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Global Dialogue

Russia's Threat to Ukraine: The West Responds A Conversation with Ambassador John Kornblum with Professor Thomas Schwartz

January 17, 2022

[Patrick Ryan] [00:00:25] Hello and welcome to this special edition of the Global Dialogue the Distinguished Speaker Program of the Tennessee World Affairs Council. Thank you for joining us today. I'm Council President Patrick Ryan.

Today, we celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his leadership of the civil rights movement in America. We are reminded that he was an international figure and was recognized with the award of the 1964 Nobel Prize. On December 10, 1964, he accepted the award at the University of Oslo, where we remarked on the civil rights movement's commitment to nonviolence. He said,

"Sooner or later, all the people of the world will have to discover a way to live together in peace and thereby transform this pending cosmic elegy into a creative side and brotherhood. If this is to be achieved, man must evolve for all human conflict. A method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love."

We commend the full speech to your attention, along with the many others of his stirring speeches and writings. You can find it posted on TNWAC.org. Let me thank our partner in today's program, the American Council on Germany. The ACG is a nonpartisan organization that works to strengthen German-American relations. ACG is a frequent partner in many of the councils of the World Affairs Network. We are grateful for ACG's work with us to foster global

affairs awareness. Let me also thank the generosity of our guests today many who connected via ACG who made donations to the World Affairs Council when they registered for this event. Your financial support will make programs like this possible, as well as our education outreach work with high school and college students. Thank you.

For others who would like to make a gift to give to the Council to support our work or to become a member of the Tennessee World Affairs Council, please visit TNWAC.org to support our important program.

We are pleased to present this conversation about the Russian threat to Ukraine and the response from the West. It is a rapidly unfolding series of events, and there's no better time than today to talk about the crisis that could bring war to Europe. And there's no better authority to give us insights and perspectives on the situation than Ambassador John Kornblum. He joins us from Berlin.

We are pleased to have Dr. Thomas Schwartz, Distinguished Professor of History at Vanderbilt University with us in Nashville, who will guide the conversation. I'll hand over to Ambassador Kornblum who will set the scene for us, and then he and Professor Schwartz will engage in conversation before taking your questions. Please start now to enter your questions for Ambassador Kornblum in the Zoom Q&A panel.

Ambassador John C. Kornblum has a long record of service in the United States and Europe, both as a diplomat and as a businessman. He is recognized as an eminent expert on U.S. European political and economic relations, in particular in Central and Eastern Europe. He served as the U.S. Ambassador to Germany from 1997 to 2001. Before that, he occupied a number of high-level posts, including U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Special Envoy for the Dayton peace process. U.S. Ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Deputy U.S. Ambassador to NATO, and U.S. Minister and Deputy Commandant of Forces in divided Berlin.

Dr. Thomas Schwartz is a distinguished professor of history at Vanderbilt University. He is a historian of the foreign relations of the United States with related interest in American politics, the history of international relations, modern European history and biography. His most recent book is "Henry Kissinger in American Power: A Political Biography." Earlier in his career, Schwartz was the author of "America's Germany. John C. McCoy in the Federal Republic of Germany." Ambassador Kornblum thanks for joining us today from Berlin and the floor is yours for your opening comments.

Amb Kornblum [00:04:32] Thank you very much, Patrick. I'm pleased to be speaking to you from Berlin, but as you know, I also am a resident of Nashville. And so I'm very pleased to be talking with the Tennessee World Affairs Council today.

It's actually quite fitting that we're having this discussion today on Martin Luther King's Day celebration because the world that we're trying to protect in the debates and the, if you will,

confrontations with Russia right now is a world which many people put together, including myself 30 years ago, which for the first time was based on a Western world that is from the United States all the way to the Russian border. And in fact, it's beginning to even pass the Russian border, which was based on the principles which Dr. King held so closely. It was a world based on democracy and openness, of freedom, of choice, of noninterference in internal affairs, of freedom, of alliance.

Now, this may seem all so obvious to most of us, but the fact was until 1991-92, when all of these documents were put together, Europe had never in its entire thousands of year history known this kind of system. There had been democracies, especially after World War II, many democracies in Western Europe, but the continent had been divided. It had been ruled by a communist dictatorship, before that by a Nazi dictatorship, and it had all sorts of societies, which in fact were simply emerging into a democratic direction.

So, it was for all of us and for me personally, since I had worked so much on it, it was a great, great period. The early 1990s, when we really believed that we were building a democratic future, not just for Europe, but for the entire democratic world. We were talking a bit before we came on here, and almost all of us who are taking part in this discussion probably have some sort of ancestors in these parts of Europe, which saw so much warfare during the 19th and 20th centuries. And so it's very important for us right now to understand why that democracy seems to be fading in parts of Europe, why there is confrontation, maybe even the fact that threat of war and what our interests are, why we should care about this and what we can do about it.

What we did in 1990 through 1996-97 after the end of the Cold War, was set up a structure of relationships of negotiations, but also of principles, also of commitments to democracy, to peace and freedom, which everybody, including the new Russian Federation, signed, not just begrudgingly but actually very openly and very positively.

I was working on the relationship with Russia in 1996 and 97, spending a great deal of time in Moscow at that time. And I can remember when the people we were talking to then be at the Prime Minister of Russia or be it the Foreign Minister, or the diplomats that we were dealing with, they were all thanking us for liberating them from communism. They felt very strongly that Russia now had to take this opportunity and become part of the modern Western world, not because they had lost to us or that we were better than them, because they knew that it was this modern Western democratic world which had guaranteed both its inhabitants, but also the countries around it, more freedom and more prosperity than any at any time in history.

So, that was a very hopeful period. As we know, there have been many ups and downs since then, and we now are in a down period. Vladimir Putin, for whatever motivations he may have, feels that he needs to push Russia in a traditional way, in a traditional big power imperial way, to reestablish Russia's control over its neighborhood, not to be interfered with by Western countries, especially the United States.

Not much of this may have to do with Mr Putin's desire not to have democracy in his country, because if there were a democracy, he most probably would not be president anymore. But some of it also deals with who Russia is and how they see themselves. And in fact, probably demonstrates that they did not feel totally liberated when the Soviet Union came to an end.

And why shouldn't they? Why should they, after all? And that as the years have gone by, and especially that there has been economic ups and downs in their own country that a feeling of a need for pride, a need for a sense of Russian history and everything has come back. And Putin is able to use this for his own purposes.

