Rising China in Perspective: Global Threat or Great Power Competitor with Robert Ross  
September 23, 2020

Ezra Vogel: Welcome everyone to our weekly session on critical issues confronting China. Today we have our own member, Bob Ross, who's been a very loyal and faithful member of our center. A member of the executive committee. Always ready to do more than his part in keeping the center going and working on big issues. Bob got his PhD from Columbia in 1984. He has spent a lot of time in Beijing. He's been at Beida for a year. He was at Tsinghua for a year. He was at Foreign Affairs College for a year and he keeps in touch with counterparts there. He's also in great demand this morning. He gave a talk over 200 US military officers at the US War College. He has written widely on international affairs. He's had a particular interest in issues with China and Vietnam. He's what we call a realist who looks at things as they are and has been calling them like they are and has been calling them usually before other people begin to catch up. He moved from his nice home in the suburbs to the coast, a nice apartment overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and then he went off to Wyoming for the Corona virus era where cowboy Bob Ross hangs out in his study and continues his research. So we're very pleased that Bob set aside the time today to talk to us on issues of the rising China in perspective, global threat or great power. I wanna call first on Nick to tell how we conduct the questions just to remind those of you who haven't been with us recently. Nick you want to say about that one and then over to Bob Ross.

Nick Drake: Thank you Ezra. Those of you who have attended sessions in the last few months with us will know how this goes but if you haven't, at the bottom of your screen in zoom you have kind of your control tab and there's a Q and A button. If you have questions during the event please free to enter the questions there. There is an anonymous option. These events are recorded and then posted online afterwards. I believe they're going up on our YouTube channel in about a week or so after they happen. So keep that in mind. If you'd like to ask a question anonymously you may do so. If you don't ask it anonymously please provide your name and current affiliation so that we can identify who's asking the question. And with that I'll turn it over to Bob.

Robert Ross: Thank you Nick. Thank you Ezra. It's always a pleasure to speak to the critical issues series. I think this is perhaps the most important contemporary lecture series in the United States today on contemporary China. Weekly, speakers come in from around the world, from around the nation to talk about where China is and where it's going and I think it's critically important that we keep these kinds of dialogues and meetings ongoing. So I think it's important the Fairbank Center has continued to do this dialogue as it has continued to do this series despite the interruptions. It may not be as good as in person event, it maybe only virtual, but I'm very grateful to be invited and it's important to keep it going.

Robert Ross: Today I wanna talk about rising China in perspective, global threat or great power competitor. The base here is how do we understand Chinese behavior? What is China doing in the world and how do we come to grips with it? How do we evaluate? There are different perspectives in which to evaluate China. We can have a policy perspective and a diplomatic assessment. We would expect the United States to adopt a national security perspective on the rise of China. We would expect the beltway to reflect our perspective. And
we would expect the diplomatic language, we would expect the beltway language to reflect part of the instrumental effort to promote American diplomacy and to contribute to the success of American diplomacy around the world.

Robert Ross: And I said that it should be clear that to the extent that this is American rhetoric and description of China it's instrumental it may not accurately capture just what China is doing. So then we have a political science perspective. And from that perspective we don't look at China as in so far how it challenges American interests, American security, we don't adopt a diplomatic perspective in how we understand China. We look at China as a great power in international politics, what his objectives are, what his ambitions are, how it's using his capabilities and how it's competing including with the United States with other great powers. This requires not a diplomatic or policy perspective but a political perspective with a comparative historical perspective. And that's what I wanna talk about today. How do we see China and how we think about China not from the perspective of American diplomacy, American security, American foreign policy but as a great power in global affairs.

Robert Ross: Now this difference of course is a difference between the beltway that's in Cambridge. The beltway perspective is not a novelist as to be expected but it's not necessarily helpful in understanding China and the source of the Chinese behavior. So again, is China a rising power? Yes, it's still rising but having said that it's also been rising for a long time now so it's achieved some remarkable success at closing the gap with the United States, something we'll come back to but we should understand that as a rising power China's necessarily revisionist. All rising powers of revisionist. They were not at the table when the great power sat down and created a regional security order. So if you were in Europe, they were not at Doka, they were not a Potsdam. And when the regional security order was created in East Asia following World War II I'd say it was the only country at the table because it was the only great power in maritime East Asia.

Robert Ross: So an issue here is China's revisions objectives for the security order, the regional security order, not the global order. Important to recognize that great powers when they compete they compete over regions, they compete within regions and so the US to think of China as a global power or to understand America's competition with China as a global power is not helpful. We are two great powers in East Asia competing in East Asia. What do great powers do? They divide up a region. They create in great power sit down they create security orders and the result is you get spheres of influence, you get buffer states, you get basis, you get allies. And who's on who side? Who has which allies? Who has basis where? Who gets buffer states and which ones?

Robert Ross: That's a function of the distribution of power among the great powers within a region and how they can negotiate and come to some sort of meeting of the minds on what the region should look like. Every region has a security order. So the cold war security order was the iron curtain if you will down the center of Europe and the American sphere of influence is on the West European side, the Soviet's sphere the influence was in Eastern Europe. We didn't negotiate that. It was a defacto event created by the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe but nonetheless it was a security order reflecting the distribution of power in the United States and the Soviet Union. In cold war Asia. The initial security order in post World War II East Asia
was the United States was the great power in East Asia, the only great power in East Asia. The
United States had strategic and military presence on the periphery of China on mainland East
Asia whether it was in Korea, whether it was in China whether it was in Thailand, whether it
was present day Taiwan, we were on the mainland. I wonder that we got wars because we don't
think of it but China was a great power, a rising power in 1949 and 50. Civil war ended if civil
revenue stream going from warlords into Beijing, the unified army not fighting civil wars but
defending borders. October 1st 1949 Mao gets to the briefing and he sees American forces
surrounding China and he says get off my border. The United States expanded to the Yellow
river get off my border.

Robert Ross: I'd say it transferred two wars in Indochina trying to support wars in Indochina.
The Russian support the Vietnamese occupy Cambodia. I need to go to support war. This is
what great powers do. Get off my border and if necessary we'll fight. The French, the
Americans, to the Russian, the Soviet Union all resisted China's demand to get off the border.
Rising China respond to security order in East Asia so that it is as secure borders and it was part
of the war. The post-Cold War regional order was still a reflection of the post-Cold War
regional order so a reflection of post-World War II regional order. America is and was the
dominant hegemonic, neural polar, maritime, great power in East Asia in 1945 till recently. In
that respect you also see regional orders with the Germany elsewhere. India has had basically of
Germany in South Asia with the exception of Pakistan. The United States of course has
regional order with Germany and European influence in the Western hemisphere. That's what
happens when you're the only great power. You create a regional order which you dominate.

