields now?

SEC. KERRY: We're better off in the last few months.

MR. ISAACSON: Okay.

SEC. KERRY: There was some -- we had to sanction, we sanctioned additionally a few months ago because of a missile shoot. We're prepared to do that again if we have to. Our hope is that we can continue to open the aperture and there are those in Iran, you know, we had people bitterly opposed to the deal here in America, they had people bitterly opposed to the deal in Iran. It was a very tough fight there just as it was a tough fight here. But that's the nature of change, I mean, you have to, you know, fight for something that's rational.

MR. ISAACSON: You were just in Rome where you helped -- I'd say blessed the deal between --

SEC. KERRY: Yeah.

MR. ISAACSON: -- Netanyahu and the Turks which has got to be very helpful. I know you probably have somewhere either in your head or in your office maps of what could be the map that we could help solve the Israeli-Palestinian problem. Is there a possibility of movement while you're still in office? Would you lay down a plan perhaps or suggest something?

SEC. KERRY: Well, I -- here -- let me answer that this way. I had a very constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu. We probably spent more time together as prime minister and the secretary of State than any duo in history I think.

(Applause)

SEC. KERRY: And I think we know what we're trying to do, it's very tricky. I am always the optimist, I'm always hopeful that we could try to get something moving if possible. One thing I know is this; the status quo is unsustainable. You cannot continue moving in a way that is increasingly making a two-stage solution impossible. And as the settlements expand and as you have increasing violence and back and forth and tit for tat, blame here, blame there, the people harden and it gets more difficult, but the notion that you can have a Jewish state and a democracy and have a unitary state given the fact that already today the population between the Jordan River and the sea is majority non-Jewish. So it's critical for Israel, for its future, to find a way to get into a real negotiation. And it's not all Israel. The Palestinians need to make moves and be open to things and not just shut doors and --

MR. ISAACSON: Do you have any plans to go over there?

SEC. KERRY: Well, I'm always -- I mean, I'm in the region frequently for various reasons, but right now we're working with Israel particularly on the Daesh issue and the ISIL issue. Daesh is in the Sinai, Daesh is in the Golan, and you can see them from the Golan in nearby areas. That's a threat to Israel. It's a threat to us. It's a threat to the region.

MR. ISAACSON: Do they have a joint security -- do they share something with the Palestinians in that both want Daesh out of the Golan?

SEC. KERRY: For sure. Daesh is no friend of the Palestinians. Abu Mazen is a committed -- he wants two states, he wants nonviolent approach to it. Now, he doesn't always get that. And there is incitement in the West Bank that has to stop and we've tried to hold people accountable for that incitement and we are continually working with both sides try to massage this process forward. But you have to have two willing parties. We can't want this more than they do.

MR. ISAACSON: You just said in your talk that globalism, there's been a reaction to it that's involved nativism, nationalism, tribalism. Do you think that under current explains what's happening in somebody said Austria, Hungary, France, Germany, and the Brexit vote and the United States?

SEC. KERRY: I think it explains a great deal of it. You know, I had a professor at Yale who taught me John Morton Blum, good -- great historian. And I've never forgotten a phrase in one of the lectures in which I was actually awake --

(Laughter)

SEC. KERRY: -- my fault, not his, believe me. He said, "All politics is a reaction to felt needs." And I thought about that, you know, and the more I practiced, the more I -- it's absolutely true, it's just felt needs. So it doesn't have to be a real need, it doesn't have to be, you know, fully developed or perceived, but if it's felt, it's real and you've got to deal with it. And what's happening today is, you know, I supported trade. Why did I support trade? Well, because 95 percent of the world's customers live in other countries. If we're going to grow we've got to be able to sell to other people, and they've got to sell to us. And so it made sense to me providing it's fair, providing it's done in a way where the -- you're not being taken advantage of, people can

share the benefits and so forth.

In the 1990s during the great tech boom of the '90s every quintile of American income earners saw their income go up.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah.

SEC. KERRY: Everybody. And we did better. And it was a \$1 trillion market with about a billion users, and of course it was the tech market, the personal computer and communications. The market we're looking at today to get out from under the cloud of climate change is energy market. It's already a 4 to 5 billion user market compared to 1. It's already a multi-trillion dollar market compared to 1. And it will go up to 9 billion users in the next 20 to 40 years. This is the mother of all markets.

