

Richard Haass: We're going to talk about the special relationship for a bit and then we'll open it up to any questions you all may, uh, have. And we've got one of, let me just sort of say, I've worked for four presidents for four administrations and I would say pound for pound over those years. The British embassy, or to be more specific, the embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Uh, I always thought was the s the most talented and influential, uh, embassy in Washington. There were times when it was as if they had a seat at the interagency table. They were, they were so informed about what was going on and so plugged in as to when to make their recommendations. And there were also times where the embassy played an extraordinarily important role in Washington. It was one of the very few safe spaces where Republicans and Democrats caught people in Congress, people in the executive branch.

Richard Haass: What have you would come together, uh, in a, in a city that's become increasingly balkanized. I actually thought, uh, the British ambassador played a, a, an important role as a, a place in the end. The only explanation I can give was the food. So a cheap shot. Uh, but since I lived there for six years, I'm allowed to make uh, such a cause. Cause let's start with the uh, know. Thank you for doing this. Thank you for it annoys me. Uh, let's talk. Sorry, it's my first time after three and a half years, you know, I should have come here from year one. I realized I should have, uh, I blame it on bad staff work. And uh, so now you are here. So it's cause let's take advantage of it. Special relationship. It's a phrase that's constantly bandied about, but let's just, let's take a couple of minutes and set the baseline. What do you understand, uh, the special relationship to be and which, and I guess the question I'll, I'll ask it. The, the risk of being slightly whatever difficult is whether in reality it was less special than the, than the, the term would suggest. Well, let's just talk about w w w what's the origins? What do we mean by this special relationship and has it actually lived up to it? Yeah. Um,

Kim Darroch: the freeze of course comes from Winston Churchill speech in Fulton, Missouri at Westminster College in 1946, a speech that was better known for him, coining the term about an iron curtain descending across Europe after the Second World War. But he also talked about a special relationship between the UK and the u s and it's been around ever since. And, uh, I mean, I don't myself use it every single public speech I make because I just think it can get overused. But why is the readership special? Well, uh, you have to look across the whole breadth of it, whether defense and intelligence where we have a thousand Brits embedded in your armed forces in any one time, in 28 different states where you and we have fought together through two world wars in the ninth century. Um, and in Iraq and Afghanistan, uh, since then and in, in Syria.

Kim Darroch: And, uh, the, each ship is so close that it is seamless. Um, and it's effectively like one, you know, organization spread across two continents. But, um, uh, after that cultural region, which extraordinary strong, uh, ludes of history, you're our biggest trading partner. There's one point \$2 trillion invested in each other economies. Um, uh, thousands, hundreds of thousands of tourists. The millions coming in two directions. And the interaction between the two countries, uh, is

an extraordinary level. But, um, but that doesn't mean that we don't disagree. Occasionally I look at my own, um, Korea, I mean the high points of us, uh, together saving the world in the Second World War, um, but also fighting in the first world war. And there were Brits fighting in Korea alongside you. Um, and then you look at the first, uh, Iraq conflict, which was a huge success. So there's a lot of long history with [inaudible], but also my career, there've been some big, big disagreements.

Kim Darroch: Um, everyone thinks of facture Reagan as the real pinnacle of the special relationship. They had some big, big disagreements, notably over the u s invasion of Grenada, um, where, uh, Margaret had, she didn't feel she had been consulted properly or indeed at all before the invasion happened. And then you had, um, uh, uh, Bill Clinton and John Major got along personally very well. Two big disagreements, one over the handling of the Bosnia, uh, but civil war in Bosnia. Um, and the, that culminated with the u s basically unilaterally deciding to launch the Dayton peace, um, uh, initiative and lead to these conference, which by the way was one of the great pieces of, um, uh, of diplomacy of the last century. And you know, Dick Holbrook's finest now and did bring peace to Bosnia after several years of civil war there, Bosnia as a state barely functions, people don't kill each other anymore.

Kim Darroch: Um, and then there was a disagreement between Clinton and major about, uh, about a travel visa for Jerry Adams as well, which was quite an issue at the time. Then if you go to Blau and Clinton, they were huge personal buddies and they worked for teddy bears as Europe advisor. And I knew that he had the grit. He thought he thought Bill Clinton was the most talented politician he had ever seen in action, but they had a big disagreement over whether we should threaten and we'd have to carry it out if we needed to. Um, ground troops, uh, in, uh, Kosovo when the, our campaign wasn't working, uh, in terms of, uh, Swedish them occurred though the, the, the, the Serbs that they had to leave, uh, get, get out of crossover so that it was determined. And then as you go on through, uh, through, um, through the 21st century, there had been more often at the moment, they have a very good relationship with this administration.

Kim Darroch: But we disagree about climate change and we disagree about a US withdrawal from Iran and other issues out there. So it is special across the breadth of it, across the depth of it. But it doesn't mean that there aren't movements which had when, uh, we have some quite sharp, sharp disagreements and

Richard Haass: It's nothing new. Uh, if you go back to 1956 and Su as when the Eisenhower maybe the biggest one of all, you're right, basically threatened to undermine the pound sterling. Yeah. Uh, it was, uh, you know, this administration's known for using coercive financial diplomacy. Yes. Mr Eisenhower was pretty good at, at, uh, uh, as well. Um, during the fire plans, big disagreements, particularly with elements of the U s government that Mrs Statute deem were not sufficiently supportive, but it's gotta be tough at times because it's a relationship between unequals.

