

**The Nixon Seminar on Conservative Realism and National Security
on U.S.-Japan Relations**

June 1, 2021

The following is a rushed transcript. Please check back soon for a revised version.

Hugh Hewitt: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, I'm Hugh Hewitt, the president of the Nixon foundation. Welcome to the fourth gathering of the Nixon seminar. Co-chaired by former secretary of state Mike Pompeo and former national security advisor ambassador Robert O'Brien, as we prepare for a seminar at the Nixon library about the 50th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan on the 17th of this month, the seminar tonight we'll focus on the U S Japan relationship and Japan's situation, problems and challenges as well as promises going forward with that. I'll turn it over to secretary Pompeo and Ambassador O'Brien our co-chairs

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Michael Pompeo: Great. Thank you Hugh, that I'd open with just a few comments from these last four years, the experiences that I had and that my teams had, we knew this was an important relationship, and we had a, a great opportunity because we were also working with a prime minister, Prime Minister Abe, who knew how important the relationship between the United States and Japan was. He and president Trump got along wonderfully. It gave all of us who were working. I'm sure. Ambassador Brian will concur, give us all the opportunity to go build this relationship out in the places that mattered most. My first opportunity to meet with my Japanese counterpart was actually at CIA, was now national security advisor. [inaudible] who was my counterpart for the Japanese intelligence services. We were working together when we were dealing with a problem with Chairman Kim in North Korea. That was the first time that we had the opportunity for me to actually see up close how the Japanese government was thinking about the threats to their region. And what was heartening to me was it was very clear that while we were addressings the challenges of the missiles that were being fired and the nuclear risks in North Korea, the Japanese never lost sight, that the greater challenge was the Chinese communist party that they knew that this was something that was a threat that they needed a good ally and good friend with.

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And so, while we were working along with the south Koreans and them to build out a strategy on North Korea, they were ever mindful of the fact that the Chinese had a big role in this and played a functionally functionally masterful role with how chairman Kim was thinking about what we were doing and what mattered between the United States and Japan, two other issues, then I'll turn it over to Ambassador O'Brien, you know at the same time we were working on complex trade issues just as the president was confronting the Chinese with tariffs. We also had complicated trade relationships with the Japanese as well. There were also defense issues that were around, and we were trying to assist the Japanese in building out their own capabilities, and they had complex

internal political situation, which didn't always make that straightforward prime minister Abe was very, very determined to make it happen.

[00:03:30] But time and time again, we talked go, you, you mentioned you Okinawa. We saw time and time again, prefecture issues, local issues that mattered an awful lot and made the logistics of how we were going to execute and help the Japanese execute their defense program, made it very complicated and internal issues inside of Japan. And I'm sure we can talk about that some more this evening. Lastly, China, they were resolute and understanding what mattered about Taiwan, what mattered in Hong Kong, but it was very difficult for them to find a footing for them to find a place where they could talk about this in the same way that the Trump administration was able to talk about this. And I'll leave for a further discussion, all of the dynamics that were at play, but the Japanese came to understand that they were going to have to lead that their role in the quad was going to be central.

[00:04:00] We could push a lot in the United States. We could do our level best to make the quad grow and prosper, but the Japanese were going to have to demonstrate that they were prepared to work with the Indians and with the Australians in a way that would matter for Japanese defense as well. Last piece, it was always complicated because of the deep historic issues between Japan and South Korea as well. There's a famous picture of me with my counterparts in those two countries where it looks like they, the last thing they wanted to do was be in the frame together. This is something that the United States has to be mindful of as we try to encourage the nations and the regions to work alongside of us, to defend the west against the threat from the Chinese communist party. There are, you know, bilateral dynamics that are deep historical and always in the minds of the populaces of these two countries. Even if the leaders want to take the country in a direction, that is the one that the United States is trying to urge them to get towards. And so with that, Robert ambassador O'Brien, I'll turn it over to you. And then we'll open up to the larger group, Robert.

[00:05:00] **Robert O'Brien:** Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. And, I want to compliment Secretary Pompeo, Mike, on the work he did with Japan and with his, his counterpart, foreign minister, Thomas Mizzou. It was, it was really impressive work. The quad turned out to be, I think one of the real singular achievements, expanding the quad, turned out to be one of the singularity.

[00:05:30] **Michael Pompeo:** I can't hear you. I don't know if everybody else can or not, but I'm unable to hear you.

Robert O'Brien: Do we have comms?

Okay. I I've been told we're good to go out and secretary are you, can you hear now?

Michael Pompeo: Hey, Robert, it looks like we're, we're not getting your sound.

Yeah. Can you let the guys here? It looks like everyone is shaking their head. No, I cannot

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Robert O'Brien:

Hey guys, we're not, we're not now comms wise or how are we doing? We get down. All right, Mike. Mike, can you hear me? Yes, we have, you know, Robert. All right. Great. Well, listen, I want to, I want what I was saying. Maybe the Chinese had cut that off, but I was complimenting secretary Pompeo on the, the work he did on this critical relationship between the United States and Japan, especially in helping, using Japan's influence and, and building out the quad, which I think is going to be viewed historically as one of the singular foreign policy achievements of the Trump administration. And, and no one worked harder than that than, than Secretary Pompeo and worked harder, that relationship. So, again, a lot of the credit for what was done over the past four years with with the Japanese foreign minister with Kitamura Assan who Mike worked with as head of their Intel service.

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And I later worked with when he was the the head of the national security secretary at, that that groundwork was laid by Mike. So you know, that, that was excellent work, I think, as we talked today about the, and we're gonna talk again next week on two weeks on June 17th about the Okinawa reversion treaty, that's an accomplishment, it's another one of these Nixon accomplishments that was, that was really terrific at the time, but has looked more and more important over the years, as we look back at President Nixon's legacy, getting Okinawa back to, to Japan, so that it could be governed for the past 50 years and in a post-war by post-war Japanese governments is all the more critical when we look at what the PRC and the communist party of China has been doing, whether it's Tibet or India, the south China sea, the Senkaku is how they've steadily been expanding their sovereignty over, over the territory of other nations and, being very assertive in the, in the region.

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The Chinese have started to talk about Okinawa in a similar sense as they do the south China sea. And certainly the Senkakus is that they're, as they would refer to them as the Diaoyu islands. And this really started back in 2012, 2013, when Chinese researchers, apparently discovered or started publicizing the fact that in the 15th, 15th and 16th century, an independent kingdom and the islands had included Okinawa, paid some tribute to the Japanese emperor. And they started using that as the grounds to claim some sort of sovereignty over Okinawan, the Senkaku islands. Normally that would be something that we would, you know, that would be rejected out of hand and eyes would roll in international forums, but this is the same sort of approach that China has taken on the South China Sea.

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The fact that the, the Okinawa reverted to Japan as it has been under Japanese governance for the past half century, I think it makes Japan's confidence in, in their ability to, to govern those islands, all the more secure. It also removes it would have been much more difficult to be dealing with those sorts of claims by the Chinese, if the US was still asserting some sort of trusteeship, post-war trusteeship over the islands. So again, I think looking back and in history, I know it was controversial at the time, and there were some folks at DOD that, that didn't think the reversion made sense. I think, in hindsight it was a, it was a great achievement of President Nixon and his administration, Secretary Kissinger, and

[00:10:00] others. The second thing I'd like to mention is, is just the flip side of the coin that, that Secretary Pompeo spoke about.