And if we accelerate our efforts to convert rapidly to alternative, renewable, and different infrastructure to create grids and we don't even have a grid in America folks. We have a great big gap in the center of our country. You can't sell energy from Texas to Massachusetts or Minnesota or over places, it's nuts. We're supposed to be the leading developed country of the world. But actually other countries have better infrastructure in certain areas than we do today. Walk through many of their airports and you know what I'm talking about. Try and get a card in some of our airports where you need it before you get out of the airport when you don't need it.

(Laughter)

SEC. KERRY: It's insanity. You know, it's --

(Applause)

SEC. KERRY: So you know, we -- it kind of get quickened, that's all.

MR. ISAACSON: On climate change, do you think that Brexit might make it a little bit harder now with

England out?

SEC. KERRY: It depends entirely on what arrangement is made. This is a very complicated divorce because the Brits do not want announced the what's called Article 50 announcement that they're leaving because then the 2-year timetable begins to trigger, and they're afraid that they could sit there for 2 years, be negotiating, and at the end of the negotiation there isn't a deal and they're stuck. Now, they're told by our friends in Europe you don't have to worry. We're going to really -- we want you to do as well as possible, we need you, and they do. And I think it's true. But there's no element of trust sufficient there for them to start the process.

They don't start the process, then there's uncertainty in the marketplace and uncertainty in Europe and a whole lot of people get angrier and angrier, and then you have the potential of people taking out, you know, say we're not going to give them that because they didn't help us at all when we needed it and you get into this tit for tat. So the whole thing, you know, really depends on the wisdom and calmness and vision with which people come to the table to try to cut the deal by which they will "be out," but there'll be a market and they'll have rules that work for everybody or they don't decide to get out, I don't know what's going to happen. I'm not --

MR. ISAACSON: Well, wait, follow-up on that, how could they decide not to get out because Christine Lagarde mentions that, a lot of people mentioned that here.

SEC. KERRY: There's a lot of talk -- there's a lot of talk in England today of having another vote. I -- Cameron said it won't happen, certainly not for about a year or so, whatever, but a year --

MR. ISAACSON: That's pretty close, yeah.

SEC. KERRY: -- that's for them a 2-year period. So who knows. I can't sit here and tell you that I know what's going to happen.

MR. ISAACSON: So Prime Minister Cameron, yesterday when you talked to him at Downing Street I guess, did -- said -- indicated he won't invoke Article 50, right?

SEC. KERRY: He believes that he won't because he is -- he feels powerless and I think this is a fair conclusion, to go out and start negotiating something that he doesn't believe in, and that he has no idea how he would do it. And by the way nor do most of the people who voted to do it.

MR. ISAACSON: So what other ways are there for them to walk this cat back, so it's a sovereignty still in parliament?

SEC. KERRY: I think there are a number of ways. I don't as secretary of State want to --

MR. ISAACSON: Okay.

SEC. KERRY: -- throw them out today. I think that'd be a mistake.

MR. ISAACSON: Okay.

SEC. KERRY: But there are a number of ways.

MR. ISAACSON: Good. You were talking to about, you know, whether there might be some fallout of Brexit when you go to Warsaw with the NATO administrators. Do you think Brexit and the threat of Brexit, since we don't know if it's going to happen, will strengthen NATO or --

SEC. KERRY: I do.

MR. ISAACSON: -- or weaken it?

SEC. KERRY: No, I think it will strengthen NATO. David Cameron and Britain have met their 2 percent of GDP allocation to NATO. They will stick with that. They have declared that they intend to be front and center and fully participatory. We have four framework countries that are going to be taking on a reassurance training

program for frontline states, and we the United States will be doing it in Poland and the Brits in Canada, and one other country, I forget which are going to be doing --

SPEAKER: Germany.

MR. ISAACSON: Sorry?

SPEAKER: Germany.

SEC. KERRY: Germany, thank you very much.

MR. ISAACSON: Oh, the back-seater from Germany, Peter Wittig speaks up. He actually knew the answer, but he wanted you to help him.

