



How Safe Are We? Homeland Security Since 9/11 (3/26/19)

00:00:32 Good evening and welcome. My name is Alice Greenwald. I'm president and C.E.O. of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. And as always, it's my pleasure to welcome you to tonight's program, along with those who are tuning in to our live web broadcast at 911memorial.org/live.

Tonight, we are honored to host former Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano. During her tenure with DHS, Secretary Napolitano would regularly attend our annual commemorations of the 9/11 anniversary. So it is a special privilege to welcome her back to the memorial and this evening to the museum.

00:01:15 Tonight, Secretary Napolitano will consider how homeland security has changed our country and our society since 9/11. And she will help us understand what it takes to keep America safe.

Established in the wake of 9/11, the Department of Homeland Security was given a sweeping mandate: to do just that, keep our nation safe. In her newly published book, "How Safe Are We: Homeland Security Since 9/11," Secretary Napolitano shares her unique perspective on what that mandate look likes in practice, and she offers insights into the future of the department itself, the department she once led.

00:01:59 President Barack Obama nominated Janet Napolitano to serve as homeland security secretary in 2009. Only the third person to head DHS, she was the first woman to do so and served in this capacity until 2013. She currently holds the distinction of being the longest-serving secretary of homeland security to date.

00:02:24 Previously, Janet Napolitano served as U.S. attorney for the District of Arizona, attorney general of Arizona, and governor of Arizona for two terms. And not one for avoiding big challenges, she is currently the 20th president of the University of California system.

00:02:42 Following tonight's program, you will have the opportunity to purchase Janet Napolitano's new book, "How Safe Are We?" on the day of its release. So we are truly honored to be your launch site for this wonderful new book.

And without further ado, please join me in welcoming Janet Napolitano, in conversation with Executive Vice President and Deputy Director for Museum Programs Cliff Chanin. Thank you.

(applause)

00:03:16 Clifford Chanin: Thank you, Alice, welcome, everybody. Welcome, Madam Secretary. Um... you start in your book with 9/11, which is not just the starting point of DHS but this whole sense of how the world changed and how we took on a sense of vulnerability that as Americans we didn't have before. But I wonder if you will tell us... you were attorney general of Arizona at that point.

00:03:40 Secretary Napolitano: I was attorney general of Arizona, and like many of us here, I remember so clearly the morning of 9/11. I was getting ready for work, and I heard the announcer on NPR say that a, a plane had flown into the World Trade Center tower in New York. It must be some kind of air traffic control problem. And you didn't know whether it was a large plane, a tiny plane, or what have you. And then I heard that a second plane, a large plane, had hit the second tower. And I knew immediately something was wrong. I went in, turned on the television, called my chief of staff at the Attorney General's Office.

- 00:04:30 Uh, uh... We began kind of running through what-if scenarios. We could tell that something horribly wrong had occurred. Then the governor of Arizona called, and... who wanted to know whether she could activate the fighter planes out of our National Guard to protect the nuclear power generating station outside of Phoenix. So I had to make an immediate call on that.
- 00:05:01 Normally, in a situation like that, I would have called the Pentagon, but, as you know, the Pentagon was also under attack, so there were no answers from the Pentagon that day. And we were all flying by the seat of our pants. We didn't know what was happening. We didn't know what to expect. The president was flying around and was in, in... out of communication with the American people.
- 00:05:26 We were all suffering from a lack of knowledge, and... and, and as, as it turns out, um, when we think about the attack of 9/11 and you read the 9/11 Commission Report, what the 9/11 Commission identified was that there had been lots of red flags before the attack, but there had been a failure of imagination, a failure to conceive of the ability to weaponize commercial airliners, fly them into iconic buildings, and really try to decapitate the U.S. government. And that's really as close to a decapitation of the U.S. government as we've ever seen.
- 00:06:08 Clifford Chanin: I wonder if, you know, we sit here in New York, at Ground Zero, and everything is so intensely centered on what happened here, but I wonder if you can recreate at all the feeling that you had, you know, as a state official, but very far from here, very far from the focus of the attacks. And so obviously the thought to protect the power plant indicates that you recognized that there were things that had to be done. But did the impact of this as an attack on the country come to you immediately as a sense of, "As far away as I might be here in Arizona, this involves us all, and we will have to do something, as well as the folks back east?"
- 00:06:50 Secretary Napolitano: You know, that sense developed over the course of the day, as we began asking ourselves questions and being asked questions. Um, uh... "Should we shut down Sky Harbor Airport in

Phoenix? Should we close the border with Mexico? Should we cancel the baseball games that were scheduled?" You know, all of these things coming rapid-fire, and there was no playbook. I mean, there were, there were... and, and there was no previous experience. And so, like I said, we were all flying by the seat of our pants.

