

## [Transcript] Leading / 15: Hillary Clinton: Fighting Putin, the Return of Trump, and the Killing of Osama Bin Laden

Welcome to another episode of the Restless Politics Leading with me, Alistair Campbell.

And with me, Rory Stewart.

With a very, very, very special guest.

I'm not even going to bother introducing with a CV, Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Probably best known for her role as current Chancellor of Queen's University, Belfast.

Thanks very, very much for talking to us.

Can we just start with that?

Well, obviously, we're not going to go through your whole life and times,

but there just seems something quite full circle about you being here now with Bill

on the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement,

a university of which you've become Chancellor.

You're both in your 70s, and yet you seem to kind of keep going and going and going and going.

Well, there's a lot to go for.

There's a lot of extraordinary opportunities and work to be done.

And I was delighted to be asked to be Chancellor, the first woman Chancellor at Queen's University, Belfast.

And I didn't anticipate or even think that it would be coinciding during my tenure with the 25th anniversary.

But I'm so grateful.

We've had an amazing series of events already bringing together everyone from past, present, and future,

who has a stake in the Good Friday Agreement and making sure that it's a living document

that improves the lives and opportunities of the people of Northern Ireland,

but continues to represent what it is, a diplomatic triumph because of the hard work,

patience of leaders and people back in the 90s.

Thank you for coming.

I'm very excited to see you.

I wonder, one way we'd love to go is to get a little bit of a reflection on the US's role in the world.

And it strikes me that there's something both very moving but a bit troubling 25 years on.

Because when we look at the situation in Sudan or Ethiopia or Somalia or even Yemen,

one doesn't perhaps feel America's centrality in the way that we did 25 years ago in relation to this peace agreement here in Ireland.

What is your reflection on that?

Do you think the world is changing?

We're into a new global order?

Well, I think we're always evolving.

And whether it's a new global order or new alliances or new adversarial relationships,

that's part of what you have to expect to be occurring at any time in history.

I actually think that currently under the Biden administration, the United States has reasserted leadership.

That doesn't mean we are involved everywhere all the time.

What's that movie that won the Academy Award, you know, everything everywhere all at once.

But it does mean that there's been certainly a reinvigoration of the Atlantic Alliance,

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given the threats from Russia with its invasion of Ukraine.

I think there's been some smart moves in the Pacific around uniting countries to deal with the challenges posed by China.

But there's always more to be done.

And you mentioned a series of countries that are in terrible troubles right now from civil conflict and terrorism and so much else.

So it's an ongoing, you know, set of challenges that the United States has to be meeting.

And I think there is some progress in recovering from what was inherited from the prior administration

and the chaos that was engendered.

But there's still a lot more that has to be done to rebuild the trust and credibility of the United States.

And where does Europe and the UK in particular fit into that sense of America and America's role in the world?

When Tony was prime minister and your husband was president, we always sense that really meant something, a special relationship.

Feels a little bit frayed.

And I just wondered your take on where Britain is in the world and where Europe is in relation to some of these challenges that you're talking about.

Well, first, I'd say that the relationship remains central.

It remains central in what is an ongoing struggle between democracy and autocracy.

I do think the special relationship with the UK continues.

It is important to, you know, be tending it.

You can't take it for granted.

I think the relationship that has been built around summoning the resolve of Europe to support Ukraine has been quite remarkable.

And I would not have predicted that it would have been as strong and sustained as it has turned out to be.

But you also have what are continuing and to some extent kind of perpetual challenges in the relationship.

And, you know, we saw that recently with President Macron going off to China.

And, you know, once again, as is kind of the script of a French president saying, we need to be independent of the United States.

We need to have our own military and defense.

Well, yeah, we've heard that for decades.

But when push comes to shove, the partnership is stronger.

Did that worry you?

I've heard it so many times from, you know, so many French presidents.

It doesn't worry me because I don't see any potential strategic approach to realizing it because there isn't an standing army in Europe that is a EU instrument.

There is not a currency that is going to really compete with the dollar.

I think that's been proven over and over again.

And I don't think that individual countries and leaders can be as impactful alone in whether it's

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diplomacy with China or anything else, as they can be in alliance with the United States.

