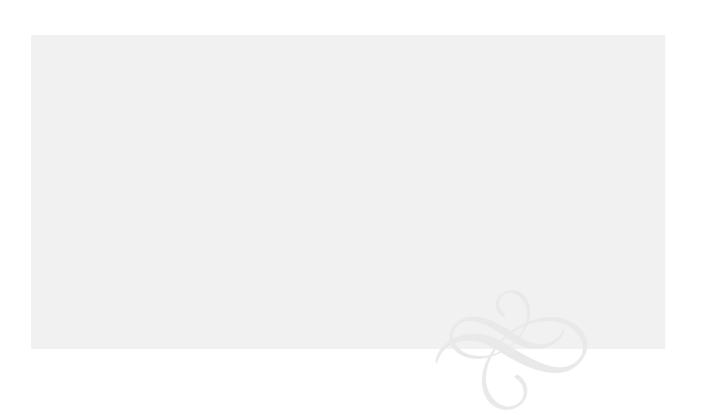# THE DITCHLEY SUMMER PROJECT

4 – 23 July 2020

The Ditchley Summer Project was three weeks of diverse discussions, talks and workshops designed to encourage members of the Ditchley community to 'think new things and make new connections' in order to have impact on a world we need to remake, and connected hundreds of outstanding individuals who have participated in Ditchley events over the last two decades.

Introduction

At a time of transition from lockdown in the UK, the Ditchley Summer Project aimed to help members of the influential Ditchley community review what they had learned so far during the pandemic and prepare for action in the struggle to renew and rebuild that surely lies ahead. Over seven hundred people joined the Project spanning different generations, geographies and fields of expertise. Over the three weeks we held over thirty events and discussions with an extraordinary range of panellists and speakers.

This introduction lays out, from my personal perspective only, some of the major themes that emerged. Key points and participants for each session are in the following section, with each bullet summary linked to a fuller account. In addition, almost all the sessions remain available to view on demand on the Ditchley Summer Project digital platform. Whenever you have a spare half hour I recommend revisiting, as it amounts to a tremendous resource of wisdom and commentary from many distinguished and thoughtful people from eighteen to eighty and up. They shared their thoughts freely and frankly: please continue to respect their confidences in the spirit of Ditchley.

What struck me most is that this crisis is a complex challenge to our belief in the fundamental value of personal freedom. This came out most explicitly in Nick Burns' conversation with Secretary Condoleezza Rice but was implicit in many of the other discussions. We will have to find our way through this pragmatically, balancing freedom with the need of the moment for order and compliance. But we need to be clear at all times that a resumption of the human journey towards individual empowerment and freedom remains our overriding aim. We should try to use our recovery from the crisis as an opportunity to take a big new step forward toward that often interrupted but never abandoned dream.

Here is what I heard:

A continued crisis of self confidence in the West. The US was seen as repeatedly asking itself 'who are we' and acting like 'a defensive fortress,' worried about what others might do to it with cyberattacks; fretting about the Chinese authoritarian model, its efficiency and its ability to 'deliver'; beset by a retreat into identity politics, twisted around a series of internal crises. When the US, still the necessary power for the World, steps away from international leadership, then there is no one to take its place and that sets the tone for the rest of us. This is despite the objective strength and the continuing global appeal and economic success of the democratic world as a collective. There was agreement that regaining confidence is crucial to the renewal of democratic health, vitality and effectiveness but also that the reverse holds true – confidence flows from effectiveness.

The importance of a sense of mission and purpose for institutions. Institutions with clarity of social purpose are doing well in the crisis. Those whose purpose is muddled or minimal are struggling to find their way. This applies across government, politics, the private sector and civil society. A clear sense of purpose will sustain institutions as 'a guiding light' through the difficult times ahead and over the long term. Brad Smith described Microsoft as a company where technology and business must ultimately be subservient to democracy. NHS and London police leaders' discussions also stressed how clarity of mission was helping them work through the grey and ambiguous dilemmas of this crisis.

The necessity of competence for today's world not yesterday's. Mission and purpose are going to ring hollow without a basic ability to deliver. The root of incompetence in crisis is a failure to have prepared in normal times, whether this means stockpiling equipment or building knowledge through education. Where there has been sustained investment and seriousness of purpose over time, then systems and people have stood up to the strain – an example was the resilience of the Internet and Cloud services which have coped well. Where that investment was lacking and benign conditions have been taken as permanent, there has been no resilience and responses have stuttered. Another essential trait of competence is that it marries long term ambition with short term incremental progress. There was close to consensus that we need large scale transformation, especially in education and adult education, but this will be achieved through an aggregation of 'small actions undertaken consistently over time'. Perceived competence – a value judgement on performance – is also impossible without frankness and honesty over the scale of challenges. Leaders need to be straight about what they know and what they don't; what they can do and what they can't; what has been achieved and what hasn't.

More realism but less cynicism from all of us as the public. We appear to be in a cycle of perpetual disappointment with our leaders, amounting to a deep cynicism that effective leadership is even possible. This feeds a deep suspicion that everyone in public life is corrupt. Journalists have been shocked to discover that the public views them as part of the 'elite performance', the flip side of the coin to the politician on the make. In the UK, the appointment to the role of prime minister has become the almost inevitable prelude to a long-lasting loss of personal reputation. But we haven't yet identified where and how we will discover the more perfect leadership we crave, and we haven't yet quite admitted to ourselves that our leaders generally reflect what we have become. We have a right to insist on standards, but we have got to get away from the position that everyone who disagrees with us is either stupid or evil, all the time. As Madison wrote

in the Federalist papers, 'If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary.' But we're not devils either. We, the public, have to take responsibility and realise our agency alongside leaders.

More value to quiet and local, rather than noisy and national, virtue. Taking responsibility means doing things in real life, not just emoting on social media. The crisis has shown the immense capacity of the public for kindness, neighbourliness and resourcefulness, alongside its less attractive revelation of inequality and hate. There is a hunger for responsibility and the right to allocate resources at the level that most people can comprehend, which means locally. People say they want 'levelling up' to be something they are helped to achieve, not something that is done for them but by them. Communities should be given the tools, the command over financial resources and the challenge and responsibility to live up to their demand for agency. Building trust locally is the first step to a renewal of national and international trust and a step back towards essential multilateral action. Too much centralisation destroys trust in authority and elites and infantilises people.

We can push back on globalisation but we can't undo the way we have connected the global and the local. Technology has reduced the effectiveness of borders in separating one country's conception of the rule of law and rights from another's. This has far reaching consequences. Open societies broadcast the totality of what they are in an entirely uncontrolled way across the Internet. Goods, ideas, intellectual property and people flow in and out. This brings advantages such as innovation and vitality but also vulnerabilities such as the foreign manipulation of information, cyber attacks, economic espionage and a hell of a struggle to control a free-flowing virus like COVID-19. We should work on our vulnerabilities, for example trying to develop cyber deterrence and more resilient supply chains, but we can only go so far before we kill the free exchange that defines us and is the source of our success. We can't separate success at home from success abroad.

We have to put our trust in the power of freedom. Secretary Condoleezza Rice made an extraordinarily personal and articulate plea for belief in the power of free men and women to prevail. This strange crisis poses difficult questions for freedom in its blurring of personal and collective risk and intrusion into personal life. We will have to find our way through this pragmatically, balancing freedom and order, but we need to be clear at all times that a resumption of the human journey towards individual empowerment and freedom is our aim. We should try to use this crisis to take a big new step forward toward that often interrupted but never abandoned dream.

Freedom means messiness, contradictions and inefficiency but it's better than the alternative. We're having a tough time but we've had it much worse in the past and come through. We have a series of complex interlocking crises because we've connected the World. But there have been bigger tipping points and greater evils: World War II, Stalin's purges, assassinations and, on race in America, lynchings and killings attracting not global demonstrations as happened after the killing of George Floyd but only a minor footnote in the local press. To get through, we will have to balance idealism with pragmatism, individual freedom with collective action. We need grown up leadership but we have to be grown up citizens too. Taking lessons from Isaiah Berlin, this means navigating contradictions between values, accepting the world as it is but without succumbing to cynicism, or losing our hope of making something better.

Well founded confidence is both the best defence and the best ambassador. We need to be both clear eyed about the nature of China today and frankly critical on actions that we see as incompatible with our conception of universal human rights, or that threaten our core interests. There were unpleasant aspects of the West's mercantile embrace of China's economic possibilities that we should reject as incompatible with who we are. We shouldn't let China use Russia as some sort of well armed but crazy younger brother that only the sober and greater power of China can contain. But our main approach has to be positive, not negative. The democratic world remains profoundly competitive and we should stop talking below our weight. We need to make investments in the future: more vision, more competence, more innovation and more education. Together these investments should build confidence in our core value of individual freedom for all, built on the individual rights of all. With our confidence regained, we should be able to accept and engage with the many aspects of China that are positive: the contribution to the global economy, Chinese innovation, Chinese culture, and what will be an an absolutely essential Chinese contribution to global challenges on climate, food, biodiversity and disease.

Actions not words, especially not 280 characters. The crisis has given, at least those of us not grappling with it directly, some time and space to think, let's not waste it. We've been reminded that as human beings we don't always perform well on the hoof – snap judgements tap into our prejudices and emotions; snap communications spark prejudices and emotions. When it comes to how to run a country, the best means of communication, both at home and abroad, is example not exhortation. Let us show the world what we can do and put less emphasis on what we say. One way suggested to signal this: if you are a serious person then stop using Twitter, at least other than as a sign post to serious work. Slogans and soundbites have their place but it's noticeable that we wisely don't apply them to things we really care about, such as our personal relationships. Why do we apply them so freely to our democratic relationships? Most of all, let's stop lying, to ourselves and to others. There's a global pandemic. Superpower competition could have unintended consequences. It's time to get serious. It's time to find some common purpose.

As the second wave of the pandemic builds in intensity in Europe and beyond, then it is clear we face a tough winter. With this in mind, Ditchley's October conference, in hybrid face to face and virtual form, explores the difficult question of what we should do if hopes for vaccines and effective treatments prove overly optimistic. Needless to say, we are not expecting to find simple answers. But we know also that adversity drives innovation and forges character. If we can continue to build common purpose across the Ditchley community, then together we can help in a small but significant way with finding a way out of this crisis that takes forward not just our economic and public health recovery but also human dignity and freedom. Thank you for your investment of time, ideas, energy and support.

James Arroyo,
Director

DITCHLEY

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**THE DITCHLEY
SUMMER PROJECT**

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Key Point Summaries

A Fourth of July Celebration —
Three Great Americans and their lessons for our times

Key points

- We are going to need wisdom, courage and love. These are the powerful words Sir David Wills had engraved on the Ditchley Bells as an accolade to the American people for the bicentenary of independence in 1976.

- Harry Hopkins drove through the new deal for FDR and helped bring the USA into World War II. What was striking was how he took time to decide on big decisions, weighing the evidence, but once decided he was all in, unequivocal and resolute. His starting point — not the traditional wisdom of the age — was that the unemployed were not 'chisellers.' They wanted to work, needed to work for their dignity and purpose as well as livelihood.

- Edward R Murrow remains a beacon for journalists of all generations. He would let a story settle in his mind before producing his best work. Known for his words, in fact it is striking how often he says little and lets the pictures and sounds and words of others tell the story.

- Congresswoman Barbara Jordan tried to make a difference to equality in America by working through the system, for which she was often criticised. It remains true today that both those who make it to the rooms of power and those who protest and who march on the streets have a role in moving society forward. A student of the constitution, she often would draw on its power to point out injustice.

Chair

James Arroyo
DIRECTOR, THE DITCHLEY FOUNDATION

Panellists

Ertharin Cousin
DISTINGUISHED FELLOW, THE CHICAGO COUNCIL ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Zavain Dar
PARTNER, LUX CAPITAL

Will Hutton
PRINCIPAL, HERTFORD COLLEGE

Shehab Khan
POLITICAL REPORTER, ITN NEWS

Elizabeth Linder
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BEAUTIFUL DESTINATIONS

Hannah Nazri
MEDICAL DOCTOR, DPHIL CANDIDATE, ASSOCIATE FELLOW OF ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY, NUFFIELD DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

David Riemer
SENIOR FELLOW, COMMUNITY ADVOCATES PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE

Tony Sewell
CEO, GENERATING GENIUS

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Multilateralism's Failure or its Rebirth?

Key points

- The need for a reframing of the Grand Enterprise of the West so as to provide a framework to meet challenges and to defend values.

- A grand enterprise does not separate issues into competing concerns, but instead considers a big picture of interconnecting issues, the interconnectedness driving impetus and urgency.

- A re-articulation for the public of why multilateralism is the pursuit of self-interest.

- An understanding that multilateralism works on many levels and in many different configurations. We focus on the big failures, but we all rely on the boring but essential aspects of international coordination to make the modern world go round.

- We should not overdramatise flaws in the system; multilateral institutions have always been imperfect and there will never be perfect solutions.

Chair

João Vale de Almeida
AMBASSADOR, HEAD OF DELEGATION, EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

Panellists

Mark Green
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MCCAIN INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Heidi Hulan
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, PERMANENT MISSION OF CANADA TO THE IOS IN VIENNA

Torgeir Larsen
DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF NORWAY

Karen Pierce
HM AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE, BRITISH EMBASSY, WASHINGTON

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Reset or Resume —

How transformational do we want leadership after the crisis to be?

Key points

- Both stabilisation and transformation are necessary right now.

- But there is no centre of leadership to inspire and cohere others.

- The demands on leadership were said to be increasing, given the interconnectedness of multiple trends. This necessitates an emphasis on a wider range of relationships: not only employees but also customers, business partners, suppliers and local communities.

- We need leadership with vision (looking to the future), that engages us but most of all that delivers. We need competence. And we need delivery: 'The whole thing breaks down if nothing is delivered.'

- We can go a long way by making clear that we care — for employees, for citizens and especially for those who are suffering most in the crisis.

Chair

Gayle Smith
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, ONE CAMPAIGN

Panellists

Ariana Berengaut
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS, PARTNERSHIPS, & STRATEGIC PLANNING, PENN BIDEN CENTER'S DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

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FELLOW, ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER

Matthew Rycroft
PERMANENT SECRETARY, THE HOME OFFICE

John Sawers
EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN, NEWBRIDGE ADVISORY

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Big Risks Round the Corner

Key points

- Pay attention to black elephants. It is important to think not only about black swan events but also 'black elephants': the risks we know are in front of us but that we tend not to prepare for rigorously enough.

- Value human ingenuity. We need to take risks on human ingenuity and talent, creating new ways to find young talent, removing barriers to entry.

- Invest in human ingenuity from all corners and ages, as early as fifteen years of age or younger, in order to ensure that experimental ideas can emerge now, ahead of future crises.

- Question neutrality of our technologies. The tech we've created is not neutral, not least because access is not equal. Greater efforts are needed on better representation of different communities. This point was also a major focus in the tech discussion covered below.

- A sense of mission will be helpful over the next months, given that momentum is fleeting and that we cannot only rely on momentum or the uniqueness of a moment for change.

Chair

Jami Miscik
CEO AND VICE CHAIRMAN, KISSINGER ASSOCIATES, INC. / VICE CHAIRMAN, AMERICAN DITCHLEY

Panellists

Eric Braverman
CEO, SCHMIDT FUTURES

Sean Ó hÉigeartaigh
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF EXISTENTIAL RISK

Vishaal Hariprasad
CEO, ARCEO.AI

Mike Rogers
CEO, THE MS ROGERS GROUP LLC

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Technology —
The crisis' big winner?

Key points

- Big government versus Big tech. The crisis has accelerated the growth of government even more than it has accelerated the growth of technology platforms. Confrontation is coming.

- We are in 'an extraordinary moment for re-evaluating values,' but this moment will be malformed at best without increased connectivity to those currently without internet access.

- Data has to be shared if we are to overcome. Sharing data — responsibly and protecting privacy — should be a civic duty for companies.

- A hybrid world will require 'hard choices' between public and private values and may contribute to new modes and patterns of life.

- Our populations need new skills for the digital age and access has to be more equal. We need to build skills and make the digital age more accessible, especially for women and in developing countries.