00:07:25 And, and we did not know whether there were other attacks planned for that day in other parts of the country. And so even though we were, you know, 3,000 miles away from New York City, uh, um, we, we certainly felt the... the tensions of that day and the worries. And, of course, in the aftermath as it, as it played out, there were all kinds of other questions that arose.

00:07:54 Clifford Chanin: Of course. I want to ask you a little more about that idea, you know, you have to make this up as you go along. And, you know, you were in a senior decision-making position, and, obviously, the legal system, the Constitution, the rights people have, but their desire to be safe at the same time-- I mean, all these things are swirling. I mean, what can you tell us about being in that position, where you're being looked to for decisions, but you don't know what the parameters of the decision-making are, because you really don't know what the circumstance is?

00:08:26 Secretary Napolitano: So I, you know, I think you have to exercise your best judgment. You have to get and gather the facts that you can, and realize on 9/11 and the, the days afterwards, the facts kept changing, so that, it was a continually evolving narrative. But you have to exercise your best judgment, and you have to, you know, you know, you have to say, "Look, the number-one thing is to keep, keep, then, the people of Arizona safe."

00:08:55 Um, uh, uh... "Number two, to share what knowledge we did have. And, number three, help people resume their lives." You know, so get that sense of resilience going, get people back to work, kids back at school, you know, the airports running, baseball being played, and so forth. And that, that was, you know, that's part of leadership, is how you help a group kind of work its way through a crisis like that.

- 00:09:28 Clifford Chanin: I don't know offhand what the political makeup of the leadership of Arizona was at that point, in terms of Democrats and Republicans, but I can only imagine that those distinctions really didn't mean very much at that point in time, and that there was just this impulse to figure out together what needed to be done.
- 00:09:47 Secretary Napolitano: Yeah, absolutely. I'm a Democrat. Everybody else in state government was a Republican. It didn't really matter. It didn't matter in Washington, D.C. It didn't matter in the Congress. I remember this sight of all the members of the House of Representatives, Democrat and Republican, on the steps of the Capitol, singing "The Star-Spangled Banner." That, you know, there, there was this sense of, "We are under attack. We are Americans. We will work together. We will respond together. We will recover together."
- 00:10:21 Clifford Chanin: Let me ask you, also, you mentioned the border and the possibility of, or the thought, "Should we close the border?" You know, Arizona is a border state. You live with the reality of the border every day. I mean, in that moment of crisis, what was the sense of the border that people had? Was this considered to be, you know, a backdoor vulnerability, or was this just the normal state of things, and the border was not a particular worry to Arizona?
- 00:10:47 Secretary Napolitano: You know, I think... what we had to, uh, uh, protect was the notion that... trade and travel needed to still occur. Mexico is Arizona's leading trading partner, that we couldn't just seal, seal off Arizona from Sonora, which is the Mexican state just on the southern side. Um, uh, uh, but, you know, there was this suspicion that, "What if the terrorists are going to come in through Mexico and come into the United States that way?" And we see that kind of fear resurging every now and then, even to this day.
- 00:11:34 Clifford Chanin: But was that...

Secretary Napolitano: It hasn't happened, but yeah.

Clifford Chanin: But was that, you know, the...I'm trying to get a broader characterization of what the border means in the daily life of an Arizonan, you know, people who are there. And how is the border seen by people who live and in many cases, you know, are going back and forth themselves?

00:11:55 Secretary Napolitano: So... well, let's fast forward to the recent issues concerning the border with, with Mexico, and the notion that it is in crisis, and that the solution to the crisis is to build a wall. Um, it's... not in crisis. And building a wall won't solve anything. Um, uh, the fact of the matter is...

(applause)

00:12:25 Secretary Napolitano: Yeah, okay. You know, when I, when I was governor of Arizona, I would say, "Show me a ten-foot wall, and I'll show you an eleven-foot ladder." Or a tunnel or something else. But, but the plain fact of the matter is is that, you know, we cannot seal off a 1,940-mile border as if it's a gigantic ziplock bag. It's a region. It's a region where lots of people live on both sides. It's a region where there's a lot of trade, tourism, families who live on both sides. The border is very diverse, geographically. It's very diverse. There's private land, public land, sovereign Indian lands, all along the border.

