

**Mary Kissel:** Hello, everyone. Welcome to the Nixon seminar on conservative realism and national security hosted by the Nixon Foundation. Thank you for sharing your time with us this evening. I'm Mary Kissel, with Stevens Incorporated, and we're happy to have Secretary Mike Pompeo chairing tonight's event. Ambassador Robert O'Brien is away and we're thrilled of course to bring back our distinguished panelists and seminar members and to welcome a new member, Bridge Colby. Tonight we're returning again to the subject of Russia. Vladimir Putin's violent expansionism Putin's war on Ukraine, now into its second week, has taken 1000s of wives has said women and children fleeing 2 million Ukrainians and flat playing abroad to neighboring states. How did Russia's relationship with the West after the fall of the Soviet Union deteriorate to where things are today? Well, President Nixon warned against this dark turn.

(Clip of President Nixon) - Well, Russia at the present time is at a crossroads. It is often said that the Cold War is all over. That the West has won that that's only half true. Because what has happened is that the communists have been defeated. But the ideas of freedom now are on trial. If they don't work there, there will be a reversion to not communism which has failed, but what I call a new despotism, which would pose a mortal danger to the rest of the world because it would have been infected with a virus of Russian imperialism, which of course has been a characteristic of Russian foreign policy for centuries.

**Mary Kissel:** Well, Freedom did fail. And the nationalist strong man rose to power and is now arguably attempting to restore the borders of the old Soviet Union since the fall. What has gone wrong? We're gonna kick it off tonight with former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Mr. Secretary, you heard the clip. We've got you on screen. There. You are the clip what has gone so wrong? We find ourselves here. Good evening, sir.

**Mike Pompeo:** It's good to see you. It's great to be with you all again this evening. A whole handful of things went wrong. We've talked in previous sessions here at the seminar about various models of deterrence. We've also talked about the fact that we know this is a forever challenge. This isn't something that you can even establish deterrence in. It is timeless. It is in fact ephemeral. And I think that there's one thing you can see here was that the United States and the West didn't do remotely enough to change the calculus for lots of bad leaders around the world. You can see this rise with Chairman Kim's axes. You can see it with the ayatollahs efforts in Iran today. And you can see most clearly every day on television screens in four different places in Ukraine that are now rapidly being encircled by a Russian military that has already demonstrated that it is not truly up to the task that they told him or Putin that they would be up to become a big deal from a strategic perspective. There's so much at stake. It reminds me when I've listened to President Nixon's comments there reminds me of the thing we would tell ourselves and we were pleased at West Point, we would always joke as we got near the end of the first year, which was supposed to be a tough year, we would always remind ourselves it's never over. And then right life is going to be hard for an awfully long time and when it comes to maintaining peace and protecting against authoritarian, evil leaders like Vladimir Putin, it is never over for the West. Freedom is to use President Nixon's term always on trial. You know, he used another idea about reversion he said, he said it will always revert. You should know that there is always that risk and these bad guys use language about reversion. They talk about

American decline to talk about the decadence here in the West. I saw a poll that said a huge number of Americans given the choice that the Ukrainians are facing would walk away. They'd flee the United States before they would defend it. You can question the poll itself but even if it's 1/3, right, it's too many people who weren't prepared to do that. That basic thing, which is to defend this amazing nation in the West and the idea of Western civilization. It's a big failure. And to your question, Mary, this is about what went wrong, right. If we're not teaching the right things in our schools, if our economy is strong, if we don't understand not only are the Germans dependent on Russian energy, but it turns out when you put climate change at the top of your agenda, so are we, if these the central underpinnings of the core institutions of the United States are weak, then maintaining the deterrence that we all know is necessary is so much harder. I'll stop there. There's certainly a lot more to say about this. But in the end, it is it is not multilateral as America I don't know how many times we spoke about this, or I spoke about and using language you suggested during my time as Secretary of State and multilateralism is only going to be underpinned by a strong and robust United States of America that is a singular in fact and tour today than it was even five years ago.

**Mary Kissel:** Thank you, Mr. Secretary, I'd like to turn to Dr. Monica Crowley. Who worked for President Nixon because there was a theme that you've just hinted at, and I'd like to go into a little more deeply that that freedom is not inevitable, and that President Nixon knew that. And, and that was what the warning was about, that if the West didn't do enough to pull Russia into our sphere, they would end up back to what they saw as their kind of cultural impulses. Almost. That's what it sounded like to me. Monica, can you comment a little bit on expanding on it for us?

**Monica Crowley:** Sure. And thank you so much, Mary. It's great to see you and the Secretary and our fellow seminarians here at the Nixon seminar, you know, would like to begin by framing this with a quote from Vladimir Lenin. During the Russian Revolution in 1917. Ukraine actually tried to steer its national course independent of Russia. And that, of course, was later incorporated into the Soviet Union by force. And at the time, Lenin confided to his fellow Bolsheviks, he said, quote, If we lose Ukraine, we will lose our heads. So they knew from the very beginning how critical Ukraine was to the Soviet economy and of course, here we are, over 100 years later with Vladimir Putin, seeking to bring Ukraine back into at least Imperial Russia or mother Russia's fold. To your direct question, Mary. Yes. And in fact, I wrote an op ed for Newsweek, which was published today you can see it online.

