

# **Center for Strategic and International Studies**

## **“2016 Global Go To Launch: Why Are Think Tanks More Important Than Ever Before?”**

**Introduction By:**

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**Moderated By:**

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H. ANDREW SCHWARTZ: Welcome to the Center for Strategic International Studies. I'm Andrew Schwartz. I head external relations here at CSIS, and I have the pleasure today of welcoming really the entire think tank community. I see so many of our friends here. I see Andrew Seele here. I see just a whole bunch of great faces out here today. And you're in for a treat, because we have some of the real people who have had the most experience in think tanks here in Washington about to talk about really what it's all about and what we do and why we're – why we are where we are today.

Just a little bit of housekeeping, first of all. You know, this is Washington, and we always have to talk about security. We don't expect there to be any problems, but if there are, we have blue – we'll have blue shirts out there that will direct you safely to safety. We have certain exits, and we'll just follow our blue shirts.

With that, I'd like to bring up my dear friend Jim McGann. Jim is of course the director of the think tank program at the University of Pennsylvania who's been doing this study. And as you have copies of the study in front of you, you can see the extensive amount of work that Jim and his team has put into it. If any of you have ever visited Jim as I have at the University of Pennsylvania, you'll see, you know, an incredible group of students and other people that work with Jim working on this report, all year round. They put an enormous amount of effort into it, and I think that effort really shows in the product that comes out every year. It's something that we all look forward to, you know, whether we're up or down. You know, it's just like the U.S. News and World Report. You know, if your college is in the top 10, it's great. If you're – if you're not in the top 10, you get a little – oh, I've got to get there next year. And it's become a real benchmark for all of us here in Washington.

So, with that, I'd like to introduce Dr. Jim McGann. (Applause.)

JAMES G. MCGANN: We have a fantastic panel, so I'll be – or try to be – quick. I have to put my glasses on because I can't even read my own notes without it. This is the global lunch of the Global Go To Think Tank Index, and it's its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. But more importantly, it's a session to discuss why think tanks are more important now than ever before. This event, or events like this, are taking place in 70 cities around the world. Many have already taken place, obviously, in Asia and in Europe. Others will take place throughout the day. And this week I got a surprising email from Erbil, Iraq, an organization that I know, but said we're hosting a program. We want to let you know. And we have declared – which I think is, you know, in terms of for a global audience – international think tank day. And it sort of embraces what I had in mind in terms of creating a global community of think tanks that come together on a single day to sort of explore the sort of key issues facing the think tank community. This discussion today, I believe, is both a timely, necessary and important discussion to have at a very critical moment in national, regional and global history.

I want to thank our partners and hosts at CSIS and specifically – or in terms of John Hamre and Andrew Schwartz, who helped make this possible. John asked a wonderful question in the green room: Who funds what you do and, you know, how many staff do you have to produce this? I was always very pleased to say zero budget and zero staff. I rely on 50 each semester interns who work with me, but the stuff we do both nationally and internationally is entirely made possible through partnerships and the labor of aspiring think tankers, both executives and scholars. And so I want to thank CSIS for helping in this effort and making this meeting possible, and especially at their wonderful not so new anymore headquarters on what I term think tank row. It used to be, as you all know, Embassy Row. It is now Think Tank Row. And CSIS and the new arrival, AEI, have really made this a center for public policy.

A few words about the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program. It is a grassroots effort to create a global community of think tanks that is by design transnational, transpolitical and transdisciplinary. That is what distinguishes it from regional, philosophical, discipline-driven or donor-driven networks. I want to – and I neglected to mention the extraordinary panel, as Andrew mentioned, and thank them and our moderator for what will, I think, be a very exciting and dynamic discussion.

The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program collects data on over 6,800 think tanks around the world. We conduct research on think tanks and the civil societies and countries in which they operate. We produce, as you all know, the annual Go To Report. And we organize now, once having identified the leading think tanks, I felt it was important to begin to connect them. So we now organize national, regional and global summits of think tanks to focus on both the policy challenges and the organizational challenges that face think tanks around the world.

I'm now just going to mention four trends which I think might help frame the discussion. And I think we're at a very critical moment, I would suggest – because I tend to dramatic and my students call me Dr. Doom – and existential moment for think tanks. One, we have to place, I think, this discussion and our understanding of what's going on with think tanks and the policy environment in the fact that it is a highly competitive and contentious marketplace of ideas. Secondly, that globalization – good, bad and ugly elements – have a direct impact on think tanks. Finally – and I – fourth – thirdly and most importantly in some respects, disruptive technologies which also have created and support disruptive politics. And then finally, which I think is a key element and a transformative element and a challenge that think tanks need to meet is the increased velocity of information and policy flows. The acceleration, because of technology and because of globalization, because of a highly competitive environment, are accelerating both information and policy flows. And for those who trade in ideas and influence, it's a fundamental force that will shape and continue to shape think tanks.

So the current political economy requires that all think tanks and those who support them and those who use them think critically about the challenges and opportunities that think tanks in this new operating environment – that this new operating environment presents. So I am looking forward to hearing what our panelists have to say about these critical issues and how we will face them.

Andrew?

MR. SCHWARTZ: With that, I'd like to welcome our panel to come up and take their seats. Jay Solomon, our moderator today, of The Wall Street Journal, covers foreign affairs, has a terrific new book out about Iran. You should absolutely see it. And with that, we'll – yeah, right there is fine. Perfect.

Congresswoman Harman, you're right on the inside next to Mr. Feulner. Great, perfect. There we go. Let's turn it over to Jay.

JAY SOLOMON: Great. Thank you, Andrew.

As a journalist and the son of someone who headed a think tank, I think I know a little bit about this topic. So I think I just want to start off first on a sort of broad question of, you know, where – what is the think tank role right now and is – are think tanks in a – sort of an existential crisis? Donald Trump has talked about draining the swamp in Washington in recent months, suggesting he's got, you know, outside Washington advisers or information flows that allow him to circumvent, you know, the

traditional Washington think tank. Even President Obama's staff talked about a blob or, you know, that we've had this traditional line of think tanks that had been part of a string of decisions that didn't work out so well. So maybe on just very on a broad scale, where are we and how much of a threat do you think there are to just the traditional think tank? Maybe you could start?

