

WEBVTT

00:00:04.300 --> 00:00:11.200

<v SPEAKER_1>Hello again, and welcome to Global Exchange, part of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute's Podcast Network.

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<v SPEAKER_1>I'm your host Colin Robertson.

00:00:13.480 --> 00:00:23.420

<v SPEAKER_1>On this episode, recorded on June the 16th, we talk with CGAI fellows Marius Grinius and James Trottier about North and South Korea.

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<v SPEAKER_1>For listeners, both James and Marius were career Foreign Service officers.

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<v SPEAKER_1>In addition to senior positions in Ottawa, Marius served as our ambassador to both North and South Korea, as well as Vietnam and to the UN in Geneva.

00:00:38.020 --> 00:00:43.220

<v SPEAKER_1>James served in Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar, and in New York.

00:00:43.220 --> 00:00:54.180

<v SPEAKER_1>Both James and Marius have visited North Korea and continue to develop their expertise on the Koreas and the Indo-Pacific, and we'll link to some of the more recent publications, particularly by James.

00:00:55.320 --> 00:01:05.680

<v SPEAKER_1>For listeners, today at the Canonascis G7 Summit, Prime Minister Mark Carney is meeting with recently elected South Korean President Lee Jaemung.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Canada-Korean relations are close with a deep history.

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<v SPEAKER_1>516 Canadians died in defense of South Korea during the Korean War.

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<v SPEAKER_1>With our free trade agreement, Korea is our eighth largest trading partner.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Canada's largest exports to South Korea include energy, minerals, ores, meat, wood, pulp and electronics.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Canadian imports from the South include cars, machinery, electronics, iron and steel products.

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<v SPEAKER_1>People-to-people ties continue to grow through immigration and student exchanges.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Korea is Canada's tenth largest source of international students.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Korean K-pop and film have a popular following in Canada.

00:01:49.980 --> 00:02:00.340

<v SPEAKER_1>The Karni Lee Conversations will inevitably include a discussion of Kim Jong-un, whose family has ruled North Korea with an iron fist for three generations.

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<v SPEAKER_1>In violation of UN sanctions, Kim supplies troops and ammunitions to Russia for its war in Ukraine in return for help with North Korea's space program.

00:02:10.700 --> 00:02:17.180

<v SPEAKER_1>Kim Jong-un continues to be and to threaten his neighbors, especially South Korea and Japan.

00:02:18.420 --> 00:02:28.480

<v SPEAKER_1>A Canadian is once again Deputy Commander of the UN True Supervisory Mission, and the RCAF and Royal Canadian Navy continue to participate in UN sanctions monitoring.

00:02:28.480 --> 00:02:30.260

<v SPEAKER_1>A final observation.

00:02:30.260 --> 00:02:41.120

<v SPEAKER_1>The one thing that keeps presidents awake at night is the specter of the bomb, and the North Korean threat has haunted presidents since Bill Clinton and including Donald Trump.

00:02:41.120 --> 00:02:42.360

<v SPEAKER_1>So let's begin.

00:02:42.360 --> 00:02:43.800

<v SPEAKER_1>James, I'll let you lead on this one.

00:02:44.700 --> 00:02:53.040

<v SPEAKER_1>South Korean politics have gone through really extraordinary changes over the last and much tumult over the last months.

00:02:53.040 --> 00:02:58.220

<v SPEAKER_1>Can you bring us up to speed on what's happened, why it happened, and where we are today?

00:02:58.220 --> 00:02:59.380

<v SPEAKER_2>Yeah, thanks Colin.

00:02:59.380 --> 00:03:06.920

<v SPEAKER_2>Well, unusually for the last six months, South Korea has gotten more international attention than North Korea.

00:03:06.920 --> 00:03:17.260

<v SPEAKER_2>For the last six months, South Korea has been embroiled in political turmoil from which it has just emerged with the presidential election of June 3rd.

00:03:17.260 --> 00:03:40.900

<v SPEAKER_2>So it started this period of six months, started in December of 2024 when then-President Yun, frustrated by a blockage of his agenda in the then-opposition-controlled National Assembly and moves to impeach some of his ministers, launched an ill-advised and reckless self-coup, declared martial law and sent the military to the National Assembly.

00:03:41.460 --> 00:03:53.780

<v SPEAKER_2>To arrest lawmakers, this swiftly churned into a debacle with lawmakers and crowds of ordinary citizens blocking the military from accessing the National Assembly.

00:03:53.780 --> 00:03:57.620

<v SPEAKER_2>The National Assembly voted down the martial law declaration.

00:03:57.620 --> 00:04:05.820

<v SPEAKER_2>They also voted to impeach then-President Yun, several members of Yun's own party joined with the Democratic opposition to do so.

