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Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON
GLOBAL SECURITY CHALLENGES
AND STRATEGY

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

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1 HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON
2 GLOBAL SECURITY CHALLENGES AND STRATEGY

3
4 Wednesday, February 15, 2023

5
6 U.S. Senate
7 Committee on Armed Services,
8 Washington, D.C.
9

10 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:33 a.m.,
11 in Room G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack
12 Reed, chairman of the committee, presiding.

13 Committee Members Present: Senators Reed [presiding],
14 Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King,
15 Warren, Peters, Manchin, Duckworth, Rosen, Kelly, Wicker,
16 Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Sullivan, Cramer, Scott,
17 Tuberville, Mullin, Budd, and Schmitt.
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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM RHODE ISLAND

3 Chairman Reed: Let me call the hearing to order.
4 Good morning. The committee meets to discuss the global
5 security challenges confronting the United States. Before
6 I introduce our witnesses, I would like to welcome the
7 members of the Armed Services committee to our first public
8 hearing of the 118th Congress.

9 And I am pleased to welcome our new Ranking Member,
10 Senator Roger Wicker. He is a tremendous colleague, and I
11 look forward to working with him leading this committee in
12 the bipartisan fashion that has been done for many, many
13 years.

14 And to our returning members, thank you for your
15 continued service and partnership. And to our new members,
16 Senator Mullin, Senator Budd, and Senator Schmitt, welcome.
17 I look forward to working with each of you. Okay. Now, I
18 have been informed, since we have a quorum, and that is
19 transitory --

20 [Laughter.]

21 Chairman Reed: Since the quorum is now present, I ask
22 the committee to consider 1790, Pending Military
23 Nominations. All of these nominations have been before the
24 committee for the required length of time. Is there a
25 motion to table report this list of 1790, Pending Military

1 Nominations to the Senate?

2 Senator Wicker: So move.

3 Chairman Reed: Is there a second?

4 Voice: Second.

5 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. All in favor,
6 say aye.

7 [Chorus of ayes.]

8 Chairman Reed: The motion carries. Thank you. And
9 returning now to my comments. We are lucky to have our
10 extremely talented witnesses with us today. And we
11 understand there are significant challenges facing us, from
12 China's growing influence, through Russia's reckless
13 aggression on issues faces a complex and dangerous security
14 environment. Prevailing in this environment will require a
15 thoughtful, resolute strategy informed by experts like
16 those before us today.

17 Dr. Bonny Lin is the Director of the China Power
18 Project and Senior Fellow for Asian Security at the Center
19 for Strategic and International Studies. She is an expert
20 on U.S. military strategy in the Indo-Pacific, with
21 leadership experience across the Department of Defense and
22 with the RAND Corporation. Dr. Fiona Hill is a Senior
23 Fellow in the Center on the United States and Europe at the
24 Brookings Institution.

25 Dr. Hill has served as a top advisor for European and

1 Russian policy on the National Security Council, and is an
2 expert on issues related to Russia, Central Asia, energy,
3 and strategic competition.

4 Mr. Roger Zakheim is the Director of the Ronald Reagan
5 Presidential Foundation and Institute. He is an expert on
6 U.S. defense strategy, having served as a professional
7 staff member on the House Armed Services committee and
8 other national security positions. He currently serves on
9 the 2022 National Defense Strategy Commission.

10 Our objective today is to examine the national
11 security issues that this committee should consider as we
12 prepare for the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense
13 Authorization Act. As the Biden Administration's national
14 defense strategy makes clear, China is our primary
15 competitor.

16 It is the only nation with both the intent and the
17 capability to mount a sustained challenge to the security
18 and economic interests of the United States, and its allies
19 and partners around the world.

20 At the same time, Russia remains a violent,
21 destabilizing force. Putin's assault on Ukraine has
22 inflicted horrific suffering on innocent civilians seeking
23 a free and democratic society, it threatens European
24 stability, and harms the global economy. In addition,
25 nations like Iran and North Korea continue to push the

1 boundaries of military brinksmanship, and issues like
2 terrorism and climate change remain persistent. The
3 significance of these threats is widely understood.

4 The question is how to address them in order to deter
5 or mitigate the threat to U.S. national security, and
6 international stability more broadly. To begin, we have to
7 recognize that America faces an existential struggle
8 between democracy and autocracy. Beijing and Moscow seek
9 to change the international order by exploiting vulnerable
10 nations through coercive economic and military pressure.

11 America must offer an alternative to this kind of
12 foreign policy. Given the economic, cultural, and
13 geographic ties between many of our partners in China, we
14 can't ask them to choose between engaging with the United
15 States or China based solely on an economic or military
16 calculation.

17 We should use all our tools of statecraft and build
18 mutually beneficial relationships. Indeed, forging and
19 maintaining strong international partnerships is likely to
20 be the decisive factor in any future conflict. We have
21 seen this through Ukraine's remarkable performance against
22 Russia, and it will hold true also in the Pacific.

23 Our greatest comparative advantage over China is our
24 network of allies and strengthening that network should be
25 at the center of our strategy moving forward. The

1 development of the Quad, involving the United States,
2 Japan, India, and Australia, presents a valuable framework.

3 Similarly, our defense agreement with the Australia
4 and the United Kingdom, known as AUKUS, provides an
5 excellent platform for improving the capabilities of our
6 allies and increasing our engagement in the region.

7 Our adversaries' presence around the globe is
8 evolving. I would ask our witnesses to share their
9 assessment of the Ukraine conflict in a larger context of
10 the evolving international order, as well as the
11 implications for U.S. defense strategy going forward.

12 Similarly, I would like to know what military and
13 nonmilitary factors are most likely to impact Chinese
14 decision making with respect to potential aggression
15 against Taiwan.

16 As the Russian shootdown of the Chinese surveillance
17 balloon in our airspace should remind us, the top priority
18 of the national defense strategy is homeland defense.
19 America's skies and seas must be secure to protect its
20 citizens, and the Department must pursue technologies that
21 provide forward detection to buy decision time for decision
22 makers.

23 Finally, as we adapt to meet these global challenges,
24 we need to consider that we are entering an era of
25 trilateral nuclear competition. The Cold War was

1 essentially a bilateral rivalry between the United States
2 and the Soviet Union, which developed deterrence theory and
3 communications methods based on two competitors.

4 That has changed with the ascendancy of China and its
5 growing nuclear arsenal. I would ask our witnesses to help
6 us understand this new trilateral dynamic and how it may
7 impact efforts to deter the use of nuclear weapons.
8 Ultimately, long term strategic competition is not just a
9 rivalry of military or economic power, but also a
10 competition of ideas. This requires us to develop an
11 understanding of our adversaries' strengths, weaknesses,
12 philosophies, and objectives, as well as our own.

13 This is where the knowledge and insights of the
14 experts before us today are so valuable. I look forward to
15 our witnesses' testimony, and I thank them again for their
16 participation. And let me now recognize and turn to the
17 Ranking Member, Senator Wicker.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. ROGER WICKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 MISSISSIPPI

3 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to
4 congratulate you for once again holding the position of
5 chair of this important committee. As Ranking Member, I
6 hope to and expect to continue the great bipartisanship
7 that has become a tradition of this body.

8 Also, let's take a moment to salute my predecessor,
9 the Honorable Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma. He left us Oklahoma
10 sized cowboy boots to fill, and we are going to do our best
11 to carry his legacy, with a relentless focus on supporting
12 the men and women who protect America every day.

13 I want to salute and recognize the invaluable
14 contributions of our returning members, and welcome three
15 new members of our committee, Senator Mullin from Oklahoma,
16 Senator Budd from North Carolina, and Senator Schmitt from
17 Missouri. Their states play a critical role in defending
18 our nation.

19 Also, there are a number of service members and
20 veterans there. And particularly, I would say to Mr. Budd,
21 my first active-duty station as then Captain Wicker was
22 Seymour Johnson Air Force Base. So I hope you will look
23 out for my buddies there at Seymour Johnson, as well as the
24 entire military.

25 Today's hearing is an important opportunity to speak

1 with experts, and so we welcome them. Particularly
2 important as we begin to craft this year's National Defense
3 Authorization Act, hopefully earlier than usual.

4 The United States faces an increasingly complex and
5 dangerous security environment. Indeed, it is fair to say
6 that this is the most dangerous moment since the Cold War.
7 The Chinese Communist Party is engaged in a massive project
8 of military modernization and its threat to unify, as they
9 say, and I would say invade, Taiwan becomes clearer every
10 day.

11 Nearly one year ago, Beijing's junior partner, Russia,
12 launched an unprovoked and brutal invasion of Ukraine.
13 This war poses a direct threat to peace and prosperity on
14 the European continent and to America's vital economic and
15 security interests. Moscow's war machine in Ukraine is
16 aided by Iran.

17 In addition to supplying Russia with lethal drones,
18 Iran continues to spread mayhem elsewhere as it marches
19 closer toward a nuclear weapons capability. Iran's
20 volatility and malign influence is matched by North Korea.
21 The 38th parallel remains one of the most dangerous places
22 in the world.

23 Further, we cannot take our eye off the global war on
24 terror. Global terrorist organizations continue to
25 recruit, train, and operate in the greater Middle East and

1 beyond, and pose a direct threat to us here in our
2 homeland.

3 Our first job in this community is to provide the
4 tools our military needs to deter and defeat these threats.
5 There is no doubt that continued real growth in the defense
6 budget top line above inflation, real growth above
7 inflation is an absolute necessity, a bare necessity. We
8 are in the crucial years of this military competition and
9 we cannot afford to let our guard down, Mr. Chairman.

10 This committee led the bipartisan charge to increase
11 the defense budget in last year's cycle, a successful
12 effort. I hope our witnesses will provide their views on
13 the defense budget top line and the need to resource our
14 warfighters, as well as initial thoughts on how to tackle
15 the manifold threats we face from adversaries abroad.

16 The war in Ukraine illustrates the importance of
17 properly funding our military. On a bipartisan basis,
18 Congress has provided billions of dollars of equipment and
19 munitions to help the Ukrainian armed forces defend their
20 country's sovereignty and independence.

21 Although we have provided considerable resources, I
22 remain disappointed that the Administration has been
23 hesitant to provide Ukraine with advanced capabilities to
24 secure victory.

25 Time and again the Administration's reluctance to

1 provide rapid delivery of critical capabilities, stingers,
2 javelins, HIMARS, and Abrams, to name a few, has cost the
3 Ukrainians valuable time. It has led to the projected
4 battle of attrition we may be seeing today.

5 So I would ask our witnesses to comment on the war and
6 suggest ways that this committee can continue to help the
7 brave and steadfast Ukrainian troops actually win, actually
8 win, rather than preserve the stalemate.

9 Now, here at home, the war in Ukraine has exposed
10 shortcomings in our defense industrial base and supply
11 chains. Expanding our lines of production, especially for
12 critical munitions, should continue to be a priority this
13 year. I would welcome our witnesses' perspective on this
14 issue and how it applies to the Taiwan situation.

15 The defense industrial base is not only important for
16 today's fight in Ukraine but of supreme importance for the
17 competition with the Chinese Communist Party. Both the
18 Trump and Biden Administrations have placed strategic
19 competition with China as the top priority for the national
20 defense strategy.

21 The previous Republican Administration and the current
22 Democratic Administration are together, have been together
23 on this issue. Winning this competition will require a
24 significant investment.

25 And developing and fielding game changing technologies

1 that will keep us a step ahead of Beijing, in addition to
2 developing transformational technology, competing -- out
3 competing China will require increased production of
4 platforms and weapon systems such as our battle fleet of
5 ships.

6 Congress proved last year that it could take bold
7 steps to advantage the United States by passing the CHIPS
8 and Science Act. We would be interested in our witnesses'
9 views on how this committee can help the Department of
10 Defense focus on the long term strategic competition with
11 the Chinese Communist Party in this respect.

12 So I thank our witnesses. I thank the indulgence of
13 my friend the chair. I would note that the namesake of Mr.
14 Zakheim's Institute of President Reagan, summed up his
15 national security policy as peace through strength, and I
16 hope all of my colleagues continue to keep that motto in
17 mind as we embark on this very important year. Thank you.

18 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Wicker. Dr. Lin,
19 please.

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1 STATEMENT OF BONNY LIN, DIRECTOR, CHINA POWER PROJECT
2 AND SENIOR FELLOW, ASIAN SECURITY, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC &
3 INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

4 Dr. Lin: Thank you, Chairman Reed, Ranking Member
5 Wicker, and distinguished members of the Senate committee
6 on Armed Services. Thank you for the opportunity today to
7 testify at this important hearing.

8 I will focus on three issues, the nature of the PRC
9 challenge, what the United States is doing, and how China
10 is responding. The 2022 U.S. National Security Strategy
11 appropriately identifies China as the only competitor with
12 both the intent to reshape international order, and
13 increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and
14 technological power to do it. China continues to coerce
15 U.S. allies and partners.

16 China continues to engage in rapid military monitors
17 issue of its conventional and nuclear capabilities to
18 become a world class military on par with the United States
19 by 2049. On critical global challenges such as Russia's
20 invasion of Ukraine, China's role remains problematic. The
21 difficulty of dealing with China is magnified by Xi
22 Jinping's dismantling of collective political leadership
23 and the establishment of himself as a sole leader of China.

24 With respect to the U.S. approach to the PRC, the
25 Biden Administration has identified and made significant

1 progress in three areas, invest, align, and compete.

2 First, the Biden Administration has worked with Congress to
3 invest over \$1 trillion at home to improve U.S. economic
4 innovation and competitiveness.

5 This includes the 2021 bipartisan infrastructure law,
6 2022 CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction
7 Act. Second, the United States has trained its unique
8 advantage we have over the PRC, our alliances and
9 partnerships.

10 For example, Japan now not only shares a common
11 strategic vision with the United States but is also
12 committed to do far more than its own defense. Australia
13 has agreed to enhance force posture cooperation and more
14 U.S. rotational presence.

15 The Philippines has provided the United States with
16 access to four additional military locations. The United
17 States has resumed large scale military drills with South
18 Korea. The Biden Administration is also facilitating
19 greater cooperation between allies and partners.

20 This includes the U.S., Japan, Australia, a U.S.,
21 Japan, ROK trilateral cooperation, AUKUS and the Quad.
22 NATO is also increasingly engaging with Indo-Pacific
23 countries. Third and central to the U.S. approach to the
24 PRC is a need to outcompete China.

25 DOD has prioritized PRC as the pacing challenge and

1 Taiwan continues as the pacing scenario. The problem in
2 defense is improving U.S. posture and presence, logistics
3 and pre-positioned material, and infrastructure throughout
4 the Indo-Pacific. The United States is enhancing joint,
5 allied, and partner capabilities, increasing training and
6 information sharing, and co-developing critical and
7 emerging technologies.

8 DOD is also investing in new operational concepts to
9 fight in a highly contested environment. The Biden
10 Administration has made clear that engagement with China is
11 necessary to prevent competition from spiraling into
12 conflict. However, U.S. engagement efforts to date are
13 prone to disruption, and the PRC continues to stonewall
14 calls for critical dialogs.

15 Overall, the U.S. approach towards the PRC has
16 encouraged Beijing to compete more against the United
17 States and our allies and partners. The PRC blames the
18 United States and our allies and partners for its -- what
19 it views as its deteriorating security environment and does
20 not view its behavior as problematic.

21 We have not seen any clear indicators of dampening PRC
22 ambitions or activities. There is a real risk that Beijing
23 could miscalculate, and intensifying U.S.-China competition
24 could lead to confrontation.

25 Moving forward, the United States needs to continue to

1 deepen our alliances and partnerships and strengthen this
2 critical advantage that we have. The Biden Administration
3 also needs to bolster its economic strategy towards the
4 PRC.

5 If joining the CPTPP is completely off the table, the
6 United States should look at other bilateral or
7 multilateral arrangements. The United States should also
8 continue to work with our coalition of friends to counter
9 PRC economic coercion.

10 The United also needs to continue to invest in our
11 military to ensure that DOD has the resources needed to
12 train and invest in our capabilities to deny PRC
13 aggression, and to build a more resilient and dispersed
14 U.S. posture.

15 And finally, the United States needs to maintain high
16 level engagements with China and expand people to people
17 contacts. Thank you.

18 [The prepared statement of Dr. Lin follows:]

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Chairman Reed: Thank you, Dr. Lin. Dr. Hill, please.

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1 STATEMENT OF FIONA HILL, SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER ON THE
2 UNITED STATES AND EUROPE, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

3 Dr. Hill: Thank you so much, Chairman Reed, and
4 Senator Wicker. It is a great honor to be with you, my
5 fellow witnesses, the members of the committee today.

6 Before I begin my opening remarks, I would just like
7 to flag that I have a news article in Foreign Affairs with
8 my colleague Angela Stent on this very topic, and I would
9 just ask that that could be submitted for the record so the
10 members and staff could read it later.

11 Chairman Reed: Without objection.

12 Dr. Hill: Thank you. I want to focus on one specific
13 challenge in my opening remarks and look forward to
14 answering the questions that you and Senator Wicker laid
15 out in your opening statements.

16 But first of all, just as you, Senator Reed,
17 emphasized in your introduction, Russia's invasion of
18 Ukraine in February 2022 was an assault on the post-World
19 War II global order. And the war in Ukraine has
20 necessitated the third intervention by the United States
21 and a European conflict in a little over a century, and
22 what will now likely be our third attempt at revamping the
23 international security system.

24 Now, this world order wasn't just our order, but a set
25 of rules that all nations, including Russia and its

1 predecessor, the Soviet Union, had agreed to. Russia
2 violated the United Nations charter and fundamental
3 principles of international law by attacking an independent
4 state that had been recognized by all the international
5 community, including Russia itself, for more than 30 years.

6 So, the current challenge in Europe is how to craft a
7 more durable, regional security arrangement that rolls back
8 Russia's land grab in Ukraine, is embraced by all
9 Europeans, and sets a precedent for reinvigorating the
10 largest set of international agreements. We need to find a
11 formula that is not entirely dependent on the military and
12 economic power of the United States or its political
13 leadership to ensure long term success.

14 The European security environment was irrevocably
15 altered or ruptured in 2014 when Russia annexed Ukraine's
16 Crimean Peninsula and sparked off a brutal conflict and
17 proxy war in the Donbas region.

18 None of the United States and Europe's mechanisms and
19 practices for keeping the peace after World War II and
20 during the Cold War had much, if any, effect on deterring
21 Russia from seizing Crimea in 2014, or attempting to take
22 Kiev and the rest of Ukraine in 2022.