One of the things that seems to have changed also over the last 25 years is the focus on global poverty.

So when you were very centrally involved in things, I remember very well dealing with you when you were a sexual state.

The fight against global poverty and particularly the focus on sub-Saharan Africa was very central.

We were coming out of live aid and making poverty history.

We're now in an era where the number of people living in extreme poverty in Africa is nearly three and a half times greater than it was in 1980.

And yet we're not really talking about it very much.

What's happened over the last generation?

Why do you think we've lost focus on this issue?

You know, Rory, I think it's really an important question and there was a greater emphasis on global poverty and we were making progress.

I think to some extent we have lost ground because of COVID and because of donor fatigue and because of the failure of a lot of governments to maintain democratic rule

and be able to make investments in their people.

So it's a very difficult continuing problem.

So I think we have to once again get back to talking about it, emphasizing it.

And you know, when you were in government in the UK, there was an understanding that the UK was making smart investments

by investing in sub-Saharan Africa, other places in the world to try to alleviate the worst effects of poverty,

but also to try to empower people to be able to make better lives for themselves.

The UK has retreated from that back and forth between the Obama-Trump and now the Biden administration to try to maintain our financial commitment has been a political football.

So there are other priorities and there, as I say, this kind of sense of donor fatigue.

And it's coming at exactly the wrong time because we are in this competition for hearts and minds with China.

And I think that the Chinese have made it a priority to have big showy investments, mostly in infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa.

That doesn't mean that they're actually increasing jobs and income of the people in those countries because they often import workers and they export the profits and the benefits.

But they are demonstrating a commitment.

And we did that in a very big way through the PEPFAR program under President George W. Bush in dealing with the scourge of AIDS, but we don't do it in a sustained way.

And so I think it's a continuing challenge, both on a humanitarian and moral basis, but also on a strategic and economic one.

How much damage do you think Donald Trump's tenure did to the United States and indeed to the wider world?

I think his four years were extraordinarily damaging to our credibility, to our standing in the world, to the predictability and stability that people should be able to expect from American leadership, regardless of what party is in the White House.

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And I think that his erratic behavior, his courting of authoritarian leaders, you know, send a message that we weren't even going to stand up for the fundamental foundational principles of democracy.

Do you worry he could come back?

Well, he is likely to come back as the Republican nominee.

If the primary elections were to kick in right now, he would be the nominee.

I don't think he can win a general election, but, you know, we can't take anything for granted and have to work hard against that.

And how does one beat him?

What are your reflections on how one beats Donald Trump in an election?

Well, you have to win this bizarre, anachronistic thing called the electoral college, because, you know, I beat him by nearly three million votes, Biden beat him by seven million votes.

But in the electoral college, I lost by 77,000 votes and Biden won by 100,000 votes.

So the popular vote in both elections was pretty significantly in my favor and Biden's favor, but the electoral college margin was very, very thin.

So you have to understand that the Republican Party has decided it cannot compete in elections on the ideas and the policies and the personalities of their leaders.

They have to shrink the electorate.

They have to make it difficult for minorities, for young people to vote.

Anyone who they think might vote against them needs to be somehow written out of the electoral map.

And through gerrymandering and voter suppression tactics aimed to win enough votes in the electoral college, regardless of the popular margin.

So that that's a real problem for a democracy.

And in terms of populism and the way that populism works and the way that Trump exploits classic populist tactics, how do you as somebody who's a kind of sort of symbol of the center ground of moderation?

How do you make the arguments against the populist?

How do you defeat a populist?

Apart from the mathematics, the electoral college, how do you communicate in a way that defeats a populist?

Well, I think that's a that's a big question for parties of the center center left.

And I think it's a question we haven't adequately answered.

We've had, you know, very effective communicators, you know, like my husband or Tony Blair, who have been able to, you know, win the, you know, the votes of people who might not necessarily agree with everything.

But thought that they were making a good case and they were certainly better than the alternative.

And so we've got to do a better job in making that argument ourselves.

But to directly answer, if you look at the election in 2020, you know, Trump did a lot better than he did against me.

More people ended up voting for him after having seen all of the nonsense, all of the instability, all of the demagoguery.