00:04:05.820 --> 00:04:13.180

<v SPEAKER_2>Yun was divested of his presidential powers, which devolved on a rotating cast of ministers, several.

00:04:13.180 --> 00:04:23.740

<v SPEAKER_2>And ultimately, the Constitutional Court voted

unanimously in April of 2025 to uphold the impeachment, and a presidential election was called for June 3.

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<v SPEAKER_2>On June 3, the Democratic Party candidate, Lee Jae-yong, defeated the conservative candidate, running for the then ruling People Party power, and also a reform candidate.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Lee won 49.42 percent of the vote with the conservative candidate, Kim trailing at 41 percent.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Though slightly short of a majority, it was a convincing victory and combined with the nearest supermajority in the National Assembly for his party, Lee is considered to be one of the most powerful presidents in South Korea's Democratic era.

00:05:00.280 --> 00:05:21.020

<v SPEAKER_2>He was sworn into office shortly after the election, and the political chaos of the last six months has basically left the risky and dangerous leadership vacuum in South Korea at a particularly fraught period marked by the opening months of the erratic Trump presidency and the imposition of US tariffs against South Korea.

00:05:21.020 --> 00:05:32.840

<v SPEAKER_2>And as South Korea cycled through several temporary presidents, there was no one in South Korea in effective control to engage Donald Trump and other leaders to protect South Korean interests.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So unsurprisingly, Lee's first actions in office, one of his first actions, was to call Trump, and they were expected to meet at the G7, which the new South Korean leader was, as you say, was attending on the invitation of Prime Minister Carney.

00:05:49.100 --> 00:06:06.760

<v SPEAKER_2>Unfortunately, Trump departed the G7 before he could meet with Lee, and I would just make a final note that during the six months period of drift, there was also the risk that North Korea would try to take advantage of the situation.

00:06:06.760 --> 00:06:15.160

<v SPEAKER_2>However, fortunately, in this period, North Korea acted in a relatively restrained way by North Korean standards.

00:06:15.160 --> 00:06:22.900

<v SPEAKER_2>Apparently, they were prepared to sit back and watch South Korea be embroiled in political turmoil of its own making.

00:06:24.080 --> 00:06:26.320

<v SPEAKER_2>Perhaps, I'll leave it at that for now.

00:06:26.320 --> 00:06:28.000

<v SPEAKER_1>Thanks, James, and we'll come back to North Korea.

00:06:28.000 --> 00:06:37.360

<v SPEAKER_1>But Marius, I want to bring you in on this because we've seen this turmoil in South Korean politics and obviously a deep polarization.

00:06:37.360 --> 00:06:55.700

<v SPEAKER_1>But ultimately, it appears notwithstanding South Korean history, that the checks and balances worked and the judicial process, which I think played a key role in the decision to oust the former president, worked.

00:06:56.000 --> 00:06:58.680

<v SPEAKER_1>Your evaluation, please.

00:06:58.680 --> 00:07:09.860

<v SPEAKER_3>Well, it looks like South Korean politics, just like James mentioned, went through a serious six months of turmoil.

00:07:09.860 --> 00:07:25.300

<v SPEAKER_3>And of course, there was questions, as you noted, of sort of a recession back into the battle days of dictators and strongmen and all of that kind of stuff.

00:07:25.300 --> 00:07:45.600

<v SPEAKER_3>But it was the people around that National Assembly that really, to my mind, reinforced that despite that current challenge and the impeachment and all of that, that democracy in South Korea has been strengthened.

00:07:45.600 --> 00:08:08.720

<v SPEAKER_3>And that, of course, has been reinforced by the fact that the Constitutional Court unanimously said, yes, the National Assembly impeachment of Yun really was proper, and the rule of law will continue.

00:08:08.720 --> 00:08:15.060

<v SPEAKER_3>Perhaps there's a little bit of lesson in there in the context of US politics.

00:08:17.620 --> 00:08:25.720

<v SPEAKER_3>President Yun actually won in 2022 by a majority of less than 1%.

00:08:27.580 --> 00:08:41.080

<v SPEAKER_3>And at that time, Li Jemun, his competitor, now president, accepted it despite the potential of chaos even back then in 2022.

00:08:41.080 --> 00:08:46.600

<v SPEAKER_3>But it all has moved forward and in a very, very positive way.

00:08:46.600 --> 00:08:52.820

<v SPEAKER_3>And of course, Li Jemun's challenges now are huge.

00:08:52.820 --> 00:08:54.680

<v SPEAKER_3>And it's not just North Korea.

00:08:54.680 --> 00:09:02.660

<v SPEAKER_3>I think the biggest challenge is how to work with Trump.

00:09:03.940 --> 00:09:08.120

<v SPEAKER_3>And I'm sure we'll talk about that further.