(Laughter)

SEC. KERRY: (inaudible) Deutschland. We are very grateful. And Germany is going to -- which is very, very important and the four of us are going to be -- so NATO is going to be stronger. I don't have any questions about it. NATO is taking on a stronger southern mission, a stronger mission dealing with migration out of Greece. It may even take on additional mission with respect to Libya. We have to wait and see. But I am very confident that NATO is going to be strengthened coming out of this, and I think this -- everybody will bend over backwards in Warsaw to make sure that's clear.

MR. ISAACSON: Let me open it up because I know I've -- yes, Jeff Goldberg.

MR. GOLDBERG: Yeah. Thank you Walter. Thank you Mr. Secretary. I want to stay on something that Walter was talking to you about, the Iran deal and the consequence of the Iran deal. Two interesting developments the past couple of weeks. The first is that your department has re-listed Iran once again as the world's primary state sponsor of terrorism. The second is that your administration is considering approving the sale of \$25 billion -- approximately \$25 billion worth of Boeing aircraft to Iran. Now, two observations out of that. The first is that we know that in the past Iran has

used civilian aircraft to re-supply Hezbollah, to re-supply the Assad regime. We also know that within the administration you are one of the most fervent advocates for more action against the Assad regime including military action against the Assad regime. So I'm just trying to understand this and I'm not understanding the thought process that goes into the possible approval of the Boeing deal given what you think about Iran's role in terrorism and what you think about Iran's role in Syria?

(Applause)

SEC. KERRY: Well, it's a very good and very fair question and I don't think there is a -- I don't think there's a fault-line in our approach or in my thinking about it, or the President's thinking about it. About 60 percent of the people in Iran are under the age of 30. People who have been to Tehran tell me of a Tehran in which young people are sitting in cafes, talking about the future, educated in other countries, looking at a very different place. And the revolutionary street part of Iran which is what it brought us the terror, and the principal reasons for the designation go back to Khobar Towers and different -- and Hezbollah, and it continues with Hezbollah. Hezbollah is a terrorist-designated organization by the United States of America which is building up a weapons arsenal, a missile arsenal that's aimed at Tel Aviv and other parts of Israel, it's a risk and a danger. And it's not their country, it's not their people. These are a terrorist organization in another country that's being supported by Iran.

So you're absolutely -- we're going to call them on it, we're going to absolutely stay focused on that. But at the same time we're trying to move the process thoughtfully and doing business is one of the best ways to create interests and a vested, you know, purpose if you will in furthering transformation. And so I think -- and by the way, tell me what makes sense, in the United States of America, negotiating a deal with Iran to allow people to lift the sanctions, which we did, but other countries like France are rushing in to sell Airbus to the cost of Washington State and Boeing and our workers in the United States, doesn't make a lot of sense to me, so I think we

ought to sell what other people can sell, but not break completely with the primary sanctions which continue to put pressure on to move them to recognize that there's still unfinished business and there are certain things we will not tolerate.

Now, it's complex folks, not every -- I mean issues in foreign policy don't always -- if they lend themselves to the -- you know, just right and wrong, black and white, simple line, you draw it, you're often wrong. And you know, I fought in a war that was drawn that way and we know how wrong that was. So I'm for looking at the subtleties and understanding all of the rationale for what is happening in a country. We were not good for a long period of time at looking at other countries through their lens, not just ours, and if all we do is interpret problems in other countries as Americans in our lens, through our felt need, we are neglecting the felt need of all the other people who will also make up policy decisions that have an impact on us. So the distinction between the planes and the other things is I think trying to draw a line that threads a needle, it's a very difficult needle to thread, but very important in order to have a transformation that doesn't send you down the road to a needless confrontation or to misunderstanding or to lost opportunity.

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you. I'm having trouble with all the lights --

(Applause)

MR. ISAACSON: -- but I see where the microphone is. Okay, John Dickerson --

MR. DICKERSON: Good morning --

MR. ISAACSON: -- and Jane, I'm sorry, I'm trying to be fair here.

MR. DICKERSON: Mr. Secretary, on this question of tribalism, you talk about the felt need. What's the five-point plan for the felt need in states in Europe, in England? And as a part of that, when the President said

that Great Britain was going to have to go to the back of the queue, did he misunderstand the felt need and how can nothing have changed if he said that they're now going to the back of the queue?