00:13:16 And so, really, the border should be thought of more like it's a zone. And it's a zone that requires good management. It's a zone that requires the enforcement of the rule of law, but done in an intelligent and strategic way. That's what we're really looking for at the border.

Clifford Chanin: What do you define as the problems that come at the border at this point in time? I mean, what do you look at when you think about a strategic approach to the problems that you mentioned?

- 00:13:48 Secretary Napolitano So I think, um, uh, uh... you know, you have to distinguish that the border is the area between the ports of entry and the actual ports of entry. And so if the identified problem is illegal narcotics coming into the United States, those come through the ports of entry. If the identified problem is illegal immigration, you, you deal with that through a, a variety of ways.
- 00:14:22 You deal with it through manpower, you deal with it through technology, aerial surveillance along the border, a very strategic approach, not just one, single, physical structure. And when you have families who are coming over, seeking asylum, you need to enforce the rule of law, and, and I think about it as, "We should be flooding the zone with the rule of law." We should be adding immigration courts and immigration judges and stationing them along the border, so that people's claims can be heard and fairly adjudicated and then decisions made.
- 00:15:05 Clifford Chanin: Coming back to the time when you were brought into DHS as the secretary, the beginning of the Obama administration, you know, you refer, in thinking about 9/11, to, "The 9/11 attacks shook the American psyche. "We had to struggle with the realization we were no longer safe from attack by foreigners." And, you know, you are given this job and this massive agency, which at that point is still quite young in its, in its lifespan, as it is still today. Um... how much of this initial response to 9/11 of, "We don't have a plan for this," is what shaped your sense of how to build out DHS?
- 00:15:47 Secretary Napolitano: Well, first of all, I have to acknowledge my two predecessors, Tom Ridge and Michael Chertoff, who did yeoman's work in standing up this department. I think Tom Ridge actually had to send some people out to Staples to get some office furniture for the place. Um... Anybody who has been at the Nebraska Avenue Complex, the NAC, knows what I'm talking about.
- 00:16:13 Um, uh... And then Michael Chertoff, who, you know, had to design a lot of the, the systems and the programs that we have today, programs, for

example, for the exchange of passenger information for people that are, that are flying internationally or, or domestically.

00:16:41 What I, I saw as the Department of Homeland Security was, we had this incredibly broad jurisdiction. So we had land-border security and air travel and the sea coasts of the country. We had cybersecurity for the nation's critical infrastructure. We had responsibility for disaster response and recovery through FEMA and through some of the other elements of the department. We had a responsibility for coordinating the agencies of the federal government if there were to be a pandemic. I mean, there's almost nothing that the federal government does that DHS doesn't have some role in.

00:17:28 And so when you have so many different responsibilities and so many different people and so many different agencies spread over so many locations, you've got to find some way to create some foundational principles, some, you know, "These are going to be our priorities. This is going to be our mission statement. This is going to be what we set out to do." And so I spent a lot of time when I took over listening to people who had been at the department, and then trying to put my own stamp on things.

00:18:03 Clifford Chanin: Let me ask, you know, DHS, which combined 22 agencies from the Coast Guard to FEMA to new agencies that were spun out of the Customs Service, and all of this, so you have the internal issues of trying to create sort of a common vision for these previously independent agencies, in most cases. But you also have the issue of how do you get standing within the broader intelligence and law-enforcement community in the United States? So you know, the FBI, the C.I.A., they're very well established. They have their jobs. They're not always necessarily inclined to share. You know, how do you get DHS into the place that it needs to be, because of now these new responsibilities that the agency has been given?

00:18:46 Secretary Napolitano: You know, that, that could be a challenge, honestly. And, you know, part of it was just being insistent that we were at the table, that homeland security equities were being taken into

account when decisions were being made, that we were active and, and seen as active and competent in the areas where we had responsibility, and that we were willing to exercise that responsibility. So, again, I think you don't change the federal government on a dime, and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security was the largest reorganization of the federal government since the creation of the Department of Defense.