Robert Ross: Rising power says rising powers are revisionists and China says American
hegemonic maritime power is incompatible with Chinese security. Rising powers seek security
commensurate with their power. So as their power grows they want more security and they
weren't at the table when that security order was created they say revise the security order.
There are two ways they do it. With national military power to change the bilateral balance of
power with the existing great power and when they do that to change the regional security order
by changing the alignments of secondary power. So what had been on one country's side moves
to another country's side. You set a base here that base is no longer reliable. You set an alliance
that alliances is eroded. Bilateral national power chain about the power changes country then
works because you can equal security order. How do they do that? What countries use
economic power as a foundation of military power? They build up their capabilities, economic
influence, formal or informal with an economic empire or in military spending with an armed
buildup and sometimes that results in arms races. And they use that economic and military
power to compel other countries to change their policies. They target other great powers to
accept the changing military balance then they target secondary powers to compel them to
realign. They shift their allegiances to weaken their cooperation with the adversarial great
power. That's what rising powers do.

Robert Ross: Of course, sometimes this ends up in war since they're always people. One power
gets impatient, the power of refuses to budge and refuses to accommodate. This is what great
powers do and we need to see China's perspective. It's what Athens did and what Napoleon did,
what the United States in the Caribbean in the turn of the 20th century, this marks Germany in
World War I, Germany in World War II, Germany and Japan. This is what they do. So the issue
is we don't question Chinese intentions as a rising power. Its intentions grow with its capabilities and as China's capability grow its intentions for East Asia grow accordingly to create a new regional order and give China security. This is expected rising power behavior. The question we ask about China is what are its risk-taking proclivities? We think about Hitler. We think about his willingness to take risks and we think about the Japanese high command. We think about the willingness to take risks. We think about a country's willingness to use force to achieve their objectives.

**Robert Ross:** And so we evaluate them and how they use those capabilities to create change. Will they accept pain? Will they accept violence? Will they create war? Are they in a hurry? Are they excessively violent? And that's what we do when we look at great powers as rising power. That perspective it's especially important today as we look at China. Of course everyone's vision is power but how does China to use its power? So how do we understand China as a rising power? And there are different perspectives. The US foreign policy perspectives on the front perception and of interest and how do we respond? How has the US responded? We have weaponized, if you will, value judgments on the behavior of China. We've weaponized those judgments to facilitate the mobilization of our domestic resources whether it's defense budgets whether it's support for trade wars or tech wars we've mobilize our value judgments straight to the rest of the world and they should cooperate with the United States. So we call China communist China. While we call China communist we don't talk to China we talk to the Communist Party of China. We say that China is trying to overthrow the global order and it's done more damage to the global order in any country in history. These are not reliable judgments about China but they were instrumental in American foreign policy.

**Robert Ross:** International policy perspective is relative compared to Chinese predecessors as rising powers. China will use these capabilities but is it a threat to the survival of other countries? This is a threat to launch war. It's ambitions are going to cause heightened conflict but is there heightened nationalism and unwillingness to moderate to reduce the cost to other countries? So we have seen the fundamental rise of China. We've seen the economic rise of China. The first 30 years of modernization of China saw a minimal increase in China's maritime naval buildup. Not only buildup ground forces but it continued to modernize by importing Soviet equipment, Russian equipment for the acquisition of technologies. You have to say that China was extremely strategic in its use of the international economy for it to rise. Peaceful rise was in essence a diplomacy design to create an environment to maximize China's domestic economic deal. It was quite successful. The stapled international world allow China to tap into the economic resources of the world. They wanted to do every soft loan with World Bank, every grant whether it's World Bank. Whether it was Japan soft loan, American soft loan. Whatever loans or grants they got with infrastructure development for airports, sea ports, railway the essential elements of economic growth. It conducted foreign trade to create capital for economic development. They opened up for foreign investment to attract technology into China. This joint venture law however much it is problematic today was extremely successful for tech transfer to China. It's intellectual property rights enforcement was weak.

**Robert Ross:** Every country that has risen has stolen intellectual property rights from other countries. We stole it from the British. If countries are willing to transfer intellectual property to China so be it. China was willing to take it because security requires catching up. Countries
have never been very good at stopping other countries from stealing secrets. Today military technology is what is high tech and today you can leave the front door open countries are going to come in and military technology diffuses quite rapidly in the digital world. That China is copying the kind of carrying on industrial espionage. This is detrimental to American security but this is not something that'd allow us to create value judgment to say China's aggressive. Belligerent power behavior is normal. For what it's worth countries over the years have tried to stop other countries from stealing their technology to build up their own military capabilities and they have always failed. Whether it's the French building the ironclad, whether it's the Germans and the British over the grid knocked or United States nuclear weapon and even in terms of organization Napoleon staff system for military created French power then the Prussians and the Germans received a copy.

**Robert Ross:** Compare China, the Soviet union, Indian and Japan, even Japan closed economies and they fail to compete. From a political science perspective the rise of China is really something that requires some degree of admiration because of how effective they were over 30 or 40 year period compared to other countries such as India or Russia that failed to let other countries in because of nationalism or other issues and whose infrastructure has not advanced beyond much of the basics in the last 50 years. China didn't exercise any military power towards ready. They waited to establish border security. First after the cold war it built up its army and then next it saw the gradual decline, continued decline of Russia and they looked around their borders and they said we have no threats now we can build the Navy. According to understanding American to Naval power because the tuition is Katelyn United States China's got no border threats. Only then did they start to build their Navy. Compared to other countries that tried to build a Navy prematurely. France, Kaiser Wilhelm, World War II Japan tried to be continental powers and Naval power simultaneously they all failed. China waited until they didn't need to spend excessive resources on their army. They could spend on their Navy. All this contributed to defense spending. The last few years average defense spending in China was 10% a year.