Richard Haass: So it's one thing for us, it's nice to have a partner when we're off doing things, but it's a totally different calculus from the British side because again, it's not, eh, the scale of the two countries is fundamentally different. So what's the cut? What's the argument for the special relationship are on your side?

Kim Darroch: An American friend once said to me, to your point about the unevenness of it, he said, you Brits, you kind of have, you know, quite a nerve in the way you deal with us because you supply about 10% of the resources to anything we're doing internationally for which you demand 49% of the input. And the, uh, you know, the policy advice. And that's about right. Yeah. I mean, sometimes we'd like 50, 50, you know, or more than that. Um, but, uh, I like to think that on the u s side, even if you have a pretty clear idea of where you want to go to, is useful to have someone which has got, which our country, we just had a long history of international, um, involvement, I mean globally, but obviously, especially a lot along the history in some of the world's most common trouble smarts around the Middle East.

Kim Darroch: And, uh, you know, further eastern that to bounce your ideas off and to consult and to see if we see things the same way that you do. Um, we also bring the special relationship, I think really, uh, top quality, uh, security and intelligence understanding. And I think our intelligence agents contribute way more than 10% to our collective picture of what is actually going on in the world. Uh, our special forces, uh, are often so closely involved with yours that when you're deploying special forces, it's not an a 10%, no, it's closer to two 50, 50 cause they're so closely embedded with each other. Well, let me, um, let me be slightly more negative because we've had some, first of all to the coins to the Queen, the greater the president.

Richard Haass: The, uh, so let's look at, um, Tony Blair as prime minister. Yeah. Came under tremendous criticism at home for essentially being so junior a partner and it's plagued his relationship ever since. Indeed. I would argue, sadly, that it weakens his ability to be a rallying point for the anti Brexit forces in the United Kingdom because he's much more popular here than he is in your country. So yeah, clearly a lot of Brits would say he was too junior a partner.

Kim Darroch: Mm. I'm a, I mean I worked for Tony Blair as his Europe advisor from in number 10, from 2004 to 2017 he'd finished. And a good friend of mine who was a, who became ambassador here before me, Nigel Shinewald, uh, was the advisor on the rest of the world. I always thought I had such an easy ticket compared to Nigel because Nigel was going with news about, uh, about Iraq and all the time. And I was reporting the occasional triumph from the European scene. So, um, so I remember those days vividly. Tony would still say to this day, I'm sure that, um, he felt he did the right thing. And the only thing that the UK could have done when asked by, um, the Bush administration to support what, uh, what they wanted to do in Iraq. Um, we shared the same intelligence about, uh, weapons of mass destruction being created in Iraq.

Kim Darroch: And, uh, you know, he felt it was absolutely the right thing, the right thing to do. I can tell you Richard, that although it wasn't inside the room cause I was doing Europe and there's no German side of the room, they felt that in all of those meetings, uh, between the U S and UK teams with Bush and Blair at the table, that they were getting way more than 10% of the input and that they were persuading, uh, their colleagues and American friends, uh, of certain policy positions or ways things should unfold that the US side was agreeing with them. So, uh, I remember seeing the team come back to number 10 time after time feeling really quite Boyd by how the meetings have gone and what they felt was a really good measure agreement to be frank with you didn't always then turn into US policy, uh, emerging quite the way we thought had been agreed, but it didn't feel like the junior, junior partner.

Kim Darroch: Then it felt, um, the prime minister had a huge amount of influence over the president at the time and the attorney would never say, and has never said publicly, look, if any of that actually followed my advice, things will work out differently. He's taken the hit. Um, he's very active now on the Brexit debate. Um, yes, you're right that it has made an impact on his, on how he's seen in the UK. And he certainly has his critics there, but he is a unrepentant about what he did. And remember at the time he went to parliament and got a comfortable healthy majority for our supporting you in Iraq. So he would say, look, you know, parliament supported me. The country was supporting me.

Richard Haass: which brings me to David Cameron.

Richard Haass: Two things come to mind in the context of this conversation. One was the vote, uh, on using force against Syria after the Syrian use of chemical weapons and defiance of the threats or challenges not to, he could not deliver parliament, which then, uh, undermine whatever confidence Barack Obama had. Barack Obama then essentially used it as something of an explanation or excuse to back off acting. So there was, there was that when a funny sort of way you had an unfortunate influence. And then David Cameron even more faithfully, I would think for this special relationship, uh, lit the fuse that became Brexit. And the reason I say more consequentially for those special relationship is one of the big arguments for the special relationship from our point of view was that our intimacy with the UK gave us extra voice in Europe. And to one question. So the bring me back into Brexit, which I knew we couldn't avoid is to what extent do you fear or are you concerned that if this, if Brexit goes ahead and important American rationale for the specialist special relationship disappears with it?

Kim Darroch: Um, I'll come to that question. I promise. I will. I said just very quickly on David Cameron and, um, the, the serial bombing. I was national security advisor that time. So this is kind of a seared into my, into my memory. And I remember how it unfolded vividly. And, uh, David and actually, you know, pretty much everyone in the cabinet and certainly everyone on the national security community in White Hall, which I was leading at the time, believed that it was right to launch air strikes against Asad for the, uh, the use of chemical weapons, the first stone, you know, the first time for almost a century that chemical weapons had been

being used and they were being used against civilians and children. Um, if you were in the House of Commons when that debate was happening and when, uh, the, um, the vote was lost. Honestly, it felt as if, I mean this may be unfair to those, those members of parliament who, who take a different view of how that debate went.