Now, the big question, which I'm asked quite often is especially by Americans, is why the why should we care about this? Russia is a country which no longer rules the world, no longer has a big empire, is not really a threat to us. Ukraine may be a nice enough place, but it's far away. It doesn't really have anything to do with the center of Western cooperation, and it's always been part of Russia anyway.

So what's all this talking about? Well, the talking is about the fact, it's twofold. First, because we all agreed 30 years ago and we have been working hard on it that for the first time in its history, in fact it it's really thousands, two-thousand-year history, Europe has known a sense of equilibrium, of peace, of openness, and there is no reason why we should, until recently, have feared war could break out in Europe, around Europe or between Europe. This is now changing a bit.

Secondly, there are great parts of Europe, especially what we now call Central Europe, who were the allies of Russia, the involuntary allies of Russia during the Cold War, who cherish democracy strongly. And if there is going to be a questioning of Ukraine's right to be a democracy, then why not Poland? Why not Slovakia? Why not Hungary? Why not the Balkan states? These are all neighbors of Russia. And if Russia has decided that it needs to have a sphere of influence around it, it's going to affect many of the countries who are also part of NATO and part of the European Union.

Thirdly, even more importantly than that is the fact that we are coming into a new era. The Europe that we put together 30 years ago was in fact put together 30 years ago, and 30 years is for anybody's life span a long time. And things are changing dramatically. As we know we had never heard the word social media. Thirty years ago, we didn't know what an iPhone was. We had never thought of live streaming a discussion as we were doing it today. And the changes which have taken place are changes which can be used for the good or they can be used as we've seen. Also, for evil, it is very important that the operating system of this new system be a democratic one.

And if we're going to guarantee that we also have to guarantee that the European side of the Atlantic community is also a peaceful and democratic one, and therefore it is very much in American interest to make sure that peace is maintained in Europe, and to make sure that

countries such as Ukraine, which want to develop a democratic system are given the opportunity to do so.

Finally, there is the question of is there going to be a military confrontation? And of course, nobody can answer that. Russia is playing a game of chicken, as we say in the United States. We can't be sure what Putin is up to. But I think that one thing that he has already done, unwittingly, I'm sure, is he has strengthened the unity of the rest of the world against the kinds of pressures that he is exerting. This is good news in its own way. It wasn't quite obvious that this would happen. Maybe some people would say, "Why do we care? Let's let the Russians do whatever they want." No that has not been the case.

The Western world, from the United States to Canada to England to the European continent, has been very profoundly speaking with one voice and everything was going on. We intend to support democracy in the countries who want to be democratic to recommend that others be democratic, if they aren't already, including Russia, and we are doing it together. That's very important for America because as you can see, when there is a conflict like this, what happens? The United States becomes the major interlocutor immediately. Putin seems to have no great interest in talking with the French President or the German Chancellor. He wants to talk with the President of the United States.

So, that means we're drawn into these conflicts, whether we wish it or not. And that means that we have to understand what they are. And we also have to be ready to deal with them. So I think that we well, I know that we can't predict what's going to happen. But I do think that the United States and its allies are not on a bad track here. We have been working very closely with each other. And I think that we will be putting we are putting a common front towards the Russians and we'll see how they deal with that.

Thank you.

Prof. Schwartz [00:14:46] Thank you very much. Ambassador Kornblum, there are a number of questions and areas I'd like to pose to you to see get your reflections on and your thoughts. Certainly, you've stressed, or you stress toward the end of your remarks, the relative unity of the West in facing the situation in Ukraine.

My question to you, as a sort of what does, what will that matter in effect, if we have Russian aggression in the Ukraine, either seizing additional territory, continuing cyber-attacks, and the West imposes sanctions that seem to have relatively little impact, will the process itself be discredited? And in the sense, do we face the problem that multilateralism, as important as it is to the American foreign policy process, is ultimately empty if it cannot exert or create a type of pressure on Russia through economic sanctions. And here I'd like you actually to reflect a bit on whether you think the Administration's position that sanctions will be imposed is strong enough, given that we will not specify which sanctions we will use.

Amb Kornblum [00:16:08] Yes, very interesting. Well, if Putin does decide to do something militarily and especially if he decides to do something, which is, shall we say, less than a full scale military invasion, but rather something, as he did in Crimea eight years ago. It is going to present us with a major challenge. No question about it. We had a similar challenge. It was a different world, but it was a similar challenge. Thirty-five years ago, when the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies invaded Czechoslovakia for the same reason because Czechoslovakia was becoming too democratic, and they just couldn't stand that. Now what did we do after that? We put sanctions on them. We put economic sanctions on them. We blocked them from international activities, et cetera, et cetera.

But we also continued to push an idea of what Europe should be like. And one of my greatest and most exciting experiences was to take part in the Quadpartite negotiations on Berlin, which came up with these first sort of, so-called solutions to the Berlin issue. The agreement, which sealed that negotiation was signed almost to the day, three years, only three years after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. In other words, we shouldn't assume that a regime such as the Soviets of that time, or Putin today, is endlessly flexible, endlessly able to take advantage of what we're doing. I think sanctions are useful, but I don't think it's the only thing that we can do.

We also need to be pushing some kind of contact and dialog with them, which is what, Thomas you know a lot about Henry Kissinger, Henry Kissinger was already planning his detente, and so it was Willy Brandt at the time when this was happening. And so we did dialog, also. I think your question is still very good because you can't know how it's going to turn out. And much of it will depend on the skill and the statesmanship of the Western leaders. So far, I think they've been doing quite well. But who knows?

Prof. Schwartz [00:18:35] I was going to pose a question connected more to your presence in Berlin, namely, to what extent do you see any German willingness to sacrifice for Ukraine in any manner, in particular, of course, in the United States the issue is the Nord Stream two pipeline and the question of whether that should be suspended by any type of Russian military action.

What do you see as the ability of the German government to take decisive action?

Amb Kornblum [00:19:07] Well, that's very interesting. First, the new German government has been on board completely and the measures we've been taking so far. But you're right, the Nord Stream pipeline, the gas pipeline coming across the Baltic Sea, has been an area of confrontation and debate for some time. Just today [Jan 17, 2022], this morning in the newspapers and this shows you something about the situation here. Two of the partners, no, one of the partners and the CDU, who are the opposition party came out very strongly, saying that if Putin moves in any way militarily, that the Nord Stream pipeline is finished. The Chancellor, Mr. Scholz, has not said that. And he has, in fact tried to argue that he has no more influence over the project, that it's now being decided by the EU, which is to a certain extent, correct.