Chair

Nigel Shadbolt
PRINCIPAL, JESUS COLLEGE OXFORD & PROFESSOR OF COMPUTER SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Panellists

Julie Brill
CORPORATE VICE PRESIDENT, DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL & CHIEF PRIVACY OFFICER, MICROSOFT CORPORATION

Anthony Finkelstein
CHIEF SCIENTIFIC ADVISER, GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR SCIENCE

Auren Hoffman
CEO, SAFEGRAPH

Rosemary Leith
CO-FOUNDER, WEB FOUNDATION

Chris Mairs
VENTURE PARTNER, ENTREPRENEUR FIRST

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The United States' Role in the World after the Crisis

Key points

- The US is intensely introspective right now and suffering from a crisis of self-confidence, amid not just one but four huge challenges: the COVID-19 pandemic, internal economic crisis, a leadership and trust crisis, and perhaps, most importantly, a deep-seated racial crisis.

- The US must get its House in order (as warned by Lincoln). Renewed leadership abroad and sweeping government reform at home must happen simultaneously. This is not just about President Trump — large areas of government just aren't working well.

- Many of the current divisions pre-date the current American administration and are not just down to the impact of President Trump: he is the expression not the cause of these long-standing rifts between communities.

- But don't write off America. The US has witnessed great surges of change in the past. There is hope for a new progressive, healing era ahead. Outrage at racial discrimination cuts across racial barriers.

- The restoration of US confidence in itself and in its international role is essential if we are to maintain democratic values in the crises ahead of us.

Chair

Nick Burns
GOODMAN FAMILY PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF DIPLOMACY & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL

Panellists

John Bellinger III
PARTNER & CO-CHAIR, GLOBAL LAW & PUBLIC POLICY, ARNOLD & PORTER LLP

Ertharin Cousin
DISTINGUISHED FELLOW, THE CHICAGO COUNCIL ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS

John Micklethwait
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, BLOOMBERG

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The Economic Response to the Crisis —

How do we mitigate a collapse in economic insecurity for the most vulnerable in our communities?

Key points

- Longer term economic prospects depend upon where you are in the world. The pandemic could exacerbate pre-existing structural economic trends, with China and India coming out of the crisis in a relatively stronger position.

- Many workers lack the education and training to be globally competitive. This requires a restructuring of education systems that makes better use of 'technology as a catalyst.'

- Consumer scrutiny will drive change. A newfound level of awareness and scrutiny by younger consumers around exploitation in supply chains could spur better accountability of business practice and drive change.

- Target government financial support locally. Central government cannot expect to have a detailed understanding of the specific and practical interventions that can make a difference in local economies.

- There is a need for partnership between corporations and more locally focused organisations in order to better engage marginalised voices.

Chair

Sara Thornton
INDEPENDENT ANTI-SLAVERY COMMISSIONER, OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ANTI-SLAVERY COMMISSIONER

Panellists

Melissa Bethell
PARTNER, ATAIROS

Barbara Byrne
DIRECTOR, VIACOMCBS CORPORATION

Jamie Driscoll
ELECTED MAYOR, NORTH OF TYNE COMBINED AUTHORITY

Steven Pearlstein
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PROFESSOR OF BUSINESS & PUBLIC POLICY & MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMME, BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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Not London or New York —

What has this crisis done to regional identity and demands for decentralisation and localism on both sides of the Atlantic?

Key points

- Calls for 'deglobalisation' and decentralisation, which preceded the pandemic, will only continue to intensify.

- Clarity on what layer of government is responsible for which local services. This is essential for accountability and therefore for government to improve in the UK in comparison with Germany and Canada where this is much clearer.

- Trust between central and local government has to be better. The centre does not trust the regions to spend money wisely but is intrinsically incapable of doing so itself on local matters.

- Any real devolution of power will be tested in part by the inevitable mistakes that will be made by local leaders. These mistakes will then be amplified by social media noise.

- Care and kindness has flourished at local level. Government can't dictate this but can get out of the way, coming in when called in to help. More government on demand, less imposed.

Chair

George Robertson
SPECIAL ADVISER, BP PLC

Panellists

Jean Charest
PARTNER, MCCARTHY TÉTRAULT. FORMER PREMIER OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, CANADA (2003-2012)

Nick Gardham
CEO, COMMUNITY ORGANISERS

Bobby Vedral
PARTNER, MACRO EAGLE

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US and UK Responses to the Crisis —

What can we learn? How can we help each other?

Key points

- Recovery. This is an opportunity to stop and think about the world we want to create, once we emerge from the pandemic. We can learn from indigenous communities about living sustainably.

- Resistance. We must use this time in the 'COVID gym' to develop our capabilities to deal with future crises. We need longer term disruptive thinking and planning built on science, data and also civil society, in collaboration.

- Resilience. We must invest in human infrastructure to create resilient communities — and that means more equitable communities in which systems work for all.

- It is very difficult to prepare the tools needed in a crisis response on short notice: 'you can't magic smart machines out of thin air.'

- We can return to Robert Peel's principles of law enforcement, which stress the significance of willing public cooperation with the police — essentially that 'public approval for police actions' is critical to police integrity.

Chair

Amanda Sloat
ROBERT BOSCH SENIOR FELLOW,
THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

Panellists

Jamie Bennett
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ARTPLACE
AMERICA

Paul Clarke
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER,
OCADO

Kenneth Cukier
SENIOR EDITOR, THE ECONOMIST

Rosie Kay
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ROSIE KAY
DANCE COMPANY

Benjamin B. Tucker
FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER,
NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT

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The Impact of the Pandemic on the Next Generation —

What does this crisis mean for the coming generation?

Key points

- The pandemic has shown young people that there is much more that governments and societies could have done in more normal times if only they had found the political will.

- Vulnerability across generational poles. In many countries, there is a growing tension between a health crisis for older people who are more vulnerable to the virus, and an economic crisis for younger people who are at risk of being jobless and without opportunities.

- Now is the time for human agency. Governments should respond quickly and with flexible funding packages prioritising young people, whose learning has been adversely affected by the virus. We need people to lend their expertise and time to mentoring the next generation.

- Flexibility should be a core feature of new educational arrangements and technology would be likely to play a role in facilitating this.

- Responsibility and becoming. Great responsibility rests on the shoulders of Gen Z: global problems such as climate change and economic insecurity. We must learn quickly from our mistakes and from others' successes, and ask ourselves the critical question of 'Who we want to become?'

Chair

Dominique Raymond
STRATEGY DIRECTOR, LUMINA
FOUNDATION

Panellists

Madeleine Mensah
STUDENT, GENERATING GENIUS

Kalm Paul-Christian
ASSOCIATE, NATWEST MARKETS

David Parker
DIRECTOR OF FIELD OPERATIONS,
HON. ERIN O'TOOLE LEADERSHIP
CAMPAIGN

David Willetts
PRESIDENT, THE RESOLUTION
FOUNDATION

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Lifelong Learning and Values —

What kind of learning is needed for the new world emerging from the pandemic?

Key points

- Demonstrate public empathy. When leaders display public empathy, this spreads throughout society. In addition to embracing science and data-driven responses, there has been more awareness of others' suffering, which is a part of our interdependence with others.

- If physical encounters are not prioritised, then it may be that we come to know less and less about our neighbours. There is a danger of 'creating a new normal as to what we consider to be togetherness.'

- We might actually live in an age of 'witnesses rather than teachers.' We may be too hung up on the idea of leaders and particularly leaders in the public eye.

- Scepticism of youth. Young people are able to navigate the noise of social media and it will be hard for leaders without character to fool this generation. We are seeing a rise in social action projects in school and a new generation of activists expressing what matters to them.

- Optimism for renewal but with contested moments ahead. We've had to be more still and less rushed. This has been revelatory for many. But we cannot assume that values such as care and kindness will remain. Renewal in values will require disciplined action over the next months.

Chair

Ed Brooks
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE OXFORD CHARACTER PROJECT

Panellists

Tariq Fancy
FOUNDER & CEO, RUMIE

Katy Granville-Chapman
CO-FOUNDER, GLOBAL SOCIAL LEADERSHIP / DEPUTY HEAD, WELLINGTON COLLEGE

Jamie Hawkey
CANON THEOLOGIAN, WESTMINSTER ABBEY

In partnership with the Oxford Character Project.

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The Impact of the Pandemic on Values, Relationships & Leadership —

Views from the heart of the storm

Key points

- A time for increasing courage and empathy. This is a time to demonstrate courage and public empathy. Courage in getting on with it, without looking down while on a tightrope. Empathy in recognising that 'we are all in the same storm; not necessarily in the same boat.'

- Challenges can arise or worsen in this crisis at high speed. This requires leaders who are able to 'step up and in' and who 'know their stuff and know it quickly.'

- We cannot know what the long-term impact will be, but we must focus more on disadvantaged groups. It is too difficult at this juncture to determine how the crisis will unfold, but we know that there will be differential impacts across different groups.

- There are reasons to be optimistic. Both the London Metropolitan Police and the NHS have benefitted from surges of volunteer effort and support. The challenge is to harness this groundswell of supportive talent in meaningful ways.

- There is an opportunity to shape the future, using data better for health and for policing. And where necessary making a break with the past.

Chair

James Arroyo
DIRECTOR, THE DITCHLEY FOUNDATION

Speakers

Cressida Dick
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE OF THE METROPOLIS, METROPOLITAN POLICE

Simon Stevens
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NHS

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Human Work in the Age of Smart Machines —

A virtual fireside discussion with Jamie Merisotis

Key points

- Work is essential to meaning in life for most people. Work gives position in life and provides dignity. The work of the future needs to be about more than just making a living.

- The work of the future has to be work that only humans can do. With potentially cascading societal failures, we need the work of the future, and the learning systems that support it, to focus on human traits such as empathy, curiosity and nuance. This will be essential to meet the rise of authoritarianism and environmental challenges.

- We need wide learning. Work in the future has to be able to engage a wide range of people, with diversity in race, ethnicity, gender and immigration status.

- National service. Countries should consider developing their national services infrastructures as part of the pandemic response. At the moment, however, the privilege of a sense of service from fulfilling work is not accessible to everyone and the pandemic has revealed these disparities.

- Shared prosperity. Caring for others is not only good socially; it contributes to our shared prosperity.

Speaker

Jamie Merisotis
PRESIDENT & CEO, LUMINA FOUNDATION

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What Does the Crisis Mean for the EU and for the UK's Relationship with the EU?

Key points

- Acceleration of European cohesion. After initial divisions, the effect of the pandemic has been rapidly to advance European cohesion. The pandemic arguably poses particular challenges for the UK as it leaves the EU.

- The EU had agreed that recovery had to be focused on the next generation. This meant a focus on transformation on climate, the digital revolution and inclusion.

- Each of these steps would help to maintain belief in the future.

- States versus markets. The pendulum has swung towards giving states the upper hand — for now, at least. This swing, however, may hinder the economic recovery over the long-term. This is the battle for the economic soul of Europe being waged behind the scenes.

- Equitable globalisation. Globalisation will persist as the primary motor of prosperity, but new processes will need to evolve to ensure a more equitable globalisation.

Chair

Alex Stubb
DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF TRANSNATIONAL GOVERNANCE AT THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

Panellists

Jonathan Hill
CHAIRMAN, THE DITCHLEY FOUNDATION

Peter Mandelson
CHAIRMAN, GLOBAL COUNSEL

Margrethe Vestager
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT FOR A EUROPE FIT FOR THE DIGITAL AGE, EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Reflective Ditchley Community Discussion —

What values do we need to capitalise on the opportunities in front of us?

Key points

- Reinforcement of pre-existing values. The experience of the last few months has, for many, clarified and reinforced values previously held.

- Contributing beyond expertise. Some have appreciated the new ways in which they can contribute to their societies and to global efforts beyond their own areas of expertise, as members of their local communities.

- Cross-generational engagement. Different generational experiences are real and may have lasting consequences. Many younger people consider they are suffering disproportionately. Cross-generational dialogue is paramount going forward.

The Participants were from the UK, the US, Canada and China. There was no summary written for this discussion.

In partnership with the Oxford Character Project.

The World in 2050 and Beyond —

A virtual fireside discussion with astronomer royal Lord Martin Rees

Key points

- We are at a tipping point. This century is crucial to the future path of humanity. Humanity's actions in turn will determine the future of the planet.

- The challenge is politics and society. Although we need technological developments, these are already on track. It is the political and sociological challenges that should concern us most.

- It is young people that will make the difference, or not. Young people can make a difference and need to realise their power. The short-termism that affects many politicians can be broken through by young people's activism, but this needs to have political effect.

Speaker

Martin Rees
ASTRONOMER ROYAL, FELLOW, TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

There was no summary written for this discussion as a powerpoint is shared in the virtual presentation.

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DITCHLEY

What Are the Main Lessons so far for the Media in the Pandemic?

Key points

- A trustworthy media is the immune system of democracy. It is concerning that public trust in the media is in decline. Investment in high quality journalism is needed to reverse the trend.

- What was once a tactic in foreign intelligence operations is now being applied domestically, with politicians and officials using journalists as tools in information operations.

- The pandemic has reduced opportunities for in-person serendipitous encounters between government leaders and journalists, making it difficult for journalists to read the mood of leaders in the hallways, ask questions and obtain the right information.

- Clearer distinctions. To help combat misinformation and disinformation the distinction must be clearer between news coverage and that of opinion pieces.

- Truth to power still resonates. There is hope in the strong commitment of many journalists to uncovering and reporting the truth. The subscription and membership model is a promising business model. Technology platforms are realising their responsibilities. Have hope.

Speaker

Mark Thompson
PRESIDENT & CEO, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Panellists

Rafael Behr
POLITICAL COLUMNIST, THE GUARDIAN

Jonathan Capehart
OPINION WRITER, THE WASHINGTON POST

Richard Gingras
VICE PRESIDENT OF NEWS, GOOGLE, INC.

Jennifer Griffin
NATIONAL SECURITY CORRESPONDENT, FOX NEWS

Craig Newmark
FOUNDER, CRAIGSLIST & CRAIG NEWMARK PHILANTHROPIES

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Reflective Ditchley Community Discussion —

What values do we need to capitalise on the opportunities in front of us?

Key points

- Values at the neighbourhood level. We are seeing more acts of openness and generosity at the neighbourhood level. Neighbourhood values can be differentiated from family values.

- Opinions, attitudes, values. Opinions, which are loosely held, evolve into attitudes and which in turn can become values, which are deeper and more enduring. Norms may follow on this and it is worth reflecting on changing norms in the pandemic.

The Participants were from the UK, the US, Canada and China. There was no summary written for this discussion.

In partnership with the Oxford Character Project.

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Union: A Democrat, a Republican, and a Search for Common Ground —

Virtual fireside discussion with Jordan Blashek and Christopher Haugh

Key points

- The importance of grace. Grace, a largeness of spirit, helped to mend wounds throughout the authors' own conflicts and it was present in the stories of Americans who had found some common ground following conflict. Often grace was demonstrated through small words and actions demonstrating love and care.

- Common ground does not require agreement. In their experiences common ground is less about agreeing on a political issue; it is about knowing how to disagree with empathy and 'coming to the table' with another person over and over again.

- Dignity in work. The individuals Jordan and Chris met, such as the trucker Pete, want dignity in their work, but feel that much of this has been taken away from them. Collectively we need to do a better job at valuing the contributions each person makes to society through their work.

Speaker

Jordan Blashek
DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF TALENT, SCHMIDT FUTURES

Christopher Haugh
AUTHOR, JOURNALIST AND SPEECHWRITER

*An extended interview with Jordan Blashek and Christopher Haugh on their new book Union can be found **here**.*

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What can we Learn from Sir Isaiah Berlin on Living with Uncertainty —

A virtual fireside discussion with former Israeli Education Minister Professor Yuli Tamir

Key points

- Berlin was clear about his Jewish identity and never sought to hide it. This came from a belief in the importance of people being 'recognised as who they are rather than to cover.'

- You were born to your identity. Liberty is an essential part of who you are and how you define yourself. There is a delicate balance between the freedom of the individual and the freedom of the group. It is important to be ourselves, but also to govern ourselves.

