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**Intro:** Welcome to the Let’s Talk Government Podcast that is provided for you by the Department of Government at Minnesota State University, Mankato located in Minnesota in the United States. I am your host Dr. Pat Nelson the chairperson of the Government Department. I want to thank you for joining us as we explore different topics about government. Some may be surprising to you and some may not, so please enjoy.

**Dr. Nelson:** Welcome to episode four of the Let’s Talk Government podcast. Today we're going to discuss US foreign policy, how the world views us. I'm joined by doctor Dr. Abdalla Battah, Dr. Tom Inglot, and Dr. Jackie Vieceli from the international relations program at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Dr. Abdalla Battah is in his 27th year as an associate professor in the political science and international relations programs at Minnesota State University, Mankato. His research focuses on international relations theory, international political economy, international conflict resolution, Middle East politics, and comparative politics. Dr. Tom Inglot is in his 25th year as a professor in the political science and international relations program at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He currently serves as the international relations program director and is a distinguished faculty scholar. His research areas of interest include central and Eastern Europe, comparatives social policy, welfare state, comparative democratization, compared to political economy, and international relations. Dr. Jackie Vieceli served 32 years in the international relations and political programs at Minnesota State University, Mankato. And is now a faculty emerita. She is a past program director for the international relations program and shared the Castle memorial lecture. Her areas of interests are ethics, human rights, international relations, and African politics. So, Dr. Inglot, I'd like to start with you. What is the perception of the United states in the rest of the world?

**Dr. Tom Inglot:** First of all, thank you for organizing this podcast and it's a pleasure to discuss those issues. And I would like to start by saying that when we want to understand how people view us today by us being in the United States, and in many people's minds they kind of combine the opinion of the government and in the country as a whole. We need to start by thinking what that perception was like before these recent events, before the trump administration, before COVID-19. I think that the world was pretty much divided into different regions and countries and some of them had a very, you know, I wouldn't say exaggerated but overly optimistic view of what the United States stood for and represented. And other countries were on the opposite spectrum and I give the two examples in my classes, and I teach European politics I ask students if they know which country consistently, I say before Covid, before Trump it was the friendliest toward the United States. And they all surprised when I say Poland will always come up first is for historical reasons. And there are other countries of course the UK and so on, but on the opposite side of the spectrum is also a little known country in Europe, one of the smallest but very important historically that's Greece. There's also for historical reasons going all the way to the communist uprising after World War Two against, you know, the western alliance and the United States also supported the military regime and so forth. So, there's lots of historical reasons and also perceptions, misperceptions, the baggage that still existed before all this happened, but what happened with trump and Covid and especially Covid accelerated everything. First of all, a lot of shock and disbelief, so even people who did not like us like Latin American populations, largely also and grievances going back to the Cold War and so on. But, the Russians, you know, we're all baffled by contradictory statements, by faulty policies, by news coming from the United States about one direction in policy one day and completely opposite the other. So, I would say that confusion is a good word to summarize it, and also this belief and that is also the perception which is like I said was initially in prevalent, and now it's becoming more hostile. We have to see this against the background of also misinformation and misunderstanding of the United States. I discovered long time ago talking to a lot of people around the world that people had the image of the country that have little to do with reality when you ask specific questions about the US, and you convey information it's either not belief, or people can relate to it because they don't follow the details about our country, and then they have this image of the US which should be in their mind, and they stick to it. They don't challenge it, right. So, let's say that's the problem still continues. But now they're getting more information cause the US is acting in a very strange way according to everybody, and they're getting even more confused right, and they have this emotional reaction. And, maybe I'll just follow up with one more thing. That reaction is very often also based on a need that all countries have. Some kind of a model ideal to look up to in the United States successfully through Hollywood, through its propaganda, through its success sold to the rest of the world. Its image of what capitalism and democracy should be supposedly. Still, we call ourselves the best democracy ever existed and without thinking about facts and how to justify. So, all people in the world want to have this model even people living in countries like China, Russia. They understand their country can never be like that, but they want to know that there is somewhere in the world some country that is succeeding. That is doing great. So, they bought into this now they're all confused, right. So, there's a vacuum and maybe I'll just end with this thing is the vacuum. And who is supposed to feel that vacuum, right. They are looking around and said the United States collapsible maybe election will change, and maybe they'll still fix it. There's still that faint hope it's fading ,but then they look around and what's there. Oh, China is there. What about China? It is really powerful economically impressive. They're making money. They're becoming rich, but they really want to be like China. Does China really want the world to be like them? They're not trying that hard, they don't have this tradition. So, people are completely … they're all confused. You said, well company that banning United States because he felt the image disappears, we have nothing left.