EDWIN J. FEULNER: OK. Thanks, Jay, and thank you very much, John Hamre and our good friends here at CSIS. As John well knows, I started my career in Washington at the old CSS before it became CSIS. So it's always great to be back as – I'm a proud alumnus.

Think tanks are in fact more important, I think, than ever, in this new environment. A couple quick factoids along the way. My successor at Heritage, Jim DeMint, met with Candidate Trump last April or so, and at that time the candidate gave him a challenge. He said, "Well, if we are in fact going to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court, who should we be appointing? And can anybody give me some names in this group meeting?" And Jim volunteered and said that he would get him some names within 48 hours, which he did. That list of names from Heritage, together with the Federalist Society – and we worked jointly with them on the list – became a touchpoint throughout the campaign to the point where the last numbers I saw post-election was – it's something like 20 percent of Trump's supporters did it based on the fact that the kind of person he would appoint to the Supreme Court. So that was just one little data point along the way in terms of the importance of a think tank.

I did take a leave from my consulting and everything else that I've been doing post my retirement at Heritage to work for Mr. Trump in the transition starting in August, and it was pretty lonely in August and September. By November, I had a lot of new friends. The interesting thing to me was, as we ramped up the transition process, we had something like 300 volunteers in the transition office over in a GSA building not too far from here, and I would guess – this is not scientific, but I'd guess at least a third of them came from different Washington think tanks. So the think tank community is very relevant in this – in this environment and I think will be even more relevant as the intersection of politics and public policy faces a whole new environment.

MR. SOLOMON: How about Wilson?

JANE HARMAN: Well, thank you, Jay. And hello to many swamp mates in the audience. (Laughter.) Some of my favorite swamp mates. And a shout-out to Andrew Seele, who's the executive vice president at the Wilson Center and has more to do with this topic than anyone there. He's written the book on think tanks. I mean, Jim has also written all kinds of reports on think tanks, but, you know, just that Andrew is quite special.

Two things that I would add to what Ed said. First of all, in case anyone missed it, we're all what I call frenemies. We work together. We're friends and we compete, but we work together, and there is huge overlap in what we do. And at many of the Wilson activities – we did something last week on Central American immigration – we had Heritage there. Why wouldn't we have Heritage there? And we trade ideas in a safe political space, which is a useful thing to do – very hard to do on Capitol Hill. That's my second point. Ed's successor is who? Jim DeMint. Where did he used to work? He and I are escapees of the United States Congress. And Ed was talking about how Newt Gingrich has just done a series over there. He did one at the Wilson Center. My point is, there's a lot of cross-fertilization of political types in think tanks. It's not just academics. Nothing wrong with academics, but it's a mélange of folks. That's my second point.

And my third point is that there's a lot of laughter about post-factual, alternative facts and so forth in this town in recent months. I think most of us care deeply about what the facts are. And where are you going to find out what those are? You know, just maybe some of our friends in media – and there are some in this audience and there are some who used to work in media – will claim that at least the traditional media provides those facts. But I would say maybe, maybe not. There are Fox facts, there are MSNBC facts, et cetera. We really try. I think all of us try very hard to be factual, and to be factual in the present tense but to bring a long history – certainly, scholars at Wilson Center do this, but at all of – all of the frenemies do it too – historical understanding, and predict long term into the future, not just for the election cycle. So I think there are things we do, including the cross-fertilization and friendships, that are extremely important in this town. And I would just finally close by saying swamp really is not fair. I would call it a much more fertile environment.

JOHN J. HAMRE: Well, if I could just step back to a little bit more of a philosophic frame, you know, everything in the world that we see – whether it's, you know, electric lighting or it's bottled water or the shape of a table – everything in the world started off as an idea in just one person's mind. And every country, every society has a need to take the ideas that come in one person's mind and turn it into public policy. It's complicated in democracies. It's pretty easy in authoritarian governments. You know, you just get – you're the king or whoever and – but in democracies, it's a very complicated process. How do – one person comes up with a new idea for America. How does that become policy for everybody?

And think tanks have emerged as one of the significant channels for that. Now, there are people that are all the time coming to Washington to – you know, to petition their government. It's a constitutionally protected right to petition the government. I think we should – we should recognize that. Lobbying is not an evil thing. Illegal lobbying is. But legal lobbying is a central function for democracies. But you need to have modulating institutions that take the particular interests that people have when they come to Washington and bounce it against the general interest of national good.

That's the role that think tanks play. Our role is to – it's perfectly fine for people to have particular interests that help them. It's our role to evaluate that and to say, does this reinforce and is it positive for national interest, for public good, or does it conflict? And I think our role – more than ever, I think it's going to be more important. I'm with Jane and with – and of course, I'll always be with Ed – but I'm with Jane and Ed that I think our role is going to be far more important, because more people are coming to Washington, more channels trying to get their special interests advanced, and you're needing institutions that can objectively evaluate that against the context of public good, and that's what we do.

MR. SOLOMON: I'm interested in how, as heads of think tanks, you navigate the politics of Washington or the changing politics of Washington. I know sometimes, as a reporter, it's – you get into kind of a situation where oh, under Bush, oh, call AEI because they seem to speak for the Bush administration; or under Obama, I'll call Brookings because they seem to speak for the Obama administration. And I think the risk was that sometimes it felt like the responses you'd get from various think tanks were kind of canned or so in alliance with whatever, you know, political power that was in sway that it often didn't – some feel like, well, I'm getting that much more than just talking to an official. But how, at this time, where we have another big shift and, you know, a pretty strong personality, how – I'm curious, Jane, how you see it as someone from more of a liberal think tank, and Ed as someone from conservative, how this plays out. Or, I don't know, maybe it doesn't fit into your calculations.

MS. HARMAN: I think Donald Trump is calling Ed.

MR. FEULNER: Somebody is. (Laughter.)

MS. HARMAN: Yeah. Well, I would take issue with being – the word liberal can mean lots of things, like a liberal order. But the Wilson Center was chartered by Congress in the late '60s to be the living memorial to our only Ph.D. president. We have a presidential board, which when I was hired was mostly Republicans appointed by George W. Bush. It's now Republicans and Democrats. It always was bipartisan. But we're prohibited from lobbying and we are strictly nonpartisan. So we try to serve it up as straight as we can do it.