- Living with radical uncertainty. We always have to be engaged with the process of evaluation, reflecting and trying again. This is what makes our freedom and our lives valuable.

- Values are not eternal, but the product of one's time, and yet one should fight for one's values as if they were eternal. The civilised person recognises this and learns how to balance this contradiction.

- Nationalism and leadership. Nationalism can be a positive force in response to the disenchantment with globalisation. The pandemic may lead into new ways of thinking about the role of the state, and what it should provide.

Speaker

Yuli Tamir
PRESIDENT, SHENKAR COLLEGE, BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

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Reflective Ditchley Community Discussion —
What values do we need to capitalise on the opportunities in front of us?

Key points

- The importance of self-reliance. We've learned to take responsibility ourselves to understand what we can about the virus, how to stop it spreading and how to protect others.

- Responsibility to community. The lockdown has renewed interest in immediate localities and in our own countries. Going forward, the decisions we make about travel or as consumers may reflect a renewed commitment, loyalty and interest in our countries and economies

- Pause to discern. Recognising that actions have consequences means taking responsibility to consider the sources of the information we share and to ask harder questions about who stands to gain from the narratives perpetrated.

The Participants were from the UK, the US, Canada and China. There was no summary written for this discussion.

In partnership with the Oxford Character Project.

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Cyber — Does Accelerated Digital Transformation Mean Accelerated Risks?

Key points

- Resilience in computing and data storage in the cloud. Resilience in this area has been much faster than planned. Before the crisis, considerable effort had gone into making this a resilient system and, as a consequence, it has fared well in this time of crisis.

- Yet, a move to homeworking would have in normal circumstances taken place over a period of months, in a step-by-step manner, with thoughtfulness and protection of information kept in mind throughout the process. The pandemic forced this shift in minutes.

- The immediate is likely to take precedence over the long-term in how we focus our attention. There was consensus in the session that new distractions will prevent organisations from dealing with the gaps in security created through the unanticipated shift to homeworking.

- A fertile feeding group for disinformation has been created, where belief systems can be hijacked. This has been facilitated by the decrease in real-world direct experience and the difficulty of verification in the digital age. Sowing divides has never been easier, while the building of common ground and respectful discourse are becoming ever more difficult.

- Users are increasingly playing a role in a geopolitical power struggle. This is facilitated by apps and services backed by national agencies. Are people ready for these debates, or are they out of their depth? These complex issues need to be brought within the public consciousness.

Chair

Ciaran Martin
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY CENTRE

Panellists

Scott Charney
VICE PRESIDENT, SECURITY POLICY, MICROSOFT CORPORATION

David Sanger
NATIONAL SECURITY CORRESPONDENT, NEW YORK TIMES

Arwen Smit
AUTHOR & ADVISOR ON DIGITAL ETHICS, MINTBIT

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Trade, Technology and Globalisation

Key points

- We are at a critical juncture. We have already had hard confrontation and we are experiencing a competition of narratives. The longing for confrontation is overwhelming but we must find a will to cooperate while avoiding the struggle of narratives.

- The economics have worked better than the politics. Governments have failed to redistribute the benefits of globalisation. We may soon enter into an era of state capitalism.

- We cannot lightly abandon the US-China commercial relationship. For some, this is the most successful commercial relationship in history. A divorce will be extremely messy; there will be no neat division of spoils.

- The trust question is vital. We need to agree on rules that respect individuals, norms and encourage peaceful co-existence. It is important that China proposes some of these rules.

- If coherence and cooperation are necessary, then the exchange of rhetorical blows of recent months will need to give way to deeper intellectual work to develop new rules for global trade.

Chair

James Arroyo
DIRECTOR, THE DITCHLEY FOUNDATION

Panellists

Peter Mandelson
CHAIRMAN, GLOBAL COUNSEL

Eric Li
FOUNDER AND VENTURE CAPITALIST, CHENGWEI CAPITAL

Norbert Röttgen
CHAIR, FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, GERMAN BUNDESTAG

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Reflecting on the Canada-UK Relationship —
What can we build on in our values and in the realms of culture, science, higher education and business as we enter a post-COVID-19 world?

Key points

- Over the last four years, Canadian Ditchley has developed a "Canadian Gen Y network" comprised of outstanding Canadians under the age of forty working across a variety of sectors. In addition to partaking in Ditchley conferences, this group convenes semi regularly in order to reflect on Canada's role in the world on a range of topics - multilateralism, finance and trade as several examples. In this case approximately thirty Gen Y Canadians met as part of the Ditchley Summer Project to reflect on the UK-Canada relationship amid the coronavirus pandemic and into the future.

Chair

Janice Charette
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR CANADA, THE HIGH COMMISSION OF CANADA IN THE UK

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Initial Reflections on the Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Women's Lives and Leadership

Key points

- Promising signs but some mixed evidence. We have seen women rise to the challenges of political leadership within the pandemic, relying on a facts-based approach, managing risk and embracing ambiguity. But women have also been at the helm of countries with some of the worst outcomes in the pandemic. We must be careful not to generalise at this juncture.

- A breakthrough for women in science. Women have played decisive leading roles in the search for a vaccine and in medical responses across many countries, Professor Sarah Gilbert at the University of Oxford as a primary example. The pandemic should be a great source of encouragement for girls looking to enter STEM fields.

- No women at the decision-making table in many pandemic responses and the impact on education. There have been far too few women at daily press briefings — and in many cases literally no women at the table in pandemic responses. If women had the casting vote, they would have ensured schools, nurseries and childcare provision re-opened before a return to work post-lockdown.

- The long-term impact. There was concern about the real impact of the coronavirus pandemic on employment and women in the workplace, particularly in the Autumn when furlough supports end. The fear is that women are disproportionately represented in the very sectors that are hardest hit in the pandemic, namely the hospitality and retail sectors.

- Leadership is increasingly about bringing full self to work. Although there are challenges, work from home has enabled women to show a more authentic, honest portrayal of themselves. We may look increasingly for this honesty and vulnerability in our leaders going forward — a trend already in play before the pandemic.

- Diverse mentorship networks. Creating a female mirror image of the old boy's network is not a helpful solution. We need to break down these networks, which are damaging for the members of them anyway, and create new networks thinking carefully about their composition across genders and perspectives.

Chair

Marjorie Glasgow
CEO, RIDGE CLEAN ENERGY

Panellists

Nicole Anderson
NOVELIST, BLOGGER, SPEAKER

Ruth Deech
PEER, HOUSE OF LORDS

Rosie Kay
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ROSIE KAY DANCE COMPANY

Emma Reynolds
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, POLICY & RESEARCH, THECITYUK

Natasha Whitmill
DEVELOPMENT LEAD, THE DITCHLEY FOUNDATION

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James Arroyo in Conversation with Brad Smith, President, Microsoft

Key points

- Bridging technological divides. Technology can bridge divides between people as it gives everyone the opportunity to connect and we should expect more remote activity to last in the future. But we must address existing divides such as the broadband divide, the divide between those who have devices and those who do not, and the digital skills divide. No matter how good the technology we also need face to face contact to be fully human.

- Cybersecurity — a 'Digital Geneva Convention'. The past year has witnessed not just the growth of cybercrime, but a proliferation in cyberattacks — those for financial gain and now nation-state attacks. The world's governments need to come together to affirm international cybersecurity norms and adopt new and binding rules to protect civilians on the internet and defend democracy.

- Democracy before technology. Technology must serve democracy. Underpinning democracy are timeline values such as diversity, inclusion and privacy, as well as transparency and accountability as bedrock values.

- Companies must serve democracy. Making a profit and serving shareholders is essential but a company such as Microsoft has to contribute to society, to the global community and to the defence of democratic values and democratic states.

Chair

James Arroyo
DIRECTOR, THE DITCHLEY FOUNDATION

Speaker

Brad Smith
PRESIDENT & CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER, MICROSOFT CORP.

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Ambassador Burns in Conversation with
66ᵗʰ Secretary of State of the USA, Condoleezza Rice

Key points

- With freedom humans will overcome. When humans are free, they will always find ways to persevere and overcome. In the United States this has been the case since its very founding.

- Racial equity has to be addressed in the US. This needs to be, and can be, a tipping point as powerful as Rosa Park's refusing to be segregated on that bus. But other countries need to look in the mirror too. Few countries have confronted race as directly as the US.

- Self confidence in democracies. The United States and other democracies need to maintain their confidence in their systems and the freedoms they provide as they have done in the past. Totalitarian states might allow for rapid delivery of good policy, but bad policy also scales quickly and without questioning. We need to maintain confidence in the freedoms and process in our democratic systems seeing messiness and slowness as vital ingredients in freedom.

- Be wary of the conceit of our current challenges. We are in a tough moment, but we have had many tough moments in the past and we have surmounted them. We must remember what our forebears have accomplished and regain our confidence and vision.

- Hope in the young. There is tremendous hope in the young and we need to cultivate them. Connecting emerging British and American leaders is especially one angle on this as we cannot take this relationship for granted. There is great potential for the future in the US and UK relationship if we nurture it.

- The response to COVID-19 has seen the revenge of the sovereign state. The current COVID-19 crisis has been the most nationalist response to an international borderless problem in memory. International organisations have been side-lined.

- Race is a visceral issue in America. It has an impact on almost every aspect of society, but the United States is at least confronting the issue of race in a way few countries have yet been able to do.

- Collaboration between democracies on technology. Whatever our differences on privacy, they pale in comparison to Chinese conceptions of privacy. Allies should get to work on issues such as privacy and technology. Can we imagine a new 'special relationship' built not just on the past but on a shared technological future, a revival of NATO and free trade with the UK and Europe?

- Stop tweeting. Politics takes considered thought and compromise. We must examine our expectations of leaders, or we're going to continue to get 'fast food delivery' of leadership.

Chair

Nicholas Burns
GOODMAN FAMILY
PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE
OF DIPLOMACY AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL

Speaker

Condoleezza Rice
THE DENNING PROFESSOR
IN GLOBAL BUSINESS &
THE ECONOMY, STANFORD
UNIVERSITY

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Closing Reflective Session on Values —

What do we value? What does it mean to rally and rebound?

Key points

- Re-evaluating the good life. The pandemic has led many to think about what it means to live a good life. For some this used to involve constant travelling for work. This has been replaced with a focus on family, neighbourhoods, health and good work.

- Value and values. Values must be applied; they are developed within contexts. With decline in trust of institutions, it is difficult to demonstrate the value of our values within contexts. Many are questioning how we have thought of value in the recent past. A case needs to be made for whatever values we prioritise.

- Humility and honest conversations. Humility is necessary in the face of uncertainty and in order to achieve compromise on challenges ahead of us. More honest conversations will help us to better understand our own and others' values.

- Moral muscles. The values we believe are important need to be practised; they cannot be developed in the abstract. Some believe this requires a radical spirit and solidarity in action. Others believe this requires humility and disciplined practise over time.

- Coalitions. One of the main revelations of the pandemic has been the failure of global leadership; there has been a stepping-back from long-standing coalitions. We need to reinvigorate our coalitions and find new ways to come together.

- Building on the work of previous generations. There has always been a passing of the torch between generations, one generation building on the work of the last but in new ways. We cannot determine what the next generation will do, imposing on them our own purposes, but they should be given the necessary agency to act.

- Emerging visions. We are lacking in vision as well as in a sense of awe, admiration and wonder that can move us. Visions will compete but some vision is desperately needed.

Chair

James Arroyo
DIRECTOR, THE DITCHLEY FOUNDATION

Panellists

Ed Brooks
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE OXFORD CHARACTER PROJECT

Lise Butler
LECTURER IN MODERN HISTORY, CITY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Tara Lemméy
CEO, LENS

Mike Rogers
CEO, THE MS ROGERS GROUP LLC

Gayle Smith
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, ONE CAMPAIGN
KALM PAUL-CHRISTIAN - INVESTMENT BANKER, NATWEST MARKETS

Amanda Sloat
ROBERT BOSCH SENIOR FELLOW, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

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DITCHLEY

SUMMARY

Multilateralism's Failure or its Rebirth?

In this session, participants considered whether we are witnessing multilateralism's failure or its rebirth. Multilateralism is often code for the United Nations, but participants reflected from the outset of the discussion that this also includes regional organisations and international financial institutions that provide an important but invisible infrastructure for global collaboration. Seen from this broader context, there was a sense of hope in the multilateral system and in multilateral institutions throughout the discussions but agreement that we need to build more confidence in these institutions. But there was also emphasis that we cannot wait for a moment for change in the multilateral system; it is important that we begin to reaffirm the values underpinning multilateralism now.

Self-confidence and self-interest

The participants were clear that democracies should demonstrate more self-confidence; the current lack of confidence weakens coordination between states. The 'democratic GDP' of the United States, Japan, Europe, the United Kingdom and India among other nations outweighs enormously the collective economic success of authoritarian countries including China. Our crisis of confidence is outpacing the objective facts.

A point was made on several occasions that the values underpinning multilateralism cannot be taken for granted and that the case for multilateralism needs to be made to citizens within democracies. Globalists, as one participant noted, cannot simply assume, as many of them have, that citizens will know why multilateral institutions were established or why they are important. 'Citizens like to be mission-driven and purposeful,' as one participant noted, and proponents of multilateralism should take this into account in their framing and approaches. It was also stated that we currently find ourselves within a period of opportunity to reframe the case for multilateralism and our definitions of 'reform,' and that we need to muster the energy to develop new lines of thinking rather than rehash stale debates.

It is increasingly important to connect values and interests: it is in the self-interest of nations to sustain the multilateral system. Trust in national institutions benefits rather than hinders the multilateral system. As one participant noted, national institutions 'are the building blocks of the multilateral system,' and hence trust in national institutions positively impacts citizens' buy-in to multilateral institutions. We should be sceptical then of the view that trust in local institutions and effective local responses to the pandemic are somehow mutually exclusive with trust in the wider multilateral system.

No perfection or predictability

Nevertheless, disappointment was expressed with the multilateral response so far in the crisis. A pandemic affecting all nations should have been the moment for the world to see effective multilateralism in action. This disappointment and lack of preparedness follow years of growing pessimism about the effectiveness of multilateral institutions. But participants noted that we should not overdramatise flaws in the system; multilateral institutions have always been imperfect and there will never be perfect solutions. There have been many shocks to the system in its 75-year history, not least the banking crisis and the Russian annexation of Crimea.

It was agreed that the multilateral system of the future will not be the same as the one we currently know — no one can predict how the future will unfold. Nevertheless, for the sake of discussion three imagined scenarios were proposed: the first being a form of multilateral breakdown in which the system implodes and stops working; the second being a situation in which multilateralism is captured by a group of countries or ideologies, and the third being a decoupling of the multilateralism system into two or more new systems. The pandemic was not seen as an existential threat to the multilateral system, but participants noted that we are in a period said to be evolving and one that might constitute a new chapter in human history.

A series of immediate risks amplified by the current crisis were highlighted throughout the discussion. The crisis should have been anticipated and we should feel collective shame about this, but there is now a need to ensure better preparedness and seriousness given future crises and the interconnectedness of these crises: climate, cyber and other pandemics as three examples. The challenge of economic recovery could put the SDGs out of reach for many countries. Much was believed to turn on the success of the economic recovery. The challenge of COP26, as was stated at one point, is to make this a real-world exercise and not just a conference. Unlike the pandemic, climate change was deemed to be an existential international threat.

But there are reasons to be hopeful. The global economy may recover faster than anticipated. The international financial institutions and the World Bank were described as having so far been effective in their responses. Interest in the role of the WTO has been reinvigorated and the scenario planning completed has been a gain for the international community.

Restating values with ambition and renewing a 'Grand Enterprise'

Participants agreed that we must restate our values and interests with ambition. The United States is usually drawn back to multilateral institutions during times of crisis. There is reason for Americans' frustrations with the failure to enforce basic 'multilateral frameworks,' as well as with failure to respond to obligations in health reporting, abuses by peacekeepers and apparent travesties in the workings of the Human Rights Council. But collaborative action was said to provide real benefits for the United States. The challenge then was said to be to 'reform and restate the bargain' and present it effectively to the American people, reminding citizens of the profound self-interest to them found in

collaboration in moments of crisis.