**Dr. Nelson:** That's a great point about it's almost being a vacuum and having other countries lookout having like a model to look at. So, Dr. Battah what are your thoughts on this?

**Dr. Abdalla Battah:** Well, I think, you know, beginning with the Middle East. So, there is a little background there, and probably it should begin with the George W Bush administration, and its aggressive war in Iraq are quite disruptive in the region, and the things kind of improved a little bit under Obama perhaps not to the highest they were under the Clinton but certainly there have gone down dramatically and the trump administration this is pretty much is what we see else in the world. Although, they are not as affected by the policy of United States in the Middle East, but we see that as indicated by the surveys that have been done by the Pew Research, global attitude survey for the last two decades. And this is really the best the best evidence we have social science data driven evidence that we have got, and I’ll just give you the heading of the report they have is says basically the last report of 2020 US Image plummets, Internationally as Mercy Country has Handled Coronavirus Badly. But you could also add to it other things not just the coronavirus. Number of things that could certainly be added to that record on human rights, for example, even United States and the survey did not include the protests that connects with them, that connects with the Floyd and other cases in the United States. But, nevertheless very damaging, you know, impact these have happened in terms of the perception you could actually you know the perhaps the rhetoric of the president of United States. So, unlike what we have seen in decades past historically I mean there really without any president very divisive, very exclusive sort of, you know, language that he uses, very disruptive and language even incendiary even incendiary, and we see that domestically obviously. We see that essentially his America first which, you know, at face value sounds like it's isolationist, but truly it is about trump. It's a trump first period. it's not so much America in the equation, and we see evidence in what happened to the institutions domestically and internationally. I mean the president basically has denigrated demeaned personnel and law in law enforcement in the courts intelligence services and can you imagine I mean if the president of United States doesn't have a vote of confidence in these institutions. How anybody gonna convince the rest of the world to have a conference? Next time when I say to them believe me this happened or that happened, they say, hey but you don't believe yourself. I mean, you know, that it has been shown the White House is infested with Corona I just leads the world in terms of the number of cases, the number of deaths, and again you know in terms of I guess I already mentioned. I remember Reagan when he used to talk about United States being a city upon the hill. Everybody looks up to United States. We are not seeing that anymore. People say what. Are you talking about, you know, United States doesn’t promote human rights within its own boundaries economically that should be the few Research Services? All of the countries surveyed except Japan and South Korea think it is Japan the leader, not United States. And, that matters. It has to translate into tangible benefits basically an add established in the survey in this one and previous ones. That the perception and the confidence in the US president goes hand in hand in tandem where is the perception of the United states. If it is up, then the perception of United States is up, and if it is there it goes down, we saw that, for example, I could bring attention to earlier 2010, for example, that research had a survey of the perception of the United States and Obama and they said well this was the time when there was Obama mania basically. More popular abroad than at home and global image and United States benefits from that as a close quotation of that of that hitting, and I think that really is telling as it comes to a number of indicators the perceptions that the few find whether it's racially justice or justice human rights whether the United states is a global leader, whether there is a confidence in United States president to do to be a global leader again. All of those indicators are really down sadly and I'm sad to see they are they are done at a low point.

**Dr. Nelson:** Well, Dr. Jackie Vieceli, I heard you were laughing a little bit there. What are your ideas on this? On this thought about our perception outside the United States.