**Mary Kissel:** It's going up on the screen if we can, yes. Thank you.

**Monica Crowley:** Thank you, Mary. Because I wanted to sort of bring all of this full circle. I was with President Nixon in the early 1990s. The wall had come down, the Soviet Union had collapsed, and Nixon saw a providential opportunity for the United States to lead in an effort by the West for something akin to a new Marshall Plan, which saw the rescue of Europe after World War Two, and he realized there were budgetary constraints and political constraints, but he was really making a very passionate case for the West led by the United States to get in at the ground level with this fledgling Russian democracy. And he laid out a whole array of options

for us, but he did want to make sure that the West was doing everything it could in order to lock in the incremental gains we saw after the fall of the Soviet Union with regard to representative democracy, but also free market capitalism. And his warning was that if the West did not step up and do enough that Russia would be lost for generations, and we would see the rise of a new despotism. That was his phrase, a new despotism. So he actually foresaw the rise of Vladimir Putin. And in fact, the invasion of Ukraine, which unfortunately we're seeing today, so once again, President Nixon was incredibly prescient and correct, as usual.

**Mary Kissel:** Well, he has a great quote, it's a short quote, I'll put it up on the screen. I think this is from his book of Beyond Peace, where he said, often the demise of old adversaries leads to the emergence of new, sometimes more dangerous challenges, rather than to peace and harmony among nations that's from President Nixon's book, beyond Peace of course of many books that he wrote but want to return to the same of of how we got here, Secretary Pompeo talked about the lack of deterrence. And Monica, you spoke to a problem that went back far beyond that across several administrations. And yet you did have one administration out of the last four where Putin was not so adventurous and that was the last administration. I don't know of Congressman Gallagher if you jump in here for us, but if you could put some detail on that. I mean, what does deterrence look like what has succeeded in the past?

**Congressman Mike Gallagher:** Well, the lesson I derive from all of this is that deterrence to work, requires hard power. I think the fundamental flaw in the Biden Minister frustrations approach was the belief that the threat of sanctions combined with hashtag diplomacy or mean tweets, would somehow deter Putin and I think that if you get a layer deeper represents a bizarre form of mirror imaging, where we sort of impose our value structure onto a KGB thug like Putin whose only language is hard power, and we did not put hard power in Putin's path. The Biden administration delayed assistance to the Ukrainians for over a year. They signaled consistently that they would not use military force, the president in what was a big gaffe downplayed a minor incursion. I would further argue that deterrence failed because Biden launched a war on American energy production while giving a green light to Putin's pipeline. And again, I don't say this to assign blame. I just say that so I think we can learn from the failure and I worry that not only are they going to fail to learn from this, they're going to use their management of Ukraine crisis as a success story for their broader approach something that they're calling integrated deterrence, which when you get to the bottom of it is just a fancy, liberal code word for cutting hard power prioritizing things like climate change initiatives, DNI initiatives. It's a dangerous way of, I think, laundering appeasement into US foreign policy and abandon a peace through strength. So the primary takeaway here is that hard power is necessary to determine I think, one Nixon example would be the way in which Nixon and Kissinger handled the 1973 crisis when Israel was attacked by Egypt, and Syria robustly mobilized in order to put hard power in the way and ultimately forced a diplomatic resolution where we were center stage and did not allow the Soviets to take credit for acting as a peacemaker. And I guess that's my, my final concern is that when the dust settles here, somehow the CCP is going to weasel their way in despite enabling this war, they're going to put themselves in the role of the peacemaker.

**Mary Kissel:** Well, you do start to see an argument, Congressman that from the administration, but from other observers that, for instance, if we had said Polish mags and Ukraine that would have been provocative Congressman waltz here and Green Beret been on the ground and many of these war zones. Speak to us a little bit about that argument. Congressman Gallagher has said that effectively Putin has determined us because we've let our deterrence erode, if not completely evaporate. So speak to us a little bit about events in recent days and how you interpret that. I think you're on mute congressman.

**Congressman Mike Waltz:** This has been a consistent theme. Even over the last year I was out in Ukraine and a bipartisan delegation last year. And the frustration from the Ukrainians, even from our own embassy, with the White House's approach was palpable. And they expressed it in no uncertain terms. And at that point, there were a number of false distinctions being drawn. One was offensive versus defensive weaponry. That was the reason that we didn't at least that we were given that harpoon anti-ship missiles which would have been critical for defending Mariupol and Odessa. Right now. That's the reason they weren't provided the Stingers were questionable. But the entire premise was, let's not be provocative. Let's not do too much. Let's not lean too forward. On this you know, hope is Mike Gallagher. I think rightly laid out this kind of hope on this concept of integrated deterrence. And when you put a diplomatic and an economic strategy forward and right off the bat, you pull hard power off the table. I mean, you communicate that rather than rather than at least confused Putin's calculus. I think that's a large part of why we are where we are on the MIGs itself. Let's provide the damn migs. I can't figure out what happened between Tony Blinken given a green light and then now suddenly this odd articulation out of the Pentagon, that really air superiority or at least checking and challenging Russian air superiority is no longer relevant. You know, I think at the end of the day, they're falling into the same trap. They're being deterred by Putin and they're drawing a false distinction providing we've drawn the right distinction which is us boots on the ground or US pilots, enforcing a no fly zone, but to start drawing these false distinctions, what they've been doing over the last year on different types of hardware is too provocative is I think, a large reason why we are where we are.