So, I think Germany is going to be the key as Germany, as you would know, well, very well know is very often the key to what's going on here. And so far, it seems that the Germans are hanging together with their Western allies. But they do have this deep engagement in Russia, and they do have a deep psychological dependence on good relations with Russia. And so we can't be sure. We'll wait and see.

Prof. Schwartz [00:20:34] Do you find that they read Mr. Putin differently than we do in the United States in terms of his willingness to act in an aggressive manner? And do you find that they have a tendency to be far more understanding of Russian concerns for their citizens in Ukraine or their Russian speakers in Ukraine?

Amb Kornblum [00:20:58] Yes and no, that was six months ago. More of that now, it's not so strong. He's, I think, this is another long discussion we could have. I think Putin is playing his own hand very poorly. And if he wanted to make sure that Ukraine would separate itself from Russia, he's achieved that.

Ukraine wants nothing more to do with Russia. And the same is the case in Germany. But you know, again, Tom, you're more of an expert on this than anyone. The Germans just don't find it possible to be totally confrontational with Russia for various reasons, and they're still behaving that way. Well, in this morning's papers that I was reading, there was a poll of readers, should the North Stream pipeline be built or not? 70 percent said yes. And so this is not there is not an anti-Russian anti-Soviet sentiment here, as there is in Poland or certainly in Ukraine.

But I think that Germans understand completely what's at stake here. And I think that you will find that that they will support maybe not quite as enthusiastically as others, but they will support what what in fact needs to be decided, if it does so need to be decided.

Prof. Schwartz [00:22:16] Is there a sense in Europe that a failure to respond adequately to a Russian action could trigger actions by other bad actors around the world? And here? I'm particularly wondering whether Europeans see any connection between their response and the Western response in Ukraine to what might happen with China and Taiwan or Iran or North Korea or other countries in terms of their willingness then to undertake risks because of a feeling that the West is too divided, too polarized and too caught up with its own issues to actually act effectively anymore?

Amb Kornblum [00:22:57] Yeah, that's a good question. Well, I think probably it's accurate to say that there's not too much focus on that right now. For whatever reason, the Europeans have defined relations with China as an American problem, even though China is exerting tremendous, tremendous efforts in Europe and especially in Germany. By the way, they see China as being far, far away and being a good market for German industrial products, but they don't feel themselves politically or militarily involved in what happens.

Now. If there were, for example, we sometimes hear the example of Taiwan having a similar role for the Chinese that Ukraine does for Russia. If the Chinese were to sense weakness on our

side and try to do something against Taiwan, I think you would find the Europeans quite interested and willing to act. But right now, I don't, I can't tell you that they are taking a great deal of interest in what's going on in the in the east, the Far East.

Prof. Schwartz [00:24:07] One of my friends has made the argument to me that one of the things you see with Putin's behavior is a connection between the price of energy and Russian aggressiveness. I'm wondering if that is something that is part of the discussion, the sense that because Russia, the prices of oil and gas have gone up and European dependance on Russian supplies is there, that this is this is in a way a fuel for Putin's behavior.

That is a problem for the West in general and that that had this dependance and also the simple price rises that give that extra cash in order to undertake such actions.

Amb Kornblum [00:24:49] I think that's probably true. I think that there are interests. There are essentially two different strains of discussion of Putin right now. One of them is comes, if I may put it this way from the academic community quite a lot, is to inform us on the dynamics of Russian history and why Russia has always been an expansionist country, that it needed the expansion for its own national feeling.

That, you know, the original Muscovites were in fact not Russian at all, but were Scandinavian. They had to build up their own identity there. That's one train of thought that you get quite a lot these days. The other is the, shall we say, social, political side of Putin. He is a dictator, obviously. He's also a very rich dictator. He is also a dictator whose popularity is fading in his own country and that there are some people who say this is this has nothing to do with Moscovy or Russia or conquering Siberia. It has to do with Putin and his desire to survive. I don't know, I'm not that much of an expert. I think you can see both things there. I think there is a sense of Russian-ness, which is very strong, which is still being felt. And he has, I think, successfully played on the idea that, no, we're not just going to be another Western country having the Americans tell us what to do.

We're going to be a separate power and the Americans have to treat us as a separate power. That may be true, but also, of course, he is a, you know, we can say he's a criminal. He does. He suppresses human rights. He has suppressed other countries. He has money, stock stashed all over the world. And so, he, obviously, and he and the group around him obviously want to stay in power. And just when you're a little bit on the, on the down in the woods track, finding a good place to attack overseas is not a bad thing. He's not the first leader who's done that.

It's been done quite often in the world. And so it's hard to say. I'm going to give you after talking for three or four minutes, I will say, I don't know. But I think that both of these things play a role, and I think that it makes it more difficult for us because we can't simply say this is a military threat, that we can't simply say this is a sagging leader. It's a mixture of both.

Prof. Schwartz [00:27:25] You have mentioned, I want to I want to ask one more question and then see if Pat might want to bring in some of the questions that are coming from the audience.

But you mentioned Ukraine itself. Ukraine. To what extent does there exist a potential fifth column of sorts of Russian speaking Ukrainians who would welcome a Russian presence in the eastern Ukraine? Is that been changed by Putin's behavior or does it still exist? Is it still a vulnerability of the Ukrainian state?

Amb Kornblum [00:27:58] Well, first, I think one thing that Putin has achieved is to stimulate and develop quite strongly a Ukrainian sense of national identity, which they may or may not have had before. Secondly, the role of the Russian speakers is a very controversial issue in Ukraine. Also, I think. I think it's safe to say that at the beginning of its independence period, Ukraine felt so pushed, downtrodden by the Russians that they passed very strict language laws, which basically told people they couldn't speak their native language, which doesn't work in any country. In our own country we know how many people hang onto their native language. And so they made a lot of mistakes, in other words.

I think and I have, if I'm going to mention this, you and Patrick, you know what I'm talking about my wife, Helen Oksana is her name who has spent the last three years doing OSCE missions in Ukraine. She has reported to me that the Russian speakers are fully engaged Ukrainians, and that's, you know, from the horse's mouth, so to speak. It's also true, by the way, if you go back, now 30 years, to the election data of the referendum, they did, after all, hold the referendum to see whether they wanted independence or not. And it was not uniform across the country, but even in the heavily Russian-speaking areas, it was more than 50 percent, sometimes 60 percent wanting independence. And in the, in the two so-called runaway provinces, some of the results that I've looked into this were in the 90 percent, in those provinces, not everywhere, but in some of the parts of it.