**Dr. Jackie Vieceli:** Well, in general, you know, we're referring to the latest pew research that we have poll conducted in 2018-2019, and then reported out earlier this year. And our overall rating I think of the trump administration in the United states was like 30-39% approval rating, and it differed certainly from country to country. I think it's lowest maybe and in the Middle East, certainly low in Latin America, and in Africa this is quite interesting because they're given the president's comments about Africa, you know, one would think that the ratings would be extremely low. And actually, our ratings in in Africa or the perception in Africa we may have benefited a little bit from the fact that trump is not interested in Africa other than making some disparaging comments, you know. The first lady has visited the continent, but trump is really not interested in Africa. There is an initiative called prosper Africa which, you know, is an attempt to again stimulate economic development and get various American African partnerships going and so on. A lot of the policies have been continued from the Obama administration and some of the analysis from the Council on Foreign relations, and I was looking at some analysis from one of the correspondents in. They're saying diplomats US diplomats in Africa probably have more freedom in many ways than diplomats and in Europe, you know, because of the fact that the trump administration doesn't particularly care. But there are some rough spots watch Ethiopia at this point Ethiopia of course has been very instrumental critics might say a Lieutenant of the United States and in AFRICOM very much involved with counterterrorism operations and so on. Well, there was a project for the Renaissance dam involving Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan, and the US I’m thinking in about July cut aid to this project that's been in the works for about a decade because Ethiopia and Egypt have not come to an agreement. Well, you may have been following that terrible flooding in East Africa now is displaced about a million and a half people. Many think that this this dam would help in the control of this kind of flooding, which is related to climate change and, you know, we certainly can go there. And so, The Ethiopians are quite … at this point we've been a good ally of the United States. And the United states you know has let us down, pulling the plug on A2 a good project that would have helped the whole region, and, you know ,you can see effects of that right now with climate change related weather disasters. And of course, the US pulling out of the World Health Organization which does critical work around the world so yeah. You know, hopefully those are a couple other examples to look at of the phenomenon that we've all been talking about. Thank you.

**Dr. Nelson:** So, Jackie, you actually bring up a good point. Oh, Abdalla, do you have a comment add on to that?

**Dr. Abdalla Battah:** Well, I mean I think Jackie mission is there pulling out of the World Health Organization, but this has been a path and it's not being the exception. And it indicates that United States truly has abdicated its leadership and the World Health Organization is but the latest example. Before that landmark treaty restoration device with the Soviet government in 1987, again pulling out of that, pulling out of the Paris agreement for the climate change, pulling out of the trash Pacific partnership, you know, pulling out of UNESCO completely defunding unaware as far as erase is concerned the UNDP. The funding for that has been cut threatening to pull out of NATO. Even NATO, threatening to pull out of NATO and of course renegotiating NAFTA, and others as well, pulling out of that Human Rights Council is another one. … at the Iran nuclear deal which everybody thought well it was progress, but we have got nowhere with you over on that on that front, nor have we got any progress on the front of the nuclear issue of North Korea. So, it is part of the pattern that makes United States look as quite unreliable in making agreements. And, you know, because it all depends on the whim of the president of the United states at the time. And, we have got basically a president at the time whose whims are quite radical.

**Dr. Nelson:** Tom, do you have any comments to add to that?

**Dr. Tom Inglot:** Yeah, because we are trying to link now US foreign policy with the US perception. I think it's a nice connection. You're making two points. First of all, you know, there's a second, you know, disconnect within this administration because the United States is so much embedded in the international institution that it's on sound creation like NATO, you know, you've been always active at the UN different levels, and so on international financial institutions. We cannot just quit. It's impossible practically, and so this is connection still function, and sometimes they like Dr. Vieceli said in Africa certain programs just continue because they don't pay attention. And the other side of the story is that this administration would like us to quit all this but doesn't have a coherent plan on how to do it, how to become isolationists, for example. So, they do it by complete chaotic targeting of certain things once in a while. So, it’s all together creates a pattern, but it's completely uncoordinated and chaotic nobody knows where it's going, right. So, that's one point. Point #2 and Dr. Battah mentioned, you know, connection between the presidential policy, and how people see us. I see it more as a fluctuation because it's true that started under Bush and even on The Raegan a lot of people hated us for what we did overseas, but at the same time came Obama add went the opposite direction. So, Obama becomes president everyone is euphoric, “oh he's going to make the United States really great international … this, and this, and that” they also gonna disappoint and why did he get disappointed because most people in the world do not understand and follow and are aware of those long term trends within our society, When you live here long enough like I did for almost 40 years, I could see as seven continue. Regardless of who is president, our society has been continuously turning away from the world. Maybe not a majority yet, but we're close. Maybe starting with a 10% now about I would say 30-40% of the population would like that to continue in this direction that includes some former Obama voters as well. We don't like foreign wars. We don't like to spread democracy. We would like all countries take care of their own citizens. We don't like too much immigration. I can go on and on and on with all these policy issues. But at the same time, for example, Europeans and others when they see us, they don't see that there is a global trend which they are part of. They don't want the United States to become just like them, and they see in their own societies exactly the same thing. Which is exaggerated by social media, lack of paying attention to the news, and so on, conspiracy theories, all that stuff. But every country if you take it one by one has the same exact set of ideas and values isolationist tendencies and nationalism. You find it everywhere. You name the country. They have it. The problem is it's maybe the difference is that the US has more people like that now probably in the population that they do. But there is a global disease I would call it of people becoming much more inward looking. People don't see that connection very often.