Robert O'Brien: And that was the relationship between the national security council, at least during the year and a half that I was there and the Japanese equivalent, the national security and my relationship with, Kitamura and if you haven't heard Kitamura, you, you should get to know him. He's probably the, the most powerful, capable, tough, national security advisor, or one of the, one of the most powerful, capable, and toughest national security advisors in the world. But he's a name that's not necessarily familiar to Americans or, or even people who are well versed in foreign policy, but he's got a, he had an extremely close relationship with Prime Minister Abe and had tremendous influence there. He's had that same sort of relationship, excuse me, with prime, Mr. Suga, he understands the challenges, that the PRC and the communist party of China present to the region and to the world as well as anyone.

[00:11:00] So he was incredibly supportive and the, the, the Japanese NSS was very supportive of the quad. once COVID-19 really hit the Japanese took a leading role in nearshoring and reassuring industries from China. they continue to do that because they did not want to be, they don't want the CCP to have leverage over Japan the way that they have because of the manufacturing supply chains in Japan stretch deep into China. And they're trying to, to change that, that dynamic. so they've been very, forward-leaning they've been forward-leaning on defenses. the secretary Pompeo pointed out, um, they also understand the importance of Taiwan and ensuring the Taiwan is not subject to an invasion and, and taken over by the communist party of China by the PRC. if that happened geopolitically, it would be extraordinarily difficult for the Japanese they'd essentially be surrounded by the Chinese.

[00:11:30] And, and so that's something that, that I think the Japanese understand very well, and they, and under both prime minister, Abe and prime minister Suga, they've been very supportive of the U S and, and supportive of, of Taiwan and president Tsai. we had a shared strategic vision with the Japanese during, during our time in office. secretary Pompeo is in my time in office with the president. I don't think we have anywhere the interoperability of our military and especially our Naval services are as close as they are with the Japanese. and we've got some close Naval relationships with Australia, with the UK, with Canada, and I think Japan falls right into the, that category so much so that even with the language barrier Japanese ship serve alongside our ships and carrier battle groups and, and strike groups, I'll just mention two clouds for Japan and secretary Pompeo beat me to the punch on both of these, but I spent a lot of my time dealing with my counterparts in, in South Korea and Japan trying to bring them together including a one meeting that Matt Pottinger and Alex Grey, who are on the line here will remember were, were both of them desperately want to you know a meeting and a photo with, with president Trump.

[00:12:30] And we had to get the the just Somia the general security of military information agreement extended. And, and we did that, and then we're able to take them into the oval office. And I, I think they wanted individual photos with president Trump,

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[00:14:00] and he insisted that they take photos together to show the strength of the Alliance. but you know, that that's a tough relationship and, and arises out of, out of some very difficult circumstances from that the second world war. but we need to keep working that, and, and the us is the essential partner in that tripartite relationship. And we can't allow China to drive a wedge between Korea and Japan further than it is. And, and we, we don't want a wedge between either the U S and Korea, the U S and South Korea in the U S and Japan.

[00:14:30] So now that that's going to be a tough issue that we'll keep working at, and the U S is an indispensable party there. the other area that we've got to focus on our, our Japanese military expenditures we've seen the largest peacetime buildup of a military since the 1930s since Germany rearmed we're seeing that take place in the PRC right now, Japan has spent a little over 1% of its GDP which is still a large number given the size of the GDP, but given the challenge presented by, by China and the massive defense budget that the Chinese have we need the Japanese to step up, like we've asked our NATO allies to step up and get to the 2% plus number for, for percentage of GDP spent on defense. But then there are also some, some smaller things that can be done even within their current budget.

[00:15:00] , the Japanese have very capable so-called submarines, but they retire them with plenty of life left on and plenty of, of tread left on the tires if they would extend those retirements and their submarine force by a couple of years for each sub they, they could have a dramatic improvement, the number of submarines operating, and these are, these are highly capable very effective submarines, very silent with technology that can't be matched by forever diesel electric subs by any other country in the world. So the more of those we have out there, the more of a deterrent there is to malign activity by the the PRC. So we need to, we need to work with them on those issues. so, so with that as a a summary I'll, I'll kick it back to Mike to ask the first question of our panel or to weigh on anything I said, but I just want to emphasize this a very strong relationship. it's a relationship that I think became stronger over the past four years and properly managed. Um, you know, I'm, I'm hopeful that, that even under the current administration, that, that the Japanese American relationship will remain strong. And, and that the platform that that we strengthened is continues to be built on by president Biden secretary blank and Jake Sullivan and others, and the realize the, the great strategic advantages that come from a strong yes, Japan relationship. Mr. Secretary.

Michael Pompeo: Thanks. You know, it's, it's worth noting. I think many of you who've served in government as well would appreciate this. The people matter an awful lot. You heard Robert talk about particular names and my counterparts at, at state we're vers Tara Kono, and then [inaudible] both, both good people who you can pick up the phone. I don't know how many times I've talked to Kono dozens and dozens of times that I've talked to a foreign minister Kono when we were dealing with North Korea. And to your point, Robert, we were always the ones that were just different views between Abe and the leadership in South Korea about how to proceed. And it was always the United States that was able to try and bridge it, to make the gap and create the, the important, the important optic is that we're all

three working in the same direction. And then those people mattered an awful lot. And I could go through a list of countries where we didn't have a fantastic counterparts during our time, even with countries that were really important. This was a place where we were blessed at, at a time in history when we did have good counterparts, I think throughout their foreign policy establishment throughout the national security team and throughout their intelligence team as well. So with that, I'm happy to take understand Alex. Gray. Did you have something that you wanted to add or comment or a question?

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Alex Gray:

Thanks for the secretary.

Ambassador, my question actually was related to, from both of your perspectives, how the Japanese and the Japan Taiwan relationship is evolving from, from, have you seen it in time in office, and even now into the Biden administration that we saw with the recent prime ministerial visit Washington, um, some commentary about how Japan and Taiwan are evolving their partnership and their relationship, and just be curious, your take on how that evolving situation is going to fit into the broader us Indo-Pacific strategy.

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Michael Pompeo:

We'll just give two quick thoughts, first deep commercial relationship between the two places I saw a note today that was talking about they're trying to work together, TSMC working with the Japanese on some semiconductor work inside of Japan as well, important set of relationships between those two countries. And I think the Japanese watched Hong Kong, and it gave them even heightened sensitivity about the risks throughout the entire set of islands there. I think they saw the risk and realized they were going to have to do more, not only with respect to Taiwan, with respect to the Pacific islands, with respect to the Philippines, other places as well. I think they watched that political activity instead of Hong Kong and recognize that this wasn't five or 10 or 20 years out, but was on top of them in a way maybe they didn't appreciate, or at least maybe the population didn't appreciate enough to give their leadership the space to do the things that they needed to do. Um, I don't know, Robert, if you have any other thoughts or different thoughts on that?