In particular, the United States was agreed to play a pivotal role in strengthening confidence in multilateralism. A United States moving away from its long-standing role as guarantor of the international system, alongside the emergence of an authoritarian China, has allowed China to position itself as supporting multilateralism and the United States as being somehow outside of this.

As participants stated, there is now an opportunity for a 'Grand Enterprise' on multilateralism. A grand enterprise does not separate issues into competing concerns, but instead considers a big picture of interconnecting issues, the interconnectedness driving impetus and urgency. Crises will flow into one another. Certain capabilities will need to be developed alongside a grand enterprise, such as horizon scanning, preparedness, resilience, co-ordination and a 'loose leadership.'

The possible delivery of a vaccine for the coronavirus will be a test for multilateralism. Will the vaccine be considered a global public good or something we compete on? Focus must also be on the next crisis, whether this will be climate change, major cybersecurity breaches or another pandemic. There will need to be a return to a focus on values and interests as well as greater resistance to authoritarianism. The multilateral system will need to draw on lessons from the pandemic, demonstrating seriousness and preparedness and striving to gain public approval, rather than taking support of the system for granted. Self-confidence in these efforts will be critical to success.

DITCHLEY

SUMMARY

Reset or Resume —

How transformational do we want leadership after the crisis to be?

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus wrote that 'You can't go down to the same river twice.' We cannot recreate what existed in the past, and instead must build on what we have in the moment. With Heraclitus in mind, participants agreed that transformation is inevitable — but they also felt that stabilisation through incremental delivery on promises is necessary. They remarked throughout the session that we are seeing a shift from 'shareholder value' to 'stakeholder values' and with this will come a need for transformation in how leaders think about themselves, seeing themselves as part of webs of relationships to which they are accountable.

No centre of leadership

It was agreed that the pandemic will make us poorer — struggling on the resource side — and that we will become more divided. The participants largely agreed that there has been 'no centre of leadership': we have seen an absence of leadership at national and international levels. Instead there has been a 'performative style of politics,' where leaders tell citizens what they want to hear. It's true that citizens' expectations of what leaders can deliver, and at what speeds, are too high and that these expectations need to be recalibrated. But leaders have failed to deliver on their visions or promises and this has eroded trust.

The demands on leadership were said to be increasing, given the interconnectedness of multiple trends — rapid digitisation with impacts on areas such as e-commerce, food delivery and entertainment as several examples — and the calls on business to address rising social inequalities, climate change and other crises. This necessitates an emphasis on a wider range of relationships: not only employees but also customers, business partners, suppliers and local communities. This stakeholder approach means that 'any competent leader sees themselves as a stakeholder.' A second implication is that leaders need to 'care about ordinary people's aspirations.' This care and connection with the ordinary aspects of people's lives was seen to have ruptured in past years.

Delivery and mission

As one participant stated, 'Cometh the hour, cometh the man or woman': the crisis is bringing forth many exceptional leaders with formal or informal sources of authority. Local leaders were highlighted consistently alongside examples of corporate leadership, the chief executive of a major automotive company stating for instance that millions of employees will be retained, this sending a clear message to stakeholders that the whole supply chain would come out stronger.

Several basic qualities were reiterated for crisis moments: simplicity, honesty and credibility. The framework 'Future, Engage, Deliver' was proposed. Leaders should provide a vision that is more than performance; demonstrate empathy, values and trust in their relations with others, and do what they say. 'The whole thing breaks down if nothing is delivered,' as one participant stated. The crisis helps to identify individuals and teams with substance and who can deliver with substance. There was a focus throughout the discussion on prioritising competence above bumper-sticker politics.

Clarity of mission is necessary, it was felt, but delivery is paramount. Several participants suggested that delivery will be aided if we have something to fear: a situation that could realistically be much worse than our current one. Climate change was proposed on several occasions but there also are other risks, such as cyberattacks, which could impact us all. We will be less complacent, collectively, if we see these risks clearly. (Additional risks put forward were conspiracy theories and a loss of public trust in basic facts).

Knowledge and preparation

The difficulty of understanding connected risks means that leaders need time to build the knowledge necessary to tackle them, particularly as these risks combine, evolving and building on each other. At the same time, citizens and employees want to 'know where something is going' from their leader, uncertainty breeding anxiety. The challenge for leaders is considerable and requires both dynamism and discipline: to engage with a wider variety of people, while also possessing the knowledge to see risks clearly and prepare for them.

There was a sense throughout the discussion that leaders cannot achieve transformation on their own: institutions are necessary if the desired character is to be shaped. An overly strong focus on transformational leaders signals a weakness in institutions. We need the character of leaders and institutions to grow in tandem. Increasingly, however, institutional missions are used as means to personal gain rather than as ends to which members of a team or group can aspire. There was a sense that the rebuilding of trust in our political, civil, religious and other institutions is more likely to occur incrementally than in one go.

It is in times of crisis, as one participant noted, that individuals want to trust. Those who demonstrate vision, who care about their relationships and who deliver one step at a time may rebuild trust with more speed than would be the case in normal circumstances. A crisis is an opportunity to gain trust as well as lose it. This sense of optimism permeated the discussion, while noting that we are beginning from a low base of trust.

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SUMMARY

Big Risks Round the Corner

The world and its many geopolitical risks have not stood still in the pandemic. In a short period of time, we have seen Chinese aggression along the Sino-Indian border; North Korea's destruction of a joint liaison office with South Korea; Beijing's introduction of the new Hong Kong security law; and the collapse of global oil prices. In this session on big risks, however, participants reflected on the risks that we are likely to forget about in the pandemic alongside these geopolitical risks and well-known risks such as climate change and cyber. The emphasis of this discussion was on human capital in particular, with participants highlighting the need for belief and investment in human ingenuity and the building of a talent pipeline ahead of the next crises that we will face.

Step-by-step improvements through human ingenuity

'Momentum is fleeting' as was noted on several occasions throughout the discussion. Robert Oppenheimer once said that 'the world alters as we walk in it,' but participants noted that change is more often than not slow, taking place in an incremental, step-by-step manner. There is a sense, however, that the past was better and many are 'fighting to hold onto the past.' For many, change is not seen as a benefit even if incremental. There is little desire to collaborate or to develop the skillsets that we will need for a different future where goods and services play a greater role in the workforce.

A strong argument was made to invest in human ingenuity from all corners and ages, as early as fifteen years of age or younger, in order to ensure that experimental ideas can emerge now, ahead of future crises. The point was made that we need to bet on talent without track records and conventional badges. In several sectors, we may actually be moving in the opposite direction than is needed, with research on leadership in academia indicating that the average age at which a first major grant is awarded to PhD scientists in the United States has increased from approximately 35 in 1980 to the 40s in the 2010s. Elsewhere, in the public sector, there is still a belief that we must seek to mitigate risks rather than take risks. If we are unable to invest in talent now, then it is unlikely that we will 'build the bench globally' for leadership in the next challenges we face.

Building wide relationships before crises

Participants spoke about the importance of relationships, and particularly the importance of cultivating wide networks across many sectors. There was agreement on the 'inability to coalesce around priorities' in many democracies. One participant noted that there is little if any momentum currently in the crisis on developing broad-based solutions to the problems we face. Other crises, such as the Ebola crisis, were 'fought using spreadsheets' and connected across disciplines, but new information-sharing methods have not been used as well as is possible in the current crisis. In order for information to be shared and used effectively, relationships need to go beyond the superficial — focused on single issues — and into the personal in which there is a search for mutual value. Several participants also conveyed the saying, often used in intelligence communities, that individuals must 'build relationships before a crisis.'

There was agreement on the point that 'we cannot wait' to prepare for the next crises — succession efforts must begin now. A sense of urgency and fear of possible risks are paramount. It is difficult to maintain commitment and preparedness when future risks are dimly perceived and where many of these are seen to grow only over the long-term. The term 'black elephant,' coined by a Singaporean government official, was used to represent the risks that are known to us but that many do not acknowledge. It is difficult, however, when mired in busyness and distraction to confront these black elephants. There was a sense that the disciplined work to prepare for the most important of these must begin now.

It was also noted that any preparatory efforts will need to be sustained, since we are likely to be closer to the beginning rather than the end of the current crisis. A sense of mission will be helpful, given that momentum is fleeting and that we cannot only rely on momentum or the uniqueness of a moment for change. Preparedness is more likely to develop one step at a time. But as participants stated, we must have the courage to begin and build the pipeline and a broader approach to relationships now.

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Technology –

The crisis' big winner?

In a session focused on whether technology is the crisis' big winner, the participants took aim at the definitions of 'winning.' On one hand, participants acknowledged that governments and large technology companies have grown even larger, emerging as the winners economically and in influence over the last months. On the other, participants proposed a definition of winning as meaning positive engagement of multiple stakeholders and the wider public: 'not just helping shareholders but employees, communities and the environment.' Technology would only remain a winner, if technology leaders and governments were open with citizens about the uses of data, its experimental nature, and the impacts of these uses on their lives. If this was not the case then technology would quickly face a backlash.

Increasing connectivity and understanding of data

There was agreement throughout the discussion that governments have in a very short period of time become more sophisticated in their understanding and use of data. Yet public understanding of data has not kept pace. We are in 'an extraordinary moment for re-evaluating values,' but this moment will be malformed at best without increased connectivity to those currently without internet access. With 'non-connectivity,' we will only see an increase in social inequalities as several participants concurred. Some participants suggested that data should be a 'public good,' but what exactly we mean by this and what data infrastructures would support these public goods remains to be determined.

Government leaders might have begun the pandemic with poor understanding of data, but their embrace of data has been one of the remarkable aspects of the last five months. In the UK, Cabinet meetings now begin with a review of recent pandemic data, the question 'What does the data say?' being one of the most important. In the United States, the adoption of data analysis by some state and local government officials has been as rapid and impressive as one of the participants has ever seen, even compared with teams in the private sector. For some, this evolving government approach is a 'gamechanger' and was simply unimaginable prior to the pandemic.

At the same time, however, it was noted that we are far away from achieving substantive public discussion on data — data privacy in particular — and there is little public understanding. This lack of understanding could become a problem as the role of government grows in the next months, with possible mistrust and fear of government leading to a possible 'gov-lash,' as one participant stated, as well as 'tech-lash'. Despite increased government reliance on data, government staff members' skills and capabilities in technology are well behind current stated aspiration levels. It remains to be seen whether the UK government's focus on 'levelling up' by increasing digital skills across government and the wider population will be successful or not.

Open data and responsibility

The work of some large technology companies to drive open data initiatives was applauded and more of this effort was needed. Small technology companies in particular had been the most willing to share anonymised data relevant to pandemic recovery efforts. With one or two honourable exceptions, large technology platform providers had not been responsive to calls to share data with central and local governments and might eventually have to be forced to do so. One participant described more open data sharing as a 'huge responsibility' for large technology companies, and that increasingly technology leaders are recognising these responsibilities.

Participants felt that we will shift to a hybrid world in the coming months — where we try to combine face to face working in offices with remote virtual connections — but that this shift will be an enormous challenge. Hybrid was seen as more difficult than both home-working or remote-working as it will accentuate conversations about what people value in their lives: quality of life, affordability of housing and the importance of employment and advancement in their careers. A hybrid world will require 'hard choices' between public and private values and may contribute to new modes and patterns of life. On the whole, participants agreed that the potential of a hybrid world will only be achieved if governments strive to widen connectivity and access to the web. Otherwise, participation in a hybrid world will be uneven at best.

There was a sense in the discussion that the value of local community will shape participation in a new hybrid world, and it was said that we must find ways to 'live properly in the physical world and in physical spaces.' We are social animals and in our move to remote working we should not devalue the physical elements of life (for instance participation in peaceful demonstrations in physical spaces, as one participant stated). A 'win' for technology in the pandemic, then, would involve a much better engagement of the public in the hybrid world into which we are entering.

Going forward, participants felt that we will need to think about what we value in the world that is gradually emerging: quality, community life and relationships, or perhaps how to achieve greater efficiency, career progression opportunities and material success in a hybrid world? These debates will need to play out if public trust in technology is to be sustained over the next months.

SUMMARY

The United States' Role in the World after the Crisis

The participants in this session grappled with the question 'Is the United States still the indispensable power?' The answer was that American leadership remains necessary if we are to maintain the multilateral system and values of human rights, democracy, freedom of the press and rule of law that many have come to take for granted. The world still turns to the US for leadership but the US has turned inward in recent years, creating a vacuum that participants agreed cannot be filled by other powers such as China or Russia. There was a sense of hope in the potential of the coming generation and in the ability of US leadership to right itself, but it was agreed that this would be impossible without the US first healing its 'divided house.'

Four crises

Americans are currently facing four simultaneous crises: a pandemic crisis that has so far led to the deaths of over 130,000 people; an economic crisis that has seen the highest level of unemployment since 1933; a racial crisis that has garnered the world's attention and a crisis of leadership and of self-confidence at the international level. One participant stated, there is a 'Lack of self-confidence, suddenly, about who we are.' The racial crisis was seen to be the most dangerous and truly existential of these four crises. Slavery and race was the US' 'original sin' and undermined the global soft power of the US to inspire and attract.

The role of the next President of the United States should be, it was argued by the participants, to heal the divisions in the American people. It was stated that 'change outside is directly related to the ability to heal.' In the wake of the next election, the President will need to invest time in domestic issues if he is to have space to act abroad. It was stressed by one participant that these divisions pre-date the current American administration and are not just down to the impact of President Trump: he is the expression not the cause of these long-standing rifts between communities.

Actions in recent months with black and white Americans coming together in peaceful protests, gave many of the participants hope. There was also a sense in the discussion that the necessity of American leadership abroad is supported by a majority of the American people. Still, the 'cult of self-sufficiency,' which has grown in prominence over recent years, was seen badly to underestimate the amount of preparation and cooperation needed to lead internationally. The US turning inward, into a period of introspection, has taken place in years past, but this was described as a 'false narrative' as Americans tend to be supportive of engagement in the multilateral system.

A necessary power

It was agreed that the US is not dominant in the way that it was thirty years ago, but that it remains unquestionably the strongest power in the world. We have seen what the world is like without American leadership as well as the risks of an emboldened China, which seeks to create dependency rather than promote autonomy amongst the countries to which it provides aid. There is a 'kernel of truth,' as one participant put it, in the US' Administration's frustration with and withdrawal of support from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, the Iran nuclear deal, the Paris Agreement and a range of other treaties and bodies such as UNESCO, the Human Rights Council and the Optional Protocol to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. But the question is 'Do you pull out or try and lead from within?' The experience of the pandemic response is that European coordination without American leadership is difficult. The US remains a necessary power, and this goes for other global issues such as food security, counterterrorism and virus epidemics such as the Ebola crisis.

Without US involvement in these arenas, participants remarked that other large powers or groups of small nations can try to step in, but often do not have the necessary talent, resources, or experience to coordinate effectively. If the US is to restore its role in humanitarianism, then it must remember that it is the 'banner-carrier' in this space and that Americans are called to 'stand for something more.'

Clear sight

The pandemic crisis and the opportunity for conversations between American, British and other leaders has provided the 'gift to see ourselves as others see us.' Participants agreed that the next months can be looked at as a test and as an opportunity to restore trust domestically as well as globally.

All participants believed that 'Americans need to inspire us again' and this will require a concerted effort on domestic and global fronts — these working hand-in-hand rather than sequentially. Healing domestic rifts will take time but is vital. The restoration of US confidence in itself and in its international role is essential if we are to maintain democratic values in the crises ahead of us.

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The Economic Response to the Crisis –

How do we mitigate a collapse in economic security for the most vulnerable in our communities?

On the day of the UK Chancellor unveiling the pandemic crisis mini-budget, this panel — cutting across previous conferences on economic insecurity and the global financial system — reflected on how to mitigate the negative impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable communities in the UK. Despite a generally positive view on the private sector's movement toward stakeholder capitalism and a sense that previously marginalised voices are now being taken seriously in business realms, the responsibility for the economic security of workers was asserted to lie primarily with government.