**Dr. Nelson:** Especially if you don't travel, you don't see that connection. If you only stay within the United States. Alright, well so you guys are actually bringing up fairly interesting concepts here. So, we talked about like the general perception. Maybe let's dive in a little bit more about our government perception, and why is it important our relations with other governments outside the United States, not just the public perception but the perception of the government and how much maybe that is changed. Go ahead Dr. Battah

**Dr. Abdalla Battah:** Well, I think it is very important because first of all United States is been the leader of the world not just the free world. For all of those decades everybody looks toward the United States to take a lead. The United States has been all too happy to jump in and take the lead. But United States is nowadays not only has abdicated that responsibility, if you will, but has become the world's number one disruptor. It is true I mean you cannot really characterize the politics of the trump administration by anything other than that. And I think that also mirrors what he's doing domestically. You know, consider the case of pushing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel one of the same times claiming to be pushing toward peace which is of course exactly the contrary. There's been a world consensus on that issue in fact. In fact, after he announced this one the Security Council well, you know, she feels a veto power is one of five permanent members and 1:15 basically essentially couldn't dump the move by United States because it goes thoroughly against the national consensus or resolution passed. I'm sorry was end a draft resolution was introduced United States veto to that and it was one United States with his veto against 40 the rest of the those who sit in the Security Council. This is an international consensus I mentioned the climate in the trade and all of those others these have been built over decades. Trade the nuclear agreement with Iran has come after, you know ,a lot of effort and a lot of work. So, I think one of the things that's important to realize is that we academicians talk about determinants of foreign policy and we say there's a list on the external side then the international system and power, and you know ,a number of them and then we say well domestically there is a number of them, you know, structure and style of government is well one thing that stands out about the style in this administration which is basically President Trump, and his I still do secrecies. He doesn't even listen to advisers. He has suspicion of the experts. He has suspension of the bureaucracies to such a point that is closed advisor secretary of defense, victory of the state, chief of the staff, national security advisers, two of them. Basically, said he is he constitutes a danger to the national interest of the. So, if that is the situation with the President of United States will think. Look at it from the outside. What is the rest of the world seeing? A chaos. This is a superpower with a lot of power, a lot of wealth is basically run by this person who is well suited for a different kind of government. A totalitarian government. He would be well suited for that. I mean I think of him… my background is the Middle East I say, “boy he would make a great king. He would just make a great president because that's what the Middle Eats is accustomed to. You know, just something like that but in terms of a country like United States, the greatest democracy in the world, the most powerful nation on earth is an oddity to look at what is taking place and there is a void of leadership, and it does cost there is a cost. There that has yet to be, you know, accounted for.

**Dr. Nelson:** Well, we better watch out Dr. Battah because if we see a tweet that I should be King because Dr. Battah says so on the podcast, we will know where that came from. Dr. Vieceli, you had a comment there.

**Dr. Jackie Vieceli;** Yeah, I think ,you know ,John Bolton, I think his is really put his finger on a good part of our problem, and, you know, if you read his book and, in the room, where it happened, you know, what he portrays is an administration without a plan. And you look at all the turnover in the administration, and, you know, I think the covid pandemic really has pointed up something critical as well as climate change. And that is that we have these severe global problems. The virus doesn't know national borders. It doesn't know politics the same for all of our ecological problems. And, you know, as Dr. Inglot also commented about these anti-immigrants to isolation is tendencies in the world and, you know, we mentioned before that when you look at the attitudinal surveys, Trump is liked by portions of populations in various countries that want more authoritarian governance, that want to be more isolationist, that are pulling into their ethnic lager. And we're facing this at a time when I would say if we do not reach more consensus as the global community, if we do not assist each other, than, you know, the reputed saying of Benjamin Franklin is going to be the case. If we don't hang together, we will surely all hang separately. And that's another reason why I think that the way that this administration is going is so very unfortunate because we don't have much time left. And again, I mean we could talk about the attitude towards science, the attitude towards experts, the rejection of facts for so-called alternative facts. I think all of these things are related, and the consequences potentially are I think are catastrophic. Thank you.