SEC. KERRY: Well, I think the President very clearly was talking about tea tip (phonetic) and the fact that we have 28 -- now 27 countries we have to negotiate with, we're now potentially 27 countries that we have to negotiate with to get that done. And if you have a whole bunch of countries working to get one thing done and that's the larger market, it makes sense to try to get it done. So -- but I think given what has happened, the President is going to try and do both at the same time. He knows how to multitask. So if we have to, you know, put more effort into helping, but for the moment it's up to the Europeans and the British really to manage how they're going to do this.

We don't want to meddle, we're not trying to insert ourselves into the middle of it, it would be inappropriate. We have interests, we will clearly talk with them about it, but they have got to come to some understanding of how they're going to meet the felt needs of both their people. And you say what's the felt need? I mean, obviously in Great Britain there was a huge amount of this vote that was caught up in the migration issue, huge amount.

And there also was a huge amount caught up in the large parts of England, and you just look at the map and see where the votes where that feel -- feel left out from all the games of the great financial center of London and all of the growth that's taking place in Ireland or in other parts of the country. So that's, you know, all politics has always been driven by that. You know, jobs, jobs, jobs, and you better be able to employ people because you're not going to have much revenue to, you know, do the other things you want to do if you don't have a pretty healthy economy. So I think that's the felt need that's predominant frankly, and that drove this vote to a very large measure.

Now tribalism is not new folks. I'm amazed, you

know, when I went to college I don't remember a course, there probably was one, but I don't remember learning a lot about, you know, Sykes-Picot and how the place got chewed unless you really specialized in that particular area.

MR. ISAACSON: Professor Baum didn't teach that?

SEC. KERRY: I -- American history.

MR. ISAACSON: Okay.

SEC. KERRY: We were American history. We learned -- we heard the names et cetera, but I don't think we really understood -- I didn't understand it even as a senator until later on in my process as I really began to visit and spend time, listen, and see the impact on Iraq policy, on Afghanistan policy, you know, witness a lawyer (inaudible), go to a Shura and sit down and have 100 Afghan faces starting at me with 50 years experience fighting for their country, talking to me about, you know, what we were trying to do. And you recognize that if you can't connect to those things and understand them, you're going to fail. And we didn't understand those things.

I am told and I'm not going to go backwards too far, but I'll tell you there are people who did not know the distinction between Sunni and Shia when we made the decision to go into Iraq. And what we did was turn something absolutely topsy-turvy, upside down, reversing 1,200 years basically of a history. And so you've got to understand these things and the tribalism I find is far more pronounced today. And if you stop and think about it by the way, we have a lot of it here in America.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah. A lot.

SEC. KERRY: I mean, you know, Boston and New York, and you know, look at how the Burroughs are divided up and who lives where and what happens and who celebrates what, you know, we're not free of it. So people need to understand it better in the context of how you get things done and patch people together in order to have the unity that we often talk about in fairly simplified terms. And

it never is quite as simple as the nice principle lays out.

MR. ISAACSON: You know, I'm getting a lot of signals and you have to go to Ottawa, but I think they've given me permission, I'm going to let Jane who has the microphone and Richard who had had the microphone both make a quick question and then let him answer. That's sort of my way of putting two questions in one, is that okay?

SEC. KERRY: Jane Harman.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah.

MS. HARMAN: Okay. Well, I'm proud to serve on your foreign policy board and I know everyone here is astounded at your energy and your focus --

SEC. KERRY: Thank you.

MS. HARMAN: -- and your unrelenting idealism.

(Applause)

MS. HARMAN: I just wanted to ask a question about one of the good unintended consequences of the Iran deal which I personally supported and that is that the Gulf states which are worried about Iran have aligned more closely with Israel and there are informal conversations, the Israelis admit this, between Israel and many of the Gulf states, could that provide an opening to restart the peace deal?

MR. ISAACSON: And before you start, let me -- Richard has the mic, I've gone where the mics are, we can combine questions perhaps.

SEC. KERRY: Richard has no less --

MR. ISAACSON: I know.