And he, in my view, largely lost because he's so badly fumbled COVID, you know, his behavior, his refusal to take responsibility.

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His grandstanding when he himself was so deathly sick from COVID, it had to be literally taken to the hospital because he was in such dire straits.

He lost because of how he handled COVID.

If he had handled COVID in even a minimally competent way, there is a very good chance he might have been reelected.

That's pretty terrifying.

Well, it's terrifying because there's so many other things that he mishandled and that going after our institutions, undermining the rule of law, everything which he does and stands for.

But I think the issue is it's all, politics has always been about entertainment and performance, right?

You've had a recent prime minister who was basically a performer and we had a recent president who was basically a performer.

And people got to the point where they didn't really care that much what he stood for as long as he entertained them.

And as long as he came out and said outrageous things and insulted people that they would like to see insulted, he was just fine.

They're both out, though.

They're both out for the time being.

They're both out.

And part of the reason they're both out is because they both went too far.

You'll have to speak for your former prime minister.

But Trump, he went too far on COVID.

And he was doing daily press conferences in the United States.

That's when he said, drink bleach.

That's when he said, try this veterinarian medicine that's used to treat parasites and sheep.

I mean, that's when he said all this bizarre stuff and that registered on people.

What did you learn about tackling Trump, both about politics and the sort of thing you described and also about yourself?

And because I find it almost impossible to imagine what it's like to take him on the way you did, have the best arguments, have the best campaign, have the best policies and you lose.

Well, I wrote a whole book about it because it was hard to understand what happened, which is the title of the book.

You know, look, I came out of all those debates with big leads in public opinion polling that was done, you know, tens of millions of people.

I mean, 80 million people watched the debates.

They all saw us.

They, you know, they, they responded to pollsters that, you know, I was by far, you know, more effective and all of that.

But my election outcome had more to do with external events at the end than with Trump himself.

And, you know, the combination of all kinds of unprecedented interference in our election, I could watch the impact.

So, you know, that's, to me, more of the explanation than that Trump won than I lost because of bogus charges and stolen emails and all the rest of it.

But how did you deal with that as a human being? How did you build from that?

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You know, look, it was so bizarre and I actually wished Trump well.

I mean, you know, unlike him, I conceded and I had more reason not to than he did, but I did.

And I said, you know, we all wish him well.

We have one president at a time.

We want our president to succeed.

And I, you know, basically just went off, walked in the woods and started thinking about what had happened and then began piecing together.

And we're now still learning stuff, Alistair.

I mean, we just had a criminal trial in the United States where a guy who was one of the trolls against me crossed over from vitriolic untrue attacks on me to targeting mostly black voters, telling them they could text their vote for me.

And thousands did.

And so if he had just continued to lie about me, he would have had no consequences.

But because he moved into subverting the election, he was convicted of electoral interference.

So there was so much going on in that election that we're still just finding out about.

Trump basically was indicted just now because of his interference in the election.

Can I sort of develop Alistair's point on the puzzle?

So I, I ran against Boris Johnson and was defeated.

And I found it horrifying.

I mean, I went through a very, very difficult period in my life thinking, not just that I'd lost, but I'd lost against this guy.

You know, how on earth can they possibly have chosen this person?

And it would be nice to see how you personally came through it.

I mean, was it a difficult few weeks or months?

How, how did you come to terms that you talk about walking the woods?

I mean, what was the personal impact?

No, it was difficult, but, you know, I did get more votes.

That was some comfort.

I did get sandbagged at the end.

That made me feel worse.

What?

To lose when you got more votes, that made me feel worse.

It made it worse in one way, but it was also ratifying in another way.

Right.

So there was a lot going on.

And what I did, in addition to walking in the woods, was to just dive into the data and the events to try to understand it, because it did not make sense to me.

And we're going to keep learning about the 2016 election and what happened in the United States, the combination of, you know, psychological operations, Cambridge Analytica and all the rest of it, Russian interference, you know, stolen materials that were weaponized and lied about.

I mean, it just was so unprecedented.

So in a funny way, that was, for me, a kind of saving grace.

All right, Rory.

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Hillary, let's take a break.

Welcome back to the Restless Politics Leading with me, Rory Stewart.