**Dr. Nelson:** Dr. Inglot, what are your thoughts on this?

**Dr. Tom Inglot:** Just coming off that a little bit I think they're doing they’re just during their last vice presidential debate it was pretty boring for many people. There's one thing that kind of stuck in my mind that Kamala Harris said. Kind of pointing to the Trump administration that foreign policy is about relationships. And I think it was a very good comment that I think most people would understand so Trump, you know, when he came on the scene as a U.S. President and foreign policy leader, many leaders in the world thought,” well, he is not traditional. It is going to be a different situation, but he's a transactional dealmaker all that stuff.” They thought they knew about him. They said, “oh maybe on the individual level I can make a great deal with him for my country or for my interest” we don't have to look far it's almost every year we are thinking that he's going to negotiate a great deal. Boris Johnson a special trade deal when he quits the European Union, Bolsonaro in Brazil is gonna be my great friend who helped me because I'm thinking like him. Mccrone France threw a parade. A military parade. You can go on and on and all, you know. Even the Chinese President of them. By now if you ask anyone of them including even North Korean dictator, they will tell you that there absolutely disappointed, and they don't want to have anything to do with that guy. OK, and he became like Putin in the old days. When he was invited to Australia and attended one breakfast, nobody wanted to sit at the table with him. Trump is not now welcome or invited anywhere. They didn't want to come here for his meeting. So, he's shown by the world. So, that's the biggest problem that we face. So, what's the word reaction to it, right. We can ask so what? Other countries are beginning to contemplate, and some experts I said discussion between the British and German expert on this on foreign policy and they said “well this open is a chance for us. We've been always in the coattails of the United States following it. Now we can lead.” Europe is the next largest if they work together economy and power in the world after the United States that is the people say economically bigger now. The problem of course is Europe is not a country, right. So, they have to act together. But that two countries in Europe with great ambition France and Germany that want to make Europe a counterweight to the US and what they're doing, for example, negotiating with China. At the same time, we're not. So, we're blasting China for the virus. Stepping into that vacuum and negotiating their own deal because they believe they cannot deal with the world without cooperation with China. And China is making concessions. They just announced they will do some clean energy by the year 2060. So, they're trying to negotiate with other countries. My believe is that the Chinese are very open to negotiation, but now there's nobody to push them because they are not afraid of the US. They just laugh at it and ignore it. OK. And then finally I want to end up on a more pessimistic note because doctor Vieceli mentioned, you know, problems with not trusting science, and climate. Another thing is Dr. Battah worry about the Middle East but look at what's happening around the world. All experts in international relations have argued for a long time, but now we don't have state to state wars anymore. The world has been saved because of the United states building these institutions. We have more civil conflict. So, the world is there but it was a different kind of work. But look around what's happening today Armenia, Azerbaijan is in their real war like in the old times, you know, between countries over boundaries. So, a lot of conflicts are opening up in front of our eyes, and there's nobody to leave to stop it and make peace. That's where the United States played such a pivotal role, and we see things done row in a very dangerous way on many fronts.

**Dr. Nelson:** Going off of that Dr. Inglot. will get to you in a second their Dr. Battah. How much have we. Well, we have seen unprecedented numbers of career diplomats and career professionals in the state Department leave during the Trump administration, and we know that although the president is the figurehead of the United States at the real work in international relations happens in the state Department, what are your guys's thoughts on how much that's had that has impacted our relationships?

**Dr. Tom Inglot:** I had a chance, I was invited to a state Department meeting on immigration, and on migration, and social conditions in Europe that was back in 2016. I was sitting at the table with some of the people who were at the European desk. European and Eurasian the relations and things like that in Russia. And I said with some of these people and discuss things, and one of them was sitting at the table in front of me, and he was not an ethnic immigrant anybody like that, and he told me “maybe you should, we should do you speak Polish. Maybe you can switch to Polish and conversing in Polish” and I was completely stuck. You know, I mean struck by the fact, you know, the people knew several languages. They were so well versed in everything, and more importantly than anything they were there because they are passionate about the world. And about the United states engagement and democracy they didn't go there for money. Washington is an expensive place to live. They don't make much money the life is disrupted all the time. It's a very demanding job, but I met personally even young students going into that profession dedicated young Americans who made a difference as individuals and state department's full of them. Now they all are quitting. It is not new phenomenon because our culture has never rewarded such people. We push them into business careers many of them quit because they couldn't financially handle it. But still we have many still going there since ,you know, the time of the Cold War that continued that this place attracted the most fantastic talent in this country. And now it's almost completely gone nobody wants to work. There there's awful condition working conditions and atmosphere on the bumper of his just the political operative, you know, and we complained about the former, you know, secretaries of state you know there who had no experience, and were, you know, but now they're writing books and their themselves dismayed about this whole mess so, you know. It's the worst it's ever been I'm very pessimistic about the future.

