

The Truman Doctrine at 70

Senator Tim Kaine

United States Senator from Virginia; Democratic Party Vice Presidential Candidate, US Presidential Election (2016)

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Dr Robin Niblett

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Chatham House. I'm Robin Niblett, director of the institute and delighted to welcome you back for this next annual John C. Whitehead Lecture at Chatham House. I know some of you have attended these lectures in the past so I don't want to repeat too much but I think it is important just to note a quick word about John Whitehead before I introduce our lecturer today, Senator Tim Kaine, who we're delighted to have with us.

But just a quick word about John Whitehead because John was somebody who was involved with Chatham House on and off, really, from the late 1980s, he had served as the US deputy secretary of state under President Reagan, under George Schultz as secretary of state at that point. He was the deputy secretary of state from '85 to '89 after a very distinguished career as the former chairman and, in the end, senior partner at Goldman Sachs.

He, like many Americans, was somebody who found time to do both things, both to work in the private sector but also work in the public sector. He was chairman on a number of occasions of the Federal Reserve of New York and ended up also being chairman of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, through to 2006, that critical period when New York was rebuilding itself after the tragedy of 9/11.

And he was somebody who always believed strongly in the UK-US relationship and the transatlantic relationship. He built up a strong personal relationship with Lord Carrington when Lord Carrington, Peter Carrington was foreign secretary.

And from that, he developed a relationship with Chatham House and from that came this annual lecture. And he passed away, sadly, two years ago but came here and watched the lecture on a number of occasions when I first took over as director of Chatham House. He's somebody who we miss very much but great to see that his beliefs and his commitments live on through this lecture and through the great group of speakers we've had come speak here.

To which, Senator Tim Kaine; Senator, delighted that you would take the time on your trip here to bits of Europe to come and spend a little bit of time at Chatham House and to give this lecture. I think, certainly, Tim Kaine obviously known to everyone here very well, not least for the very intense I think you said 105 days? I heard you mention the specific...

Senator Tim Kaine

Who's counting?

Dr Robin Niblett

No one's counting but as serving as the vice presidential candidate next to Hillary Clinton as the Democratic nominee for president of the United States, through what was a very hard fought election, he continues now to serve as a senator, a position that he took up, Senator from Virginia, in 2012 so he's got a good... you've got a good run, I think, at least until 2018 where you can keep pushing your contributions in the US Senate on the, from

our point of view, relevance of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senate Armed Services Committee as well.

But Senator Kaine really started out his career in politics, as many do in the United States, from that more local level in Virginia, having served as Mayor of Richmond, Lieutenant Governor of Virginia from 2002 to 2006 and, as many of you know, as Governor of Virginia as well, where he hosted Her Majesty the Queen, our Patron, during her visit to celebrate the 400th anniversary of that Commonwealth.

So Senator, welcome to Chatham House. We look forward to your remarks, to your lecture and as you were saying, I think, you are going to look forward to the Q&A as well so we will make sure we've got time for that. We might run a little bit over to 12:35, just to let everyone know here.

And welcome to our members who are not in the room but who are joining us through our now glitzier cameras on the live stream. So thank you very much.

Senator Tim Kaine

Well, thank you and good afternoon. I'm so honoured to be here at Chatham House to have the opportunity to talk about a topic I'm passionate about, which is American policy looking forward but to also, in interacting with you in your questions, suggestions, criticism sharpen my own thinking my own thinking. I appreciate, Robin, the invite. Our dear friend in London, Mark Bergman, who is connected with Chatham House sort of made the match and I thank him as well and I thank all of you for being here.

As Robin said, I am a big fan of the US-UK relationship and every governor of Virginia would say the same thing. We named our state after the Virgin Queen, Queen Elizabeth I and I happened to be governor at the time when we were commemorating the 400th anniversary of the English settlement of the United States with the arrival of that small, hardy band in Jamestown, Virginia in 1607.

And so I had the opportunity when I was governor to first invite Her Majesty and then work on logistics with the then ambassador, David Manning, who is here. And then we had a magnificent visit that my wife and I will always consider to be one of the honours of our life.

Here we are. We are at a challenging, challenging moment. I think the election in November in the United States, especially paired with the Brexit vote here, is prompting the most significant reassessment of the US role in the world since the end of World War II. We did major reassessment when the Cold War was over and the Soviet Union collapsed but you do more of a reassessment when something happens to you than when something happens to somebody else. And so there are some things that are happening to us and that's leading to a huge reassessment of the role of the United States.

I'm not a disinterested observer. I am in the Senate and most of my work thus far has been on armed services and foreign relations, the role of America in the globe. And I come from a state, not every state is like this, where this is really important. Virginia is probably more connected to the military mission of our country than any other state, either by real

estate or by the percentage of our people who are directly engaged. And we also have one of nine Virginians born in another country so we're really interested in the foreign relations issues as well, from trade to diplomacy and beyond.

I'm also not disinterested because I was on the ticket. I was victim of the Russian cyber attack of the campaign. One day I woke up and my voicemail was filled with kind of vile and extreme and weird messages and I realized that one of the WikiLeaks dumps was my personal cell phone number that they had obtained from the Democratic National Committee.

And in another way I was personally involved because during the entire time I was campaigning, my oldest son, who is a marine infantry commander, was deployed on the eastern edge of NATO, training all of our allies there to resist Russian aggression that they're so worried about. And so it's a very personal thing and I sometimes feel like the campaign was surreal but I sometimes feel like what we're living in now is surreal. But the challenges are all too real.

We're trying to figure out what the policy of the United States will be under this new administration. In Munich and Brussels, last week, we heard messages of continuity from the vice president and from some members of cabinet but we also heard sharp criticisms from others, Senator McCain, for example, who is my chair on Armed Services, really taking on the administration and suggesting that it is continuing and even accelerating a US trend toward disengagement not only with Europe but with the whole notion of America's global leadership.

Chatham House has played an important role in trying to help us figure out a path forward in the early days of the administration. Three days before the inauguration, Chatham House put out a publication that I and other colleagues have really relied on trying to make predictions based on the campaign and other trends about what a Trump administration would look like in terms of US policy on key issues and also with respect to key regions. And I know you had a friend, Bob Kagan, from Brookings here earlier this week to talk on the cheerful topic of the twilight of the liberal order. We're all trying to make our best assessment of the situation.