00:09:08.120 --> 00:09:14.220

<v SPEAKER_3>But that's, Li Jemun is looking at national unity.

00:09:14.220 --> 00:09:19.400

<v SPEAKER_3>He's looking at economic stimulus, of course.

00:09:20.220 --> 00:09:25.280

<v SPEAKER_3>He talks about practiced, balanced diplomacy.

00:09:25.280 --> 00:09:52.180

<v SPEAKER_3>And quite frankly, I think his main job will be to project South Korean stability, a return to normality, and reassure everyone, including all those whom he's meeting, all the leaders whom he's meeting in Kananaskis, that South Korea is a reliable, like-minded partner.

00:09:52.180 --> 00:09:54.380

<v SPEAKER_1>James, tell us a bit more about Lee Jae-myong.

00:09:54.380 --> 00:10:02.580

<v SPEAKER_1>We know that he, as Marius said, ran against this as a second election as a presidential candidate, and of course did so much better.

00:10:02.580 --> 00:10:06.880

<v SPEAKER_1>But what kind of individual is he?

00:10:06.880 --> 00:10:10.720

<v SPEAKER_1>He met today with Prime Minister Carney.

00:10:11.540 --> 00:10:12.900

<v SPEAKER_1>What's your read going forward?

00:10:12.900 --> 00:10:19.640

<v SPEAKER_1>And obviously, the relationship with Donald Trump is going to play into this, and he didn't see Trump because Trump's gone back to Washington.

00:10:19.640 --> 00:10:28.440

<v SPEAKER_1>But that's, as Marius says, going to be an important part of things going forward, both in terms of trade and in terms of security for South Korea.

00:10:28.440 --> 00:10:32.140

<v SPEAKER_2>Yeah, Lee has a very interesting backstory.

00:10:32.140 --> 00:10:49.020

<v SPEAKER_2>I sat in on a conversation with former US ambassadors to South Korea talking about the US election, and one of them mentioned that she had worked in South Korea in the 1970s as a teacher.

00:10:49.020 --> 00:11:04.500

<v SPEAKER_2>And that she, and from the same area that Lee came from, and when Lee was a teenager himself, a middle school student, and she said, he could have been one of my students, except he didn't go to middle school because his family was too poor.

00:11:05.560 --> 00:11:09.680

<v SPEAKER_2>He was working in a factory in the 1970s as a child laborer.

00:11:10.160 --> 00:11:17.660

<v SPEAKER_2>So his is the kind of sort of the equivalent of the Oratio Alger story in South Korean terms.

00:11:17.660 --> 00:11:29.340

<v SPEAKER_2>He put himself through university, he put himself through law school, he's a survivor in the American, or in the South Korean political scene.

00:11:30.480 --> 00:11:46.620

<v SPEAKER_2>So as Marius said, I mean, his primary challenge will be dealing with the US on tariffs and trade, as well as on the military and security relationship between the US and South Korea.

00:11:46.620 --> 00:12:10.360

<v SPEAKER_2>The, according to a readout, so as I mentioned, the first thing he did after he was elected was spoke to Trump, and according to a readout of that conversation, that telephone conversation, the two

leaders talked about bilateral relations and covered trade negotiations, tariffs, and plans for a future meeting, which was supposed to be at the G7.

00:12:10.360 --> 00:12:32.380

<v SPEAKER_2>And there's also going to be tough discussions concerning the funding of US forces in Korea and the mission of those US forces in light of the new strategic flexibility doctrine of the Pentagon, which the idea that all the US allies should be focused on and give priority to the China threat.

00:12:32.380 --> 00:12:51.280

<v SPEAKER_2>And since taking off, the Trump administration has made clear, of course, that if you use China, not North Korea, as the biggest threat to the US in the region, and officials have increasingly signaled that they want the mission of the US forces Korea to evolve, to focus more on countering Beijing.

00:12:51.280 --> 00:13:10.720

<v SPEAKER_2>But the public opinion surveys in South Korea indicate South Korean public remains very wary about the idea of direct US forces Korea involvement in a Taiwan military conflict, because the consequence of that would be that South Korea would be left with the main burden of facing the North Koreans.

00:13:11.740 --> 00:13:19.440

<v SPEAKER_2>And it raises the question about the role of US forces in South Korea in the event of a conflict in Taiwan.

00:13:19.440 --> 00:13:24.120

<v SPEAKER_2>And as they say, it could leave South Korea was carrying the main burden.

00:13:24.120 --> 00:13:30.260

<v SPEAKER_2>It also raises the question of what position South Korea would take regarding Taiwan in a conflict there.

00:13:30.720 --> 00:13:36.920

<v SPEAKER_2>And I think strategic ambiguity seems the more likely approach.