So, I think probably this idea that Ukraine is sort of being torn apart by language differences is probably not really true. Of course, it's to a certain extent, but it's not really true as far as the existence of the country is concerned and that what Putin really has been doing is giving them a sense of national unity, which they may not have had in the same extent before he started with his various exercises.

Prof. Schwartz [00:30:24] Pat, do you want to bring in some questions?

[Patrick Ryan] [00:30:30] Sure. Thanks, Tom. Ambassador Kornblum, thanks again for being with us today. We have a very large audience, a lot of interest in this topic, obviously.

Let me share with you a question from Angela Weck, who is Executive Director of the Peoria Area World Affairs Council. Angela asks about the support for Putin in in Russia. What kind of risk has he faced when he claims the need to invade Ukraine while calling them Russia's brothers and part of Russia in terms of a common history and culture?

Do Russians in Russia support his tactics as he controls the media enough to control the message?

Speaker 4 [00:31:14] Well, it's hard to measure, of course, because you don't have too many sources of objective opinion. But if you take the anecdotal evidence, including the numbers of demonstrations, including the last election campaign where he ... my wife was almost on her way to go to monitor the elections in Russia when Putin essentially kicked the OSCE out and said, We don't want you meddling in our internal affairs. That showed that he was worried about what the what the foreign monitors might hear. I think there is a well-known person, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who was once the richest man in Europe, who I've gotten to know quite a bit, and he is now interesting enough working to build democratic institutions in Russia. And Putin lets him do it, by the way. It's very interesting. He asks us continuously, he just gave an interview in a German newspaper where he said it again, not to underestimate the democratic spirit in Russia, that it is a very independent country, independent people, and they have no sense of patriotism in the sense that we would understand.

They at the same time feel very strongly about being treated fairly. So, he really almost begs us to say Russia is not a lost cause. I'm willing to take him at face value on that. I worked, I had an interesting experience. I never lived in Russia and I don't speak Russian, but I worked for about 40 straight years with Russians doing common things, for example, here in Berlin, and I found them almost to a person to be very open and fair minded and freedom oriented.

They were, of course, I had some, I would go into it now, but very interesting discussions with some of them after the fall of the Soviet Union, when they came up to me and said, it's so nice that we can finally talk to each other openly there. So, there's I think there's more, there's more democracy in Russia than many of us want to believe, but it's very hard when you have a system, which suppresses it at every corner.

[Patrick Ryan] [00:33:32] Thanks for that, Ambassador. One question, from Nick McCall in Knoxville about sanctions, and he asks if the imposition of sanctions are likely to provoke armed conflict and gives the example of the imposition of oil and steel sanctions on Japan in their 1940 era, harden Japan's decision to go to war. So Nick asks what do you think the likelihood is that sanctions may embolden Putin to further conflict?

Amb Kornblum [00:34:07] Well, I'll just say my own opinion is I'm not a big fan of sanctions. I have in various times where I was in various places. I had to either think them up or to manage them. And I never felt that they were a really very good tool. I just say that off the top of my head. So maybe I agree with our colleague there that they're not the best thing to do it.

But sanctions are usually used when you can't think of anything else to do. Let's be very blunt about it. And this was the case in World War Two. We didn't know what to do about Japan in 1938-39. So we said, OK, they can't buy steel from us. That'll show 'em.

Well, as you say, it didn't show that just made the madder. But sanctions are right now one thing that we could do without upsetting too much else. There are some other sanctions which could be taken, and President Biden made a very direct statement to Putin, apparently in his last conversation, saying, I have, I can do things by myself, which would really hurt you.

He probably was thinking of the SWIFT system, which is the international global financial payment system. But other people have come out to say, well, if you talk about shooting yourself in the foot, if we took Russia out of this SWIFT system, it would bring turmoil in the international financial markets for a long time to come. So I don't think in this case, I don't think the sanctions have made Putin madder. I think, however, they've made him prouder because the fact is that he has swallowed the sanctions that we've made so far. And in fact, it may be even made the Russian economy, stronger by substituting home produced things for imports. And so I actually don't think they've had very much effect.

Prof. Schwartz [00:36:07] Do you think the administration was correct to leave out any sort of military responses, even, not necessarily U.S. troops, but certainly additional weaponry. Something like that is part of the response to any military action.

Amb Kornblum [00:36:27] Well, I do, yes, but I'm not necessarily in the majority of people who believe that there's a feeling that if we got too much into the military side that it would then become a military confrontation, which nobody really wants. It would be, let's be frank about it. If he, if Putin started, not with a major attack on Ukraine, but maybe, for example, just taking the two provinces and setting up governments there, et cetera, and halving them off, as he did with Crimea. That would put us in a very difficult situation.

So, people who say we should be tougher should think about what the follow up would be. And at a certain point, the follow up would probably then be a major confrontation, which nobody really wants. I mean, we have enough things going on.

We're in the middle of a pandemic. We have the climate falling apart around us. We have all sorts of things going on in our countries. The last thing we need is some kind of war. So I think the president is being quite balanced on this, being tough, but at the same time, understanding that pushing it towards military conflict is in nobody's interest.

[Patrick Ryan] [00:37:42] Ambassador, we have questions from Lisa Kissel and Robert Kapanjie. I'll combine the two. They deal with the recent events, Lisa asks, what do we know about the apparent cyber-attack on Ukraine? And importantly, its significance. Robert asks about the reports that Russia may be hinting at deployments of weapons systems in the Western Hemisphere. What are your views on those two reports?

Amb Kornblum [00:38:09] Well, I know more or less the same thing that you all know in the newspaper, but we know that the Russians have been using the cyber weapon a lot over the past five or so years. Wouldn't surprise me. Wouldn't surprise me at all. It wasn't reported very much, but already in 2014 or 15 the entire Estonian computer, internet Wi-Fi system just blacked out for six hours, or something like that. Clearly done by Russian interference.

So, the Russians can do this. They have very good mathematicians, very good computer people in Russia, it's just a shame that they're being used for nefarious purposes rather than for

making contributions to the overall technological world. But I don't know anything more than anybody else does, but it wouldn't surprise me if that were the case. As for what was, I forgot, second question?

[Patrick Ryan] [00:39:10] The hints that Russian military armaments go to the Western Hemisphere.