23 Western deterrence failed in part because American and
24 European policy makers never meaningfully emphasized the
25 West's red lines. Indeed, one might even ask, what were

1 our red lines? Because we certainly did not appear to
2 uphold the post-World War II principle of ensuring
3 independent state sovereignty and territorial integrity
4 after 2014.

5 And instead, European leaders, led by Germany and
6 France, rushed to push Russia's annexation of Crimea to one
7 side and broker a quick peace settlement in Donbas, the
8 Minsk Accords, which would have limited Ukraine's
9 sovereignty if fully implemented.

10 The tepid Western political response to Russia's
11 violation of Ukraine's territory and the limited
12 application of sanctions after this first invasion
13 convinced Moscow that attacking Ukraine was not, in fact, a
14 serious breach of post-World War II norms, and Western
15 commentary since 2014 has more frequently focused on the
16 risk of stepping over Russia's red lines rather than
17 enforcing the West's.

18 We have spent more time contemplating the perils of
19 provoking Russia's mercurial President Vladimir Putin, than
20 the merits of bolstering Europe's resilience to Putin's
21 coercive power.

22 In charting a path forward, we need to recognize that
23 the war in Ukraine has been brewing for decades because of
24 a key distinction in the way that the international
25 community and the United States approach the collapse of

1 the Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

2 In the chaos of Yugoslavia, the country was dissolved
3 without the recognition of a single successor state.

4 Serbia's territorial claims against all of its members were
5 rejected. In the case of the USSR, the United States and
6 every other country recognized Russia as the sole successor
7 state.

8 Moscow inherited the Soviet Union's U.N. Security
9 Council seat and its other privileges and obligations, as
10 well as it seemed, the Soviet Union's Cold War sphere of
11 influence in Eastern Europe. Ukraine, along with all the
12 other former Soviet republics, fell into a gray zone where
13 Russia's interests seemed to trump theirs, and they were
14 deemed by all of us, Russia's near abroad.

15 Vladimir Putin has repeatedly stated that Moscow has
16 the right to dominate this neighborhood and claim lost
17 territory. For Putin, the war in Ukraine is a continuation
18 of the Soviet struggle with the United States to carve up
19 Europe after 1945.

20 Russia sees NATO as a U.S. Cold-War bloc, a cover for
21 American imperialism, and not as an alliance of equals to
22 ensure common defense and security. So in this context for
23 Russia, NATO's post-Cold War expansion and Ukraine's
24 reluctance to implement the Minsk Accords in Donbas became
25 the current war's casus belli.

1 So redefining European security and restoring
2 deterrence will involve explicitly countering this
3 narrative. Building an international coalition against
4 Russia's aggression to facilitate the eventual settlement
5 of the war in Ukraine will require the same.

6 The U.S. and its allies must clarify and emphasize
7 that they are supporting Ukraine on the battlefield to
8 uphold the United Nations charter and international law.
9 We need to step up our diplomatic efforts, including in the
10 UN, to convince friends and middle powers in the so-called
11 global South that our goal is not to return Western
12 supremacy, but to keep the world safer for every nation.

13 If Russia succeeds in carving up Ukraine, then the
14 future sovereignty and territorial integrity of other
15 states could be imperiled, so upholding international norms
16 must once again be a central part of our global security
17 strategy. Thank you so much for your time.

18 [The prepared statement of Dr. Hill follow:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Dr. Hill. Mr. Zakheim,
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1 STATEMENT OF ROGER ZAKHEIM, DIRECTOR, RONALD REAGAN
2 PRESIDENTIAL FOUNDATION AND INSTITUTE

3 Mr. Zakheim: Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Wicker,
4 and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for
5 inviting me to testify today on global security challenges
6 and strategy. Less than a year ago, I had the honor of
7 testifying before this committee, when, as many of you will
8 recall, the world witnessed Russia's massive military
9 convoy assembled on the road to Kiev.

10 One year later, that convoy of armor and steel is no
11 more. The Russian military failed to seize Kiev, and
12 Ukrainians are valiantly fighting to preserve their freedom
13 and sovereignty. We have learned a lot in a year, some of
14 which is worth reviewing as we consider the state of our
15 national security strategy and the efficacy of the national
16 defense strategy.

17 First, we have learned that supporting Ukraine with
18 military capabilities necessary to defend their sovereign
19 territory will not lead to escalation or spillover.
20 Instead, Western support has helped transform the
21 battlefield, badly damaging Russia's military capabilities,
22 and moderated for now, Putin's military objectives.

23 Going forward, our support to Ukraine, be it with
24 tanks, drones, aircraft or missiles, should be tailored to
25 executing a counter offensive strategy that rolls back

1 Russia's gains and restores Ukraine's sovereign territory.

2 We have also learned that the war in Ukraine has
3 revealed how the digital age is leveling the playing field
4 between great powers and smaller countries. Ukraine has
5 skillfully deployed precision munitions, drone technology,
6 and sophisticated encrypted software to gain the upper hand
7 against Russia's invading conventional military.

8 But while Russia's military conventional force is
9 badly damaged, it is not defeated. We stand at the
10 precipice of a new stage in the war, where Ukraine will
11 need tanks and other conventional offensive platforms in
12 order to dislodge entrenched Russian forces.

13 Russia's war in Ukraine demonstrates that conventional
14 forces still matter. Submarines, tanks, fighting bombers,
15 munitions, and end strength cannot be sacrificed in favor
16 of a future capability that merely exists on a PowerPoint
17 slide.

18 We need to sustain our conventional capability to
19 prevail in today's conflicts. Third, industrial capacity
20 may be America's Achilles heel as we implement our national
21 defense strategy.

22 As Ranking Member Wicker pointed out, this is a key
23 area of focus for this committee. Just in time
24 manufacturing, which products are made only to meet
25 existing immediate demand, may make business sense for big

1 box stores and their suppliers, but the war in Ukraine
2 makes clear that just in time means out of time on the
3 battlefield.

4 The effort to deploy, arm, feed, and supply forces is
5 a monumental task, and the massive consumption of equipment
6 systems, vehicles, and munitions requires a large scale
7 industrial base for resupply.

8 These takeaways lead to a more general observation
9 that realizing the objectives of our national defense
10 strategy requires a builders' mindset. Now is a time to
11 build a force capable of winning today and tomorrow. The
12 challenge before this committee is to ensure the NDS is
13 executed.

14 To do so, I recommend the following steps which I
15 outline in depth in my written testimony, which I hope is
16 considered for the record. Number one, prioritize winning
17 today by countering China. Number two, investing in
18 winning tomorrow. And three, resourcing the demands of the
19 National Defense Strategy.

20 China's recent brazen breach of U.S. airspace is just
21 the latest case of aggressive and provocative actions by
22 the CCP. The primary test of the NDS is whether we are
23 able to deter China from seizing control of Taiwan and
24 arrest its pursuit of hegemony in the Indo-Pacific.

25 Its actions in the Taiwan Strait, combined with its

1 robust military modernization program, suggests Beijing is
2 considering this sooner rather than later. While we have
3 made and this committee has done a remarkable job of
4 progress in areas of warfighting that are relevant to the
5 Taiwan scenario, more is needed for other high end
6 munitions relevant in the Western Pacific.

7 While our force must be capable of deterring
8 adventurism and the present competition with China, it must
9 also be prepared for a future 21st century conflict. We
10 are far below the scale of investment required to replace
11 air, land, and sea platforms with AI infused autonomous
12 systems.

13 In comparison, as this committee knows, China is
14 rapidly incorporating the achievements of its commercial
15 sector into its military monetization. Not since the
16 Reagan Administration has our country committed itself to
17 sustained multiyear rebuilding of our military. Executing
18 this defense strategy, one, as was pointed out, is a line
19 between the Trump and Biden Administrations.

20 It requires a jump from today's spending levels of
21 just 3 percent GDP to what I believe around 5 percent GDP.
22 As Congress debates how to manage spending amidst the debt
23 ceiling negotiations, it should be mindful that cutting
24 defense to Fiscal Year 2022 levels, which would be about 10
25 percent of the top line, would render the defense strategy

1 non-executable. It would reduce our military to nothing
2 more than a regional force.

3 Our defense strategy seeks to preserve American peace
4 and prosperity by building and sustaining the U.S. military
5 that maintains what President Reagan called the margin of
6 safety. Notably, this is not the most ambitious defense
7 strategy. It does not seek military dominance everywhere,
8 nor does it call for a force capable of winning two
9 conflicts simultaneously.

10 Rather, it is a strategy prudently tailored to address
11 the security needs of the country, not the political
12 calculus of the moment, ensuring no foreign power threatens
13 our interests. Thank you.

14 [The prepared statement of Mr. Zakheim follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Zakheim.
2 Thank you to all the witnesses for your excellent
3 testimony. And all of your written statements will be made
4 part of the record. Without objection, thank you. Dr.
5 Hill, President Putin has made several speeches over the
6 years where he has made it clear he wants to restore the
7 Russian Empire.

8 So if he succeeds in the Ukraine, can we have
9 reasonable certainty he will continue these efforts in
10 other countries?

11 Dr. Hill: Well I think, Senator, that we can. He has
12 already made it very clear, as you have discussed, that he
13 is interested in acquiring territory in what was the former
14 Russian empire.

15 As I mentioned in my opening remarks, we recognized
16 Russia as the successor state to the Soviet Union, which
17 was itself the successors to the Russian Empire. And in
18 fact, we incorporated many of the territories that were
19 lost after the Russian Revolution.

20 So Putin has made it very clear, of course, the
21 priorities of the Slavic states, Belarus and Ukraine, but
22 also Moldova.

23 And we have just heard recently in the last few days,
24 I am sure people have been reading the press reports that
25 the Moldovan government feels under incredible strain and

1 has been getting intel itself that Russia is planning, you
2 know, some kind of aggression against them.

3 And of course, also Kazakhstan, because northern
4 Kazakhstan was settled by Slavs, Ukrainians and Russians,
5 in the Soviet period. So all of those countries feel a
6 great deal of anxiety.

7 We can also say, of course, that our allies and
8 partners in Poland, the Baltic states, which were forcibly
9 taken into the Soviet Union during World War II, Finland,
10 which was attacked by the Soviet Union 1939, 1940, and
11 other countries in the neighborhood feel similarly
12 threatened by this expansionary nature of Russian aims.

13 And Putin has said the world needs to get used to the
14 fact that Russia is territory expanding again. And in
15 fact, Sergei Lavrov, the Foreign Minister of Russia, has
16 demanded that the rest of Europe accept these new
17 realities.

18 So even if we were to have a settlement based on some
19 kind of recognition of the frontier lines that are now
20 holding on the front, even a temporary one, we should be
21 very certain that Russia, under Putin, and the people
22 around him will look for every opportunity to push beyond
23 that at some time in the future.

24 In fact, that is what we have seen in Ukraine from the
25 beginning. 2014 was the beginning of a process, not the

1 end of Russia's territorial aims.

2 Chairman Reed: Now, you mentioned settlement. Can
3 you give us any indication of what it would take to get
4 Putin to sit down and have some type of settlement?

5 Dr. Hill: Well, right now there is not much
6 indication of that, just to be frank. I mean, I think this
7 is a pretty grim picture, in part because Putin didn't feel
8 deterred in the first place. I think, you know, all of us
9 have mentioned here.

10 The other thing is that Putin also feels that he has a
11 lot of support from the rest of the world, including from
12 China. And I think it would be very interesting to hear
13 from Dr. Lin about really what China's views of this are
14 now.

15 Because unfortunately, it may very well take countries
16 like China pushing Russia for there to be any break in
17 Putin's resolve at this particular moment. It would have
18 to be, I think, other countries beyond the United States
19 and its Western allies, demonstrating to Putin in some
20 fashion behind the scenes or more directly, that this war
21 is not in their interests and that they want him to move
22 towards the negotiating table.

23 Right now, the circumstances on the ground are such
24 that Putin really believes that he can push more manpower.
25 This gets back to what Mr. Zakheim was already saying about

1 the importance of looking at the battlefield. But we need
2 to have a diplomatic initiative. We need to get the rest
3 of the international community behind us in support of
4 pushing Russia back.

5 Chairman Reed: Thank you. And I always recognize an
6 excellent question. So, Dr. Lin, can you comment upon the
7 Chinese reaction to Ukraine, and particularly their
8 willingness at some point to step up and help contain. I
9 would note that they made statements against the use of
10 nuclear weapons, which are somewhat encouraging. Dr. Lin.

11 Dr. Lin: Sure, thank you. So, Senator Reed, if you
12 recall at the very beginning of Russia's invasion of
13 Ukraine, the position that China took was, I would say,
14 very, very much pro-Russia. A two day China decision is
15 still that the United States and our NATO allies are
16 responsible for Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

17 And what we are seeing is some shift since last year
18 of China's position in terms of not fully taking Russia's
19 position politically, as China wants to salvage its
20 relationship with particularly our European colleagues.

21 We are also seeing that there is increasing reporting
22 of Chinese support by select smaller Chinese companies, for
23 example, providing of surveillance equipment for the Wagner
24 Group, as well as Russian operations in Ukraine. And we
25 also know that China's trade with Russia increased 34

1 percent last year.

2 So as we move forward, I think one thing we need to
3 pay attention to is what might push China more in Russia's
4 direction. And I worry that as China looks at how strong
5 our position is with our allies and partners, China may
6 feel it needs a stronger partner internationally and
7 doesn't have too many options, and Russia is unfortunately
8 one of the partners that China is keen to keep.

9 Chairman Reed: Doctor Zak -- Mr. Zakheim, excuse me,
10 I get confused. Can you comment briefly, very brief
11 because my time is running out, about this, the issue of
12 the dynamic between China and Russia.

13 Mr. Zakheim: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate
14 the elevation. You know, we saw that around the Winter
15 Olympics and they made this explicit when Putin and Xi met.
16 We are not seeing it on the operational side in terms of
17 the military support like we are seeing between Iran and
18 Russia.

19 But I think, as my colleague pointed out, it is the
20 diplomatic support, legitimizing, equivocating in terms of
21 what is and is not permissible is where China, I think, is
22 helping Russia the most. Legitimizing war crimes would be
23 the first example I would point to.

24 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. Senator Wicker,
25 please.

1 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr.
2 Zakheim, you participated in the current development of the
3 National Defense Strategy and the previous National defense
4 strategy. Is that correct?

5 Mr. Zakheim: I had an opportunity to be on the
6 Defense Strategy Commission to review the former one, and
7 we will review the present one.

8 Senator Wicker: In your testimony, you make a case
9 for real growth in the defense budget. That's real
10 purchasing power over and above what is being taken out by
11 inflation. And you talk about measuring our defense
12 contribution in terms of a percentage of the GDP.

13 Why is that a good way to measure it? And you talked
14 toward the end of your testimony, your written testimony,
15 about how we could still -- we can do that and still
16 achieve some real savings and efficiencies.

17 Mr. Zakheim: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. GDP, I
18 think, is a good way to look historically of what our
19 country, our nation has devoted to national defense. As
20 you know, we are below 3.5 percent GDP and declining in the
21 out years.

22 Historically, we have been over 10 percent. During
23 the Reagan buildup, we were between 5 and 6 percent.

24 And I think the combination terms of where our
25 military is today, and that is a force that hasn't actually

1 been modernized since the Reagan buildup for a variety of
2 reasons, either peace dividends or what we have spent on
3 armed conflict, plus inflationary challenges, plus the
4 national environment, which my colleagues have outlined in
5 their testimony, requires doing this.

6 And I think there are three fundamental pieces here
7 that are required. I think of it as winning today, which
8 is taking our conventional force and upgrading it. I think
9 it is leveraging the technologies that will transform our
10 military, that China is doing as well.

11 That requires a whole new suite of investments led by
12 autonomy in every domain of warfare. And the third, as you
13 have pointed out and lead on, Senator Wicker, industrial
14 capacity. The reality that we have seen from Ukraine, it
15 will play out. We are seeing it right now in terms of
16 backlog in supporting Taiwan.

17 And what we need for our own national defense, we just
18 don't have the industrial capacity to keep up. If you add
19 all three of them, Chairman, Ranking Member I wouldn't
20 disagree with you, but I am not sure 5 percent real growth
21 is enough to get there. And what I am trying to get to is
22 what the national defense strategy actually calls for.

23 This is what the defense strategy says it seeks to do
24 in terms of leading in three regions of the world, being
25 able to compete today, and to prevail one conflict, while

1 holding another adversary preventing a second conflict. To
2 do all that requires a force that we simply don't have
3 today and capabilities we don't have enough of today.

4 Senator Wicker: Well, that is a very important
5 statement you just made. So it really, in terms of what we
6 need, we need to quantify exactly what we need to buy in
7 the near and foreseeable future, and that might be more
8 than 5 percent.

9 Mr. Zakheim: I believe so. Ranking Member Wicker and
10 Chairman Reed, I think this committee, what you have done
11 in terms of adding to the defense request has gone a long
12 way. I know it is hard to do, but I don't believe it is
13 insufficient.

14 Senator Wicker: Dr. Hill, what about that?

15 Dr. Hill: Well, I -- obviously planning ahead and
16 trying to, you know, foresee where we might end up is
17 pretty difficult, given as Mr. Zakheim is talking about,
18 the capacity issues that have been revealed by the war in
19 Ukraine. I mean, right now, unfortunately, it is very hard
20 to say how long this is going to continue.

21 But I think one thing that we do have to factor in
22 here is, you know, sadly listening to Dr. Lin, it seems
23 more and more likely that China and Russia will find their
24 interests converging, as they already have up until this
25 date. But we might be actually dealing with problems on

1 two fronts for a long time to come.

2 I think, you know, something to add to what Dr. Lin
3 said is China has no interest in Russia losing in this war,
4 and in fact, might in fact have a vested interest in this
5 war going on in Ukraine as long as possible, because, of
6 course, it does take up a large amount of equipment and
7 armaments, particularly ammunition, as we now know, and the
8 increasing demands from Ukraine, which are tied very much
9 to the battlefield, for other equipment.

10 We have seen our other allies from Europe, not just
11 NATO countries but others, stepping up to assist Ukraine
12 here too. So there is a question about their production
13 capacity. And I think that we should factor in as well
14 what the European militaries are going to require, too,
15 because they are also dependent on our production.

16 Senator Wicker: Do you agree that the Russian
17 offensive seems to have stalled? And if there were a
18 successful counter offensive by Ukraine in the next 2 to 3
19 months, China would pay attention to that and perhaps alter
20 their ambitions.