00:19:32 And you know, the Department of Defense, it took 40 years, 50 years for it to be recognized as, as one cohesive whole. DHS is still much, much younger and is much more disparate, is made of many more departments and agencies. But it... every year it's in existence, it, it, it gets stronger. Its place at the table is clearly recognized. And its role in protecting the safety and security of the American people becomes paramount.

00:20:10 Clifford Chanin: How does 9/11, as threat, as actual event that transpired, how does it shape your priorities over the course of your time there? And was there or even now is there a point at which you think we might be giving too much attention to the 9/11-type threat at the cost of attention to more recent threats, cyber or otherwise, that really are not what brought about the creation of DHS and were not related to 9/11?

00:20:39 Secretary Napolitano: So, look, the world is not a static place, and the environment is not static, and, certainly, the threat environment is not static. And so we've seen the evolution of terrorism. So when, when I took over, we were still in al Qaeda mode, Osama bin Laden was still alive, um, uh, we were looking at conspiracies directed by groups located abroad who might be sending members to other countries of the world or trying to get them to the United States.

00:21:18 As time went on, what we've seen is the development of terrorists who are homegrown and may not be a member of a group, per se, but may have been self-radicalized, self-radicalized a lot of times by virtue of what they've seen or, or read on social media.

00:21:43 And that's a much... that's actually a very difficult phenomenon to prevent, 'cause there's no conspiracy to interrupt. There are no phone

calls to listen in to. There's no mail to intercept. There's nothing of that sort. So terrorism, per se, has, has morphed. And, in addition, the other kinds of threats that can impact our safety have also changed.

00:22:11 So when I became secretary, we were still having a pretty constant threat stream of aviation-related threats. I think in some, you know, sick, sick way, 9/11 was still viewed as the gold standard of terrorism. Um, uh, um... And we saw the underwear bomber in 2009. We saw the attempt to get explosives in printer toner cartridges on planes the year after that. So aviation security remained a threat stream. But when I started as secretary, I spent maybe ten percent of my time on cybersecurity-related matters.

00:22:57 By the time I left in 2013, it was easily 40% of my time. And I would venture to say, with the current secretary, it's even more than that. I mean, this is an incredibly complex, complicated international phenomenon, and we've seen it, its manifestations in a lot of different ways. But it's an areathat I, I think deserves our highest attention

00:23:22 Clifford Chanin: Let me ask you... in fact, we had Secretary Nielsen here speaking about cybersecurity for a conference that we ran last November, but as you think about the air-related threats, sort of the derived threats from 9/11, do you feel that our improvements are enough to sort of keep us ahead of that, so that if the secretary needs to spend 40% or more of her time on cyber at this point, that we're not leaving kind of a back door open to these kind of attacks? Or is it this constant juggling that you've got to do, where it's airplane security one day, cyber the next. I realize you're doing many things in a given day. But how does that balance shift, and are we able to establish at least a level of certainty, as much as it can be certain, in relation to these 9/11-type threats, as opposed to the new ones that you also have to pay attention to?

00:24:15 Secretary Napolitano: So I... you know, if the question is, "Can a 9/11-style attack happen again?" I, I really don't think so. I think the changes we've made, the improvements to airport security from, you know, arming the cockpit doors of planes to the rules that you can't get on, put

your luggage on a plane unless you're on the plane, to the kinds of screenings we do at airports, I, I think that's gone a long way to eliminating that sort of threat. But as I said earlier, I think threats and threat streams continually change. They evolve.

00:25:03 And one of the challenges in the Department of Homeland Security, for the federal government writ large, is to be agile and to be proactive and to be thinking ahead, and to be playing in our minds "what if" scenarios. Um, uh, uh, uh... What if.... there were a, a cyberattack that disabled not only one American city but a half a dozen American cities?

00:25:33 What if there were a group that decided to set off explosives in a shopping mall over the Christmas holidays not just in one place but, you know, ten different places? You know, those are the kinds of things that we constantly need to challenge ourselves with. "Are we thinking ahead? Are we being proactive? Are we prepared?"

00:25:57 Clifford Chanin: One of the things you write about, in terms of the cyber threat, is the fact that so much of our cyber infrastructure is in the hands of the private sector.

Secretary Napolitano: Right.

Clifford Chanin: And so there are... while they all seem to have an interest in protecting what's theirs, I mean, there are clearly going to be gaps between them, and they may not have the resources or the approach of the federal government. So, you know, how does DHS act to protect this cyber infrastructure if it is, in fact, not in charge of it?