**Robert Ross:** Finally about 2012 China thinks now we can build a Navy. The defense production grew significantly. Before then they built a new generation of ships and they said these are still bad ships we're not gonna build a Navy. Next generation built a few ships. Third generation built just a few ships so they get the technology down. Finally they said now we'll build a lot of ships. The strategic well thought approach being a rising power. When Xi Jinping in 2012 was the beneficiary of rising China he didn't create it. Jonathan created rise in China but in 2012 when he assumed power he says China is now ready to compete. The buildup became in 2012 very, very quick. Submarine, surface ships, aircraft carriers, destroyers, missiles, monitor missiles based on ships. Very, very rapid Chinese build up American capability. Is this particularly belligerent? No, a country is not supposed to give the other country a chance to respond. But it wasn't a secret. There wasn't Naval ships hidden and one day China had a 400 ship Navy. Since 2012 its been obvious to everyone inside Washington that China was beginning a rapid ship production process that would quickly create a large capable Navy. The closing of the gap reflected one, rise of the underlying Chinese economy and technology but two, America's complacency or perhaps a slowness to react. China has now a larger Navy with modern ships and missiles. It is what we were concerned about if you were in Washington. It is now a fully fledged peer competitor. There's a potential war winning
capability in the South China Sea. No longer is the South China Sea an American Lake. American no longer has naval dominance. America who at this point could well win the war but we're not sure.

Robert Ross: That's what makes a bipolar region with two great powers. Both countries can contend in a war with the other. Again admiration. The risk for China in this process was very great. Status quo great powers have inclination to carry out preventive war. The British Kennedy against Copenhagen in 1807. Jackie Fisher went to the King of England multiple times to say I wanna launch a surprise attack against the German Navy. British King said no. China was acutely aware that they were in a window of vulnerability which the United States might carry out a preventive war against the Chinese Navy. They were aware of this risk and they avoided despite the more activities and more soon they became to avoid Naval crises, to avoid pushing the US to the point it might be a pre-textual war. It was belligerence when they were patient as they moved forward. This is what we tend to call China's gray area of operations. It was using its name, using its coast guard, using its greater authority as a rising power to affect change but in areas that were neither peaceful nor accessibly belligerent to create a crisis and the risk of war. What does China want? This should be fairly clear too.

Wants a new security order. The post-World War II security order maritime usage was clear and it continued in the post-Cold War era. US with air and Naval basis surrounding the Chinese coastal perimeter. South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, United States dominated the waters of East China Sea, the Yellow Sea, the South China Sea with the stream of basis and the alliances that made China's coastal waters vulnerable to American power.

Robert Ross: What did America do with those capabilities? We carried out real time surveillance of Chinese South China Sea ports with American submarines going within 12 miles of Chinese territorial waters to attract Chinese submarines leading ports going out to sea. What did the United States do with that capability? With impunity it mapped the ocean floor up to 12 miles of the Chinese coastline so as to prepare for submarine warfare. In 1995 a US aircraft carrier sailed down the middle of the Taiwan Strait. The Chinese didn't know. Those are all unacceptable circumstances for a rising power. China never accepted that status quo it just lacked the capability to do something about it. With new capabilities rising power provisionists kind of seeks to revise that security order to match greater security commensurate with its capability. Not an unexpected demand of any rising power. What does it want? In the early it wants secondary states in the region to accommodate Chinese interests. And what does that mean? How are they challenging Chinese interest today? By cooperating with the United States and providing the United States with facilities and diplomacy in all policies that contribute to US challenges in Chinese security. China's demand is very clear on these things. Reduce your strategic cooperation with the United States. This in return entails a weakening in the American alliance system in East Asia.

Robert Ross: Quite definitely America will no longer have strategic dominance. It will no longer have maritime in Germany and China's perimeter. What does it want? On the mainland at East Asia it wants spheres of influence and wants the sphere of influence in the Korean peninsula. Why? Because we we recall that in 1950 American troops came right up to the edge of the Yellow river threatening Chinese security. Regardless of who started the Korean war and today United States still has 28,500 troops in South Korea air bases and naval bases. Not a
comfortable environment for living. Mainland Southeast Asia, Indochina, Burma, Thailand recall basically two Vietnam wars in which French and American troops were fighting close to Chinese border and then the third war in Indochina where Soviets alive with Vietnam to carry a war in Cambodia and salvage strategic presence in Chinese borders. Not having spheres of influence in maritime East Asia posed great threat to Chinese security. That's the mainland. Maritime South East Asia what does China want? I would say its immediate objective is to end America's sphere of influence in maritime South East Asia. Does it want Chinese and Germany? I assume it does. After all America had it, we like it and now we're losing it but we're working really hard to keep it so we must like it. We certainly have maritime of Germany in the western hemisphere which we enjoy so I assume China wants to have time in Germany and East Asia.

**Robert Ross:** But that's not a question of ambitions. It's the question whether it has the capability to support those ambitions over time which is a function of the US China balance the power and overtime how it develops. Right now I think United States has the capacity to maintain a bipolar region and a maritime region. The US sphere of influence to maritime East Asia again a reasonable expectation and ambition of a rising power get off my borders, get off my coastal waters. We have rising China which is the revisionist China which wants to revise a security order with new capability. Anyone who watched China from late seventies or early eighties into the nineties assumed that China was successful this day would come. No surprise. How has China used this military power? Let's establish first of all that it must use its military power and its economic power if it wants change. We're trying to simply to go to Singapore, the Philippines or South Korea and say we really don't like your cooperation with the United States. Would you please change your relationship? It wouldn't go very far. Only by exercising power could China affect the cost benefit and the healthy use of other States so as to compel them to accommodate Chinese interest by distancing the relationship with United States. China's use of force. Peaceful use of course.

**Robert Ross:** Since 2012 has been frequent and targeted in many countries. South Korea was a target of Chinese coercion following the deployment of a beer high altitude area defense system. And I'd say it's critical. Japan was a target of Chinese coercion following the 2012 Japanese government purchase of the disputed islands. The Philippines is a target of Chinese coercion from 2013 on over the Scarborough Shoal and then the Philippines mission to the permanent court of arbitration for the territorial dispute with China. Vietnam has been a target of Chinese coercive diplomacy since 2010 over Vietnamese cooperation with foreign powers and exploring alternative oil. It didn't dispute the orders. In each case it was a use of coercive power when these countries were challenging Chinese interests in cooperation with the Nazi. They were using American power to resist China. China's signal was clear. We can make life difficult for you. Stop collaborating with the United States.