**Mary Kissel:** I'd like to point to Alex Wong who worked on the North Korea issue very closely so is very familiar, not just with nuclear armed states. Oh, sorry. They're not nuclear arms. And also sanctions issues. Alex, you referred a lot of commentary from the right and the left and, you know, complimenting the administration saying that they've done an awful lot to get the US, UK, Europe on the same page of sanctions, many of which have been, you know, fairly significant central bank sanctions, for instance, why isn't it working? Why isn't Putin stopping?

**Alex Wong:** Well, first of all, I you know, I know people are giving credit to the administration they deserve some credit but I think the the key event here in galvanizing the free world as implementing these sanctions has been the action of Vladimir Putin and making a reality this invasion and waking up the west to the threat that we see. So we're seeing these dramatic changes in direction which I greatly welcomed, I think many in this seminar welcome from from Germany and others, to place the sanctions to actually lead on the sanctions and to do what I believe the bottom nutrition was was asking them to do before the invasion, but now they have

the reality of this invasion, and now we're taking those steps. Now as far as sanctions turning back, Putin I don't think that anyone who's been experiencing the sanctions, would say that that was a realistic outcome of putting these in. We haven't seen sanctions had that type of effect, whether it's in North Korea or elsewhere. They are very useful in implementing costs. Now, implementing costs is important in order to deter other states from pursuing a nuclear program as we see North Korea doing. There are many very few states that would take the deal that North Korea has taken which is essentially destroying their economy in order to get the fissile material that they do have and the missile technology that you have and in the same way, we want to send a creator norm year that this type of action that Putin is taking as an Asian is is not not acceptable. As far as turning him back. That's something that sanctions can do. We're gonna have to have a a in my view, be ready for a long term strategy here together with our allies to make this as hard on Putin and his military as possible to to win this war of attrition and see if there could be a different calculus down the line, but in the short term, it's not going to be sanctions. That's going to do it.

**Mary Kissel:** Mr. Secretary, I want to go back to you because Alex mentioned norms are setting new norms here in this first conventional ground battle to this degree that we've really seen. Since you know, it was worse many decades ago. Seems like one of the other norms is we're not going to defend you if you're not in a defense treaty with the United States. How significant is that? Is that how you read the President's statements? You're on mute Mr. Secretary.

**Mike Pompeo:** It is. It is very clear that President Biden is not going to use the hard power that we've been talking about tonight to defend anyone but a treaty ally. I pray that he would actually use it to defend treaty allies. He's been pretty clear on NATO. But we have other treaty partners around the world. We have the Philippines, we have Japan. Or many treaty partners of the United States. We need to be unambiguous about this. I was traveling in Asia. I was in Singapore and Taiwan this last week. I must say they're watching this with enormous attention and without much, much applause for the West's efforts. Today. That's the best diplomatic language I can muster up this evening. To a couple of other folks points about this normative understanding that have changed. We've seen, I think, three things that are a bit different one we shouldn't forget. This is the first time we've had a real time real knowledge attack of this scale. We've seen it in the Middle East and conflicts before but to have this real visibility real inside of us is really quite something and has changed the perception. I think it's forced President Biden's hand in material ways as well. Second, we shouldn't forget that. There's a battle going on inside of Ukraine and one going on inside the Orthodox Christian churches. Well, Mary will remember the work that we did when we could clearly see that Putin had weaponized the Orthodox Church with the patriarch Carol in Russia saying the most unbelievable things with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church making the decision and being granted by the has his highest holiness, Bartholomew, being out of Safley independence from the Russian Orthodox Church and to watch the Russian Christian church that many have defended in places like Syria and elsewhere, even those on the right to watch what it is saying about this war is truly something that I think will have deep ramifications not only in the Orthodox Church, but in other global Christian churches as well. And the last thing is what you can see emerging here is a proxy war. I pray that we will support the proxy with all of the tools that we have. As Congressman talked

about MiGs, sign me up. Don't forget, C two and ISR, all the things that the United States uniquely can bring to bear. You have enormous intelligence capabilities that could be brought to the benefit of the Ukrainian people and put enormous pressure on Vladimir Putin as well. We ought to bring all of those tools to bear because this force these Ukrainian people deserve it. And it's as President Nixon said, incred this this piece of ground this Ukrainian space, that we're talking about is enormously important to American interest, I hope I hope everyone can now see that whether it's a farmer in Kansas who's going to pay more for his fertilizer or her fertilizer, or, or someone who just wants to watch good sporting games and now is watching them impacted. This is a broad from the trivial of sports, to the importance of feeding the world. This spans an enormous global impact when someone engages in this kind of aggressive war, and we have an obligation to try and get it right.

**Mary Kissel:** Thank you for calling us back. Mr. Secretary, maybe we should have actually started there on Ukraine's strategic importance. President Nixon knew how important Ukraine was. In fact, we've got another quote from him. I'm going to get that one. Up on the screen. He was such a prescient man and he said quote, of these post Soviet states, the one requiring the most subtlety and finesse is Ukraine. The United States must become much more active in reducing tensions and rivalries between Ukraine and Russia encouraging political and economic reforms in both and always taking care to be perceived as neither anti Russian nor anti Ukrainian, unless either adopts policies that threaten our interest. Christopher Nixon Cox, I'm going to come to you next, because President Nixon often would say that the Russians didn't lose the Cold War. The communists did. So in some respects, he's making the same point that the Secretary just made about the Orthodox Church that instead of blaming Russia writ large, let's blame the guy who's in charge and committing these atrocities ordering these atrocities. And let's not forget about the people. Let's speak to the people. And talk to us a little about that, and your grandfather and how he thought about that.