Kim Darroch: But it felt as if the Iraq war, um, was a cloud hanging over the chamber. A lot of people were kind of re-arguing what they had said when it supported the Iraq war, when they were explaining why they weren't going to support the Syrian war. So it felt like a kind of real litigation of all of that. And I don't think, certainly eyes, no scooted advisor with my job being prepared, all the arguments with the prime minister of the debate had not really anticipated that. So it was a real moment for me and I still think honestly that it would have been the right thing to have done. I think very common things would've been the right thing to have done. And you know, of all ironies, we did, um, uh, actually participate in, in, uh, air strikes against us, um, uh, forces, um, uh, under this president, um, a year or two back.

Kim Darroch: And that was the right thing to do as well on Brexit. There is one reality here, which is that when we leave, we will not be sitting around that table. I was a masters of European Union, so I know that table well with the other 27 member states, um, arguing, uh, and we were always arguing for the British line, but it was usually aligned with you and we agreed on, on international foreign policy issues or what the UK or the EU position is. We were advocating something, um, we'd never advocate something that ODU thought we disagree with, but we always, always agreed on these things and we will be taking that for a line that, that supported you and it was important that you, we won the argument. And that won't happen for when we're not around the table. There are some other angles to it and provided and I'm sure we will, we live up to everything that our government is saying about an international facing UK, which is active, which uses its, its role on the UN Security Council, but which also continues to invest at more than 2% of GDP in our defense and security forces sows and is willing to deploy them, uh, around the world, um, in pursuit of our national security, but also to make the world a better place.

Kim Darroch: We may be able to do more of that, uh, and they'd be willing to do more of that. Um, uh, when we are, uh, outside the EU and, uh, in things which fall short of action, there is a tendency to be frank for you from policy to emerge. As you know, having watched over many years as a kind of lowest common denominator. And when it's just us making national decisions, we may be able to, to, to take firmer from international positions. And one of the features is when we do sanctions now we agree them at 28 sanctions are far more effective. You have 28 countries doing them. But if it's just one, but if it's just one, we will certainly be able to have more freedom to do exactly what is right.

Richard Haass: You surprised me by one of the things you said a few minutes ago that the current relationship between, uh, our governments is good. And, uh, I would say that

Richard Haass: for those of us observing from some distance, the relationship between president Trump and prime minister may is not say what it was between President Reagan and Margaret Thatcher or Bill Clinton and Tony Blair. And I could go on and on and on. But the interesting prospect, if Ladbrokes is right, uh, Boris Johnson will be stepping into number 10 sooner than later. Uh, Donald Trump has made no secret of his desire that, uh, Boris Johnson becomes prime minister. So might we see a revival? Might the relationship become more special?

Kim Darroch: I think you'd be surprised, Richard, if you've sat in on a couple of, at least two the meetings between Theresa May and president Trump at actually, despite very different personalities and different styles in the way they approach meetings. How well there's sometimes I've got on, of course they had disagreements as well, but, but you're gonna have better than, than, than you think. But on, um, on Boris Johnson, I mean, there's two candidates left remembering Jeremy Hunt, foreign secretary is still there. So it's not assume that it's Boris worried to be virus. Um, it is the case that, uh, this is a guy who used to have an American passport who is deeply, instinctively, um, pro American as foreign secretary. He came over probably four times when I've been a master here. And, uh, he loves this place. He loves the country. He loves Washington. And, uh, his style, um, which is quite flamboyant in the way that he does public speaking.

Kim Darroch: And he's very funny, very knowledgeable. He doesn't tweet that much, but who knows. He may start but uh, that's something to look forward to. But he gets on really well here and he is I think very popular here. Um, and he just didn't know the president Trump, it's a long relationship. They met in New York a year or two back when Boris represented the prime minister at an event that the president was chairing, but they've got on very well when they met and the president has made no secret of his regard for borrows. There is also said Nice things about Jeremy Hunt so there's not kind of like he's thrown everything behind the one candidate. So if it is, if it is Boris Johnson, um, I am sure they will get on extremely well. I'm sure that they will meet soon. I'm sure that they will talk very often. Cause this is the president who does a lot of business on the telephone and I think I have a lot of work to do.

Richard Haass: Say a little bit about what it's like to be her majesty's ambassador working in a Washington, which is different from most of the Washington's I remember, and probably you remember this administration is something other than the textbook. You know how it, uh, operates with ice, mentioned Twitter, the interagency processes a at times less than orderly, there's degree of a cyst, concentric circles and presidential reaching out to people, relatives and others who are outside the normal liner chain of command. So what's it like to be an ambassador in this Washington, other than interesting,

Kim Darroch: other than interest? It was, grew in my first word in interesting look, before I came out here, I did two things. I went to, um, see pretty much all the previous presion masters to the u s who are still alive and chatted to them all about how

it was and tried to learn from their experience. And then I did, um, a month with my wife Incognito, um, before I was actually pointed here, driving ourselves around the deep South and the southwest and Florida. We did, we drove from Nashville to um, New Orleans. As you would say New Orleans. We would say New Orleans. And where are you going to tell the people where you're going at? Um, where are going next from here? I am going up to Montana. I said Montana and you laughed at me. So anyway, one planner and you have to big sky country for a couple of days over the weekend and next week.

Kim Darroch:

But anyway, we drove from, we drove through the deep south and we went across to Utah. Uh, and then uh, we drove around Florida and you know, in the evening being law abiding citizens rather than if it's, we like to have a glass of wine in humans. We will go out to restaurants in the towns. We will stay in places like Jacksonville, Mississippi by Uber and every Uber driver. I said, who's going to win your election in 20, 20? Every single one of them in the deep south in the southwest and in Florida said Donald Trump at a stage. We, before any PR. I came up to Washington my first week here, had all the positives around the 16. Just to be clear, that's 2016, 2016. Um, and uh, I come up to Washington and first week we have a pundits breakfast and all the Washington, um, experts came around and they all said, well, it won't be Donald Trump who wins the election, but you know, enjoy the other counters.