21 Dr. Hill: It is possible. I think, you know, again,
22 we know that it is extraordinarily difficult now for the
23 Ukrainians to dislodge the Russians from certain positions.
24 They have dug in very heavily in Zaporizhzhia and Kherson.

25 We are seeing this World War I like fighting on the

1 front line in the Donbass region. I think all of us are
2 looking at this, not just military experts, but others see
3 that this is going to be quite a grind.

4 And I think, you know, China obviously is watching
5 this very closely. The situation in Taiwan is quite
6 difficult. And this is a maritime challenge, not one of
7 land warfare. And actually, one thing to bear in mind is
8 the Russian navy has not really been affected by this.
9 And, you know, we are seeing these joint naval exercises
10 with South Africa.

11 That is why I mentioned the importance of getting two
12 middle powers and other, you know, friends in the global
13 South with China and Russia that might show, you know,
14 different kinds of offensives or actions that Russia could
15 take to distract us from what is happening in Ukraine.

16 As I said, this is extraordinary difficult situation
17 that we are in, but I think we would make a mistake if we
18 think if China and what Russia is doing as two separate
19 things. I think right now they are melded together and we
20 have to have a 360 degree perspective around this,
21 including what our other allies and partners can bring to
22 the table.

23 Senator Wicker: Thank you. And thank you, Mr.
24 Chairman.

25 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Wicker. Senator

1 Gillibrand, please.

2 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And
3 thank you all for your testimony. I want to drill down on
4 this convergence of China, Russia, Iran, and the concerns
5 that you have all expressed about how these world powers
6 are aligning.

7 China has been projecting power in many ways for a
8 long time the last 10 or 15 years. Their doubling of their
9 military budget, their investment in Belt and Road
10 initiative to create bases, create opportunities worldwide
11 to project their power.

12 Russia has been projecting its power through an
13 invasion of Ukraine. What they are doing in Moldova right
14 now. A constant push of their power. And Iran has been
15 projecting its power through conflict, through the use of
16 proxies, through constant malign activities. And so I
17 would like your recommendations on the best way to try to
18 create a deterrence, a stronger deterrence against
19 conflict.

20 Ways to establish the future or path to peace with all
21 of these different regions. And specifically with
22 addressing China, Dr. Lin, you talked about building up our
23 allies, our partners to maximize our deterrence
24 capabilities and demonstrate a united front in the region.
25 I would love some more specific ideas about how best to do

1 that, whether that means basing agreements for deployments,
2 whether that means any other alignment that you think is
3 useful as a way to promote deterrence.

4 I would also like to hear about ways that we may be
5 able to deter Iran and Russia. One of the ideas I would
6 like your thoughts on is the Abraham Accords, specifically
7 as a way to create a regional alliance across the Middle
8 East against Iran, to counter Iran, and also to push those
9 Middle East countries from aligning with China.

10 Because when we are absent, the gap is filled and we
11 don't want that gap being filled by China. Many of our
12 allies, that gap was filled by Russia. Russia gives them
13 their weapons. Russia makes different kinds of
14 investments. And when we don't participate in these
15 international agreements and collaborations, the gap is
16 filled by, unfortunately, others who do not align with our
17 interests or values.

18 So I would like your thoughts on each of these
19 questions, and your best recommendations for how do we
20 create long term alignments for peace? How do we deter
21 conflict, especially with China, and especially with Iran
22 in the future?

23 Dr. Lin: Thank you, Senator. I can take a quick stab
24 at the range of questions, excellent questions that you
25 had. You mentioned the China, Russia, Iran alignment. I

1 would just note that the stronger of them is between China
2 and Russia, whereas the China, Iran one is one that is
3 still growing.

4 And if you look today, the Iranian President is
5 actually in China meeting with Xi Jinping. And one of the
6 reasons why he is there is because of the fact that he
7 wants to make sure that China can move as fast as possible
8 on the major agreements that were signed last year.

9 But he also recognizes that China is trying to do
10 somewhat of a balancing act in the Middle East with the
11 fact that China is heavily dependent on oil from Saudi
12 Arabia and also recently signed major agreements with the
13 Gulf Cooperation Council.

14 So I would just note that the China, Iran relation is
15 one to watch, but I don't think it is, from China's view,
16 as strategically important as Russia right now, given the
17 fact that Russia is significantly much more powerful than
18 Iran, and also besides that Russia is China's neighbor.

19 In terms of what the United States can do to further
20 bolster our alliances and partnerships, what we already --
21 we already have many developments underway. A couple that
22 I will highlight that I think are worth very much following
23 up on is recently we saw the greater alignment between NATO
24 and four East Asian countries, South Korea, Japan,
25 Australia, New Zealand.

1 And my understanding is NATO seeks to normalize that.
2 We should try to support that as much as possible,
3 increasing, as Dr. Hill mentioned, increasing the linkages
4 between our European allies and partners, and our critical
5 allies in the Indo-Pacific.

6 I would also note there has been consideration of
7 whether Japan might join AUKUS. All of these developments
8 that we already have underway we should continue. For
9 example, U.S., Japan, Australia, trilateral, the U.S., ROK,
10 Japan trilateral. All of these are incredibly important in
11 terms of our positioning in the Indo-Pacific. Thank you.

12 Dr. Hill: I would like to agree with what my
13 colleague, Dr. Lin, has just said about the importance of
14 creating all the linkages with the various alliance
15 structures and partnerships that we already have.

16 One of the things that I probably should have
17 mentioned, you know, before about Russia's aims throughout
18 this war and Ukraine is to begin to create new alliances
19 for Russia as well.

20 As Dr. Lin pointed out, Russia is one of the few close
21 partners of China at this point, but that is the same for
22 Russia. And although, you know, Russia has emphasized a
23 great deal in terms of partnership building in Middle East,
24 for example, in other parts of East Asia, and Latin and
25 South America, trying to revitalize old Soviet ties, the

1 close relationship between Russia and Iran has been a
2 problem there.

3 And, Senator, as you pointed out with the Abraham
4 Accords, one of the main factors for those Accords was, of
5 course, opposition to Iran and Iran's role in the region.
6 And if Russia remains the only power that has relations
7 with Iran, that will actually become a problem in its other
8 relationships over time, including with Israel and some of
9 its other close partners, the UAE, for example.

10 So I think we do absolutely have to find ways in which
11 we can work with these sort of middle powers, and others
12 that, you know, so far are trying to sit on the fence and,
13 you know, watch us from a distance because they frankly
14 don't want to choose sides.

15 India, you know, is one of those countries that has a
16 crisis at the moment because India's relationships with
17 Russia were an important counterpart for India against
18 China. And of course, the closer the China and Russia pull
19 together, the more untenable India's own security position
20 becomes.

21 We should also pay attention to the so-called BRICS,
22 Brazil, Russia and India. I have already said China and
23 South Africa. I mentioned already this, but the new naval
24 exercises that South Africa and Russia and China are
25 conducting, I mean, we should make it very clear to South

1 Africa that that is just not acceptable.

2 And other countries should be doing that, too. It
3 shouldn't just be the United States stepping out there. We
4 have just had President Biden visiting with President Lula
5 in Brazil. Brazil is eager to take a larger international
6 role.

7 We should try to capitalize upon that. We need to
8 really think about how we can reinvigorate our own
9 relationships with middle powers on countries in all of the
10 key areas of Asia, Latin and South America, and Africa.

11 That should be part of our strategy. And one area in
12 which we could focus on this, it is not perhaps in the
13 mandate of this particular committee, but is focusing on
14 the combination of fuel, food, and fertilizer.

15 Because one of the key things that we have seen as a
16 result of this war in Ukraine is how important Ukraine,
17 Russia, Kazakhstan, the Black Sea area for global food
18 supplies, fertilizer, which is, of course, tied together,
19 and also flows of fuel.

20 And this is where we really have a lot of leverage
21 with other powers, because they have been dependent on all
22 of those flows and have been very concerned about the
23 impact of this war. And this also includes China, which
24 was a major investor in Ukraine prior to the outbreak of
25 war, particularly in the agricultural sector.

1 So there may be something there that we can look up as
2 a recommendation for emphasizing in our outreach.

3 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Gillibrand. And
4 Mr. Zakheim, for the record, you can submit something, if
5 you would. Thank you. Senator Fischer, please.

6 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr.
7 Zakheim, what do you see as being the primary lessons
8 learned from the war in Ukraine thus far?

9 Mr. Zakheim: The number one lesson is that we are --
10 should stand and we will advance our interests by standing
11 with Ukraine. That aggression needs to be countered, and
12 if we do so, that is not going to be escalatory, but in
13 fact, stabilizing.

14 And I think the best thing we can do for our national
15 interests is to see Russia defeated in Ukraine. And this
16 committee and this Congress has done a lot to support
17 Ukraine in realizing that.

18 I think we have to start measuring our support for
19 Ukraine by the particular weapons platform that is on the
20 table and think more broadly and strategically, what is our
21 aim, what is our goal?

22 The goal is to roll back Russia, to support Ukraine in
23 their counter-offensive, and we should be supporting them
24 with the necessary munitions and platforms to realize that
25 objective.

1 That will return security and stability to Europe and
2 deter Vladimir Putin. He has never been deterred because
3 he has never had to deal with a counter to his aggression.
4 We have talked about 2014 Crimea.

5 As the Senator knows, start in 2008 with Georgia.
6 This is the first time we have had the counter, and we need
7 to pull it, and support it through to the end.

8 Senator Fischer: One thing that I have been focused
9 on from the very beginning is our munitions capacity, and
10 the production that we see, when you say -- I thought you
11 kind of glossed over that on your answer, and I think there
12 is a real and urgent need to expand munition production
13 capacity as quickly as possible, not just to address the
14 ongoing war that we see in Ukraine.

15 What additional steps do you think you would recommend
16 to Congress to consider to overcome our current limitations
17 that we have on that capacity?

18 Mr. Zakheim: Well, Senator, I agree with you and did
19 not mean to gloss it over. In fact, I share your view that
20 this is an urgent problem. It is an urgent problem in
21 Ukraine. It is an urgent problem in Taiwan.

22 And many of those munitions and capabilities, we now
23 need in those two theaters, but we also need here at home.
24 And as you are fully aware, we don't have that capacity,
25 both in terms of what we need for current scenario planning

1 and also for surge capacity.

2 I think this committee started it in this past year's
3 National Defense Authorization Bill, but it is limited.
4 Most important thing this Congress could do, and I know I
5 am preaching to the converted here in authorizing
6 committee, but multiyear procurement. I think you saw a
7 lot of this.

8 If you are able to buy things over the course of three
9 or four years, you would make it cheaper. You know, that
10 is an efficiency that I know Senator Wicker is focused on,
11 other members of this committee.

12 But at scale, at scale, an industrial capacity, this
13 is capital intensive investments, not just to get the
14 particular ammunition that can be produced on the curved
15 production line, but it is multiple production line. And
16 Senator, as you know, it is not just about munitions.

17 The most important capability for a Taiwan scenario,
18 and I assume Dr. Lin would agree, is our undersea
19 capability. And we are retiring our undersea capability at
20 a faster rate than we are producing them. That, in its
21 essence, is a capital problem, focused, you know, around
22 industrial capacity, Senator.

23 Senator Fischer: I agree with you. And that was the
24 reason that I was able to get the amendment in the NDAA, to
25 address that problem specifically.

1 On this committee, and this for all of our panelists,
2 on this committee we have been debating and changing
3 security dynamics, in particular the return of great power
4 competition.

5 And what do you see as being implications that we have
6 for our military in that regard, and how do you think the
7 events that we have seen play out over the past year may
8 have changed your view of that discussion? Dr. Lin, would
9 you like to start?

10 Dr. Lin: Thank you. So in terms of great power
11 competition and looking at the China dynamic, I think if I
12 could add really quickly to what China is learning from
13 Ukraine, I think what China is seeing is how long a war can
14 occur.

15 And related to the Taiwan scenario, and what the
16 United States needs to do, is we need to make sure that we
17 are not expending all of our ammunition, that is within a
18 very short period of time.

19 Recently CSIS did extensive war gaming, and we found,
20 given our current stocks, they would run out within two
21 weeks. And if we are expecting a Taiwan conflict to last
22 more than that, we definitely need to build up our defense
23 industrial base, as well as both the surge capacity, as
24 well as the capacity to be able to have more of these
25 stocks pre-positioned in the region.

1 In terms of great power competition, what I am seeing
2 from China's end, particularly after Speaker Pelosi's visit
3 to Taiwan last August, is a greater willingness on China's
4 end to use limited demonstration of military force to
5 express its displeasure.

6 What it is taking away from Russia's invasion of
7 Ukraine and why it thinks Russia needed to invade Ukraine
8 was that it saw that Russian efforts at diplomacy with our
9 NATO allies and with the United States failed.

10 And if you don't believe that diplomacy can allow you
11 to achieve your aims, then you have to think about a
12 greater use of military force, including demonstrations of
13 force, at smaller scale.

14 Senator Fischer: Thank you. Dr. Hill.

15 Dr. Hill: Thank you so much, Senator Fischer. Again,
16 I concur with my colleagues here on the panel. And
17 actually, I want to pick up on something that Mr. Zakheim
18 absolutely was right in emphasizing, but in fact, all of
19 this started in 2008 with Russia's move into Georgia.

20 In fact, we have had 15 years of this phase of great
21 power competition, if that is how we want to call it, that
22 we should have been paying closer attention to. We thought
23 that was an aberration.

24 It turned out not to be. And what we have to
25 recognize here is obviously we are in a very different

1 competition, if that is what we want to call it, from
2 Russia and China. Russia has been in the process of
3 revanchism and revisionism, trying to overturn a
4 territorial order in Europe.

5 And, of course, Russia -- China is similarly engaged
6 with Taiwan, who is obviously of a different nature, but
7 also territorial claims against many of its neighbors,
8 Japan, Vietnam, and others in the South China Seas. The
9 United States is not in that position of territorial
10 acquisition.

11 And again, I think part of the message that we have to
12 get across all the time, notwithstanding all the
13 accusations that we have from, you know, previous U.S.
14 actions and, you know, at different times in our history,
15 is that we are actually trying to maintain the current
16 international order, which means the territorial integrity
17 of all of the recognized states. And that is different.

18 And that should enable us to build a coalition of
19 other countries, including middle powers, to push back
20 against the actions of China and Russia, and specifically
21 of Russia at this juncture, but China over the future.

22 So we all have to focus on how when we are answering
23 these questions, we are going to work with our allies in
24 all of these different alignments that we have already
25 talked about, in NATO, with all AUKUS, expanding that out,

1 and also trying to push, as I mentioned before, countries
2 like South Africa away from contemplating the kind of
3 activities that they are now engaging in.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator. Senator Shaheen,
5 please. Thank you, Senator Fischer.

6 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. And thank you to each of
7 you for being here today. Mr. Zakheim, I couldn't agree
8 more about multiyear procurement. It would also help if
9 people could count on our getting a budget done every year.
10 That would be a good first start, so I hope all of us on
11 this committee will take that to heart.

12 Ms. Hill, or Dr. Hill, Belarus has seemingly been
13 reluctant to embrace Putin's war in Ukraine, but Russia
14 continues to use the territory in Belarus to stage its an
15 invasion.

16 Can you briefly tell me how Putin views his
17 relationship with Lukashenko, and whether we expect Belarus
18 to engage to a greater level in the war in Ukraine in the
19 future?

20 Dr. Hill: Thank you, Senator Shaheen. It is actually
21 very important for us to remember Belarus, because it still
22 is technically an independent country, but as you were
23 mentioning, it has been used as a staging ground for this
24 conflict by Ukraine -- for Ukraine by Russia.

25 We also know, of course, that President Lukashenko of

1 Belarus has been in some political difficulty in the most
2 recent elections, and there is a lot of questions about
3 whether he was, in fact, actually elected.

4 We had a large opposition movement that emerged, and
5 this will continue to be questions about his long-term grip
6 on power. What we do know, of course, is that he has
7 become increasingly dependent for political and economic
8 support for Russia, which is why Belarussian sovereignty is
9 now being used.

10 I think Russia was also a model for what Putin wanted
11 to achieve in Ukraine and still remain so. You know, we
12 have probably forgotten that, you know, several decades
13 ago, Belarus and Russia entered into a union State.

14 Nobody quite knew what that meant, but it was
15 obviously one in which Russia dominates all of Belarus's
16 security policy and politics and economics. And that was
17 clearly what Putin wanted with Ukraine after the initial
18 phases of the invasion.

19 He wanted to do the same thing. So I think that we
20 need to focus on Belarus and thinking forward as well.

21 Senator Shaheen: Excuse me for interrupting, but so
22 do we think Lukashenko is going to bow to Putin's getting
23 the country further engaged in the war in Ukraine?

24 Dr. Hill: I think he has limits to what he can
25 actually do. He is dependent on Putin for propping him up

1 on the one hand, but on the other, he has such a level of
2 opposition. We are seeing Belarusians fighting for
3 Ukrainians.

4 We have got a lot of Belarussian opposition in the
5 Baltic states, in Poland and elsewhere. I think Lukashenko
6 knows that if he used the country, or let the country be
7 used as a platform for yet another set of invasions of
8 Ukraine and actually then committed Belarusian forces, that
9 he would face severe problems at home.

10 I think all the signs are that he is trying to
11 shift his way towards the exit. I mean, he is been
12 flashing sort of signals behind the scenes that he would
13 like to do something different. The challenge is trying to
14 figure out how to facilitate that under the current
15 circumstances.

16 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Given the turmoil in the
17 world right now, are there opportunities that we should be
18 trying to take advantage of?

19 Obviously, in Syria, for example, the devastation of
20 the earthquake has finally allowed or forced Assad to open
21 up some more avenues into the country for humanitarian aid.

22 You talk, I think, Dr. Lin and Dr. Hill, each of you
23 talked a little bit about the opportunities with some of
24 our Asian partners to get closer together to address China.
25 But are there other opportunities that we ought to be

1 looking at in this turmoil and trying to take advantage of?

2 Dr. Hill: I will just say very quickly, in addition
3 to those that you have outlined, because I think those are
4 genuine opportunities, that we should also take a much
5 harder look at all of the web of our relationships in the
6 Western Hemisphere, for example.

7 And one of the issues that we discovered under the
8 last Administration when we had the crisis in Venezuela was
9 that regional countries were not well-disposed towards the
10 United States, in part because we failed to have a coherent
11 policy towards our neighbors in Latin and South America.