00:13:36.920 --> 00:13:50.960

<v SPEAKER_2>In his election and in the inaugural address, President Lee affirmed his support for good relations and the bilateral alliance with the US and for the trilateral cooperation with Japan.

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<v SPEAKER_2>This is viewed as a shift in Lee's position and that of his Democratic Party.

00:13:56.300 --> 00:14:09.120

<v SPEAKER_2>Both have been characterized in the past by a certain distance from the US and even more from Japan and support for better relations with China and dialogue with North Korea.

00:14:09.120 --> 00:14:12.700

<v SPEAKER_2>So that has, as I say, there's been sort of a shift.

00:14:12.700 --> 00:14:20.260

<v SPEAKER_2>At the same time, Lee is expected to want to stabilize the relationship with China.

00:14:20.900 --> 00:14:27.460

<v SPEAKER_2>But at the same time, he has to deal with the new aggressiveness of China in flexing its muscles in the region.

00:14:28.020 --> 00:14:32.680

<v SPEAKER_2>And he also wants to, he supports the dialogue with North Korea.

00:14:32.680 --> 00:14:39.000

<v SPEAKER_2>But there's no indication that North Korea wants to talk to South Korea.

00:14:39.000 --> 00:14:42.780

<v SPEAKER_2>And I just had a final thing on a positive note.

00:14:42.780 --> 00:14:51.140

<v SPEAKER_2>Lee ordered that the loudspeakers along the DMZ, which had been broadcasting into North Korea, be turned off.

00:14:51.140 --> 00:14:55.820

<v SPEAKER_2>And the North Koreans actually reciprocated, shutting down their own loudspeakers.

00:14:55.920 --> 00:15:01.880

<v SPEAKER_2>And certainly, this will be a relief for anybody in the vicinity of the DMZ.

00:15:01.880 --> 00:15:17.100

<v SPEAKER_2>And Lee is also trying to stop NGOs from sending their balloons over the DMZ into North Korea, which as you'll recall was a provocation which resulted in North Korea countering with their own balloons carrying garbage into the South last year.

00:15:17.100 --> 00:15:21.460

<v SPEAKER_2>So small notes of grace, but positive.

00:15:21.460 --> 00:15:31.400

<v SPEAKER_1>No, I do remember the time I went to the DMZ and hearing

the loudspeakers on both sides and thinking to myself, my gosh, I wouldn't want to be posted here because I think they ran 24-7.

00:15:31.400 --> 00:15:32.520

<v SPEAKER_1>Yes.

00:15:32.520 --> 00:16:09.260

<v SPEAKER_1>And so, well, look, Marius, coming on this one because are we looking, you know, James is describing that the shifting geopolitics and geostrategic approach of the United States in the, what they call the Indo-Pacific, might we see the emergence of some kind of collective security arrangement by like-minded, particularly Asian members similar to what we're seeing, highly reinforced NATO looking at transatlantic and particularly the front with Russia affairs vis-a-vis China.

00:16:09.260 --> 00:16:25.640

<v SPEAKER_1>I'm thinking of in, if the United States is less than reliable, would, is there some opportunity for some kind of a collective alliance within the ASEAN and other countries?

00:16:26.640 --> 00:16:36.260

<v SPEAKER_3>I don't think so, not in any sort of practical defence treaty way.

00:16:36.600 --> 00:16:53.940

<v SPEAKER_3>You'll remember that there used to be something called the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization, CETO, that was supposed to be like stop communism, like NATO was stopping the Warsaw Pact.

00:16:53.940 --> 00:16:57.680

<v SPEAKER_3>That of course didn't work out.

00:16:57.680 --> 00:17:05.360

<v SPEAKER_3>Certainly, there are all of the ASEAN countries, or most of them, are keeping an eye out.

00:17:06.480 --> 00:17:19.520

<v SPEAKER_3>They want good relations with China, but most of them also want to keep a very good relationship with the United States in terms of security.

00:17:19.520 --> 00:17:36.540

<v SPEAKER_3>But again, Trump has now become the question mark in terms of how US geopolitical defence attitudes have changed, as James has mentioned.

00:17:36.540 --> 00:17:52.980

<v SPEAKER_3>And at the same time, of course, we have the rising bromance of Kim Jong-un with the new comrade, the new brother, Putin.

00:17:52.980 --> 00:18:15.120

<v SPEAKER_3>And it's almost to the day a year ago in June that Putin, of course, was visiting Pyongyang, and they signed the Russian-North Korea Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

00:18:15.120 --> 00:18:35.820

<v SPEAKER_3>So suddenly you have, oh, ASEAN looking at their relations with China, looking at how Japan, United States and South Korea are still holding on to their trilateral security relationship.

