GLOBAL SECURITY CHALLENGES AND STRATEGY

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

U.S. Senate
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed, chairman of the committee, presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE ISLAND

Chairman Reed: Let me call the hearing to order. Good morning. Today’s hearing is an opportunity to hear from leading non-governmental experts regarding the global security challenges we face and the strategy the United States needs to avoid a conflict and to advance its national security interests now and in the future.

Our witnesses are Dr. Thomas Wright, Senior Fellow with the Brookings Institution, and former National Security Advisor, retired Lieutenant General H.R. McMaster. Welcome to both of you, and thank you for your willingness to appear before us this morning.

The 2018 National Defense Strategy, or NDS, made an important shift in our defense priorities away from a narrow focus on counterterrorism and towards a strategic competition with Russia and China. Yet the exact nature of this competition needs to be better understood, and the U.S. objectives for out-competing its near-peer rivals need to be clearly defined. Russia and China reject our democratic values and the rules-based international order that has kept the peace for decades. Instead, they seek to sow division and export autocratic political models that they see as more advantageous.

I hope our witnesses this morning will shed light on
what is at stake in these rivalries and what is the role the
United States should play in addressing these global
challenges going forward.

We face a very different security environment today
from even a decade ago. While we were preoccupied with
fighting wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, our near-peer rivals
invested in modernizing their military capabilities. Russia
and China have significantly narrowed the technological
advantages the U.S. military enjoyed in previous decades.
In order for our military deterrent to remain credible, our
armed forces must now be prepared to operate in contested
environments across all domains, not only land, sea, and air
but also in cyberspace and space.

Foreign adversaries have also escalated the threat of
hybrid warfare campaigns targeted at the United States and
its allies. These countries use hybrid tactics including
election interference, disinformation amplified on social
media, and malign financial influence and corruption to
exploit vulnerabilities in our open democratic societies.

Our rivals have also invested and continue to invest
heavily in research, development, and acquisition of
cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence,
quantum computing, hypersonics, and the next-generation
digital communications. They are making significant strides
in a number of areas, and we cannot afford to fall behind in
these potentially transformative technologies.

In addition, as the coronavirus crisis has made clear, how we think about national security must also address a range of transnational threats. This includes addressing health security and the threat from global pandemics, environmental security, including the truly existential threat from climate change, and the security of critical infrastructure, including our democratic processes.

Dr. Wright, you have written that this new era of strategic rivalry is likely to be transformative, not just internationally but also at home. I agree and believe part of this transformation will require more unified efforts for a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society strategy for Great Power competition. This strategic competition will also require a unified approach with our allies and partners globally, which are our greatest comparative advantage.

Yet the international community’s faith in global leadership has been shaken and our allies and partners are wondering how reliable a partnership with the United States will be going forward. The Biden Administration has pledged to reinvigorate these relationships and restore the strategic advantage we derive from other countries seeking to stand with us. I hope our witnesses will address how they see the role of alliances and partnerships and the U.S. strategy for competing with Russia and China and how we
should be prioritizing scarce Department of Defense resources to best position us to prevail in the strategic competition.

Again, I want to thank the witnesses, and I look forward to getting your perspectives on these critical security issues.

Senator Inhofe, please?
STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES INHOFE, U.S. SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have had the opportunity to meet Dr. Thomas Wright for the first time just a few minutes ago, so I don’t know him well, but I appreciate all of the knowledge that you’re bringing to this hearing. You’re the right one to be here to participate at this point.

But I do know General McMaster. It’s a common thing for us to say thank you for all your tireless years and all that stuff, but I really mean it. You’ve been there. You’ve been there doing the right things. And I think when I look at this -- and I’m older than anyone else in this room -- I can say that I really believe we’re in the most threatened position we’ve been in in my lifetime.

I’ve been on this committee all the way back to the House years, and when you think about the challenges that are out there now, you have China and Russia that are using military power to achieve political aims, rogue regimes.

I remember back in the good old days of the Cold War, we had two superpowers. We knew what they had, they knew what we had. Mutual assured destruction meant something back in those days. Now you have rogue nations who have capabilities of wiping out an American city. I mean, this is not the way it used to be, and that’s why it’s so
important to have guys like you that have been around, and particularly you, General, with your background. You’re the right one to be at this hearing. I appreciate it so much. We look forward to the informative advice we get.

As mentioned by the Chairman, the National Defense Strategy, this has been our blueprint. This was from, I guess, 2018. Six Republicans, six Democrats, they got together and they are all knowledgeable, and they pretty much outlined it. We use this as a blueprint. So I will look forward to finding out at this hearing what elements of this document are still good today. We’ve had a lot of people saying it’s getting outdated. So I want to get your opinions, particularly you, General, as to where we are with this.

The primary mission of our military is to secure the nation against foreign external threats or, as the Constitution puts it, to provide for the common defense. The Committee has used this 2018 NDS as a roadmap, and it still has a lot to offer to us. We want to find out what is relevant today that we want to continue using.

We used to be able to say, as I said, since I’m the oldest guy in this room, I remember World War II, and I remember what happened when we first got in. We weren’t prepared and all that, but after the war is when we decided we were going to -- I kind of got in the habit growing up
when I was a kid thinking America has the best of
everything. We have the best artillery, we have the best
airplanes, the best of everything, but that isn’t
necessarily true today.