SEC. KERRY: -- slumming at another institute.

SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Secretary, arguably the biggest or one of the biggest intellectual ideas animating this administration's foreign policy was the so-called pivot or rebalanced Asia, and a principal part of that is the Trans-Pacific partnership so much so that your colleague, the secretary of Defense, essentially said he'd trade a carrier taskforce if he could get this agreement. Given Brexit, given the fact that TPP has been stalled in the Senate, what is your sense about what can be done over the next 6 months while you all are still in power to get this, and if you can't, what is it not that you can do to offset the economic states you discussed a few minutes ago with Walter, but the strategic states because not going through with this, as you know better than anyone in this room would raise major questions about American reliability amongst our colleagues and our allies in Asia. What would we do to essentially reassure them?

MR. ISAACSON: And I really want to apologize, I know there were a lot of other hands, and we tried hard, but so the Gulf states and then trade and TPP.

SEC. KERRY: Yeah. Let me also emphasize to everybody here, the Gulf states have questions about the deal, no question about it, but they ultimately supported it, and they do support it. And it's brought us closer together with them too because we've spent a lot of time sitting down with them working through their needs. And we have a much clearer sense and we are working with them now much more closely in training, in providing certain equipment, sharing intelligence, and in working on a mutual defense concept for the region which includes missile defense. So they will be safer we believe in the long run. And I'm not going to go into all the details of it, but I really think the conversations we've had with Iran and with them, I think it is possible over a period of time here for a better understanding to be reached about the direction.

And if we are more successful faster in getting Daesh under control, dealing with Assad and getting some stability, I think things will begin to evolve and move. Saudi Arabia by the way, the deputy crown prince has announced with King Salman and the Crown Prince Mohammad

Muhammad bin Nayef a very ambitious program for the country in terms of their diversifying their economy. And they're really reaching, they've seen what the United Arab Emirates have done, they've seen what Israel has done. Israel by the way has enormous and I talked to Bibi about this, enormous ability to play a huge financial and mentorship and advisory role in the region which they now seem to be more open to.

And on agriculture for instance, Egypt has about \$16 billion agricultural deficit. They've got a huge energy deficit. They desperately need help to transition. Israel could become financial powerhouse more than it is in the sense regionally and a mentor in each of these sectors that could be transformational for those countries too which is one of the reasons why I never do give up on this idea of trying to move the process forward because strategically it's so key to everybody there. The difficulty is not envisioning what the final status agreement might look like, the difficulty really is getting people to make the decisions to move towards it.

I think most people understand the basic framework. So we're trying to do that, we're going to keep doing it. I'm hopeful -- I'm not hopeful, I know that with the right choices by Israel itself, the Arab world is poised to do very different things. There's no question in my mind. And this is an opportunity in that regard. With respect, Richard, to Iran and --

MR. ISAACSON: The pivot, TPP.

SEC. KERRY: -- the TPP and the whole rebalance to Asia, I'd be less than candid to you, I mean, I want to be honest about the stakes here. The TPP is a central ingredient, all of America's presence in the region economically going forward. The fastest growing region in the world, one of the most exciting, we were just in Vietnam, the President and I with our teams and it was very, very exciting. There's a raging capitalism there, they still have some state-owned enterprises, but they're beginning to transition those. I think they will privatize over a period of time.

There's immense thirst for technology, for change, for bigger, you know, role. And so if we were to take the hard work of these last 7 years and suddenly lose it over this parochialism and this felt need locally, we would be shooting ourselves in the foot gigantically strategically and economically. And so I think what hasn't happened yet, we have not fully engaged with the Congress. It's a very difficult time to do that given the raise and what's happening, and so once we get fully engaged I think we have very powerful arguments to make and will be looking to people like you and others, businesses, the chamber of commerce, think tanks, loads of people we'll brief. And there are some things we can brief on in a classified session that I can't talk about here that I believe would have a profound impact on the thinking of lots of senators and congressmen. So I think this is just a hugely important step for the United States and vital to our global leadership and vital to our economic future. And I hope we don't blow it.

MR. ISAACSON: Mr. Secretary, thank you so much for your service to the nation. Thank you. Safe travels. Safe travels.

(Applause)

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