

# Press Releases: Interview With Hal Jay and Brian Estridge of WBAP Morning News

Interview  
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Via Teleconference  
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**QUESTION:** Yes, and Secretary Mike Pompeo joins us (inaudible) Secretary of State, kind enough to carve out a couple of moments for us. He's headed to Houston for a – to deliver a keynote to – at a big energy conference, Hal.

**QUESTION:** All right.

**QUESTION:** And we've got a lot to get into. Secretary, thanks for the time this morning. Let's dive right into the news that came out this week that all of the sudden, the U.S. is the number one exporter of energy in the world, and this really strengthens our standing internationally, doesn't it?

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** Well great, it's thanks to be with you. And it does, that's why I'm down here. I wanted to talk about what U.S. energy production does for American national security, how it keeps people from Dallas and San Antonio and Houston and all across Texas safer, lets us work more closely with our friends and puts real pressure on those who want to do harm to the United States. So this energy production really matters. I wanted to come down here and talk about how, as American's most senior diplomat, we use that to advantage to keep America safe.

**QUESTION:** Yeah, is that leverage for you when it comes to negotiating around the world?

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** There are very few countries I travel to – I was in the Philippines last week and Vietnam, I'll be in Europe in a couple of days and the Middle East. Everywhere I go, energy is at the top of the list. Demand for energy is only growing, and those who can produce and provide it have an enormous advantage when it comes to security around the world.

**QUESTION:** Are we at the point now where America can say we don't have to worry about other countries anymore, Middle East oil, anything like that,

we're – we are on our own?

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** So we're getting close to where we'll have true American energy dominance. It's a global market; it's a complicated market. But the more energy that we produce here in America, so the more we can do – and the Trump administration's done a lot of this, reduce regulations, create opportunities for jobs and wealth creation in the energy industry in America – the safer Americans will be around the world as well.

**QUESTION:** Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is with us right now. That leverage that we talk about when it comes to energy doesn't just play in the Middle East. Does it factor into the negotiations that are ongoing with North Korea at all?

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** North Korea presents a special situation for sure, but nobody can escape the truth. The truth is to grow an economy you need energy. Their electrical infrastructure needs work. They need refined petroleum products. One of the ways that we've convinced North Korea to move towards denuclearization is to reduce the amount of energy that they can import, and those sanctions that the United Nations put in place alongside of us have made a material difference. It's made it harder for the North Koreans to do the things they need to do, and I think that's at least in part why Chairman Kim made the commitment to denuclearize, and we're hopeful that even though we didn't get as far as we would have liked when the President and I were in Hanoi last week, we still have a path forward there.

**QUESTION:** Is North Korea – are we paying too much attention to it? Is there – is there a real true threat?

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** So the – any time you have a nation that has nuclear weapons and the capacity to either sell those weapons to those that would want to present risk to the United States or the capacity to use a missile system for delivery, there's a threat to the United States. Nuclear weapons are unique and especially risky, as you all well know, so I think it's important, important that we get this right, important that we take down that threat to the United States.

**QUESTION:** A different kind of threat in South America with Venezuela that I know has your attention as well.

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** It does. Last night we made the decision that we would withdraw the last of our diplomats from Caracas, so they'll all be coming home. The calamity, the chaos that is engulfing Venezuela today is a direct result of socialism, of the Maduro regime and the Cubans and the Russians all destroying a once proud economy. The United States, the neighboring regions in South America, Central America, they want to have a better life, democracy restored in Venezuela. And America is prepared to play its part, an important part I believe, in helping that happen.

**QUESTION:** Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is with us. What keeps you up at night?

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** Oh goodness. Lots of things to focus on in the world, but just like you all, right, you just keep focused, you set priorities. I work for a President that understands the incredible importance of American national security, and you get up each day, put your helmet on, and get to work.

**QUESTION:** Just so you'll know, I voted for Donald Trump, so I'll ask you this: Fill in the blank. I wish the President would stop –

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** I'm not going to answer that one for you this morning. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** How about this one then: I wish the President would start –

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** (Laughter.) You're not going to draw me into that.

**QUESTION:** Okay.

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** I think –

**QUESTION:** That's why –

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** I think we're getting it right most days.

**QUESTION:** That's why I said I voted for him, and I didn't mind asking those questions, so – well, thanks for playing along.

**QUESTION:** Yeah, and your timing is perfect. You're there for the last week of the Houston radio – rodeo. The Kings of Leon are playing tonight. Enjoy the concert.

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** I would love to get to that, and Susan and I – my wife – we're from Kansas. We love rodeo too.

**QUESTION:** Yeah. Mike Pompeo –

**QUESTION:** There you go.

**QUESTION:** – the Secretary of State, thanks for the time today.

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** Thank you very much. You all have a good day.

**QUESTION:** Yeah, you too.

**QUESTION:** And keep up the good work by the way, too.

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**QUESTION:** Thanks for serving us.

**SECRETATRY POMPEO:** Thank you very much. Very nice, thank you.

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