**Robert Ross:** How did they do it? Economic sanction against Korea. They were extensive following deployment of Philippine and that is in tourism, Vietnam, significant decline across border trade and Chinese investment in Vietnam when the Vietnamese accelerated the cooperation with the United States and challenged Chinese sovereignty claims. Boycotts in Japan and perhaps railroads. This is an active economic course of diplomacy. Doesn't compare to American sanctions around the world and second it's just economics. The country will simply
exercise economic sanctions to get what they want. That would be exceptional in a rising power. What else are they trying to do and why they are using military power. They are establishing with military power and with their own presence and military presence China as an in-region Naval power with the round the clock presence in the waters surrounding every American ally in this stage. That around the clock presence held every South East Asian secondary power that China is here we're large and we're here to stay. With the Philippine legislator who said we know who the real Naval power is in East Asia. United States sends this navy goes home. China is always here. That's a powerful signal and that's what the Chinese are doing. How else would they do? Island building. Island building was an audacious move. I don't think many states anticipated China would start building islands in the South China Sea. What do they do? They contribute to this near permanent presence in the South China Sea of Chinese coast guard vessel, Naval vessels to be in proximity of the secondary state coastal waters. What are they? They are pieces on basis. It's audacious, it has it's tried capabilities but in a larger perspective bases of bases of basis. The United States has bases in South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, defacto basis in Singapore, even Malaysia. This is what countries do.

Robert Ross: The United States use of maritime superiority to carry out constant surveillance of Chinese ships, surveillance of Chinese ports, submarine ports and mapping the ocean floor. China says stop this, don't do this. United States says we have a legal right we're gonna do it. It should not be a surprise that China developed the capability to the same United States. In this case is decided to deal without us. Certainly a significant initiative. A basis of basis of basis. Second they are not a wartime capability. You think of aircraft carriers as being vulnerable today. We should understand that China's Island building doesn't really change the view and military balance because those islands were easy targets. So audacious but not especially aggressive given US-based presence and activities targeted on China. Chinese coast guard presence always there. They're near Japan and disputed islands and every maritime South East Asian country has Chinese coast guard vessels.

Robert Ross: We might want to just recall that this is the coast guard doing this not the Navy. When the United States wants to have Naval presence around the country or have a maritime presence around the country it uses the Navy not it's usual coast guard. China's large fishing fleet the so called maritime militia, not a very appropriate or accurate name 'cause it's not a war fighting capability in these fishing pleats nonetheless they're large, they're intimidating and the coast guard vessels from nearby. The region is experiencing the presence of Chinese Naval coast guard and ship presence around the clock. Third thing they're doing is they using the South China Sea oil dispute. Economic disputes over easy energy resources as an instrument to compel South East Asian countries to change their policy code with the United States. In this respect we should not understand the Maritime's sovereignty or economic dispute as national sovereignty. It's not sovereignty that drives these a scheme. It's China's security. Now that we know that at times policy goes up and down as a dispute. It's not a constant when countries cooperate with the United States they challenge Chinese secure that's when China gets rest. What are they saying? Do not cooperate with foreign power and do not use your relationship with the United States to challenge China's foreign policy.

Robert Ross: Understand that when time does these things, we're looking at it from here in the United States they don't look particularly dangerous. For China these incidents are not
dangerous but if you're in the Philippines or you're in Vietnam call these crisis, serious crises, because they risk escalation to using force. China is creating crises with third with its neighbors to compel them to reconsider cooperating with the United States. Crisis from the Philippines in 2012 when the Philippine ships got trapped inside Scarborough Shoal by Chinese coast guard deserts. Constant pressure around Philippine fishing boats following the Philippine submission to the permanent court of arbitration for the economic easy dispute. Vietnam would be another explanation build with foreign partners trying to create crisis. The Malaysia very quietly with China's coast guard begin to remind Malaysia we're watching we're here.

**Robert Ross:** All these are threads of crises. They did it for South Korea in the aftermath of the deployment offered. All of a sudden they were fishing disputes in the Yellow Sea. They were always there over disputed features in the Yellow Sea. All of a sudden China was putting sanctions on South Korean corporations. Fishing disputes emerged in South China Sea. Vietnam when they were creating a crisis in 2014 all of a sudden there was exchange of fire on the South Vietnamese border. The Philippines, again, there in the Philippines to try and come out and Scarborough Shoal with risk of hostilities. What do we call this? We call this coercive diplomacy, gunboat diplomacy. Yes it absolutely is. Just to be clear this is the minimum grade power. The US uses gunboat diplomacy with Iran. We use our Navy. We don't use our coast guard. US uses gunboat diplomacy today in Latin America. We use that as well. American gunboat diplomacy since 1895 in Latin America but it's just the norm. The PLA meeting didn't jail people, didn't occupy other countries territory. We see no effort at regime change in any other country from both diplomacies.

**Robert Ross:** Just a reminder what they have in United States characterizes this. You call it bullying. When we do it we call it security defense. When the Chinese do it's called bullying because that's what the policy is supposed to do. But then second even in some of the academic literature I've seen when we do something against China, it's called coercive diplomacy. We're trying to do something against the Philippines. It's called bullying. Coercive diplomacy is coercive diplomacy. Doesn't matter who you're doing it to. China's behavior is expected within a realm of restraint and in many ways even more restrained than the United States. Has China ignored international law on sovereignty claims? Of course it did. What more would you expect? That China would allow five men in New York to tell them to relinquish for sovereignty claim? It wasn't gonna happen. An US intention or Philippine intention was not to use international law to solve a problem but to create a coalition to oppose Chinese claims East Asia and to allow our countries an obligation to China, On the Philippine part it was unfriendly act and the Philippines knew it. China warned them under those circumstances the Philippines should have expected consequences.

**Robert Ross:** The United States knew it too. We had no expectation Chinese would abide by a decision from the permanent court of arbitration. It was a diplomatic instrument not an effort to resolve a problem through the wall. And for what it's worth US recognition to the international courts on US sovereignty claims is not perfect. Finally we look China's demand on sovereignty. China has not demanded that any country in South East Asia recognize Chinese territorial claims in South East Asia. Whether Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines China's demand is clear. Do not publicly challenge Chinese claim. You don't have to accept them but don't challenge it. Particularly don't challenge in cooperation with American power. For better for
worse China has been very, very successful. in using military power and economic power to transform East Asia security.