This is a pivotal moment and I want to just say one thing. While the Trump administration is likely to be a pretty significant break in discontinuity in many ways than what has gone immediately before, in another way, I'm not so sure it's going to be a break.

So here's the way it will be a break. The Chatham House publication I referred to earlier sort of summarized this is an administration that is likely to put immediate economic concern at the forefront, probably rely less on human rights concerns, less even on global security concerns but I suspect that whatever the Trump administration does, it's going to continue a recent American trend of a reactive, executive driven foreign policy strategy, not really shared with Congress, not with congressional buy-in, that is likely to last for precisely as long as the administration lasts. In that sense, it's not a break with previous administrations, the Obama administration, the two Bush administrations and the Clinton administration.

So I want to talk about this moment when we're trying to figure it out in the context of another moment and that's why I've titled this talk 'the Truman Doctrine at 70'. The Truman Doctrine was hatched by one of my favourite presidents, Harry Truman using a lot of ideas from Prime Minister Churchill 70 years ago in March, next month. Seventy years ago, President Truman appeared before a very hostile Congress in a very war weary nation and asked for significant assistance to the governments of Greece and Turkey to try to pre-empt them from falling into the Soviet sphere of influence.

Agreement with Congress at that moment was at least as unlikely as any bipartisan agreement in Washington might be today. And yet Congress agreed with the proposal and it established a doctrine that lasted for more than four decades, through presidents of both parties and through congresses of both parties. It was an overarching security strategy, it was a cornerstone of our policy, it had many flaws, people have and you certainly can critique the Truman Doctrine but it was bipartisan and it lasted.

So what I want to do today is talk about lessons from the Truman Doctrine. There would be no way to redo it because the world is different but I want to talk about lessons from it. In a time where an Obama 'don't do stupid stuff' strategy followed a Bush 'global war on terrorism' strategy and is now being replaced by a Trump 'America first' strategy, to be replaced by the next president's strategy, is there a way to conceive of the role of the United States leadership in the world that could gain bipartisan traction and could last for more than one administration? And that's the question I'm grappling with.

I had a meeting in my office with one of our senior military leaders – who I'll keep nameless for this purpose – a year ago and he said to me, 'We have OPLANs but no strategy.' We have operational plans but no strategy. We have a plan for every contingency you can come up with but what we don't have is a strategy that drives it together.

Truman basically confronted a world where they were grappling with a lot of existential challenges. He invited the prime minister to come to Missouri to speak at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri in March of 1946. And Winston Churchill came, was very flattering to the United States but basically... I want to read a couple of relevant quotes during my speech. Here is the way he described the world, 'The people of any country have the right and should have the power by constitutional action, by free and unfettered elections, with secret ballot, to choose or change the character or form of government under which they dwell, that freedom of speech and thought should reign, that courts of justice independent of the executive, unbiased by any party, should administer the laws which have received the broad assent of large majorities or are consecrated by time and custom.'

The 'Sinews of Peace' speech, which we all know as the 'Iron Curtain' speech laid out what Prime Minister Churchill thought should be the role of the United States in the world. He flattered the US and he was very good at flattery when he knew what he wanted and he flattered the US as, 'You are the pinnacle of world power and you have an awe inspiring responsibility to the future.'

Those thoughts rattled around in President Truman's brain. He was confronted with the challenge of internal opposition, especially in Greece, potentially pulling Greece into the

Soviet orbit and had to go to Congress in March of 1947. Very difficult circumstances, he had just lost both houses. They had just both gone from Democratic to Republican and they handed his head to him in the midterms. He was incredibly unpopular and America was deeply war weary and here he was going into this unpopular body two months after they had taken over to ask them to do something very hard.

He asked them to do basically what Churchill had said we should do. We should have international institutions to protect world order but as the chief superpower in the world, the US should be willing to act unilaterally, if it needs to, to do two things: to prevent war and to prevent tyranny. Listen to Truman's words and see how much he borrowed from Churchill, 'At the present moment in world history, nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. One way is based upon the will of the majority and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion and freedom from political oppression.

'The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority that relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press, fixed elections and suppression of personal freedoms. I believe it must be the policy of the US to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside forces.' He asked Congress to support him in that in March of 1947.

Two months later, two and a half months later, at a graduation speech at Harvard, his secretary of state, George Marshall, appeared and laid out the plan, the Marshall Plan. Truman was smart enough to realize it would do better with Congress if it wasn't named after him. What president would allow anything to be named after a cabinet member? This is something that's an amazing and never to be repeated feat, I'm sure, in our American future.

And then a month after the Marshall Plan speech, George Kennan's famous article, under a pseudonym in Foreign Affairs, laid out the dimension of the Soviet containment strategy. And this became what we know as the Truman Doctrine. It had a high-minded statement of principle; the US should prevent war and prevent tyranny. It ended up sort of devolving into, 'Check an adversary. If they'll put up an X, we'll put up an O.'

But it attained assent. Without really being voted on as a doctrine, it became an organizing principle that not only described our military posture but things as disparate in appearance as the Peace Corps, the race to the moon, Fulbright scholarships, these were all items that were connected to an overarching security doctrine that we shared. It celebrated these liberal democratic values that Churchill and Truman talked about and it had a remarkable consistency from presidents Truman to Reagan, with bipartisan support in Congress.

And then the capital 'A' Adversary was no more and the US didn't face the Adversary that had led to the creation of the doctrine. And in the heady days following the collapse of the Soviet Union, a dear friend, Madeleine Albright coined the phrase that essentially continued a Truman Doctrine way of thinking, America was not the sole superpower, America is now the indispensable nation.

There are many criticisms of the Truman strategy. We probably wouldn't have taken over the colonial war that the French were waging in Southeast Asia had it not been for the Truman doctrine. We probably wouldn't have bungled in the Congo and Guatemala and Iran in the 1950s and 1960s and tried to destabilize governments without the Truman doctrine. President Eisenhower, at the end of his two terms saw that as connected to the swelling of the military-industrial complex.