Kim Darroch:

Interesting experience. Anyway. What's it like to be ambassador here? First thing to say is, look, this is an administration which may operate in some unconventional ways, but we Brits find them very congenial because a lot of them seem to have had long experiences the UK and to kind of like us, whatever mysterious reason there is. So it feels like administration that is full of anger files say which, which means, by the way, it's very easy to get in to see people depending to see your cabinet secretaries to get into senior people in the White House. Yeah. And the, a bit of any current cheapest club has a very good friend of mine. And I talked to him, it feels like certainly every week. Um, but it feels like you talk to him daily if you wanted to because he is, he's such a good guy and seems to like us.

Kim Darroch:

So in that sense, that's very easy. It does operate unconventional ways. Richard's quite right, there isn't the interagency process. And we used to try to lock into and as Richard said, to be a kind of virtual presence around the table that doesn't meet so often nowadays. So you have to work in different ways. There are two or three things at a different one. I didn't think my predecessors, when they woke up in the morning, the first thing they did was have a look at Twitter to see what the president said of the night. And I do because there's usually something in there that's quite interesting. Um, second, I don't think my predecessors have tried to influence direction of us policy by going on the cable news channels. Um, one cable news channel in particular to set out our policy vert. We would go into the State Department or under the White House.

Kim Darroch:

This is what we think it can be quite effective to actually compare on some of these cable new channel and say, this is what we think. We never know who

you might be, who might be watching. Um, and from the future you can protect, you can present your credentials to Rupert Murdoch. Exactly what I've been for a minute. So thing third thing is that the president runs alongside his cabinet and his White House advisors. We knew that there are some people he consults who are not actually in the White House or in the administration. There are some prominent senior senators and congressman whom he consults. There are some people in the media world that he consults. There are people who have been longtime business trends in his consults. And we try and that making this sound like a great conspiracy. We try and knew as many as possible of those people and talk to them about what we think about issues.

Kim Darroch: And I mean, for example, Lindsey Graham is a great friend of the, uh, of the Brits and of the British Embassy and is, I believe, very influential with the president. And so talking to Lindsey, I'm sure you do it too, which are about foreign policy issues can be very productive. So it's a kind of a, I mean this is the term I've learned a little bit about basketball. It's a full court press approach. You know, you try and get everyone who might be on the same side of the argument as you, who might be talking to the president to, um, to know what you think about things and encouraging to talk to the president.

Richard Haass: It's actually flooding the zone. Right?

Richard Haass: Uh, well I tried to, uh, I, I can't explain cricket. Don't worry about it. The one last question that I want to open it up, which is about Brexit, cause you said, I, I, unless I misheard you, I think you said something that when Brexit happens, well, when Britain leaves Europe. And so I, um, when I was a bit surprised with that and my own, my own reading of it is it's likely but not definite and one can imagine various things. But if it were to happen, particularly if it's a no deal or quote unquote hard Brexit of some sort with, uh, cause I for one, can't imagine your former friends in the EU giving you a significantly different deal than you. They've already offered you. Um, are you worried that the United Kingdom in 10 years will no longer be the United Kingdom and that Northern Ireland and Scotland may go their own ways in order to keep it in Europe? That are you, are you concerned about what Brexit uh, might well set in motion

Kim Darroch: in today's politics, which are, you can never say anything is impossible because so many unexpected things happen. But I use the word when in terms of Brexit, first of all, cause that's my government position. And uh, you know, the two candidates see the prime minister are both also determined to deliver Brexit. And second, because the main opposition party, although there is quite a lot of debate within that party is also, um, currently committed to delivering Brexit. And it was 17 port point 4 million people who voted for it and 16.1 million against. And although I worked for many years on the European Union, you know, I believe in democracy and you have to kind of, um, uh, accept the verdict of the people and then make the best delivering it. Um, what is going on a loop now is we were trained to get a Brexit deal that, um, that best delivers what the British people voted for the, with minimum, uh, impact, uh, to existing economic and commercial relations.

Kim Darroch: Well, there's one that gives us the opportunity to continue to be very close trading economic partners with Europe while developing new and stronger trade relations with the rest of the world. I believe personally, uh, it's not just Chris, my governance position, that new deal, Brexit would be extraordinarily disruptive and would lose jobs in the UK and should, uh, if at all possible be avoided. Um, and so I think that we, you know, I hear what you say richer than certainly that's where the European Union is saying, uh, publicly that new deal other than the one prime minister Theresa May negotiated is going to be possible. We'll, we'll see. Because I think whoever wins the Tory leadership election will go to Brussels and look for some changes. I think probably the foundations of that deal, the withdrawal agreement between, um, the tree's May's team negotiated, a lot of that will be kept, but I think we'll have to have to be looking for changes on the backstop, which is the issue that Verus backstops produce you, that a lot of people in the, in the government party and the Tory party have issues with. And we'll see if, uh, if, if there is, if it really is impossible to get some changes there. But I think it's very important that we leave with a deal and not with a noodle Brexit, which I think would genuinely be extraordinary disruptor. I mean, we would come out of it after a period of time, but the damage that would be done meanwhile the people might lose their jobs, would um, would worry me or not.