**Christopher Nixon Cox:** Well, I think that my grandfather was a very unique president for many reasons, but he also visited Russia, and in 1972. During the summit, he made a point to go out and visit the people in Russia. He wanted to actually meet people and I remember growing up, he would say whenever he went to China or Russia or some other place, he always said I'd rather the Secret Service not be around I'd rather not have my security detail around. I want to meet the people of the countries that he visited. And that was something that was very important to him. And I think this is something that we must keep in mind as well as we move forward if we're not fighting against the Russian people. We're fighting against the evil leadership. That is driving these poor people that do terrible things. And you look at these poor soldiers that are many of them being captured by the Ukrainians, and they say we don't know why we're here. You know, these are our Orthodox brothers. Why are we attacking them? We didn't think we'd be attacking them. So I think you have to understand, you know what it is that the people in these countries want. And I think that ultimately, the solution to this is that, you know, enough pressure has to be put on Putin so that his own people don't want him in power anymore. Whether that's the people around him, the generals around him, his inner circle, and the pressure that they'll be getting from the street. The people who are protesting in the Russian Street, we have to understand what drives them, because ultimately, they're going to be the

ones that take Putin out of power. And then on the flip side, I think we have to look at Ukraine. This whole Ukrainian story is going to come down to the Ukrainian people and how much they're willing to sacrifice, whether they're going to want to put their lives on the line for months and months and months on end. If they don't have the will, then this isn't going to be some war that's going to end well for the West. But I think that they do have a will. And I think that that's something that my grandfather would certainly look towards is how eager are they to fight and I think that we're going to see that they are and that's that's what's going to cause Putin problems.

**Mary Kissel:** Well, Ambassador O'Brien asked that we pull up a couple of his comments and he did make a comment on the Ukrainians will to fight but I actually want to put up the clip on what exactly they are asking for. It's the second clip. We could pull that up, please. That's from Martha McCallum show. Ambassador Robert O'Brien. Let's play the clip.

(Clip of Robert O'Brien) - Strength is what deters people like Putin and Xi and then the ayatollahs and, and we've got to get back to a peace of strength posture and then we have to take it seriously because everything he said so far, he's done. I mean, he said he was gonna invade Ukraine here video, Mcrainey said he's gonna invade the Baltics, and we've got to protect the Baltics and Vanda and he's even from Sweden and Finland into the mix as well. So we need to take steps to protect our allies and on the nuclear front, Vladimir. Putin should understand that we have a very capable and very large nuclear force just to see what happens and he doesn't want to see his entire country destroyed and we don't want to see our country destroyed. So hopefully, that's enough of the term determined to to keep him from doing something very, very foolish.

**Mary Kissel:** Okay, that was the clip on deterrence. Sorry about that, folks. But actually, it's a good segue, because we do have a missile expert here on the group of seminar members so that would be John Noonan. This conversation a lot of it has been about deterrence is Vladimir Putin if he's not threatened at home, could he Orpheus write that down rather, could he move to using those weapons of mass destruction and what does that what does that look like?

**John Noonan:** Yeah, I think you said it exactly right there. In that he made a very important caveat, which was not just nuclear but weapons of mass destruction. And as Ambassador O'Brien said, and that appropriate clip one has already demonstrated a very recent willingness to use these weapons. He poisoned two British double agents in Salisbury, England using a specialized nerve agent. He there was a coordinated gas attack over Duma, Syria, which was developed delivered by by a Syrian Army helicopter but I think most of the people on this call and frankly many of your audience, probably know that Bashar Al Assad the dictator of Syria does not wipe his bottom without a tacit go ahead from Vladimir Putin. So with regards to weapons of mass destruction, and Ukraine, let's take a look at the operational picture at two weeks and we currently see the Russian military enveloping several of Ukraine's major cities. And when that happens, Putin will have several options: he can send in all the infantry and go house to house with the Ukrainians. mackinder what we did in cities like in the Second Battle of Fallujah, which was very bloody and took a very hard toll on American forces. He can try to dislodge the Ukrainian resistance by softening them up with artillery fires, which we've already

seen, quite frankly, quite a bit of in the first few weeks of the war, or he can use something more serious, such as dedicated chemical agents and widespread chemical gas attack. I caveat that anyone who tells you how the next 48 hours or an hour how the war is going to go is probably full of it. But if we had to choose a WMD I can't believe we're even having this conversation in 2022. I would say that there's a decent odds that Putin resorts to chemical weapons now on the subject of nuclear weapons. I think last year, the odds of nuclear weapons being used in this decade were probably about 0%. I would cautiously elevate that right now to maybe about 5%. And this is obviously an art not a science. For those of you who don't know the difference between nuclear weapons there are strategic nuclear weapons, which is long range missiles like what I did in the Air Force, there's submarine launch missiles and then there's a cruise missiles launched by our bombers. Have you ever seen for those of you familiar with Cold War constructs that was the the big exchange between the big powers during the Cold War, but there's also a smaller set of nuclear weapons called battlefield nuclear weapons or tactical nuclear weapons and, as the name implies, those were designed to repel Red Army formations. Should there be an invasion of West Germany in Western Europe during the Cold War in the event that, Lieutenant Pompeo, his armor platoons were overrun by Soviet forces our doctor did call for using these battlefield weapons to essentially create holes in the Soviet lines that we could exploit. The The reason I say 5% is....