Speaker 4 [00:39:16] I take that, as you know, just talk for talk sake. I think the last time the Russians tried that, it didn't turn out very well for them and Mr. Khrushchev was out of office two years later. And so I don't, I think that's almost a joke. Actually. Very interesting to follow, if you can, is the statements of the Foreign Minister, Mr. Lavrov, who's a very smart person. We knew him. I worked personally with him in the 90s on the Bosnian stuff when he was the Russian Ambassador to the United Nations. And in those days we used to say there is the kind of modern, Russian, smooth, Western oriented, liberal Russian that we want to see happening. All of a sudden, he becomes the ogre of Russian diplomacy.

But if you listen to him, what I think, what you hear is resentment. Resentment, somehow that Russia isn't up there with the big boys, and this is an element which I might have mentioned earlier, but neglected to do so, that as the world is now evolving. And as the world is clearly evolving into the big two, China and the United States, Russia is being increasingly, maybe not ignored, but sort of pushed to the side. And I think this probably has something to do with Putin's behavior also. And he says, well, you think you could ignore me? No, you can't look at what I can do to you. And so this talking about, Oh yes, we can send some troops into Venezuela or Cuba or wherever. They tried that and they got more than a bloody nose. They got really pushed back pretty hard.

So, I don't think they're going to do that. I think that's just empty talk that do that. I think that they sense and again, a certain truth to this, that the West is a little bit disoriented, partially because of corona, partially because of many other things going on and that they have a chance to catch us off balance. And you can see in the way they're talking about things that they're starting to like it. They're starting. And I take these comments about Venezuela and Cuba almost being them having fun with us. They know they wouldn't do that. And what would it bring them? Nothing they could pull Venezuela out of its economic troubles, which is nobody probably can do that. And so I don't take too much, too much credence to that kind of stuff.

Prof. Schwartz [00:41:54] Can I follow up here? Can I follow up here and just ask you if you think there is a way for Putin to come out of this particular period of confrontation saving face but without risk, without taking military action? Is there, is in a way if he doesn't do anything, will he suffer from that? Or is this situation such that he could simply decide, well, nothing's happened, but we'll go back to the frozen conflict?

Amb Kornblum [00:42:23] Well, he's probably going to want some kind of bone, shall we say. Something which shows that he was right, that he gathered, he got some kind of additional security guarantees or something like that. The discussions that Deputy Secretary Sherman has

been having have been going in this direction. I'll be very honest, I'm a little bit nervous about this because I don't think that we should give too much credence to Putin's complaints. There's really not much of truth there. But at the same time, if there is a way that we can find to give him, you know, some cover. Give him the ability to say that, OK, I raise my point and the, and the West took my points and helped me out of it, that that would be probably that if you're talking about what the problem is, he could do that would be what could happen. What we can't do is ever promise that we won't expand NATO. That is in the original NATO Charter of 1949. And in fact, NATO has, I think, 27 or 28 members now. It started with 10 or 12.

So, it has expanded considerably. And one of the biggest expansions, of course, was to include West Germany in 1955. So we can't say that we would never expand NATO when in fact you noticed the Finns and the Swedes came out real fast in saying Russia is not going to tell us whether we want to join NATO or not. So that we couldn't do. But we can give him all sorts of things, you know, including arms control negotiations and maybe confidence building measures and things like that. The question is, is he ready to say to take yes for an answer that nobody knows? He probably doesn't know?

[Patrick Ryan] [00:44:17] Well, we have a couple of questions that are related. Dr. Winfred Schmitz asked about offering NATO membership to Russia. I know that's been talked about in the past, and probably that ship has sailed. But wouldn't that be a way to ameliorate the issues with the eastward advance and related to that, Kline Preston asked, Do you believe NATO's advance eastward towards Russia is the cause of Russia's position regarding Ukraine and Ukraine's decision to want to join NATO?

Amb Kornblum [00:44:59] Well, as I mentioned, I was one of the chief negotiators of the entire arrangement with Russia -- 1996-97 -- and we, the United States, wanted to include in the documents, whatever you want to call them, a perspective for Russian membership in NATO, you know, based on things happening in the right way, etc.

The Europeans were not in favor of it. And the reason that was given, I can remember very well the discussion that was given to us was, well, if we offer the membership in NATO, they also might want to join the European Union and we simply couldn't swallow them, they're too big for us. It would be like the United States wanting to join the European Union.

So, we didn't make that offer. If you read James Baker's memoirs, but also the book by Peter Baker, on James Baker, which I can highly recommend. Baker thought about this, and there are some conversations that I also wasn't aware of and thought, I read the book that about this, and I personally would have been much in favor of that. I was, I can say this here, I was the main drafter of the charter for the NATO-Russia Council and I had a different concept for the Council that it turned out to be. I wanted it to be a mutual operation with Russia. Instead, it turned out to be 25 new ambassadors confronting one single Russian and telling him what a bad guy he was. It was not a successful operation. I'm sorry to say I'm not saying that that would have changed history had we been more open on the NATO-Russia Council, but we could have handled it a lot differently.

We could have, in fact, welcomed the Russians into our arms, so to speak. But we didn't. We treated them as supplicants. We treated them as a foreign body who had to learn how to be democratic. It wasn't good. If I could put it that way. And so, should we have offered them membership? I think we should have, but it just wasn't in the cards. Now, the other question is, did our expansion lead all to this? This has been debated almost from the day that NATO was first enlarged with the Poles and the Czechs almost 30 years ago. I again was a big part of this. I was a very strong believer in this. There is a book which was put out by Dan Hamilton of SAIS Johns Hopkins University, in which he did a very long seminar, which I took part in and had all sorts of different people, including Russians. Talk about NATO enlargement, gives you a pretty good picture. Our view in those days, I can say this in the halls of the American Council of Germany, was twofold. First, we felt that we owed the Baltics, the Czechs, the Poles, Hungarians something for the way they had suffered as being part of the Warsaw Pact. We wanted democracy to go as far as we could. We tried to ameliorate it so that Russia would be able to live with it. It didn't work so well, but I'm still very proud that we now have, we have a democratic community which stretches from, shall we say, the Russian-Estonian border all the way to the islands of the Aleutian Islands, where the United States and Russia meet each other. And that is that is a democratic community which spans two thirds of the globe. So I think we should be very proud of this. And I don't think that anything that we could have done would have would have made it any worse.

The other point, and this is where we talk about the Americans on Germany, one of the biggest, biggest supporters of NATO enlargement was the person called Volker Ruhe, which some of you may have heard of, he was German Defense Minister for some time and his line to us was, you can't leave us hanging out there by ourselves. NATO has to be to the west of us. Very, I thought, prescient and very important concept that that was part of our concept. When Germany looked east, it should see the West and that we were able to achieve that.