Richard Haass: So I'm going to say something

Richard Haass: for 45 seconds. You can close your ears and you certainly don't have to respond. But as an American, I am a stunned by what I would find the uh, stubbornness of the Taurian British political establishment. The idea that the one time referendum [inaudible] is that just in stone when it was a referendum based upon the idea of Brexit, without knowing what the deal would be like the Mitch, all sorts of disinformation, some put out by the advocates, some put out by the Russians. I find the idea that it's one and done and democracy has us spoke to people who have spoken and we can't revisit it now that we actually know what Brexit would mean. I find one of the weakest political arguments I have encountered in a years and I find it quite tragic and you don't have to respond to it. One Americans, I also think I'd say one other thing for ourselves.

Richard Haass: I think we lose him this. I actually think we, I think Britain comes out weaker for it. We lose something of a partner. Uh, I think it also, it's, it's, it suggests to me the danger of democracy via referendum when the, when the founders founded this country we created as an yours or representative democracy and direct democracy I would argue has certain, uh, risks and eh, implicit or inherent in it. And then any doubts about it I would suggest are a Brexit has a erased, but you don't have to respond to any of them. Uh, so let's open it up. Any questions about special relationship Brexit things the United States in the United Kingdom work on, sir?

Audience Member: Uh, sir, could you try to explain to us the soft border issue and how it doesn't become a Civ? Our newspapers have done a terrible job explaining anything about Brexit, but especially this issue,

Richard Haass: you mean the, the, the backstop, the issue between a Ireland and Northern Ireland?

Kim Darroch: Richard actually has done some extraordinary vibrio valuable work on [inaudible] for kind of special representative. We asked him to do a few years back, which hasn't yet quite delivered the deal that we'd like to, but it's not to Richard. It was an extraordinary good piece of work. It would take to give you the full detail and the Irish back, it would take 10 minutes, but here's a very, very quickest version of it. Um, we had many years of really tragic, um, uh, troubles in Northern Ireland between the Protestant and Catholic communities there, uh, with a lot of people dying with, um, shootings, uh, killing bomb outrages, um, including on the British mainland. Um, first John Major, um, in the late 1990s. And then sealed by attorney Blair do the thing called the Good Friday Agreement, um, which I think, uh, was signed in 1998 around eastern 1998 which basically, um, uh, it brought the two communities represented the two communities, including Shin feign pretty representative of the IRA into a coalition leadership for Northern Ireland and self-rule.

Kim Darroch: And you know, we have texts and really difficult decisions that part of that, including people who we thought had been terrorists actually, you know, uh, weren't, were released from prison and some of them actually then became, uh, politicians representing parts of their community. Um, one part of that deal was the deal said, um, to the Protestant community as long as the majority of Northern Ireland wants to be part of, uh, the UK, that will be the UK government's position. So they felt reassured that in doing this deal with that enemies, um, they were not suddenly going to find themselves part of, uh, the rest of Ireland that Irish unification was going to happen. But for the Catholic community, the big plus point was the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland was completely open. Um, we're all in the European Union, so we had the same customs regime, so you could live on one side of the border and work on the other.

Kim Darroch: And the practical purposes, it felt in no doubt that if it was one country, if you, as a result, if we leave the European Union, that border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland becomes the border between the UK and the European Union because it's probably going as part of the European Union. If you then have tariffs and quoters and other trade measures between the UK and the EU, you would have to have customs posts and border posts. Do you have visas in there that between Northern Ireland and proper ground. And so that part of the good trade agreement which was so important to the Catholic community, um, disappears and that potentially can wreck the whole, the whole deal. Um, and you will get a return to what we saw in the 1980s and 1990s which obviously no one wants. So there's been a commitment of the British government from the outset that there will be new hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Kim Darroch: The way you get that ultimately is that after we have left the European Union, you have a free trade deal between the UK and the EU, which I mean, you didn't

need any tariff or they had no tariffs and no quotas and whatever. So you wouldn't need any, any border controls, any customs controls on that border. Um, but until you get there, what the Irish backstop says is that UK will stay inside the customs union or a customs union so that we don't have controls on that border. And part of the Conservative Party thinks that is potentially a trap which locks us into the European Union indefinitely. And that's why they are sparks back. Backstop is so, it's so controversial, but, uh, obviously I believe in the government position on this genuinely, personally I do, which is the Northern Ireland peace deal the good trade agreement is such an important part of modern Britain having resolved, you know, centuries of troubles pregnant to come to communities. But you know, particularly the troubles that I lived through in the 70s, 80s and 90s, that, uh, that sacrament that has to be preserved. And that's the most important single objective. And that's why the government has been saying that, uh, that we have to stick with the backstop.

Richard Haass: I have a slightly different take on just one minute. Just so you know, I was the US envoy for the Northern Ireland Peace Process, and then I was brought in by the parties themselves as the international mediator. And my own view is this could change the debate a little bit in Northern Ireland and it gives you up to now with what demographics might be the driver. One day of a Catholic community was increasing at a faster rate than Protestant. And whether one day that those numbers would reach your point where a border poll people voting on both sides, this would change the numbers. But I think if Britain, Britain leaves Europe, you can then basically argue for Irish unification on the basis that therefore it's keeps you in Europe. And I think it changes the argument somewhat in the north and it goes beyond a religious or community based, uh, arguments.