And the – I mentioned the term safe political space. That was coined to me by my friend Lindsey Graham when I was leaving Congress, and I said, "Well, you know, should I do this? What do you think?" And he said, "Do it. It's a place where we can all come and discuss the issues which we really can't discuss while we're in Congress, because the place is so unfortunately toxically polarized." And that's why we can also do things like on Friday afternoons host what I call foreign policy school, 50 Hill staffers at a time, bipartisan, bicameral. They come down and learn foreign policy issues. We try to teach objectively. We have – we break them into teams and they do sort of workouts on different issues and work together, but they get to know each other. So I would say some think tanks are set up to offer – I would say CAP might be one; I don't know if anyone is here from CAP – but I think they're proud of the fact that they represent Democratic with a big D, the Democratic point of view. We were not set up that way and we don't operate that way.

MR. FEULNER: Obviously, Heritage is a little different. We are not partisan in terms of Republican. We are unashamedly, unabashedly conservative in terms of our general philosophy and our outlook on policies. But Jane, I think, made the critical point, and that is that all of us here and everybody in the think tank community absolutely has to depend on the credibility of our product. The facts up front on a Heritage 10-page background, the last two pages are the conclusion. And as one Washington Post editorial writer once said to me, "I love it because it's short and I can count on the facts and then I throw away the last two pages." That's fine, as long as we can agree on the facts. (Laughter.) And John and I have stood together and said jointly with the head of Brookings and Peterson and AEI and Cato, hey, a president should have the right to be able to come up with a uniform trade program. And this is not an ideological issue, it's something that goes all across the spectrum, we all agree. So there are many things that do bring us together but – and one of those has to be the reliability or the credibility of our product.

MR. HAMRE: Can I – you didn't direct it to me, but let me just say I think it would be very frightening to me if there was only one think tank in America. I think that would be a very bad thing, because America's too complex a country to try to think that only one institution could properly represent the ideas and the perspective in America. We need – you know, thankfully, I think about half of think tanks in the world, Jim, are here in America. I think that's one of our great strengths, because we have lots of ways where new ideas can come forward. So I – yes, there are think tanks that are champions for one ideology or another. There are organizations that are nonpartisan. There are organizations that are educational. You want as much diversity as possible in this landscape because it enriches the opportunities for government to get it right.

MR. SOLOMON: Jane, you mentioned it a little in your introduction, but this idea of fake news or alternative facts has really kind of come up to the forefront in the last few weeks. I mean, I'm curious as to heads of think tanks, with this issue becoming such a dominant issue and this concern that

we're now sort of in some Orwellian world where you basically hear what you believe or – has that caused any of you to think how you're going to change your operations or your – kind of your mantra in the coming four years?

MS. HARMAN: Well, first of all, we're proud of what we do. We think we serve up quality information and recommendations. We don't lobby, but we certainly come up with policy recommendations on a variety of topics. And one of our strong points is transdisciplinary research, and we think we do that particularly well. So let me not apologize for that.

We are diversifying the media across which we disseminate information, and across which we have conversations with different audiences. Why are we doing that? Because I think the premise of your question is, news has become an echo chamber. People just go to their little slot and hear what they already believe, and then assume that's fact. Well, guess what? Wherever your slot is, it's not fact. So if we can be there too – and I assume this is true for John and Ed – and they can be there too, at least if you're – if you're on BuzzFeed or – I don't – just pick something about which I know very little, you want to see some Wilson stuff there too, or some Heritage stuff, or some CSIS stuff, not just what one writer who has some particular bias is telling you.

MR. FEULNER: A couple points. Among my other activities right now, I teach a small seminar. And I asked my students a week ago, I said how many of you read a daily newspaper, and one of my students raised his hand because his father gives him an annual subscription electronically to The Wall Street Journal, you'll be happy to know.

MR. SOLOMON: Good man.

MR. FEULNER: None of the others read a daily newspaper.

MS. HARMAN: Right, yeah.

MR. FEULNER: And this is a big concern that I'm sure all of us share, is that if we're only reading, in my case, the Daily Signal from the Heritage Foundation, which now gets about 150,000 readers a day, it – or reading CAP on the other side, hey, we've got to be able to read the same thing, come to different conclusions but based on the same – the same presentation. And that's a real concern that I get.

MR. HAMRE: I asked Andrew to pull together a presentation to help me understand this. It's actually remarkable – and frightening, really – because civil society, American business – I mean, what would happen to investors if they couldn't trust the news based on how a company performed?

MS. HARMAN: Right.

MR. HAMRE: What – how would we – how would we function as a society when we lose our moorings as to what constitutes legitimacy? And I think this is a very large issue for us to deal with. This modern technology makes it so easy to present things that look authentic, but they are absolutely adulterated. And this is going to be challenge. And I think it's a real issue for all of us.

MS. HARMAN: That's true.

MR. HAMRE: I think it's an issue we should all get together and talk about. This is not one that separates us in terms of our – the – our business models or our affiliate, you know, community. I mean, this is one where all have a legitimate interest to think this through together in an era when, frankly, so few people read newspapers. I think Andrew's chart showed that 40 percent of Americans – 47 percent of Americans say their primary source of news is Facebook. And in Facebook, you know, where you can just see anything – I saw one this morning that came through. It's just was completely loony story but – and it's that little button or like, you know, that little – hit that Facebook thing. Send it to all your friends, you know? And you'll all of a sudden creating – you're creating momentum behind something that has no authenticity. And I think think tanks are going to have to play a very important role in anchoring public debate about what really is true.

MS. HARMAN: I was just thinking about something Ed said, where he talked about their – your short reports where people tear off the back because they may not agree with your prescriptions, but they do agree with your facts. And if we can all agree – and this is hard – on a common set of facts, it's much easier to have an informed conversation about what to do. And we've lost the agreement on the common set of facts. In fact, a whole bunch of folks don't even think the facts matter. And I just – again, as somebody who spent a lot of decades in the Congress, I often say I was coasting on existing intellectual inventory. It was – I was so busy racing across the country, raising money and, you know, dodging incoming fire that I had very little chance to learn new things. That's another reason why having some factual information out there and some highly creative suggestions about policy prescriptions is so useful.

MR. SOLOMON: I – sorry.

MR. FEULNER: Jay, I was just going to remind everybody of that Daniel Moynihan quote from a generation ago, when Moynihan said, you know, Washington's a one-industry town. That one industry is government. Government has one product. That product is laws. And laws have one raw material, and that raw material is ideas. So the question is, where do the legislators, where do all the policymakers get their ideas?