And I think today, 30 years later, we can be very proud of that and Germany can be very proud of the way that it has integrated itself, not just with France and Italy and Belgium, but also with the eastern countries. So I think that was one of the main, and then it was followed, of course, by the expansion of the European Union, which gave these countries the economic and social context, which he couldn't get through data. So I think that the whole NATO enlargement was a major victory for democracy. Did it make some Russians angry, maybe later on it did? We could have a long discussion of what was done right or wrong, in the years after and after 2000, for example.

[Patrick Ryan] [00:50:21] Ambassador, let me just ask on that note, yesterday on the Fareed Zakaria CNN show, Mr. Peskov, the spokesman from the Kremlin, said that at the time of the German reunification, Gorbachev was given promises that there wouldn't be expansion to the East. There was nothing put in writing, but it was a verbal guarantee. And that's one of the irritants that remains with the Russians.

Amb Kornblum [00:50:46] Yes. Well. How do you say he's lying in public, politely? He's lying and he knows he's lying.

[Patrick Ryan] [00:50:56] I think that's how you do it.

Amb Kornblum [00:50:59] Gorbachev himself said that no promise was ever made. James Baker, in his various memoirs and in the Peter Baker book, talks about this in great detail. I again was on the scene. I was one of the drafters of the London Declaration in 1990, and when we talked about the new alliance and in that declaration, we reach out to the countries. We say we are no longer enemies. We reach out to you. We want to be your friends. We want to work with you.

There was never a talk of NATO enlargement really until the mid-nineties. And there were two, according to what one reads. I had never had a discussion with him about it. President Clinton felt very strongly about enlarging NATO, but there were many people in the US government who didn't, who didn't want to do it. But secondly, there was strong pressure from the central Europeans, the Poles, the Czechs, the Hungarians.

And as I mentioned, the German Defense Minister was very strong, and I think Helmut Kohl was too. I don't remember him ever saying anything, but I think he probably was very strong about it. So, so all of this is trying to rewrite history. But there is nothing that NATO has ever done to Russia, which should make the Russians feel that they were being pressed. We have never threatened them. We have never put, just to give you an example, we have never put short range missiles into Kaliningrad, which is this little small corner of Russia on the Polish border. We have never done what the Russians have done. They have missiles in Kaliningrad, which could hit Warsaw, Berlin and Prague without anybody ever having a chance to get their boots out, so to speak.

So, they have in fact been building a cordon sanitaire around us and threatening us with things such as the short-range missiles where United States when the Cold War ended, the United States had about 200,000 troops in Europe at the moment. If we got all the truck drivers and the people working at McDonald's, we might get 40,000 and the number that we have in Eastern Europe, which the Russians say are such a big threat to them, are in the hundreds, not in the thousands.

And they are, according to the agreement that we agreed with the Russians in 1997, there is no permanently stationed American or NATO, in fact, presence in the former Warsaw Pact countries. So we have actually been very careful about this when the Russians haven't. So he's, Mr. Peskov is, you know, he's got his talking points, but they really don't make much sense.

[Patrick Ryan] [00:53:41] We have a question going back to the energy issue. And Professor Schwartz asked you about Nord Stream, but there's a follow up here about the possibilities of other countries supplementing European energy needs. There was a broadcast with a Polish official which was representative of the questioning. He talked about LNG shipments going into

ports that were ready to receive American LNG. And the question from Joachim Woerner is about the capacity. And I know you're not an energy expert, but what's your view on cutting the ties of the energy and what might be done to prevent shortages in Europe?

Amb Kornblum [00:54:30] Well, believe it or not, I'm more of an expert than you think I am because I have worked on some big energy projects over the years.

[Patrick Ryan] [00:54:37] Apologies.

Amb Kornblum [00:54:38] No, that's all right. You know. There's lots of gas in the world and it's a declining asset because alternative energy is coming online. So, there are lots of people who want to sell their gas. There's no reason for Europe to ever worry about having enough gas. One of the projects that I was working on, this is now 2013, so it's nine years ago, was to try and build some so-called liquefaction harbors in Germany so that Germany could accept more LNG and nobody wanted to build them in Germany because they said, we've got Russian gas.

I was on the scene in the much earlier incarnation. I was the head of the Central European Department in the State Department when Ronald Reagan got into a big fight with the Germans about the large diameter pipe that was sold for the build the first pipeline in 1982. He finally gave up and the Germans said, well, don't worry, natural gas. The Russian gas will never be more than 10 or 15 percent of European consumption. Right now, it's 49 percent.

So, there's been lots of mistakes made on the European side here. Germany giving up nuclear energy too fast was a major mistake. And so, the pipeline was planned and built partially for Russian strategic reasons, I believe, but also for the economic benefit of certain large German firms. They've, I think now I'm happy that they took this step, but they did. And maybe the Russians aren't so happy about it, either. But it was planned in a different era when building another pipeline to Russia didn't seem to be such a threatening thing. Now, of course, it is.

[Patrick Ryan] [00:56:39] I've got just two more questions as we're running close on time here, and then I'll ask Professor Schwartz to come in with anything that we might have missed in this brilliant conversation. Question from Jack McCall goes to the question of Putin's choice and timing and using the crisis to advance other ends, such as further separating Europe from the United States and NATO, and driving a wedge in the alliance and sensing that to what extent Putin enjoys meddling in U.S. domestic politics? The timing of this is, as you mentioned, there's a lot of things that President Biden has on his plate right now.

Amb Kornblum [00:57:24] Yeah, well. This goes back really to Lenin, and before Lenin, the Russians were I was masters at, at whatever word you want to use, meddling in doing propaganda, doing special operations. There are many things that happened in the Western Europe in the 1980s and 90s, which were essentially financed by the Soviet Union, for example. And so it's not, you know, they look, let's try and look at it totally from their point of view. It's good. It's very useful to do that. They are a very big country, but a very also loosely, shall we say, organized country, and they are continuously worried about incursions from outside.

That's part of Russia, that is part of Russia's history. And they are especially worried when Europe becomes unified, when it becomes democratically unified and when the United States and Europe mount such a major competition that Russia can't hope to keep up. That's the way it is right now. Russia in the world, be it the digital world, be it the artificial intelligence world. Any of these areas of modern technology, Russia really isn't playing much of a role.