So there's a lot of criticism of the doctrine. But we had a doctrine and it lasted and people kind of knew where we would be based upon this doctrine that was hatched by an executive and shared by a Congress.

After the Soviet Union, my argument is that we basically moved into good old American reactive pragmatism and we've had one administration after the next reacting to events, trying to be non-ideological in their reaction to them. And there's something to be said for this. And there were some achievements reached during the administrations that followed the Reagan administration by being carefully practical rather than ideological or driven by a doctrine or theory.

But there were problems too. Why do you intervene, even if late, in the Balkans and not in Rwanda? Why intervene in Libya militarily but not in Syria? The challenge with reactive pragmatism is often your own folks don't know what you'll do, your allies don't know what you'll do and when you look at situations in the rear view mirror, they can raise some haunting questions about why you acted in one circumstance and not in another.

Reactive pragmatism has its place. There is something very American about that. George Washington in his farewell address to Congress basically said, 'We don't want permanent alliances or permanent enemies,' so there's even a Washington tradition of trying to look at the facts on the ground and not be overly doctrinal in the way we approach them.

I'm very close to President Obama. I was the first state-wide official to support his campaign beginning in late 2006, when he was running for president. President Obama, who is a dear friend that I really support and has many foreign policy achievements, for example, the Iran deal I view as an achievement, the normalization and opening of relations with Cuba I view as an achievement, Paris climate accord I view as an achievement but he did not like doctrine. You know, he famously quipped, when pressed, 'What's the Obama doctrine?'

'Don't do stupid stuff.' Don't do stupid stuff. And that really tells you something about him. He's suspicious that doctrine would blind you to realities and lead you to jam the reality into your preconceived framework rather than looking at things.

But the problem with don't do stupid stuff is that it sometimes leads you to not do stuff that it's stupid not to do. And I think the reaction of the United States and much of the world in allowing the Syrian crisis to mushroom and grow and then spill over so violently, without taking definitive action, is the 'What if?' of the Obama administration, just as Rwanda might be the 'What if?' of the Clinton administration.

And now we have a Trump administration. And so now we're looking at a new America first strategy. But this is a president who preaches the virtues of unpredictability. He says

it's been a good negotiation tactic and it often is. And so I think we're going to see with a Trump administration, again, some breaks from what the Obama administration did but again, a reactive, event driven, unpredictable country.

I'm suspicious of doctrine too but I think it's better to have a strategy that you can communicate. Don't view it as a mechanistic straightjacket, view it as a strategy and use that strategy to organize your efforts.

Let's talk about what that strategy might look like. But before I do, an important question: who comes up with the strategy? A lesson from the Truman Doctrine I think is very important. I think it has to be articulated by a president. You can have think tanks and senators and newspaper editorial boards and universities and engaged citizens but the Truman Doctrine was articulated by a president. The powers of the president in Article II to do diplomacy and be commander-in-chief really give the president the ability to start this with some articulation. That's critically important.

It's also important because it's what other nations understand. Other nations don't understand a Congress that would be at odds with the president, they understand strong executives. Nations with parliamentary systems understand prime ministers who you assume have the support of the coalition at the time. So Congress' independent role is not well understood. When other nations look at us, they wonder, 'What does the president think?' And so I think the theory has to be articulated by a president.

Bipartisan congressional buy-in is critical because Congress has the power to declare war. Congress has the ability as the elected representatives of the people to sort of put the people's thumbprint on a strategy. And so no strategy would work, in my view, if it's not articulated by a president and if it's not shared in some way in a bipartisan fashion by Congress.

I'm not sure the administration is particularly concerned about what I think. But I do know that many members of the administration are. This is an administration that is not just unpredictable because of the president's declaration that that's good but it's unpredictable in terms of the team. There are some really sharp global thinkers who are part of the Trump team. There are some people who scare me to death. But there are some very sharp people and they're grappling with the same question that we are, you know, post this election and as we're reassessing things, could we come up with a strategy that could last? But it does have to be one that is hatched by a president and shared in a bipartisan way.

And just to give us a feeling of optimism that well, that could never happen today, Truman went to a Congress that had just beaten him badly, as I said. He was so unpopular in the 1946 midterms that no Democrats would allow him to campaign with them. And he lost both houses of Congress. And so the Republican Congress came in, in January and this was now March, it was two months later when he's going to them, in a nation that's incredibly war weary. After being engaged in this mess of war abroad, we've got to take care of the home front now. And Truman walked into this hostile body and said, 'I know you want to take care of the home front but we have a role to play in the world and I'm going to ask you to do something hard. Will you make an investment in Greece and Turkey? And if you make this investment, I'm going to probably be coming

back over the course of the years and asking you to make more.' And they did it. The prospects seem as unlikely today as they did then and yet it worked.

So what would a doctrine like a Truman Doctrine look like today? Again, I'm not the president but I hope to provoke thought. And there are many folks in the administration that are grappling with this same thing. Let's start with the starting point that Churchill and Truman started with, which was a description of the world as they saw it. The Churchill speech was very much a sort of a geographical description and a description of the different power centres and the Truman speech to Congress was the same thing. So what would that look like today?

We have to deal with some realities. There's less US dominance in 2017 than there was in a post-war environment where big economies had been reduced to rubble and the United States economy was really growing. It had become the largest GDP in the world in 1890 and by 1945 it was so powerful. So there's less of a quantitative or qualitative edge between the United States and other economies and that's not a bad thing. We would want other nations to rise and be successful but it is a different world we live in. We are deeply interconnected.

The post World War II architecture that the US and the UK worked on all, all of the institutions, NATO, the IMF, the World Health Organization, all of these organizations have interconnected us, largely for good but not completely for good. The Greek debt crisis never was really threatening to the United States but the more you are interconnected, the more anybody catching a cold is going to give you a cold. So interconnection is a fact of life. It's a little bit different than it was in 1947, mostly for the good, not completely for the good.

And the other factor that I think is extremely powerful and very different than what Truman was grappling with is the tremendous rise in non state power. So many doctrines that we have, doctrines of war, Geneva Convention, etc. really assume the sort of Westphalian notion of states within accepted boundaries acting vis-à-vis each other, hopefully together but sometimes clashing. But what we have in the world today is a tremendous increase in non states that don't necessarily follow the rules. Some are malign, ISIS, Al-Qaeda, the Sinaloa Cartel. Some are benign, NGOs. Some transnational corporations are benign but you can use tax avoidance strategies to shield yourself from legal or financial accountability in a world.