MS. HARMAN: That's right.

MR. FEULNER: And fundamentally, that's why think tanks are going to continue to be absolutely central. Academics, you know, it takes too long and it's got to be Ph.D. book length, whereas we can do something that can actually impact on policy in the relatively short order, and that makes a difference.

MR. SOLOMON: I'm curious how you see the impact of technology, big data. I've been stunned in, like, the last – just over the last 12 months how much as a reporter you can get from a data analytics company, a NGO about specific subjects in ways that you could not even 24 months ago. I just, like, have an example on North Korea. I used to call think tanks around and say, you know, what's going on in North Korea, and you could get some general, you know, the Chinese are helping the North Koreans, or not doing enough. But I've been struck in the last six months where there's one analytics company that I talked to that actually can get so much data from the public sphere, just from their own data mining operations, that they can actually print out for you which Chinese companies are helping the North Koreans, why, how. I mean, it's so specific, and it's coming from not traditional think tanks and it's really changing the environment about what type of information you can get. How would think tanks see this information revolution changing their traditional roles, and is it – and is it – is this a threat or you see this as an opportunity you need to sort of take over? Because it really is – the

types of information you can get and from totally different sources than you used to be able to, seems like it's disrupting the whole national security apparatus.

MR. HAMRE: Let me – back when I was in the Defense Department, I launched an effort to try to use data mining for a counterintelligence purpose. Won't go into the specific details. But – and it was a disaster, because we were very sloppy in how we structured the inquiry. You know, if you do data mining and you are not really well – you don't structure your question, you're going to get a million frightening results, you know? And I think – this is – again, I think the role that think tanks are going to play – data mining has an enormously important role, but you really need to have a well-developed sense of policy frameworks and how government works to ask the right questions so that you get results that are meaningful for a member of Congress that has to work on legislation. So I'm not intimidated by data mining. It is – it forces us to develop new competencies and it forces us to enter into new partnerships. We – so we're now doing partnerships with people that wasn't conceivable years ago.

MR. FEULNER: Five years ago.

MR. HAMRE: But, you know, unguided or self-guided data mining can be – could be a very dangerous thing. You can find out about anything you want. You can prove almost any conclusion that you want if you do not have disciplined objective structuring of the inquiry. I think that's what we're going to do.

MS. HARMAN: Well, yes. But data mining is now central to a lot of the ways we gather intelligence. I don't think anybody missed a guy named Edward Snowden, who revealed to some people – actually, many of us in Congress had known about this – but that we have several data mining programs as part of intelligence gathering that are based on a predicate that at least seems to me to be sound, but – and that we had had a careful debate about whether these complied with the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, et cetera.

But I think that there is a role – I'm agreeing with John – that think tanks can play in exposing or creating frameworks around data mining tools. There – a recent example is this huge debate we're all having about the Russian hacks – plural – into some of our election – some parts of our 2016 election and whether we need to investigate this further. Well, interestingly, I think it was called CrowdStrike, which is a data mining firm, found out more about this, faster, than our intelligence community did. So these folks are there, the folks you're consulting about Korea. But I think it is a fair challenge – and I think John is exactly right – to all of us to think about what frameworks can work, whether they're legal or they're regulatory or they're just norms that civil society should agree to.

MR. SOLOMON: Have – I'm curious. Have you – have any of your think tanks started to sort of align with companies that are more just pure data analytics to try to harness their expertise, even if you worry sometimes it's a little too unguided?

MS. HARMAN: Well, we, again, consistent with our foreign policy school that we teach, we also do something called cyber boot camp. Similar idea: 25 Hill staffers at a time, bipartisan, bicameral, and teaching cyber, both how the internet works – you know, Internet 101, it's very useful for old people like me with digital adaptor brains, not – the adapting isn't so good. The digital isn't so good either. But teaching how the internet works and what the tools are, we call in these folks, and they help teach. And so we are not in a formal way aligning with them. We're not doing policy work

with them, but we are consulting with them and sharing this opportunity for them to talk directly to Hill staff. And guess what? Now members, Hill members want to learn this stuff, too, because, like me, they think they're behind the curve.

MR. FEULNER: At Heritage, we've had a kind of probably almost unique role in terms of some of the data analytics we've been doing internally, and that is looking at the hot buttons, if you will, the pressure points of the more than 500,000 people around the country who voluntarily every year support us. And it's a very different support model than either John or Jane have to deal with, but wanting to know, you know, why is there this antipathy to Washington, going down into our basic supporters. It's one of the reasons why in Heritage publications of the last year or so you'll see things that we're – one of our phrases is we're in Washington but not of Washington – you know, a distinction that we try to make. But, again, it's – it is a tool, in your case on Korea. I've been one of those who's long argued and our Asian Studies Center has long argued that China could do a lot more with regard to North Korea, and this comes down, then, to the questions of secondary boycotts, what Chinese banks. You know, when these kinds of questions then can be delved into and concrete results obtained, that's something that should be a tool for think tanks to use.

MR. HAMRE: Could I just –

MR. SOLOMON: Sure.

MR. HAMRE: We're in the – about one year into a major new project for us. We think we'll – it'll be one of our biggest things over the next 10 years. And it's – we call it Reconnecting Asia. It's the way in which this massive infrastructure or buildout inside Asia's transforming the geopolitics and the geoeconomics of Asia. We know we can't possibly do this on our own, and so we're – our approach on this project was to build a platform that would make us a node in a network that we will build out. We don't yet know who's going to be in this network. We're moving carefully because we're inviting people to partner with us, and that means our reputation is going to be in some sense conditional on who is a partner. So we're moving very carefully to invite partners where we don't have to independently curate their data. I – there's risk in bringing somebody else's data into my platform and then I become culpable if it's flawed data. So I need to have a – I need to have an institutional partnership where I'm confident in the trustworthiness – so – of their – of their discipline. So we're at advanced stages, talking with a couple of international financial institutions, you know, like the World Bank and the Asia Development Bank and things like this to start entering into partnerships on sharing data to start building out a network. And we don't really know yet where this is going to go, but it's a platform that will be available for researchers – our researchers, other researchers – to start evaluating this phenomenal new development. I mean, this is epochal change, and we need to find a way in which we can understand it. So we're experimenting. I mean, it's a complicated problem about reaching out to somebody else and then using that data, because you have to understand is it – is it trustworthy. And so that's always going to be a dimension for us.