So, I think that that they are continuously trying to do two things. First, they are trying to separate the European Union to try to undermine its unity. They usually do that well enough by themselves so they don't need the Russians. But the Russians play their role, too. And with the United States, it's simply a case of wanting to be seen as an equal. And our European friends have been quite perturbed by the fact that most of the discussions on this issue have been taking place between Russia and the United States. I can understand that they were perturbed. I would be too in their shoes.

Even more perturbing is the fact that Putin simply doesn't care to talk to them. He focuses on the big boys, and that's the United States and increasingly China. And for the rest of them, even the powerful Germans are, for him, just medium-sized countries who he doesn't take too seriously. So, his goal of separating Europe is making it less unified, less functioning and less of a threat to him as a major one. And of course, simply being seen as the equal of the United States is for him, I'm sure, in his own ego a very, very important factor.

[Patrick Ryan] [01:00:09] Now you've mentioned China, and we have a question from Kline Preston. Do you believe the sanctions against Russia will drive Russia further into partnership with China? In the last year, we've seen conversations between Putin and Xi Jinping about strategic partnerships and working together and positioning the United States as a common foe. What do you see evolving in the Beijing-Moscow orbit?

Amb Kornblum [01:00:37] Well, they'll try as much as they can to set up an alternative reality to the Western world and to try to push the United States into a corner. There's no question about that. But the fact is, they don't really like each other very much. The Chinese are bordering on disdainful of the Russians and the Russians always are worried that the Chinese are somehow going to try and take parts of Siberia or whatever from them.

They have a common project, which is also a common dividing project, which is North Korea. And so I don't think that we have to worry too much about that part of it, that there's all of a sudden going to be a pan-European Asian alliance of China and Russia that they tried that a couple of times and it never worked. But I do think that they have more than enough potential, certainly China, but also Russia, to disrupt our new digital world that's being built, to disrupt global supply chains to try and get other countries to have a different point of view of what should be going on.

They can't really take it apart because they don't have enough reach to do that, but they can be very disruptive. So, it's very much in our interest to keep the two of them not from being

partners where it doesn't matter that much, but to keep them under control. And that means, of course, we have to make sure that China understands where its interests are. Because, just one final point perhaps, the big difference between now and 1960 or 1970 is that China is a fully integrated member of the global economic system, and it needs this integration to meet its tremendous population needs at home.

If you talk with a Chinese official for more than 15 minutes, he'll say, Remember, we're a developing country and what you see in Shanghai is not China. Well, there is some truth to that. So, China, there's no way that China can break its ties. You know, virtually every smartphone sold in the United States is made in China, for Pete's sake.

There's no way that China could possibly break its ties with the United States. But there is a lot of ways that they can disrupt those ties and they can go up to the point of confrontation. And you can see that they've been doing this. I'm also, I've been doing this a long time, and I also get a little bit suspicious, and both Putin and Xi are in this category of people who essentially appoint themselves president for life. If you do that, you're worried. You're worried that you may not survive.

You know, you may not be in office anymore, but you may not be terribly healthy after that or secondly, that your regime won't survive. And so, and only you, of course, the great leader can keep it going. Both of them are now seeing themselves as the great leader. That, to me, is a sign of weakness and a sign, not that it should make us happy because, you know, that could lead as we have with Putin, to disruption of a kind that we really don't want to deal with.

[Patrick Ryan] [01:04:06] Professor Schwartz, I'm going to slip one more question in here before handing it to you for your closing questions. Wolfram Rohde Libenau, says thanks to Ambassador Kornblum, and that he mentions he met you some years ago at Babi Yar Memorial near Kiev. He asked about pressure from Russia on Ukraine, and you talked about the Russian speakers in Ukraine identifying as Ukrainians. But give us a little more sense of the view from Kiev over this whole press that the Ukrainians remain within the Russian sphere.

Amb Kornblum [01:04:51] Well, they were, after all, a part of the Russian sphere for three, 300 or more years. And there are lots and lots of common ties. Probably families now who can't see each other because of the tensions. So Ukraine is not an enemy of Russia, that's the other point that Putin keeps trying to argue that Ukraine is somehow its enemy.

Well, it's not an enemy at all. But it's a threat because it is doing, I think, for all of the problems that Ukraine has, including the corruption, which is still a big thing. Ukraine is becoming a Western country. If you go to Ukraine, which I do, you know, fairly often you're not in Russia. You feel more like you're in Slovakia or Slovenia or someplace like that. It's in fact their languages are more southern Slav language than in northern Slav language.

And so this is the threat. If you believe I talked a few minutes ago about you have the geopolitical analyst of Russia. If you believe in the geopolitical analysis of Russia, that it needs

to maintain its sense of being an empire in order to maintain its national identity and national existence, then to lose 45 or 50 million people, that it's the largest Europe country in Europe after Russia, in land area. That's a big chunk to lose. They have also lost Georgia. They have lost Uzbekistan. They thought they had lost Kazakhstan. Who knows what what's going on in Kazakhstan right now?

So, this idea that that Russia is supposed to have this wonderful sphere of influence, it's not working very well for them. And so that's why they're putting maximum pressure on Ukraine and probably pressure that in many ways a country such as Ukraine can't withstand, to be honest about it. And not because they're a weak country, but because it's just tremendous, tremendous attacks being sent in their way.

It's part of the whole situation, and that's why I'm a big believer. Patrick, you mentioned that I was the Ambassador to the OSCE, but even before that, I was the Head of the Delegation at the 1992 Helsinki Summit, which wrote the charter for the modern OSCE. And we believed very strongly those day is that we were setting up, again on Martin Luther King Day today was especially important to say it, a democratic foundation for all of these big military and economic arrangements would be done.

And Ukraine has done very well in building a democracy, and it's not perfect, certainly not totally free of corruption, but it is certainly a much better place to be than living in Russia. And from the point of view of freedom, of openness, et cetera. So, I think that's what worries Russia about Ukraine, and I think they'll be after it for some time. It's not going to stop. It's just it's just too much of a threat to them.

[Patrick Ryan] [01:08:11] Professor Schwartz.

Prof. Schwartz [01:08:15] Quickly, I know we're at the time thing, I'd just like to thank Ambassador Kornblum. He's been very reassuring on a lot of issues related to this. I confess that there's still a modicum of doubt in my own feelings that in effect, what Putin's going to do is try to destroy the democracy in Ukraine, by castrating it essentially and weakening it by taking territory and by intimidation. And that this will have a very negative effect on other countries in that region and create a sort of sense of fear especially in the Baltics and other countries of Eastern Europe, that the Cold War is returning and that the Russian power is returning to intimidate.