00:18:35.820 --> 00:18:43.560

<v SPEAKER_3>But then you've got this zinger, almost out of the blue, with Putin.

00:18:43.560 --> 00:19:01.620

<v SPEAKER_3>Of course, we've had Xi Jinping go to Moscow recently in May, to witness the Russia's victory parade at the end of World War II.

00:19:01.620 --> 00:19:07.180

<v SPEAKER_3>And of course, to show solidarity with Putin.

00:19:07.220 --> 00:19:15.540

<v SPEAKER_3>Because again, the Xi-Putin relationship is important for mutual interest.

00:19:15.540 --> 00:19:20.420

<v SPEAKER_3>And then of course, you've got the issue of North Korean troops in Russia.

00:19:20.420 --> 00:19:32.060

<v SPEAKER_3>So suddenly, in terms of concern, different pieces of that puzzle, constantly moving and changing shape.

00:19:32.760 --> 00:19:44.620

<v SPEAKER_3>And of course, call them the Western like-minded, having to look at what to do and how to do it.

00:19:44.620 --> 00:19:51.420

<v SPEAKER_3>And perhaps Indonesia might be an important player in this context.

00:19:51.500 --> 00:19:59.960

<v SPEAKER_3>Australia is right in the neighborhood, and they are looking very closely on what's happening.

00:19:59.960 --> 00:20:42.460

<v SPEAKER_3>And you have European countries, Germany, France and Great Britain, actually showing greater interest in that Asian,

Northeast Asian and Southeast Asian area by sending their own ships to, as just showing the flag, but being very, very clear that they want to be part of the changes in the region, in the Asian region, and also to be supportive of what can happen in the future.

00:20:44.940 --> 00:20:48.300

<v SPEAKER_4>Hi, I'm Dave Perry, the President and CEO of The Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

00:20:48.300 --> 00:20:52.920

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00:21:01.780 --> 00:21:06.360

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00:21:11.948 --> 00:21:19.168

<v SPEAKER_1>Marius, I think you were, if not the last, one of the last Canadian ambassadors to the North, who actually got up to Pyongyang.

00:21:19.168 --> 00:21:23.268

<v SPEAKER_1>And James, if I recall, you were one of our last diplomats to be up there.

00:21:23.268 --> 00:21:33.328

<v SPEAKER_1>Should we be reconsidering having some kind of presence or at least visits from the South to the North, just to know what's going on?

00:21:33.328 --> 00:21:33.828

<v SPEAKER_1>Why don't you start?

00:21:34.988 --> 00:21:49.328

<v SPEAKER_2>Well, James, I would just say that it's long overdue to have a renewal of the relations that we had until 2010 when they were suspended.

00:21:49.328 --> 00:22:01.408

<v SPEAKER_2>When I went in 2015 and 2016 in order to negotiate about the release of a Canadian prisoner, we had to renew all the channels that had been cut over the intervening years.

00:22:01.828 --> 00:22:05.448

<v SPEAKER_2>Unfortunately, those channels have now dried up after that.

00:22:05.448 --> 00:22:22.248

<v SPEAKER_2>And I think it's essentially essential that our ambassadors from Seoul who are also accredited to North Korea or should were accredited to North Korea should resume when that there's no opportunity to do so.

00:22:22.248 --> 00:22:34.308

<v SPEAKER_2>The practice that other countries which have the same arrangement of having ambassadors accredited from South Korea, resume that, and I hope that.

00:22:34.308 --> 00:22:44.208

<v SPEAKER_2>But unfortunately, that started under the conservatives and then continued under the liberals.

00:22:44.208 --> 00:22:48.888

<v SPEAKER_2>And so we'll see what happens going forward.

00:22:48.888 --> 00:22:50.408

<v SPEAKER_1>Marius, what do you think?

00:22:50.988 --> 00:23:09.528

<v SPEAKER_3>I'm on record both with the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee to say that Canada has to be there, has to be engaged, has to know what's going on.

00:23:09.528 --> 00:23:26.228

<v SPEAKER_3>We certainly rely quite a bit on the like minded, including the five eyes, the other five eyes, to get a sense of what is happening in North Korea.

00:23:26.228 --> 00:23:29.748

<v SPEAKER_3>And a lot has changed under Kim Jong Un.

00:23:29.748 --> 00:23:51.688

<v SPEAKER_3>But it has always been my argument that you have to be there to see it and make up your own mind with your own knowledge of what, as much as it can happen in a state like North Korea, but it is important.

00:23:51.688 --> 00:24:21.188

<v SPEAKER_3>And that way, when Prime Minister Carney talks about a renewed Canadian diplomacy, renewed activism, well, I would suggest that after, as James has mentioned, a lot of policy drift starting with the Harperite government, but then also by Trudeau, that here's one area that we can be a player.