Richard Haass: So, and it's ironic just because the Protestant community that you took called uniqueness, uh, voted for Brexit, yet they could set in motion again dynamics that could ultimately bring about a political outcome, which is exactly the opposite of what it is they want. So I would simply say I think, you know, stay tuned. And what's interesting about politics so often is the unintended consequences. And I think this could have some, uh, unintended, uh, consequences you could think of for better or for worse depending on your politics. But I think this is, it'll play out in very interesting ways. Yes, ma'am. This next to the last row there,

Audience Member: Richard, ambassador, uh, excellent session. Thank you. My question is about the latest friction point in the special relationship, which would seem to be Iran. Your Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt told the parliament two days ago that he could not envision joining a US led war on Iran. And your government has not been shy about saying you think that leaving the nuclear deal was a terrible idea. So my question is if this conflict deepens and if things get worse instead of better is the UK with the US?

Kim Darroch: the differences between the UK and uh, and the administration on Iran, um, are around the GCP row and we would have liked the US to stay in the, in the

nuclear, the GC Korea. But we agree and I've always agree with the u s that Iran shouldn't be developing ballistic missiles, particularly ones with the range that would reach European capitals and the Iranians activities in the region, whether in Syria or in Lebanon, whether they're supporting Hezbollah or in Yemen, whether supporting the Boothies or in Iraq, whether these highly disruptive Shiite militia gangs are the line and damaging to peace and security stability and secure in the Middle East and should be stopped. So our preference, um, uh, how policy has always been keep the JCPA no one ever says a perfect agreement. If John Kerry had had another couple of years, um, in the job, he might have actually been able to negotiate something on blisssed in the sales as well.

Kim Darroch: But keep the JCP because that's a kind of banker and that constrains there any, a nuclear program, uh, or deals when it was signed for at least a decade. And by the way people was talking about, or after some of these sunset clauses expire, then what can they do? But there are lots of different sunset clause of different durations and there's, you know, there's one of 10 years, which is number, uh, of centrifuges habit. Then there's on a 15 years, I think around quantitative cheer and m and then there are others that are more or less indefinitely. So it's not as simple as after 10 years they do what they want. It never was. And we always intended anyway, a few years before the sunset clause is expired. To go back and say, you're not going to be an out loud to develop a nuclear weapon. So that's now renegotiate this anyway, you nail down the constraints in JCPS and then you press the Iranians.

Kim Darroch: And we still have two Europeans still have 200 odd different sanctions on Uranian. So it's not like we're saying that fine now, you know, the no problem at all. We have sanctions on them over there, regional activities, central other ballistic missiles, sanctions on them, over their human rights abuses. So there's a lot of pressure on the uranium still, but keep the JCPA negotiate our vista muscles and press them to stop doing what they're doing on, um, on, uh, the regional activities. Now, um, we hope that the Raelians will stay inside the JCP ray and we have been publicly clear that we, we deplore and we think it's completely and you know, uh, uh, in permissible in any sort of international law terms for them to attack civilian shipping in the Gulf. Something you did by the way back in the 1980s as well. Um, so if they continue to harass shipping in the Gulf, there will be consequences to that.

Kim Darroch: My ministers haven't spelled out what they are, but there will be consequences. Um, if they're continue doing what they in the region, there are potentially consequences that and if they breach the limits in the JCPA, there'll be a bit of process we will go through in terms of using the mechanisms in that agreement, the dispute resolution mechanism, the joint commission, um, to see if we can persuade them to come back into compliance. But ultimately there are consequences if they stay outside. They leave the area as well. So putting lots of pressure on them that they shouldn't do that. Plus I admit freely, we are looking for ways in which we can make the JCPA work for them given that some of the economic benefits they expected from the JC degree in terms of international

companies treating with them and investing in them are not happening because US sanctions, understandably, companies feel they have to make a choice between trading with the US and trading with their own.

Kim Darroch: They're always going to choose the u s so that has happened. And so we are looking through any ways which we can bolster the Iranian economy. Not selling the weapons or anything. Um, but, uh, selling them, um, humanitarian goods and maybe consumer goods as well. So, um, we hope he's not going to get to the confrontation between the u s and, uh, Iran. And we felt the president took the right decision when he appeared to call the all back. The all strikes the, the air strikes back, you know, an hour or two, maybe it was 10 minutes. I think he said in a tweet before you're actually going to press the button. That was the right decision we've held. Um, and we hope that, uh, they really wouldn't do anything, wouldn't make any miscalculations now, but in terms of what happens if the Radians breached the GCP or continues for us to begin shipping or do any other things that could, by the way, we have plenty of people around in the Middle East and region to go potential targets for them, that they lose circumstances, then all bets are off on what might happen.

Richard Haass: if the administration came to you and basically said, uh, we're prepared to give the Iranians a diplomatic off ramp. Um, they would have to sign on to a JC POA 2.0 yeah. That would extend the constraints, say another 25 or 50 years where they couldn't accumulate significant amounts of fish ion material or centrifuges. They'd have to accept constraints on ballistic missile range in exchange for which they would get a degree of sanctions relief. Do you think you'd sign onto that?

Kim Darroch: I think absolutely. I mean, so way beyond my pay grade to make policy up on, on the hoof in front of this audience. But I think we'd find that a very interesting and a, an attractive suggestion Richard. Yes.

Richard Haass: Ms Tett I see in the back of the room.

Richard Haass: For those of you who don't know Gillian, she, uh, she works for that salmon colored newspaper of some excellence.