00:26:25 Secretary Napolitano: You know, that is the \$64,000 question. And, you know, this was a real struggle, legislatively, when I was secretary, where there were attempts to pass legislation requiring owners and operators of critical infrastructure to meet certain federal regulatory established

standards And Congress decided, "No," that that was too much like the big bureaucracy, the big, bureaucratic approach.

00:27:01 And so it it set up a series or a, a, a situation where there would be standards set, but compliance would be voluntary. Although, if you complied with them, you would be able to qualify for certain kinds of insurance. You know, it's really the only aspect of law enforcement or security that we've outsourced to the private sector. And, you know, I think, I actually think we run some risk by taking that approach. But that's the law that we have today.

00:27:41 Clifford Chanin: You believe that increases our vulnerability?

Secretary Napolitano: I think it does, yeah, because there's, there's no certainty, there's no unity of effort. There's, there's little commonality, in terms of how these owners and operators have to attain different cybersecurity standards. So, yeah, I do think it's problematic.

00:28:05 Clifford Chanin: You know, you write-- it's very interesting here-- your reflections on the measures that were taken, the Patriot Act in particular, but post-9/11 to deal with those immediate threats. But you make the argument that whatever the effect of that, the threat has actually broadened, not just the threat of terrorism but, you know, the legislation we have in place for that doesn't cover all of these new threats, the cyber and so on and so forth. So where do you see the shortcomings of what we have in place, and what would you like to see in terms of better cybersecurity through the legal system?

00:28:43 Secretary Napolitano: Well, actually, I want to step back a moment and, and say, you know, I think with the 20th anniversary of 9/11 approaching, it, it would be a good time for us to do a national assessment of the entire homeland-security apparatus that we have and to make sure that we are prepared for and thinking ahead of different types of threats that can manifest themselves; that we're using the best science, the best technology, the best intelligence that we can gather; that the federal government is indeed organized in the right way to deal with the threat

environment in the, in the world today. And, and I, I just, you know, I, I believe that that kind of more-holistic thinking is called for.

00:29:49 Clifford Chanin: Now, you write about this phenomenon that many security experts refer to as security theater, which is to say, whether by officials or people in airports or whoever it is, sort of the performance of things that look like they're protecting us, but which do not necessarily add to our protection. How much is this security theater, this idea of, "Let's show people we're doing something, even if we have doubts about the effectiveness of what we're showing them," how much of that is a factor, do you think, in the way security measures developed in the post-9/11 world?

00:30:23 Secretary Napolitano: Um, you know, I, I'd like to think that we kept pure theater down to a minimum. You know, some theater is useful. Um, uh... You know, I, I think it's helpful for travelers to see explosive-detecting dogs when they're on a subway platform or in a train station. I, I think it's important to have a uniform presence at the ports of entry to the United States. I think that, you know, that that's useful. Where theater is not useful is when it takes the place of real strategy and real security.

00:31:09 And I'll, and I'll use as an example, I think, I think the wall is theater, and I don't think it's real. And I don't think it will actually improve the quality of safety and security in the country. And so I think what we need to do is strike that balance between some theater, which is useful, versus actually dealing with the security threats that we have.

00:31:34 Clifford Chanin: You write that, "True security means that, as a society, we must decide what risks we're willing to tolerate in return for preserving our way of life. Free and open societies require free and open spaces." Talk to us about that balance. I mean, where do you think it needs to be set in relation to where we today? Where have we gone too far, do you think, and how do you get a discussion about risk into the public space?

00:32:02 Secretary Napolitano: So let's go back to 9/11, and I talked about the question of whether we should close the borders. Well, we didn't close the border. But what was mandated instead was that every vehicle coming into the United States would be inspected, its trunk opened, and so forth. Slow down the traffic coming into the United States, so that the traffic stretched for 20 miles into Mexico.

00:32:40 And, you know, as I said, We have a tremendous amount of trade, et cetera, that needs to come across that border. We can't, we can't operate like that. Our economy can't operate like that. We need to have a better way, better way to identify vehicles that may be carrying suspicious cargo, better way to put them into a secondary line, so they can be inspected while everybody else comes through.

00:33:09 Use airport security as another example. You know, would that, you know, would... we could have done it while I was secretary and have the technology to allow people to leave their shoes on and carry their liquids onto airplanes. The technology didn't exist, doesn't still exist. But why can't we think about creating something, which we did, called TSA PreCheck.