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Robert O'Brien:

No, I, I agree with the secretary on the Mike on the the situation in Hong Kong, I I think it was a wake-up call, not just for the Japanese, but I think it was a real wake-up call for the people of Taiwan. The idea that there was there somehow that the Taiwanese would agree to a, a one country, two systems a resolution of the issues between Beijing and Taipei after seeing what happened in Hong Kong that the, the, that, that potential disappeared with all, you know, for, for probably 90, 95% of the folks in Taiwan. But I think their, their allies in Japan and friends in Japan not realize that as well. So I think that had a huge impact, and I think there's also been a lot of boisterous talk among national security Hawks. And hopefully it's just talk in Beijing about the need to, to take the retake Taiwan by force in the coming four to five years. And I hope, I hope that doesn't happen because that's, that's the sort of thing that could trigger a massive international crisis. And I think that the Japanese are by, by, by standing with Taiwan and leaning forward on Taiwan, or demonstrating a classic peace through strength approach and trying to deter China from taking such action. So I, I think you're right. I think it's hard to overestimate the impact of, of Hong Kong on, on these issues.

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Michael Pompeo: Morgan is the next question that I have in the queue or the next comment.

Morgan Ortagus: Thank you, sir. Appreciate it. Um, it could be for you too. Well, Robert, I thought I know a lot of people are gonna push us on the defense side. So I thought I'd um, for the, both of you about the, um, FDA, the free trade agreement that we did with U Penn in 2019, are there ways in which that we can expand upon that? And I also started thinking about the campaign, um, against the Huawei, that secretary Pompeo, and all of us at the, at the state department pursued under his leadership. And I was curious if there are ways in which that we can encourage more American and Western businesses to perhaps do more business with China rear Taiwan, um, instead of having the risk of doing it.....
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[00:21:30] Robert, do you want to go first? Go ahead.

Robert O'Brien: Yeah, Morgan, I think that's a, a great question. And again, there was, it was the, the campaign on Huawei and securing 5G network with trusted providers, I think is one of the best examples of an interagency whole of government approach that was successful that, that you'll see in, in the US government across administrations for the past 20 or 30 years. By the time I had left working for Mike at the state department and got over to the White House people basically told us that the, the, the Huawei battle, the 5g battle was over that the, the Chinese were going to control 5g everywhere on my Western allies, even to the United States. And that we'd have to find some sort of encryption solution to deal with that. But just, just understand that the internet of things will be controlled a hundred percent by Beijing and, and all the data will go up into their clouds and that there was nothing we could do.
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[00:22:30] And I didn't accept that the President didn't accept it. Certainly Secretary Pompeo didn't accept it. And he put together a great team of the state department. Larry Kudlow became a great ally of ours in the White House, and we literally fanned out across the, the free world not, not to sell an American product because at the time we didn't have a company that was fully making the equipment necessary to put together a 5G network. There was a lot of I kind of felt like sometimes Mike and I were the unpaid spokespeople for Ericsson and Nokia, but we we got out to our allies in Europe and Asia in the south Pacific and really turned that around and showed that that, that America could win and that the Western world could win by focusing on that this idea of trusted providers and the outset of your question, I think was, you know, how do we get more allies and friends and, and how do we move our supply chain toto, to Japan and, and Taiwan and, and other countries and away from the PRC.
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And I think that's something that policymakers need to be able to be looking at, but I think business folks need to be looking at that as well. I mean, if, if China miscalculates and does attempt to take Taiwan by force or engaged in some sort of blockade of Taiwan or Aaron gait continues to engage in egregious activity and sin John with the weakers, I think as we become harder, it's going to become harder and harder for businesses to justify having their supply chains in China.
[00:24:00] So it's going to go on to become a business risk in the same way that it was a business risk to do business in South Africa back in the seventies and eighties.

And, and so I think you're going to see smart businesses looking for to diversify their supply chain, if not taking it totally out of China, but, you know, at least having backups and, and alternate supply chains and some of the other nations in the region. but Mike, turn it over to you. I know you and Keith crock did a great job on, on Huawei, and you may want to further elaborate on, on, you know, some of your diplomatic efforts that led to the success.

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**Michael
Pompeo:**

You don't remember that you told the Huawei story pretty well. I'll give you the other, we're going to give you another economic issue that we faced up front with them was they didn't want to give up oil from Iran. and I remember tough conversations. This was an important part of their energy mix, how they had thought about life for an awfully long time prime minister Abe. He thought he had a relationship with the Uranians that, that he didn't want to break. You'll remember he travels over there and it ends badly I'll put it that way suffice it to say they didn't. When we put our sanctions on, it would have been 2019 on crude oil. these were tough discussions with the Japanese. And interestingly in the end, the Japanese did the right thing. They are great partners. they, they did it right.

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They were, there were, there were, there were, there were no issues there wasn't leakage there, but they, they wanted to make darn sure that if we were going to impose this on them, that we were going to impose on the Chinese as well, that is, we want, they wanted to make sure that their friend wasn't treated in a way that was different and worse than the Chinese communist party was being treated. And so this was a big effort that we made, again, a very important economic issue for the Japanese, something that they were going to have to explain to their people, why they were going to give up this, this source of stable, reliable, affordable energy for the Japanese people, and a big deal for their trade and trade commissioners as well. And so it was a long, difficult conversation, but in the end, the Japanese did absolutely the right thing. and we were, we were deeply appreciative Of that I'll, I'll leave others. I'm sure we'll comment on trade things too. It sounds like Alex Wong, you've got something that you want to add to this question, or maybe something different. Great.

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**Alex
Wong:**

Well, thank you, Mr. Secretary, and Robert, thank you. And to everyone for joining us tonight, always good to be with everyone. You know, it's this conversation it's, it's striking me what we're talking about issues today and, and strategic um, interests that we have with Japan today. But, you know, the, the extent to which the policies we're talking about and the issues we're talking about are, are influenced by the strategic vision that Nixon and the Nixon presidency had, you know back in, in, in, in the seventies is, is pretty remarkable. You know, maybe just for the audience to give a little peek behind how this seminar operates. It's not just called a seminar. And in fact is pretty much operates like a, like a, like an academic seminar. they send out the Nixon foundation sends out articles, background reading, and, and a whole phalanx of a very interesting source material from the Nixon era.

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But, you know, the one article, the one document I was really interested to read was this, this foreign affairs article from, um, president Nixon, you were not present at the time. It was written in 1967, as he was thinking about his second run for the presidency. And it was titled Asia after Vietnam. you know, when you

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read, um, at least when I, when I read or come across old foreign policy articles you know, very few of them have enduring truths. Most of them are actually, you know, they make a chuckle a little bit of how cloistered they are and the trends of, of that time and, and predictions usually fall pretty flat. but this one is pretty remarkable. you know, first of all, again, it was written in the run-up to Nixon announcing his, his second run for the presidency. So it's remarkable as a campaign document you know, it's, it's granularity, it's detailed the, the fact that it actually prioritizes strategic issues abroad.

[00:28:00] That's not something you, you would see a presidential campaign doing these days as he had done back then, but it's more remarkable. and if, if all the audience members get to pick up a copy, it's remarkable for its it's clear sightedness on the priority that Asia should take in the next 30 -40 years. And it's pretty remarkable. And it's foresight about the strategic landscape that we would face the United States we're facing in the world with this. First of all it talks about the rise of more Asian, regional consciousness post world war II. And I think we've definitely seen that rise, particularly in the post cold war era. it focused on the growing threat of China as a security threat to other nations, which was interesting. and it talked about the growing political and practical limitations to the U S, police actions in Asia in particular, which is definitely something true that we look at today.