12 We focused on problems rather than how we can build
13 those relationships up. And I think with the shift to
14 President Lula in Brazil, this provides more of an
15 opportunity because he is traditionally been much more
16 interested in international affairs.

17 We also have opportunities in Mexico and in other
18 countries to try to, you know, work with them looking
19 forward. Our big problem is that 87 countries around the
20 world, including many of our neighbors in Latin and South
21 America, you know, still tend to have visa free regimes
22 with Russia.

23 They are looking towards Russia and China for
24 investment and sometimes assistance. We could work on that
25 front as well. Thank you. Mr. Zakheim.

1 Mr. Zakheim: Senator, I just would add that, and I
2 know you do a lot of work on this, allies. I mean, there
3 is no better way, in order to engage allies and allies more
4 willing to work with us, than when you have revanchist
5 powers invading other countries. And they are playing out
6 in terms of what the CCP is doing.

7 And certainly with Russia, you see Finland and Sweden.
8 And then of course, as was mentioned, what the
9 opportunities we have in the Indo-Pacific. I would add
10 that we need to give these are more meat.

11 You know, the AUKUS framework is a great example, but
12 other types, particularly industrial cooperation, how we
13 deal with supply chain challenges in terms of impacts to
14 the military, we are not making these alliances and
15 relationships meaningful enough for the current security
16 environment.

17 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Shaheen. Senator
19 Rounds, please.

20 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you
21 to all of you for taking the time to visit with us today.
22 My question will focus specifically on NATO and our
23 obligations under Article 5, and the impact that we could
24 see should we have to respond.

25 Assuming the possibility exists that a belligerent

1 Putin attack or at least he has interest in perhaps
2 expanding out of Ukraine and into one of our other allied
3 countries that are part of NATO, what would be the
4 probability, in your estimation, that we would also find
5 ourselves not only legally obligated to respond in that
6 area, but just very briefly, what do you believe the
7 probability is of us having to also respond in short order
8 to another conflict area regarding China?

9 Just the probability, and I am just going to do right
10 down the line. Dr. Lin.

11 Dr. Lin: Thank you. So I think the possibility of a
12 large scale conflict, two simultaneous, large scale
13 conflicts are relatively low right now, mainly because we
14 are not seeing clear signs yet that China coordinates its
15 plans for Taiwan on what Russia is doing in Ukraine.

16 Because if we did see that, we would have seen
17 significant more use of force by China against Taiwan in
18 the past year or so.

19 Senator Rounds: Thank you. Dr. Hill.

20 Dr. Hill: And I think in addition to what Dr. Lin has
21 said within the NATO realm in Europe, we are actually
22 seeing Russia being quite cautious. Notwithstanding the
23 brutality on the ground in Ukraine, we haven't yet seen
24 some of the things that people were worried about in terms
25 of talks of convoys going in to Ukraine from NATO

1 countries. There were reports, of course, of missiles from
2 the Black Sea going over potentially to -- Moldova.

3 Senator Rounds: But my question is, should we have to
4 respond under Article 5. Assuming we had to respond under
5 Article 5, what is the probability of having a second front
6 open up? What would be that probability on the other side
7 of the world?

8 Dr. Hill: On the other side of the world, as I think
9 Dr. Lin has said, I think that is quite low. And I think
10 in Europe what we are seeing is Russia is more likely to
11 keep on trying with cyber, political, and economic
12 intrusions than more military expansion because of Russia's
13 own concerns about having to respond to too many fronts at
14 the same time.

15 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

16 Dr. Lin: If I could add quickly, I meant to say it is
17 low now, but it would be increasing over time.

18 Senator Rounds: As we get closer to perhaps the 2027
19 timeframe.

20 Dr. Lin: But also as the US-China competition
21 intensifies, as China will be thinking, well, what are the
22 best ways -- if we need to use force, they will be thinking
23 if the United States is distracted, it is a better
24 opportunity for us to use force.

25 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

1 Mr. Zakheim: Senator Rounds, I am a little less
2 sanguine than my colleagues here. This scenario that you
3 have raised, the simultaneity problem is one that our
4 defense strategy struggles with. As you know, we shifted
5 away from building a force that could deal with two major
6 regional contingencies.

7 And what that did, as you know, raised the salience of
8 nuclear weapons, a dangerous scenario. But that is what
9 our approach is. If we are in one fight, the way we are
10 going to hold off the other fight for the most part is rely
11 on allies and rely on our nuclear deterrent. That is a
12 place we don't want to be.

13 So winning in Ukraine is key here because it pins down
14 Vladimir Putin, weakens his military, and reduces the
15 likelihood we face the same simultaneity problem, which you
16 have raised here.

17 But I am not sanguine. I think what we saw in the
18 Winter Olympics, and this China, Russia axis presents the
19 very problem that you are thinking about.

20 Senator Rounds: Following up on that, should we find
21 ourselves in that type of a position, and we would be
22 required to -- I have always said, look, nobody wants to
23 use nuclear weapons, but the best way not to have to use
24 nuclear weapons is to be just overwhelming in our
25 capabilities.

1 We are currently in the middle of upgrading our NC3.
2 What would be, Dr. Zakheim, what would be your opinion as
3 to our process in the upgrading, and what should we be
4 working on or focused on right now with regard to our
5 nuclear capabilities on the triad?

6 Mr. Zakheim: Well, I think this committee has done a
7 great job of modernizing the triad. Of course, it is not
8 happening fast enough. And you know that, the committee
9 gets the briefings on it.

10 I thought the Nuclear Posture Review was good. It
11 certainly didn't change the doctrine. But we are still
12 stuck at the strategic level. And as you know, Senator,
13 the Chinese and the Russians are modernizing not only at
14 the strategic level, but also kind of at theater level,
15 intermediate level, tactical weapons, and we are behind
16 there.

17 And I think what that does is introduce the
18 possibility and elicits a form of escalation that none of
19 us would ever want.

20 Senator Rounds: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
21 I am up against my time limit.

22 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Rounds.
23 Senator Hirono, please.

24 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I thank
25 all of the panelists. Clearly, there are many demands on

1 our resources. That is an understatement. And I would
2 consider a foundational concern to be the need to invest in
3 our infrastructure, which is not only a matter of
4 geopolitical competition, but also the readiness of the
5 force -- the forces.

6 And as chair of the subcommittee on Readiness,
7 improving our military's readiness is a top priority. In
8 the last year, let me give you some examples, there have
9 been numerous issues with the military's infrastructure in
10 Hawaii, from water main breaks to toxic chemical leaks and
11 spills endangering our groundwater.

12 And I know that these kinds of events are not
13 particular to Hawaii, even across the country. We need to
14 better maintain and modernize our DOD infrastructure to
15 take care of our people, get our systems out of maintenance
16 on time, and be able to support national security.

17 I will start with Dr. Lin. It is clear that
18 INDOPACOM, AOR infrastructure needs to be modernized. Can
19 you elaborate on the importance of our infrastructure for
20 our national security, especially in the Pacific?

21 Dr. Lin: So our infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific,
22 particularly the fact that we are now investing in much
23 more resilient and dispersed basing is absolutely critical,
24 particularly as we look at the range of missiles, the
25 hundreds.

1 I think right now is based on what DOD release last
2 year. The range of the missiles that China has in its
3 vicinity is clearly around 2,000 or so. The range of
4 missiles that China can bring to bear means that in any
5 fight, whether it is over Taiwan, we will need to be able
6 to be able to disperse our assets so we are not reliant on
7 any particular base.

8 And in order to be able to maintain that we can
9 function for in particular airfields, we need harden our
10 infrastructure. We also need to work with our allies and
11 partners to make sure that we have the capabilities to
12 quickly repair, for example, runways and other facilities.
13 So it is absolutely critical to the fight.

14 Senator Hirono: We basically, from what I can see,
15 and especially with the examples of what is happening in
16 Hawaii, we have aging infrastructure, which we tend to
17 ignore until something breaks, and then you have Tripler
18 Hospital, which is the main military hospital, not have
19 water or not have electricity. We can't have that and
20 maintain readiness.

21 So I hope the other two panelists agree that even as
22 we need to pay attention to other aspects of keeping our
23 military ready, that let's not forget about some of these
24 foundational concerns. I want to get to again, Dr. Lin, a
25 key foundation of our national defense strategy is

1 integrated deterrence, which highlights the need to work
2 cooperatively with our allies.

3 And a number of you have already emphasized how
4 important it is to strengthen our allies and partners, to
5 strengthen our economic, cultural, and defense
6 relationships. It is all of a piece because we can't just
7 focus on the mil to mil relationships.

8 And we can deter aggression in the Pacific, for
9 example, with our network of allies and partners, including
10 increased posture forward and greater opportunities to
11 conduct training in the region.

12 Dr. Lin, between the recently announced access
13 agreements with the Philippines, the U.S. basing the
14 historic AUKUS agreement to share nuclear propulsion
15 information and work on emerging technologies, and the
16 current renegotiation of the compacts of freely associated
17 states, the Administration is taking large steps forward
18 and strengthening our relationships in the important Indo-
19 Pacific region. What kind of message do these steps send
20 to both China and our regional partners?

21 Dr. Lin: Thank you. So our efforts to strengthen
22 relations, whether it is on the defense front or on the
23 political front, it sends a message of reassurance to our
24 allies and partners that are looking to us to help them, to
25 help deter Chinese coercion and deter Chinese aggression.

1 What I would note is China is watching these efforts
2 very, very closely. And while it does have a deterrent
3 effort, it is also causing China to think, well, how do we
4 counter this?

5 And as China looks at this, what China is looking for
6 is what they find as the weakest link among our allies and
7 partners, and also they probably also have in their mind
8 thinking, well, do we also need the same sort of
9 partnerships and alliances?

10 And that is where, again, returning back to the China-
11 Russia relationship, as China is watching what we are doing
12 with our allies and partners, it must be in Beijing
13 thinking, well, we need to definitely have our own
14 partnerships and Russia is definitely one of them that
15 China needs to keep.

16 Senator Hirono: So how important is our relationship
17 with the Pacific Island nations, i.e. our compact
18 partners?

19 Dr. Lin: Senator, absolutely important, because, as
20 you know, China is trying to increase its military presence
21 there. And as China -- as the PLA becomes more or more
22 active, it is now venturing much more beyond the first
23 island chain into the second island chain.

24 So if we are able to deny China a military base within
25 the second island chain area, that would allow the United

1 States to continue to flow our forces into the region much
2 more easily than if China, for example, had a military base
3 on the Solomon Islands.

4 It would also make it much easier for us to support
5 some of our key allies there, including Australia.

6 Senator Hirono: Dr. Hill and Mr. Zakheim, do you
7 agree that we can do a lot more with our Island nation
8 partners, i.e. Marshall Islands, the Micronesia, Palau,
9 and other island nations?

10 Mr. Zakheim: Yes.

11 Dr. Hill: Absolutely.

12 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Hirono.
14 Senator Tuberville, please.

15 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr.
16 Zakheim, how would you assess our military recruitment,
17 with all the politics we have added into it in the last few
18 years?

19 Mr. Zakheim: We are below where we need to be,
20 Senator.

21 Senator Tuberville: Another question here on
22 spending. In 2023, the Department of Defense, we spent
23 \$163 billion on procurement, \$139 billion on research and
24 development. Don't you think that is a little bit much on
25 research and development as compared to building machines

1 and ammunition to fight wars?

2 Mr. Zakheim: Well, Senator, I think we need to do
3 better on procurement, as your question suggests.

4 The R&D is critical for the military we need for
5 tomorrow, but we also need to emphasize the transition of
6 our current force, and getting the software it needs and
7 the AI infusion that is going to be critical to making
8 these platforms useful in some of the scenarios we are
9 discussing here.

10 My own view is that the strategy is right, is we
11 should focus on today and tomorrow, and the procurement
12 needs to go up, Senator.

13 Senator Tuberville: Yes, sometimes you worry about
14 tomorrow, today, and tomorrow never happens. And it is
15 dangerous, the world we live in now with all the hotspots.

16 Also, you know, with the risk posed by our Army and
17 Navy's efforts to divest, you know, and especially in the
18 SSGN, we are going to do away with one a year, which
19 carries 154 Tomahawk missiles, and we are going to
20 transition over to a boat that carries 40 missiles. Are we
21 gambling here on this research that we are just talking
22 about?

23 Mr. Zakheim: Yes, again, I don't have an issue with
24 levels of research, but I agree with you, Senator, that we
25 are not doing enough on the procurement side to keep pace

1 with retirements.

2 And you are right that the capability, both in terms
3 of total number of boats and in terms of the tubes, in
4 terms of what the boat could deliver is a huge problem for
5 us in the Taiwan scenario.

6 And it goes to procurement, as you point out, the
7 multi-year piece, the fact that we can't build as many as
8 we are retiring. Ultimately, I think this is capital
9 required for industrial capacity improvement here, Senator.

10 Senator Tuberville: Doctor, you got a comment on
11 that?

12 Dr. Hill: I would just urge us to, you know, be
13 really still emphasizing research as well as infrastructure
14 that Senator Hirono also mentioned.

15 As Dr. Lin said, you know, our adversaries look out
16 for the weakest links and we can be sure that China is
17 spending an awful lot of money right now on research and
18 development, including, you know, trying to get access to
19 our own IP and our other research as well. And we can only
20 really keep ahead, as you said, because there is always a
21 risk that tomorrow never comes.

22 But we can only ever really keep ahead of our
23 adversaries by, you know, being on the cutting edge. That
24 is why America has always succeeded in the past, because we
25 have managed to find a balance between the needs of today

1 and, you know, what we think is coming across the horizon
2 tomorrow.

3 And I think in a basic infrastructure, as the Senator
4 pointed out, is pretty critical. We have just seen, you
5 know, with what has happened in the earthquake in Turkey,
6 how important roads are, port facilities, for example, how
7 easily they can be destroyed. You know, we should -- we
8 need to be looking at where all our weak links are and what
9 we can do to shore them up.

10 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Just one quick
11 question, Mr. Zakheim on Ukraine and Russia, I have been
12 perplexed for a year of what -- how Putin has fought this
13 war. He probably had some good thoughts about it. He kind
14 of tiptoed into it. Do you think he is having second
15 thoughts about not doing shock and awe like we did in Iraq?

16 Mr. Zakheim: I think that was the original plan, and
17 he realized that the military thought he had was not the
18 one that was on the ground.

19 And now I think the strategy has changed, as we are
20 all reading, Senator, which is he is going to fight us for
21 as long as it takes and allow his people to mow down until
22 they are able to advance inch by inch, foot by foot.

23 And I think we, that is the side of freedom, Ukraine
24 and its supporters, the West, the United States need to
25 take advantage of this opportunity by speedily getting the

1 platforms and capabilities in there not to allow this
2 become a war of attrition.

3 Senator Tuberville: This next wave of fighting that
4 we are getting ready to have, don't you think, is going to
5 be more of a precision fight, ISR. We are talking about
6 tanks and stuff. Those things aren't going to last very
7 long if, you know, if we go that direction.

8 Mr. Zakheim: Well, I think that is where the future
9 of warfare is. We are going to see whether what you are
10 describing is able to roll back Russian forces, which are
11 actually embedded and encamped and dug into territory.

12 And I think that is why the Ukrainians need more of
13 these conventional forces like tanks. I think they would
14 also benefit from fighter aircraft as well to dislodging
15 the Russian positions.

16 Senator Tuberville: Because of the 500,000 troops
17 Russia has got on the border, is that what you are saying?

18 Mr. Zakheim: And they are going to keep on pushing
19 them in.

20 Senator Tuberville: Yes. Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
21 Chairman.

22 Chairman Reed: Thank you. Senator Tuberville.
23 Senator King, please.

24 Senator King: Thank you. First, I want to welcome
25 Senator Tuberville from the end of the row. He is now no

1 longer at the end of the -- Senator Tuberville, welcome to
2 the -- from not being on the end of the row, as you have
3 been very ably --

4 Senator Tuberville: It got very lonely on that end,
5 especially with this big room that we had. Thank you.

6 [Laughter.]

7 Senator King: Mr. Zakheim, first, I want to thank you
8 for your organization and leadership of the Reagan Defense
9 Forum, which is a really important part of thinking through
10 some of these strategic questions.

11 Here is my question. It strikes me, as you look back
12 at the Ukraine conflict, that if you combine the
13 Ukrainians' will to fight with the resources of the West
14 and the United States, Putin really in the long run doesn't
15 stand a chance.

16 It strikes me that Putin's best hope now is dividing
17 the West and dividing the United States. Do you think that
18 is a legitimate concern?

19 Mr. Zakheim: I absolutely think that is part of the
20 Putin strategy. I think he also questions the will of the
21 West to continue to support Ukraine.

22 Senator King: That is what I mean --

23 Mr. Zakheim: Absolutely, yes. I agree with that.

24 Senator King: He wants to divide us, get us tired of
25 the conflict, and then he is just going to win through the

1 passage of time.

2 Mr. Zakheim: I think that is his approach, Senator.
3 I agree.

4 Senator King: And you mentioned, you used the word a
5 few minutes ago, speedily. And one of my concerns is that,
6 for example, with the tanks, our response has been slow and
7 then we have to go through training.

8 And I am worried right now at this moment that the
9 Russians are preparing for a major offensive in the East
10 that the Ukrainians aren't going to be ready for because
11 they don't have the equipment.

12 In other words, we have telegraphed to them that we
13 don't have the tanks there yet and they are going to try to
14 take advantage of this gap. Is that something of concern?

15 Mr. Zakheim: Yes. And I think the unclassified
16 information I have reviewed certainly suggests that. And
17 the way I think about it, Senator, is the strategy here is
18 to help Ukraine realize a counteroffensive, to break
19 through that Russian line that is emerging in the Donbass.

20 To do that, we should give them all the capabilities
21 necessary. Tanks is one example. Fourth generation
22 fighter aircraft is another. And we tend to think about
23 the platform and get stuck rather thinking about the
24 strategy.

25 If we trust Ukraine to restore its sovereign

1 territory, then we should trust some of the platforms to do
2 that, and not worry they are going to use the platform for
3 some other purpose or escalate the battle beyond the
4 territory of Ukraine.

5 Senator King: Have the Ukrainians been respectful of
6 those limitations in terms of escalating the battle into
7 Russia?

8 Mr. Zakheim: Best that I can tell, yes. There have
9 been some debates, I believe, on the margins, but it has
10 always been focused on within the sovereign territory of
11 Ukraine.