China and Russia have gotten ahead of us in developing
some key technologies like hypersonics and microelectronics,
artificial intelligence, some areas, and we’re not number
one anymore. The balance of power in Eastern Europe and the
western Pacific continues to go in the wrong direction. Our
forward forces are outnumbered and outgunned. China and
Russia are rapidly modernizing and expanding their nuclear
forces. China will soon complete its triad and double its
nuclear arsenal by 2030.

In China, it wasn’t too long ago they actually showed
pictures of what they were doing with hypersonics in a
parade in Beijing in Tiananmen Square. So they’re up there.
They’re a threat. This is, I believe, the most threatened
we’ve been in this country.

So, DOD’s bandwidth and the resources are not
unlimited. These challenges require a laser focus on
increasing combat capability and capacity through new
investments and new operational concepts, new ways of doing
business. We’ve got to modernize and replace the legacy
systems, such as our aging nuclear enterprise, focus on
directing military resources toward missions that are
clearly not a core function.

You know, this bothers me, and I know that there’s a lot of diversity of thought on this around this table. Yes, we had a change in administration. Historically, we know what happened to us back during the last five years of the Obama Administration. That would be between the years of 2010 and 2015, that we actually reduced our support of the military by about 25 percent at that time. And during those same five years China increased theirs by 83 percent. That shouldn’t happen. This is America. We’re not supposed to be doing that.

It bothers me a little bit. There are a lot of people who are going to be wanting to use a lot of our resources knowing that a lot of resources go to defending America but wanting to use that for their liberal agendas that have nothing to do with defending America.

So that’s what I’m concerned about, and that’s why we’re having this hearing today, and I look forward to the advice that we get from you guys during this hearing.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe. And thank you again to the witnesses. Let me join Senator Inhofe in saluting General McMaster’s distinguished career in the Army. Thank you, sir.

Dr. Wright, would you begin, please?
STATEMENT OF DR. THOMAS WRIGHT, SENIOR FELLOW, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

Dr. Wright: Thank you, Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of this committee. It is a great honor to appear before you today to speak about the global security environment and implications for U.S. defense policy.

I have submitted written testimony for the record and I will just speak very briefly on three points from that testimony.

The first point I’d like to make is if you measure the security environment by what was expected or predicted a decade or so ago, it is clear that the United States is facing near worst-case scenarios on both Great Power competition and transnational threats. This is compounded by a negative synergy between the two that makes each more dangerous and more difficult to deal with.

The autocratic nature of the Chinese regime and its paranoia about its hold on power and standing in the world made it much less likely to cooperate with the international community during COVID-19. It covered up the virus in the crucial early months and continues to withhold vital information from the World Health Organization. The current pandemic highlights the way in which China has increased its influence in international institutions in ways that damage
the interests of other nations, including the United States, and independently of Chinese behavior the more nationalistic and protectionist outlook of many governments around the world has undermined the type of international cooperation we are used to witnessing in a crisis.

This pandemic will have long-term strategic consequences for the United States. While the U.S.’s economic decline last year was 3.5 percent, and other democracies saw even larger losses, China’s economy grew by 2.3 percent. By one measure, China will overtake the U.S. as the world’s largest economy five years earlier than predicted, in 2027 instead of 2031. Early talk about China’s Chernobyl moment has been replaced by a confidence on the part of the government that has emerged stronger from a global crisis for the second time in 15 years, the other being the international financial crisis, and China has become much more assertive in the wake of the crisis.

What last year shows us, I think, is that the United States must prepare for a world in which the most severe and frequent global shocks occur against the backdrop of emboldened adversaries and limited cooperation between major powers.

The second point I’d like to make is on a traditional mission of the U.S. Armed Forces and defense policy, which is deterring adversaries from aggressive action. I’d like
to frame this in terms of thinking about how to deter revisionist powers.

Sometimes we think of revisionist powers as countries hell-bent on global domination like Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union, but revisionism rarely manifests itself without all-out conflict. Revisionist states traditionally go after the “non-vital” interests of their Great Power rivals because this generally does not provoke the type of retaliatory strike that attacking a vital interest would. Threatening non-vital interests -- for instance, by attacking a non-ally of the U.S. -- leaves status quo powers torn over how to respond and deliberating about whether retaliation is worth it.

Of course, the term “non-vital interest” is somewhat misleading. It only holds true when viewed narrowly and in isolation. With annexation and unprovoked invasion clearly constituting a breach of the peace and threatening U.S. vital interests, seizing rocks or strips of territory poses a more ambiguous threat. Such moves appear to be of limited strategic importance until, in the aggregate, they acquire much greater value.

This is not a new problem. It is textbook revisionism and it poses one of the most complex problems a major power can be confronted with. The purpose of revisionism is to make deterrence extremely hard and to encourage rival Great
Powers to accommodate them diplomatically or to limit their response to the point of being ineffective.

The final point I’d like to make is just on recommendations, and I have five recommendations in the testimony.