And me, Alistair Campbell with Hillary, Roland Clinton.

Now, you know, as well as anybody, how important pictures are.

One picture that I'd really like you to reflect on is the one when you, President Obama, Vice President Biden, small number of military and officials in the situation room in the White House watching the raid on Bin Laden.

Just talk us through that.

You know, I thought that the decision making around whether or not to go after Bin Laden and how to go after him was one of the best examples of presidential decision making that I know of.

And, you know, a lot's been written about it, but it was a very small group of us.

And we began meeting and reviewing the intelligence, but the intelligence, to be fair, was suggestive, but certainly not conclusive.

And so we subjected the intelligence to what's, you know, we call red teaming, where you bring in people who weren't involved in collecting it, weren't even involved in the hunt for Bin Laden.

They did something else to evaluate it.

We had two different teams.

They basically came back and said, you know, there's like a 40 to 60 percent credibility assessment.

And so we, we just went over and over.

We brought in the special forces commander, Admiral McRaven, to talk about what a raid would look like.

We brought in people who would talk about what a predator drone strike would look like.

We went through all of it.

And as I say, it was, you know, literally just around one table, the group of us involved.

And at the end of it, you know, the president came in and made each of us go around the table and tell him what we would do.

And that was such.

If you were president.

No, what we, we would advise him to do.

So, you know, starting with the vice president, the secretary of defense, the chairman of the joint chiefs, the vice chairman of the joint chiefs, the director of the CIA, the secretary of state.

And we all had to tell him in front of everybody else what we recommended he do.

And it was hard.

And, and, and I give credit to everybody around the table.

There was no chorus of, you know, trying to figure out what does he want to hear.

And I'm going to join the chorus.

People said, don't do it.

People said, if you do do it, do it by a missile, not by a raid.

That way we don't risk losing any of our folks.

We also don't know if we really got bin Laden, but it's safer.

Go ahead and do the raid.

We understand the risks.

Everybody was on the record as thoughtful and careful as each of us could be in making our

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recommendations.

And then, of course, the president had to make the decision.

And so he gathered all of that from us and, and, you know, went off to think about it and, you know, made the decision to order the raid.

Now, the raid had been planned very carefully because we'd had some bad examples in situations like when, you know, President Carter wanted to rescue the hostages that revolutionary government, the new government of Iran were holding from our embassy, the helicopter crashed.

So here we are going to be sending helicopters from Afghanistan into a place called Abadabad, Pakistan, which happened to be the city where the military academy of Pakistan was, which is why you'll never convince me people in that government did not know bin Laden was there. But that's a topic for another conversation.

So, yeah, we were going to send these helicopters in.

They had to land at this compound.

They had to go in.

They had to do whatever needed to be done with anyone who would be confronting them.

They had to either kill or capture bin Laden.

Then they had to get them out.

They had to get the helicopters up.

They had to get back across Afghanistan border.

I mean, the whole thing was so fraught.

And so we made this decision.

It was tightly, tightly held.

And it was something that we were all holding our breath watching as we watched the video of the helicopters landing.

And we couldn't see what went on inside the compound, but we could see one of the helicopters literally crashing, right?

And it crashed because its tail hit a barbed wire that we didn't know was there when they planned for the...

You never know everything.

And then so that meant we had to bring in another helicopter to take out the people who were in that helicopter that got disabled.

And we had to blow up the helicopter because it was a stealth helicopter with very advanced technology.

All of this had to happen, like, as quickly as possible.

So, I am very proud to have played a role in that.

I'm very impressed by the extraordinary ability of the Navy SEALs to go in and pull that off.

It was the most intense, like, 72 hours, I think, of my public life, you know, knowing about it, waiting for it, watching it.

And I think it made a difference in the amount of terrorism that we have seen since.

And there was also a very difficult but right decision made, two right decisions.

One, what to do with the body after doing the DNA to determine it was bin Laden.

Buried at sea, no grave for terrorist idolaters to come and worship at, and don't release the pictures.



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Don't release the pictures.

One of the things that I've always really admired about you is that you never have struck me as a classic politician.

I see classic politicians as people who are being on transmit all the time.