12 Senator King: Dr. Hill, I know you touched on this.
13 It worries me, looking at a map yesterday, the Belarus
14 border is about 60 miles from Kiev. If I were Putin, I
15 would be very tempted to try to have another offensive
16 toward Kiev and the decapitation of the government. I take
17 it you believe that Belarusian politics and the regional
18 balance does not raise the level of risk of that happening?

19 Dr. Hill: Well, look, I think the risk is always
20 there because, of course, Belarus and its President
21 Lukashenko are very much dependent on Russia at this
22 particular point. And of course, there is an awful lot of
23 troops.

24 But I think that the pressures inside Belarus,
25 political pressures would make it very difficult for

1 Lukashenko to contemplate this. This would also be a huge
2 alarm bell for all of the other former Soviet republics.

3 I mean, if Belarus is been actually deployed in this
4 war, I think we are going to see a pretty aggressive
5 response from others as well.

6 Senator King: And based upon the intelligence that we
7 saw a year ago, we would know if the Russians were moving
8 significant forces in that direction.

9 Dr. Hill: Yes, we have seen buildup, you know,
10 getting back to what Senator Tuberville was talking about
11 before, about the placement of men and equipment there.
12 Looks like some of them are being trained. But we haven't
13 seen, you know, particularly at the moment that we are
14 expecting waves of people going over the Belarusian border.
15 But we mustn't rule it out.

16 Senator King: And in fact, that ties one of -- part
17 of the strategy probably of those deployments is to tie the
18 Ukrainians down to some extent, defending that border
19 rather than putting all their forces in the East and the
20 South.

21 Dr. Hill: Absolutely. And Putin is at pains all the
22 time to still raise the threat to Kiev itself of another
23 assault. And I think, you know, getting back to what Mr.
24 Zakheim said before about not being sanguine about anything
25 actually. We have to be continuously vigilant and, you

1 know, continue to look at the intelligence about any of
2 these contingencies.

3 Senator King: Dr. Lin, final question. The key to
4 the success thus far of the Ukrainians has been their
5 amazing courage and will to fight. What do you assess of
6 -- how do you assess the will to fight of the people of
7 Taiwan and their leadership? Is there leadership of the
8 Churchillian quality of Zelenskyy? Or are they closer to,
9 let's say, Gandhi?

10 Dr. Hill: That is an excellent question, Senator. I
11 think Taiwan is strengthening its will to fight. It's
12 being very encouraging for Taiwan to look at what Ukraine
13 has accomplished, and it is instilling more confidence in
14 the Taiwan people.

15 I would also note that unlike Ukraine, where folks
16 could leave the land, Taiwan is surrounded by water. So
17 even if we are not necessarily seeing the strong will now,
18 when push comes to shove, I think many people in Taiwan
19 will find they have no escape routes and they need to fight
20 for their home.

21 Senator King: Thank you. Thank you all very much.
22 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator King. Senator
24 Scott, please.

25 Senator Scott: I want to thank each of you for being

1 here. I come from Florida. We have got 21 bases and three
2 unified commands. Military is a pretty big deal,
3 especially in our panhandle, but all across our State.

4 So you look at the Chinese spy balloon, you look at
5 them build a military to defeat us, you would think that
6 American citizens would start waking up and saying we are
7 to stop buying things from communist China because seems
8 like they are taking the money they make to go --
9 eventually defeat us is what their goal, so I guess the
10 first thing is, do you think Americans are to stop buying
11 things made in communist China because it ultimately flows
12 to the Chinese Communist Party and it can hurt us? I mean,
13 what do you all think?

14 Dr. Hill: Sure. So I think we definitely, the U.S.
15 Government is already imposing significant restrictions on
16 export of technology that could be used, as far as we know,
17 to fuel military civil fusion in China, as well as the PLA.
18 With respect to technology below that, I think there is
19 still a lot of advantage that Americans actually get from
20 the cheaper products from China.

21 Senator Scott: But doesn't China get a benefit?

22 Dr. Hill: For some of the more cheaper products, not
23 as much, but definitely on the higher end, China is
24 benefiting more. So we need to desegregate where we want
25 to limit our exports to China and where exports to China or

1 buying from China could actually benefit U.S. consumers and
2 U.S. citizens.

3 Mr. Zakheim: Senator, I might add that I agree with
4 the way Dr. Lin framed it. It is the strategic decoupling
5 that is key. We have failed, and as you know, you have led
6 on this in the Senate, to make sure that we are not giving
7 China the types of capabilities through our commerce that
8 enhance the top, you know, tip of the spear for part of
9 their military.

10 But we also have an interest in making China dependent
11 on older technologies. And the scale of our exports to
12 China in some ways could benefit us, but certainly on the
13 military side, those elements, and I think we are seeing
14 some good things out of the Bureau of Industry and Security
15 and Commerce that are starting to put up walls, but it has
16 taken way too long.

17 Senator Scott: Do you think that China thinks we are
18 getting weaker or stronger in relative to them? How do you
19 think their leadership thinks?

20 Mr. Zakheim: What I have read, and the way that they
21 are planning is that they think they can beat us,
22 particularly in the Taiwan scenario.

23 Senator Scott: Right. What about, you know, you read
24 all this and what you hear is that how much time was put in
25 on woke, having to woke military. It seems to me I have

1 always thought we ought to have -- I served in the Navy. I
2 thought our job was to be a lethal military, that people
3 are scared to death of us.

4 So do you think that -- what do you think the
5 government of China thinks when they read that we are
6 focused on pronouns and things like that rather than how we
7 have the most lethal military force?

8 Mr. Zakheim: Senator, I think the defense strategy is
9 clear on this and it starts with Secretary Mattis, we need
10 to focus on being the most lethal force, as you point out,
11 focusing on the core mission. Anybody in the U.S. military
12 wants to focus on their mission.

13 We have done polling at the Reagan Institute, the
14 Reagan National Defense survey. Politicization is a
15 problem. The American people have reduced trust and
16 confidence in the military because they believe the
17 military is politicized.

18 And the more we can do to allow our military, our men
19 and women in uniform to focus on warfighting, the better it
20 will be for our military and the more it will deter China.

21 Dr. Hill: I would like to make a comment that look, I
22 am afraid that the more that we have partisan and political
23 fights, the more adversaries think that we are weak. I
24 have made that point many times in public before. They
25 watch all of this and frankly, they think we have lost it.

1 So the more I am afraid that we make statements like
2 this, the more that we start attacking our fellow Americans
3 for whatever perspective we think they come from, the more
4 that Russia and China think that we are working ourselves
5 out of history.

6 They watch all of this very carefully, but not in the
7 ways that you think. I think China and Russia do know that
8 we still can be lethal, but we are most lethal when we get
9 our act together and that we are all Americans fighting
10 together on one side. And that is what our adversaries and
11 our friends are looking to us.

12 They would like us to get over all of these fights
13 that we are having internally. And so, I mean, I would
14 just urge to -- I don't understand what that label means.
15 I am trying not to use labels. I think the more that we
16 can stand up and just show that we are Americans in
17 solidarity, the more we will be able to have a deterrent
18 effect on our adversaries, and more will bring our friends
19 behind us, because they are watching us and thinking, you
20 know, has America lost the plot at this moment.

21 Senator Scott: So I just -- we stopped the vaccine
22 mandate just recently in December. One of the issues I
23 think a lot of us have been focused on is how do we
24 reinstate people that were discharged and how do we make
25 sure they are not put in an adverse monetary position. We

1 have a problem with retention.

2 We have a problem with recruitment. So how much do
3 you think it would be important that we, you know, let
4 people come back in, that for, you know, religious or
5 health reasons, decided not to take the vaccine or -- and
6 also make sure that they don't have to pay, you know, back
7 pay. They don't have to pay for training, things like
8 that.

9 Mr. Zakheim: Readiness is key here. We, as you know,
10 we are not meeting our numbers. And so I believe this
11 Congress has given authority to the Secretary of Defense
12 and Department Health to do just that. And it is about
13 execution now at this stage, Senator Scott.

14 Dr. Lin: And if I could add, one major event that our
15 military has over the PLA is the quality of our personnel.
16 If you look at the what President Xi Jinping has mentioned
17 in terms of priorities for the PLA, after military theory
18 and organization, the second priority is development of the
19 PLA personnel, and equipment comes after that.

20 Senator Scott: Thank you, Chairman.

21 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Scott. And for the
22 information of my colleagues, there are two votes beginning
23 at 11:30 a.m. Senator Manchin, please.

24 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you,
25 all. I am so sorry, I had another meeting I had to speak

1 at. And I am sure you probably covered this in generality,
2 but I would like to ask the questions again.

3 First of all, I think what I am hearing loud and clear
4 is if we have laundry that is dirty and need wash, don't do
5 it in the public when the military is involved. I am
6 hearing that loud and clear. Which probably every time we
7 have military conversations or disagreement, it should be
8 done in the skiff with all 100 of us so we can talk about
9 it to each other, and how we come out of there unified.

10 So that is a clear message you are giving us, and you
11 got to continue to give that. I feel very strongly about
12 that. Next of all, I would like -- Dr. Lin, I will start
13 with you. First of all, does the Taiwanese have the
14 ability to defend themselves against mainland China, to be
15 independent?

16 And if not, would they have the ability with the
17 United States help? And if it took the United States help,
18 would we have any allies coming with us to defend Taiwan
19 the way that they have come together in Europe on Ukraine?

20 Dr. Lin: Thank you, Senator, for the question. So to
21 be frank, Taiwan would not be able to stand by itself.

22 Senator Manchin: It cannot defend itself, no matter
23 what we do, no matter what equipment we give them.

24 Dr. Lin: When you are talking about a large scale
25 invasion, given the vast power disparities that China can

1 bring to bear, Taiwan would not be able to stand alone.

2 Senator Manchin: Okay. Can they do it with our help?
3 Are we able to do it to deter that or just basically
4 prolong it?

5 Dr. Lin: Yes. So I think that is what the department
6 is focused on with Taiwan as the pacing scenario, to make
7 sure that the United States can be able to flow enough
8 assets and have the right, both posture and capabilities,
9 as well as operational --

10 Senator Manchin: I am understanding there is a little
11 bit of a difference of what we believe that they would need
12 to defend themselves and be successful versus what they
13 desire to have.

14 Dr. Lin: So, when Taiwan thinks about his defense
15 needs, its thinking not only about the high end contingency
16 of the Chinese invasion, it is also thinking about the day
17 to day gray zone incursions that China is flying into
18 Taiwan's air defense identification zone. So, from their
19 perspective, they need to cover all the different threats.

20 Senator Manchin: Okay. And how about allies? Which
21 allies would come to the defense that look at Taiwan and
22 the commitment other than the U.S.? I have not heard of
23 other allies believing that it is of national interest to
24 them to go and fight or support Taiwanese war against
25 China.

1 Dr. Lin: So, we are increasingly hearing from Japan
2 that the defense of Taiwan is vital to Japanese national
3 security. And that is why they made the critical national
4 security documents, the new documents that came out in
5 December from Japan's end reflect the seriousness that
6 Japan takes for its problem.

7 Senator Manchin: And about South Korea?

8 Dr. Lin: South Korea -- I would put South Korea lower
9 than potentially Australia and other -- I put Japan --

10 Senator Manchin: Japan the highest.

11 Dr. Lin: Australia. South Korea would be a bit
12 lower.

13 Senator Manchin: I got you, okay.

14 Dr. Lin: And the Philippines would probably be
15 somewhere between Australia and South Korea.

16 Senator Manchin: And we are pretty much effort in the
17 Philippines right now trying to build that up. Okay. And
18 Dr. Hill, Ukraine. Does Ukraine have the ability to fight
19 and win the war to take back the Donbass and also Crimea?

20 Dr. Hill: Well, it is not just Donbass and Crimea, it
21 is also these are the two regions, as well as Kherson and
22 Zaporizhzhia.

23 Senator Manchin: Sure. I mean, basically putting
24 their country --

25 Dr. Hill: Yes -- I, as much as we have been talking

1 before, depends on the provision of military assistance
2 from the United States and other allies, and also a
3 diplomatic effort too.

4 And I think just primarily on the battlefield, it is
5 going to be extraordinarily difficult, because, you know,
6 we have already had a discussion about how much the
7 Russians have dug in at this particular point.

8 So, we need to have diplomacy pushing alongside the
9 military. I can't honestly say about whether it is
10 feasible for Ukraine. There are differences of opinion in
11 the United States, UK, and among other --

12 Senator Manchin: Are you all gauging the support of
13 the Russian citizens towards this fight? Do they believe
14 it is an honorable fight, it is a needed fight? It is one
15 that they have to put their country and take back?

16 Dr. Hill: This is being put to the test. What Putin
17 is trying to tell the Russians at the moment is this is the
18 third patriotic war after Napoleon's invasion, Nazi
19 invasion. I mean, this is ridiculous of Russia, the Soviet
20 Union, and, you know, the Second World War. Now, this is
21 the next invasion.

22 I think not all Russians are buying this. We have
23 seen a million people leave. And I am not convinced myself
24 that another additional 500,000 people are willing to be
25 sacrificed on the front lines of what is, to some extent, a

1 vanity project for Vladimir Putin.

2 Senator Manchin: And you think Ukrainians have the
3 willpower and the people power to continue this fight?

4 Dr. Hill: So, they certainly have the willpower. The
5 people power is under some stress at the moment because of
6 the sheer numbers that Russia is trying to push to the
7 battlefield. We are aware of that, which is why, as Mr.
8 Zakheim has been saying, it is very important to outweigh
9 with the equipment. But again, diplomatic support is going
10 to be crucial. It won't be just won on the battlefield,
11 this war --

12 Senator Manchin: Yes, but diplomatic -- and I am
13 always concerned the United States might intervene in, or
14 the Europeans put so much pressure on to go to the
15 negotiating table and Putin is going to walk away with a
16 win. No matter if he loses, he will walk away with the
17 propaganda win.

18 Dr. Hill: I have exactly the same concerns, which is
19 why we have to really step up our diplomacy with other
20 countries to make very clear how unacceptable it is to have
21 Putin get away with what is a violation of international --
22 yes.

23 Senator Manchin: My final -- I am running out of
24 time. I know, I am so sorry. If I may, sir. The,
25 basically the will for our allies to stay in this fight,

1 are they going to be forced back as energy independence or
2 energy security or lack of it, or a need of the Russian
3 energy cheap energy they have had before? Is that going to
4 force maybe this to a table or to resolve prior to where it
5 needs.

6 Dr. Hill: This is much less of a factor than it was
7 before. I think actually you will find that Europeans
8 resolve is much stronger than perhaps is often seen from
9 here.

10 Senator Manchin: Thank you so much.

11 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Manchin. Senator
12 Mullin, please.

13 Senator Mullin: Thank you, Chairman. And just for
14 common purposes, I want to see if there is any way I could
15 get a list of promotions before we vote on them because I
16 think I just voted on my brother-in-law to be promoted, and
17 I wanted Billy to maybe put a hold on them before I do
18 that.

19 [Laughter.]

20 Senator Mullin: I like him sometimes but not always.

21 Chairman Reed: Absolutely. We could. You have to go
22 through 1,700 names but --

23 Senator Mullin: Well, that is fine. I will find him
24 pretty quick.

25 Chairman Reed: No, that is no problem.

1 Senator Mullin: Anyways, I appreciate the opportunity
2 to serve on this committee. And I want to go straight to,
3 sir, forgive me if I miss your name, but Zakheim? Is that
4 kind of --

5 Mr. Zakheim: But I will take Zakheim.

6 Senator Mullin: Say that again.

7 Mr. Zakheim: Zakheim.

8 Senator Mullin: Zakheim. All right, Zakheim. In
9 2022, to the National Defense Strategy Briefing mentioned
10 our enemies use of irregular warfare as a way to
11 destabilize our allies and undermine our conventional
12 military power. Can you speak of the effects of Russia's
13 energy warfare has had on Europe's resolve and the allies
14 in Ukraine?

15 Mr. Zakheim: Thank you for the question, Senator.
16 And I want to associate myself with what Dr. Hill just
17 said, where they absolutely tried to intimidate and
18 browbeat the Europeans into submission on the basis of
19 turning off the spigots, and, you know, energy warfare is
20 really what it came down to.

21 And I think in this regard, Europe, I guess from my
22 standpoint, surprised me. They have diversified. And
23 recently, as you may be aware Senator, Vladimir Putin is
24 now going to reduce production because he hasn't seen the
25 effects of this this form of warfare. So, I think it is

1 actually been a good news story to date.

2 Senator Mullin: Well, I have said this multiple times
3 that U.S. energy independence brings on global
4 stabilization. You know, people want to do business with
5 the United States.

6 And Dr. Hill, you made a reference that we should be
7 trying to help our allies move more with food, fuel, and
8 fertilizer.

9 The problem is, is that underneath this current
10 Administration, the war on energy, even the president's
11 comments just recently that he is wanting to eliminate
12 fossil fuels within 10 years, it causes problems with our
13 allies, would you agree?

14 Dr. Hill: Well, it depends on, you know, how we are
15 framing all of that. I mean --

16 Senator Mullin: Well, if we cut fossil fuels, you are
17 going to damage food supply. As a rancher, someone that
18 produces a lot of protein for the American people, I can't
19 run my tractors and our semis on electricity. And if I
20 could, it would cost two or three more times to buy that
21 product, which there is not the margin in there.

22 So, it is going to hurt the food supply. Fertilizer,
23 my lord, we saw the effects of that last year. So, when
24 you make that comment, it would have to have worse effects
25 on our allies because they would have to depend on somebody

1 else for that.

2 Dr. Hill: Well, look, you are absolutely right in
3 making this distinction and I am glad you did, because, of
4 course, 70 percent of food production is fuel, just as you
5 have pointed out. And it is not the electricity, it is
6 actually the fuel that is in the major equipment, but it is
7 also for making fertilizer because all the ammonia
8 phosphates and, you know, fertilizers are used with natural
9 gas.

10 So, we have to -- what I was going to say is we have
11 to have a very sensible discussion about all of this. You
12 know, there is another dimension beyond the fuel,
13 fertilizer, food mix, which you have quite rightly pointed
14 out, which is of nuclear energy, too. We haven't put this
15 in the mix.

16 And Vladimir Putin has, of course, imperiled civilian
17 nuclear power by attacks on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant,
18 going through the Chernobyl exclusion zone. We have been
19 dependent on Russia for some of the fuel supply system for
20 nuclear fuel.