**Mary Kissel:** I want to make some room here for others to jump in to John because we can go very, very deep into the various parts of the nuclear arsenal. But it sounds to me like your point is, Putin has every opportunity and he's demonstrated a willingness to use these weapons, and he's got them and we've said we're not going to defend you because you're not a treaty ally. And his secretary ads were a proxy war. So what if he does use a tactical nuclear weapon? How many people does that kill it? Does that provoke a NATO response?

**John Noonan:** So believe it or not, Mary I was getting to that in my long winded Air Force way? Look, as your previous guests have stated, we are not even providing MIG 29 and 40 year old fighters to the Ukrainians at President Solinsky his request and a very willing Polish government to provide those jets out of fear that that would be excessively escalatory. So there is a very real possibility, in fact, likelihood that if Putin were to use a chemical weapon or nuclear weapon, he could either get away with it because he's already incurred a significant international response in form of sanctions, etc. Or I think that the lower threshold before that before us before we would weigh in with weapons of mass destruction of our own, you would probably feed into that. That that movement that's arising for a limited no fly zone or a no fly zone, which would I think still would still realist into the war. So just think about the escalation ladder and those terms. Yeah, it's it's a scary scary thought. Congressman Waltz way in here. You had some comments.

**Congressman Mike Waltz:** Just very briefly, I think John's absolutely right. And I do want to be clear that it is a part of Soviet doctrine to escalate to de-escalate, that they believe they can use small tactical nukes, and that we won't escalate beyond that for fear of destroying the world and therefore they can get away with it. It also want to give Secretary Pompeo a, you know, an absolute shout out. That's one of the reasons we had to get out of inf because they were violating the treaty and developing these intermediate, both missiles and these low tactical



nukes. I just wanted to make one other point that the messaging here coming from the White House, aside from the doctrine, is critical in terms of establishing red lines and sending signals to Putin about what he believes and therefore what he believes he can get away with. And just in the last 48 hours, I really believe it's been horrendous. When you have the Vice President, the United States, in such a moment of crisis, standing on the Eastern Front, and essentially kind of laughing our way through it like it's a traditional bilat and not establishing those firm lines and then you have that backed up by the White House press spokeswoman when directly asked today, what the US response would be in the use of chemical weapons. And her response is I don't want to get into hypotheticals. I think that's the exact wrong approach. We need to be very clear on what those lines are and what the consequences will be. If Russia crosses them, and you look he got away with it in Syria for years 54 hospitals directly attack for in one day, and ongoing use of chemical weapons often through false flag operations. And if we don't send the right signals now, I agree that he thinks he may believe that he can get away with it again

**Mary Kissel:** Alex Wong jump jump in here.

Alex Wong: Just on the nuclear these I just want to make a simple point here. You know, it's clear that, you know, Vladimir Putin has the nuclear capability or their tactical or strategic, and I think we have to assume that he has the willingness and the right situation to use it as well. But that in turn says to us, that we have to have Russia understand that we are willing to use our nuclear weapons. That is the only way we're going to maintain this run; we have had no nuclear use since the 1940s. And I am worried and I will look very closely at the Biden administration's messaging on this because they are conducting right now their nuclear posture review we're putting that together. And there have been a lot of noises going back to the campaign, from President Biden himself on changing our nuclear doctrine on diminishing the role of nuclear weapons playing our foreign policy. There's been some movement in the administration and other quarters of the Democratic Party to delay modernization and investment in replacement of our strategic forces. And in this environment, I think that it has to be rethought that we were in a period where nuclear weapons would not play the role that they have played for the past 70 years. That that is over now, in this age of new aggression. And it's not just Russia that is looking at China too, and their buildup of near nuclear forces and not doing that for nothing. They're doing that for a purpose. They're doing that for a revision of the world order that we're in. So we have to be serious about our own nuclear forces as we and I hope this, this Ukraine division is a wake up call for a lot of things. Open to wake up call on that, that piece of policy as well.

**Mary Kissel:** Congressman Gallagher Your hand was up.

**Congressman Mike Gallagher:** Well, Alex raises what I think is such a critical and overlooked point, which is that in the face of not one, but two growing major nuclear threats. If not more, by the way, I'm talking about Russia and China. They're considering adopting policies that explicitly de-emphasize the role of nuclear weapons and US defense policy. So the Biden administration, reportedly and rightly rejected a no first use nuclear nuclear weapons. policy, but still on the table is a sole purpose nuclear deterrent, declaratory policy, which has no precedent in the

history of US nuclear policy, and its sole purpose policy states that the sole purpose of US nuclear weapons is to deter a nuclear attack, but the policy's goal is the same, as you know, first use policy, which is to demonstrate us goodwill by removing nuclear weapons and its defense strategy. Our allies do not like this. They are concerned. They protested loudly when the Obama administration with then Vice President Joe Biden considered these policies in 2010 and 2016. And President Obama actually, after careful consideration of ally views, and receiving feedback from military leaders, military leaders rejected that change, just as Biden should reject it now, but I'm very worried that they're going in the opposite direction and that's been playing out behind the scenes for the last year and I believe that has also undermined our extended deterrence in Europe and also reverberates in other theaters around the world. As Secretary Pompeo are we seeing the end of US leadership in the world? Is this the end? of the US led order just the beginning of the end?