Intervention and skin in the game

Participants largely supported the UK government's recent intervention into the economy, but they felt that more thinking needed to be done on the correct role of government over the next months. A main fear, as one participant put it, was that the furlough scheme provided immediate security, 'but with very little skin in the game.' It was 'like putting people on steroids after an accident; it is hard to get them off it.' Another participant remarked in contrast that 'If you give workers a guarantee of things, this gives them some leverage and makes the labour market work more equally.' This also helps, as a participant noted, to reduce opportunities for exploitation, which abound when individuals have no other options and little recourse to public funds when in difficult economic circumstances (for example, for migrant workers).

It was also noted that the Chancellor could come under strong political pressure from the public to extend the temporary emergency measures. Participants worried about a public dependency that may develop, should

interventions continue, and the ensuing undermining of political and economic liberalism. The personal corollary of liberalism was seen to be accountability, the latter which can be lost when adopting statist approaches.

Training and autonomy of regions

At the level of the individual, it was noted that many workers lack the education and training to be globally competitive, this requiring a restructuring of education systems that makes better use of 'technology as a catalyst.' At the level of businesses, there is now much greater awareness of health and safety as a result of the crisis and especially the mental health of workers. But there was a sense that we 'can't rely on corporations,' as one participant put it; many businesses having experienced their sharpest operational downturn in decades and consumer demand is uncertain over the next months. For retail companies, for instance, uncertain demand is one of many issues alongside higher cost structures, lower efficiency and rapidly changing supply chains. This will continue to put pressure on jobs and there was a shared view that government should only continue to support 'viable' businesses. Others will need to be restructured or allowed to fail.

There was uncertainty as to the roles and responsibilities of government going forward. The participants agreed that government can improve on delivery and that funding initiatives could be more targeted — particularly to the most deprived regions of the UK. There was a sense in particular that governments need to engage more effectively at local level. It was suggested that there should be a redistribution of funds from central to regional control, with the aim of increasing the autonomy of regions.

There was scepticism around the ability of boards or highly centralised groups to understand the preferences of consumers,

and that attempts by small centralised groups to do so are illiberal. Several participants commented on the importance of partnerships between corporations and more locally focused organisations in order to better engage marginalised voices. There is a desire to understand 'what is happening in communities,' but the methods for achieving this more nuanced, granular understanding were unclear.

Governments and businesses must strive to at least preserve some of the autonomy and initiative of citizens or consumers. There was a fear that instead we will get more central government intervention, that the public will in the short term welcome this, and personal initiative and local autonomy will be reduced.

Many workers are ill-suited for a workforce that will rely increasingly on technology skills and this requires a fundamental rethink of educational policy — a long-term rather than short-term endeavour. In the meantime, and as the UK government plans for the period following the current job support schemes, there will need to be steps taken to build partnerships between governments, businesses and local communities.

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Not London or New York –

What has this crisis done to regional identity and demands for decentralisation and localism on both sides of the Atlantic?

The pandemic has led to greater bottom up appetite for much more local autonomy. There are clear benefits to more localised or regionalised approaches. Calls for 'deglobalisation' and decentralisation, which preceded the pandemic, will only continue to intensify. It was argued that it is possible to be localist and internationalist at the same time. A challenge will be around clarity on what level of government does what. The principle of subsidiarity will have to be addressed in any government efforts to distribute power.

Canadian and German systems

The session opened with overviews on the Canadian and German systems and their responses to the crisis. The Canadian system is one of the most decentralised in the world, to the point that 'provinces have powers of countries,' each in charge of their own healthcare, education, legal systems, roads and public security to name only several areas. The federal government transfers dollars between provinces but generally does not operate services. This approach goes back to Canada's founding, a perennial question being whether it was the provinces that created the central government, or whether the central government created the provinces.

In the German system, a key strength was that the Länders 'learned fast from who was doing well and why.' There was effective sharing of best practice and a habit of learning from different areas. That said, the space for targeted responses based on the different needs of respective areas was one of the benefits of both the Canadian and German systems. One participant noted, however, that the political economy of each country needed to be viewed as an organic whole with advantages and disadvantages. More regionalised systems promoted incremental growth and stability which worked well for nations such as Germany with strong manufacturing systems. But they were less good at driving innovation and maximising financial output.

Communities stepping up and in

Localism was seen to be one of the winners in the crisis so far, with 'communities stepping up and in' where central government and local authorities have failed to respond, or respond quickly enough, to citizens' needs. One participant remarked that 'communities have looked out for each other' and have been kind.

In the UK, however, there was not clarity as to who was responsible for what, whereas in Canada and Germany there was. One participant noted that, 'confusion leads to delinquency.' Westminster does not trust local leaders to make decisions on behalf of their communities. MPs are not given much authority to speak on behalf of their own constituencies. It was noted that even in decentralised nations such as Canada, the crisis has concentrated more power at the central level, in the hands of a small number of decision-makers in the Prime Minister's Office.

Any real devolution of power will be tested in part by the inevitable mistakes that will be made by local leaders. These mistakes will then be amplified by social media noise. Will central bodies be able to 'live with the decisions' of local leaders, or will they respond through the creation of new rules to limit local powers?

From efficiency to resilience

It was noted throughout the discussion that prior to the pandemic, political and economic systems were optimised for efficiency; now the focus must be on resilience. Flexibility is a significant advantage of more regionalised political and economic systems but this depends on social cohesion. When social cohesion breaks down, then coordination efforts in any crisis will founder.

The onus on leaders is to ensure that citizens feel heard and respected. It was generally agreed that respect and care for citizens cannot be mandated but government could help create the conditions for it to emerge. One of the opportunities in the pandemic is that people had 'rediscovered each other.' Leaders can demonstrate respect and care through simple gestures. In contrast, identity politics can be exacerbated through rhetoric which amplifies divisions, a sense of injustice and grievances.

There was hope that positive change could be led at the neighbourhood level, with work in deprived areas critical to enable this. Leaders at national and local levels will need to demonstrate care and attentiveness to people at local level, and involve them in decision making more, if they are to build a more resilient system.

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US and UK Responses to the Crisis –

What can we learn? How can we help each other?

In a wide-ranging discussion comparing and contrasting the American and British responses to the pandemic, the main common thread was that of the need to build the tools and infrastructure in 'peace-time' in order to prepare for future crises, learning the lessons from one crisis to get ready for the next. Participants focused on digital and human infrastructure and the hidden wisdom found in the relationships of indigenous peoples with nature. The role of the media was raised at several junctures, with some criticism that reporters have not challenged governments sufficiently on their preparedness for the future, arriving instead with their questions too rigidly set out, many of them focused on politics.

Building tools when you don't need them

There have been calls for better preparedness over recent months, but participants suggested that there has been too little critical thinking on what preparedness demands when not in a crisis. The idea that 'you need to build tools when you don't need them, to have them when you do need them' captured much of the participants' sentiment. It is very difficult to prepare the tools needed in a crisis response on short notice, as one participant remarked, and even more so to maintain trust when timelines are tight. As one participant put, 'you can't magic smart machines out of thin air; these need to be weaved into the fabric of society during peacetime.'

It was noted that the data needed for robust government responses in both the US and UK has been lacking, and that a better approach in the future would involve coordination across stakeholders in elected office, the civil service, the private sector and in civil society (for instance through crowdsourcing of data). The most interesting and useful data was said to come through these collaborations, rather than through open data sources only. But these collaborations can only be developed over time, requiring many months or more realistically years of work, particularly since they are enhanced by public buy-in. Whether in the United States or the United Kingdom, participants agreed that too many public leaders lack the competence to prepare and deliver effectively and that they have instead treated their roles with little seriousness up until the crisis.

Human infrastructure and morale

One participant noted that 'COVID-19 has taken us to a different place,' this being the most difficult challenge in a fifty-year career. A common experience was that it had been difficult to maintain high morale among staff, while also considering the well-being of frontline workers and responding to government guidance often changing by the day or even hour. There was a sense that governments in the US and the UK have wasted time to think. Some participants commented on the difficulty of constantly responding to small events and new demands — for instance enforcing thousands of commercial inspections in New York, which saps time and resources. And yet this moment was still described as 'the moment where we can come together and think about the future.'

Human infrastructure was discussed alongside technological infrastructure. Former UK Prime Minister Robert Peel's principles of law enforcement were discussed, with both American and British participants in the session having reflected on these previously in their own work. These principles stress the significance of willing public cooperation with the police — essentially that 'public approval for police actions' is critical to police integrity and that use of force should be minimised to the greatest extent possible. With these principles in mind, participants noted that citizens should be included in the business of public safety and that this is a serious challenge in the crisis.

It was agreed that compliance with government guidance is key and that a numbers-driven enforcement strategy is unhelpful. Several participants noted that better human infrastructure supporting policing requires involvement of social services, for instance related to better housing. The political dimension of policing was raised on several occasions, this being a pain point in the crisis responses and one area where increased clarity in roles and responsibilities will be necessary going forward.

Artistic perspectives and human fragility

Several participants spoke passionately about the need for artists and Art as part of the response to the pandemic, particularly in help-ing leaders to imagine problems and discover solutions. The New Deal and its support for the Arts alongside industry was referenced. In the UK response thus far, the protection of artistic organisations was welcomed but nonetheless many artists, designers, musicians, singers and other freelancers have struggled. Artists can help us to think about what should be part of a fulfilling life, exploring identity, nationality and community and individual and collective vocation.

We need to envision a new future, overcoming the distrust in science and the growing inequalities that could see us descend into a very dark period. Our human fragility is clear. We are 'stacking crates in the wrong order' and have been doing so for more than twenty years, putting our future at risk. We need guidance for living more sustainably, with indigenous communities' perspectives seen as a source of neglected wisdom that might help us develop the human infrastructure we need. One participant referred to this development as taking place within the 'COVID gym ', with the hope that the challenges of responding to COVID-19 would help us develop capabilities and resilience to deal with genuinely existential challenges ahead.

The scale of the challenges is massive. Tackling them will require long-term commitment: years if not several decades. What was often times a sobering conversation concluded with a sense of hope, but with participants believing that leaders within democracies will need to demonstrate greater self-confidence in the recovery and longer-term planning efforts. Alongside self confidence, we will need to give greater attention to our human limitations.

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The Impact of the Pandemic on the Next Generation –

What does this crisis mean for the coming generation?

This session explored the impact of the pandemic on the next generation, loosely defined as those not yet established in their careers (school leavers to early or even mid-career). The participants stressed the importance of cultivating an entrepreneurial, 'value-creation' mindset to counteract the disproportionately negatively impact on young people. School leavers and this year's cohort of university graduates risk lower wages and diminished job prospects over the next five years. Set against this cause for pessimism, the participants saw the crisis as an opportunity for the young to question assumptions with urgency and to bring forward new ideas that could transform the situation.

What could have been done beforehand

The pandemic has shown young people that there is much more that governments and societies could have done in more normal times if only they had found the political will. One of the main questions asked was 'Why was online education not in place beforehand?' There was general agreement that in times of strife, government is the 'ultimate insurance fund' and that we rely on the decisions of government. Government stepping in to help

students and families without many financial resources or social capital was appreciated but this was not done proactively enough during the crisis and many of these actions could have probably been taken before the crisis. These initiatives were seen to come after individuals had mobilised as volunteers or rallied corporates in order to provide others with necessary resources.

There was little doubt that the pandemic would negatively impact young people and particularly young people in disadvantaged situations. Young people are highly represented in retail and hospitality, two of the sectors experiencing the largest numbers of job losses. There was concern that relying on predicted grades as part of GCSEs and A-levels would prove unfair, as grades for BAME students were often disproportionately under-predicted. One participant, who had received A and A* grades for example, had been predicted to receive B and C grades in A-level examinations.

Value creation

In this context, many school leavers and university graduates may start to question the value of a degree. One participant noted that

school leavers are becoming more activist and that a renewed interest in politics is one of the short-term impacts of the pandemic. An increase in ventures in the social entrepreneurship realm may be one of the positive elements of the crisis. At the core of the discussion was an emphasis on human innovation and agency: that the crisis will lead many to ask how they can be value-creators in their work, striving to transform society through what they do.

Alongside criticisms of government, there was a sense that education is not preparing students effectively for the world and careers ahead. Many students are entering jobs in manufacturing and energy that may be obsolete in the short to medium term. When these industries begin to falter, as has been the case for instance in energy with the double impact of the pandemic and the crash in oil prices, many individuals could end up with a sense of helplessness and despair and be vulnerable to opioids and other addictions.

The current environment was described at one point as an opportunity to 'shake bureaucracy and shake traditional structures,' government being included in this but also the private sector. There could be a chance for the young to make a conscious decision to choose pathways for innovation, rather than the industries and careers of the past. Government might be able to help with this.

Educational flexibility

We cannot yet know how the current crisis will impact the next generation economically, but there were calls throughout the discussion for governments, universities and other educational institutions to provide short-term, six to twelve-month courses. Flexibility should be a core feature of new educational arrangements and technology would be likely to play a role in facilitating this.

One of the main solutions proposed was to organise educational programmes in short order such that in one year from now, as many young people as possible are in some form of training, employment or education. This would be a major task since at the moment there were limited signs that governments, educational institutions or private sector organisations could find the capacity.

Short-term innovation in educational programming should be possible though if there is the will and follow-through: as positive examples participants highlighted recent efforts to expand access to certificates in the United States, as well as Microsoft's new global skills initiative, the goal being to provide 25 million people globally with digital skills by the end of the year. New working structures from home could help to facilitate participation in new learning programmes for the next generation over six to twelve-month periods.

Mentorship would be important in this new set-up and there are already many examples of mentorship being provided in innovative ways within organisations: virtual watercooler moments that randomly connect staff within large corporations, allowing early-career staff to meet executive-level staff more frequently than would have been possible before the move into lockdown.

The imperative, then, is to demonstrate proactiveness on potential solutions, so that the question 'why did we not do this beforehand?' does not need to be asked again in one year's time.

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Lifelong Learning and Values –

What kind of learning is needed for the new world emerging from the pandemic

The pandemic has been an opportunity to reveal and refine our values, allowing us to reflect not only on what we care about but on what we want to become. But the question of 'Who are we?' as the participants found, is not a simple story. It was agreed that there is much that needs to be done individually and collectively in the 'COVID gym' over the next months to develop whatever values we believe are important. The participants noted that we must learn intellectually about our values but also put these into practice — not only virtually but also physically, in person, as much as possible.

Trustworthiness and honesty

Values of trustworthiness and honesty were raised repeatedly as important values in the pandemic, ones that perhaps received too little attention in prior years. Emphasis was put on relationships that go beyond the surface-level. Several participants felt that leaders could foster such relationships through 'projects of strength and competence.'

Although there has been a strong emphasis on solidarity, there is a risk that solidarity is expressed only virtually rather than experienced in the flesh, meaning that we lose touch with 'face-to-face virtues.' If physical encounters are not prioritised, then it may be that we come to know less and less about our neighbours, paying shallower attention to others even as we stress solidarity as a collective value online. There was a danger of 'creating a new normal as to what we consider to be togetherness.'

The point was made that face-to-face relationships can help us to embrace 'uncomfortable difference and diversity,' as well as a healthy sense of our dependence on others. As one participant remarked, it is important that we reflect on 'those to whom we owe debts' — an idea that received little attention prior to the crisis. Philosophers and theologians might want to address such questions.

Limitations of competence

There was scepticism throughout the discussion around rewarding a reputation for competence only or even primarily as a value, for it is possible for leaders in a social media age to project competence without demonstrating this in practice. Participants felt that we will see a 'return in some measure of the importance of experts,' but that it also matters how expertise is shared or implemented in the world. Here there was emphasis on wisdom as a virtue. The participants commented on the importance of the inner life but stressed that the inner life is linked to what one does: 'the life of the soul cannot exist without it being represented in the actual physicality of life.'

What this means for leaders and for learning is that we would benefit from acknowledging our dependencies on others. Volunteerism in the community, for instance, is linked with our belief in helping other people but also that we are not fully self-sufficient. There was some discussion on suffering — an understanding that hard times can lead to greater formation of character. The idea of suffering is frowned upon in modern society, viewed as a sign of weakness in humans, but it may be that we need to acknowledge the power of suffering in character formation, demonstrating greater public empathy for those who acknowledge their limitations (particularly for competent leaders who nevertheless sometimes make mistakes).