[00:28:30] It talked about the need for, um, informal and formal groupings in Asia to balance China. It talked about quote, active defense coordinating with our partners in Asia while also guarding against accusations of cultural or racist animus against China. and it talks about the need for Japan to, to Rouse itself from its post-World war II era into a new role of a regional leadership, um, which which gave, which was the context for the Okinawa reversion agreement that we've been talking about. So, I mean, all of those things that Nixon talked about in that article, again in 1967 rings very true today. I mean, it reads like something could have written last year about, about Asia, um, you know, won a couple of points. I just want to make, I mean, I think Japan's role today is a little bit different, of course, from that, that kind of cold war era from that Soviet focus past.

[00:29:00] Um, you know, I think our Alliance was a little simpler back then and we, we secured their security and in return, um you know, we, we, we asked them to stand with us against Soviet union. We allowed them to, the Japanese to turn inward, to build rebuild, domestically, rebuild their economy. we allowed their foreign policy or their, their Alliance with us, allowed them to have their foreign policy focus on securing commodities for them and securing markets for an export led economy. And then to rise up the value chain. you know, some of that still is true today, but that's less true. You know, it's much more the U S Japan Alliance is much more an enterprising partnership these days. You know, I think there's a unique identity of interest between the us and Japan and the region. this, I think comes mainly from the fact that Japan is not really export dependent or trade dependent anymore.

[00:29:30] It's the relations abroad or are no, they're not really so much about securing commodities and, and markets. Although there are some of that, you know, I think it's really focused on securing a regional balance in the Indo-Pacific that is not in favor of itself, but of, of sovereign nations making sovereign decisions. And that's exactly what the U S strategy is. and, you know, I saw this firsthand and I think a lot of people on this seminar saw this firsthand and working with the Japanese over the past four, four and a half years, um, you know, one

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disagreement I have with Nixon in that article, he talks a little bit about how the memories of world war two were fading in Asia which would open the door to more Japanese engagement across, across the region. but like secretary Pompeo, I think that those histories, not just from world war II, but past colonial histories are still extant in the memories of many people across Asia

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And I think that Japan is aware of this, but that's why working with us working in a multilateral setting, working through the quad to temper those, um, animosities and tensions I think is really key. Um, and you know, it's great that we have people on this call that worked so, so, so forthrightly on that effort anyway, not really a question more just, I wanted to share some thoughts I had in doing the reading, but seeing the arc from Nixon to today and to the policies that we all tried to implement in the recent Trump administration.

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Robert O'Brien:

Hey, Alex, this is Robert here on the line. you look, you worked very closely with the Japanese on the North Korea issue when you were the Envoy for North Korea. how did you see the Japanese working? Obviously they weren't the five party talks, but in our work with the, the Japanese to, to, to confront North Korea and to, to deal with the DPRK issue how did you see the diplomacy? And, and obviously you weren't there when president Nixon wrote the the article in 67. I think Mike and I are probably the only two that were alive at that time, but based on the article, what do you, what do you see as the differences between the Japanese functioned in your, your rounds of negotiations with them on DPRK and, and what Nixon might've been thinking in, in 67?

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Alex Wong:

Well, you know, it's hard to compare. I mean, obviously I wasn't in the room, you know, with the mixing team and, um, but you know, one thing I will say, and I think it's reflected a little bit in secretary Pompei was remarks regarding North Korea in particular is, you know, that the, you notice in, in the past three or four years, North Korea did summits, obviously with president Trump chairman Kim did a summit and multiple summits with, with President Moon of South Korea in multiple summits with Xi Jinping of China. And he did at least one summit. If I remember might've been two, but with, with Vladimir Putin, you know, chairman Kim was making, making the rounds, trying to raise his profile, trying to figure out a way forward perhaps a new strategic landscape or balance in Northeast Asia. You know, the one leader he didn't meet was, was prime minister Abe.

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And he hasn't met with prime minister sukha yet. And I think that was a real missed opportunity for North Korea and clearly as an interest in more stable Northeast region. And they have a lot to offer if we're Korea takes the deal where they, they give up their WMD programs. And the fact that that chairman Kim didn't want to sit down with prime minister Abe, even though prime minister Abe from a political standpoint and made promises regarding a rapprochement with, with North Korea, that was a real missed opportunity for chairman Kim. it was also something that we would have liked to have seen, and the more contact at the leader level that can then, you know, melt the ice between the diplomats North Korea and the rest of the world, but in particular, Japan perhaps we could have taken things up and found a way forward, but it put a real missed opportunity there. Yeah,

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Michael Pompeo: Alex, that's a, that's a, that's a good point. We remember we were working so closely with the Japanese too. We were going to come with them to be one of the underwriters, guarantors central participants, if we were successful with the north Koreans and the fact that they didn't have direct conversations that have very senior level certainly didn't facilitate what we were trying to do. That's a really good point next to John Noonan, John, the evening and weekend here. You hear me now? We've got you now. Yes, sir. All right.

John Noonan: Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and Brian always a pleasure to duty beginning into that. They are a highlight. So I have a two-part question one on the diplomatic side, and one on the military side, even if your secretary on the diplomatic side, it's been almost four years the month and, um, a major announcement made on a lot of the... and my question different radical side on the quad itself seems like it's stuck in this purgatory between a dialogue and what I think at least three out of the four players would, would like to see, which is more of a NATO, like obviously not NATO, identical, but NATO like framework where there's more of a collective defense element to it. Um, and every year we, we see the Chinese take another step whether it be the seizure of Hong Kong or whether it be, um developing the largest Navy in the world as of fall of 2020, and every step they take as they inch a little bit more, as they answered a little closer to being a threat that can dominate not just the United States, but all of its allies in the region.

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I think there's a tendency to say, well, it lasts, the quad is finally going to become a real it's going to become a real Alliance. so the question, and it might be a parochial one I freely admitted is, um, you know, four years on after, um, the, the leaders of the quad agree to reinvigorate the dialogue into something more meaningful. How would you rate the progress and what do you think the next practical steps are? Um, and they don't even have to be steps four steps backwards for that matter. Um, the second question is on the military side and I hope you all will indulge me. Um, my brother-in-law is a air force captain. He's a stationed in Okinawa. He flies the FFPC Google air to air superiority fighter. so he's had some interesting stories over the south China sea what they increasingly capable PLA air force and forgive. Um, forgive me, I'm channeling the the question of a, a fighter pilot and a captain, which I'm sure you all know that it can be blunt. And and I'll just put the military question to you this way from him. if China invades Taiwan are the Japanese going to let us fight. so with that, I direct it to you, Mr. Secretary, and you ambassador Ryan, thank you all so much.

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Michael Pompeo: Um, let me try to take the first one and then Robert, you can take the second one that I know Matt Pottenger wants to get in. I bet he has some thoughts on a second question as well. Um, as he was dealing with some of these issues pretty closely look, the quad was it's a dance to grow it and strengthen it. You have reluctance, you mentioned one partner there's frankly, reluctance everywhere. Everybody's trying to figure out how to make this work. What does article five mean in this context or the equivalent thereof? Right? What does that, how does that shake out? Who's going to underwrite this thing who's going to resource it. What does it mean for the rest of the nations in the region as well? How do you

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think about that? So our effort was to, and by the way, our effort was greatly benefited.