21 This is a time for us to step up into this realm as
22 well. I think, you know, possibly for this committee and
23 many others, we should be having a very sensible, open
24 discussion on the complexities of this issue and how to
25 balance it off.

1 Senator Mullin: Thank you. I agree. Sir, what
2 lessons should we learn from Russia's irregular warfare?

3 Mr. Zakheim: Well, they have been effective with
4 hybrid warfare. As you know, in Georgia, in Crimea. In
5 this case, Putin was perhaps overconfident in his
6 conventional forces capability and didn't pursue that
7 route.

8 Although I would note that the day before Russia had
9 the physical land invasion of Ukraine, there were robust
10 cyber-attacks on Ukraine, on their government servers, and
11 actually globally. And so, we have to think of this
12 conflict as one that is playing out in all domains,
13 including, I think, what you are characterizing as the
14 irregular domain as well.

15 And, you know, the notion that we are in some sort of
16 steady state of either peace or conflict, the reality is
17 that there are elements of military domains right now that
18 are in active conflict, cyber being the primary example.

19 Senator Mullin: Thank you, sir. With the fact that I
20 came over from the House and we respect the time because we
21 get cut off, I am going to yield back the remainder of my
22 time to you.

23 Chairman Reed: Thank you. That is the example that
24 everyone should follow. I agree. I think, Senator Mullin,
25 you have added so much to the committee already.

1 [Laughter.]

2 Senator Mullin: You will get over it soon.

3 Chairman Reed: With that, let me recognize for five
4 minutes, Senator Blumenthal.

5 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you. I am not going to use
6 any of my five minutes to comment on any reaction. Thank
7 you all for being here. It has been very, very helpful and
8 enlightening. And I have been to Kiev three times in the
9 past year.

10 And every time I go, I am so deeply moved and
11 impressed by the resolve and resilience of the Ukrainian
12 people, which I think in the end of the day is the reason
13 that they will win. Because as Presidents Zelenskyy told
14 me during one of my visits with him, they will fight to the
15 last person and they will fight with pitchforks if they
16 need to do it.

17 And I have supported his requests for the Javelins and
18 singers, and then for long range artillery and still
19 longer-range artillery. The ATACMS, not just the HIMARS.
20 For the tanks that he needs, not just the Bradley and
21 Stryker vehicles, but the Leopards and the Challengers.
22 And now for the fighter aircraft.

23 But as important as those munitions and artillery and
24 other hardware are, I think the morale and determination of
25 the people of Ukraine is equally important. And in that

1 connection, I have worked with Senator Graham to support
2 designating Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism.

3 Every time I have met with Presidents Zelenskyy, he
4 has mentioned it. In fact, when we brought him a copy of
5 the resolution, passed unanimously by the United States
6 Senate, asking the Administration to designate Russia as a
7 state sponsor of terrorism, his face alighted.

8 We presented him with the resolution in July, Senator
9 Graham and I. It has meaning to the people of Ukraine.
10 Would you agree with me that Russia should be designated a
11 state sponsor of terrorism?

12 Dr. Hill: I would actually have to say with regret
13 that I would not. And let me just elaborate why. Because
14 I think that what we really need to do is to be able to
15 persuade other countries in the global South and elsewhere,
16 that it is very important for them to support Ukraine and
17 to push back against Russian aggression.

18 And we have to focus this on what Russia has done to
19 violate Ukraine's territorial integrity. I think once you
20 put it into that designation, you then start to have a lot
21 of countries pull back from any support that they might
22 have given, because the consequences of that will be
23 questioning whether that's going to happen to them as well.
24 We have many other conflicts around the world.

25 We have Saudi Arabia's attacks on Yemen, for example,

1 and many of those where I would hesitate to think that we
2 would apply that designation. What we have to do when we
3 look at this is to see whether we can actually use the
4 precedent of whatever action we take.

5 There is one other element that I, you know, I do want
6 to point out, though, that we should be making very clear
7 that the United States, along with the United Kingdom, have
8 a special role in supporting Ukraine because of the
9 agreements that we had in 1994 to support Ukraine's
10 territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence, when we
11 pushed them to give up nuclear weapons.

12 One thing we haven't mentioned on this panel is the
13 proliferation challenge that we now face because of this.
14 So I do think that we, the United States, along with the
15 United Kingdom and others, should be stressing continuously
16 how much -- how important it is to support Ukraine. But I
17 am afraid that with regret, I would hesitate taking this
18 step.

19 Senator Blumenthal: How about the Wagner Group?
20 Would you agree with me that we should designate the Wagner
21 group as a terrorist or a foreign terrorist group?

22 Dr. Hill: I think that would fall into that category.
23 I think with the Wagner Group and another paramilitary
24 formations, we can discuss those, some of the atrocious
25 acts that they are undertaking. They have actually

1 attacked Special Forces of the United States in Syria in
2 2018.

3 Senator Blumenthal: So, you would distinguish --

4 Dr. Hill: I would distinguish bargainer. Is this the
5 actions of particular groups under that state rubric.

6 Senator Blumenthal: Let me ask you, you know, over
7 the course of this year, the prospect of potential
8 escalation by Putin has been raised as a reason not to
9 provide each of these weapons' platforms as we have gone
10 along. And I have said the danger of escalation has been
11 vastly overestimated.

12 Just as we have underestimated the capability of the
13 Ukrainian forces, we have overestimated or exaggerated
14 Putin's potential for escalating. Could you give me your
15 thoughts about whether we are close to that escalation
16 point, whether it would be triggered by the fourth-
17 generation fighter aircraft that now we are urging be
18 provided?

19 Dr. Hill: I want to seed some of this to Dr. Zakheim,
20 but I just want to make it very clear, Putin escalates all
21 the time. Sending 500,000 extra people, 300,000 extra
22 people to the front is an escalation.

23 We are seeing a lot of caution, as we mentioned
24 earlier, about crossing over into NATO territory because he
25 doesn't want to have a full-on kinetic war with NATO. But

1 I don't think that actually specific choices of equipment
2 really -- germane to this debate.

3 Mr. Zakheim: I agree with Dr. Hill, and I think the
4 point here is what is the platform going to be used for?
5 Why is it necessary? That is the question that should
6 animate decision making with the emphasis on urgency and
7 speed.

8 And I agree with you, Senator. I think fighter
9 aircraft, ones that this Congress has authorized the U.S.
10 military not to use anymore, that could easily be sent over
11 there, could have a material impact on the fight within the
12 sovereign territory of Ukraine.

13 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.
15 Senator Cotton, please.

16 Senator Cotton: I agree with what Senator Blumenthal
17 said that the Administration has been deterring itself from
18 providing the Ukrainians the weapons they need. I would
19 say from the very beginning they engaged in half measures
20 while Ukraine has half succeeded, and they should quit
21 pussyfooting around on the battlefield.

22 I want to look before Russians launched this war,
23 though, Mr. Zakheim, to what happened in 2021. Winston
24 Churchill, in his famous Iron Curtain speech, cautioned
25 against offering temptations to a trial of strength.

1 And he offered that caution specifically about the
2 Russians, who had said he had just seen up close and
3 personal as allies and friends for many years, and there is
4 nothing they respect so much as military strength and
5 nothing for which they have less respect than military
6 weakness.

7 Can you tell us how did the botched withdrawal in
8 Afghanistan perhaps tipped Vladimir Putin to a trial of
9 strength in Ukraine?

10 Mr. Zakheim: Well, I think they correlate, Senator.
11 I agree with your -- you know, the thrust of your question.
12 The United States looked weak. It didn't look like it was
13 going to -- did not support the state until every U.S.
14 service member went home and it looked like we were unable
15 to carry out military operations. And so, we looked
16 defeated, and I think when you look weak, people like
17 Vladimir Putin seek to exploit the opportunity.

18 Senator Cotton: When Joe Biden took office, I think
19 it is fair to say that Vladimir Putin's top two foreign
20 policy priorities, at least as it related to the United
21 States, were one, the extension of the New START treaty,
22 which is a badly one-sided nuclear arms control treaty that
23 the Obama Administration entered, and two, the waiver of
24 sanctions on the Nordstream 2 pipeline.

25 In his very first week in office, Joe Biden extended

1 the New START treaty. Shortly after that, he waived
2 sanctions on Northstream 2 pipeline. How did Joe Biden's
3 decision to give Vladimir Putin his top two foreign policy
4 priorities without any concessions whatsoever perhaps tempt
5 Vladimir Putin into a trial of strength in Ukraine?

6 Mr. Zakheim: Well, it made clear to everybody,
7 including, I think, President Biden, that engagement of
8 Vladimir Putin, that seeking to put forward a carrot in
9 order to prevent the type of behavior that we have seen
10 consistently from Vladimir Putin, as mentioned before, from
11 2008 in Georgia, 2014 in Crimea, is not going to work.

12 That, as you point out at the beginning of your
13 question, Senator Cotton, President Putin responds to one
14 thing, force in kind and strength. And I think that is
15 what the Ukrainians have shown and this Congress has
16 supported, and actually pushed the President to be more
17 forceful in that support and to understand the urgency that
18 is required there.

19 Senator Cotton: Let's look at the provision of
20 weapons to Ukraine. Actually, let's go back to the Obama-
21 Biden era since. In President Obama's era, we provided
22 meals ready to eat and blankets not ammunition and
23 javelins. And then since then it has been a constant story
24 of ammunition but not artillery, artillery but HIMARS,
25 HIMARS but not armor. Infantry fighting vehicles, but not

1 tanks.

2 Okay, tanks, but not fighters or ATACMS or cluster
3 munitions or so forth. I have to assume, given this
4 pattern, we are going to see provision of some of those
5 weapons and platforms sometimes in the future when they are
6 less effective than they would have been if they had been
7 provided months ago or at the beginning of this war.

8 But let's look at one in particular, since a lot of
9 these things we are talking about, Bradley fighting
10 vehicles, special Abrams tanks, F-16s do have long
11 logistics tails and take some training. We have heard a
12 lot today about Russians being dug in trench lines, almost
13 World War I style warfare.

14 We have more than 1 million cluster munitions in our
15 stockpiles here in the United States. Today, we are not
16 providing them in anything like sizable numbers. Could you
17 explain what cluster munitions could do to help the
18 Ukrainians perhaps break through the stalemate in Eastern
19 Ukraine?

20 Mr. Zakheim: Well, Senator, as you point out, they
21 disperse, they clear the field, and they are very effective
22 in having a strategic impact when you are dealing with the
23 tactical problem that you have outlined.

24 Senator Cotton: And why would we not provide cluster
25 munitions, which would be ready to fire in a matter of

1 days, unlike, say, an Abrams tank or an F-16?

2 Mr. Zakheim: Well, I think anything that we have in
3 our inventory that would be useful for this battle, we
4 ought to offer the Ukrainians.

5 Senator Cotton: Okay. One final question for you,
6 Mr. Zakheim. This is in your role at the Ronald Reagan
7 Institute. You will do an annual poll about the American
8 people's respect and admiration for our military.

9 It has shown alarming downward trends in recent years.
10 Can you give us some thoughts, both on the poll and from
11 your experience, in crafting these questions and following
12 over the years about why that is the case?

13 Mr. Zakheim: Senator, thank you for that. We do the
14 Reagan National Defense Survey annually, and just four
15 years ago, the American people's trust and confidence in
16 military was over 70 percent.

17 And as you referenced there, Senator, now it is
18 actually below 50 percent. The most recent defense survey
19 we asked the respondents why, and the response was clear
20 that the American people believe that the military has
21 become politicized. That is expressed in a variety of
22 different ways from civilian leadership politicizing the
23 military, to military leaderships politicizing the
24 military, to concerns about wokeism, and extremism, and
25 divisive differently across percentage lines.

1 But I think it is not a concern of the American people
2 that the U.S. military is unable to carry out their core
3 mission of protecting this country and being the best
4 military force in the world. It is a concern about
5 politicization penetrating their mission, Senator.

6 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Cotton. Senator
8 Kaine, please.

9 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and to the
10 witnesses. If I had 10 minutes of questioning, I would
11 spend 5 comparing a Biden Administration that has assembled
12 a global coalition to stand for democracy against an
13 illegal invasion, and a previous Administration that
14 illegally withheld Congressionally mandated arms sales to
15 Ukraine to extort a political advantage by doing so.

16 But I have 4 minutes and 39 seconds, and so I want to
17 take 2 minutes, Dr. Lin, with you on a question about China
18 and diplomacy, and then 2 minutes with Dr. Hill and Mr.
19 Zakheim about an ally's reference, picking up on some of
20 your verbal testimony. Dr. Lin, in the events surrounding
21 this spying balloon incident, the thing that has troubled
22 me the most is not the capacity of a high-altitude balloon.

23 I probably been troubled most by General Austin trying
24 to call his counterpart in China and no one picking up the
25 phone. What does this say about the diplomatic

1 relationship, as an expert, that that is happening, and
2 what do we need to do so that we have, at a minimum, clear
3 channels of communication to avoid unnecessary escalations?

4 Dr. Lin: Senator, that is an excellent question. I
5 am not surprised that Secretary Austin's counterpart did
6 not pick up the phone.

7 We have a track record of us reaching out to the PLA,
8 and them not picking up the phone, or responding at a much
9 later time where it is no longer relevant to the situation
10 that we are trying to deal with.

11 It shows that across the U.S. engagement with China,
12 our military-to-military ties and relationship is
13 relatively weak. And despite the efforts of this
14 Administration to focus on deconfliction, crisis
15 communications with the PLA, we have not made significant
16 progress.

17 And I wouldn't fault that to be on the U.S. side, I
18 would fault that to be the Chinese. From their
19 perspective, they have very little incentives to
20 communicate or deconflict from us because they view our
21 attempts to communicate with them as either allowing a
22 green light of certain types of U.S. operations.

23 Senator Kaine: Don't they, though, value stability
24 and they wouldn't like surprises or accidents or
25 miscalculations that weren't in their sort of intentional

1 interest?

2 Dr. Lin: They do value that. But we have seen since
3 2021 that they have canceled the Military Maritime
4 Consultative Agreement, the key military to military
5 dialogs to prevent unsafe encounters or whatnot.

6 I think from the Chinese perspective, they believe
7 that if they can reach an agreement with the United States
8 at the highest strategic level on how the relationship
9 should be framed, all the other elements to fall in line,
10 which is why from their perspective, they are very intent
11 on constructing this framework of U.S., China relations.
12 Which from the U.S. perspective, that is only one piece of
13 the relationship.

14 Senator Kaine: Right. Thank you. To Dr. Hill and
15 Mr. Zakheim, Dr. Hill, you said something about, I think it
16 was in reference to American allies in the hemisphere, that
17 we pay attention to problems rather than build
18 relationships. And, Mr. Zakheim, you said we need to
19 always focus on allies as one of the most important
20 strengths we have. Against any adversary, the network of
21 allies we have is important.

22 I am the chairman of the Western Hemisphere
23 subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations committee, and
24 I see this throughout the Americas, deep Chinese
25 involvement economically, humanitarian aid.

1 You know, debt deals that will get you in trouble
2 later but they might be attractive upfront. And what our
3 allies tend to say to us is we would rather deal with you.
4 I mean, we are culturally more connected. We are
5 suspicious of some of the Chinese offers that are on the
6 table.

7 But if they have got an offer and you have got
8 nothing, how do we say to our people, well, we are turning
9 down the free 5G system or the, you know, the port
10 infrastructure bill. So, talk a little bit about,
11 particularly in the Americas, your thoughts about the way
12 to, you know, turn episodic attention to problems into a
13 more sustained effort to build relationships.

14 Dr. Hill: I think this is absolutely spot on. And we
15 need a strategy because China has a strategy. And maybe
16 they come in, as you said, in a very specific way, as with
17 the Belt and Road Initiative, investments in energy in
18 places like Venezuela, for example, coming in with, you
19 know, other forms of assistance, targeting elites. You
20 know, we know that the Chinese are extremely, very good at
21 honing in on elites and propping them up. Russia does
22 exactly the same.

23 And it is part of this top-down approach that Dr. Lin
24 has described, they look for a framework of the relations
25 that starts at the top and then they let everything else

1 flow from there. And that is not the way that we approach
2 our allies and partners in any hemisphere, let alone in the
3 Western hemisphere.

4 And when I was in the previous Administration, I
5 worried a great deal as a result of the crisis in
6 Venezuela, that we didn't have a plan. That we didn't have
7 deep relationships. We took a lot of other neighboring
8 countries for granted, and we didn't have a deep
9 relationships.

10 Senator Kaine: Could I let Mr. Zakheim -- we have
11 identified the problem. He will give us the solution.

12 [Laughter.]

13 Mr. Zakheim: No pressure there, Senator. I do think
14 the answer here is diplomacy that Dr. Hill is speaking
15 about. Brazil was raised before, and President Biden's
16 engagement, I think is absolutely critical. Trade and
17 commerce, and this is what needs to grow. That is what we
18 do best as a country, unleash our free market.

19 We have tried this, and success and failed over the
20 decades, but that continues to be worked aggressively. And
21 I think looking at Colombia, I think there is a layer where
22 a security relationship appropriately tailored for the
23 country can have a positive impact in terms of the type of
24 effects that you are talking about, Senator.

25 Senator Kaine: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr.

1 Chair.

2 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Kaine. Senator
3 Budd, please.

4 Senator Budd: Thank you, Chairman Reed, and Ranking
5 Member Wicker. I am honored to join the Armed Services
6 committee, and I will certainly be a good steward of our
7 military interests in North Carolina.

8 And Senator Wicker, I will work to keep your legacy
9 alive at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base. Appreciate your
10 service there. You know, it is clear that deterrence
11 failed in Ukraine. I am deeply concerned that the Biden
12 Administration's policies and actions will similarly lead
13 to deterrence failing in Asia, and that China will attempt
14 to take Taiwan by force.

15 Mr. Zakheim, you were recently reappointed to the
16 National Defense Strategy Commission. And understanding
17 that the Commission work just started on the 2022 National
18 Defense Strategy, what does the NDS get right, and please
19 give two or three examples of what the Biden Administration
20 got wrong.

21 Mr. Zakheim: A glaring gap in the national defense
22 strategy of the Biden Administration, but I think it was
23 also true for the Trump Administration, is that Senator,
24 when you look for the world resources, dollars, what is
25 required to execute that strategy, you will not find that

1 word.

2 And so, I think for policymakers and elected
3 officials, your challenge is to figure out what is exactly
4 required to realize the significant objectives of that
5 defense strategy. And that is where I think the Commission
6 historically has been helpful, and I think we will do so
7 again. I think the simultaneity question that came up
8 earlier, Senator, would be a second, I point to.