And so the world today is not the bipolar world of Truman's day, it's really a tripolar competition where we have democracies and we have authoritarian states and we have non-state actors.

Good news! There are democracies all over the world so the values that Churchill and Truman put down on the table have been embraced and you see democracies all over the world in a way that wasn't so much the case in 1947. I really love the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index to really tell you about the progress of democracy over time.

But democracies are facing major challenges. We've sort of assumed that the democracies will be fine. We've got to pay our attention to adversaries and others. But whether it's

increasing anti-Semitism or fiscal crises or understanding why Brexit happened and what will happen post, there is a set of challenges in democracies that are very, very debilitating and energy sapping and have caused nations other than the US too to turn a little more inward than maybe is the case in the past.

There are authoritarian states, the notable ones Russia, Iran, China, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, authoritarian states all over the world and they're different and differently motivated and there are authoritarian nations that have some democratization trends within, local government or other trends but the authoritarians approach things very, very differently.

One aspect of authoritarian states today that I find interesting and this is particularly common about Russia is back in 1947, authoritarians used to make a case that they were actually democracies. They used to feel, I think, a little defensive about being authoritarians and they would try to claim they were democracies. You have a nation like Russia, they're actually saying, 'What's so good about democracy?' Democracy may be a governing model that doesn't work for the challenges of today, especially battling terrorism. They want to degrade the virtues, the self-proclaimed virtues of the democratic model.

And finally, you have non states that are in all the forms that I mentioned earlier. And so I think a Truman Doctrine for 2017 and forward would look at the arrangement of power in the world now and in the likely future and would say, 'Look, we're going to have democracies, authoritarians and non states and we need sort of a strategy for each.'

With respect to democracies, the strategy should be – and this should be our primary focus – to shore up democracies, to help them overcome weaknesses and challenges and get better. That is a huge challenge in the world, probably one that Truman didn't necessarily think he needed to worry too much about. He was more about the other and the adversary and beating the adversary than he was on a building up and a promotion of democratic traditions.

With respect to authoritarian states, the goal should be to challenge them and sometimes, in challenging them, you're competing and sometimes you're cooperating and sometimes you're confronting but you ultimately are trying to challenge democracies in the hopes that if you do that skilfully, they may move more into the democratization camp. The best way to challenge authoritarians is to be good democracies, rather than to go after them directly because the power of the democratic example is ultimately the thing that is most challenging to authoritarians and most likely to create in the citizenry a desire for something that more approximates liberal democratic values.

And then finally, with respect to non-states, the strategy has to be to defeat them, at least in so far as they're using violence or military power to achieve their ends. Obviously, there are so many good non-states, NGOs, etc. but any non-state that wants to use violence, whether it's the Sinaloa Cartel or ISIL, both democracies and authoritarians have a shared interest in eliminating the ability of non-states to do that.

What would the role of the United States be in this? Again, the starting point for the Truman Doctrine is to describe the world and then the second step was, 'What's the role of the United States?'

Here's the first thing I'd say. I think we've got to scrap the indispensable notion idea. I really believe that. The world's sole superpower of the 1940s or the indispensable nation of the 1990s, it was true in the 1940s, probably not completely true in the 1990s. But the trend lines make that a proposition that is just not so accurate today. And it has the deficit of triggering something that is often attributed to de Gaulle, 'The graveyards are filled with indispensable men.'

Proclaiming yourself to be indispensable, pride goeth before the fall and it's something that we need to really grapple with and I think we need to set that aside. There are examples of the US trying to play this role in the IMF as nations are growing and want to assume more responsibility and that's a good thing and they should. But they needed Congress to be on board and Congress won't get on board with that because, 'Letting somebody else advance is going to rankle us or threaten our position.' That's the wrong kind of attitude but it comes out of hubris.

Even the notion of American exceptionalism, which is something we all pay homage to for an elected office is something that can be really dangerous. Just pride in exceptional accomplishments, a very good thing but often, exceptionalism has a second element to it which is a thought that we should be excepted from rules that others have to follow.

So when the Soviet Union got very involved in Cuba, we viewed that as a threat and responded. Did we really think Russia would not see eastward NATO expansion in the 1990s as potentially troubling? When President Obama announces a pivot to Asia, are we really surprised if China starts to build up more military capacity in the South China Sea? What would our response be if China announced their new policy was a pivot to the Americas? And so we can't expect to be excepted from rules that others have to follow.

My view is this, instead of thinking of ourselves as indispensable or evening proclaiming over and over again American exceptionalism, let's within this tripolar competition try to be exemplary. Let's try to be the exemplary democracy rather than the indispensable nation. And I kind of think this way, if you proclaim indispensability, you'll build resentment but if you strive to be exemplary, you're more likely to be indispensable. We ought to focus on within the democracies trying to be exemplary.

I think we're exemplary because of our democratic values beginning with the nation is founded on a proposition. Jefferson said, 'We hold these truths,' plural, 'to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.' Then there were other truths. But when Lincoln restated it at Gettysburg, he basically said, 'Our fathers conceived of a nation dedicated to *the* proposition that all men are created equal.'

We are a nation that is dedicated to one proposition, the equality of every person. That's a powerful, powerful and exemplary foundational value. We are exemplary in our press climate, robust and painful as it can be, under attack as it might be by this president. We're exemplary there. We're exemplary in religious freedom and the wonderful ability in the United States of people to live, work, go to school in neighbourhoods with each other

of different faiths and make it work. We're exemplary in the rule of law. None of these things are to be taken for granted. All are taking some knocks and some dings. I'm confident our system is going to vindicate itself over the challenges of the next few years.

We're exemplary in our economic climate and so many of you are deeply connected with the US economy but we will not always be the largest GDP in the world. We have been since 1890 but as soon as Chinese workers, one fifth as productive as an American worker, we'll be second because of sheer population. But our culture of innovation, rule of law, protection of intellectual property, the ability to fail, to start something and fail and then do something again and succeed, we have a unique innovative economic culture that makes us exemplary.