00:33:38 Clifford Chanin: By the way, thank you for that.

Secretary Napolitano: You're very welcome.

(laughter)

Secretary Napolitano: And, and the idea behind PreCheck was pretty straightforward, which is that the more information we have about passengers, the lower down on the risk scale they are, until they're at, they really are no risk. And so if we can precheck them before they show up at an airport, they can go into a faster line. And, and so the, the, the whole theory was to move the Department of Homeland Security into,

into really a risk-reduction department, not, not a guarantee, not a risk elimination, but risk reduction.

00:34:20 Clifford Chanin: I mean, our politics are polarized, so it may be particularly difficult now, but it's still hard to imagine, you know, political leadership saying, "We're making these choices, and they have risks that are associated with them, but we're... we recommend that this is what the choice should be." I mean, that, obviously, would be a burden of leadership or the task of leadership to convince them, but do you think that we are ready to hear someone stand up and say, you know, "This is how far we can go to keep the society we want and no further, in spite of the risks that would come"?

00:34:55 Secretary Napolitano: Um, I would hope so. And, you know, I think that's an actual conversation we need to have with the American people. But I also want to make this point, which is too often, we hear this debate between civil liberties and protection of privacy and security. And the more you increase the axis on one, you're decreasing the axis on the other. I, I don't believe that those things are necessarily always in conflict.

00:35:31 Um, I think, for example, we can, where security technology is concerned, incorporate privacy by design from the get-go. Incorporate... notions of our civil liberties, our privacy interests, into our thinking before we adopt a new policy, and not as an afterthought. And, and, I... you know, the Department of Homeland Security, I think, is the only federal agency that actually has a chief privacy officer and its own Office of Civil Rights that's designed not to look externally, like the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Justice, but to look internally at the operations of the agency. I mean, I think that's a very healthy thing to have.

00:36:25 Clifford Chanin: Let me ask about the threat that the special counsel confirmed through... we haven't read the report yet, but the prosecutions that have been made about Russian attempts to influence our elections. Because, you know, going back to the early days of DHS, I don't think this would have been imaginable at that point. Technology might not have allowed it to be possible. But now it's been documented, and it is a real threat, all other questions related to that aside. What do

you think the standard needs to be to respond to something like this? Because there really aren't any rules, it seems, that a country can do these things without necessarily having to pay a price for it.

00:37:06 Secretary Napolitano: Well, you know, I think if there's one thing we can conclude from the Mueller investigation and the indictments that have issued, and so forth, is that Russia was all over our 2016 presidential election. They were hacking the Clinton campaign emails and releasing those emails. They were posting false and misleading and deceptive material on social media, all designed to disadvantage Hillary Clinton, advantage President Trump. And, you know, Russia has never had to pay a price for that. You're exactly right.

00:37:47 And to me, if, if you have an attack by a foreign adversary directly at our democracy, that, that merits a response really at the highest level: increased sanctions, I think increased activity by the community of nations working with us, saying, "Look, maybe this is an example where"... I may be speaking out of turn here, but, "Article 5 of NATO, the NATO agreement, where an attack on one is an attack on all." That was an attack. And I think we ought to think about it that way. And I think we ought to be asking, "What are we doing to make sure that we're not attacked again in 2020?"

00:38:34 Clifford Chanin: Are we... I mean, DHS has already been speaking about efforts. Director Coats, the director of national intelligence, was speaking just the other day about already-established efforts by the Russians to prepare or interfere in the upcoming election, not even looking backwards anymore. So do you think our political polarization is such that this issue cannot be mobilized across the party line? Or are we really able to do something, do you think?

00:39:02 Secretary Napolitano: You know, this is, this is where our polarization is, is really... it's getting in the way. You know, security should not be a Democratic or a Republican issue. I mean, everybody has an interest in safety. Everybody has an interest in security. Everybody has an interest in the protection of our electoral processes, of protection of our critical infrastructure. And to the extent that extreme polarization is interfering, I

think we have to call on our leaders to, to call that out and, and say, "We are not going to let party labels get in the way of dealing with this very real problem."

(applause)

00:39:55

Clifford Chanin: In thinking about the cyber threat, you write in this vein about the threat that Russia poses, but you also refer to China and its efforts, which are not necessarily focused only on our electoral system, more economic intent and so on. Where do you come down on the development of the 5G network and the Huawei Chinese technology being used in these international systems by our allies? The U.S. has said it's not going to allow these Chinese companies to come in to create this critical digital infrastructure. What's your view of how that should develop, with our allies in particular?