**Dr. Nelson:** Dr. Battah, I'm sorry. I cut you off. Go ahead.

**Dr. Abdalla Battah** No, thank you very much. And you mentioned the state Department and the notion that they're underappreciated that truly is the case. And not only that there is their work is underappreciated. It's important because the White House, the Trump basically operates foreign policy as he does domestic policy by tweets. Bureaucracy which he distrusts has a clan, has a strategy, has a history, has a legacy, all of that is cause of Trump. Simply because there is a tweet. It seems as though they as well as the other officials in the government are in the same boat you and I. Basically, we wake up, and we see his tweets. It could very well be surprise to them as it is to us. And now Jackie mentioned that, you know, we ought to hang up hang together. The truth of it is there is a need for leadership. The United States doesn't have to be the world's policeman, but a leader that is respected and can steer if you will have a good deal of influence on world policy politics and affairs. But what we've got basically is a leader that, you know, gets along very well with dictators I mean you mentioned Putin, John. are you mentioned she you mentioned Narender, you mentioned CC, the Prince of Saudi Arabia. You name it. He gets along with their, confront him and he backs down. But the teachers of the Democratic countries. He doesn't and in fact we saw a good scene and a good in the sense that is illustrative in the 70th NATO meeting and the UK where essentially the other leaders were poking fun at him. And ultimately had to leave, you know, that the summit two days in advance. I mean you know, And you know things reached very low. I mean and we see him how he treats other leaders if the country is weak, and the leader is weak. He treats him like he's a subordinate then we saw, for example, how he treated how he treated them Prime Minister Montenegro President of Poland when he was signing in strategic partnership. He stood though he was an aide to him. And how he basically job on and do arm twisting and hangs up on leaders like the Australian Prime Minister and back and forth with the President Mexico and examples go on and on. He announces things that are not true, and committee try to, you know, how to make it center compete like ,for example, announcing that Kuwait was going to be signing a peace deal with Israel. And Kuwait has to say what happened here. Wait a second are sick in Mayo Clinic and he was taking advantage of that. He gave him an award that he thought he could just announcement to bold that quit is about to do that, and equity said no we're not. The Bahrainis were dragged into it and the Israeli commentator said we feel sorry for them because we're not even sure they read the agreement they were signing because he had to have somebody on September 15 to sign the deal with it the Bahrainis. Foreign minister came in and signed. Signs of blank check basically and so that, you know, that does a lot of damage for the United States. It does have a, you know, it doesn't have a meaningful impact ,and I think this is one thing that we in political science and academia tend to put it at the lower ranks that yeah personality has some significance work through it is he a personality is just about yes, we are in a democracy, but the democracy been taken over by that personality. So, to the last word I want to say about

**Dr. Nelson:** Well, actually we're getting to the point where we're going to have further conversations on further podcasts about this. But I want to kind of wrap it up with each one of you giving me your thoughts on so what why do we care. What the world perceives of the United States? Why is it important to understand what's going on? So, I'm going to start with Dr. Vieceli to give me her thoughts on so what? Why is this important?

**Dr. Jackie Vieceli:** Well, you know, I think it's important in in a few ways. I think too many of us in this country like to think that we live alone. But then of course you know, we want the products of other countries, and you know, we want to be able to travel and so on. But you know, I think there's very little global awareness here, and we do not live alone. I think that if we employ the notion that that we in international relations like to employ of soft power and other words the prestige that you might have from cultural accomplishments, from other populations agreeing with some of your principles and ideas and so on, you know, we're certainly losing that. If you lose soft power, and you can't negotiate with people what's left. And we can say this domestically also if we can't talk to each other free can't come together, what's left. We put more and more reliance on our guns, and again you know we are seeing more and more calls from civil society here. Reallocate funds away from military, away from policing ,away from the coercive apparatus. Take care of the problems that we have in society. But if we have a situation where you know, we've abdicated leadership, we've abdicated negotiation, and so on. Then you know, we're putting ourselves in a position where what do we do just rely on militarizing ourselves more and more and more. I think that's a problem. I don't want to see a world in which human rights are or even less secure. I think you know, the struggle for meaningful human rights in the world is always very uphill, and it's gotten much worse. We don't think about this in in this country because the majority anyway don't expect that they would ever be in a prison cell wrongfully arrested. They don't expect they would ever be tortured. They don't expect they would ever be killed. Again, you know, just listen to the life experience of so many people around the world, and again you know, I think it matters a great deal for the very lives of many human beings, but we don't see it. Thank you.