MR. SOLOMON: But is it – so you think think tanks have a special role, in some ways, trying to balance what is a situation you mentioned too – I can think of three or four examples over the past year where either think tanks or NGOs were learning about hacking or money laundering types of issues before the intelligence community. I'm sure of it. And the guys who were doing it are a lot of times, you know, 28-year-olds who are sitting in some place in Chinatown just datamining and finding some incredible stuff. But – and they're doing it before the IC. I've seen it. And you've –

MS. HARMAN: Well, but that's who the IC's trying to hire now, too.

MR. SOLOMON: Right.

MS. HARMAN: It's a little tricky because they can't pay, in some cases, the same salaries. But how do you – can I flip the question? – as a reporter working for a highly respected journalistic platform, how do you know that these analytic firms you're turning to are accurate?

MR. SOLOMON: I mean, I've been amazed just because what they show you is so precise as far as, you know, this company in this city.

MS. HARMAN: But how do you know it's accurate?

MR. SOLOMON: But you check. Then you – I mean, you don't just write it. You go and send someone to this company and –

MR. HAMRE: Can I make an observation about this? When I was – when I was the comptroller at DOD, if I ever sent a letter that had this program will cost \$2.0 billion, everybody questioned it. If I said it cost \$1.798 billion, nobody questioned it. Precision implies accuracy.

MR. SOLOMON: Right.

MR. HAMRE: Which is to say, you've got to be careful here.

MS. HARMAN: You've got to be careful here, you know?

MR. SOLOMON: I mean, I'm saying the information is so precise that it's much easier to –

MR. FEULNER: To verify.

MR. SOLOMON: – to try to verify it. Not like you can run it without verifying it yourself, but when someone's telling you that this company in this, you know, city is doing X, Y and Z, you can actually go there and suss it out yourself.

So it's – another issue that's come up obviously a lot in the last year – and there was a big series in The New York Times last year about funding and, you know, the tension between how think tanks raise money, what types of projects they're doing and this concern in some cases that there's pay-to-play or, you know, think tanks are writing in a sense what their donors are asking for. You know, maybe there's money from the Middle East and the projects are focused on issues they're interested. How do you balance that tension between needing money, having collaboration with either governments or companies, but also not being, you know, seen as being paying to play or being – having your research, you know, basically doctored to support their goals? So maybe you can start.

MR. FEULNER: Sure. Well, as I said before, the Heritage funding model is different from most other think tanks because we do have this broad base of public support, that it accounts for about 60 percent of our annual income. Another 32 percent comes from foundations, about less than 5 percent from corporations, and the rest is off of either sales of publications – very small – or interest on and income earned on our investments.

Thirty years ago, another CSIS alum, Dick Allen, and I started the Asian Studies Center at Heritage, and the first thing that we decided internally and the board approved was that's fine, but if you're going to do it, you have to raise dedicated funds that will in fact then be an endowment kind of thing. So we did that and we raised about \$30 million. Alas, it doesn't provide as much income today as it did eight or 10 years ago, but, you know, by doing it in an endowed way, there's – that kind of solves that question. The problem with endowment, from my perspective as a former CEO of a think tank is, endowment makes you kind of less responsive to the market. And if you're trying to keep your base broad and keep everybody kind of marching in the same direction in terms of what your policies are, that becomes an extra challenge. Jane has to get one check a year, and so that makes it easier, right?

MS. HARMAN: Yeah, right. (Laughter.) Well, to remind – Ed, you would know this – Pat Moynihan was the founder of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. That's our full name. It's a mouthful. And he conceived of us when he was in the Nixon White House, and he was the mover behind the charter and setting us up. And we're a little different because we are called a federal trust instrument. I can never remember those three words. But we're a public-private organization. We do get some funding from Congress each year for our 150 international scholars, who are selected by a dispassionate board. We don't hire them because they have some personal view on whatever, but they write great books and think great thoughts, and some of them come from the journalistic community. And one of them just won a Pulitzer for his work on ISIS. We're proud of him. It wouldn't have happened but for us. We take full credit. But, anyway, so we get some federal money. We get a lot of foundation money. We have an endowment. We can take foreign money – and this is interesting – including from foreign governments, and what we do in every case, even if it's for \$12,000 from some government, is we have our board, our federally – our presidentially appointed board approve every single foreign government gift, and we are totally transparent about all of our donors. And does that work perfectly? Probably not. But we think we don't produce a paid-for product for anybody.

MR. HAMRE: So let me step back a little philosophically again. You know, there is no such thing as disinterested money. You know, nobody has ever approached me to say I don't care what you're going to do with it, I don't care what you want to study, I just want to give you some money. I mean, that's never happened to me, and that doesn't happen in Washington, OK? People make investments, and they are hoping that it helps make a contribution to something. So, then, let me come back to say this is where you have to ground yourself on the role we play. There are particular interests – these are the terms of art in ethics law in the United States. Particular interests means you have a particular interest in building a hotel and you need to get zoning and you've got to do this kind of thing. That's a particular interest.

MS. HARMAN: That's a random example.

MR. HAMRE: Well, I'm sorry. (Laughter.) That's a particular interest. It's a legitimate interest. And what – it's the role of government to say, how does that particular interest fit against public good? Our role – we have a privileged position in American society. We are allowed to take contributions that are tax-exempt. So that puts us in a very privileged position. And we, then, have to put ourselves squarely on the side of evaluating it for the public good. So if somebody comes and says I really want to fund you guys, I'd like to have this study done, the first question I ask is, well, that's an interesting question. I'm going to recruit your competitors. Do you mind? And if they say, well, I'm not so keen on that, you know, you say then you need to go to a consultancy. You're looking for help for a company. You're not looking for public good. And, again – and I have to – this is – it's a

constant challenge. Every project we do, we have to evaluate: Are we really focused on the public good side of the table? And the only way then to retain your legitimacy is to be fully transparent.

MS. HARMAN: Yeah.