00:40:31

Secretary Napolitano: Yes, so at the University of California, we have... really cut our commercial ties with Huawei, because of their activities. And, you know, I think that they, they're a problem. They're, they're a real problem.

Clifford Chanin: And yet, we don't seem, necessarily, to be convincing our allies that we should be on the same page in relation to Huawei in particular, it seems.

00:41:07

Secretary Napolitano: Well, I'm not sure that our conversations with our allies on a lot of issues are as fulsome as one would wish.

(laughter)

Clifford Chanin: I'm going to let it sit there.

(laughter)

00:41:20 Um... I do want to come to one of the agencies under your jurisdiction, ICE, and the role that it plays and the... demand, in some quarters, that ICE be abolished, because of its role in rounding up people who are here illegally inside the United States and so on. What is your view of ICE? I think you should first tell us the breadth of ICE's role. It's not simply as it's described in these accusations. But the idea of abolishing ICE, because of this most-recent round of policies?

00:42:00 Secretary Napolitano: You know, I don't support the abolition of ICE. And only one part of ICE is actually where the controversy emanates from. Uh, uh, um... And, and that is the part that deals directly with the apprehension and deportation of those in the country illegally. And, and there, you know, I think that the question is not, "Should we have ICE? Should we be enforcing our nation's immigration laws?" Clearly, we should. Every country has that ability and that authority. The question is, "How?" >>

Clifford Chanin: Mm-hmm.

00:42:44 Secretary Napolitano: The question is, "Who is targeted? Who does the federal government throw its resources against to remove from the country?" Um, uh... You know, when, when I was secretary, we began the process of instituting priorities in terms of immigration enforcement, that we would focus on those who had committed serious crimes, known gang members, security threats, those that we captured right at the border. We moved a lot of ICE agents to be right down at the border so that they could do deportations immediately when someone, once someone was in the country.

00:43:25 Conversely, we ended the process of doing workplace raids, and we started DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. This is a program for young people brought over into this country, usually at the age of six or younger. They've grown up in the United States, they go to our schools, they attend our universities. Some of them have started

their own businesses. They have families here. And they, and they oftentimes don't even know the language of their country of origin.

00:43:59 Well, these are the lowest of low risks, from an enforcement perspective. And so, using the prosecutorial discretion that any law-enforcement agent, agency has, we said, "Look, if these young people will come forward and pay a fee, they'll be entitled to remain in the country and have authorization to work in the country."

00:44:25 When we started DACA, we didn't know whether we'd get 5,000 or 50,000. I think today there are upwards of 850,000 members of DACA. Now, when the current administration announced that it was going to rescind DACA, um... I took the only action I could imagine, which was I sued them.

(laughter, applause)

00:44:52 And, and to oppose that. And we obtained an injunction against the rescission of DACA. That injunction has been upheld in the courts of appeal, and so far the Supreme Court has declined to take the case up. And so in the meantime DACA recipients have been able to re-register and re-enroll. But the, the... ultimate answer lies with Congress. There needs to be a statutory solution to the condition of these Dreamers, actually, to our overall immigration law to begin with.

00:45:31 Clifford Chanin: You know, it's a wonderful opportunity, because in your role now as the president of the University of California, it's not just a legal problem. Obviously, the individuals may have a legal problem, but you see them as the students, the people they are, the contributions they make. And I wonder if you could tell us about that part of the DACA story, which is not necessarily the focus of so much of the reporting on it.

00:45:53 Secretary Napolitano: You know, I... you know, I see... you know, the University of California, we probably have 4,000 DACA students in our

student body. They're wonderful students. They got admitted to the University of California, which is not easy to do. And... you, you know, we have a DACA student who is, you know, studying to be a physician at the University of California San Francisco. We have DACA students who are in our law schools.

00:46:21 Um, uh... These are very bright, productive young people. They're the kind of talent that a country needs, that we should want to keep in our country, not somehow remove them. And so, you know, I don't know whether you can tell, but I feel pretty passionately about DACA.