Servant leadership

Now may be a time for valuing of servant leadership — those who lead from behind in small ways or who emerge from left-field. It was agreed that leadership starts at the top and that leaders need to model whichever values are seen to be most important, but that we might actually live in an age of 'witnesses rather than teachers.' We may be too hung up on the idea of leaders and particularly leaders in the public eye. We would benefit from a 'stronger vocation for public service' as one participant mentioned, but a key challenge is that leaders genuinely committed to public service are often pilloried on social media.

There was agreement that only government can bring about the deep systemic changes needed in areas such as climate change and reducing social inequalities: 'there are certain things that only governments can solve: climate change is one of them; pandemics and alien invasions are others' as one participant stated. On education, participants thought that a more flexible approach to learning is necessary, particularly for adults who might have only been given limited opportunities early on in their lives.

The COVID gym

Lifelong learning was seen to be able to 'change the bar' for adults, it being possible for non-experts to jump in as well as individuals who might not have been raised in the 'right postcodes.' Lifelong learning was also seen to be conducive to the 'COVID gym,' with the ancient idea of askesis used to convey the attentiveness involved in the COVID gym. Askesis was described as a process of being 'slightly taken aback' at something. The crisis startled us and introduced into our lives an element of shock that serves as a kind of educative process.

A reimagined lifelong learning system would do better to cultivate more than straightforward skills, as was suggested at one point in the discussion. We need leaders who are wise and who display emotional intelligence, rather than individuals who 'know a set of things.' It was hoped that the leaders that emerge will value fairness in their work and that they will bring a sense of fairness into their work.

Here again it was seen to be important that learning emphasises practice — valuing action in the world with others, in small groups where small actions can be undertaken consistently over time.

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SUMMARY

The Impact of the Pandemic on Values, Relationships and Leadership –

Views from the heart of the storm

In a discussion on values, relationships and leadership in the crisis, two public leaders at the heart of the crisis response in the UK, Dame Cressida Dick, Metropolitan Police Commissioner and Sir Simon Stevens, CEO NHS England, reflected on the challenge of maintaining clarity of thinking, sound judgement and discretion in a time characterised by the inescapable reality of grey areas in decision-making and intense polarisation of opinion. This is a time where leaders 'need to turn up,' but where leaders cannot always provide certainty. We are living through a period of transformation, and it was emphasised that leaders will need to transform themselves on numerous occasions.

Knowledge and attention

One of the main challenges for leaders in the crisis has been to ensure that the crisis does not become a crisis of competence, one that further erodes trust in leadership and institutions and that could bring about public disorder. This requires leaders who are able to 'step up and in' and who 'know their stuff and know it quickly.' Challenges can arise or worsen in this crisis —

a social media argument turning into a large public protest for example — at high speed. This requires leaders to remain attentive to the public mood and respond continuously to changing circumstances.

The participants remarked that everyone has had their personal struggles in this crisis, behaving oddly and out of character on occasions. This has required a new level of empathy at points, alongside reflection on mission, values and the use of scenario planning in order to prepare for possible new circumstances. One of the main lessons is to envision new challenges at speed and prepare diligently for these, since 'one knows that if one looks down as a leader while on a tightrope, then one is in trouble.' The murder of George Floyd and Black Lives Matter protests had necessitated honest conversations within organisations, underpinned by compassion for staff and their experiences.

Polarisation and togetherness

The participants were clear that people are incredibly polarised at the moment, many holding strong views that can lead small disagreements to 'burst into flames' within hours or less. Leaders of large public service providers, in health and policing, operate in grey areas at all times, making integrity and discretion important values in this crisis but also difficult to achieve in practice. It was also suggested that there are no clear solutions as to how we will work our ways out of this period of polarisation. That said, with the crime rate falling in the initial months of the pandemic, this gave police officers more time to walk, talk and engage with people, which may have helped somewhat to overcome some of this polarisation. The approach needed over the next months was said to be to 'keep bringing people together, keep finding the common ground and calming people down.'

The crisis has shown that individuals' experiences vary considerably from person to person or from family to family. The often quoted sentence 'Whereas we're all facing the same storm, we're not all in the same boat' really did reflect reality. Within the span of several blocks in London, a family living in a small crowded estate apartment might be out for its one walk of the day, passing individuals in much more secure personal situations enjoying a glass of prosecco in the park. Inequality of experience and circumstance was manifest. The same differentiation of experience applies to regions across the UK, and there was a sense that local discretion is vital and more of it probably needed. There has been some 'mashing of the gears' on local responses so far and this will require more clarity on who does what across central and regional levels of operation in the future.

Empirical decision-making

Despite these challenges, the turn to empirical fact-based decision-making and science-based communication was a reason for optimism in the pandemic. Examples were shared of the setting-up of randomised control trials on treatments and preparations for a large flu vaccination campaign. But the existence of data does not make some of the judgements necessarily any easier. Public leaders cannot 'make a judgement just like that,' and it is easy for today's hero to become tomorrow's villain when errors in judgement are made. The approach to take is to be 'saying more, louder and earlier' and to be visibly present.

An increased sense of community

Encouragingly, the spiritedness of the localised volunteer-driven responses and renewed neighbourhood engagement were seen as real rather than superficial changes. We are learning about what really counts for people and many will emerge with warmer feelings toward public service and the work of public service workers. There are massive challenges and massive levels of uncertainty ahead, but the discussion provided inspiration and some reason for optimism as we confront these new challenges.

SUMMARY

Human Work in the Age of Smart Machines –

A Virtual Fireside Discussion with Lumina Foundation President and CEO, Jamie Merisotis

In advance of his forthcoming book Human Work in the Age of Smart Machines, Lumina Foundation President and CEO Jamie Merisotis reflected on the 'work of the future', for which he argued we will need to develop yet further our human capabilities, cooperate with others and be of service to society through our workplaces. We are far from the 'end of work' despite the many articles written over recent years making this claim. The quality of our work — and the education preparing us for it — will remain as important as it has ever been to the health of our societies and democracy.

The 'future of work' or 'work of the future?'

At the outset of the discussion, Mr Merisotis commented on the language of the 'future of work,' which often involves predictions of major job losses thanks to automation and artificial intelligence. This gave the impression that we are nearing a 'robot zombie apocalypse,' with universities such as MIT and Oxford creating scorecards with predicted job losses across sectors. For Mr Merisotis, these discussions about the future of work are framed wrongly; instead we should be talking about the 'work of the future.' Work remain a central feature of human life in the future and the impact of technology would create new jobs, fuelling a demand for new skills.

These skills will not only relate to technology directly. Many will focus on drive, intelligence, values and our relationships with other people. They will encourage us to 'discern nuance,' in our dynamic human landscapes, nuance which cannot easily be achieved through automation. Indeed 'the most unpredictable environments are those caused by other humans.' This nuance will become more important as we learn from the pandemic and seek more connection with others, reflecting more critically on how we care for others through our work.

Sustaining democratic ways of life

Work — and the educational pathways leading into and through work — are 'our best defence against threats to democratic ways of life.' Mr Merisotis remarked that neither the United States nor Europe should be treated as different 'in terms of vulnerability of people, of systems and of the very notions of truth and moral judgement.' Amid the cascading failure of the pandemic response there is an allure for authoritarianism, this brought about by change, loss of advantage and fear of the other.

Under these conditions many prefer conformity and social cohesion, and in turn strong leadership styles. Approximately one-third of Americans with a high school degree think that a strong leader is good, whereas only 13% of Americans with a bachelor's degree agree with this statement. Americans with some form of postsecondary education are also more likely to participate in their community through volunteering, which helps to 'restore hope and confidence in the future of society.'

What does it mean to be human?

Concern about AI and automation displacing human beings is not all hype; especially in a world facing economic crisis and a failure of leadership. It is crucial that we return to 'who we are as humans.' Work in the future has to be able to engage a wide range of people, with diversity in race, ethnicity, gender and immigration status. Work must represent the totality of society in order to ensure that all share in its benefits. Preparing people for this work would be not be something that happens 'just once over the lifecycle' but a continuous process. The current notion of work as something that follows a single early period of education is based on a post Second World War model. Instead workers of the future will need to invest in their development and education at various junctures over the course of their lives and be attentive to this to succeed.

Work should in itself contribute to development of the self and be a form of education, cultivating a wide array of human traits and capabilities, including becoming 'better servants to others and to our collective well-being.' The idea of work and service being separate activities should fade over time, with the concept of service to others incorporated into the content of different roles as 'part of the work day or work month.'

At the moment, however, the privilege of a sense of service from fulfilling work is not accessible to everyone and the pandemic has revealed these disparities. Some good may come out of this in that we now see these inequalities more clearly than we did previously. Nevertheless, as it stands individuals with heavier life responsibilities are penalised in their education and work, whereas those with more resources and support have greater flexibility to take up learning opportunities and to be of service. It is vital that we build pathways for learning for disadvantaged groups, with a focus on continuity and provision of new credentials over time.

In order to make real progress, we need to drive towards specific goals and targets. There was a sense of optimism in making progress, with 2021 envisioned as the year where we can make progress on expanding the conception of human work and where 'learning, earning and serving' can come together in the work we undertake in response to the economic challenges in front of us.

SUMMARY

What does the Crisis Mean for the EU and for the UK's Relationship with the EU?

It was stated persuasively at the outset that human beings tend to 'over-rationalise the past, overdramatise the present and underestimate the future'. Much of this session focused on the future — and particularly the importance of a European recovery response that sets its sight on the next generation. There was agreement that we should not strive to restore what many of us were unhappy about in the past. Pushing back against accusations of EU disunity in the early stages of the crisis, it was argued that, although a tragedy, the crisis was the most transformational thing to have happened to the EU in sixty years. Never had the EU responded to a crisis more swiftly, or with greater unity and power.

Belief in the future

The EU had agreed that recovery had to be focused on the next generation who would pay the economic bill over many decades of today's care for the vulnerable and emergency economic bail outs. This meant a focus on transformation on climate, the digital revolution and inclusion. A dramatic increase in science and research could be an area of competitive advantage in Europe. Each of these steps would help to maintain belief in the future, which one participant highlighted as the most important element of the response.

The aim of the European recovery effort is to ensure that we never see the full effects of the crisis. The European recovery fund, in development and soon to be announced at the time of the session, would be a main element in mitigating the anticipated effects. It was recognised that this strategy would have to be built on debt and that hundreds of billions of euros would eventually have to be paid back.

The response was shaped to deliver transformation, rather than just to mitigate damage (for example, through supporting the hospitality sector where employment is expected to remain low). The political impulse in many countries will be to try to moderate the impact of digitisation on the economy, preserving jobs and companies that may have been unviable before the crisis, but participants agreed that this impulse should probably be resisted.

Open strategic autonomy

Participants raised concerns with the slogan of European 'open strategic autonomy.' This could become a thinly veiled cloak for protectionism and state capitalism, which for this group was not the answer. Lagging behind the United States and China on technological innovation, open strategic autonomy could deteriorate into Europe adopting an 'If you can't beat them, join them' mentality. But Europe would not be well suited to such a strategy and could not fall back purely on internal markets. Participants argued that it is not through protectionism but rather trade and openness that regions become properly autonomous. They acknowledged that single-supplier dependencies are a problem and that there will need to be a business-driven response to this.

There was noted scepticism about state-driven approaches favouring home-grown companies. Recovery and fair competition were viewed as 'two sides of the same coin.' It was argued that businesses need challenge within their home markets in order to innovate and streamline processes. Otherwise we should expect complacency and a consequent decline in international competitiveness. Contestable markets were viewed as an important element in well-functioning democracies, this helping to 'keep the consumer in charge.'

Cooperation on critical issues

In contrast to the European response, it was suggested that the crisis could not have come at a worse time for the United Kingdom as it left the EU. Participants agreed that at this point, it is vital not to pour more petrol on the flames and that this is the time for cooperation, not strife, between Europe and the United Kingdom. Climate transformation was an important area for collaboration with citizens in Europe and the UK aligned on this.

The UK had begun the crisis on an independent course asserting its post-EU individuality but now was notably cautious and compliant in implementing lockdown and very much in line with most EU states on its response to the crisis. The irony was noted that while the UK had left Europe in order to become more British, it now looked more French than ever before, intervening in regions, taking stakes in industries, and even in specific satellite companies. For the current government, there had been a complete reversal on everything that Thatcher had promoted.

It was stressed that Europe and the United Kingdom have much in common: 'the UK voice is part of Europe's history.' A shared policy on China was another obvious area for collaboration alongside climate. The application of digital solutions to policing and to security are significant areas for collaboration as are academic partnerships — not just on vaccine development but in deep technology and biotechnology. We should resist the urge to look inward and to the past, instead we should face toward the future and work to increase our belief in its possibilities.

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What are the Main Lessons so far for the Media in the Pandemic?

Journalism may be the 'immune system of democracy,' but many citizens now view journalists as an integral part of the establishment that they are meant to hold accountable. The participants were, nonetheless, ultimately optimistic about the potential for journalists to meet the rising demand for truth and trustworthiness in society, spurred on by a range of new grassroots movements. But participants also highlighted the significant challenges now facing journalists in their pursuit and reporting of truth.

Merging of foreign and local on disinformation campaigns

What was once a tactic in foreign intelligence operations is now being applied domestically, with politicians and officials using journalists as tools in information operations. Participants reported, whereas in the politicians and officials would avoid telling direct lies, now this taboo is broken and in both the US and UK elected officials and advisors readily lie to a journalist's face in order to spread the story they want and to gain transient influence over the narrative. These information campaigns were described as breaking the 'good faith relationship' between governments and journalists.

Government officials have realised that, for many of the people, journalists are 'part of the elite performance' and are now exploiting this vulnerability. They know that significant parts of the public will have little sympathy when journalists complain of manipulation.

There was emphasis on the need to 'engage both sides' in order to improve the quality of journalism but this was difficult when one side was ready to lie and did not see interest in establishing objective truth. If political 'spin' was a matter of elasticity — stretching the truth within reasonable bounds — the elastic was being snapped without shame on the part of many government leaders (and so far without electoral consequences).

In-person serendipity and intimacy

The pandemic has reduced opportunities for in-person serendipitous encounters between government leaders and journalists, making it difficult for journalists to read the mood of leaders in the hallways, ask questions and obtain the right information. This has been a humbling period, as one participant noted, demonstrating the significance of in-person relationships, particularly in building trust.

It has also revealed the extent to which many journalists lacked the expertise to provide valuable insight beyond their relationships with sources. The lack of basic scientific literacy amongst journalists was highlighted as a challenge in the early stages of the pandemic. At the same time, the crisis had shown why investigative journalism is needed 'more than ever,' but at a time where fewer and fewer media organisations have the resources, capabilities and political will to invest in investigations and deep research.

There was responsibility too for readers to 'do a better job consuming the news of which they are consumers.' Journalists often undertake painstaking work to separate news reporting from opinion but many readers do not always acknowledge this distinction.

Social media allows for immediate public commentary on reporting. Abusive comments are a big problem and especially for female reporters. But there is a positive side to the medium which could also deliver constructive and thoughtful feedback from the public.

Separating news and opinion

One problem is that the composition of news sites is made up increasingly of opinion pieces, a trend likely to continue given the popularity and low cost of producing opinion pieces as opposed to investigative journalism. (It was noted that of course good opinion writers also do significant research to underpin their stories). News reporters sometimes play into accusations of the news being no different than opinion when they appear, for instance, on morning or evening opinion talk shows as experts.

The separation of news coverage from opinion should be reinforced with clear signposts for readers. A question was asked on how readers might be helped to see more clearly the 'underlying intent' of an article, as part of differentiating between news, provision of facts, and opinion. There was a responsibility for the media to continue to surface the right basic data for citizens, providing authoritative information on the 'practical and mundane' in the crisis. In the early stages of the pandemic, readers looked not as much for opinion as they did for the facts relevant to their health and well-being: opening times for health clinics and information on the spread of the virus. There was a marked rise in local news readership.