**Mike Pompeo:** It can't be. It can't be for deep, deeply, deeply American reasons. So it's not about being the policeman for the world for the sake of being the policeman for the world for the benefit of others. It is providing American leadership for the benefit of us right here at home. You can see this plain as day. There's always this risk. There's always this risk of complacency and democracies. Our founders knew it. They talked about it an awful lot. They had both sides of it right? They said don't get entangled, but at the same time they understood that we were a unique and special place and you have to strike the right balance. We had a realism in the Trump administration that was important. We accepted facts as they weren't. We didn't pretend that Vladimir Putin didn't need to be constrained. We didn't. We didn't pretend that the Chinese Communist Party could sell a few more trinkets so we could invest a little bit more money there and life would be good that they would stop their malign activity. We didn't pretend that the Ayatollah couldn't be constrained by a piece of paper that was worth what it was written on. We were realists. But at the same time, we were pretty restrained and made clear here are the things that matter. We drew two. I think Congressman Gallagher wants to talk about red lines and clarity. We were pretty clear about the things we were prepared to expend American resources on and create risk for America because it's never cost free connected to that. But we were very clear about those things. We were prepared to work hard on what we would do in the event that they took action on when President President Trump saw the chemical strike in Syria, we launched Tomahawk missiles at some targets. One could argue we should have done more. But we at the very least lived up to the commitment that we had made to that point. I'll give you one more example. You know, the absolute failure to be clear about what even the Biden ministration has been prepared to do so far is very apparent around the world. When I was in Asia, they were talking about our sanctions and saying these things aren't even remotely serious. If you don't apply the secondary sanctions alongside of them. And we saw that with Iran when people said American sanctions alone won't work. You'll need the Brits, the Germans, everyone else. That's just nonsense. They accomplish, that they are a tool for effective policy, as long as you're prepared to use the full weight of American power alongside them. And when we say we're not going to buy Russian oil, but knock yourselves out United Kingdom, Germany, France, whomever the world sees not only the weakness of the sanctions, but more importantly the deception that is being foisted on the American people this this will be my last point very about your question. Leaders have to stand up and tell the story at home. It is a pretty easy

thing to say, you know, let's fix a pothole not provide a javelin to the Ukrainians. It makes perfect sense to me. The logic there. What leaders have to do is they have to be prepared to go back to their county commissioners to their citizens in their own state. They need to go back to their home district or their home state of thurst, Senator and make the case for why this matters why and why we should be prepared to do what we're going to do and why that what the impact will be if they're not if the answer is to take the easy out and simply say, well, we're not prepared to go make this little bit of sacrifice, right? Take whatever risk may be connected to allow Polish airplanes to be flown out of a US Air Force base or a NATO Air Force Base in Germany. If you're not prepared to go make that case back home then, yeah, there's some risk that American leadership will be diminished. And this will only accrue to the benefit of those who want to undermine our way of life here at home.

**Mary Kissel:** Now, Mr. Secretary, I'm going to push you a little bit more on this question, because just to go back to Christopher Nixon, Cox said about his grandfather, President Nixon that when he went to Russia, he made a point of going and talking to the Russian people. As Monica Crowley told us earlier, President Nixon thought of perhaps a new kind of Marshall Plan for Russia to make sure that it didn't revert back into this nationalist expansionist mode that historically it's reverted back to, is that a leg of the stool that either, you know, our administration Mr. This administration is missing, is just focusing on the sanctions on the military tools, you know, on on on that aspect instead of simultaneously, you're reaching out here to the Russian people.

**Mike Pompeo:** We tried to do that but we wouldn't get everything right every day in our administration, and that is sure. But we didn't try to do this all across the world, frankly, where we had bad guys so take Venezuela where we rightfully recognized one way there was the president. It wasn't easy. It wasn't straightforward, but it was the right thing to do. This administration is now meeting with the Maduro regime. When the Iranian protests began on our watch, we did our best. We were furiously trying to communicate with the Iranian people and provide support to them. So they could get a better chance, a better opportunity for their families in their lives. We did it with messaging, we did it with money and resources. We tried our best to make sure that we were supporting peoples around the world that were in their own way trying to create a more consistent, more prosperous, Freer space for themselves. There's always more that the United States can do. Our resources aren't infinite. We ought to be continuing to try and do this for the Ukrainian people. Every place we can today, not just with missiles and javelins, but with the humanitarian assistance that's going to be needed to make sure that these refugees are taken care of wherever they find themselves in Poland or Romania, wherever it may be. Doing the right thing though the world is watching to see how we treat the victims in this and how we treat the aggressors.

**Mary Kissel:** I want to pull in the Congressman again and please other seminar members if you want to jump in tell me but perhaps just a congressman waltz just because he'd been traveling in the area. How would you assess the performance of NATO? What have we learned here? About that institution in a time like this? You're on mute, sir.

**Congressman Mike Waltz:** If I had \$1 for every time when I worked in office, the Secretary of Defense for the Bush administration and helped write a speech or engage in some type of ministerial begging and pleading for, for our NATO partners to live up to their pledges and they'll live up to their to their commitment that they all signed up for for to 2% of their defense spending and via be a lot much more wealthier. And this was a kick in the rear. This is a wake up call. You know, you started off Mary with Where Where did we go wrong? Congress certainly shares a lot of the blame from sequestration to 20 years of continuing resolutions to, you know, heavy investments and Middle East wars, which were absolutely necessary but to the exclusion of other types of deterrent like the F 22. And now a nuclear enterprise that is literally aging before eyes as China puts new capabilities on the field at a very rapid rate. So look, I hope that this will last longer than this crisis. In terms of NATO. I think we could see some absolutely kind of revolutionary, or at least evolutionary leaps forward. It's very interesting what's going on with fenlon. What's going on with Sweden? And in terms of, you know, what they're considering now, their traditional position of NATO. I thought what happened with Switzerland, obviously, not a NATO partner, but taking the bold action that they took I think this is a real wake up call. I'm not sure it's going to last long enough for meaningful national level changes in energy policy. I certainly hope it does. But I'm not sure I mean, you know the problem with the bipartisan ban on Russian oil is there is no bipartisan agreement on what we replace it with. And as the Secretary said, the absolute wrong answer is creating a devil's bargain with Iran and Venezuela, that I do not see the progressives loosening their grip on this White House, at least in the next three years. In terms of unleashing American energy and that's what ultimately Europe needs to get off their addiction.