The first is to continue military modernization as set out in the 2018 National Defense Strategy to reorient U.S. defense policy toward dealing with Major Power competitors. The U.S. must also integrate initiatives to improve strategic competitiveness with efforts to rebuild the domestic economy after the pandemic, including a strategic approach to technological innovation and reducing the vulnerability of certain sectors of our society to interdependence with adversaries. Strategic thinking must also be integrated across all relevant government agencies and departments.

Second, nest competition with China in a positive and affirmative vision of the free world which we will continuously strengthen, work to strengthen and improve.

Three, continue to deepen U.S. alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, including by focusing on deterrence by denial, improving the credibility and resilience of the U.S. presence in the region, encouraging cooperation between allies and partners in the region, assisting those allies and partners in responding to
external coercion and interference, including as we’re seeing in Australia, and deepening cooperation with India and Taiwan.

Fourth, I would take a new look at the 2 percent defense spending target for NATO to reform it to incentivize European allies to invest in civilian as well as military capabilities such as new technologies that would enable them to compete with China. I would supplement this with a sophisticated American-Europe strategy that allays European concerns about strategic competition with autocratic powers and rethinks European security to enable the EU to play a greater role in security and defense.

And finally, we should facilitate a national conversation about the type of strategic competition we want to engage in. Great Power competition is not a strategy in itself. It is a condition that we must cope with in all of its dimensions. We are still at a very early stage in identifying different strategies of competition, just as we had different strategies of containment during the Cold War, although considerable progress has been made in this over the last four years with liberal, conservative, realist, and progressive alternatives for how to compete.

Over the next four years we must refine and develop our thinking on the objectives of the competition and the means to accomplish these objectives. Thank you.
[The prepared statement of Dr. Wright follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]
Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Dr. Wright.
General McMaster, please?
STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL HERBERT R. MCMASTER, JR., USA, (RET.), FORMER UNITED STATES NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

General McMaster: Chairman Reed, Senator Inhofe, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the privilege of discussing global security challenges and how the United States, alongside our allies and partners, might overcome those challenges, preserve peace through strength, promote prosperity, and secure a better future for generations of Americans to come.

I want to begin by thanking this committee for the work that you and your predecessors have done to provide for the common defense. I was a direct beneficiary of that work. Thirty years ago almost to the day, I had the privilege of commanding Eagle Troop of the Second Armored Cavalry Regiment at the Battle of 73 Easting. During an intense 23-minute assault across 4 kilometers of heavily defended ground, our 132 troopers equipped with 9 Abrams tanks and 12 Bradley Fighting Vehicles destroyed a brigade of the Iraqi Republican Guard without suffering casualties.

Senator Sam Nunn, who, as you know, rendered extraordinary service to our nation as a senator, member of this committee, and its chairman, invited me to testify as a captain alongside retired Army General Paul Gorman to explain our cavalry troop’s lopsided victory in the Gulf
War, a war that was full of lopsided victories. I thanked the committee for giving our troop, our Army, and our entire joint force the weapons that allowed us to overmatch the fourth largest army in the world and prove wrong pre-war predictions of massive American casualties. But General Gorman and I stressed the less tangible sources of our force’s combat prowess and in particular the training, military education, and leader development that were foundational to forging confident, cohesive teams bound together by our warrior ethos, an ethos based on honor, courage, respect, and a willingness to sacrifice for one another and the mission.

It is that same ethos that has allowed our small volunteer military to sustain combat operations across the first two decades of this century after the most devastating terrorist attack in history took the lives of nearly 3,000 innocents on September 11, 2001. The warrior ethos is foundational to combat power and to the sacred covenant that bonds servicemen and women to one another and to those in whose name we fight. With the support of this committee, General Gorman and other leaders of his generation strengthened that ethos as they led a renaissance in our all-volunteer joint force after the Vietnam War, a renaissance based on improved training, education, doctrine, organization, equipment, and quality of recruits.
Our joint force is a living historical community in which today’s leaders are charged with building on the legacy of excellence inherited from those who have gone before them. Today’s leaders, like those of General Gorman’s and my generation, will continue to rely on this committee to help them preserve the warrior ethos and fulfill their responsibilities to the servicemen and women of today and generations to come.

That is why the work of this committee and its strong example of bipartisanship is vital to our nation’s security as we emerge from four traumas: a pandemic; a recession associated with the pandemic; social division and violence sparked by George Floyd’s murder and anger over unequal treatment under the law; and vitriolic partisanship combined with lies, disinformation, and conspiracy theories that culminated in the murderous assault on this building on January 6th, 2021. Recovering from these traumas is essential to our national security because it is the perception of division and weakness at home that emboldens rivals, adversaries, and enemies abroad. And confidence in our common identity as Americans and our role in an increasingly interconnected world is essential to a sustained approach to national security and foreign policy.

As Dr. Wright mentioned, we live in a dangerous time. But we live in a dangerous time in part because our
confidence appears eroded as the global pandemic catalyzes challenges to American security, prosperity, and influence in the world. I describe some of those challenges in my statement for the record and suggest ways that we might overcome them and secure a better future for generations of Americans to come.

In general, we must overcome our narcissistic view of the world and stop assuming that what we decide to do or not do is decisive to achieving a favorable outcome. We need to adopt a non-partisan, long-term approach to foreign policy focused on competitions important to our nation’s security, prosperity, and influence in the world. And we must ground our national security and defense strategies in the reality that rivals, adversaries, and enemies are unlikely to conform to our preferences.