We're exemplary because of our openness to self-criticism. You know, the authoritarians, if they're known for one thing it's hostility to self-criticism and we're very able to do that. And even during times of turmoil like right now, we have mechanisms that are built into our system. I view where we are right now, we are taking this constitutional democracy car in for its 230 year check up and we're checking the systems, the systems that were put in place for exactly this moment, independent Congress in Article I, independent courts in Article III, free press in Amendment I, the right of the people to peacefully assemble and petition their government for redress of grievances, Amendment I.

Why did James Madison put that in First Amendment when he was drafting the constitution? Most of these checks were put in because they were used to overreaching executives. That's what they were worried about, they were coming out of a world of kings and monarchs and emperors and sultans where executive power was strong and so they put checks in place, not only but primarily to be a check against an overreaching executive. And I think the deep meaning of the current protests that you're seeing in the United States or the ability of a single federal judge in Washington to say to the president of the United States, 'I'm stopping your executive order. You cannot do this,' this is an evidence of a system that is working in a challenging time, not an evidence of dysfunction.

To be the exemplary democracy, let me say this and then conclude, I think we ought to do five things. One, let's put democracy first and let's promote democracy as we work with the UK, as we work with our allies, let's acknowledge that the virtues of democracies are not so self-obvious anymore. They're being challenged from internal rot and external attack and we need to spend some time not just on military alliances like NATO or economic alliances, OECD and others, trade deals, we need to spend some time on democracy promotion. I think we need a global network of democracies like an amped up OECD that would truly be global or a community of democracies which Madeleine Albright helped start in the early 2000s. We need that to promote the enduring virtues of this model.

Listen to what George Kennan said in his foreign affairs piece in July of 1947 and when you hear Soviet Union, just substitute Russia or authoritarian nations. 'The palsied decrepitude of the capitalist world is the keystone of communist philosophy. Exhibitions of indecision, disunity and internal disintegration within this country have an exhilarating effect on the whole communist movement. Can the United States create among the peoples of the world generally the impression of a country who knows what it wants, which is coping successfully with the problems of its own internal life and with the

responsibilities of a world power and which has a spiritual vitality capable of holding its own among the major ideological currents of the time?’

He was pointing out the challenges that democracy was under at the time but also how a successful democracy was the best thing to contain the authoritarian nature of the Soviet Union. And the same thing would hold true about democracies today.

So number one, I think we should be more engaged. And again, NATO is not the right way to do it, although NATO needs to persist because NATO is primary military. We’ve got to be about salesmanship of the democratic model in this tripolar competition, working together with the UK and other allies.

Second, we’ve got to make our military the partner of choice, not necessarily the protector. Both President Obama and President Trump don’t believe that the US should, or now from a resource standpoint can be, a global policeman but we can be the security partner of choice. My son’s MOS in the military is training foreign militaries and he’s been all over Africa and he was now just all over Eastern Europe. And in my work on the two committees, I travel all over the world. And I watch the US working with the Lebanese military. I hear the Indian military saying, ‘We do more training exercises with the United States than with any other nation.’

Being the security partner of choice, which is a tiny part of our defence budget, what we do to go and train and then who we bring to our country to train, that is a really important role for an exemplary democracy to play because as we’re training we’re also training in values, being against torture, respecting the rule of law, respecting civilian control. That’s part of the training we do.

Third, rule builder, not empire builder. Even though there’s a tendency in this administration to want to step back from the table in being the architect of global norms and rules and institutions, it’s a mistake because there will be rules, there will be trade, there will be relations and the question is do these relations or trade, do they happen pursuant to rules or do they happen in a no rules environment? Creating rules that elevate standards, whether it’s about intellectual property or trade or anything else, human rights protection, any rule that elevates standards is a good thing for us and a good thing for others and we should stay at those tables.

Fourth, let’s hold on to a great position we have – and we’re squandering it in some ways – let’s hold on to our great position we have as humanitarian leader. When there’s an Ebola crisis in Africa, when there’s a tsunami in Asia, people want us and they want us fast and we actually respond well because our citizens support that. We need to view that as not kind of a soft thing we do on the side but as a fundamental part of who we are in playing the role we need to play in this world and we need to hold onto that. That’s one of the problems with these anti-refugee orders is they squander that reputation that we’ve gained and that we should not give up.

And finally, a fifth thing to be an exemplary democracy, for the US but for the UK and others, we’ve got to have a north-south correction. Foreign policy in the United States moves on an east-west axis. It’s been about Europe, it’s been about the Soviet Union or

Russia, it's been about China, it's been about the Middle East, it's been about Japan. Our engagement north-south is episodic.

In the Americas – I spent a year as a missionary in Honduras many years ago – we get engaged in the Americas if Europe shows too much interest in the Americas. That was what the Monroe Doctrine was about. It was a doctrine about the Americas but it wasn't really about the Americas, it was about Europe. We get engaged in the Americas when the Soviet Union is trying to do something in Cuba or elsewhere, in Guatemala or something. We get engaged in the Americas when unaccompanied minors start to show up in the tens of thousands but once we get over that crisis, our attention drops back down.

And you can say the same thing, to some degree, about other projects that we're engaged in now, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization that is very interested in things north of the Tropic of Cancer but less interested in things beyond.

The virtue of democracies is that they're now all over the globe but we will not be able to successfully promote the democratic models if we don't fully include and celebrate democratic achievements in nations like Colombia or India or Malaysia or South Africa. So as we think about democracy promotion, if it's just a northern hemisphere project it's going to fail.

I'll just conclude and say a couple of last things. The times we're in now make discussion of the United States as the exemplary democracy a little bit challenging because we don't know. I mean, I'm offering a model but I don't know whether anybody's going to take us up on that. Some of the events of the last months have been even a little bit embarrassing, I think. I've been embarrassed by them. But it is a good time to take stock and to do a couple of things, to abandon rhetoric that has now become empty because it was rhetoric of another age that we've kept repeating but doesn't really apply to our situation. It's a good time for us not to be burdened by what we can't do or what we won't do but instead be proud about the important things that we can and we should do.