But I remember coming to see you when you were in a sexual state on Afghanistan a couple of times and I was just struck by how well you listened.

And I wonder whether you could reflect a little bit on that, on how you've managed to maintain the ability to listen when most of my colleagues on both sides.

Can I add a point to that?

One of your other major strands to your life and your public service is about the role of women in politics.

It's part of your answer, the fact that you're a woman.

It is part of the answer.

I never thought I would be an electoral politician.

I always, unlike some people we know, I always thought that there would be a role to participate in public political debates on behalf of primarily children and families, obviously women.

And so I was always motivated by a sense of rolling my sleeves up and getting stuff done.

And I really take a lot of joy in that.

I mean, that to me is worth the price of being in politics with all the other stuff that comes at you.

So I have other resources.

It's not just resilience.

It's a real, you know, sense of purpose about why I keep going into the fray, you know, why I keep lifting my head up and, you know, dealing with the slings and arrows.

But it's also kind of around this question of being a tool for empowerment, a person of, you know, role model, whatever one might call it, so that I do want to model for other women.

You can get in the arena and it's a it's a brutal place.

You have to be prepared.

You have to have, you know, allies.

There has to be a sense of reason why you're there, not just for your own personal aggrandizement.

And so, you know, I actually feel good about what I do.

And I think that's what it comes down to.

And there's always something to do, Rory.

There's always something to do.

You know that.

And you're both going to do it.

You and Bill, you're going to just keep on doing it and doing it and doing it.

Yeah, you know, we just we do feel, Alistair, like these events at Queens celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement are a great way to remind ourselves as well as others what it took to get there.

You know, listening to Tony Blair and Bertie Ahearn and George Mitchell and Bill Clinton and the leaders of the political parties in Northern Ireland and everyone else who was involved, you know, talk about how long it took.

Now, there's an important lesson here because I was talking to George Mitchell.

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Could he have done what he did and could all of the leaders have been as willing finally to compromise in an era of instantaneous information and cell phones?

I mean, if people were walking out of these confidential meetings and whipping out their phone and taking a selfie saying, here I am, you know, coming out of the meeting with George Mitchell, would that have enabled the kind of trust that is necessary to build up?

And I'm not sure the answer to that is one we want to hear.

Can I just on that one of the things that we come across a lot when we talk to politicians and it relates partly to the rise in social media is the sense of politics feeling increasingly brutal, particularly for women, many, many women.

I mean, Nicola Surcin just into art and many members of Parliament in Britain leaving politics because the brutality of the experience.

Can you reflect a little bit on that particularly for listeners who are engaging in politics about what the negative experience of being a politician is and how our age has made that particularly acute?

Well, I think it has exacerbated a problem that was always there, but, you know, somewhat below the surface, you know, the number of people who actually walk up to you and insult you to your faces relatively limited.

Talking behind your back is one thing, but literally to confront you.

But the anonymity that social media gives to people to engage in the most vile and vitriolic attacks is, as we know now, in epidemic proportions.

And the primary victims, it seems from all of the studies and my own personal experience and observation are women in the arena.

I mean, if a woman lifts her head up in a public role and it doesn't have to be just in politics or government, it can be in business or entertainment, something else.

But if she is visible, she immediately becomes a target.

And I was in Newcastle and David Miliband's old constituency a year or so ago at his invitation, you know, doing a speech there.

And I met privately with a group of Labour Party women in office at the local level up to Parliament. The number one thing they wanted to talk about was their physical safety.

The kind of attacks they are now receiving.

And we think of Joe Cox and her murder because of her position on Brexit.

And these women, they're wondering, do I have to...

I don't know, where am I going to get the money to put in an alarm system to put in big lights to protect my children?

This is what's going on and that is why women are leaving.

And some of it is not organized.

Some of it is spontaneous, but a lot of it is organized.

Like the guy who was going after me in the trial when he was, you know, testifying, yeah, I hated her and I wanted to destroy her and all of that.

So they are being given reinforcement by an online community that, you know, goes down the rabbit hole with them.

And, you know, for somebody like me, look, I have security.

You know, I live in a different bubble.

Even though I get probably more threats, I have more protection.

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These women don't have any protection.