Audience Member: Some excellence. Um, I'm curious, um, when the president went to London recently, one of the issues at the absolute top of the agenda was a UK attitude towards Weiwei because you know, that has been a point of some friction in the sense that the u s has obviously taken a very tough line on Weiwei and the UK has continued to use it to some degree and the UK intelligence services have indicated they don't necessarily share the same level of that has been present, um, and presented by the president. So I'm curious, do you think that there's going to be a serious breach over that? Would that have implications for intelligence sharing? Um, or do you think the UK will simply come in line in the end with the UK us position on this? Or do you think the u s position is overblown

Kim Darroch: writes to them? I mean that's a, it's quite a tricky question. Um, she is good at what you do. I know I was pregnant would ask you about Huawei. First thing to say, and this is an old, you do, a very short answer is this, that the UK has, uh, I mean we've had a couple of national scooter council discussion of it, but we have not taken a decision. The decision will be for the new prime minister. Um, and whether you take such quickly or spends a little time to ponder of it, I'm not sure, but I wouldn't myself expect it to be one of the first things that he decides in the, you know, the dog days of, um, a walkest. So I think it may take a little time. Second point to make though is, um, sometimes looks if we have a bigger difference with the US on hallway than we really do.

Kim Darroch: There. There's never been any question, you know, sensitive communication systems, um, uh, ones, uh, connected with national security. One's connected with, um, the military communication systems, um, or, uh, uh, in, uh, stuff like our emergency services as I'll never be any question of using, um, uh, what we equipment in that we don't. Um, while the equipment is, you know, commercial networks but not in the sensitive government once. Now what we said about five g is we are not going to compromise. The national school is very important. McLaughlin popularize it. So we're not gonna put while we equipment, um, you know, in the national security of sense, national security sensitive bits of uh, the future five g networks won't be in the government networks whether you have intelligence or security or military networks or whatever. Um, I'm not a great technical expert, but I've tried to do a bit of analysis study of this.

Kim Darroch: Um, it's not clear to me that using quote weight equipment in your commercial networks, um, carries with it even significant national security risks. So when we have debates with, uh, US friends about, uh, about the risks, if there is a difference, that's where it is. I have to say, I do think that there is a completely solid unified us view on the technical risks that anyway, um, when it comes to commercial networks, by the way, there's lots of where recruitment in the u s commercial networks at the moment because it's the cheapest kit. And so if you are running a move on network in, in um, uh, in a rural area in Montana one, Tada. I thought I was avoiding saying one title but you said it for me. Um, then you'll find the, probably it's full of [inaudible] cause it's the cheapest and you know, these, these rural networks run on quite a narrow profit.

Kim Darroch: Um, uh, there is a different argument here which is about whether we should all of us not use power equipment as part of, um, combating or responding to the strategic challenge that, that in Washington, they, they say that China represents for the future to kind of different argument. But again, the president's sometimes says publicly and privately that he sees the why we issue primary in the context of us China trade. So you do wonder if there is US China trade deal in the next 12 months, whether current restrictions on where we will be lifted as part of that. Um, so I don't know exactly what I think. I don't, not sure I know exactly what the u s position is on this. So where does it come to, where does it come to? Um, we will put national security absolutely foremost in our calculations and our decisions on, um, what we do, um, about our five g network and whether we are trade agreement. By the way the main

competitors knocking Erickson also make all their stuff in China just saying. Um, but that doesn't, you know, whether we end up with a full ban on Huawei or just a few like a partial ban, cause it's not in any of the sensitive bits of our networks is something for the next prime minister to decide. And both options are possible

Richard Haass: Got time for a few more questions. Yes, sir. Here in the second row,

Audience Member: Richard mentioned the potential Russian interference in the Brexit vote. Um, in, in our country, we have obviously the same issue. In our 2016 election, we investigated that by our president asking the Russian president whether it happened and was denied. Um, what if anything is the UK doing to investigate potential Russian interference in the Brexit vote?

Richard Haass: In our defense, we also investigate it in other ways. The intelligence community did come out with a joint position about Russian interference. And the Mueller report is pretty explicit.

Kim Darroch: Yeah. Um, look, the two things that have happened, one, a number of, you know, I'm a huge admirer of the, of the media honestly. And um, there've been some very good journalists who have looked into this and have written, um, uh, a lot of stuff about Russian interference, Brexit, which is fascinating, um, and quite what was going on. And there's a huge amount of really good research going into that and I admire them for that work. But in terms of what the government has done, we gave this issue to the electoral commission or independent veteran commission whose job it is to look at whether elections have been conducted fairly or not. And by the way, they have teeth. I mean they have, um, find, uh, at least one party, um, over it, uh, and the whole Brexit debate, um, uh, if they find the, the leaf campaign over exceeding some of the limits of what you could spend and some of the other rules. And they concluded, I believe that although there had been, um, some Russian activity that it was not significant. Um, in the end results of that, that's where it's been asked, but it's been investigated and it's their job to do it.

Richard Haass: That's interesting. That means your investigations made a judgment that are never ours, never did, which is whether it had any impact. We've only described what we know of Russian activity. We've never made an assessment of where we'd had any effect on one way or the other, uh, on the election. That's interesting. There's a gentleman over there who just had the, yeah. Good.

Audience Member: Yes. Thank you. Well, hi Richard. Well, you mentioned it at a certain point before that with England out of Europe, the special relationship would probably diminish. And of course there are other ways to maintain it. And at the recent event with, uh, English and American, uh, political scientists, um, the Brits were very excited about the idea of the anglosphere to, to introduce as a substitute and, uh, and because the, the attitude was on the 10%, 50%, uh, that we were discussing before, uh, an American very senior American banker took the floor and uh, and said, well, actually it's a good idea. We could probably buy England

and an exit. Um, so the question is, what can you tell us about the anglosphere and would, would it be a good idea to have the UK up for sale? Maybe?

Richard Haass: I think it depends on the exchange rate.