So this is a good moment for us and it's a good moment for the UK to take stock and power forward. The seeds of the American leadership, the remarkable leadership that we showed in the world in the 20th century really were laid at the end of the Civil War. We were beset by a rift that had we not solved it we couldn't have accomplished what we accomplished. We would have been inwardly looking, divided over our slavery and other deep questions. We settled a rift and then that enabled us to have a role that was critically important.

The world needs the United States as much in the 21st century as in the 20th, even though our role is going to be very different. That notion of the world needing us, there are so many bits of evidence I'll give you, I'll just give you my favourite one and close. There is a beautiful picture that was taken in 2014 of the USS John S. McCain docked in Da Nang Harbour, Vietnam, celebrating the 15th anniversary of reestablishment of normalized relations between the US and Vietnam. Bitter, bitter war, 60,000 Americans killed, tens of thousands more injured, probably between a million and a half and three million Vietnamese killed. But in 2014, here's the USS John S. McCain, named after the grandfather of my committee chair, who was a POW in Vietnam, there it is in Da Nang Harbour with all of the Vietnamese military brass there, welcoming it, saluting it, wanting

a relationship with the United States. I mean, it speaks amazingly to Vietnamese magnanimity, speaks to American magnanimity, speaks to challenges with adversaries but it does speak to a deep desire that the United States, even on behalf of a bitter recent enemy, a deep desire that we engage.

We've got huge influence, whether we acknowledge it or not and whether we're intentional about defining it or not. And so the question for right now is will we be about the business of defining a role for ourselves, a role that acknowledges our amazing and unique strengths without polluting those strengths with unnecessary self-congratulation?

Seventy years ago, good to remember, at a moment that posed existential anxiety in the world, at a time when bipartisan compromise in our country seemed completely unlikely, our elected officials forged a bipartisan consensus that lasted more than four decades. Should we expect any less of the leaders of today?

Thank you very much.

Dr Robin Niblett

Thank you, Senator. I think your ringing cry there for a number of these principles for a new doctrine, a new outlook for the United States clearly found some resonance in this room. Thank you for taking the time to do it. I know you're a little worried about the amount of time we've got left to get feedback. As I said earlier, we will run to 1:35, just drift over a few minutes past and I will try to get as many comments and questions in as possible to be sure.

Senator Tim Kaine

And I won't filibuster on the answers.

Dr Robin Niblett

You'll have to be super fast on them if you want to get some feedback. But I think a very interesting set of comments. I'm not going to pull them all back through but you did say at the end, 'This is not a time for America to return to reactive pragmatism, not to have another presidency that will be reactive pragmatism.' Now, perhaps the implication, therefore, is that Trump is – I'm not going to pose this as a question because I want to let other people come in but I hope we'll get to it at some point – maybe President Trump does have a doctrine. It's called 'America First' and the one thing that wasn't in your remarks was his aspect of the context, which is that America's losing.

So all of that flows from America's losing and I'll let you come back there. But let me get two or three points in round the room.

Question 1

Thank you so much for your talk. Just going back to Truman, I know when he tried to pass that bill for aid to Greece and Turkey, he was advised by Senator Vandenberg to scare the hell out of the American people so using 'an other' to sort of form unity amongst

the domestic public opinion. So my question is in a post Iraq, post 2016 America, how do you bring the domestic public behind a doctrine?

Question 2

Hi, I'm Andrea Howard. I'm an ensign in the US Navy and I'm here on the Marshall Scholarship, so bearing the name of another great influencer of US foreign policy. Two really quick historical points, they'll be really quick because I'm in the military so I'll stick to my word there and then just a question.

So China with Sun Tzu saying the nature of warfare is deceptive, then Russian conducting information campaigns with men like Nicholas I, Alexander II, cutting down trees in Chechnya during the wars there. Second point, US in terms of propagating foreign policy has needed domestic support to actually carry out its initiatives.

So, in today's world, the point that I think that I would like addressed, that I thought was missing is how do you get the American public to care about the fact that China is breaking the Law of the Sea in the South China Sea or that Russia has violated the territorial integrity of Ukraine or what really terrifies me is that Russia was proven to have actually influenced the US elections?

Question 3

First of all, I want to thank you for a profoundly, dare I even use the word inspiring, contribution but it resonated with me because I'm doing a documentary on Syria at the moment and this point you made, though, about democracy under threat from within, in the sense that whether we like it or not, Mr Trump appears to almost lionize Mr Putin as an authoritarian, he empathizes with an authoritarian. And this linkage with Putin and Assad and we see Marine Le Pen in France linking them together, endorsing this authoritarian coalition, almost, as if it's inspiring.

I'm really wondering how do we get people mobilized to recognize we must not just in a form of unity together, recognize we must promote democracy, even though we have different points of view, that it's not to be taken for granted because the root of the Syria problem, I put it to you this way, democratic activists, thousands of them, at huge risk to their lives, filled the streets of Syria in 2011 and they were butchered. And the Security Council, as you know, to the Russian veto, but the US and the EU did nothing. I'm just wondering, that's a profound challenge. We must promote democracy. But how do we support democracy?

Senator Tim Kaine

Let me link the first two questions and they really are. Actually, they're all connected because it's about how do we get the populace to support what I'm suggesting. Does it have to be from scaring the hell out of folks? I would hope that's not the case and you certainly shouldn't over-scare or over-sell the dangers.

But there are enough dangers in the world that people are scared of and so they're looking for answers that make them feel a little bit better. Cyber, we were under a cyber attack

and we didn't have a deterrence doctrine. If you don't communicate a doctrine, there's no such thing as deterrence. You've got to communicate it, we didn't do that.

So I think the folks in our country and other countries do have worries, terrorism and other worries so I don't think we have to be about dramatically over-scaring. It's not like 1947 where there was a capital 'A', one Adversary. That's not the case. But there's enough out there that's worrying that putting a doctrine down to describe, 'Here's what we're going to do and how we're going to do it,' I think you can get support. And so that's a little bit of a response to both of these points.

On Syria, look, it's a dark set of moments for the US and for other nations too. Russia used their veto in the Security Council until February of 2014 when nations were smart enough to put a humanitarian resolution to the Security Council during the Sochi Winter Olympics. They felt like they couldn't be an apologist for Assad's butchery when everybody was watching the Winter Olympics in Russia so they didn't veto that amendment, which called for cross-border delivery of humanitarian aid into Syria, even without Assad's permission.