9 It is quite different than 2017 where we didn't see as
10 clearly and didn't have as much evidence of this Russia,
11 China axis. It is live, it is real, and we need to think
12 through that.

13 And nuclear weapons cannot be the only answer, nor can
14 some kind of vague reference to allies. It needs to have
15 meaning. AUKUS is a good step, but that should be one of
16 many examples which right now we don't have.

17 Senator Budd: Thank you. Continuing on, last year
18 you told this committee that a strategy of deterrence by
19 denial is a sound approach to keep China from invading
20 Taiwan. Do you maintain that position? And if so, what is
21 your current assessment of our posture in the Indo-Pacific?
22 And should we, for example, invest more heavily or move
23 faster in specific areas?

24 Mr. Zakheim: Yes, I do think the denial approach,
25 deterrence by denial is still sound, although as mentioned

1 earlier in this hearing, some of the key elements,
2 particularly undersea warfare capability, fast boats,
3 submarines are just not being produced at a clip that will
4 realize that -- you know, the deterrence by denial.

5 I think this committee and this Administration
6 previous mission has done a good job investing in some of
7 the capabilities, missiles, anti-ship missiles. Long range
8 precision munitions are key for that fight that was less
9 apparent or we hadn't addressed that sufficiently the last
10 go around.

11 So, I think those would be, you know, two areas where
12 we need to emphasize really that are critical to
13 accomplishing the deterrence by denial strategy. Last
14 point on that, Senator, I would also say that we have to
15 continue to focus on balancing.

16 And whereas Taiwan might be the most apparent and
17 clearest flash point, the Indo-Pacific has other
18 challenges. China has other ambitions in their global
19 nature, as we see most recently in terms of China invading
20 our aerospace.

21 Senator Budd: So, Mr. Zakheim, much has been made
22 about potential timelines for a Chinese invasion of Taiwan,
23 but predicting when might make war seem inevitable, an
24 invasion seems inevitable. So, what are the near and long
25 term risks of deterrence failing without significant and

1 sustained growth of our defense budget?

2 Mr. Zakheim: Well, I take the view here that this
3 strategy, which is a bipartisan strategy between the Biden
4 and Trump Administration, wants to deter for today. It
5 recognizes the so-called Davidson window as a real
6 possibility, and we have to deter and operate with the
7 urgency that it could happen today.

8 That is the best way to push it out to tomorrow. And
9 with tomorrow, we need to continue to make those
10 investments where we have the modernized force that China
11 is clearly investing in.

12 I think one thing this committee has done well, we
13 know about the Chinese military modernization because this
14 committee requires an annual China military modernization
15 report. We learn a lot and we educate the public around
16 it.

17 And as much as we are concerned about what China is
18 doing with their signal fusion, just focusing on their core
19 military modernization has revealed what a significant
20 challenge we are facing today.

21 Senator Budd: Thank you. Many Americans, some would
22 say a majority of Americans, support Ukraine, including the
23 reclaiming of territory taken by Russia. A growing number
24 of Americans, however, are rightly concerned in the U.S. --
25 that the U.S. is providing too much aid, particularly in

1 comparison to our European allies.

2 So, in my limited time, Dr. Hill, given that the U.S.
3 is no longer resourced to fight two major wars
4 simultaneously, we must consider real tradeoffs between
5 continuing to arm Ukraine or being ready to deter, or if
6 necessary, defeat a Chinese invasion of Taiwan.

7 Where and how should the United States encourage our
8 European allies to step up so we can free up resources to
9 focus on the priority theater in the Indo-Pacific?

10 Dr. Hill: Thank you, Senator. But I actually think
11 that Russia and China are fused together in this regard.
12 We all forget that Russia is actually in Asia, and as a
13 Asia-Pacific power, it actually has a long border with
14 China. In fact, the longest border that Russia has in any
15 country is with China.

16 And Russia has benefited from China's assistance and
17 facilitation of this war, including moving its own troops
18 from the Russian Far East to the front in Ukraine. So,
19 China and Russia are part of the same problem,
20 unfortunately. I do agree with you that we need to work
21 very closely with our European allies.

22 We also have European allies who are interested in the
23 Asia-Pacific region, the AUKUS alignment, for example,
24 includes the United Kingdom. We have unfortunately got
25 into a bit of a spat with France over that, but I think we

1 can recover from this.

2 We need to think about our other European allies that
3 are major maritime powers, which France and the UK actually
4 are. But I do think we need to recognize that Europeans
5 are stepping up on the front in Ukraine. And we may also
6 have to ask Europe what it is prepared to do in the Indo-
7 Pacific region as well, because they have interest.

8 Senator Budd: Very good. Thank you. My time has
9 expired.

10 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Budd. Senator
11 Rosen, please.

12 Senator Rosen: Well, thank you, Chairman Reed,
13 Ranking Member Wicker, for holding this very timely hearing
14 on global security challenges, which comes ahead of the
15 unfortunately, the one-year anniversary of Vladimir Putin's
16 brutal and unjustified invasion of Ukraine. And as Russia
17 and Ukraine, of course, we know they are both preparing for
18 spring counter offensives because of the weather there.

19 It is absolutely critical, I believe, that the United
20 States and our allies stand with Ukraine for as long as it
21 takes to help the Ukrainian people win. So, Dr. Hill, I
22 want to build on a question that Senator Manchin asked you.
23 If Ukraine were to undertake a military operation in
24 Crimea, which was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014, how
25 could the U.S. and NATO allies deter Russian escalation

1 short of a direct military confrontation between NATO and
2 Russia?

3 Dr. Hill: Well, first of all, Senator Rosen, thank
4 you very much for this question. But there is a lot of
5 territory between the Ukrainian front lines and Crimea at
6 this particular point. The Ukrainians have been able to
7 penetrate into the airspace over Crimea using drones and,
8 you know, the long-range missiles.

9 We have seen some of this happen. But in actual fact,
10 what Putin is trying to do is consolidate all the territory
11 around Crimea to keep it. So, in fact, what Mr. Zakheim
12 was already talking about, which is the military battle in
13 the Donbass region, in Zaporizhzhia region, Kherson is
14 pretty important.

15 So, we have got to, you know, look at that before
16 Crimea comes onto the agenda. Now, there is a case, and I
17 think that we have to be discussing this with the
18 Ukrainians, behind the scenes about what to do when it
19 comes to the issue of Crimea over the longer term. Russia
20 has claimed all of this territory, not just Crimea. We
21 have to figure out how are we going to push those claims
22 back.

23 It is not just a question of how far we can push
24 Ukrainian territory forward again in this battle, but what
25 are we going to do about that territory over the longer

1 term? The Ukrainians were willing to discuss some of the
2 formulations internationally prior to all of the atrocities
3 that have been carried out here.

4 And I think we have to have an international level
5 discussion in the United Nations of how to handle this. It
6 is unacceptable at any point for Russia to have any kind of
7 political control and claims of sovereignty over Ukrainian
8 territory. So, it is not just a question of what happens
9 when Ukraine tries to retake territory, but how are we
10 going to handle this over the longer term.

11 Senator Rosen: Well, thank you. And I kind of want
12 to build on that because we know that we are trying to add
13 Finland and Sweden. Their NATO ascension is really going
14 to bolster our alliance, of course, in significant ways.
15 We all know that.

16 And so, what do you think the advantages, comparative
17 advantages, or the challenges that we might have bringing
18 them into the alliance. Will that help us? How will that
19 help us in some of the things that we are trying to do as
20 well?

21 Dr. Hill: Well, look, Finland and Sweden have made a
22 strategic decision to join NATO. They could have gone to
23 any point since World War II, since the creation of NATO,
24 and they did not. Finland has a very long border with
25 Russia. It was attacked by the Soviet Union in the 1930s,

1 1940s.

2 And Finland has actually got an incredibly important
3 defensive posture. They can put up to 800,000 people under
4 arms. So, Finland is determined to defend itself and is
5 also making it very clear that it wants to be part of the
6 defense of Europe, so this is very significant. Sweden was
7 completely neutral up until this point. This is a huge
8 rupture in the strategic posture of Sweden.

9 And Sweden is also making it clear that it intends to
10 defend Europe writ large, too. So, this puts on the agenda
11 a whole rethinking of our European security posture. This
12 isn't just something that the United States has to step up
13 to, Sweden and Finland are stepping up as well.

14 Senator Rosen: Thank you. I want to build on that in
15 a minute or so I have left. So, Dr. Lin, I want to talk
16 with you a little bit about mainly maintaining our defense
17 technological edge. Global competition, we have declining
18 R&D, we have contracting challenges, we have a huge STEM
19 workforce gap, huge.

20 There are just a few of the impediments that we have
21 to growing at the edge with our adversaries. We see them
22 all around. We have been talking about this today,
23 particularly China, and that is a pacing challenge for us.

24 So how, in your opinion, do you assess the U.S.'s
25 ability to develop, to adopt, to deploy these emerging

1 technologies for national security, and particularly as
2 compared to China, which we know is really moving forward
3 pretty quickly?

4 Dr. Lin: I guess I will separate the development of
5 technology into two aspects. One is developing of the
6 talent, which I think China is able to do much faster
7 because they have more of the STEM education, because they
8 are able to redirect education in certain ways that we and
9 the U.S. Government are not -- don't have the same
10 authoritarian powers to do.

11 But I would say that when it actually comes to the
12 fielding and ability to operate these emerging technology,
13 that is where, and this goes back to our discussion
14 earlier, the personnel and the training within the PLA is
15 far lacking than the United States. So, we can see a lot
16 of, for example, new weapon systems online, but that
17 doesn't mean that China's actually able to operate these
18 new weapons systems.

19 So, I would say that I wouldn't characterize the
20 United States as necessarily lagging behind the Chinese. I
21 would say we have different advantages in terms of we have
22 the personnel and we are able to incorporate the
23 technologies, but China -- I am sorry, on the military
24 side.

25 But China is able to invest more and is also able to

1 have more -- they have also more STEM graduates to help try
2 to develop that technology to begin with.

3 Senator Rosen: So, you would say going broad and deep
4 in STEM education, starting as early as possible, pre-K all
5 the way through to develop the pipeline would be in our
6 critical best interest.

7 Dr. Lin: Yes, for sure.

8 Senator Rosen: Thank you.

9 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. Senator
10 Sullivan, please.

11 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And
12 unfortunately, my colleague from Virginia is not here. And
13 had I had 10 minutes to raise an issue, I would have asked
14 you guys, a previous Democratic Administration, the Obama
15 Administration wouldn't give the Ukrainians javelins
16 because they were scared about sparking a war with Putin.
17 The next Administration, the Trump Administration,
18 immediately gave javelins.

19 Previous Democratic Administration, the Obama
20 Administration declared a red line in Syria, then watched
21 everybody walk over it, invited the Russians into the
22 Middle East for the first time in decades, and the next
23 Administration declared a red line in Syria with Russian
24 proxies saying if they get any closer to our special
25 forces, we will destroy them. And then we destroyed them.

1 Hundreds of them, killed them.

2 So, there is a lot of comparisons here, and I just
3 want my colleagues to know, but I don't have 10 minutes. I
4 am going to turn to another topic that is all about
5 American strategy and that is energy. I am glad to see
6 Senator Manchin, Senator Mullin have raised this.

7 You know, a very memorable meeting I had many years
8 ago with our former chairman here, Senator McCain, and a
9 Russian dissident, very brave Russian dissident who is now
10 in jail, Vladimir Kara-Murza, I had asked him, what more
11 can we do to undermine the Putin regime?

12 What more can we do to go after Putin and the
13 oligarchs? He said it is easy, Senator. The number one
14 thing you can do as a country is produce more American
15 energy, number one. Do you agree with that, Dr. Hill, Mr.
16 Zakheim?

17 And if you can keep your answers short, I have a bunch
18 of questions. American energy as a really important tool
19 of American power to deal with great powers like Russia and
20 China.

21 Dr. Hill: Well, I would say yes, writ large, together
22 with our allies and rethinking also our energy posture,
23 absolutely.

24 Mr. Zakheim: Yes.

25 Senator Sullivan: Thank you. Dr. Lin, someone else

1 who is very scared of American energy dominance is Xi
2 Jinping. You read the reporting, it makes him very
3 nervous. I was just in the Middle East. 60 percent of
4 China's oil and gas goes through the Straits of Hormuz. If
5 we are in a conflict with them, we could shut that down in
6 10 minutes.

7 Does American -- is American energy dominance
8 important for us, all the above oil, gas, renewables,
9 whatever, but certainly oil and gas, is that important for
10 our competition with China? Is that something we should
11 emphasize?

12 Dr. Lin: Absolutely. And China imports about 70
13 percent of its oil, so it is a huge dependency that China
14 needs to work around.

15 Senator Sullivan: And so, they are scared when they
16 look at American energy dominance, is that correct?

17 Dr. Lin: Yes.

18 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask another question. We
19 haven't done American energy dominance. We haven't
20 produced more American energy. To the contrary, when this
21 Administration came into office, they did three things.
22 They immediately started shutting down their production of
23 American energy. They immediately started shutting down
24 American energy infrastructure.

25 They immediately started pressuring American financial

1 institutions not to invest in American energy. And then
2 when the prices of energy went up on working families, they
3 went overseas. President bended knee to the king of Saudi
4 Arabia, begging for more oil, lifting sanctions on
5 Venezuela, a terrorist regime to get more oil, and they
6 make it harder to produce American energy here.

7 Let me ask you this question, assume that there was a
8 project in America, \$9 billion investment, 200,000 barrels
9 a day, 2,500 jobs to build it, 75 percent of which are
10 union, lowest greenhouse gas emissions in the world,
11 highest environmental standards in the world of any energy
12 project.

13 From a national security perspective, if that was in
14 front of you right now, would you say approve it or would
15 you say, no, keep begging from Saudi Arabia and Venezuela?
16 What would you do, Dr. Lin? Will you approve a project
17 like that?

18 Dr. Lin: I would approve it, but I would also
19 continue to strengthen our relations with Saudis and many
20 of our partners.

21 Senator Sullivan: I agree 100 percent. But not
22 Venezuela, right?

23 Dr. Lin: No, not Venezuela.

24 Senator Sullivan: You don't need to go begging from
25 them. Dr. Hill, would you approve a project like that,

1 from a national security perspective. That is all I ask.

2 Dr. Hill: From a national security perspective,
3 absolutely. But we also need to look at the domestic
4 versus the export potential.

5 Senator Sullivan: Correct.

6 Dr. Hill: Because I think, you know, what we have got
7 -- what we are talking about here is how much energy that
8 the United States can also export in our own --

9 Senator Sullivan: But 200,000 barrels a day, that
10 gives us muscle, right, from America --

11 Dr. Hill: Certainly, in the short to medium term it
12 does.

13 Senator Sullivan: Yes, absolutely. Dr. Zakheim, what
14 about you?

15 Mr. Zakheim: I agree.

16 Senator Sullivan: Okay, thank you. Now, final
17 question. Assume we had a senior Administration official
18 who goes to Asia, who cautions our allies in Asia not to
19 purchase clean burning American LNG and then tells these
20 same Asian allies don't help some of the other countries,
21 ASEAN countries, for example, transition from coal to gas,
22 make them transition from coal to wind turbines. Would
23 that be smart American foreign policy, diplomatic policy as
24 it relates to Asia and building our alliances? Does that
25 make sense to any of you?

1 Dr. Hill: There is one element and --

2 Senator Sullivan: Well just real quick because I am
3 out of time, but --

4 Dr. Hill: No, no, but the point is that China is
5 making huge inroads on renewables and on in a green energy
6 use, including on constructing turbines. So it wouldn't
7 necessarily be the wrong thing to do, if we can also have
8 the technology that --

9 Senator Sullivan: China is building a coal plant a
10 week. And in ASEAN, they want to build more coal plants.
11 We have John, I am naming John Kerry, if you haven't
12 noticed. Does that make sense for John Kerry to go to Asia
13 and warn our allies not to buy American LNG and tell the
14 ASEAN countries you can't go from coal to gas, you have got
15 to go from coal to windmill, which no industrialized
16 country has ever done. Dr. Lin, does that make any sense?

17 Dr. Lin: So I think one of the concerns that
18 countries particularly in ASEAN but also in Pacific Island
19 have is about climate change and how that affects their
20 national security. So I don't know is what Secretary Kerry
21 was thinking behind that. But I think from a U.S.
22 perspective, it makes sense to encourage our allies and
23 partners to buy American.

24 Senator Sullivan: To buy American LNG. Dr. Zakheim.

25 Mr. Zakheim: I associate with Dr. Lin.

1 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

2 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Sullivan. I am
3 going to recognize Senator Duckworth and ask Senator Warren
4 to take over as I go vote. I shall return. Someone said
5 that once. Excuse me.

6 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome
7 to the panel. I want to pick up on a thread from earlier
8 in the conversation and discuss why I find the CCP's
9 actions across the Indo-Pacific, from the Mekong River to
10 the South China Sea to the Pacific island nations, so
11 incredibly troubling.

12 It is no secret that the CCP is using economic
13 coercion and expanding its diplomatic presence in this key
14 area of the world. And reality dictates that countries in
15 this region cannot simply ignore China's presence and
16 proximity.

17 And yet I still hear from our allies and partners
18 about how the United States remains a strong partner of
19 choice, and even those who are not yet allies and partners.
20 I sat down and had a meeting with the prime minister of
21 Cambodia, and he said he wanted to engage with the United
22 States as a partner when it comes economically -- to
23 economic engagement. Which brings me to my first question.

24 Dr. Lin, it is lovely to see you again, and I
25 appreciated your insights when I was preparing for my

1 travel to Taiwan last year, and I look forward to hearing
2 more of your thoughts as I plan another trip to the region.
3 Your testimony highlighted how our nation's alliances and
4 partnerships are a critical advantage over the PRC, and I
5 couldn't agree more.

6 And that is why I am leading a CODEL next week to
7 Indonesia and Japan to discuss a wide range of issues,
8 including energy security and the role that biofuels can
9 play in reducing our reliance on fossil fuels.
10 Facilitating greater economic engagement among friendly
11 nations or those who would like to become more friendly.

12 And the importance of expanding people to people
13 academic exchanges, including those that have brought many
14 Indonesians to study in Illinois. I will also engage both
15 countries on bolstering multilateral organizations like
16 ASEAN.