**Dr. Nelson:** Dr. Inglot, what are your thoughts?

**Dr. Tom Inglot:** I fully agree with Jackie just said and it's you know; the main point is that all these institutions the United states help build around the world you know it took a two world wars and the huge loss of life and so much time to build them they cannot be easily replaced by anybody in such a short period of time. And all that potential now is kind of fizzling away. I'm not just talking about you know, Trump or the President doing this or that. But I'm talking about many American people experts’ institutions, universities that work so hard to contribute not only this country but the rest of the world. So many areas look at public health you know, countries looked up to us to give him guidance on public health. We have the best experts like Dr. Fauci and others and know what's happening. Now you know in complete disarray and other countries are actually using our own inventions in public health and health to do much better with covid than we are. So, things are unraveling. All these different fronts and that's a big disappointment cause all this potential without government policy that will encourage and mobilize resources to benefit the whole world, and we have so much to offer involve his head. That's a big disappointment. And then a second point, what Abdullah just said about those leaders and a relation with Trump. You know, those weaker leaders, smaller countries they've always built you know, second relations with the United States in which they were able to sell to their own public the message that there's a benefit coming out of it. Now he mentioned the president of Poland and Mexico and so forth. They have no choice. They have to be friends with us. They tried to make some kind of a deal with Trump which is a complete disaster on many different fronts, and then the population blames them. They don't blame America. They blame them all. They messed up there so. They're becoming weaker the societies destabilizing we see so many problems around the world because that relationship has been completely shattered. So, it's a big disappoint.

**Dr. Nelson:** Thank you. Dr. Battah would you like to give us your final thoughts?

**Dr. Abdalla Battah:** Yes, you know, I would agree that of course perceptions do matter, and they do connect with you know, reactions concrete, reactions by other states, and how the device their strategy is visibly United States or any administration for that matter. For instance, United States is not living up to its international commitments and obligations. Give an example, to other countries. Why should we? That's what some would say. United States not aiding its allies that are stood with it. That means United States doesn't have enough credibility. Why should you be an ally of United States? For example, of the Kurds in Syria for example when earth unpressured President Trump. President Trump withdrew his forces there open the way for the Turkish forces to enter and clear their you know their zone. And so that the Kurds were thrown out of the way. Although, there were reliable allies against in the fight against ISIS. And so, you shouldn't really be you know, ally of the United States because you could be thrown under the bus in terms of human rights likewise. you know United States is an example but if it's not an example than other countries justify. The best thing that happened for dictators and authoritarian rulers was the election of President Trump because the in their country is their people compare their dictator with President Trump and say, “well what we've got is not all too bad on the level of corruption.” Their parents while we were OK because that's what happened in the best of countries. United States take from example, so this is important for some countries all you have to do is oblige with the interest of not the United States but the interest of Israel to get into United States. And this is very much contrary to what George Washington said in his farewell speech. They are questioning his successors from getting into in tangling alliances. Where they confuse their interest the national into the United States with the interest of that ally and that's what we are having today. You know, it tells them “hey look the best thing that works with the United nations to be confrontational combative look at the Kim Jung-Un for example, when he was told he was a rocket man, he said no you're… And that works. And all of a sudden, they are in love. You know, look at the example of Putin who seems to be intimidating of President Trump. Look at the example Urdu and or others that can bring a lot of money like that from Prince of Saudi Arabia. So, he sends our policy since the all the wrong signals that could certainly be echoed elsewhere in the world and you know, America first. While China's first then Britain will say we first nobody is going to put out and hang together on behalf of the world community to combat common you know, common problems. So, whether it is terrorism or global warming or the other global Commons that we talk so much about in international relations.

**Dr. Nelson:** Well, thank you so much. I know we're kind of running out of time we have already talked about so many things, and we have more to discuss in the future. So, I look forward to the three of you joining me again on the podcast so we can keep talking about our perception of the world, and even after the election how that may change or may not change our perception.

**[music]**

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