[00:39:00] We made progress that I'm proud of, but Xi Jinping gave us enormous energy. Right, right. When, the ultimately the Chinese and the Indians have conflict in the Himalayas and that the tone from the Indians just radically changed. but, but these things take time. There's Histories, there's deep connections between the two countries prime minister Modi's in in it's a complicated place, both militarily and commercially with the Chinese.and so building this out takes everybody moving forward together. What I was happy about is it, wasn't just senior levels that were beginning to talk about the quad. We really add the collective

[00:39:30] administrations, the bureaucracies starting to have real conversations about what, what shape this might take. So will there be an economic piece to this? I think there there's a good argument that one could, we could do lots of good together economically to confront the challenges of China together.

[00:40:00] , how would we diplomatically work alongside each other, knowing that there were, you know, everyone was going to show up to say, just, just, just like the history of NATO. Yes. Sign me up to, I want to, I want to be part of this. How should, you know, it's the quad, that's the name of it that has, you know, an English language that has a numerical element to it author, to be others in, what would they be? Would they be partners? Would they be adjuncts? Would we give them tenure? Right. As a faculty would think about it.and we were, we were beginning to make progress by the way, they were looking at the United States very clearly to, and could see that there, there was a time limit to an

[00:40:30] administration. And I think they wanted to see that this was going to be an enduring set of policies that would change as administrations changed.

[00:41:00] , and so they wanted to see that if this is the way we went forward, there would there be longevity, could we get the house and the Senate to sign up for things that looked like guarantees that were historical? All of these were things we wanted to test them too. And so we we've begun to make real progress on each of what I think would be three or four major fronts, but it ended there. And I hope the next administration they've said good things about this. They've applauded regulates one of the few things they've given the Trump administration some credit for, I hope they'll, they'll seriously work to go build this out. Maybe I'll, I'll stop there. Robert, I'll let you, you can add to that and talk about the military one question, and then Matt, Pottenger, you're up. You're up next?

Robert O'Brien: Thanks secretary Pompeo. And I'll just add one note on the quad. I, I think that one of the, you know, real strategics, not a tactical mistake, but a strategic mistake that the Chinese made was engaging the the Indians in the line of actual control and that brutal ambush that took place last fall.I think not only did they

[00:41:30] lose a lot of their supporters or folks that were sympathetic to them and the Indian government, I think the Indian people saw that attack for what it was, especially the, the brutal nature of the attack which played out across Indian tabloids. And I think there became a, a real distaste for, for Chinese methods and, and, and that sort of power projection in India.so I, I agree with everything the secretary said about the complicated relationship that India and China have and, and present Modi's position there.

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But president Modi is a pretty tough guy, as we learned as, as Mike learned, as I learned. And, andI think the Chinese made a a very big mistake with that that, that accident, whether it was or rogue commander, this was some sort of probe

[00:42:30] that was approved at the highest levels of the CCP. We, you know, we don't know at this point, but it was it was definitely a mistake and, and China's going to pay for that. I think it, it adds impetus to the quad. And I do agree with Mike that the secretary Pompeo that the initial soundings from the administration, the new administration, the Biden ministration are, are very positive when I, when it comes to the quad and, and strengthening those relationships. And I hope they follow through, and I wish them luck on that front and, and, and Godspeed in that endeavor, because that's a, it's a very powerful group.

[00:43:00] And in countries, when you take Australia, Japan, India, and the United States, and put them together that that creates a real alternative for other countries in the, in the Pacific to look at that grouping and and the freedom that we all represent, the fact that we're four great democracies and compare that to what they're seeing in, in China. And so it's a it's an important initiative. I'm glad to see it moving forward.you know, on the military side, I'm going to, I'll let our, our

[00:43:30] Marine Matt Pottinger or respond to our air force missileers John Noonan on that one, but I will say that you know, w w we we've been ambiguous for a reason and and how we would respond to a Chinese invasion of Taiwan.but as the PLA Navy has gotten bigger and improved don't underestimate the United States, don't miscalculate.we still have some pretty impressive tools in our toolkit when it comes to defending ourselves with the high seas below the high seas in the air

[00:44:00] on land. And and so I think, and we've demonstrated throughout our history the ability toto fight and fight hard. And and no adversaries should underestimate the, the United States military.but with that all I'll pass it over toto Major Pottinger for for his thoughts,

Matt Pottinger:
[00:44:30] Robert thanks and and secretary Pompeo, thanks so much for, for a great conversation and for sharing this tonight, um, Hey, John you're, um, you know, what I, what I would tell your brother-in-law or a couple of things, one that there's

[00:45:00] a saying in the Japanese military, the Taiwan's defense is Japan's defense. And, and I think that Japan will, will act accordingly. You know, the, the People's Liberation Army air force that your brother-in-law's, you know, flying and seeing up there in the skies of east China sea in, in, throughout the Western Pacific, there's a, there's a manual that PLA air force officers, are issued that explains why Taiwan is so important as a target to be annexed by the communist party.

[00:45:30] And it's all about Japan. And, and if you read the, the the excerpt of that manual, it basically says that China is going to take Taiwan in order to render Japan unable to, to wage war unable to even defend itself, unable to even supply itself, that, that if Taiwan were taken, basically China would be able to dominate the region and render Japan irrelevant.

[00:46:00] So th that's, that's a talking point he should mention to his, his Japanese buddies, um, you know when they're going out to the bars and NA in some in Okinawa, um, what, what what other point I wanted to make was that there was a lot of press coverage. It was really this myth in the press coverage as we were going into the election last year, that somehow the Trump administration had badly strained our alliances in the Indo-Pacific region. It's nonsense. I've never seen an empirical fact produced to suggest that our alliances did anything other than strengthen over the course of the Trump administration. Our relationship

[00:46:30] with India has never been stronger. Secretary Pompeo, you, you led the first ever cabinet level meetings. The quad the relationship with Vietnam, Vietnamese

[00:47:00] officials told me regularly that the relationship had never been better Taiwan officials and Taiwan, and told me the same thing career officers in Australia. And most of all in Japan, and I'll just lead, leave you with one, one point. Some of the key pillars of our strategy in the Indo-Pacific region were ideas that we borrowed and adapted in and shared and collaborated on with Japan. So the whole idea of a quadrilateral format is an idea that prime minister Abe came up with the dirties first and his prime minister. He was the longest serving prime minister in, in Japanese history. And that was an early idea that you got to see reach fruition before, before he stepped down the idea of a free and open

[00:47:30] Indo-Pacific that concept that, that catchphrase, we consciously adopted it and adapted it from the minds of of our closest allies in Japan. And that, that was a phrase that prime minister Abe using first. So that that's a sign of, of, of a, a partnership that is, that is evolved in ways that that, that are going to allow us as, as equal partners, of course, with the United States still providing the majority of the defense, but we want to see Japan step up and spend more and more on their defense in order to forestall the sort of catastrophe that, that PLA air force manual describes.

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Michael Pompeo: Thanks, Matt. Once we've got just a bit, we've got a couple in the queue let me go to congressmen, Waltz, Michael. There you go. Yeah.

Michael Waltz: Hey, thank you, Mr. Secretary, and thank you, Robert for co-hosting. I just wanted to build on my, um, a good VMI man.Noonan's question there.and, and Matt please feel free to jump in as well.where is just politically within, um, Suga, I know Abe chipped away at it a bit in terms of redefining, but where is Japan now with, with article nine?and it, it is, yeah, look, I'm, I'm, I'm taking a hard look at the Navy's issues, our Navy's issues with readiness.there is real pressure on the top line of the defense budget.it seems to me if the quad is truly going, um is truly going to realize kind of its full potential.we need to see a shift internally in the Japanese, um political space in terms of, of, of article nine and in terms of its own defense spending, which is still hovering around a 1%, I think there's a slight bump to 1.1%.