**Robert Ross:** There has been no effective US response to deter China from its activities and reassure our allies that we will defend them. You look at the US response and permanent court of arbitration in the Philippine. We said he hope all sides will abide by the law and resolve the dispute peacefully. If you’re in the Philippines you just hold the United States. Vietnam in the multiple crises with China limited to statements from spokespersons from the department of state and department of defense. What we would call effective support for Vietnam. The alignment responses were clear. South Korea under the Moon government the post deployment of the theater high altitude area defense system South Korea is three notes. And what were no more missile defense in South Korea, no linkage of this missile defense system with Japan and the United States. Missle defense system and no Japanese participation, no South Korean participation with the US inside the US Japan alliance basically saying it wouldn't participate in meeting the Pacific strategy or the block. First time South Korea, any country in East Asia the first agreeing with China to restrain the security cooperation with United States. South China Sea, every country in South China Sea is moving toward equidistance.

**Robert Ross:** They're not taking sides in the US, China competition. May equate US and Chinese policy is militarization and heightened competition. They said they won't be drawing. All the countries are increasing their exercise with the Chinese Navy providing port support in the Chinese Navy and in the realm of great power politics if they say they're not taking sides which they had before they were US allies and the fact that they're not cooperating with China which they hadn't before this is an erosion of the US alliance system in East Asia. A new security order is developing with the weakening in the US sphere of influence reflecting into a new US balance of power. We've all heard that it's quite common to hear pushback around the world. You'll hear commentary that China's overplayed its hand. Public opinion is growing about China against China. China is weakening his hand in Western Europe. I would encourage you to minimize and discount those assessments just as in your local gymnasium in international politics we say no pain, no gain. If China's gonna exercise its power there are going to be critics. The issue is not whether or not they will be pushed back. The issue is whether the gains were worth it. I think many Chinese are saying that if you look at where China is today compared to where it was in 2012 it's been a fairly nominal cost for the new security work. So what we say is American activities if you will, but this is the case in the criticism of China around the world.

**Robert Ross:** Talk is cheap. Watch what these countries are doing. We say about public opinion, not really important. if you look at the coming election the United States China is ranked at the bottom of the list of voter priorities. The defense budget is way down the list of voter priorities. Voters care about healthcare, race religion, the economy, COVID, defense is way down. The people will make defense policy limit of five or six people. Any government will discount with public opinions. There's always a cost to every benefit and the cost benefit with China. I'm sure they're quite pleased well worth the criticism on the pages of newspapers. Overall China's objectives are typical and expected. Secure border but the absence of other great powers sphere of influence what of maritime borders and land borders. Compare it to the rise of the United States. One third of the United States was taken from cold war. Compared to
the United States and the distinguishing of the American unity. Comparing the United States nor Latin American policy. Imperative contemporary US behavior. I've lost track of the number of wars the US has waged since the cold war. Regime change around the world. King of sanctions and it doesn't do regime change. It doesn't do wars. It does sanctions, but targeted if you compare to the United States. The sovereign issue doesn't demand recognition. What does it demand? Shelf that issue don't challenge our sovereignty with American support. And if you want to do exploration you join exploration. China and Vietnam actually had a joint exploration agreement that expired in January 2014 and Vietnam said we don't wanna renew it and then they went off to cooperate with the United States.

**Robert Ross:** It's why they believe that this was a none friendly act. Do join exploration. Is it difficult for small countries to do? You bet it's difficult. It makes them nervous to negotiate with a country the size of China. It makes it difficult new domestic environment. But how will that oil will be divided? Maybe the Philippines will get two thirds who knows then I'll negotiate. That's what China said. So as great powers go rising powers go. Does not mean this is not a serious challenge in the United States that is making significant gain at minimal cost at minimal disruption. It doesn't mean the US shouldn't compete to advance it's own security but it does say that informed debate is necessary for effective policy. How great is the Chinese threat to war and peace? Is moderate competition with China possible? Simply put as a rising power is it possible for the United States to compete and cooperate at the same time? Our cold war policy is determined by Chinese behavior. Get none and effective policies are available. Let's talk about China and its economic power and its implications to the global economic order. What are its objectives? How its been using its power? What are the implications? Today the foremost economic issue regarding China in American newspapers and think take analysis is the belt road.

**Robert Ross:** But what is China doing with the belt road? They're building a 21st century transportation network connecting Chinese market with the regional economy and global economy. I can't think of anything more benign than that for a great power region. It's what great powers do with continental size economy. We look at the United States. We built 20th century ports connecting the United States Marco of Latin America. All along from the American border to Latin America from Miami to San Diego there was seven US rail lines connecting United States with Mexico. There are seven major roads connecting United States with Mexico. There are airports along the entire region, seaports along the entire Southern border of the United States connecting the United States with the Latin American market. This is what great powers do with kind of the size economy. Why do they do it? Because they wanna create dependency of those small economies on the continental market and that's what China's doing that. That's what America did and used that dependency to compel change and it wants to expand its own exports so that increased production within its own country and therefore develop its own GDP by exports to other regions.

**Robert Ross:** Then of course this is what China is doing. Also we call this surplus capacity. Export it's surplus capacity around the world that we're keeping the production going keep it GDP going on. What it will do. If China over time with it one belt, one road will create greater economic power on this blue river. And from the result of expanded trade with the region. Keep in mind China already dominates the regional economy about East Asia and central Asia. The
impact of the belt road on China's economic authority in both region is at the margins. Relative to that of the United States. They call it the TPP which we were interested in the Trans Pacific partnership or free trade agreement in China and other countries. First recall that it was clearly inactive. Became we had every company buttoned up but China. We said try it then fit the rule in Vietnam. That's okay. Vietnam we felt we could cooperate with against China but understand that TPP was at his margin in economic policy. The WTO only reduces only so far has reduced significantly tariffs on trade. And then second China had already become number one in the region given that its market is three to four times the size of the American market and the economy is going twice as fast as the American market. So that it's important from the regional increased three to four times faster than it imports and American imports from the region TPP was gonna be effective.

**Robert Ross:** What is China doing with this infrastructure? Central agents, oil and gas import. This is not a major impact in the global trade world. Oil gas is not a major impact on the WTO international pre order. On the contrary, the trade and oil and gas is regulated not by into agreements but by the market possible. This is not a challenge of the liberal favor. Second US and Europe do not source their energy from central Asia. So this is not even a challenge in security. So for both Central Asia and South East Asia and all of East Asia the belt and road is a win win. The countries in both regions are cooperating. Maybe them infrastructure of the money. This is a win win. Hardly aggressive, hardly a challenge. Some will talk about Chinese belt road attention into Europe. This is a myth. What are the implications of belt and road activities inside Western Europe? Let's look at first for trade. Countries trade with their names. The number two US trade partner in the world is Canada with a population of 38 million people. Why because it's our neighbor. Our third largest trade partners is Mexico. Why because it's the neighbor of The United States. Home is going to trade with Germany. Beginning and end of story. European countries are going to trade with their neighbors.