They're out there trying to see their constituents run for election, make a speech.

And I just feel like it's part of the atmosphere that is undermining democracy, undermining the public good.

People who refuse to go in or feel I have to come out, we're losing good people.

And it's mostly, not exclusively, it's mostly coming against center-left progressive politicians.

I guess another really, really famous picture that I'd love to ask you about.

I think it was 2009 when you did the famous reset button with you and Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister, with your fingers on a button.

Well, with respect to Russia, you know, we were doing that for some very specific purposes.

It was a bit of a, you know, drama to do the reset button, but there were four things we wanted from Russia.

We wanted, for example, their support on sanctions on Iran so that we could begin to have negotiations over their nuclear situation.

We wanted to fly lethal equipment across Russia and Afghanistan, so we'd have two routes in Afghanistan.

We wanted to extend the New START Treaty to continue to try to have arms control about nuclear weapons.

So we had specific, very focused goals that the quote reset was supposed to bring about.

And they did. We got all of that done.

Now, at the same time we were getting that done, Putin had taken a step back.

Remember, he switched jobs with Medvedev to be prime minister and not president.

So Putin, for whatever reasons, was kind of receding and dealing more on the economy.

But he gave Medvedev kind of a running room.

So we were able to deal with him. We had a big event in Prague with, you know, they're agreeing to sign the New START Treaty.

We did all of that, all the drama and theater.

I, however, had a very skeptical view of Putin, and he returned it in a very great measure, as we now know from the 2016 election.

Because what I think he was doing behind the scenes was literally consolidating his one-man rule, removing both oligarchs and political figures who in any way threatened him, so that when he re-emerged as president, he was more firmly in control.

And I think we've seen the results of not having stood up to him more effectively, starting in Georgia, but then certainly the first invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and now helping Ukraine and hopefully giving them enough help so they can actually win.

Because I think it's in very much our interest, not just, you know, the Atlantic Coalition, but, you know, the future of democracy in the world.

So that's on the Russia front.

There's so much to talk about, and we have so little time.

But one of the things that I haven't heard you speak so much about is the future direction of the world.

So obviously we're thinking a lot about Russia and the Middle East, but artificial intelligence, the change in the world of work,

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the sense that in 2030, as time, our entire world could be almost entirely unrecognizable.

Why do politicians speak so little about that?

I think, Rory, you've asked probably the most important question, because the real problems that we have to deal with

are, number one, global problems, no respecter of borders of any kind, require a level of international cooperation that we seem incapable of stepping up and providing right now.

And you mentioned a few of them.

You know, the whole idea of artificial intelligence, which is now being bandied about by tech companies as, you know,

either the future of humanity or the end of humanity, depending upon who you listen to, requires really thoughtful agreement on the part of governments to either reign in or to direct in ways that enhance the better qualities

and try to diminish the worse.

We're not going to do away with it. The genie is out. We're going to have to deal with it.

But technology has always been a two-edged sword, literally.

I mean, any kind of new technology will carry with it uses that can undermine, you know, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

So we've got the technology challenge, and I think we're conducting a massive experimentation on human life,

particularly the lives of children and young people who are being addicted to a form of technology that is literally transforming

how their brains work, how they connect to the world, how they think of themselves.

And we're standing by and clicking our, you know, tongues at how it's happening and doing nothing about it.

And it is so telling that in Silicon Valley, a lot of the creators of this addictive technology do not allow their own children access to it.

If you are applying to be a carer, a nanny, a babysitter in Silicon Valley, you sign a non-disclosure agreement and a contract

which commits you to not allowing the children you are caring for to have much screen time.

That should tell you everything you need to know. And then you combine that with climate change and so much else.

And these big overarching problems need people to pay attention to.

The militarization of space, Lord knows what's going to happen when people start shooting off everything in space.

We've seen balloons, but that's just the beginning.

So, yes, this is an area that you two should spend a lot of time talking to people about.

Well, thank you. We should take this answer. We should play a whole series around it.

I think you should, Alistair.

Okay. Very last question, because I know you have to go.

We'd love to interview you again, a longer period.

Monthly. Monthly.

Three factors of a great precedent, having watched them all.