00:46:40 Clifford Chanin: I was picking that up, yes. Um... you know, it, it, again, it comes back to the political stasis, the political deadlock. I mean, in principle, this doesn't seem like this should be the hardest problem to solve, but, yet, it gets caught up in these other problems. What... stepping back now from the DHS role. You've been in politics, you've been an elected official, you've been on the national stage. I mean is this, for the foreseeable future, just the way our politics are going to be, this level of polarization? Can, you know, what is the thing that breaks the logjam, in your mind, if there is such a thing?

00:47:17 Secretary Napolitano: I can tell you what I hope is not needed to break the logjam, which is another 9/11-style attack. You know, that period after 9/11, we were so unified as a, as a country. And then, you know, over, over time, that's dissipated, and we've... everybody's retreated to their corner, which is exacerbated by social media, where you only, you know, have to listen to voices you agree with, and, um, uh... and, and, again, there's a lot of good having to do with the internet.

00:47:54 There's a dark side as well. But it's going to take real leadership, and it's going to take the people of the country rewarding political candidates who speak out in terms of... unity of effort, in terms of a willingness to reach across the aisle. Politicians respond to voters, and voters need to speak out on this.

00:48:26 Clifford Chanin: You're watching the beginnings of the 2020 campaign, and you're a Democrat, so I'll ask about your party. And... not in terms of a particular candidate, but in terms of exactly what you've describe as what you hope can happen. Do you see candidates moving in that direction? Or... there are a lot of candidates for Democrats, so...

Secretary Napolitano: Yeah, a lot.

00:48:48 Clifford Chanin: It covers the whole range, I'm sure. But, you know, do you see that as something that the Democratic electorate will respond to? Or is that also an electorate that's caught up in the polarization?

Secretary Napolitano: So, you know, I think the Democrats are going to have a very vigorously fought-out primary and has a big spectrum of candidates. I don't have a candidate right now. But I'll tell you what I'm listening for. I'm, I'm listening for authenticity, I'm listening for a real problem-solver, I'm listening for a spark of inspiration. Um... uh... And I, and I think that's the, the, the recipe that... of characteristics that to me is going to be so very important.

00:49:36 Clifford Chanin: We'll look and see. Let's see if we can take a question or two. We're a little pressed for time, because the secretary's going to go back to Washington by train and also was going to take some time to sign some books, so we'll go quickly. Right there, if you'd stand up and speak.

(woman speaking inaudibly)

00:49:54 Woman: You mentioned about the day 9/11...(inaudible) Given that we are supposed to...I've heard people saying that they are surprised there hasn't been a 9/11-style attack. (woman continues inaudibly)

00:50:18 Clifford Chanin: So let me just restate briefly. That the vulnerability of our nuclear installations, not just on 9/11 but subsequently, and here, of course, Indian Point, near New York. Does this concern you?

Secretary Napolitano: You know, actually in terms of a real risk evaluation, I would put that way down. And the reason is because the standards governing the construction of nuclear power plants and the kind of encasement that they are in, um, it would take far more than a commercial airliner flying into a nuclear power plant to cause any kind of disruption. So I wouldn't worry too much about that.

(laughter)

00:51:00 Secretary Napolitano: Yeah.

Clifford Chanin: Mary. Please stand.

(Mary speaking inaudibly)

00:51:50 Clifford Chanin: So I'll just restate it, apologies.

Secretary Napolitano: Okay.

Clifford Chanin: The improvement in intelligence sharing, the creation of these fusion centers for agencies to cooperate, and our international partners and their role in the intelligence work.

00:52:02 Secretary Napolitano: So some of the fusion centers are pretty good. Some of them are not so good. Um, uh, uh... Fusion centers were designed to house in one place intelligence analysts from federal agencies, but also state and local authorities as well. I, I still think it's,

it's... they're a really good idea. But I think from a performance level, there's still some improvement needed. In terms of internationally, the sharing of intelligence, of actionable intelligence, around the globe is really the coin of the realm.

00:52:40

Uh, um... and, um... you know, we, we don't live in a world where it's America only. And we are part of the community of nations. And the, the more we have alliances and share intelligence, share resources, et cetera, the safer that we are.

00:53:02

Clifford Chanin: Are you concerned that strains in our alliances, in our allied relationships are going to have a negative impact on intelligence sharing?

Secretary Napolitano: I think they could. I, I think they could. I think that's something that we have to guard against very vigorously.

Clifford Chanin: Right. We're going to stop there, because we'll have a moment with the books outside. But please join me in thanking Secretary Janet Napolitano.

(applause)