**Mary Kissel:** Well, we've been very surprised congressmen, they were for Nord Stream to until they were against it. They were against swift sanctions till they were for them. They were against banning Russian dial and something reported them. I mean, we've seen a lot of 180 degree turns.

**Congressman Mike Waltz:** Well, and just one other point that we're about to see. Remember, with you know, this was a passion for Ambassador O'Brien and I know, Secretary Pompeo, but what was behind it as well was moving that force structure that's been sitting in Germany for four years and moving at ease and Nepal and into Romania. Literally the administration was mocked by Democrats on the Hill. And now we're seeing a lot of that talk. So just want one amongst many things that that the administration was right on and now everyone's got religion on it.

**Mary Kissel:** We're gonna go back to Alex Wong and then after that, Monica Crowley Alex, right.

**Alex Wong:** Yeah, I just want to step back and maybe make a a broader point here. You know, I I know the topic here is what has gone wrong in our since the fall of the Soviet Union in our relationship with Russia. And I think President Nixon was certainly right, that we had to be supple and farseeing in managing the growth of democracy in Russia. As well as the very peculiar Ukraine Russia relationship. But I don't want this discussion to imply that where Russia

is today, and certainly this invasion is in any way, the West's fault where the United States is at fault, and we can't overlook the role that that simple human agency in bad decisions in Moscow has contributed to this over the past 30 years. You know, and it's not for lack of our helping. We have given enormous amounts of technical and financial assistance to Russia over the years. We have made extreme efforts to assure them their security among them, which of which is taking part in the Budapest Memorandum, which removed nuclear weapons and move them through Russia and the post Soviet period we have provided for Russia's political prestige having them come into the G8 when perhaps they might not actually be economically up to that level. But we've done an enormous amount from Bush to looking into the soul of Putin to Obama's reset. We've tried with Putin himself. But here there are a lot of bad decisions Putin hasn't taken the route that's been offered him and going back to Boris Yeltsin. There's, you know, a time when he was deciding on who his successor would be, who he would name Prime Minister who would ultimately succeed him. You know, among the names that he was considering he's considering a lot of names. One of them was Boris Yeltsin. Or else you know, maybe history would have been a little bit different if he had selected Mr. Yeltsin. But he selected Putin, but I'm not saying at the time people would have predicted that Putin would have become what he is today. You know, people thought at the time he was a reformer, or at least was spouting the lines on democracy. But there's human agency at play here. There's human agency in Moscow at play here. And perhaps they're fighting against the, the tides of their own history, the tides of their own civilizational identity. Perhaps, but we can't overlook that there have been bad decisions that have really set us on this course. And that's, that is quite unfortunate.

**Mary Kissel:** Well, said and that we've also seen evil men throughout history who have had horrible impacts particularly on the continent of Europe and now in Asia and elsewhere. Monica Crowley, you want to jump in over to you?

**Monica Crowley:** Yeah, thank you, Mary. So I am very concerned. That neither the Biden administration nor any other leadership in the West is all that concerned or thinking about the ultimate end game here. So it looks increasingly like Putin and the Russian army could be bogged down. In a protracted quagmire, not unlike what the Soviets faced, ultimately in Afghanistan. And if that's the case, then then what we're going to see unfold is an exposure of Putin and Russian weakness, which is ultimately going to weaken we can Putin's position and I'm just really concerned that the West is treating Putin like he's some too vague, you know, relatively minor tyrant, like a Khaddafi or like a Ceausescu, but Putin is not going to end up hanging in Red Square by his ankles. So has anybody and Secretary Pompeo, I'd love your thoughts on this. Do you get a sense that anybody is thinking ahead and to one of Nixon's quotes that we put up earlier, the alternative to Putin, should he go down or be replaced could be a lot worse, and I sense that the West is just simply not prepared for that will come? First, whether it was the German saying Fine and Nord Stream to find like crying uncle or a series of other things they've been behind? I think they're way behind and thinking about not not what it how does this end because it's very, very difficult to predict, but by drawing a set of boundaries, and then working with allies, not just European allies, who will have a big impact on this, but what the what the shape of a postwar Russia will look like will depend a lot on how the

rest of the world reacts. It was like Congressman Waltz who said earlier, I hope this isn't a femoral. We got a kick in the butt. I think he said, and I hope this is a temporary, we've seen this before, right. I suppose Crimea while there wasn't this much death and tragedy, we watched him strip off a fifth of a free nation. And it took fewer than 60 months before everyone was rounding the edges turning the corner saying well, you know, I guess they get one free. One. That can simply cannot be the case that we have to make sure of whatever. I don't think there's been a lot of thought provided by the administration of this. I've seen some good writing from others about what it might look like what how America might begin to shape a post for Russia, so that we can at least minimize to Alex's point there's they'll still be agency by someone there in Russia, whether it's Putin or his successor, but to shape and restrict their capacity to ever be in a place where they could make this kind of decision to enter for so much harm and so much risk. We're talking about nuclear weapons. So much risk in the world. There are many pieces to it, many of them economic, and a thoughtful presentation of how it is that the United States will leave postwar Russia. It's hard to think about at the moment, but there will come a day where there will be something that looks very different for more experiencing on TV every day. When that day comes we need to be prepared. To sustain all the effort that we're going to put in for the next few weeks for the years ahead.