MR. HAMRE: You know, who is giving you money for what? So every public-facing thing we do, whether it's a conference like this, whether it's a publication, if a particular interest paid for it, we let everybody know. If we invite someone to a conference to be a speaker and we say this is being funded by the Smith Richardson Foundation, we tell them that in advance so that everybody can make their own judgment of whether or not they think it's a legitimate way to participate in a public debate. So if we're constantly – the only way to deal with this central problem is transparency.

MS. HARMAN: Right.

MR. SOLOMON: Is there any particular tension dealing with foreign money compared to corporate money, or is the challenge –

MR. HAMRE: Oh, I think – no, you have extra – you have extra obligations when it's foreign money, and it gets complicated because sometimes foreign money comes through the guise of a think tank, and most foreign think tanks are really top-down funded government institutions. So that triggers a whole thing called the – let's see – Foreign Agent Registration Act guidelines, and there's a whole series of things that we have to go through: a legal review when someone approaches us with – we're partnering with a think tank, you know, that's located in Budapest, and it's on space policy – Bucharest, excuse me – on space policy. And so we have to go through a legal review and make sure that it's very clear, the guidelines. And sometimes you say we will not represent in any – to any government agency, we will not present, we will not accompany you. If you want to go talk to somebody in the U.S. government, you have to find other ways to do that. That's not our role and we will not do it. So there's a whole series of things that we have to do for that.

MR. SOLOMON: And there's another dimension, at least, that we have – that we are addressing, and that is having our scholars sign conflict of interest statements, not just the people who are paid by the Wilson Center. Some of our scholars are not paid, some are. But we think it's important that we don't have registered foreign agents as scholars – that may be obvious – but people who are doing things that seem extremely partisan on behalf of a specific interest, then allegedly writing dispassionate or doing dispassionate research that we think that's a conflict. And we're making sure we have the information so that won't happen.

MR. HAMRE: Yeah. I mean, again, it starts with understanding we have a privileged position in American society. We are given the right to accept funds that are tax-deductible. So we have an absolute obligation to be on the public goods side of that equation.

MR. SOLOMON: All right. Are there any other issues that you guys want to raise before I open it up to our distinguished audience?

MR. HAMRE: No, I would love to hear their questions

MS. HARMAN: I just want to flatter Jim for a minute because it – you know, we've all be doing this a long time, I think before Jim got his 50 interns to start churning out this interesting stuff. It matters that you're doing this, I just want to say, because you are highlighting the right issues, bringing

attention to the fact that there is now a worldwide movement. I think maybe the only thing I'd suggest is over time that we change the name of think tank – there's something sort of awkward about it – and I don't know. Maybe we're policy incubators or something. But just a thought.

MR. HAMRE: Swamp rats.

MS. HARMAN: Excuse you. We are not swamp rats. (Laughter.)

MR. HAMRE: OK, let's open it up for the –

MR. SOLOMON: Let's open it up. Who's – right there.

Q: Hi.

MR. SOLOMON: And identify yourself, please.

Q: OK. My name is Alex Paul. I work at a think tank here in town.

But my question is, last summer I went to the Midwest, to the West and to the South doing research for my think tank, and when we got there, we just got to these cities, said where we're from. They said, oh, why does a think tank in D.C. even care about us? So my question is pretty simple, which is how does – how do we break out of our Washington, D.C. bubble, and how do think tanks reengage with the American heartland and the American people and, you know, make sure that when we make policy recommendations that might turn into laws, we are actually basing them on what people, you know, in the rest of the U.S. are thinking and not just what the D.C. conversation is of the day?

MR. FEULNER: Well, at Heritage, one of the things we're about to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with is what we call the Resource Bank, which will bring together 500 different organizations. This year, the meeting happens to be in Colorado Springs. It will be in April. These hundreds of organizations not only from all around the United States but from around the world as well coming together, sharing ideas – I'm sure most of them are listed in Jim's various categories – and bringing different perspectives in. And it's one of the things that my successor, Senator DeMint, has asked me to do specifically, is to go around – and, you know, next month I'll be in Chicago and then on a separate trip I'll be in Oklahoma City – and, you know, it is very important, I think, for people in Washington to get outside of Washington and talk to real American people, and that's part of our jobs.

MS. HARMAN: Yeah, we do that all the time. We take our show on the road not just in America but internationally. We have affiliations with academic institutions and think tanks everywhere. And Ed just mentioned Chicago, and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs did pretty well on this, I – this and did the report. And we have affiliated with them for years. We do policy programming with them in Chicago. They come here and they release their annual report on what the world thinks about – what the U.S. thinks about foreign policy at the Wilson Center. But what's good about that – and you're right – is we get our voice out there and we hear from others. But we also, when we do these things, include as members of our panels some locals from the policy community – and pick a place. And we're also now able to do some of this programming in foreign languages. We – you know, we're fluent in Spanish. We're also fluent in Mandarin, as an example, and so we can do these panels in China in Chinese and we can also do them in the U.S. in Chinese. And that changes how the audience – a lot of U.S. people, not including me, are fluent in Mandarin, and the guy who

heads our Kissinger Institute is a really fluent Chinese speaker. But at any rate, it changes the sort of tone of the panel. So I think this applies to all of us, and I think it's an important question that you asked. It matters, not to stay in this bubble.

MR. HAMRE: You know, this – we're debating this question right now. I, like most of our scholars, there were a lot – there was a lot in this election that was shocking to us, things that we just didn't understand, and so we're asking ourselves how should we reassess our operating model. You know, historically our model is to be a neutral space in Washington where people with interests and the government that has to do with those interests can meet dispassionately to deal with them. And Washington is a town – it's a strange town, because basically everybody who lives here is here to represent somebody who doesn't live here, you know? Now, there's power in that, because it means that there is a way to aggregate national interests much more efficiently by working with the people that are in Washington. I mean, whether it's trade associates, the pastry and pie fillers association, the national farm bureau – I mean, there are all – there's so many institutions in Washington who have a business of understanding how people feel in the countryside. So I think our model is going to adapt by doing much more connecting – networking, connecting within the Washington environment, because it's a much more efficient way to learn what people in the country are thinking. And – but we have to watch ourselves that we're not just caught in this Washington bubble. I mean, this is a town – it's a giant self-licking ice cream cone, this town is, you know? (Laughter.) I mean, we just love ourselves.

MS. HARMAN: Better than a swamp, anyway.

MR. HAMRE: And so we have to be careful about it.

MS. HARMAN: Yeah.