**Robert Ross:** If you look at the trade patterns European countries in China. For Germany trade with China. Trade with United States is 30% larger than trade with China. German trade with France is 20% larger than trade with China. German trade with China is about the same as trade with the Netherlands. Not particularly what we would call a trading power. China is number seven. Less than a third of its trade with Germany. Half of the trade with Spain and Italy. US has almost twice the amount of trade with France and China. Again, this is not a training power. China's number six for Britain US have three kinds of trading with Britain. With Italy 3% of its exports. With Greece is less than 3% of its export. We need to look at numbers to understand what we're trying to sense as a trading power.

**Robert Ross:** Do I support investment in China? China is investing a lot of money in building new ports within all of Europe. The implications for China as the trade power is minimal. One, have to share with the neighbors and two, there is no evidence that there is a pent up demand for greater trade being held but backed by the lack of port facility. Expansion purposes is not going to result in a boom with Chinese trade with Europe. We've got a Chinese investment. Again, very low. The support investment. China is not in the top 15 investors for Greece. Not the top 20 for Italy. Not in the top 10 for Poland. With Egypt it's only two and a half percent of total investment. With Turkey is less than 8%. Not in the top seven. It's not an investment power. But new investment could matter. China is investing in what? Infrastructure. Short term
game. When projects are over the gains of employment are over. The infusion of capital is over. China's buying companies? But we say these are not Greenfield investments. China's not building new manufacturers, new companies in New York. They're buying existing ones. That is to say, they're not creating new jobs.

**Robert Ross:** What has been the impact of all of this activity? Countries have joined BRI. Greece and Italy are hardly what we call a major Chinese diplomatic victory. Countries need money for GDP. They need money for the European ports modernization. They're gonna take Chinese money. And the short term employment is not insignificant. They're going to cooperate with China. What has China gotten out of this? There've been votes by European countries that do not support EU commission resolutions condemning China put them right in the scheme of things. China had not compost very much more. Generally we just need to be skeptical. The countries can translate economic influence with China's yet to develop in strategic influence. So for the most part the belt and road has a security challenge with much to do about nothing.

**Robert Ross:** What about belt road in loan defaults that trap, et cetera? Relatively speaking, comparative perspective if you look at the debt, overall debt of countries that are belt road initiative partners, the amount of debt these countries have that is held by China is very very small. These countries have built up debt over the decades with European countries, Asian countries, the United States. China's contribution to their debt is quite simple. Second, US have been making loans to the developing world for decades and those countries which default loans are quite common. What about debt trap in base acquisitions? Well, we have two or three cases out of 1000 Chinese belt road initiative projects. Second, the poster charge for this is Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka was told their project was not viable and Indians wouldn't do it. So they went to the Chinese. The Chinese told them it wasn't viable. The corporations didn't want it. And they went to the Chinese government. The Chinese government said, this is what government to government you want us to do this. We'll do it. This is a short way of saying that to the extent that there is debt in the process the borrowing company has responsibility too.

**Robert Ross:** More recently China has worked with the IMF to help reschedule some of these loans. China has worked the recipient country to renegotiate these loans. This is the case of Malaysia. That's more generally to the extent that China has the basis in Djibouti or Sri Lanka. China's activity at these basis and development of these basis is still at a very early stage of development. Has the BRI had difficulties? Sure it has. The US and NGOs have been granting infrastructure loans to the developing world for 70, 75 years. The success is minimal. It's difficult. The BRI should be seen as a longterm project and will take time to see results on the ground. And there will be adjustments and reactions of trying to improve its policies over time. Is China working with bad governments? Corrupt governments? Oh yes. Welcome to most of the developing world where the industrial world makes loans. It's really an exception for the leading industrial economies to grant loans to ineffective and even corrupt governments. And it may even be argued that China's just relative disregard for the quality of government corruption and environmental issues maybe better for development in the conditionalities attached to Western loans, low bank loans, Japanese loans to developing world.

**Robert Ross:** When China wants to build a product it gets done. With other loans or other conditionalities delay and delay and delay. If you want to improve government all of the
The literature says you promote development. Then you get change into the extent that Chinese aid is creating rapid development through rapid completion of projects may be more effective in creating better government and better environment. The Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank. Great powers create institutions. China wasn't allowed leadership in the IMF, the World Bank. It wasn't allowed in leadership in the ADB at all commensurate with his economic visibility to make economic contribution to these organizations into development world. Second, it's their money. We don't want voting power to go with their money. Countries need money. US in the Asian Development Bank had minimal funding for new project despite the American effort to increase its loan capacity. The entire region signed off because they needed infrastructure and China had the money.

**Robert Ross:** The AIIB like the belt and road initiative could not be more of an ally. It increased Chinese influence. Regarding rules and norms the AIIB is staffed with many former employees of the World Bank and other NGOs. It does joint projects with the World Bank and the ADB. It's rules are not identical to the World Bank rule but they're relatively close. That's restrictions on conditionality. Probably a challenge for the international lending order. China's global order. Again China never signed on to the full global infrastructure. Engagement never expected China to look like us. Engagement never expected China to sign on to the global order. I don't know anyone in nineties, eighties, nineties who would say China will become a democracy. On the China's trade preferences investment profits are going to be identical to the American trade preferences. Rather the argument then was that it's better to have China inside the system than outside the system. It will see change when it's a rising power and you want China to be a beneficiary of that system and a member of that system. I would suggest that was an optimal policy then and it's been successful. It was seeking to avoid revolutionary behavior from outside the system that saw the system as hostile which is the point for the Soviet Union.

**Robert Ross:** I would again say if it's something of a success. China is seeking revisions all the time that perhaps with any institution themselves but is seeking change from what in the international liberal order, more commensurate with its own entrance rather than be revolutionary overthrowing it. Is it a revisionist of this order? Of course it is. It wasn't at the table when the US and Western Europe drew up the rules of international trade, investment and financial order. And it will reflect Chinese preferences. In this respect I'm influenced by article written by Fred Berston. What are China's preferences for the global trade order? The Chinese approach we say is less multilateral or bilateral agreement relevant without agreements. Wrestle and international law what it does it by that on negotiations and more ad hoc arrangements. Great role of the state in financial institutions and enterprise ownership. Greater role in domestic regulations in favor of domestic enterprises. These are likely trends in China's impact on the global trade order.