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[00:49:30] So I would just love to know what, what conversations you had with the Japanese along those lines.and then my second question is, is shifting focus a bit to the Japanese relationship with Russia.and do you see a tendency as you know, as we're all are dealing with the CCP threat for the, for the Japanese, um, you know, where do you see the, in response to that, or just in general the Japanese relationship with Russia going, particularly as the Northern trade routes open which from my conversations with a number of Japanese officials are, is very, very attractive to Tokyo and it is leading them, um, you know, to kind of really seek a real rapprochement with Moscow.

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Michael Pompeo: Let me just take two seconds on the second one. I think your point is precisely, right. I think there are certainly the trade matter. I think there are lots of reasons that you see the Japanese trying to find places they can work with the Russians.and I don't think there's any doubt about that. You use the word rapprochement, that might be a little, I might overstate it just a bit, at least where they sit today.but that's certainly the direction of travel. It was certainly the direction of travel. I know this better than others. It was sort of the direction travel

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for my counterpart. And I think for a prime minister Abe as well Robert, you want to jump in? No,

Robert O'Brien: [00:51:00] I, I agree with you, Mike. And I think the you know, obviously there's the, the issue on Sakhalin island with Japan and Russia that hasn't been solved since the the second world war and that's something that's important to the Japanese, but the Russians have been stubbornly hanging onto that territory for, for many, many years now. they did not have the equivalent of our reversion treaty with Okinawa when it, when it came to that island. I, I do think that the Russians as close as they've gotten to the Chinese, and I think one of the great concerns that we have from a geopolitical standpoint is that the what's becoming an increasingly close relationship between the Russians and the Chinese. We also have to understand that the Russians and Chinese do not have mutually aligned interests in many places.

[00:51:30] Most importantly, I think is in the Arctic. And this is something that both Matt and I raised with our Russian counterparts on a regular basis to explain to the the Russians that as, as, as important as they feel the Arctic is, and they, they, they take very expensive claims in the Arctic. We would remind them what the Chinese have done in the south China sea, what they've done in the east China sea how they're behaving in Antarctica and asking the Russians, if they're really confident in that Alliance with that budding Alliance with China and how much of the Arctic they wanted to see to the Chinese and the Russians didn't seem too interested in seeing any of their Arctic territories to the Chinese. So, or at least their Arctic claim. So I think that's an area where, where Japan and and Russia have an interest aligned, but they also have differences territorial differences as well.

[00:52:30] And that's the tough thing about dealing with Russia that, that secretary Pompeo saw that I saw as if there were places where our interests overlapped with the Russians. And in those cases, we wanted to try and work together, but there were always with the Russians. It was never easy because there are always plenty of areas where they were engaged in malign activity that we had to push back on. So it didn't make it easy, but, but I think that's something we need to keep pointing out to the Russians is that the Chinese are, are not their friend when it comes to territorial claims. And and, and the projection of, of Chinese influence, especially into the Arctic and Antarctic regions. so that, that, that's what I'd add to the onto the secretary's comments there.

Michael Pompeo: [00:53:00] Waltz, I'll just add it as for article nine. You said they were chipping away at it. It's not the, it's not that provision in any longer than I think constrains the Japanese capacity for defense. It's literally, leader's willingness to go make the case to the Japanese people. You know, 1% just doesn't get it done. It's not gonna, it's not enough. there is still a mindset that is a pacifist. Doesn't describe it actively accurately, but that, that mindset where leaders go out and make the case to the people that we need to spend more money, more of a budget, a high percentage of our GDP on defense is the argument that has to be made. I don't, I don't see it being the language in their constitution in article nine, being the thing that gets in their way, how prove that now it's a matter of leaders stepping up. and with that, let me turn next to Mary Kissel and then try and get the Christian right after marriage.

[00:54:00] Thanks, Mr. Secretary. Thanks Ambassador O'Brien, it's great to be with the group. Um, Mr. Secretary, just to build off of what you just said, um, you know, the big forces today are just as obvious as they were to Nixon when he was writing China's authoritarian and bad, Japan is democratic and good. And yet, you know, five decades later, we still don't have these democracies together. And we don't have the kind of domestic political dynamics within Japan to get them to rearm and take the more aggressive posture that we need them to take. Um, yes, there are cultural influences here, but, um, why would we expect their behavior to change if we don't change the incentives for them? And that's really the question I wanted to pose to you and to ambassador O'Brien. I mean, strategically we're still in the same place we were post-World war II.

[00:54:30] We provide this great security umbrella. We've allowed them to pursue really terrible economic policies that have just crushed growth, obvious, great on the military, but he's terrible on growth. Um, so, you know, let me just pose that to you and to, to the ambassador. Yeah. Okay. There are some cultural issues, but if you really want to change the incentive structure here on the economy, to get them to dump the Keynesian garbage or on the military to get them to stand up, you know, what do we need to do? Is it a free trade pack? Do we need to pull back? Do we need to, to have the quad take on more of these military engagements, see what they feel like without us doing everything for them?

[00:55:00] **Mary Kissell:**

[00:55:30] **Michael Pompeo:** Mary, I think I remember you writing a memo for me on this issue.it's funny that you talk about their economic model, their Keynesian model. I hope we can give it to the American people to reject that let alone that the Japanese people your, your point's well taken.this is we always confront this. I remember the stories about how we were trying to destroy NATO when we were simply asking them to do what needed to be done. That the same idea, the same concept has to apply here.it has to be the case that the expectations for not just the Japanese, but for the Australians, for the South Koreans and a lot, lots of countries understand that it's in their best interest to do the right thing, these Chinese communist party, and spend more money, their own defense and thereby bolster the regional defenses.we've got to figure out a way to do that. And it's a matter of rate of change and how much carrot and how much stick we have. We have ample supplies of each. We just need to use them in a way that's effective. And it's a complicated, complicated issue as you well know, Robert, you want to jump in?

[00:56:00] **Robert O'Brien:** Or I'm glad you brought up NATO. Mike, some of my favorite pictures are of us in London at the, at the last NATO summit. and we looked like we were storming in and out of meetings with with set jaws and that sort of thing, because those are pretty tough negotiations to try and get it. Wasn't just the Japanese that we had to deal with on this defense spending issue, trying to get the Germans, to just maintain their submarines and get them out to sea and and get our allies many excluded.we, we finally got through a lot of great diplomacy with, with the Pentagon, but also with Mike and his team at NATO we got, I think we're up to nine or 10 countries over spending 2% that the French are almost at2% and we'll be in a year or two.

[00:57:00] , so, so we did show that it was possible to move the needle and, and encourage our allies to invest in their own protection and their own defense. I think the best

[00:58:00] advocate we have on that side though is the communist party of China and the way that they've been treating their their neighbors in the region. So for example, we've seen Australia go over 2% and defense spending buying really high techus platforms from the the Poseidon to the, to the F 35 lightnings to they're actually developing their own program with Boeing. That's, that's being funded by the Australians, not by the U S called loyal wingman for UAVs will accompany fighter jets on on mission. So w the, the, the, the Chinese have issued a wake-up call to folks in the region.