But then we didn't do anything to enforce it. So much could have been accomplished. With cross-border delivery of humanitarian aid they would have had to have military protection. I fought with McCain about this. He was calling for this months before I started to but he was always talking about a no-fly zone and I eventually went to him and I said, 'No-fly zone is a military term. This is a humanitarian crisis. We want to have a humanitarian zone and we want to deliver humanitarian aid and, of course, we'll protect it.'

But if you lead with the military side rather than with the humanitarian side, you have a completely different reaction from the American public. The American public and President Obama knew this. We've been in Iraq and Afghanistan since '01, what are we going to do, a bunch of military stuff in Syria? That's why he chose not to intervene at that time.

But if he'd gone to the American public and said, 'There is a humanitarian crisis second to none in the world and the US is the greatest humanitarian nation in the world and we're going to play a role with a group of other nations,' the American public would have supported it. And they even would have supported using military assets to protect it.

So you've got to sell it in accord with the value that Americans embrace. A humanitarian role is one that Americans embrace.

Question 4

Charlie Oliver, I'm a member and Europe lead for a youth leadership forum called One Young World. My question is short. Just talking about the disapproval ratings of the Congress, it's interesting to watch the town halls on social media. I'm just wondering if you could change one thing, what would it be?

Question 5

Hello, Jessica Toale, Centre for Development Results. Thank you for using the word exemplary because one of my preoccupations is how do you communicate and deliver on policy coherence for development because you'll know that a lot of the criticism that comes on the things that we think we're very good at are when development events, diplomacy, trade, economic parities and actions don't match up and sometimes ultimately work against each other.

My question, though, is what do you think the role of the UN is this new world order in developing this doctrine and actually, how do you think European partners have been supportive or not in promoting democracy?

Question 6

James Thacker, I've been the counsel for our democratic party since, in fact, Jimmy Carter so I know how often you've come over here. I've also worked in human rights 18 years back in the Soviet Union and I'm returning after 50 years to my country in a state of urgency.

You made a foreign policy speech that really elevated us and I was proud to hear it. You spoke of foreign policy but your committee is at the centre of constitutional questions right now and I wanted to ask you what the checks and balances you referred to yourself look like right now in a context of a Congress that is entirely Republican and without the ninth Justice in place and also with the leader column in *The New York Times* calling for a special prosecutor?

Senator Tim Kaine

Okay, so what would I change? And the question was put in the context of Congress. And I actually think Congress, of the three branches, is the one that needs most change. I meet people every day who like or don't like President Obama, who like or don't like President Trump; they don't say the Article II branch is broken. I might meet people every day who like or don't like the Roberts Court; they don't say the Article III branch is broken. But I meet Democrats and Republicans every day who think the Article I branch is broken.

And I would say the two things that we most need to reform and the prospects are not good in the near term on this but the things we most need to reform are redistricting gerrymandering and second, campaign finance. We have a pathology that is structural right now, that absence some change in those we're not going to be able to individually change it. So that's what I would try to change.

Exemplary, the great thing about being exemplary is, you know, the UK should try to be the world's exemplary democracy and Canada should try to be. If we end up in a virtuous competition about who can be the most exemplary democracy, it would be a very salutary thing. That is better and it doesn't provoke the resentments of kind of going in a different direction.

With respect to the UN – we need it; it drives us crazy. You know, FDR was interesting. When he was elected as president for the first time, the League of Nations was collapsing and the US didn't participate and other things but he knew, 'It's going to collapse and it probably should but we're going to have to recreate it.' So he was drawing up the plans for the UN before World War II, World War II slowed it down but he knew we needed it.

And we still need it. It has to be a league of all nations. It's got to be for the authoritarians, the transitional, the democracies; it's got to be for everybody. And that means it will always be frustrating because it's not going to be the democracy promotion institution that we need because everybody's welcome. But we need to have it and we need to have strong support of European nations who see it as having value as well. It's just a channel for dialogue and if you close down channels for dialogue, you just make everything harder. Having open channels doesn't make anything easy but closing channels down makes everything harder.

And then the third point was what are we doing on the checks and balances side in Congress? This is really interesting because there are two Republican houses. Let me just use Russia and the Russian investigation as an example. I was deeply worried that the president and Congress would sweep the Russian investigation under the rug, 'We're not doing it.' And they would say, 'That's so 2016, you're a sore loser, you lost the election. Get over it. We're now onto something else.' I was very, very worried about that.

The resignation of General Flynn fundamentally changes that because what that does is it brings it out of the campaign and actually into the White House. This is now in the White House that the national security advisor was having back channel discussions with Russians in the lame duck session and after inauguration and then lying about it to the vice president and maybe the FBI.

And then remember what happened? When President Trump was informed, 'Your national security advisor is lying to the vice president,' he decided to fire somebody. He didn't fire General Flynn; he fired the person who briefed him, Sally Yates. The person who told him about Flynn's like got fired. And it was only after this got out in the news a few weeks later that it got too hot for Flynn.

But once that happened, it changed the dynamic in Congress. There are still people who want to sweep it under the rug, they can't. This is now in the White House. It's not just in the campaign. And that really guarantees that it will probably be slow and halting and there will probably be efforts by some on the Republican side to stop it but it's not going to be stopped. We now have a momentum together with a very engaged press that will keep this thing going. It's going to take some time but we will get to the last question. The last question is what was the level of collusion, if any, between the Trump campaign and the Russians in the effort to cyber attack the American presidential election? We'll get to the answer to that question.

Question 7

Can you suggest the best opportunities for bipartisan collaboration and also comment on whether you think that will be welcomed by the American public or whether they are too divided to get together on celebrating something like that?

Question 8

Adam Lusher from *The Independent*. You talked about the US Constitution having its 230 year check up. I was just wondering to what extent you feel how rigorous that test you think is going to be. In other words, do you still hold to what you said during the campaign that President Trump was actually the kind of fool or maniac who could lead America and the world to nuclear catastrophe? And following on from what you were just saying about the questions going all the way to the White House, when we're talking about developing a doctrine, to what extent, though, do you think that President Trump will still be President Trump at the end of his campaign? Will he last the full four years?