**Robert Ross:** This is not an overhaul, this is not a revolutionary, this is not transformation. This is something within the system. So what we're seeing is China's more powerful as revisionist that's challenging US security seeking change in international order but from a comparative historical perspective it's used as military force in the right and restrained way. It is not taking the overhaul liberal international economic order. And from this perspective when thinking about policy this is a rising power that enables the status quo power to both compete and cooperate. Thank you, Ezra.
Ezra Vogel: Thank you very much. Can you hear me now? Bob can you hear me?

Robert Ross: Yes I can, thank you.

Ezra Vogel: That was a wonderful explanation of what a rising power does. One of the things you said was that as it gets more capacity, its expectations change. What would you advise the American government to do over an issue like particularly about Taiwan where perhaps we have the greatest danger of conflict? Some people say that the way to do it is to make it very clear to the Chinese that we would go to war. And that that would be a way to prevent China from attacking Taiwan and the best way to do it. Other people feel that there are bargains to be made and adjustments to be be made that recognize Chinese growing power and adapt to it. What would you advise the American government to do in responding particularly in Taiwan issue but other related issues?

Robert Ross: Thank you Ezra. The Taiwan issue has a lot of facets to it. So first we need to understand that the United States policy toward Taiwan under the Trump administration is not driven by a sense of historical commitment. It's not driven by a sense of common values or longterm cooperation. That generation of American policymakers that felt that way about Taiwan do not occupy posts within this administration. The administration sees Taiwan simply as an instrument in its policies toward China to cause policies for trying to contain China. In this respect these arms sales to Taiwan and greater cooperation with Taiwan do not reflect the greater threat of a Chinese use of force. We have seen no indication in the last years. The Chinese's contemplating in supporting Taiwan. It is either not required where the terms are being driven by an effort to create more problems for China. Third everyone in the administration in Washington understands that this is a losing hand. Every country in East Asia is cooperating more with China less than United States.

Robert Ross: The only outlier is Taiwan and Taiwan is a lot closer than mainland 90 miles away, far more vulnerable to Chinese power, far less able to rely on American power for defense that Singapore and the Philippines. So our defense relationship with Taiwan is an attenuating relationship inevitably. Having said that, I also don't believe that Chinese have a long term interest in invading Taiwan. The simple reason that would be a very, very costly war with no guarantee of a short war where the cost of the Chinese Navy and air force would be significant. That would degrade the balance of power between China and the United States military capability. And also we can understand the China led with the Taiwan defacto autonomy since 1949 despite leadership speeches. It does not seem to be a pressing security issue. The most pressing security issue with China is dealing with the United States. But having said all that it's in the American interest to enable Taiwan to have sufficient security to maintain a long term security from mainland use of force. I believe increasing the mainland in US ability contribute to that is waiting and second, we don't wanna get involved and we shouldn't. We would rather not have to fight a war over Taiwan. How does the United States do that? I don't think it's about issuing guarantees or credibility to go to Taiwan. It's still pretty high. The idea that we need to bolster that credibility I think is mistaken.
**Robert Ross:** And second, if we're trying to bolster with declining relative capabilities our words will not be believed. I also don't wanna cut a deal with the mainland. I'm not willing to sacrifice anything with Taiwan if I don't have to. So what would I do? I would say the Taiwan's defense problem is actually better than Cuba's. Could the United States invade Cuba? You bet you we could but the price would be really high. So the American policy for Taiwan is to provide Taiwan with the appropriate military technologies that are, I should say, low political profile uncontroversial that will give Taiwan the ability to make itself a costly card. The extent we can do that Taiwan doesn't need to worry about a mainland attack and the detours to mainland with its own capabilities. We need to write down a list of those kinds of capabilities that are not particularly controversial or provocative and they're not expensive either. I will give credit to Taiwan. In the last four years she has focused more on those kinds of capabilities than any other prior Chinese leader. She's taking defense seriously by doing other things that I would find counterproductive which is the first Taiwan Prime Minister to take defense seriously by looking at those capabilities that are inexpensive but effective in return.

**Ezra Vogel:** One of the things you said was that with growing capacity intentions change. With Japan the big issue of course is the Senkaku with the Chinese called Jayu. With constant surveillance and constant moving of fishing boats and coast guard and some Navy in the vicinity. What would China wanna do with that if they had more power? How would their intentions change if they had more capability towards Senkaku and Jayu?

**Robert Ross:** I don't think China cares about sovereignty. It's a nice idea but I think there are more important issues at stake. So in 2012 the issue was... In 2010... What happened 2010? In China were fairly well ballistic on these things or educating one fishing captain. In 2012 Japanese government bought the Island and China's attitude was we told you this was sensitive. We told you not to challenge us. You challenged us a second time in two years. Now we get nasty. I think what China simply wants is Japan not to challenge Chinese sovereignty or Chinese sovereignty claims, let's put it that way, with overreaction. It has sufficient mistrust of Japan that it feels a bit lifts up on his presence around these islands who knows what the next Japanese prime minister will do. So it has an interest in maintaining that presence all the time to remind Japan that this is a sensitive issue. Don't challenge it. If I were trying to go forward and think what China might want as a next step I think they'd think it's impossible but it'd be nice if the United States and Japan couldn't cooperate to put defense insulation on the Jayu and Senkaku islands or on the Southern islands the VQ Island that will enable the United States and Japan to prevent Chinese access to the Western Pacific.

**Robert Ross:** That's what we're doing. We're building up our capacity on the VQ islands to prevent Chinese easy access through the islands into the Western Pacific. I don't think the Chinese have aspirations for that. I think the bigger concern now if you've watched Japan dealing with the rise of China and watch the US Japan relationship continue way with a leader who doesn't even take defense operation seriously and with the decline of American capabilities we've seen a few of the normative restrictions on Japanese defendant's acquisition begin to erode. If you look at Japan, Japan was never passive of this contract. With the largest Navies in the world with the largest air forces in the world. One of the greatest submarine fleets in the world but there were three capabilities that didn't have long range missiles, long range bombers and aircraft carriers. No power projection capability. The last two or three weeks we've seen
Japan move for developing long range missile capability that can reach Shanghai if they do. That dormant restraint is breaking down as confidence in America as an ally against rising China's breaking down. In that respect we're seeing a similar loss of confidence we're seeing elsewhere in East Asia. But because Japan is a powerful country it's separated by a lot of water, a large population, a large economy we may see an interest in reducing tension with China but we're gonna see Japan develop its own defense capability as well as a term. I think that's where things are going.