Thank you for the privilege of being with you and for appearing alongside my colleague, Dr. Wright. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of General McMaster follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]
Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General.

With some senators attending remotely, I want to once again describe the procedures. Since it isn’t possible to know exactly when our colleagues will be joining via computer, we will not be following our standard early-bird timing rule. Instead, we will handle the order of questions by seniority, alternating sides until we have gone through everyone. Once we reach the end, if there is anyone we missed, we will start back at the top of the list and continue until everyone has had their turn. We will do the standard 5-minute rounds, and I ask my colleagues on the computer to please keep an eye on the clock, which you should see on your screens. Finally, to allow for everyone to be heard, whether in the room or on the computer, I ask all colleagues to please mute your microphone when not speaking.

With that, let me begin the questioning. And again, let me thank you for your excellent testimony, Dr. Wright and General McMaster.

As Senator Inhofe pointed out, the National Defense Strategy is a very crucial and influential source of guidance as we go forward. But one of the aspects of the NDS is that it describes sort of a vague endpoint, if you will, in terms of so we can compete more effectively and win. That, I think, is something we have to dig down into
more precisely, and it doesn’t define measures to see how well we’re doing in that effort.

So, Dr. Wright first and then General McMaster, what should be our strategic end state of the United States, what should we be seeking to bring about, and what types of measures of effectiveness should we use?

Dr. Wright: Senator, thank you. The question about the goal of U.S. competition with China, Russia, and probably other autocratic powers is one that is still in the early stages of being sorted out, and in the National Defense Strategy, National Security Strategy, and many of the early contributions, I think the answer to that question was relatively vague.

My answer to it now is that, to me, the U.S. objective in strategic competition with Russia and China should be, one, to inoculate free societies against the negative externalities of the autocratic model; and two, to deter adversaries from aggressive actions that would upset the status quo; and three, to build a healthy, vibrant, and prosperous collection of free societies, the free world that General McMaster has also written so eloquently about, so that that can exist and thrive independently of the autocratic states.

Chairman Reed: General?

General McMaster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think
that we have to be able to win, and I think it has become fashionable and regrettable in recent years to think it’s okay to engage even in war without a clear vision toward what victory would mean. Now, it’s not going to be marching into an enemy’s capital and declaring the war over. But I think what we have to define winning as is achieving a sustainable political outcome consistent with what brings us into conflict to begin with.

This is, of course, the problem we’re facing now in Afghanistan, where our prioritization of withdrawal over achieving that sustainable outcome is going to ensure that we can’t accomplish the objective that we are oriented on from the very beginning two decades ago, which is to deny jihadist terrorists a safe haven and support base that they can use to plan, prepare, and resource attacks on the scale of 9/11 in one of the real terrorist epicenters of the world.

And so I think, in the National Defense Strategy in particular, it’s important for us to consider the consolidation of military gains as an inherent part of war. It’s not just an optional phase, as I think we might have learned from the difficulties that we encountered in both Afghanistan and in Iraq. I mean, those were always going to be difficult conflicts, but I think we made it harder on ourselves by taking this simplistic short-term approach to
what is a long-term problem and neglecting the importance of the consolidation of gains to get the sustainable political outcomes. There will be times when we conduct military raids, which are by definition operations of short duration, limited purpose, and planned withdrawal. But neither Afghanistan nor Iraq were raids, and we paid the price for inconsistent, inadequate, unsound strategies over many years. I think it’s fair to say that our long war in Afghanistan, our longest war, is not a 20-year war. It’s a 1-year war fought 20 times over.

I think the other aspect of winning is trying to ensure, as Dr. Wright has mentioned, that the war doesn’t happen to begin with, and this is deterrence by denial. It’s convincing our adversaries that they cannot accomplish their objectives through the use of force. I would stress in this case, in connection with the defense strategy, how important it is to have capable joint forces forward positioned in sufficient scale to operate alongside allies and partners to deny our principal adversaries, in this case I would say China and Russia, from succeeding in this approach of anti-access area denial.

I would just like to point out that capable forward-positioned joint forces automatically transform what our enemies or potential enemies would prefer to regard as denied space into contested space.
And then finally, winning is overcoming challenges that operate below the threshold of what might elicit a military response, and I think we can see the danger associated with Russia and increasingly China trying to accomplish objectives below that threshold, and this is where I think the defense strategy really has to emphasize the integration of the military instrument with all elements of national power and efforts of like-minded partners to counter these more sophisticated and pernicious forms of aggression.

Chairman Reed: Well, thank you very much, gentlemen.

Let me recognize Senator Inhofe.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I’ve got two questions to ask, and I’m going to try to get them both in in 5 minutes, so be kind of brief, if you would.

The first one has to do with what we’ve been talking about, and that is the NDS. It wasn’t long ago, I think just last week, someone in the new administration -- it was not the President but someone else -- was talking about we’re going to have to be revising the 2018 NDS and writing a new NDS for 2022. This concerned me a little bit when I heard this, so I want to ask the question first to General McMaster and then a comment from Dr. Wright.