17 Dr. Lin, how do you see the role of multilateral
18 partnerships and agreements in countering malign CCP
19 activity? And how can the United States best show support
20 for all of our Southeast Asian partners with our
21 relationships with them, but also encouraging other
22 partners like Taiwan to engage with our Southeast Asian
23 partners? Thank you.

24 Dr. Lin: Senator Duckworth, great to see you, too.
25 And I am really heartened that you are taking another trip

1 to the region, because part of what we need to do from the
2 United States, not only the Biden Administration, but also
3 through our Congress, is to have more visits to the region.

4 Our own presence there to the region reassures our
5 allies and partners, and also showcases that we care and
6 are listening to them to what they are most concerned with.
7 With respect to multilateral organizations, we are already
8 doing quite a bit in this area, and I would point out for
9 Indonesia, what is particularly valuable is the recent
10 Indonesian agreement with Vietnam to settle their
11 disagreements over the EEZ, and that settlement is a model
12 that should be emulated, or that we should support other
13 Southeast Asian countries to do because it shows that we
14 can, or rather U.S. and other partners can settle disputes
15 peacefully in the South China Sea.

16 And that is a clear pushback against China's claims in
17 the South China Sea, the nine dash line claims. As from
18 Japan, I would recommend that given all the major shifts
19 that were happening, that we are seeing since this December
20 in terms of Japan's national defense strategy and whatnot,
21 your trip comes at a very pivotal point to really
22 understand what direction Japan is taking.

23 And we had discussed earlier that Japan is likely one
24 of the few countries that Taiwan can probably depend on
25 more among U.S. allies for its defense.

1 Senator Duckworth: Thank you. And you touched on
2 this. You know, I think that there are current cooperation
3 agreements that we can expand upon, and there are new
4 partnerships we should pursue to ensure stability in the
5 Indo-Pacific region.

6 I also think we need to look at what is happening in
7 Europe, specifically the war of choice in Ukraine. And so
8 my next question, Dr. Lin -- to both, Dr. Lin and Dr. Hill,
9 building on what Dr. Lin was just talking about, with
10 working with our Asian partners to expand more of these
11 partnerships and agreements.

12 With only a few exceptions, many countries in
13 Southeast Asia have not joined in sanctioning Russia
14 following the invasion of Ukraine, and many of them are
15 watching what is happening in Russia and gaining a
16 different lessons learned for what that means for them,
17 whether it is Taiwan, whether it is, you know, for freedom
18 of navigation in the South -- in the Indo-Pacific region.

19 What message or actions help convince our non-European
20 allies and partners to condemn Russian action? And
21 conversely, what message in action resonate with European
22 allies and partners as a counter to CCP malign activity?
23 How do we get more of our engagement with Europe, and to
24 get our European partners to understand that the Indo-
25 Pacific region is important to them too?

1 Dr. Lin: Right. So in terms of getting more Asian
2 allies and partners on board to sanction Russia, I think
3 part of it is also trying to understand what is holding
4 them back. Is it because they are very dependent on
5 Russian arms? Is it because they are dependent on certain
6 types of trade with villagers?

7 Or to the extent that we can decrease their dependency
8 on Russia? I think that is a way in which we could shift
9 their perspective because there's something holding them
10 back. I think most guys you recognize that Russia's
11 invasion of Ukraine is a clear atrocity and something that
12 they oppose. But it is getting them to the sanctions that
13 we need to work on.

14 Senator Duckworth: Dr. Hill.

15 Dr. Hill: I agree completely with Dr. Lin. I think,
16 you know, part of the issue that we face, not just in
17 Southeast Asia but elsewhere, is a lot of countries are
18 values neutral when they look at this.

19 So we have to clarify what is at risk. It is not
20 autocracy versus democracy because, you know, they can
21 constantly challenge us. It is really the violation of
22 territorial integrity. So when Dr. Lin was talking about
23 the importance of those helping Indonesia and Vietnam to
24 work out their territorial disputes, this is what we have
25 to clarify for countries in other regions. European

1 countries are stepping up to try to make this point too.

2 It is the point that Finland and Sweden are making as
3 they seek to join NATO. Poland, the Baltic states, other
4 countries are expressing their deep concern, and that this
5 is also a problem in the Indo-Pacific region.

6 India, for example, is a really important country to
7 engage on this, and I hope that members of this committee
8 will think about going to India. I know you already have
9 had meetings with Indian officials, because India faces
10 territorial disputes, not just with Pakistan, but also with
11 China in the Himalayas.

12 And India is wondering what are we going to do in
13 the event of another outbreak of conflict there, for
14 example, just as other countries around Asia wondering what
15 our posture is going to be on these issues? That's what we
16 have to clarify.

17 Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

18 Senator Warren: Thank you. Senator Schmitt is
19 recognized.

20 Senator Schmitt: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I would
21 say that I am very proud to be on this committee. This
22 committee in Missouri has had a long history of service on
23 this committee and look forward to working with all my
24 fellow committee members.

25 As you know, there has been a lot of discussion of

1 China, and rightfully so. And as part of their ambition to
2 project power across the world, they have been more
3 aggressive in building military bases and partnerships with
4 countries like Sri Lanka and the Solomon Islands and
5 Cambodia.

6 And a lot of Chinese firms now own and operate assets
7 in 96 ports in 53 countries, all of which can be used to
8 establish logistics and intelligence networks in strategic
9 locations, enabling China to project its power globally.

10 This network poses significant threat to the United
11 States and our allies, there is no doubt about that,
12 particularly if China can cut off access that our military
13 needs during difficult times or times of conflict.

14 I guess Mr. Zakheim, maybe direct this to you
15 initially because they don't have a ton of time. I want to
16 get through at least a couple of questions. What specific
17 actions should the Department of Defense undertake to
18 ensure that China does not gain further access to ports
19 throughout the world, especially in the South China Sea?

20 Mr. Zakheim: Thank you, Senator. I think the
21 critical thing for the Department of Defense or other
22 pieces for government to deal with China's reach globally
23 in the ways you have described is that we need to push out
24 our logistics capability.

25 The notion that somehow, we are going to rely on

1 shipping or transport aircraft to deliver forces, material
2 to the battlefield like we did in the last century is not
3 going to happen. And that is why I think you see some of
4 these memos coming out for those military leaders focused
5 on pre-positioning, on, you know, the TRANSCOM type issues
6 are most concerned because it is about getting there first
7 with speed and making sure the kill chain is not reliant on
8 pulling back the capability, you know, an ocean plus away.

9 Senator Schmitt: And then, while we are talking about
10 China, which I certainly believe is our biggest threat,
11 what do they believe is their biggest weakness in a
12 potential conflict with a foreign adversary, particularly
13 the United States? How do they view that?

14 Mr. Zakheim: I continue to believe, and I defer to
15 Dr. Lin here and her studies of this as well, is that our
16 undersea capability is something that I think spooks them.
17 That is the one I would start with. It is why think we
18 need to double down on it. They don't have the answer.

19 The quicker we can move from manned to unmanned, as
20 well as sustaining the current man capability is our
21 comparative advantage, and we should be investing that in a
22 significant, urgent, speedy fashion.

23 Dr. Lin: And Senator, I think one of -- the Chinese
24 don't say this quite easily. I think one of their biggest
25 weaknesses that they see is actually their personnel

1 because they don't do it -- unlike the United States, where
2 we have had significant experience fighting different types
3 of wars, they have had very limited fighting experience.

4 Even though they have the equipment, there is no
5 guarantee that transitioning from even a large-scale
6 exercise to a minor conflict, they would be successful,
7 much less a very high end contingency, one of the most
8 complex operations we can think about in terms of the
9 Chinese amphibious invasion of Taiwan.

10 Senator Schmitt: You know, I will just open this up
11 to all three of you for probably the last question that I
12 have time for. But you have all spoken about threats of
13 foreign actors, especially in Western Asia.

14 One concern that I have is that we remain focused on
15 obviously, those important threats, but may ignore threats
16 closer to home, to our own borders. What actions should
17 the department take to protect our national interests in
18 the Western Hemisphere, specifically the Southern border
19 and in the Panama Canal Zone?

20 And by the way, how should we engage South -- Central
21 and South America in some of these efforts?

22 Dr. Hill: Yes. I mean, this obviously picks up on
23 the question that Senator Kaine raised. And, you know, I
24 analyze the problem that actually, Mr. Zakheim came up with
25 a few solutions here in terms of our relationships with

1 some of those critical countries.

2 I think we need to assess the strength of our
3 relationships with our Western Hemisphere allies, thinking
4 about how we can capitalize on the recent presidential
5 visit to Brazil and how Brazil can play a larger role not
6 just in the region, but internationally because of its role
7 in the BRICS.

8 Our relationship with China and Russia and India.
9 Thinking about our relations with Mexico, that helps that
10 relationship overall, not just as Mexico a problem, but how
11 this can be strengthened as an alliance and as a
12 relationship going forward.

13 I think we need to have a whole scale assessment of
14 the nature of our military, diplomatic trade, as Mr.
15 Zakheim, relationships, said. And be paying particular
16 attention to those countries where China and also Russia
17 have penetrated in terms of their military or intelligence
18 investments, for example.

19 Mr. Zakheim: I will just add, Senator, that Plan
20 Colombia was a great success. I think what I have read and
21 the conversation that is at risk, that is a model that
22 needs to be replicated and we need to strengthen it in
23 Colombia. And that is coming out the military security
24 cooperation plane, and I think it would have the effects
25 that you rightfully point out we need in the Western

1 Hemisphere.

2 Senator Schmitt: Thank you.

3 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator. Let me recognize
4 Senator Warren, please.

5 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So we often
6 talk about the role of aircraft carriers and hypersonic
7 weapons, excuse me, in the great power competition, but I
8 would like to zero in on what people bring to the fight,
9 specifically, our military personnel. Leaders in the
10 People's Republic of China have repeatedly raised concerns
11 that they lack personnel who are both capable and highly
12 skilled for modern warfare.

13 A report for the U.S.-China Economic and Security
14 Review Commission found that, "many People's Liberation
15 Army commanders are still judged as incapable of properly
16 assessing situations, making operational decisions,
17 deploying forces or leading forces." We don't want to
18 underestimate China's capabilities, but that is a pretty
19 sorry state of affairs.

20 Dr. Lin, you are an expert on China and you were the
21 Senior Advisor advising the Department of Defense in both
22 the Obama and Trump Administrations. So tell me, Dr. Lin,
23 how important are personnel in winning on the battlefield?

24 Dr. Lin: Thank you, Senator Warren. Personal is
25 absolutely important. As you indicated and as I mentioned

1 earlier to Senator Schmitt, I think that is one of the
2 major weaknesses that the Chinese assess to be within their
3 PLA.

4 They aren't worried about whether they can get
5 another, for example, Dongfeng-41 missile or another
6 submarine. They are worried about whether their personnel
7 can perform. So it is absolutely critical.

8 Senator Warren: Okay. People, people, people. But
9 after years of having forces that have little more than a
10 9th grade education, PRC is now starting to attract
11 significantly more educated recruits. Dr. Lin, how
12 successful has the PLA been at retaining more skilled
13 troops?

14 Dr. Lin: So you are correct in saying that China, the
15 PLA is attracting more educated PLA recruits, but I am not
16 -- we don't really have really good statistics on how they
17 are in terms of retaining them. But I would say that the
18 respect for the PLA broadly in China is nowhere close to
19 the respect for the U.S. military in the United States.

20 Senator Warren: It is an interesting point on this,
21 because unlike the Chinese government, we actually care
22 about our people. Still we have our own recruiting and
23 retention challenges here at home. For example, U.S.
24 military families living in unsafe housing or struggling to
25 access health care that they need.

1 So I am looking forward to working on the personnel
2 subcommittee with Senator Scott to tackle these problems.
3 Dr. Lin, if the United States substantially disinvested in
4 the programs we have to support our military workforce,
5 things like access to child care and violence prevention
6 programs, would that help us or hurt us in our effort to
7 maintain a competitive advantage over China when it comes
8 to the quality of our personnel?

9 Dr. Lin: I think it would definitely hurt us. Having
10 worked with many military officers, I know how difficult it
11 is to be able to sacrifice for the nation while also taking
12 care of needs at home. So without that, without the United
13 States Government helping them with their child care, the
14 home portion, I think it makes their day jobs much more
15 difficult.

16 Senator Warren: Good. And I see our other witnesses
17 both nodding yes as well. Do I take it you both agreed on
18 this?

19 Dr. Hill: We certainly do. And look, we can see the
20 performance of the Russian military at this moment is a
21 case in point, a country that does not care about the
22 quality of its personnel, only the quantity that can be
23 thrown at the battlefield. And all of the issues that you
24 have just raised are one of the reasons why Russia has not
25 been performing as we might have expected.

1 Senator Warren: You know -- go ahead, Mr. Zakheim.

2 Mr. Zakheim: I completely agree, Senator Warren. And
3 one of the things this committee does annually when they
4 report out the defense authorization bill, what it has done
5 for the men and women in uniform, I think that is the
6 example and why we are able to realize these benefits.

7 Senator Warren: Yes. I raised this today in this
8 context because some Republicans want to cut programs that
9 support our troops and our military families. You know,
10 they talk about fiscal responsibility, but I see two big
11 problems.

12 First, anyone who is using a debate over the nation's
13 debt limit to crash our economy in order to extract massive
14 spending cuts is being reckless, not responsible. But
15 second, make no mistake, the same folks who claim to care
16 about the size of the Pentagon budget will continue to get
17 a blank check for weapons programs that go to billions of
18 dollars of cost and not to our personnel.

19 The Pentagon funding these Republicans want to cut is
20 the part that goes to safe housing and medical care for our
21 troops. I get it. There is plenty of waste to cut in the
22 Pentagon's budget, but programs that support our troops and
23 inspire them to continue to put their lives on the line for
24 our country aren't waste. They protect our greatest
25 strength as a nation, our people. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Warren. Senator
2 Wicker, you have additional questions, please.

3 Senator Wicker: Right. I am going to take a short
4 second round. You have all been extremely helpful and it
5 has been a very informative but long two and a half hours
6 for you, and I know you are anxious to get up. In terms of
7 -- Mr. Zakheim, in terms of our stake as American families
8 in the Ukraine conflict.

9 We have heard arguments, this is an assault on the
10 global rules based order, that Russia has violated the UN
11 chapter. It is a violation of international law. In
12 addition, there is the 1994 agreement that the United
13 States made when Ukraine gave up their nuclear weapons.
14 There are going to be a lot of families who say, that is
15 not enough for me. I am trying to get my kids ready for
16 college.

17 My spouse and I both work. I am furious about the
18 border. Inflation is killing me. And why should any --
19 why should my tax dollars -- that doesn't affect me and my
20 family where I live, that we are so interested in in
21 Ukraine defeating Russia in this. What is our stake?

22 Mr. Zakheim: Thank you, Senator Wicker. I think the
23 response is let's not be pennywise and pound foolish.
24 Ukraine winning means that we do not have a broader armed
25 conflict in Europe. History is clear, the cost to America

1 with a war on the continent could be so consequential, it
2 takes over the entire country in the form of some world war
3 like effort.

4 That is the difference, in my judgment, between
5 allowing Vladimir Putin and his revanchist ambitions to
6 have whatever they want in Europe versus not putting a
7 single U.S. boot on the ground, investing in the Ukrainians
8 along with our allies, to allow them to do essentially our
9 work for us, that is to defeat an adversary.

10 Senator Wicker: So it is going to save that family
11 tax money down the road?

12 Mr. Zakheim: And potentially lives, Senator.

13 Senator Wicker: Dr. Hill.

14 Dr. Hill: I agree completely with Mr. Zakheim about
15 this as well. And Senator Cotton, while he was opening up
16 for his question, invoked Winston Churchill. You know,
17 this August buddy had debates about whether the United
18 States should continue to support the United Kingdom before
19 the United States entry into World War II back in the
20 period from 1939 to 1941, in fact.

21 Senator Wicker: Indeed, it was controversial.

22 Dr. Hill: Exactly. And so I think it is, you know,
23 the same kind of debate about the knock on effects for all
24 of us. And just one issue about the borders. The kinds of
25 attacks that Russia has made on another country and its

1 borders lead to more refugees and migrants. We have seen
2 that.

3 In fact, we do have Russians, Ukrainians, and others
4 coming over the Southern border who have, you know, taken
5 roundabout routes to get here. We are now going to face on
6 a global scale more of these kinds of violations. We have
7 got a massive refugee and migration problem across the
8 entire globe. Climate change is going to exacerbate this.
9 We are going to be dealing with problems on the border from
10 --

11 Senator Wicker: I have to hurry. Mr. Zakheim, you
12 make a point that one of the worst wastes of money being
13 pound foolish is a CR, a continuing resolution. Would you
14 explain why that is?

15 Mr. Zakheim: Thank you. And thank you for giving a
16 chance. I didn't get to your reform question earlier.
17 This Congress is all about how you deal with waste and
18 inefficiency in Department of Defense enterprise of \$100
19 billion with the Congress year over year.

20 I know this is not the choice of this committee, but
21 going on a CR, not allowing that the budget that the
22 Department of Defense has requested to be executed, and
23 forcing them, boxing them in their previous year's request,
24 it raises inefficiency where you are spending money,
25 authorize and appropriated funds in things that the

1 Congress doesn't want them to spend on, the Department of
2 Defense doesn't want them to spend on, all because of this
3 larger context has happened for decades, year over year.

4 The exception is when we don't have a CR and it
5 translates into tens of billions of dollars annually of
6 inefficient spending of taxpayer money, sir.

7 Senator Wicker: And one other thing. It seems to me
8 the Russian offensive of this late winter has bogged down
9 and is not likely to succeed any further. Would you
10 comment on that?

11 Mr. Zakheim: I think that is still a question. It is
12 certainly hasn't proceeded at the pace that Vladimir Putin
13 would have liked. But as Dr. Hill and others pointed out,
14 Putin keeps on putting people, personnel, and capability
15 forward.

16 What the Ukrainians need is the ability to strike
17 through it and attack it from the rear, if I understand
18 from military professionals, and they don't have that
19 capability right now. And it risks allowing the Russians
20 to advance inch by inch, foot by foot. And Vladimir Putin
21 has the patience, so far, the ability, to do just that.

22 Senator Wicker: Thank you all. Thank you, Mr.
23 Chairman.

24 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Wicker. I want to
25 thank the panel for an excellent hearing and presentation

1 and commend you for your work. Thank you very, very much.

2 With that, let me call this hearing to be adjourned.

3 [Whereupon, at 12:13 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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