MR. HAMRE: But I do think that there's a huge opportunity to learn more of what the country's thinking by tapping into the structures that are already in this town.

MS. HARMAN: You know, John, there's one we haven't discussed, and that's the ambassador corps here.

MR. HAMRE: Yeah.

MS. HARMAN: They're very interesting.

MR. HAMRE: Yeah, yeah, very talented.

MS. HARMAN: They certainly come through the Wilson Center all the time. We've been doing programming recently on how the world views the challenges and opportunities of our – the – this election.

MR. FEULNER: New administration.

MS. HARMAN: Yeah. And ambassadors are a huge source of information. They also want information from all of us to take back to their countries. So there – John is right, that there are many audiences already in this town that we can mine for information and share information with.

MR. HAMRE: Yeah, there sure are.

MR. SOLOMON: More questions? And please identify yourself. There's a microphone right there.

MR. HAMRE: Just so we can know you.

MS. HARMAN: He used to be Tom Dine.

Q: My name still is Tom Dine, and I'm fascinated by this topic, because it is critical.

And maybe this is a question also to Jim. How does the role of authoritarian governments plays in your thought processes, selecting topics to study, and what are you going to advocate? And getting back to being open, how do you deal with authoritarian money that comes into think tanking, whether it's the Persian Gulf or somewhere else?

MR. HAMRE: Can I just start on this? Because you've hit a very raw nerve for me. (Laughter.) And I think we are, as a nation, very much back to where we were in 1947 and '48. We're starting to see the reemergence of two competing worldviews – you know, an authoritarian worldview – it can be whether it's in Tehran or whether it's in Beijing or whether it's in Moscow or wherever – that establishes the view that legitimacy of government comes from some place outside of the people they represent. And we have liberal democracies that are now under siege. They're struggling to deal with globalization. They're struggling to solve problems for their own citizens when the problems go beyond the reach of their sovereign remit. And there's a – I think a great, great battle coming between the liberal international system that bases its legitimacy on representing its citizens versus authoritarian regimes that are taking some external basis for their legitimacy and imposing it through a command mobilization system upon their society. These are now coming into conflict again. This vision that we were in a post-history world at the end of the Cold War that eliminated this threat is wrong. And we've got several projects right now, which is all basically about the theme of the contracting civil space around the world. And that applies to businessmen – you know, I mean, businessmen want open markets. They depend on information, free flow of information for efficient allocation of markets. This is something that conservatives want. Liberals want this. I mean, the closing of civil society is a great threat to – you know, from the bottom up. So this is, I think, going to be a defining issue for us, I think all of us, for the coming decade, probably the rest of my working life.

MS. HARMAN: Right.

MR. HAMRE: We're back in 1948.

MR. SOLOMON: Do you guys want to hit that too?

MS. HARMAN: No, I think John was depressing enough. (Laughter.)

MR. SOLOMON: Way there in the back.

Q: Thanks very much. I'm Rajesh Mirchandani from the Center for Global Development.

Very interesting to hear you talk about the challenge to civil discourse around the world and very interesting to hear you set out the problem of the alternative fact landscape that we seem to find

ourselves in at the moment. But given that placing huge value on civil discourse is important to think tanks and given that facts are our currency, what's your answer? How do we navigate this new alternative fact reality?

MR. HAMRE: Well, I would – let me just start by saying I think that we're going to be – we have to think again about our operating model. I think we're going to have to be in a world where we're much more partnering on projects. You know, this is – it's harder to partner on projects, frankly. There's always – for think tanks there's always a conflict over who pays for what, who gets what revenue, all that kind of stuff. So it – there's a – there's a limitation on it, but I think that there's going to be an imperative to a much wider networking going forward.

MS. HARMAN: I would just add, though, courage is required. We should not dumb down what we do because we think audiences don't want to hear things. That doesn't mean we should be – at least the Wilson Center will not be critical of things – the Wilson Center will agree with some things – and we were talking about this before – and disagree with things, and we will put on balanced programming. But our voice needs to be strong and clear. And I was – somebody I like very much is Dani Pletka at AEI, and she never pulls a punch. And boy, oh boy, was she out there the other day on this issue, saying we have to be true to our values and fearlessly state what we believe in. And, again, AEI's not exactly the same model as the Wilson Center, but we need to be clear that just as we don't serve some particular business interest or some not – undemocratic foreign government interest, we also don't just play one side and come up with a narrower bandwidth because we think if we say anything else it will displease that one side.

MR. FEULNER: Let me just chime in with a – I think one of the most insightful pieces pre-election that I had occasion to read. It was in the October issue of the Atlantic magazine. And in it the author made the point of the distinction between the pro-Trumpers who took him seriously but not literally, versus the anti-Trumpers who took him literally but not seriously. And a lot of mistakes were made not – prior to that, the publication of that article and since that article. And unfortunately, I think they're still being made. In the last 24, 48 hours, whatever you think about the policy about the wall, there are now pieces of it being put in place in terms of what is going to happen and there is now a concession from the White House that it will not necessarily be a 20-foot high wall along the whole southern border. But of course, what the – what the author of that article argued and what I would maintain is what Donald Trump was saying was he is going to control immigration on the southern border, which has not been done by the Washington establishment in either party, whereas, well, how can he possibly build a wall and how can he possibly get Mexico to pay for it, because they're not going to do that and they can't do that, how can you build a wall and – when you're going through a river and this kind of thing. So I think we have to – if you use that distinction as you review what the current administration is starting to do, I think you might have a better understanding of where they're going and what direction they're taking.

MS. HARMAN: There also are some competing goods around the border, which is obvious. There's cross-border manufacturing. There's tourism. There are private property rights along the Texas border, more so than more of the borders west of Texas. And having a thoughtful conversation about what are the equities, including keeping our country safe, is something think tanks can do and should do, in my view – we're doing it – and maybe that'll cool the rhetoric and increase the focus on what are the best sets of policies to build protection – which is what I think the wall is shorthand for – protection against an influx of terrorists or drug lords or put in some category threats to the United States across that border. And by the way, there's a Canadian border and there are East Coast and

West Coast borders and there are airports, and so forth and so on, and it's not just a one-dimensional issue.

