

Session: Populism v. LIO: U.S.

Date/Time: April 24, 2018 / 13:00-14:30

Rapporteur:

Jeanne Choi, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University

Moderator:

Elise Hu, National Public Radio

Speakers:

Edwin J. Feulner, The Heritage Foundation

Kim Jiyoung, The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Christopher Nelson, The Nelson Report

Seo Jungkun, Kyung Hee University

Bruce Stokes, Pew Research Center

Session Sketch:

Session 1, Populism v. LIO: U.S., explored the rise of populism in the United States and the potential for the future of the LIO in the aftermath of the election of President Trump. Panelists addressed the question of how recent political, economic, demographic, and cultural changes in the U.S. would affect the U.S.-led liberal world order.

Bruce Stokes opened the discussion by sharing the results of polling conducted just prior to and after the 2016 presidential election. He highlighted the divisions in public opinion on a number of issues including international trade and immigration, emphasizing the

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fundamentally partisan cleavages. Edwin Feulner continued the discourse by noting that there are actually two forms of populism that have emerged: on the right, as embodied by Trumpism and the ideology of the Tea Party, and on the left, as manifested by Bernie Sanders and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Despite the increasing partisan polarization in the U.S., he remarked that this was not always the case, even as recently as the 1980s. Jiyeon Kim continued the discussion by positing that populism is not a new phenomenon in the U.S., but has had a long and vibrant history. She argued that Trumpism is nothing new and traced the history of populist movements from the 19th century until now. Christopher Nelson contended that the recent populism in the U.S. was a result of global elites missing significant shifts that have occurred, leaving a significant portion of the population without jobs and insecure about their future. He warned that if the LIO is unable to provide meaningful employment for the bulk of the population, the entire American socioeconomic system would deservingly fail. Finally, Jungkun Seo addressed the specific characteristics of American populism, asserting that there are important distinctions between populism and isolationism, conservatism, racism, and Trumpism.

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