Kim Darroch: Yeah. Um, I think, uh, not that I want, uh, we need to debate about what I say. I think what I said, um, on leaving the European Union is one thing that that was definitely going to change. And there's nothing we can do about it was we wouldn't be around that table of 28 argue. A case of happened to be consistent with American views on issues. And that's just reality. But I hope I also said was that we would, I mean there was a lot more to the special relationship with the UK u s relationship than the UK acting as American proxy around the table. And that, uh, released in some ways from some of the constraints of European Union that I hope we could be as valuable partner to the US, but in different ways on the anglosphere look, it actually kind of functions and exists already in the form of five, which is public knowledge that we, the Americans, the Canadians, the New Zealanders and the Australians collaborate extremely closely on intelligence, security matters.

Kim Darroch: Um, there's no closer relationship than the UK us, but they're all part of it and it is, uh, extraordinarily valuable, um, and important. So in that sense it's already there. Um, but I don't think the anglosphere as a kind of sort of geographical grouping beyond what we do together on intelligence and security and defense stuff doesn't to me make a whole lot of sense. And obviously we want to trade with everyone as much as we can, but I see that more as a series of binational relationships. And something that is, is collective, but that's just my view. Um, and you will certainly find British politicians, um, who see a big future for, for the anglosphere and think that this can be one of the things that, that, um, that replaces our relationship with the European Union in the future. And, and a bit personally skeptical beyond the fantastically valuable stuff we do on security and intelligence. But, you know, I may be wrong.

Richard Haass: One of the inc your country's leading, if not the leading expert on the EU. Put aside Brexit for a second, how worried are you about the future of the European project? We see, you know, the yellow jackets or whatever going on in France. We see the Italian government potentially not meeting EU guidelines. We see the political uncertainty of Germany, the illiberalism of Hungary and Poland, Greeks, financial difficulties, what have you, uh, when you look at the European project after now nearly three quarters of a century, uh, how confident do you have a teacher?

Kim Darroch: Um, it's a good question, which I am confident of its future. Um, but I think it faces challenges. We be on those. When I was doing this from, I did a basic for about 1995 to 2012, um, pretty much with a bit doing Bosnia and costumer in the middle. Um, and uh, those were much happier times for the European project than now. Um, and Brexit is the kind of tip of the iceberg, but there are lots of challenges below that of which I would highlight two. Um, one is that in the same way that you have a politically divisive and massive challenge on your

southern border, we have the same measure of challenge if not greater, um, uh, along the Mediterranean. Um, cause it sometimes feels as if, you know, obviously the entire population of North Africa would like to come to Europe, understandably for our better standard of living and a better life.

Kim Darroch: And this was most starkly illustrated back in 2015 when, uh, with the Syrian civil war at a peak of that time, you saw the Trillium minute and a half refugees, um, mostly coming through Turkey into Greece. But there are a number of channels across, um, coming through, uh, eastern Europe on their way to western Europe. Um, and that by the way, I think was quite a big factor in, in the ultimate British decision, which populations decision to, uh, uh, to leave the European Union. And that migration challenge is still there and there are so many routes across as a route across into Spain. There's the risk groups across the southern Italy. There's a region across, um, from Libya and a southern Athena's route across from Turkey into Greece. Um, and there just isn't an easy answer to it. There wasn't easy answers we would've got there. Um, but until conditions, until there is sufficient political stability, um, uh, an economic prosperity in those countries, there's always going to be people who want to leave and come to Europe.

Kim Darroch: And Europe now is full to overflowing fields with, um, they're called migrants. Um, and they're people, you have to understand why they aspire to a better stove. They a better living with their children, but you know, it's putting huge political strains on an RPC that reflected in politics across mainland Europe. You see it in the rise of certain parties, you see it in the struggle of mainstream politicians to keep, to maintain the support of the operation. And the secondary problem, no, just flag up not just to problems here, but these are two that really worry me ever since. Um, 2008, a large parts of Europe, uh, financial crisis, they have struggled economically. There are still parts of the European banking system that really have big, big problems and um, a number of countries in the European Union to say they're mostly along the Mediterranean, um, just have had really poor economic growth for a decade now. And again, you see that appearing in politics, um, and uh, until mainstream political parties and politicians in Europe can demonstrate to their publics that they have both answers to these problems and policies that go into work. Um, we're going to have real problems and real challenges in Europe and these are the, these are really, really difficult things to solve.

Richard Haass: Kim, uh, I saved the most difficult question for last. I want you to be careful. I don't want to get you in trouble in how you answer this. This weekend the Yankees and the red sox are playing a two game series in a London. Who are, you are, who are you rooting for?

Kim Darroch: Do you know? I have a Moose Spritz. Don't get baseball anymore than you Americans get cricket. But I've been going to baseball games and so first came to America in the 1980s and I kinda love baseball and I got into it through, I don't know how you pronounce his name, but there was a great writer. Rutan was lyrical terms of American baseball called Roger Angle Angle in there. The

New Yorker. New Yorker. Yeah. Angel. And he just, he just was a beautiful proves stylist. Um, and uh, uh, I've always just loved the idea of Fenway park cause it's just there.

Richard Haass: Okay.

Kim Darroch: So I have to say I'm a red sox guy. Look, cause I really spoiled the Washington nationals who are two games off a 500 season, which isn't the best. But you know,

Richard Haass: Well you have just seen as proof that the special relationship no longer exists.

Richard Haass: Okay.

Richard Haass: But you've also seen proof of what I've said before about how the United Kingdom continues to send us extraordinary diplomats. Thank you very much.

Kim Darroch: Thank you.