00:24:21.708 --> 00:24:33.508

<v SPEAKER_3>And it gets into also humanitarian issues, human rights issues, a lot of other things beyond the security perspective.

00:24:33.508 --> 00:24:47.528

<v SPEAKER_3>But I think we can be a player because I think we have the wherewithal and capacity, if we played it, to be there.

00:24:47.528 --> 00:24:47.808

<v SPEAKER_1>All right.

00:24:47.808 --> 00:24:49.628

<v SPEAKER_1>Now stay with me, Marius.

00:24:49.628 --> 00:25:00.668

<v SPEAKER_1>If you were giving advice to Prime Minister Carney today, who's sitting down with President Lee, what would you pick as the top three items that Canada should be raising with Korea?

00:25:00.668 --> 00:25:10.408

<v SPEAKER_1>We've got a variety of things to talk about, defence, security, trade, the Trump Challenge, China, Russia.

00:25:10.588 --> 00:25:16.628

<v SPEAKER_1>How would you advise the Prime Minister to approach President Lee?

00:25:16.628 --> 00:25:49.968

<v SPEAKER_3>Well, I think first of all, to explain to Prime Minister Carney that after all that political turmoil in South Korea over the last six months or so, here's a new Prime Minister, here's a person with a lot of potential to do change, and as James mentioned, engage China and North Korea.

00:25:50.428 --> 00:26:01.648

<v SPEAKER_3>We have to be an important partner with South Korea through all the things that you mentioned.

00:26:01.728 --> 00:26:10.728

<v SPEAKER_3>I mean, we've got a free trade agreement that's been in effect now for 10 years.

00:26:10.728 --> 00:26:29.108

<v SPEAKER_3>I'm sure that we could do a heck of a lot more in terms of that bilateral trade, and because both countries are such high-tech countries, we can do a lot more in terms of other third-party opportunities.

00:26:31.028 --> 00:26:38.068

<v SPEAKER_3>We do have, again, the number two at UN Command.

00:26:38.068 --> 00:26:44.888

<v SPEAKER_3>Being a Canadian, we have more staff dedicated now to UN Command.

00:26:45.628 --> 00:26:53.468

<v SPEAKER_3>It's still just an armistice, a leftover from the Cold War.

00:26:54.948 --> 00:27:06.848

<v SPEAKER_3>We are interested and Korea has said, hey, have we got a package for you in terms of military equipment?

00:27:06.848 --> 00:27:20.028

<v SPEAKER_3>Prime Minister Carney has said that Canada should be looking away, to a certain extent, away from just buying American weapons.

00:27:20.608 --> 00:27:28.288

<v SPEAKER_3>He's, Carney has already said, yeah, let's look at what we can do with the Europeans.

00:27:28.288 --> 00:27:36.188

<v SPEAKER_3>But it was the South Koreans who said, hey, we've got the submarines and we can deliver them on time.

00:27:37.388 --> 00:27:53.688

<v SPEAKER_3>And on target in terms of price, we have artillery, we have ammunition, we've got high-tech in terms of communications, the whole package.

00:27:53.688 --> 00:28:07.848

<v SPEAKER_3>And I think we should look at that very, very seriously in terms of expanding trade partnerships, but also in the military sense.

00:28:07.848 --> 00:28:10.428

<v SPEAKER_3>Finally, we are like-minded.

00:28:10.968 --> 00:28:22.688

<v SPEAKER_3>There's all the issues around human rights, around humanitarian assistance, where the United States has now withdrawn.

00:28:23.968 --> 00:28:34.568

<v SPEAKER_3>And certainly, I think we could do much more in that partnership that we already have with South Korea.

00:28:34.568 --> 00:28:49.268

<v SPEAKER_3>We do have a comprehensive partnership that should be

deepened and certainly supported in every which way that we can.

00:28:50.488 --> 00:29:04.048

<v SPEAKER_1>James, what would you, the Prime Minister says to you, all right, you've just heard from Marius, what more would you add to what Marius has advised the Prime Minister to discuss with the new Korean president?

00:29:04.048 --> 00:29:13.708

<v SPEAKER_2>I think one of the important things is why the region and why the Korean Peninsula matters to Canada.

00:29:13.708 --> 00:29:32.368

<v SPEAKER_2>Apart from what you said about the world's fastest growing economic region and 65% of the global population, it's Canada's second largest regional export market and it contains sea lanes vital to international commerce.

00:29:32.368 --> 00:29:41.768

<v SPEAKER_2>So anything that threatens those sea lanes, that trade or international security is a threat to Canadian prosperity and security.

00:29:41.768 --> 00:29:52.268

<v SPEAKER_2>For example, I would say an attack on Taiwan will affect production by TSMC of NVIDIA microchips, which are essential to the world economy.