MR. HAMRE: Can I just – this is about – we're going to have a big debate on NAFTA coming up here, and right now we've got this – NAFTA's a four-letter word, not a five-letter acronym. No, and – but NAFTA was absolutely essential so that American workers could be competitive at a time when manufacturing was going to China. If we didn't have the broader resource base of North America – which is now an integrated economy – if we didn't have that broader resource base to be more productive, we couldn't have kept up during the last 20 years. Now we have to have an honest discussion about this. You know, I – look, I think it's dreadful what's happened in parts of America that just collapsed, you know? And we – shame on us as a nation for not putting in places the structures to help them find new ways to make a productive and meaningful living. But we needed this integrated economy if the American economy was going to succeed over the last 20 years. When are we going to start talking about that? I mean, we have to start broadening this picture so we have a more honest view about what NAFTA actually has done for us.

MR. SOLOMON: This gentleman here, please.

Q: Hi, I'm Jerry Glenn with The Millennium Project.

I've had about 40-plus years of experience in futures research, and I've noticed a disturbing trend in think tanks. In the early days of RAND and Hudson and Institute for the Future and Future – (inaudible) – (in Paris ?), the long-term future was the big deal. That's what you focused on, and you traced it back to the present. Now what I'm seeing is it's policy analysis, the present tense. And since the rate of change is accelerating, the long-term future is more important than ever before. And I see very little access on serious long-term thinking and a lot of putting down about that sort of alternative stuff.

MS. HARMAN: I mentioned that earlier. I think it's very important for us to take a long-term view. There also are short-term issues we could focus on, and do, but that, I think, is one of the strengths of think tanks. We can think beyond the next election cycle, which plagues most folks in – who are president or in Congress and – or political appointees in the government, or some foreign governments, too. And so I agree with you, that that's something we should offer and it should go both directions. Looking backwards historically, we have a history and public policy program. We have some of the most important Cold War archives available free online through a digital archives portal that we have. But it's important to understand the history of the Korean Peninsula if you want to assess the present problems and a longer-term future. So, yes, good question.

MR. FEULNER: I'd just say that if you want to split this panel very quickly, find a Herman Kahn Jr. in the audience here and we'll get into a bidding war for him.

Q: I worked with him for 10 years.

MR. FEULNER: We're always looking for them.

MS. HARMAN: That's right.

MR. SOLOMON: The lady over here.

Q: I'm Jane Thery. I'm a senior official at the Organization of American States.

And we're here in Washington, and I'd like your advice about how to best engage our think tank community with very limited resources.

MR. HAMRE: Well, let me – let me say that all of us on our side of the equation are anxious to have working ties with people like you, because it's one of the channels through which we hope to have influence in shaping your thinking about policy.

Q: Right.

MR. HAMRE: So it's an open door. You know, just yesterday I met with some folks from the State Department. There's a very unusual thing called the Una Chapman Cox Foundation that exists only to do studies for the State Department. And it was a woman who was – had a perilous accident and a State Department consular officer saved her, basically, and got her safely home, and she dedicated her estate to helping the State Department in perpetuity. And this is a wonderful thing to be able to work with them, because it means we get to sit with the people that have to consider the ideas. Now, that means we have an obligation to really create a very broad-based review of the topic. You know, we can't just channel one theme when we're working on it. But I'll tell you, the think tank world wants to have working ties with people like you. So reach out. We're delighted to have that.

MR. FEULNER: Amen.

MR. SOLOMON: One last question in the very back.

Q: My name is Kelsey Shawns (ph), and I've been working at policy incubators or think tanks in Europe, Canada and the U.S. for the past several years.

And my question is, because we have a panel of representatives from American think tanks and we've just gone through this election cycle, we've already been talking about these ideas, but how much – you know, you brought up Moynihan's point about that ideas are crucial and the underpinning of really the work that we do at think tanks. And when we talk about, you know, bringing ideas from around the U.S. back to Washington and the messaging back out, how much are we concerned with reaching the average person who – and where they get their ideas from and how they shape their own ideas? Because I think as we've seen from this election cycle, that can have a huge impact and influence in surprising ways. So my question for you is, how concerned are we as think tanks and what types of ideas or what types of things are we doing to address this?

MS. HARMAN: Well, I mentioned that earlier about our effort to be across all social media platforms, because increasing numbers of people, especially kids – I mean, my own four kids don't read print newspapers, God forbid, and barely read any newspapers. They're not dumb kids, but they get segmented news from wherever they want to get it. But we're trying to be in those spaces. So that – we can't physically go out and touch everybody, although we do go to Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Dallas, et cetera, you know, Beijing and elsewhere – but if we're – if some of our interesting products are in those spaces, we're hoping that people with intellectual curiosity – and I always felt – you know, I'm representing people for nine terms in Congress – that the people are underestimated. A lot of people want better information, and if you make it available in ways that they can access it, they will seize it. And then we have all kinds of ways they can access us on – all of these folks do – online. And one of our new formats that we – that we are using increasingly is called the

Ground Truth Briefing, where we have people, scholars, academics, public officials in foreign countries on the telephone in a conference call format to discuss what's going on wherever they are. And people can call in for that, so you don't have to physically be here. And our audiences are building and our audiences are getting younger. That's how we know if we're succeeding.

MR. HAMRE: When I came to CSS, we had seven people in our publication shop. They were editors and sort of thing. I now have one, and we – but we now have 15 people in our Ideas Lab.

MS. HARMAN: Cool.

MR. HAMRE: These are producing multimedia products, and we – one of our guys developed a very – an interactive map to show about missile defense and missile defense programs in Europe, and it was downloaded 500,000 times in the first three days. So, I mean, I – we're using – we've decided to address this through using modern technologies to convey complex stories in a gripping and graphic way. That's how – that's how we're handling it.

MR. FEULNER: Yeah. Very broadly speaking, I guess, all of us have – all the Washington-based think tanks, anyway, have two audiences, and we will probably vary a little bit in terms of how much emphasis we put on each of the two. But one is the Washington policymaking community, and the other is interested citizens around the country, around the world, who then presumably will also have an impact back on the Washington policy community, because, again, that's why our – my institution specifically is located on Capitol Hill, because that's where we view our primary target audience to be resident.

MR. SOLOMON: Great. Well, thanks, everyone. Thanks, Jim, for your new report.

MS. HARMAN: Hear, hear.

MR. SOLOMON: Thanks, CSIS and John, and thanks, Ed and Jane. Thanks for coming. Appreciate it.

(END)