**Mary Kissel:** Mr. Secretary, as I get out there and talk to investors, a lot of them are hoping for some sort of mediated settlement where President Solinsky of Ukraine who has led his people so bravely fears such a loss of life that he might agree not to join NATO and to see territory, more territory to Putin's Russia. You know, the investment class in America thinks that this would be a quote unquote, good outcome. But my worry is that that's just another sign of weakness coming after the Afghanistan debacle, the appeasement of Iran. And then it actually wouldn't bring the sort of stability and the return to that free world that we all want. What is your reaction to that argument?

**Mike Pompeo:** Well, I must say, I'm a bit surprised about the class of characters or what the appeasement model is. We certainly thought that with our efforts to convince them that the threat from the Chinese Communist Party was serious and real and needed to be addressed even if it cost some American money to do so. So I'm surprised that you're hearing that if if Vladimir Putin and those who are supporting him don't pay a price for this kind of aggression, it will be in fact, precisely what you hypothesized in your second question to me which is it will be begin the decline of a centralized Western understanding of the world that will have rewarded the accuracy it will have rewarded this kind of activity. If you were to get precisely with that list. You just ticked off I think were the things he was demanding before this war before this aggression. Were he to get 100% of his aspirational objectives even if he doesn't get all the way to the full toppling of the Ukrainian government itself or getting 90% or 95% of what he was looking for in the cost of his country he knows will be temporary. This will be a bad sign for the world and a green light to others like him.

**Mary Kissel:** Congressman Gallagher, maybe you can bring us some hope. There does seem to be a lot of bipartisanship on Capitol Hill. We have seen these 180 degree turns out of the

administration. You know, is there any hope here that we do see a hardening of the line out of the White House?

**Congressman Mike Gallagher:** I'm not the source for hope. I'm the resident pessimistic contrarian. So I guess I welcome the statements from Germany in particular, everything that Secretary Pompeo and the Congressman waltz mentioned. The only measurable real thing that's happened thus far as their provision of lethal assistance. Obviously, all of Scholtz made a speech pledging to spend 2% of GDP but presumably that needs to be, you know, implemented by the Bundestag, and other institutions within Germany. So the proof will very much be in the pudding. And I wonder if when it comes to NATO, we sort of had the wrong focus on the inputs of 2% as opposed to the outputs of what that money actually buys and whether it actually gives you a more lethal posture, particularly in NATO's eastern front. I'm going to be looking for whether we are actually shifting troops from highly Garrison positions in Germany to frontline states east of Germany. I would be looking for the deployment of intermediate range missiles to NATO's eastern front. And I think Mike waltz really hit on the biggest area where I'm, I'm pessimistic, which is both in Europe and in America. I don't think we've gotten a religion that would allow us to, to get people out of the climate change cult right now. And what's interesting is how lucky we are to even be in a position to discuss banning the purchase of Russian oil right? The only reason we have that luxury is because of the innovation and hard work of a lot of people in the oil and gas sector has been constantly vilified by the left for years and it's Europe has been undergoing a climate crisis for the better part or an energy crisis for the better part of the last year that shows the dangers of outsourcing your energy policy to ideologues and Swedish teenagers. It doesn't work, right? I mean, to launch a war on fossil fuels, does not work. And I am just not convinced that we've learned that lesson at all. And I believe that that is what remains the fatal flaw in Biden's foreign policy. And it's not just with respect to Russia. The same is true with respect to China, you have this contradiction between some people that have a more realistic view of what we need to do to deter an authoritarian regime. And then you have the climate change church led by their high priest, John Kerry, which has a dramatically different view of the world. And I have seen no indication that they're changing their policy. So you know, Hope springs eternal and human breast but it's my role to be realistic about my analysis of these things.

**Mary Kissel:** Well, I'll never return to you again for hope. Congressman, we are running out of time, Mr. Secretary just didn't want to give you one more chance at any final closing thoughts...

**Mike Pompeo:** Just that would be that that help is important, and we need to keep that help but more important than help everyone on this call knows his hard work and hard headed realism to get it right. And to remember why we've been an exceptional nation if we keep those three things, one action, two thoughts. If we keep them all at the forefront, then then perhaps this administration won't quite hit the nail on the head. But we know in America there will be an excellent time and there will be a turn that will go back to the fundamental things that we all know are what give us the prosperity and stability we have here at home. I pray that it'll be so. I pray that time moves quickly and I pray for the Ukrainian people. While we get there. We all pray for the Ukrainian people,

**Mary Kissel:** Mr. Secretary, thank you so much for chairing the event tonight to all the seminar members and those we missed tonight. Thank you for your contributions and for our viewers. You can follow every single one of these folks on Twitter, they love to keep the conversation going. You'll also see them on national television, radio and podcasts. So please do tune in. There's a lot more to say about this topic that we couldn't get to tonight. So that's it for us for today's Nixon seminar on conservative realism. I'm Mary kissel. Thanks for watching