The question would be, in your opinion, what principles and priorities should be retained from the 2018 NDS?
General McMaster: Thank you, Senator Inhofe. You know, I’m a fan of the 2018 NDS because, maybe I’m a little bit biased, but it was derived from the work that we did on the National Security Strategy in December 2017, a strategy that I think made an acknowledgement that was long overdue, and that was the return of Great Power competition, and in particular we rejected assumptions under which previous policies had been based.

Foremost among them was that China, having been welcomed into the international order, would play by the rules and, as it prospered, would liberalize its economy and liberalize its form of governance and not pose a threat.

So I think what the 2018 Defense Strategy did best was acknowledge the threat from China and the threat from Russia as revisionist powers. I think the defense objectives from 2018 are sound. They’re very difficult, I think, to argue with. They provide a broad framework for a sustained effort to develop defense capabilities over time, and I would say that the overall three objectives of rebuilding readiness, strengthening alliances, and then reforming the Department’s business practices so we can innovate within the cycle of technology and maintain our critical differential advantages over potential enemies, those are hard to argue with as well.

And then, of course, there are the eight priorities for
modernization. The overall point I would say is that I don’t think any administration going forward should define its policies and strategies based mainly as an opposition to the one that had gone before it, because if that’s the case we won’t have the kind of continuity that we need to build capabilities going forward.

Senator Inhofe: Okay. I’m going to interrupt you, and I appreciate your response; it did answer my question. Any short comments you have, Dr. Wright, on that?

Dr. Wright: Just very briefly, I agree with General McMaster. I think the overarching principle of the 2018 NDS and to reorient the Department and the U.S. military toward Great Power competitors is the correct sort of theme that should be continued and evolved through the next iteration of the NDS.

Senator Inhofe: Okay, I appreciate that very much. I’ve got to have time for the second question, and that is on climate change. There’s a lot of discussion, and I know -- I’ve been through the Paris Agreement and all of that, and everyone applauds China and Russia and India for all the wonderful things they’re going to do. But there’s something that was said, a statement that was made in your book “Battlegrounds,” General McMaster, when you said people don’t understand this but what the world needs is a comprehensive strategy based on the recognition that
countries will not suppress their security and economic interests to join an international group.

But that’s what these people want, the Paris Accord, and others who join this international group, aren’t China and Russia wonderful for doing that. However, the American Enterprise Institute report showed that the United States led in CO2 emission reductions in 2018, while China and India accounted for more than half of all new emissions.

So with that, General McMaster, what would you view as the role of the military in terms of what we’re doing in some type of a climate change policy? How does that blend into it, and do you have any comments on the fact that these countries are all getting all kinds of credit for participating in things when, in fact, you are right, they are not going to do anything that’s going to impair their competitive ability?

General McMaster: Thank you, Senator. I’ll try to be succinct on this. It’s a complex topic, and I’m not the expert on it. But I think what’s really important is that we can’t afford to have any more non-solutions. The Paris Agreement is a non-solution because even if we do everything that we can as a developed economy to reduce carbon emissions, China, India, and other emissions from the developing world, and Africa in particular, will ensure that those gains amount to nothing in connection with the
problem.

So the danger of Paris is it’s a feel-good exercise that can lead us to complacency in this area. I think the good news is there are real solutions that are available. For example, there are bridging fuels, like natural gas, for example. There’s next-generation nuclear. There are, of course, the whole range of renewables. But what is really important is that any solution has to be economically feasible in developing economies, and we have to recognize that China, Xi Jinping can pose as an environmentalist, but China is building 50 to 70 coal-fired plants a year, for example.

The military’s role is in support, right? I think research and development. But I think what the military can do is innovate, innovate to provide our joint forces the ability to sustain freedom of movement and action at the end of extended and contested supply lines in austere environments. That’s kind of a niche research and development capability. I think other departments and agencies in the administration should have the lead on the issues associated with climate change and the related issues of energy security, water security, food security and so forth.

Senator Inhofe: That’s a great answer.

My time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Shaheen, please?

Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you both for being here this morning and for your testimony.

I want to start with you, General McMaster, because I agree with the statements you’ve made relative to Afghanistan, that withdrawing our troops now is not strategically a good position for the United States to be in. But I do appreciate, as I know you do, that people are tired of this long war and don’t see an end to it. So if we’re thinking about the strategy of Afghanistan and how it affects the Great Power competition, which it does, obviously -- our engagement in places like Syria and Yemen and Afghanistan are all also about what happens with our Great Power competitors -- how do we get out of Afghanistan? How do we achieve that stable environment that you’re talking about?

General McMaster: Thank you, Senator. I agree with you that there are reasons for people to be upset about it, to be disappointed about it, to lose their patience, because I think that multiple administrations have not done a sufficient job to explain to the American people what they need to know: (a), what is at stake; and (b), what is a strategy that will deliver a favorable outcome at a cost
acceptable to the American people?

I believe that the first time that we had a sustainable long-term approach in place for Afghanistan was the August 2017 South Asian Strategy. Unfortunately, the Trump Administration abandoned that strategy and I believe doubled down on some of the fundamental flaws of the Obama Administration strategy toward Afghanistan, and in particular engaging in self-delusion by imagining a bold line between Al Qaeda and other jihadist terrorists and the Taliban, a bold line that we know as a fact doesn’t exist; as well as self-delusion in the belief that the Taliban really want peace short of establishing the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, which would be the first step again toward providing safe haven support bases to these groups.