So, I do worry that we're not in the best position right now to resist as formidable as we were during the Cold War. And I think I worry that this is going to encourage aggression and bad behavior by states around the world.

Amb Kornblum [01:09:10] Well, I don't disagree with you, Tom, but I wouldn't just go back. Let's see, if we've got five minutes. I just ... think of three things that happened during the Cold War. The Cuban Missile Crisis, the Berlin Wall and the upheavals in Warsaw, Budapest and Prague. The Cuban Missile Crisis was handled by a really skillful diplomacy. I think. There are

still to this day, people who say we should have just torn down the Berlin Wall, that everything would have been okay, it wouldn't have been, by the way. And the three revolutions in the three capitals. You know, we should be honest about this. We essentially abandoned them. And so it's not as if the United States, with great leaders such as Dwight Eisenhower, our great general or the very active John F. Kennedy.

It's not as if we were just brilliantly strong and turning down every Soviet attack. The fact is we weren't very good at it. If you want to be honest about it. What we did do was maintain the status quo. And so I'm not too worried about the fact that we don't seem to be just rolling Putin over.

What worries me is more, do we understand what the status quo is? It isn't to try and restore a European structure that we agreed 30 years ago, it's a whole new world now, the digital world, as some people call it, and this status quo needs to be a very dynamic and a very moving one. And we're not doing terribly well at that. It's ... we have our bright people out in California who are, you know, establishing almost in parallel government with their institutions.

But the Western world is not coming up with the great answers to these, these challenges, which are coming. And that's what worries me more than whether we're looking tough with Putin or not. I think in the end, Russia is going to not be a major factor in the world in years coming up, other than it'll be a disruptive one. And maybe we need to do better in learning how to deal with its disruption.

[Patrick Ryan] [01:11:32] Thanks. Thanks a lot. Ambassador I've got just one last question, and this is somewhat self-serving, and we'll probably use this as a testimonial for the value of the Tennessee World Affairs Council. Tell us again, you mentioned in your remarks, why this is important to people.

Why is staying up to date on foreign affairs and international relations and crises like climate and the issue here with Ukraine? Why is it important for Americans to understand what's going on in the world?

Amb Kornblum [01:12:02] Well, because everything we do now, I mean, back, Patrick, when you and I were, shall we say, younger people, we talked about interdependence and we talked about it's important to understand the world. But the fact is we were pretty autarkic. All of these, all the big countries sort of lived in their own borders. Right now, you can't do that. I can go to my TV set two rooms away here and watch Netflix and Hulu and an NFL, the Titans, of course, every day without even breaking a sweat. I have the entire world at my command.

The economies of California, of Arizona, of Missouri and also of Tennessee, of course, are dependent upon what goes on in Japan and in Taiwan and in China. I would, there's just no more borders anywhere. And so, if that's the case, then we have to learn how to manage these new kinds of connections. It's no longer a question of who's got the biggest army or who's the

who got the loudest voice. It's a matter of who understands how to manage global supply chains.

What was the big issue that we had at Christmas time? It wasn't Putin. It wasn't even COVID. It was supply chains. And probably half of Americans had never heard of supply chains before.

Everybody knows now what a supply chain is. And so these are the kinds of things which are going to be important in the future. And every single American person, every single German, French, British person has, his life is affected very directly by this all the time. And so, if a country like Ukraine, which is not the center of the Earth, not the most successful country in the world, but it sits there right at the center of Europe between the democratic part of Europe and the not democratic part of Europe. If we allow that country to fall into the ... and it wants very much to be part of Western Europe.

We shouldn't forget that the crisis, which caused Yalta to be occupied was not a NATO crisis. It was the European Union signing what was actually a fairly minor trade and investment agreement with Ukraine. But this apparently got Putin so upset that Ukraine's economy was going to go in a westward direction rather than eastward direction, that started this whole crisis, which we're still in. So, there's not a single one of us who is affected every single day by this. And that's why it's important that we have to be experts about Ukraine or Taiwan or whatever, but the least to know what the flows of interest in information are these days, and they're much different than they were even 20 years ago.

[Patrick Ryan] [01:14:56] Well, thank you for that, Ambassador. And thanks to Professor Schwartz, we've had a very stimulating conversation. Tom and John, I really appreciate your time today to talk about this important topic and a reminder to our friends in the audience. You can see the transcript of this program and a recording of the program on our YouTube channel and the transcript on TNWAC.org. Ambassador, any last comment you'd like to make before we sign off?

Amb Kornblum [01:15:32] Well, we are talking to the Tennessee World Affairs Council and I think that Nashville in particular, but also Chattanooga, also Knoxville, also Memphis with FedEx, are as good examples as you can find about how a part of the country, which maybe 40 years ago was not exactly seen as a global crossroads, has become a global crossroads.

And it is not because only of good government or luck or investment, but it's also taking place because Tennessee has been the place where these international industries find it useful, not just because it's a nice place, but because it's also very well situated and it shows you how important even the place to get ... you know, my great affection for Tennessee, but it's a place that 30 years ago was not considered to be one of the economic centers of the United States. Now it is, and much of it is because of globalization to use that word, which is not always a good word. People don't like it sometimes, but Tennessee is really become a very, very dynamic and important place because it has known how to learn how or knew from the beginning how to use these international connections.

[Patrick Ryan] [01:16:57] Well, to that point, I'll just mention that the Tennessee World Affairs Council is working with the Japan America Society of Tennessee on a project to document the importance of Japanese foreign direct investment in Tennessee. And people can find the interviews we've been doing with governors and economic development officials and others at TNWAC.org/JAST.

We've got quite a few interviews still to come. But it's an interesting series, and I'm glad you pointed out the importance of FDI on Tennessee prosperity. Well, that's it for us. We've run over and we appreciate everyone sticking with us again. Thanks to the American Council on Germany for support in the program and the folks in the audience who are with us today by virtue of their association with ACG. We appreciate that. That's important. And that's it for us.

This is Global Dialogue from the Tennessee World Affairs Council. You can check the podcast wherever you get podcasts at "Global Tennessee." And again, you can find the archived video of this on [YouTube.com/TNWAC](https://www.youtube.com/TNWAC). I'm Patrick Ryan here for the Tennessee World Affairs Council, thanks to Professor Thomas Schwartz and Ambassador John Kornblum. Everyone have a great day.

Thanks.