00:29:52.268 --> 00:30:10.308

<v SPEAKER_2>The presence of North Korean troops in the Ukraine-Russian War and Russian assistance to North Korea and ties between Russia, North Korea and Iran I think demonstrate how war in the region, whether about Taiwan or the Korean Peninsula, will not be confined to the region.

00:30:10.308 --> 00:30:14.368

<v SPEAKER_2>Great powers will become involved and the conflict could spread.

00:30:14.368 --> 00:30:35.948

<v SPEAKER_2>On the defence side, the all the points that Marius mentioned I would subscribe to, South Korea actually wants to, their aim is to become by 2027 the fourth biggest, largest arms exporter in the world.

00:30:35.948 --> 00:30:52.988

<v SPEAKER_2>Meanwhile, Canada needs to consider more innovative and cost-effective procurement strategies to enhance its defence supply chain, and specifically on submarines, Canada has a need and South Korea can provide these.

00:30:53.068 --> 00:31:00.548

<v SPEAKER_2>So I imagine that that will be sort of top of mind, for instance, for President Lee in the meeting.

00:31:00.548 --> 00:31:04.268

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay, my final question before I ask you both what you're reading.

00:31:04.268 --> 00:31:05.768

<v SPEAKER_1>I'll start with you, Marius.

00:31:05.768 --> 00:31:16.688

<v SPEAKER_1>Prime Minister turns to you and said, all right, our Indo-Pacific strategy, which is nearly two years old and is going to require some recalibration in light of a larger foreign policy review.

00:31:16.688 --> 00:31:20.888

<v SPEAKER_1>What advice would you give him in terms of the Indo-Pacific strategy?

00:31:25.028 --> 00:31:52.688

<v SPEAKER_3>Canada's Indo-Pacific strategy has to have a real look at first of all, its origins, which to me seem to be more of the sort of start to contain China by including India into this, what we've went from Asia Pacific to Indo-Pacific.

00:31:55.208 --> 00:32:02.088

<v SPEAKER_3>But we have to be realistic in terms of how India actually fits into this.

00:32:02.088 --> 00:32:11.888

<v SPEAKER_3>I think they're a smart but recalcitrant player in this when we look at India, China.

00:32:12.568 --> 00:32:28.348

<v SPEAKER_3>And we have to, we, Canada, have to make sure that we are more realistic about what can be, how we can contribute, what we can do there.

00:32:28.348 --> 00:32:36.068

<v SPEAKER_3>And right now, I am rather sceptical that we've got it right.

00:32:36.068 --> 00:32:39.788

<v SPEAKER_3>We haven't got it properly calibrated at this point.

00:32:40.888 --> 00:32:48.948

<v SPEAKER_3>So, we start with that and then look at what other opportunities are actually out there.

00:32:48.948 --> 00:33:09.788

<v SPEAKER_3>And I think one area that particularly would be important is our relationship with Australia in that neighbourhood and with New Zealand to know, to just have a good sense of comparing notes to go from there.

00:33:09.788 --> 00:33:19.848

<v SPEAKER_3>But yes, we need a serious reality check in terms of our Indo-Pacific strategy.

00:33:19.848 --> 00:33:21.068

<v SPEAKER_1>James, same question to you.

00:33:21.068 --> 00:33:37.448

<v SPEAKER_1>The Prime Minister says, all right, we're looking at, in the broader context of foreign policy, the Indo-Pacific, or perhaps we should be calling it Asia-Pacific, because as Marius points out, Indo-Pacific is very much a kind of Japanese-American invention aimed at China.

00:33:37.448 --> 00:33:40.108

<v SPEAKER_1>What advice would you give the Prime Minister?

00:33:40.108 --> 00:33:51.328

<v SPEAKER_2>I think the foreign policy review offers a really timely opportunity to look at what parts of strategy works and what needs adjustment.

00:33:52.428 --> 00:34:21.888

<v SPEAKER_2>I think that the question arises that if Canada is dealing with a belligerent US by trying to negotiate a new trade agreement to maintain access to US markets, but at the same time reinforcing economic and security cooperation with the European Union and the UK, you wonder how much bandwidth there will be to deal with Asia-Pacific, Hindu-Pacific, and I think that's essential.

00:34:21.888 --> 00:34:28.888

<v SPEAKER_2>Otherwise, whatever gains have been made in the intervening years will go.

00:34:28.888 --> 00:34:39.548

<v SPEAKER_2>And so enhancing cooperation with European allies should not be at the cost of our relationship with the Hindu-Pacific.

00:34:39.548 --> 00:34:55.768

<v SPEAKER_2>I think that the other thing is that the very name Hindu-Pacific indicates that there has to be a re-building of relations with India and managing the complex relationship with China.