So your very important question is, okay, so what, then? What does it look like?

Senator Shaheen: Right, that’s the question.

General McMaster: So what it looks like is Afghanistan as it is today with a very small U.S. force sustained commitment there, with allies and partners committing even more forces than the United States does for burden sharing. It has to be affordable, but we have to recognize that Afghanistan is bearing the brunt of this fight right now. About 30 Afghan soldiers die every day fighting to retain the freedoms that they’ve enjoyed.
The last thing that I would say here is that what we’re doing I think is also going to cause a humanitarian catastrophe -- could cause -- of colossal scale. Afghanistan needs support if they’re going to be able to continue to take the lead. I think we just have to acknowledge that Afghanistan is not going to be Denmark, but it can be a heck of a lot worse than it is now if we withdraw our support prematurely and create opportunities for the Taliban. We have essentially partnered with the Taliban against the Afghan government --

Senator Shaheen: Oh, I totally agree with that, and I think the question now is how do we correct that. And I also think that the Afghan people who are going to bear the biggest cost of any precipitous U.S. withdrawal are the women and girls in the country, and it would be a huge humanitarian disaster. So the question again is how to reverse that policy.

I want to go on to Russia because I think one of the things that Russia has done very successfully is their gray zone efforts, which we have not responded to in a way that I can see has deterred Russia. I’m pleased about the recent announcement of sanctions by the Biden Administration with respect to Navalny, but can you both talk a little bit about how we better deter Russia, who I think in the short term is more of a threat than China?
Dr. Wright: Thank you, Senator. Yes, I think the first thing that we could do is actually make this a top priority with the European allies. For various reasons, this has not been up front and center in various NATO summits and on the bilateral agenda with many of those countries. So I think that needs to change.

I also think we need to re-look at the automatic reflex to go toward sanctions every time Russia does something egregious. I think sanctions have an important role to play, but they don’t really change the behavior. I think looking seriously at anti-kleptocracy, anti-corruption efforts to push back against the Putin regime is also another option. And then, of course, increasing resilience on a NATO and U.S.-EU basis as well, so that societies learn from best practices in Taiwan, Australia, elsewhere, and those operations have limited effect on those countries.

Thank you.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

My time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

Senator Wicker, please?

Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Wright, you indicate that we can get a better result from our NATO allies by shifting the definition of the 2 percent requirement from defense spending, per se, to
the kind of technology research that leads to security. Can you take 60 seconds to explain to us what you mean by that?

Dr. Wright: Absolutely, Senator. So I agree, Europe needs to do more, there needs to be more burden sharing. But what worries me about the 2 percent number is we’re creating sort of an artificial metric which they can meet by having all types of things count towards it that don’t necessarily make them more competitive vis-à-vis Russia or vis-à-vis China in particular.

So if they, for instance, are willing to go all the way on 5G technology, make really costly investments to strip that out of their 4G networks and to invest in democratic solutions to that technology problem, I think we should give them credit for that, right? We should count that as part of that sort of long-term effort for them to be more competitive. So that’s just one example. I’m not saying we let anyone off the hook, but I do think we have to look at the effectiveness of how they are positioned, particularly in terms of China and what we really care about, which I think is the technology, the high-end technology.

Senator Wicker: That’s going to be a little bit hard to quantify, though, isn’t it?

Dr. Wright: Well, I think we can see it with 5G on the basis of the decisions that they make and the budgetary costs that they incur for those decisions. So I think there
are ways of measuring it. But, yes, it’s probably more
complicated or diversified than just having one single
number that we measure against a single defense budget.

    Senator Wicker: Thank you very much.

    General McMaster, let’s talk about ship building and
China. I believe we now have naval superiority in the
Pacific, but we’re in danger of falling behind, and we need
considerable investment in our naval forces. I hope you
agree with that. Tell me if you do.

    General Milley suggested last year that we may need to
depart from traditionally equal allocation of defense
spending between the services. Would you comment about
that, and do you believe our naval forces’ structure and
posture are adequate in the Pacific to countering China’s
maritime threat?

    General McMaster: Senator, I do not believe they’re
adequate, especially if you look at the projections for what
the Chinese People’s Liberation Army/Navy is going to build.
But I would say this same dynamic is affecting all the
services, you could really say since World War I, that
smaller and smaller U.S. joint forces have had a bigger and
bigger impact over wider areas based on our technological
advantages, right? The automotive revolution, the aerospace
revolution, assured communications, access to space, big
data analytics, precision strike capabilities and GPS, all
of that now is challenged because Russia, China and others, they studied us, especially after the Gulf War, and they developed capabilities to take apart those differential advantages.

So now scale matters more, and I think what we need are more systems that are maybe less exquisite but very capable, and we need systems that degrade gracefully rather than fail catastrophically.

Senator Wicker: Systems.

General McMaster: These are ships, these are submarines. Any system within the network of the joint force capability has to be resilient, has to be capable of decentralized operations, because the exquisite assured communications and surveillance that we’ve depended on is at least contested in an unprecedented way by electronic warfare, counter-satellite capabilities, offensive cyber capabilities, tiered and layered air defense, and also these long-range missile systems.