[00:58:30] I think that's what ultimately encourage their spending, but we're, we're going to have to use carrots and sticks as you suggest. Marianne is as the secretary suggest to, to get our allies spending what they want to the problem is for politicians. It's a lot easier to promise new elementary schools and, and, and stimulus payments and and parks and roads than it is to to talk about the need to invest in, in defense. And and we've seen that across the world where it's a, you know, and it's all good right up until the point that it isn't when there's an enemy on your frontier and you're not prepared to, to repel them. And so we, we certainly got to do our best as as diplomats to, to make that case. But I think in, in some ways the some of the aggressor nations out there are, are making the case for us. And, and we'll hopefully see our allies participate at a level of somewhat what the American taxpayer does so that we don't bear all the burden for sure.

Michael Pompeo: Thanks, Robert Christian, you're up. Great.

Christian Whiton: Thank you, secretary. Excuse me, Mary stoleStole a little bit of my thunder, but just picking up on that. I don't want to beat up on the Japanese, but just to preface this one of my favorite allies, one of the governments I'd like to deal with most more important, I think in the 21st century, as an ally than great Britain, third largest economy, but enormously frustrating to deal with. At times I dealt with this a little myself, not so much in the early Trump administration, but in the Bush administration, just asking for simple things like cooperation and broadcasting and medium wave into North Korea for human rights issues.if you look at their situation, yeah, they have a big economy, 1%, you know, you can talk 1%, 2%. It's sort of, you know you also raises the question of what you're going to do with it.

[01:00:00] Even if it were two or three or 4%, they don't have solid missile defense, they're hemming and hiring, and sort of not buying it. You just ashore. They don't have even a conventional capability to attack or to strike Chinese cities. Um, they failed at their constitutional reform as you point out. That's not necessarily the end all be all of whether or not they're going to be useful, but look at a Taiwan contingency. They have essentially no communications or at least no serious communications. It seems with Taiwan. It makes our communications, which I would also say are unserious look robust. Um, why do you think that in a crisis Japan wouldn't have an incentive to sit on the sidelines? I mean, I think they'd be better than Korea. Korea. I don't think will even let us use our bases. I think our forces in Korea are useless in a Chinese contingency. Japan would be different, but the idea that they would come to, to action on an emergency basis as we're rushing to shore up Taiwan's ability to survive, is that realistic? Are we fooling

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[01:01:00] ourselves? Because if we're fooling ourselves, shouldn't we focus more on buttressing Taiwan and realizing we need a unified military command with Taiwan and forces in Taiwan, as opposed to sort of a hope that the Australians and the Japanese and the Koreans are going to come to our assistance.

Michael Pompeo: Well, Christian, I'll give you two thoughts. And then I want to get to the last couple of folks. You raised some truly strategically important questions with, with all of these things. No one knows until one really knows the the need to do either or of these, I think is the mistake, right? I actually think you can do everything you can to drive the Japanese to the right place. I think we ought to absolutely do more with Taiwan. We tried to do that. We made some progress. We didn't get all the way home for sure. There's an awful lot of space left there. And I actually think they're mutually reinforcing. I think to the extent we do that, I think that this cuts across a little bit of runway a little bit, to the extent the Japanese see us doing more with, I want to say, great, the Americans took that on.

[01:02:00] Now we can spend half a percent or three quarters of a percent instead of 1%. So I get out across cuts, but I also think it would give enormous confidence to these countries. If the United States were to do more to support, I think they would, they think they would be emboldened. I think it would give us the capacity to say, we're going to continue to do this, but we can make a contingent. I think there's lots of ways that you can get the strategic idea that you're you have, which is in a pinch that at the end of the day, the United States makes, makes, make sure we have every capacity to do what the United States needs to have done. And we need to spend this period this moment between now and that moment, whenever that may come, making sure we're in the right place to do that. we should count on our friends, but in the end we've seen this before. we're going to get it right, and we need to make sure we're capable and in a position to get it right as well. I hope that answers your question, at least a part of, without at least how I think about it. Monica Ms. Crowley. You're next? Yes, ma'am. Okay.

[01:03:00] **Monica Crowley:** Mr. Secretary, thank you so much. So nice to see you investor Brian. Nice to see you too. Um, I think I have more of a theoretical question. So we note that the primary objective of president Nixon's opening to China was to enlist China as a counter rate against growth Soviet power. And that gave rise to very effective and very elegant triangular diplomacy between the three. You've both spoken very effectively about the quad and, and the importance of the quad as a new multilateral counterweight against growing Chinese power. We also know that leadership in these democracies changes, and we also know that the more players you add, the more complex it gets. So you've spoken to your optimism about the short-term for the quad, but how optimistic are you about the medium and long-term sustainability about the plot that's number one and Roberts your point about Russia. Should the United States be more aggressive in exploiting what divides China and Russia, and try to perhaps create a new Sino-Russian split that we might be able to really truly exploit. Thank you.

[01:04:00] **Michael Pompeo:** Thank you, Monica. Robert, you want to go ahead and try to answer both of those?

Robert O'Brien: Sure. And let me start with on the second question you know, look, we know that there there's a lot of Russian territory today that came to Russia from China as a result of the treaty of Beijing. I think that was an 1865 treaty. So I think that's something the Russians should be concerned about given the historical claims toto territory that the Chinese have been asserting around the region that that's something that if I was a Russian, I'd be very concerned about Chinese claims in Siberia and and other parts of Russia. So that's something that we can certainly point out to our Russian friends and you know, w w the, the, the problem with, with our Russian friends is that they they're also in Syria and engaged them all activity, and then Ukraine engaged them line had to get activity.

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[01:05:00] And there, they're trying to turn the, they're taking a page from the Chinese on the, the south China sea, and trying to do that to the black sea and threatening the Baltics. So w we've got a lot of difficulties with the Russians, but at the same time as secretary Pompeo pointed out, and I mentioned, we do have areas of interest that overlap and Monica you're, I think you're right, when you talk about the elegant diplomacy that was employed by Kissinger and Nixon and bringing China into play in the, in that U S Sovietcold war struggle. And, and there may be ways that we can, we can engage the, the Russians and at least sew some doubt between them and their, and their, their new found Chinese friends. So I think it's you know, I think it's something that's worth talking about very quickly on your first question about the long-term viability of the quad.

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[01:06:00] I, I believe in free men and women and, and free markets and free people is, and I, and, and I think even though, you know, freedom comes under attack and it can be democracy can be messy. I'm optimistic about the United States. I'm optimistic about our democratic allies. And when you look at the quad with India, which is a massive country and a messy democracy, but democracy, nonetheless, and Australia, which, you know, we inherited common you know, going, going back to the Magna Carta, common rule of law values and democratic values with, with our Australian friends. And, and you look at the way that the Australia or the Japanesetook to democracy after a terrible experience with, with Imperial Japan and, and the warlords that ran that country into the ground and world war two, and how they've really developed into a great democratic nation.

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[01:07:00] , I would bet on the democracies every, every day of the week, notwithstanding the fact that there are some days when you think, gosh, how are we going to get through this? But I, I think there's a tremendous long-term viability to that that arrangement and, and Mr. Secretary talking about Nixon, we actually have Christopher Nixon Cox here at the library with me. And The grandson of the president is, is one of our panelists and a board member of the foundation.so maybe we could turn to him to ask the the next question or make a comment if that's Mike

Michael Pompeo: That's great. Absolutely.