Question 9

Glada Lahn from the Energy, Environment and Resources Department here at Chatham House; thank you for your wonderful proposal, Senator Kaine. I just wondered what you thought were the realistic prospects for a cohesive US diplomatic effort in the world when the State Department has been sidelined and there is such a high level of disillusionment in the diplomacy, aid and intelligence services?

Question 10

I'm Monica Allen, I'm a director of strategy at Breakthrough Media and I promise to be very quick. My question really is about what you said about club of democracies and how that's your first recommendation. I'm afraid I don't quite understand what you mean because to have a club of democracies, you have to have standards to qualify. Well, we have the Commonwealth, unique standards through those and then the European Union, which has been soundly rejected in this country. So in my mind it seems the whole point of Brexit and of Trump's election is that people want direct democracy. They think democracies don't work for them and what this media mogul is very good at is direct democracy and messaging on Twitter. And so I just wonder is Twitter and Facebook, are those things non-state actors to you? What is their role?

Senator Tim Kaine

That's a series of questions. I'm going to go with bipartisanship. This is an easy one. The American public would love to see us work together on some things and there are some things where we're going to work together. There are some things that Donald Trump campaigned on that Democrats like more than Republicans, infrastructure and investments. President Trump has already played a salutary role in the debate about the future of the Affordable Care Act. When we came in on January 3rd with the new Congress, the plan was repeal it and maybe we won't do anything to replace it. And then it went to, 'Well, okay, we probably need to have a replacement so why don't we do this? We will repeal it two years down the road and then we'll figure out the replacement strategy.' It's jump off a cliff and figure out how to land later.

As soon as the Republicans rolled that out in Congress, Donald Trump tweeted at them and said, 'Well, that's not fair. The people ought to know what the replacement is before the repeal vote.' And he backed them away from something that would have been

catastrophic, that would have created economic catastrophe not only a healthcare catastrophe.

So there are going to be some areas, it might be infrastructure, it might be tax reform. He even said over the weekend in this fiery campaign speech he gave, he acknowledged we're going to have to have Democratic votes in the Senate to come to the next chapter in Obamacare. And he still wants to say repeal and I want to say reform but I don't care what he calls it, you know, he can call it a repeal if he wants and I'm going to call it an improvement and then we're going to call it Americare and it'll have a name to it that everybody can think it was their idea.

But the American public is very divided in some ways but they will celebrate working together and the good thing for me is I'm on four committees, three of which are incredibly bipartisan. Armed Services, under John McCain, I give him credit. Foreign Relations under Bob Corker, I give him credit. HELP under Lamar Alexander, I give a lot of credit. Budget, on the other hand, is really partisan but at least three of my committees are very non-partisan. The American public will support it.

I am nervous about President Trump and could there be a quick trigger finger in a way where we would overreact to something and there could be something very dangerous, absolutely. That's why I have been so quick to support some of the Trump cabinet nominations that I think will be a check against that, even though I have some people saying, 'You're a Democrat, you should vote against anything Donald Trump wants.'

No, General Mattis is the right kind of person to be secretary of defence. And General Kelly is the right kind of person to be head of the DHS. And I can tell you I have gotten uninterrupted nights' sleep since Flynn has been gone and now we're going to have General McMaster. Trump's not going to change his personality but he does have people around him that are smart folks. I voted against Rex Tillerson for secretary of state for a variety of reasons but I think he's going to join the club of the mature rather than the club of the whacky inside the administration. And I think you've got to build up the club of the mature.

And look, the president is going to serve a full term unless, in an investigation, there was some direct evidence of collusion with an adversary. General Dunford, the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, says Russia is the chief adversary of the United States right now. That's his testimony, not mine. If there is direct evidence of collusion between Candidate Trump and Russia to cyber attack an American election that is going to be an existential question that both parties will have to confront in Congress.

But just because he does things that are unpopular, he said he was going to do those things. I have someone on the Democratic side, 'We should impeach him because of this or that.' I said, 'Were you not listening to what he said on the campaign trail? Because the things that you don't like are things he said he was going to do.' That's not impeachable. People voted for him in some ways in spite of that but some people voted for him because of those things.

Again, the investigation on the Russia thing is the one serious question that's out there right now and we're going to get to the end of it.

You asked a good question. So, I laid out something that would be a positive forward looking view of American leadership. You kind of said, 'Well look, is that possible in our political climate or is it possible when the ranks of folks in the State Department are somewhat decimated?'

However, I spend a lot of time with State Department folks. We just have some great ones and patriotic and wonderful Americans are going to continue to want to go into that most difficult of jobs. And maybe the current situation makes it a little bit harder for a while but I do think our system is going to vindicate our country over a particular occupant and you're going to have people, just like the military is not having a hard time recruiting people, there are still really patriotic people who want to serve, we're going to see the same thing in the State Department.

And then the question here, yes, you've got to have standards and while some of the election would suggest that the voters, 'We don't want to be in clubs, we just want to be ourselves,' look, we're proud people, we want to play a leadership role. We feel good about ourselves when we're out there doing humanitarian work. You just have to define the role the right way. And to define the role as, 'We want to promote this system of government which owes so much to English common law, English traditions, to our constitution and our constitutional vows, we're really proud of it. We want to go out and celebrate it. We want to align with other nations that celebrate the same values.'

Appealing to American pride is still something you can do. America first, you know, we could have a debate about whether that's a doctrine or whether it's a platitude but people do want to see, in my state, left right and centre, people who never voted for me, they do want to see America be respected in the world and they want to have an articulation of what is the role that we play that will allow us to have good influence. So I think we can do that.

Robin Niblett

Senator, you've stretched over time. You see, no one's moved. And I apologize to those people I couldn't get to, there were so many questions and I've got let you go very quickly. That's a little quick, that one, don't worry. And so what I would say is it is really exciting and positive to see that the very checks and balances that you described in your opening remarks, how these doctrines need to be developed in collaboration between leader and legislative, they're living proof through you. Your remarks today, the time you're taking to think about America's place in the world historically and within a structural context have never been more needed. Thank you for taking the time. John Whitehead, I'm sure, would have been proud of this lecture. Thank you for coming and joining us.