00:34:55.768 --> 00:35:07.168

<v SPEAKER_2>And that will demand sustained and nuanced diplomacy, and will demand, all of that will demand resources be put into the Hindu-Pacific area.

00:35:07.168 --> 00:35:09.308

<v SPEAKER_1>All right, good advice.

00:35:09.308 --> 00:35:10.648

<v SPEAKER_1>Something we'll have to come back to.

00:35:10.648 --> 00:35:11.608

<v SPEAKER_1>James, stay with me.

00:35:11.608 --> 00:35:13.148

<v SPEAKER_1>What are you reading or streaming these days?

00:35:14.008 --> 00:35:26.468

<v SPEAKER_2>Well, a book that I just got called Imperial Boredom by Jeffrey Auerbach, A-U-E-R-B-A-C-H, which is subtitled Monotony in the British Empire.

00:35:26.468 --> 00:35:39.488

<v SPEAKER_2>So it's basically about how most Imperial officials and their spouses and other Britons in the Empire led lives of excruciating boredom in isolated, isolated pill stations and so on and so forth.

00:35:40.488 --> 00:35:51.468

<v SPEAKER_2>And then another one called The Thinking Machine, subtitled Jensen Rong, NVIDIA, and the World's Most Coveted Microchip by Stephen Witt, W-I-T-T.

00:35:51.468 --> 00:35:59.108

<v SPEAKER_2>And this is an account of NVIDIA and how its microchips are essential to the global economy.

00:35:59.248 --> 00:36:12.408

<v SPEAKER_2>And finally, there is another one called Focus, the A-S-M-L way inside the power struggle over the most complex machine on Earth by Marc M-A-R-C and Hijink, H-I-J-I-N-K.

00:36:13.528 --> 00:36:24.768

<v SPEAKER_2>And A-S-M-L is the Dutch company which produces the machines on which the TSMC produces NVIDIA's chips.

00:36:24.768 --> 00:36:30.448

<v SPEAKER_2>And they're the most in-demand machines in the world.

00:36:30.448 --> 00:36:34.968

<v SPEAKER_1>All right, A-S-M-I-L, NVIDIA and being bored, well on empire duty.

00:36:36.028 --> 00:36:36.988

<v SPEAKER_1>A trio.

00:36:36.988 --> 00:36:37.868

<v SPEAKER_1>Marius, what about you?

00:36:37.868 --> 00:36:39.068

<v SPEAKER_1>What are you reading in the streaming?

00:36:39.068 --> 00:36:42.108

<v SPEAKER_2>I was just going to say the old empire versus the new empire.

00:36:43.628 --> 00:36:45.628

<v SPEAKER_1>No boredom there.

00:36:45.628 --> 00:36:47.008

<v SPEAKER_1>Marius?

00:36:47.008 --> 00:36:49.728

<v SPEAKER_3>Yeah, I can only read one book at a time.

00:36:49.728 --> 00:36:52.728

<v SPEAKER_3>And I'm reading a book that was published in 1924.

00:36:54.508 --> 00:36:58.208

<v SPEAKER_3>Written a couple of years before that.

00:36:58.268 --> 00:37:18.028

<v SPEAKER_3>It's called We, W-E, and it's by Yevgeny Zamyatin, who was ultimately kicked out of the Soviet Union by Stalin, but he kept his life and became an exile.

00:37:18.028 --> 00:37:33.828

<v SPEAKER_3>But We is that dystopian novel that influenced both George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, and later Margaret Atwood in terms of their own novels.

00:37:34.568 --> 00:37:46.148

<v SPEAKER_3>It's an interesting read, but things have not really changed, and it's sometimes good but dangerous to be a dictator.

00:37:46.148 --> 00:37:51.728

<v SPEAKER_1>All right, We, dystopian fiction, which has had clearly some influence, as you point out.

00:37:52.268 --> 00:37:55.988

<v SPEAKER_1>Thank you both, and thanks for listening to this episode of The Global Exchange.

00:37:55.988 --> 00:38:00.508

<v SPEAKER_1>We were joined today by CGA fellows, Marius Grinius and James Trottier.

00:38:00.508 --> 00:38:04.388

<v SPEAKER_1>You can find their commentaries and research on our website.

00:38:04.388 --> 00:38:12.068

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00:38:12.068 --> 00:38:20.668

<v SPEAKER_1>The Global Exchange is brought to you by our team at The Canadian Global Affairs Institute, and I thank our producer, Jordyn Carroll, and Drew Phillips for providing our music.

00:38:21.008 --> 00:38:24.208

<v SPEAKER_1>I'm Colin Robertson, thanks for joining us today on The Global Exchange.