Senator Wicker: Four years ago this committee stepped forward on a bipartisan basis, included the SHIPS Act in the National Defense Authorization Act for 355 ships as a requirement and said we’re going to get there as soon as practicable. The new requirement came out late in the previous administration, around November or December, so we’d get over 400 ships. Talk about that, and are you
familiar with the plan that came out late last year, and do you support that?

General McMaster: I am, Senator. Of course, I would defer to the people in the Department of Defense because they’re the ones who are looking at all the tradeoffs and what we need in terms of joint capabilities. But I do think that overall, all of the services are coping with a bow wave of deferred modernization, and when those defense cuts occurred while we were at war, those were bills that, if we wanted to maintain our deterrent capability, we were going to have to pay eventually.

So I think that’s what, sadly, you’re coping with and the Department of Defense is coping with these days. So I think it’s really important to understand the context of defense spending these days, that we are in catch-up mode and we are going back to rectify some of the weaknesses that developed in our deterrent and fighting capability over many years.

Senator Wicker: Thank you, sir.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Wicker.

And now, via Webex, Senator Gillibrand.

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On page 68 of the 2017 National Security Strategy, it devoted about half a page to combating pandemics and combatting other biological threats to our national
security. The COVID-19 pandemic has really laid bare, exposing many of our gaps in prioritizing, detecting, responding to and preventing the spread of infectious diseases that have the potential to not only cost human lives but to cripple our economy and to weaken public faith in our institutions.

How can we leverage our current national security and foreign policy assets to improve on our surveillance and on our response to infectious disease?

And second, I’ve advocated for a one-health security approach that would use a multilateral strategy to address public health disasters like COVID-19. The one-health security approach integrates professionals with expertise in security, law enforcement, and intelligence to join veterinarian experts, agriculture, environmental, and human health experts to address these problems.

How should the Federal Government develop the multidisciplinary approach that is necessary to prevent diseases, detect them as early as possible to maximize response time, and, in the case of deliberate threats, hold those responsible accountable?

General McMaster: Okay, so I’ll take it first. The three key tasks, the three key actions in the National Security Strategy on the pandemic, I’ll just go through those very quickly, where they broke down and what we need
to do.

The first of these is stop a pandemic before it becomes a pandemic, and that’s through global surveillance and rapid response to contain it. Well, thank you, Chinese Communist Party. We weren’t able to do that based on the subversion of the World Health Organization and the disinformation and going after anybody who was trying to ring the alarm bells about it.

The second thing that we have to do is we have to mobilize a biomedical response. This is where we fell down at the beginning. We fell down for a number of reasons. First of all, our supply chains became too biased in favor of efficiency over resilience, for too long.

Secondly, we didn’t coordinate well between various levels of government, acknowledging the Federal system that we have, and between the public and private sector because we have a hybrid health care system. So authoritative data, the transferability of that data, the ability to at least not compete against each other when we’re going after critical elements of the response is very important. So how we share data, that system that is put in place, that has to change. We have to become much more effective at that, as well.

And then finally, we need biomedical innovation. I think that grade is going to be kind of an A-plus. It’s
going to be an A-plus because we delivered a vaccine far sooner than anybody thought we would. That’s investment really from this committee and others over many years on being able to rapidly prototype vaccines and then be able to produce them at scale.

So I think the most important thing we’ve learned is writing anything on paper doesn’t get it implemented, and we need a high degree of competency in implementing the plans that we have, and I think the biggest focus that we need now is on that second task of mobilizing a biomedical response.

But also, the WHO -- and I’ll ask Thomas to comment on this -- needs to be reformed. I think there is no prize for membership in international organizations, especially when they’re being subverted and turned against their purpose by an adversary, like the WHO was with China.

Senator Gillibrand: Well, let me give you a more pointed question. Obviously, COVID-19 was a zoonotic pathogen, and I’m concerned that malignant actors will use the pandemic as a teaching moment to add weaponized diseases and spread a biological weapon in their arsenal attack.

How can we work with our allies to disrupt the spread of biological weapons and ensure that emerging biotechnology and bioengineering tools are used for good?

Dr. Wright: Senator, I can address that. I would just add to General McMaster’s comment that, number one, I think
that global health has to be a priority of the U.S. intelligence community. We cannot expect transparency from China going forward, so intelligence collection on this I think has to be part of their mission set.

Secondly, I think the U.S. must engage the WHO and push for reform, again because of China’s role. We shouldn’t expect for transformative reforms, so we must develop in parallel a group of like-minded countries that are willing to go further, faster, and to hold countries accountable when they do not cooperate and do not share information.

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Gillibrand.

Senator Cotton, please?

[Pause.]

Senator Manchin: Tom, this microphone works.

Senator Cotton: Thank you, Senator Manchin.

Thank you, gentlemen, for your testimony today.

General McMaster, we talked about a lot of new types of competition with China. Let’s talk about a very old-fashioned, hard-power question about China. How bad would it be for America’s security and our national interests if China went for the jugular in Taiwan, if China invaded and annexed Taiwan to the mainland?

General McMaster: Senator, I would just say, first of all, if we were to respond, the costs on China would be
tremendous as well. I think there’s a race ongoing right now to help Taiwan harden its defenses to make itself indigestible prior to the period which I think is the greatest danger, which is from 2022 onwards based on the conclusion of the Beijing Winter Olympics and based on the Communist Party Congress.