New partnerships and grassroots initiatives

The participants highlighted the value of partnerships between national and local news organisations, as well as technology companies such as Google and international bodies such as the World Health Organization in order to continue to surface the right information. These types of partnerships across sectors were believed to be an important part of the future of journalism and more thinking is necessary as to what they might entail.

Grassroots initiatives, such as Report for America, Reporters Without Borders and The Trust Project, have emerged in recent years with a view to increasing the trustworthiness of journalism and thus trust in journalism. There was a sense of optimism that solutions will emerge to the challenges facing the industry.

But there was also a sense that past institutional norms and assumptions are no longer 'fit for purpose,' and that the economic models underpinning quality journalism may no longer be viable. Advertising revenues in print and online will continue to fall but this may also follow for television journalism. Subscription services, including consumer reports, were seen as one of the most promising of models going forward. Philanthropic money and private principled ownership of media organisations could also be effective but this depended on the principles of the owner.

Attending to mission

The participants stressed the importance of the mission of journalists. The professional ethical commitment to tell truth to power and to the people must remain central as the industry transforms. To meet these challenges is a considerable task and, as one participant noted, it will require journalists to adapt and to accept a 'plurality of ways that we do what we do.'

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What can we Learn from Sir Isaiah Berlin on Living with Uncertainty –

A Virtual Fireside Discussion with Former Israeli Education Minister and political philosopher, Professor Yuli Tamir

Sir Isaiah Berlin lived a 'happy life in a horrible century' but emerged as one of the twentieth century's deepest thinkers on freedom. The discussion with Professor Yuli Tamir on Berlin's life and philosophy began with a brief reflection on his life and on her experiences as one of his doctoral students and continued into what he would have said about living with the radical uncertainty of the coronavirus pandemic.

Joy in intellectual adventures and self-identity

Berlin lived with a sense of joy and admiration, appreciating the 'intellectual adventures in daily life' and making others feel a part of this joy. He had a voracious appetite for chocolate. Interested in a wide range of things and a man of many talents, Berlin knew 'how to connect across things' and as such was a role model for his students. But he kept a 'separate view of his life and philosophy,' and was himself a bit set apart from others.

Berlin was 'always a bit different' from his peers, his Jewish identity being one of the main examples of this. A concerned rather than devoted Jew — participating intermittently in Jewish life rather than in religious practices — Berlin was nevertheless clear about his Jewish identity and never sought to hide it. He believed that those who hid their Jewishness would eventually suffer a lack of self-respect. This resulted from a belief in the importance of people being 'recognised as who they are rather than to cover.' While Berlin did not write about identity explicitly, Professor Tamir noted that through his writing on liberty Berlin essentially 'invented identity politics.'

Compromise and liberty

Berlin lived through a period of radical uncertainty, one that Professor Tamir observed was much more uncertain than our own with the Russian Revolution and First and Second World Wars. These to Berlin were facilitated by ideological views taken to the extreme — a lack of openness to compromise. To Berlin, compromises are not perfect but are core to our liberty. We will be sometimes wrong and sometimes right, but 'we always need to be engaged in this process of evaluation.'

It is the process of 'trying to get it right, reflecting, and trying to get it right again' that makes freedom valuable and this engagement with freedom was to Berlin the mark of a civilised person. More fundamentally, this process is what makes our lives valuable, and as Professor Tamir observed, we probably do not want to live in a world where 'everything is known.'

Experimentation or a demand for certainty?

To Professor Tamir, who served as a Minister in the Israeli government of Ehud Barak, there have been pleas to pursue more experimental government during the coronavirus pandemic but also directives to 'follow the science' as if the science were absolute. Schengen 'died in a second,' with nations closing their borders and adopting an in-or-out attitude. For those within the borders of the nation-state, the response has been 'we will provide for you' with the state assuming responsibility for the individual.

There is a demand for certainty. Citizens want clear answers and do not accept failure. When ministers make mistakes, they are asked to resign and 'go home'; someone else can always be brought in. This need for certainty makes government officials cautious, focused on following rules and less open to arriving at unconventional answers to problems. This constraining expectation of certainty is, for Professor Tamir, a weakness of our democratic systems.

Fighting for values

Much has been made of values emerging in the pandemic. Berlin would have probably said that values are not eternal; rather they are a product of their time. They need to be fought for as if they were eternal but they are not. Still, he was far from a relativist, believing that we must think hard about the values we have chosen and understand that values are likely to conflict with each other. This embrace of conflict between values is a 'cognitively demanding way to live' but to Berlin this ability to live with conflict is part of the responsibility of every human being and, more fundamentally, part of who we are as individuals as well as communities.

One such conflict is that it is important that we be ourselves but also that communities can govern themselves. Self-determination is always preferable even if it results in outcomes that are less perfect than what could be imposed by an external group or person. On leadership, Professor Tamir felt that the pandemic has shown the importance of cooperation and honesty as important values. Women leaders have excelled and are well suited for leadership in crises based on their life experiences of unavoidable conflicts: 'women are less inclined to say they have the solutions.'

A main lesson that Professor Tamir takes from the pandemic is that collectively we need more patience for human failure. It is inevitable that we will fail and that we will err, but that is because we are active agents. It is the 'engagement that truly makes us valuable members of our societies.' Indeed, this active engagement, trying, failing, and trying again, is the basis of our freedom.

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SUMMARY

Cyber – Does Accelerated Digital Transformation Mean Accelerated Risks?

In this session we discussed the scale of the cybersecurity challenge, the barriers to addressing these challenges effectively and the implications for the upcoming American elections. There was general agreement among participants that we must take precautions to avoid a 'perception hack' and from this, a crisis of confidence in our democratic systems.

Change in cyber risk profile: minutes rather than months

Over the months of the pandemic, we have witnessed a sudden and drastic transformation of cyber risk profiles. A move to homeworking would have in normal circumstances taken place over a period of months, in a step-by-step manner, with thoughtfulness and protection of information kept in mind throughout the process. The pandemic forced this shift in minutes, as one participant noted, with millions of workers around the world suddenly using their home wifi and personal computers to conduct company business.

We can add to this the fact that approximately one million new people in the United Kingdom alone have moved online during the pandemic, many of these amongst the hardest to reach prior to the crisis. The result is the creation of huge challenges to determine how to secure ourselves, with ransomware being one of the most noteworthy of these. There was consensus in the session that new distractions will prevent organisations from dealing with the gaps in security created through the unanticipated shift to homeworking.

The immediate is likely to take precedence over the long-term in how we focus our attention. For instance, the question was asked of whether telemedicine companies should roll out new features in response to evolving consumer needs, or secure the technology they have already developed? It was assumed that the pandemic will force a focus on the new. This will expose individuals and organisations even more to ransomware attacks, with precautions unlikely to be taken to mitigate risk. Ransomware attacks will exploit these vulnerabilities and blindside the distracted victims. Ransomware was being directed at individuals but also institutions and increasingly small towns and regional systems. The consequences in terms of loss of trust in institutions could be severe, particularly in the stressed conditions of the pandemic.

Abstract representation

In the pandemic lockdown and for the foreseeable future, the decrease of in-person, real-world experiences will force us to rely even more on abstract representations to make sense of the world. These representations range from the banal — the difficulty of interpreting text messages — to the more sophisticated, such as the manipulation of videos to facilitate a 'hijacking of the mind.' In the realm of cybersecurity, this means less opportunity for verification of experience, coupled with increased vulnerability of service. The more layers of abstraction there are, then the more opportunities for the shaping of narratives and the manipulation of reality to serve a particular purpose.

Watching a Trump or Biden video, we will need to 'trust that our eyes don't deceive us'. Verification of truth itself will be a full-time job for individuals, let alone for organisations. Together these factors will impact the formation of identity at individual levels while also posing a risk to national security. Value systems will move further apart, and more effort will be needed in order to mitigate disagreements between people and cultivate trust in a digital world.

Reducing foreign and domestic distinctions

In the realm of political influence and particularly with the upcoming US election, a point was made that the distinction between foreign and domestic actors will be harder to make. Participants thought that increasingly, foreign actors will attempt to plant ideas in their adversaries' heads through subtle and creative use of social media, this keeping foreign interference in the realm of 'free speech,' thereby minimising the possibility of prosecution. As one participant noted, 'you will probably not be sure of the origin of the ideas you heard.'

An implication of this is that common ground will be ever-more difficult to facilitate as citizens' ability to reason is impaired. The idea of a 'Digital David Attenborough' on the BBC, providing readers with an understanding and appreciation of how they might be manipulated, was proposed and welcomed within the discussion. It was also noted that the number of journalists covering these issues has increased vastly in recent years.

Avoiding a perception hack

With the US elections fast approaching, there have already been signs of risk and several could be catastrophic for confidence in our democratic systems — many of these amounting to what participants deemed a 'perception hack.' The recent hacking of Twitter accounts of prominent figures such as Joe Biden would have been especially damaging had they taken place in the days before the election, with fake posts about policy or the contracting of the coronavirus leading to real changes in voting decisions. In the case of electric grids being taken down and voting interrupted, the US constitution does not call for a back-up day of elections.

With the exception of the Israeli Defence Force targeting Hamas hackers, so far no organisations have crossed the 'invisible line' to provoke real world action or military reprisals in response to a cyberattack. Deterrence is difficult for a range of reasons ranging from lack of certain attribution to lack of a shared language of deterrence.

The US election registration system is so distributed and chaotic that a full-scale attack would be impossible — an advantage of sorts. Attacks would need to take place at the level of states, cities and towns. But even attacks to towns or cities could be damaging and towns were seen to be especially susceptible to these, either due to a lack of IT know-how and infrastructure, or to attacks through intermediaries such as their private contractors.

Taking precautions

Several improvements to cybersecurity were proposed but many of these are not straightforward. Falling back on citizenship — limiting foreign workers in a company or government — was seen to be intuitively attractive but much more difficult to enforce in practice. Large companies employ global workforces and these workforces, comprised of diverse nationalities, have developed some of the major technology applications on which we rely. There is an imperative to build trust in technology but relying on 'flags of origin' is a very difficult problem indeed to unpick.

Participants thought that there will be a move toward greater emphasis on trust in supply chains but again, that this will be an incredibly hard struggle to achieve in practice. There was some consensus that the 'build one, sell everywhere' model is not working anymore and that more localised control of supply chains will be desirable. Governments will need to find long-term strategies for this, which is difficult to imagine given their struggle to secure even basic PPE at times in the pandemic.

These are critical problems and participants agreed that work needs to start on them now, or else we won't even begin to solve these issues. The individuals devising and implementing policy will need to ensure that they take steps to achieve cybersecurity in their own lives, through basic steps such as password protection (this believed to not always be the case for even senior government leaders). Politicians in particular will face what were believed to be huge strategic and governance challenges on cyber.

There was some hope, however, as resilience in telecommunications was a focus for some time prior to the pandemic, and this proved to be helpful in crisis responses. Systems coped incredibly well with massively increased demand. The movement to the cloud has been ongoing and there will be a need to move purposefully toward 'zero-trust networks,' the idea that people are protected all the time on individual bases.

Public debate on cybersecurity is necessary. This will need to expose the complexity of cyber risks, as well as demonstrate the consequences should citizens, governments and businesses not take sufficient steps to protect themselves.

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SUMMARY

Trade, Technology and Globalisation

The participants all emphasised that the rules-based global trading system conceived following the Second World War — a primarily Western rather than global system — needs to be revised. This will require China's active rather than passive participation. There was a sense on the western side that China has so far done too little on actively proposing new rules for global trade. It was noted that China's prosperity depends on globalisation. China needs to make continued efforts to engage more developing countries in the process of globalisation.

A need for coherence

The West (but Europe in particular in this discussion) lacks coherence in its approach to globalisation and trade. In an increasingly bipolar world, Europe does not yet demonstrate the leadership in technological innovation necessary to live up to its ambitions of 'open strategic autonomy.' The United States has a monopoly on software companies whereas China leads on hardware. It was suggested that Europe should increasingly pool its resources in order to draw even on technologies such as 5G and that very significant amounts of investment should flow into European science, research and development.

But European autonomy on technology was not seen to be 'existential' for the continuation of the European democratic and economic project as has sometimes been described in the media. Objections were raised to the notion that Europe must choose between the United States and China, as dramatised in the UK decision over Huawei. Cooperation was possible with China and this was preferable to decoupling and hostility. This did not mean that China should not be challenged on deviation from global norms and standards on human rights. It was important, from the western perspective, that China should be both engaged and challenged frankly at the same time.

The need for political will to cooperate was stressed throughout the discussion. If there has ever been a time to cooperate, it is probably now, where we all face a common invisible enemy. Instead, the virus has so far been made a counter in strategic competition, this playing into a 'longing for confrontation' attributed to both the United States and China. Neither side was absolved of blame in this discussion. If trust is necessary for cooperation in a rules-based system, then some of this trust has been undermined by the United States and its allies ignoring international norms. The invasion of Iraq was cited as an egregious example. On the other hand, the lack of transparency in China's early response to the virus was highlighted as a contributing factor to reduced trust in the West.

These causes for mutual distrust should not be seen as insurmountable problems. The alternative to reforming the global trade system is a slow descent into chaos, which would be good for no country and certainly not for those not currently benefiting from globalisation. A divorce between the United States and China would not only be a catastrophic mess but disrupt what is 'perhaps the most successful commercial relationship' between two countries in the world's history.

Great discontents

Globalisation was described as experiencing great discontents. It is a 'secular' trend deemed to be unstoppable, but one that has nevertheless been expedited by politics and policy and can therefore be slowed by politics and policy. We have run up against the limits of the value of the view of globalisation as a giant global 'business efficiency machine.' It was agreed that at this point the public would probably be happy to see 'less efficiency if it meant more equality.'

But this does not mean that we should reject globalisation. We now embrace digital more than before and many of us have come to expect or even accept disruption in the normal course of events. Still, citizens and their governments may 'want things closer to home.' This may mean less focus on markets and more embrace of state capitalism. That said, one participant noted that competition will always spur more innovation than state investment alone.

New rules

If coherence and cooperation are necessary, then the exchange of rhetorical blows of recent months will need to give way to deeper intellectual work to develop new rules for global trade. Climate change is invisible, much like the virus, but its effects may be even more consequential. There was some consensus that ideology can lead to overreach into other countries' domestic affairs. Every country will need to determine what is the 'right balance' between openness and control for itself, but erecting barriers to competition is unlikely to bring prosperity. This is true for countries involved in Belt and Road, which should 'seek their own development paths.'

There was general agreement that 'the goal should be to maximise trade in the world in a way that is consistent with each side's strategic security,' keeping in full view the prosperity that globalisation has created for millions in developed as well as in developing countries over recent years. While we will probably see 'a jumble of public moods' over the next months, we will also need to avoid a struggle of narratives and of ideologies. We will need to get a grip on globalisation, and quickly, which will depend on our respective wills to cooperate.

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SUMMARY

Initial Reflections on the Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Women's Lives & Leadership

Over the last months, the pandemic has been seen as broadly positive for women's leadership but some think its final impact risks being to undermine progress made by women in work and elsewhere. In this session, the participants reflected on the networks that facilitate women's leadership and on what steps can be taken to strengthen these networks, incorporating the lessons from the last months. There was general consensus that the pandemic has showcased women's pioneering work in the realms of science and public health. In politics the story has been more mixed.

Innovation in science and public health

The participants agreed that there is great reason for celebration on the role of women in the scientific and public health responses in the crisis. At the University of Oxford, Professor Sarah Gilbert is leading the charge on the vaccination efforts. Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England, Dr Jenny Harries, is providing leadership at the national level. In Canada, where the public health response has been seen to be among the world's best, every provincial medical director is female. In other nations, such as New Zealand, women have driven responses focused on public health. This is as good a moment as any to encourage the next generation of girls and young women to pursue the sciences and it was felt that we must capitalise on this. This is particularly necessary for girls, where encouraging ambition in schools is paramount in order to maintain this success.