**Ezra Vogel:** Now I wanna give you a question from Tony Sanders Director of Finance Administration at the Harvard College Phillips Brooks House. Question is this. Do you see any parallel between the current US, China tension and the previous Japan, China tension before World War II? At that time the United States tried to cut off Japan's vital supplies. Such effort contributed to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in an attempt to drive the United States out of the Pacific. Right now technically US Navy and strategic military bases in Asia created what the Chinese considers as a containment. Will this eventually lead the Chinese to have conflict with the United States?

**Robert Ross:** So the US resistance to Japanese activities in Asia. So first Japan occupies Korea. The United States are not particularly alarmed. Then they occupy mandatory and I would say it's a little more nervous but not a lot that moves into the rest of China which we develop opposition to we're now on a path to war. The path to war began when Japan began to expand its presence in occupation of Americans and South East Asia in Indochina with a stepping stone into the South China Sea. And that would have given Japan and Germany all over the East Asia. Two things about that. One, America didn't want Japan, but Germany with East Asia so there was consumable fear. That's a general strategic outlook in the United States. If a country asked Germany over the Europe or the Pacific then the Atlantic becomes the next aspiration. And so the Roosevelt administration simply didn't like emergency Japanese or Germany or any countries in general. Of course that's why it resisted China during the cold war in Asia and that's why he was at this time today it resists any countries of Germany in East Asia. So that was the context of US and Japan combined with what we would call Japanese military. When there was a problem you use force. When there was a problem you go to war. When there's a problem you occupy other countries. So there was a combination of aspirations with no restraint and willingness to use war.

**Robert Ross:** I don't see the emergence of Chinese agenda. China is challenging America's agenda but it's replacing American to Germany with maritime bipolarity. When you think of the big wars in history, the hegemonic wars, they were worst fought because the country was gaining to Gemini. Not because it was becoming a great power with another great power. China is not threatening Germany. It's just a rotating American agenda. So that's very different than Japan naming and getting closer toward Germany. The embargo on Japanese energy supply was significant and helped to drive Japanese ambition. Having said that Japan was energy dependent and it had no energy. I forget the number, you may remember, but the amount of energy imports that Japan had from the United States were phenomenally large. What are you planning for war against a country where you depend on it for its energy? There's something rather unusual about that. There's a myth out there that China is dependent on oil import. China is dependent on import the oil or oil consumption but the amount of energy that China imports
over shipping lanes is about seven to 8% of its total energy consumption. So that means two things. One I'd say it has no interest whatsoever in trying to use energy constraints to compel Chinese cooperation. And then second if we did it wouldn't have any impact. 'Cause China's self sufficient for the most part on energy. Over time that self sufficiency will grow from wind, from solar and nuclear, from energy efficient cars and so and so forth. It's a very different context. The reason Japan with a great power in these stage 'cause there was no other great power. America had gone home. China was on its back. The Russians had gone to deal with Hitler. Today in East Asia there is another great power that the United States. So the threatened Germany.

**Ezra Vogel:** The next question is from Paul here who you may know as one of the very wise people working on US, China relations formerly the national intelligence council, council on foreign relations is now in center for national interest. This is what he says. Your remarks imply that China's posture in East Asia is more defensive than offensive. Is this really a valid interpretation? And the same question since you're a realist where do you think any allergy fence sends to the US China's strategic competition?

**Robert Ross:** First I don't find the term defensive or offensive hopeful in explaining what's going on. I think what's driving China is security and the status quo makes China insecure. So it's taking offensive operations in order to improve its defensive security. It's certainly being offensive when it had to cover both the policy against the Vietnamese and the Philippines and so forth because those kinds of offensive operations contribute to greater Chinese security and thus far I think that security objectives are relatively capable. Its rapid construction of Naval vessel, Naval ship, the missiles that can target US bases if bomb and elsewhere. This is clearly a effort to expand its military power to challenge American security. Let me put it this way. To enhance American security. But the as I said as a realist I would see this as a zero sum security cooperation. There is simply no way that China can feel safe given American hegemony unless it erodes American hegemony by creating a more distribution of power that makes American capabilities less overwhelming but if you're going to reduce American capability to even make America less secure.

**Robert Ross:** So we're going to look at it and say China is challenging American security and China could be just simply say we want Chinese secure. There is just no way out of that trap. So whether it's offensive or defensive at this point in time I see China's behavior is commensurate with his capabilities and its behavior in a way that's relatively restrained and I think that sort of tag it as offensive or defensive but it's security driven. Second in terms of ideology. I don't see any ideology in China. This is still a country which leadership which says cat black or white I don't care as long as it catches mice. And that's still where they are. I don't see them trying to impose their own regimes their own values in other countries whether its Perma, whether it's Thailand, whether it's Laos, whether it's Kazakhstan, they couldn't care less. They have a pragmatic policy says you cooperate with us we're done. You don't cooperate with us you pay a price and that's it. Xin Jingpin goes to Europe. I don't hear ideology in his speeches. I don't think he cares. I don't see him as a communist in the ideological sense. I see him as a leader of a single party authoritarian state and wants control over the country political purposes and that control over the country includes control over to sniffing a number of state-owned enterprises.
Robert Ross: So the Chinese Communist Party can control the economy. It makes them nervous to use that old expression if the bird gets out of the cage and where you keep that bird in the cage as you have state owned enterprises and state ownership of finance. Is it doctored for the Chinese economic development? No. But I think that's how a single party authoritarian state thinks. The United States and ideology. I don't think. John Foster Dulles as probably Paul knows used anti-Soviet ideology to mobilize American public opinion against the Soviet. I see nothing different from secretary of state Palmdale. American people aren't buying it to a large enough degree in order to shape or reshape our defense spending. It's just not working. It's not working in South East Asia. It's falling on deaf ears but this is instrumental not underlying conflicts.

Ezra Vogel: That thoughtful answer is that I've allowed it to go five minutes more than it should have already. I have to but all good things come to a close. I wanna thank you for your very thoughtful comments today that you've been working on this for 30, 40 years and tell it like it is and give us a lot of food for thought.

Robert Ross: Thank you.

Ezra Vogel: Thanks very much and we'll see a lot of you next week for the next issue of critical issues. Thank you very much Bob.

Robert Ross: Thank you Ezra. Thank you everybody.