## [Transcript] Leading / 15: Hillary Clinton: Fighting Putin, the Return of Trump, and the Killing of Osama Bin Laden

What's your sense of what makes a great leader?

Wow.

Enough confidence in yourself to make hard decisions, but enough humility to ask for advice from people smarter than you.

So it's Clinton won Trump now.

You got that right.

A sense of history that places you in the midst of it, but not the center of it, knowing that decisions are hard.

They're not always right.

You got to, you know, do the best you can, given the information that you are given and can acquire. Smart enough to make the right judgments, but an intelligence that is curious still never satisfied, because you have to learn on an ongoing basis how people are living and thinking and what they care about.

And especially in today's world, as you were asking earlier, Rory, how do you communicate with people who are being fed a steady diet of misinformation and disinformation and irrelevant and frivolous and nonsensical information, in part as a strategy to kind of, you know, bread and circuses keep looking over here while we do whatever it is we're going to do somewhere else.

So I think those are some of the, you know, observations I would have.

Okay, my very, very final question.

Is Joe going to stand and is Joe going to win?

He is going to run and he is going to win.

And I think if Trump is nominated, despite being indicted, maybe once, twice, three times, it will be a vicious, nasty campaign and Biden will win.

If for whatever reason somebody else emerges, they will be new to the general electorate, and there will be a lot of fodder about who they are and what they stand for.

And at the end of it, I think Biden will win.

Great.

Well, listen, thanks for all your time.

It's great to see you and keep on keeping on.

Yeah, we will.

We will.

Thank you so much.

Thank you.

Really wonderful to see you.

Thank you.

So, Roy, that was pretty wow, I thought.

A couple of those answers were just, I wanted to carry on talking forever.

Mesmerite, the thing about Ben Laden, I've never really had to talk about that before.

Yeah, I thought it's wonderful.

I think she's an extraordinary person.

I mean, it may be just kind of pure vanity on my part, but I remember when she was Secretary of State, she'd heard that I was coming through Washington and she very kindly invited me

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into for an hour to talk about Afghanistan and I was so struck, I wasn't an MP yet. This was sort of 2008, 2009, I was just a young person who'd lived in Afghanistan and she cleared her diary, spent an hour just asking questions, listening very, very thoughtfully and I thought no British Foreign Secretary would have cleared an hour in their diary for a visiting American who was just coming through town to hear for an hour.

I also think on the human level, I'm not sure I'd have recovered from the defeat and yet you see her there.

I remember when, you know, we didn't talk about Claude Bill and the marriage and all that stuff, but I can remember during that whole period when whatever was going on behind the scenes, some of which we saw, but both of them, both Bill Clinton and Hillary, literally had this motto of going out every day, smile on your face and doing the job and she's kind of still doing that and I mean, you didn't feel you're in the presence of somebody for 75.

Part of the mental coping that struck me is not dwelling too much on the emotional impact. She keeps coming back to the data, interference, data, the electoral college, difficult to really put her on to what must have been, I mean, emotionally devastating beyond imagining me, because if you think about how many decades of her life went into that, the amount of money she'd had to raise, the extraordinary energy of that campaign and then to lose to a man like that.

And to lose and I don't think I wouldn't take any satisfaction from having more votes. I mean, that would make me feel really, really, really bad, but I think her breadth of, you forget about this as well, because she was first lady of Arkansas when Bill Clinton was in charge there, first lady of the United States and probably the most policy focused and then a senator and then candidate and secretary of state and then up against Trump and now doing all the different stuff she does.

It's there's so much experience there that you just think, wow, you know, I look, I've met her many, many times and spoken to her often, but what I've got a real sense there makes me feel really, really sad that she didn't win and that she wasn't president.

She was amazing.

And I don't understand.

I had American friends who thought that she hadn't done one on the campaign against Trump and didn't want her to be president.

I've always disagreed.

I thought she would have been the most amazing president.

Well, she'd certainly been better than Donald Trump.

Well, that's pretty low bar.

That's like Rishi Sunak against Boris Johnson.

That's yeah, I can see that she she's not a big fan of Mr.

Johnson, I don't think.

Anyway, thank you for organizing that.

I thought it was incredible and a real privilege to be with her.