No women at the table

At the same time, it was apparent, as participants noted, that women have had far too little voice in core decision-making processes on the UK pandemic response. There have been no women at the table and women have been seen far too little in daily press briefings, whether in the UK or in the US. There was a sense that men have brought other men forward in the realms of politics and media, the crisis response reinforcing the networks that already exist. Former UK cabinet minister Amber Rudd noted recently that 97% of UK press briefings had been led by men, with participants referring to her remark that 'You could only conclude that this government's default position is to trust and work with men and that every now and again they wake up [and] think… about the women….'

Participants noted that had more women been at the decision-making table, that schools would have opened more quickly. It would have made no sense to women to ask people to return to work while having children at home. Several participants suggested that women 'don't swagger in the same way men do': the response of men in the US, UK and Brazil in particular has been to fight the virus. This is a time where characteristics such as caution and honesty in leadership are necessary, qualities that many women in leadership roles frequently demonstrate.

Supply of childcare

There was emphasis throughout the discussion on the vital role of quality childcare for working women and that such care is still in too little supply. One participant noted that throughout her career, young women in science would be in despair, unable to find care for their children and therefore unable to continue working at pace with their academic research. Another participant noted that 'professional women rely on other women' and that the closure of nurseries and stay-at-home measures has left many women without these usual supports. The question 'When these (family support) structures fall down, who picks up the slack?' was asked and the answer was that this most often falls to women. Increased supply of quality nursery provision was seen to be part of the solution in unlocking the full potential of women in the economy and society.

New mentorship networks

Participants saw reasons for optimism in the growth of women's support networks in the political realm. Emily's List, an American political action committee aiming to help elect female candidates for office, had 920 women ask for advice about running between 2014-2016. In the week following the 2016 US election, around 1,000 women asked for advice. In the time since, 40,000 have done so.

Social media, while useful or even essential, was agreed to be a cesspool, particularly for minority women, and current or recent female politicians have noted that they might not have run had social media been as abusive as it is today when they first entered the political realm. There was consensus in the discussion that workplace culture and diversity efforts are important and that women have an opportunity to lead in this area, given that women already tend to assume these executive level roles within their organisations.

Mentorship networks were seen as perhaps the most vital component in bringing more women into key decision-making roles, and participants agreed — and shared their own stories — about the value of mentorship taking place across genders and across generations. Multiple participants noted that men in senior military roles had played pivotal roles in their own early or mid-careers and that women and men each benefit when they learn from each other.

More constructive discussion between women and men, within and across generations, is necessary in order to make progress on gender equality. One participant argued that all individuals should be less confident about their instincts, particularly as far as the formation of their networks is concerned, and that they should think more systematically and rigorously about who they go to for advice and who they mentor.

There was general consensus that mentorship of young women and girls in particular is crucial and that girls should be told continuously to build their own careers and become leaders — the school but especially home environment as the two main areas for these conversations. There was ambition for community service work to be led by women and men together, balancing the local with national level leadership. We must encourage leaders to step forward who look beyond their own areas of expertise and to the needs of the whole of society.

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James Arroyo in Conversation with Brad Smith, President, Microsoft

This cross-cutting conversation reflected on the advantages and disadvantages of virtual communications; international norms and rules on cybersecurity; the values guiding Microsoft's response to the pandemic; and Microsoft's support for democracy as a guiding light. Technological innovation and new threats to democracy require technology leaders to think critically about their responsibilities as corporate citizens.

Hybrid life and transitions

At the beginning of the discussion, Mr Smith asked us to imagine the pandemic happening ten years ago. Spending our days on conference calls, we would have grown exhausted, unable to see even the faces of our colleagues. We may have returned quickly to our offices, without thinking about public health. We've seen clearly in the pandemic that digital is a tool to sustain economic activity, even if incompletely, and in a short period of time government officials have begun to make decisions based on data that affect how we live our lives. But even with progress in digital tools, we have learned that 'people need to be with people' — working in person in a variety of settings.

The virtual engagement that many of us have experienced over the last months has helped us to maintain productivity or even increase it, but we are learning that we must 'break up our use of technology' with in-person time in the real world. Mr Smith acknowledged that we will enter a more permanent world of 'remote everything,' but that we need to allow time for transitions in order to think properly. We have all experienced the tiredness of shifting from one virtual meeting to another in rapid succession, without time to catch ourselves and think.

This lack of transition time is not only exhausting but prevents us from thinking about what we are noticing and learning in our work. How to live skilfully then in a hybrid world of virtual and in-person engagement, setting time aside for thinking as well as for sustaining important relationships, may be an important feature of the new world that we are entering.

Increasing connectivity

There is a need to increase connectivity in society as we continue to respond to the pandemic, or else we will risk widening three divides in particular. The first of these is the broadband divide, a 'make or break' challenge. It was noted that political leaders tend to ask how we can lay a fibre optic cable to every home but this is the most expensive way to go about solving this problem, particularly in remote areas such as small villages and rural settings. There are alternative opportunities such as the use of 'TV white space,' which could be affordable and Mr Smith urged that we need to experiment with these. Bridging the broadband divide was deemed possible if we 'reject dogma and look at a hybrid approach.'

The second of these is the devices divide. Whereas the 2010s were about having a smartphone, the 2020s will be about having an effective laptop or desktop PC: the reality is that individuals will fare better with a screen that is bigger.

The third of the divides is one of digital skills, a 'clarion call for governments across the world' and one where Microsoft has taken steps with its goal to train 25 million people globally in the development of digital skills. Mr Smith was adamant that all three divides should be addressed together, and that nothing less than a global effort is necessary in order to accelerate change on connectivity.

Multi-stakeholder systems

Addressing these divides and other problems, however, was not seen as the responsibility of governments only. Mr Smith argued for a truly multifaceted, multi-stakeholder approach. Cyberspace is largely privately owned and therefore the private sector must be involved in its protection. Whereas in 1949 it was enough for the world's governments to come together and agree on moral and legal duty to protect civilians, in 2020 more players must be engaged, not just the private sector but also NGOs and civil society. Might we need a digital and modern version of the Red Cross?

The Cyber Peace Institute, recently set up and based in Geneva, was one such new NGO aiming to address the challenges of cybersecurity, working to increase transparency and share best practices. A 'Digital Geneva Convention' could try to set limits on unacceptable forms of cyberwarfare, for example through agreements between governments to refrain from targeting hospitals, local governments and other vulnerable actors. Each of these categories had been the subject of cyberattacks since the onset of the pandemic.

Defence of democracy

In reflecting on the purpose of companies and the evolution of capitalism, Mr Smith remarked that 'Microsoft regards the defence of democracy as one of (the) fundamental responsibilities it has as a company.' The focus of this mission was on the long-term: there will be a day when any individual company disappears but we should hope that democracy will always remain alive and well. It was noted that the defence of democracy would not have figured so prominently into Microsoft leadership's thinking ten years ago but the most recent US election, combined with attacks on candidates, think tanks, political parties and others, demanded urgent action and investment in democratic infrastructure and institutions.

It is vital, as Mr Smith remarked, that Microsoft and other technology companies promote public discussion on data, since data can be used as a tool or weapon in our democracies. We have to protect core democratic processes, such as voting systems, given that the 'very definition of democracy is the ability of the people to vote.'

Human rights were deemed core values in any decisions related to data, alongside transparency and accountability. As more countries pursue 'digital sovereignty,' there will be a demand for the building of new data centres but, for Microsoft at least these decisions would have to weigh confidence in governments, proper law enforcement protections and respect for human rights.

International legal frameworks on the use of cyber will need to be strengthened over the long term. The idea of the 'corporate citizen' will be important given that citizens did not elect shareholders and executives. Corporations will need therefore to 'properly play a subservient role' to the needs of societies and their democracies.

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SUMMARY

Ambassador Nick Burns in Conversation with 66th Secretary of State of the USA, Condoleezza Rice

In this closing session on the Ditchley Summer Project, Secretary Condoleezza Rice reminded us that the human spirit is irrepressible, and that free human beings have overcome and will always overcome the challenges put in front of them.

The denial of human freedom

Reflecting on her own life experiences, Secretary Rice remarked that 'the denial of human freedom is the worst thing that we can do to human beings.' She reminded us that the American constitution once considered her ancestors to be three-fifths of a man but that this same constitution later provided rights to slaves. We are now in a period where the economic freedom of millions of Americans is at risk, many fighting for survival even as they want to do what is right for public health.

Inequality of access to opportunities was identified as a pivotal challenge in capitalist democracies and one that we must urgently address. More broadly this crisis challenges our systems, values and interrelationships, shaping 'how we relate to one another in

dramatic ways.' The United States and its Allies need to be confident in the power of the freedom provided within democratic systems and use this freedom to overcome the international crises that we face.

The issue of race and Black Lives Matter protests were deemed to be a seminal moment in American history, one comparable to Rosa Parks deciding that she would not sit at the back of the bus. Secretary Rice observed that race is visceral in the United States; it is more than ethnicity. The protests are encouraging; a Black man killed in racially segregated Birmingham would have not have been as much as a 'footnote in the news' several decades ago. But Secretary Rice noted that protests can only go so far, and that ultimately strategy involving the law and constitution will be necessary in order to bring enduring change.

Secretary Rice urged us to not lose hope or assume that these challenges cannot be overcome. Catastrophising or believing that the present is more difficult than the past was described as 'a conceit,' diminishing the work of forebearers to provide many Americans

with their current opportunities. In particular, Secretary Rice referred to 1968: a terrible year involving two political assassinations, first of Martin Luther King Jr. and later of Robert Kennedy. John F Kennedy was assassinated only several years before this. The civil war was another major crisis but as Secretary Rice noted the United States emerged a more perfect union eventually. She believes that no country, perhaps apart from South Africa, has looked as hard in the mirror as the United States on the issue of race.

Self-confidence

The America that Secretary Rice sees at the moment, however, is an America lacking in its usual self-confidence. At times the United States appears to be a 'defensive fortress,' concerned about what external forces will do to it. But Reagan stated correctly that 'free peoples will always triumph' and it took a confident United States to do what it did in 1945, 1946 and 1949, pioneering the creation of NATO and declaring that an attack on any member is an attack upon all.

Quoting General Jim Mattis, the United States was said to have two powers: the power of intimidation and the power of inspiration. A balance needs to be struck between these two poles but it was observed that 'great powers don't mind their own business': they try to shape the international system, which inevitably treads on others' sensibilities. Despite these risks, Secretary Rice reminded us that the United States has real Allies even if in recent years these Allies have been treated 'as just other countries.' This problem has been building for some time, predating the election of President Trump. But the United States can regain its footing if it does not put its Allies in either-or situations and instead lets them choose sides based on values. The choices might not always work in the United States' favour but they often will.

The revenge of the sovereign state

Beyond the United States, the international response had been the most nationalistic of any crisis that Secretary Rice had seen in her career. The response has been 'My PPE, my borders, my travel ban, my citizens,' the goal being to 'get my citizens home' and the mindset 'I don't care what happens to the rest of them.' It is the revenge of the sovereign state, with citizens each imploring their prime ministers, presidents and main political leaders to simply take care of the problem.

The reaction of China and its failure to divulge information on the virus outbreak resembled its response on SARS but Secretary Rice highlighted failure across the international system as a whole. Secretary Rice was clear that China should not be underestimated but equally that it should not be overestimated. China depends on continued prosperity and yet the pandemic has inflicted such pain and trouble that this is the first time that growth targets have not been posted for the Chinese economy. There was a sense that China may now be overextended and that its rhetoric has also damaged relationships with European nations.

Renewing the US-UK relationship

In this time of rapid change and uncertainty, particularly in the realm of technology, Secretary Rice argued that there is opportunity to renew the US-UK relationship, for instance on how to best deal with the implications of technological innovation for privacy. We needed to work out how best to adapt and revive NATO, particularly in its dealing with new frontier technologies such as AI, quantum computing and biotechnology. The point that we mustn't confuse knowledge and wisdom — and that humans are generally better at the former than the latter — was reiterated through the discussion and this is particularly true in the

realm of technology. Secretary Rice hoped that there will be a significant trade deal between the US and UK, alongside discussions to take forward trade between the US and Europe.

Secretary Rice was adamant that we cannot forget about the next generation. The strength of the US-UK relationship is sometimes taken for granted but it must be renewed continuously, and this requires that young people be involved. When asked what she is most hopeful about, Secretary Rice provided the answer of young people, the next generation being one that is deeply public service minded. She noted their desire to contribute and make a difference but identified a weakness as wanting to lead before having learned sufficiently.

We need room to work through complicated problems and this might require that we 'dial back,' not only in the use of social media, which reduces complicated issues to soundbites but also in the time that we believe is needed to accomplish anything of substance. It is not that expectations should be lowered, but rather that democracies are messy and that this is actually a good thing. Our freedom means that we may not always converge in our opinions, but healthy disagreement and compromise are vital if democracies are to win out over the long-term.

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DITCHLEY

SUMMARY

Closing Reflective Session on Values –

What do we value? What does it mean to rally and rebound?

The question 'What do we value?' underpinned much of the Ditchley Summer Project, and it is with this in mind that a group of contributors from across the Project convened in order to reflect on what we had learned on this question. There was some consensus that certain values are enduring and that these can help us to live with uncertainty. That said, participants also remarked that we cannot take for granted the values that sustained us in the past. There is a need to apply our values for them to be real. Participants referred to the 'COVID gym' as an opportunity to use and build our 'moral muscles.'

Renewing our roots

Certain fundamental values or virtues have sustained us throughout the history of the West, examples being the classical ones of courage, wisdom, temperance and justice. If we're to think in terms of an ecological model, then values are part of the roots of society. But these values must be attended to and renewed if they are to grow. Indeed, they must be replenished; they do not grow on their own. To these classical virtues were added humanity (or 'high humanity' as one participant noted), humility and hope. The first of these involves empathy, kindness and service; the second a comfort living with what we don't know and honesty to recognise this, and the third courage or resilience: 'facing discouragement but not being overcome by it.'

The pandemic has encouraged us to think about what we mean by the 'good life.' For example, the extent to which this involves constant travel and busyness, or perhaps more time and rootedness with family and neighbours. We have also been forced to consider what we mean by 'good work,' recognising the many crucial but previously often unsung key workers on whom we depend. Others proposed solidarity and collaboration as values — a sense that we need to mobilise around particular ideas or issues and with a radical spirit.

Application within contexts

Values must be 'applied and developed in a context' as one participant noted. Nor can we assume that this is a moment for particular values, as if history will follow a course that we have pre-determined. If anything, we are learning to live with uncertainty, recognising that we are all partial, incomplete and in progress. 'Democracy isn't done,' as one participant noted, and this means that we should be careful when talking about society's purposes.

The idea that current society is not 'fit for purpose' was proposed, but while provocative several participants remarked that the question itself assumes that societies will follow a given path and that there is agreement on what the paths should be. The pandemic has instead shown that such agreement cannot be assumed and that we must deal instead with tricky dichotomies: navigating between transformation and stabilisation in pandemic recovery responses; balancing public health and economic security; deciding on local versus national responsibilities; and racing to develop vaccines within nations whilst ultimately needing to eradicate or limit the virus at the global level.

Regardless of the values we believe in, a case for the value of these values needs to be made in language that can 'galvanise people.' In a climate of low trust and with a lack of leadership, values cannot be taken as given. They must be applied and shown that they fundamentally work well.

Shifting from personalities to institutions

With this uncertainty in mind, participants agreed that we must shift our focus from believing in personalities to building institutions. We should 'build institutions that allow people to live good lives.' The Barack Obama comment that 'We don't need great men; we need great institutions' was repeated but we face the challenge of rising distrust in government and in institutions generally. Governments have so far been unwilling to join together with others in action but increasingly they are asking companies about their roles in the crisis and this was seen to be a good thing.

There was stress on the importance of good governance throughout the discussion and that we must get better at compromise. One of the advantages of great institutions, as one participant noted, is that they give every new generation 'a place to begin,' a starting point for the young to 'go and do their own thing.' It is vital that the young see value in society's long-standing institutions and that they learn to participate actively in institutional processes in order to drive change, as well as to campaign and protest.

Whether we build new institutions or seek to renew the ones that exist already, we will require honesty, awareness of existing inequalities and openness to intergenerational dialogue. We will need to embrace our humanity, maintain hope as to what can be achieved down the road, and cultivate the humility to lean in and work with others, developing our values through action under pressure.

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