[01:07:30]
Christopher Nixon Cox:

Thank you.thank you, Mr. Ambassador, Mr. Secretary, I actually wanted to ask a question of Alex Gray, because I really wanted to highlight a great article that he wrote on the U S south Pacific holdings and what was happening with them over

[01:08:00] the last few months. And it was an excellent article. I want to highlight it because when you think about the Pacific you think of Japan, you think of the United States, you think of China, but our south Pacific holdings are so important as a projection of power of us power. And unfortunately for a long time, they went very underappreciated by the American political system. But I think one of the great things certainly with Matt Pottnger, his efforts and others in the Trump administration was, is that there was a focus that was put on these islands. And of course China's putting a tremendous focus on these islands. So I just was that Alex Grey could talk a little bit about what's going on there, and then maybe how the United States and Japan could work to bolster those islands as a projection of power for the United States?

[01:08:30] **Michael Pompeo:** Chris, thanks, Alex. If you could do that, and if you could do it in 120 seconds, that'd be even better.

Alex Grey: I will do it. I will do it faster than that, Mr. Secretary, and, and I would just want to quickly say Ms. Sector, your visit to the Marshall Islands was a huge part of that strategy, and that was a big, big deal in the last administration. Um, no, I appreciate the question. And I think w w you know, one of the most interesting things that I learned in studying the region and visiting the region was that the Chinese have to some extent adopted the Japanese strategy from world war two and how they're using the second island chain and how they're thinking about it strategically, and then Matt Pottenger. And I actually heard from a senior allied official a comment that will always stick with me that if you take a map of how the Japanese were, were projecting power in about 1940 through dominating the former German colonial possessions in the second island chain, and you overlay that with where the Chinese are now interested in basing and, and one belt, one road activity, it's almost a complete overlap. And so the possessions that we have that we've had since the end of world war two plus our territories in Guam and American Samoa, those are incredibly important for maintaining American power and American both economic and military and diplomatic power. So it's, um, it is incredibly important. And I think we took a really positive step in the previous administration that I hope will be continued with the high level focus that folks like secretary Pompeo and ambassador O'Brian put on the the second island chain.

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Michael Pompeo: Alex. Great. Thanks. Yes. Real estate matters. Some things never change. last question nausea [inaudible] please closing comments too, if you'd like, okay.

Nadia Schadlow: I'll, I'll ask a last question. Some of my questions about defense, um, I think, you know, Mary and Mike waltz and Christian, um, address some of them, I will, I will point out a quote or actually a great book also to look at, um, Richard Nixon's real peace book. It's a short book, but it really is on the subject of, of allies balance of power, regional balances of power. And in that book, he has a great quote. He says, handshakes do not change national ambitions. And when two leaders sit down to talk, they do not turn into philanthropists. And I think that that's probably important for us to remember as we seek to, you know, get Japan to try to do something or control other countries to try to do something, because

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there's a sense of, you know, you know, the degree to which interests are immutable or not.

[01:11:30] And how do you think about how do you get the Japanese to think this is actually in our national interest to do? And I think that was covered a lot. Um, so in, in line with that, um, just as a divergent, you know, related area, we touched upon early, but what about supply chains? Right. So as the Japanese work through their domestic policy issues on, and the difficulties of increasing their defense budgets and all of that, we talked about, um, where are they in terms of leadership on some of the critical supply chain issues in your, you know, in your discussions with them over the past few years. Thank you.

Michael Pompeo: Thank you. Thank you. And you wrote some of the strategy that we were all working on for these four years. Plus you have to do that a rock where you want to take the first swing and then I'll finish up. Sure.

Speaker 2:
[01:12:00] , so, so one of my last trips as national security advisor was to Vietnam and to the Philippines where we saw the the, the Japanese heavily involved in, in moving their supply chains to those countries and others. but we were also accompanied by Kim Reed from the EXIM bank who I think is on the line. I, Kim, do you want to just give a, you know, very short response to Nadia on, on the supply chain issue and on Japanese, near shore and onshore and, and, and both Japan and other allies moving their their, their supply chain the fonts, so to speak from China and other regions.
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Kimberly Reed: Absolutely. Thank you very much. Ambassador O'Brien. And it was a great privilege to to travel with you not only to, um to the Philippines and to, um, Vietnam, but also to participate by your, by your side at the at the 14th annual east Asia summit, which was held in Bangkok. Um, but I saw you interact with prime minister Abe and all the leaders of, of Asia. And, um, as we know and is Nadia is one of the main authors of, um, the draft, the president approved of the national security strategy, economic security is national security. And we saw over my tenure at the export import bank. Um the importance of working with, with allies and partners, including Japan, um, for those of you who don't follow XM closely, um, there are two export credit agencies in Japanese Nippon export and investment insurance group, and then JBEG Japan bank for international cooperation.
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[01:13:30] And it's so important as we look at supply chains, not only of what China is doing with their export credit agencies and furthering the belt and road around the world, but it is so important that we do co financing deals, um, with our allies and partners. And in fact, um had the opportunity to participate with J Beck on talking about, um, advanced nuclear energy technology and the importance of working with, with countries like Japan. Um, and so I hope in the Biden administration this cooperation on the economic front the whole government will continue. It's very, very important. Um, I know that we're short on time, but I also just wanted to build on Alex Wong's comment at the start of this program, um, that this is a seminar, and I just want to share for, um, the viewers something that president Nixon wrote in 1967, because I think we really need to be thinking about this, um, all the time.
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[01:15:00] He said, um, back in 1967, many Americans were primarily Europeanist in their approach to foreign affairs. Dismissing Asia is a relatively unimportant, but the United States is a Pacific power and rapid changes were taking place in Asia. We're more than half the human race lived that might well determine the world's future. Um, so as we look towards the future, I would just be really, um, interested in getting your thoughts on the United States, being not only a member of the quad but Pacific the Pacific Pacific power. And you will see in the news that, um, perhaps president Biden may nominate, um, mayor Rahm Emanuel to be the next ambassador to Japan. This was in the press recently. Um, so I hope, um, that when he is before the former us ambassador to Japan, Senator Haggerty, that there will be a good discussion on this, but again, I'd just love your thoughts on that. Generally, the United States is a Pacific power

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Michael Pompeo: Well, that's a fine question. I think for us to close out on, yes, I think will be a lively debate at the Senate foreign relations committee, but between Rahm Emanuel and Senator hageni look, I grew up in Southern California. I spent a lot of time in the Pacific. My mother would tell you too much but this is an important place for us, for all the reasons we've talked about tonight. There's certainly deep security implications for the United States. There are important commercial implications for the United States. We, we saw an administration for eight years talk about a pivot to Asia. I must say, as I met with my counterparts in the region, they they've for love nor money. Couldn't tell you what that meant. I hope that they would are telling this administration that we were, we had a right that the direction of travel, that the things we were doing to help build out the relationships and to demonstrate American resolve in the Pacific, whether it's in the far west or even closer to home the Pacific, I hope I hope the world could see.

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[01:17:00] We were much more serious about it. And as, as you, my colleagues at the Nixon seminar I'll make clear tonight. This is, this is truly critical for the United States to secure American freedom, to get this right in the Pacific and this conversation, I was a important part of helping elucidate all the opportunities, all the risks and all the tools that we have to try and make that stronger, better, and even, even build on what had accomplished. So thank you all for being with me this evening. Thanks for everyone who joined into this conversation and was listening. Everyone have a good evening, so long.