I think that the key thing is to work with the Taiwanese Armed Forces, us and other like-minded countries, to help them strengthen their defenses and to support the policies, the reforms the president signed when it’s initiated.

But it would be extremely costly for both sides. If the United States did decide to respond to Taiwan, I do believe that the People’s Liberation Army would suffer tremendous losses based on the tremendous capabilities of our joint forces. The important point that I would make, though, is that it’s immensely important to keep forward-position-capable joint forces there because what China is trying to do is to create in the South China Sea a barrier that would make it just far too costly for us to come to any ally’s defense. This is vis-à-vis Taiwan, but it’s also in their effort to isolate China’s major regional competitor, Japan, as well.

Senator Cotton: And one of those new types of competition is in advanced technology. If China were able
to invade and annex Taiwan, it would also put in Chinese
hands the world’s leading producer of semi-conductor chips,
as well.

General McMaster: Absolutely. And if you look at geo-
strategic implications, if you just turn the map sideways
such that Taiwan is on the front, you see how that gives the
People’s Liberation Army tremendous access to coerce others
in the region.

Senator Cotton: One final question on this, and I’d
like to address it to both of you. It was long U.S. policy
that we would maintain a position of strategic ambiguity
about supporting Taiwan should China invade it. Some
experts, to include Richard Haas, President of the Council
on Foreign Relations, has said that we should replace that
now with a policy of strategic clarity because China’s
military is so much stronger, because specifically it’s
grounded increasingly toward invasion of Taiwan, because
Taiwan has developed a strong, robust democratic culture
that it wouldn’t be a change of the end state we’re trying
to achieve, which is the maintenance of peace in the Western
Pacific, it would simply be a change of the policy means to
achieve that end state by going from strategic ambiguity,
being unclear to the world, to Beijing, to Taipei about what
the U.S. would do, to one of strategic clarity that said
simply we will come to Taiwan’s aid should China invade
General McMaster, do you believe that strategic clarity would be the right policy for the United States?

General McMaster: No, I do not. I believe the strategic ambiguity is adequate, especially after we’ve made public the six assurances to Taiwan. And I think if we act in the way that the Trump Administration has acted, and the new Biden Administration has acted, to assure Taiwan and to send a pretty clear message to China -- and I think the message to China ought to be, hey, you can assume that the United States won’t respond, but that was the assumption made in June of 1950 as well, when North Korea invaded South Korea.

So I think it’s really by our actions rather than by our words. Of course, I know it would strike home to all of you that this is an Article 1 issue, right? To go to war or to not go to war. So I think it would be appropriate to maintain strategic ambiguity, and if that crisis occurs, I’m sure that all of you and your colleagues would reflect the will of the American people on what we do about it.

Senator Cotton: Dr. Wright?

Dr. Wright: Yeah, I fully agree with General McMaster. I think I wouldn’t revisit the concept of strategic ambiguity, but I think through actions we can deter this action and demonstrate U.S. commitment in a stronger and
closer relationship with Taiwan.

Senator Cotton: Thank you both, gentlemen.

I must confess, sitting here behind this Senator Manchin nameplate, I’m tempted to announce the way the most powerful senator in Washington is going to vote on all Biden Administration nominations and legislation, but I won’t out of a show of gratitude that Senator Manchin allowed me to borrow his microphone. Thank you, Senator Manchin.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Cotton.

Now Senator Kaine, please?

Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you to the witnesses for your service and for your wisdom today.

Let me follow up on Senator Cotton about Taiwan. Would it be strategically valuable if Congress stepped up the pace of, for example, CODELs to Taiwan once we’re safely traveling again? I’ve been sort of wondering about that. Often, for strategic reasons, we haven’t prioritized Taiwan and CODELs, but it might be valuable to contemplate that.

What would your opinion of that be?

General McMaster: Senator, I think that’s a great idea. And in particular, it’s an important counter to what the Chinese Communist Party’s talking point is oftentimes on Taiwan, that they want you to believe that the Chinese people are culturally predisposed toward not wanting a say
in how they’re governed and that there is no alternative for the Chinese people other than their authoritarian model. So I think that’s an important message, as well as the oversight on military sales and assistance as well. So I think it’s great from a less tangible perspective and from a very tangible oversight perspective, as well.

Senator Kaine: General McMaster, you and I spoke in 2017 shortly after you became National Security Advisor, and we talked about George Kennan. We talked about Kennan’s famous 1947 Foreign Affairs article, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct.” I’m still quite an admirer of a lot of wisdom in that piece.

Here’s something he said in that article that I still find troubling, and this will be a question for you too, Dr. Wright. In talking about the way the U.S. can best influence and, frankly, prevail over the Soviet Union and the international communist movement at that point, here’s what he said: “It is rather a question of the degree to which the United States can create among the peoples of the world generally the impression of a country which knows what it wants, which is coping successfully with the problems of its internal life and with the responsibilities of a world power, and which has a spiritual vitality capable of holding its own among the major ideological currents of the time.”

That piece of wisdom was focusing on the fact that it
wasn’t necessarily the weapons systems or the defense budget that was going to defeat communism. It was the power of the United States as an example of being a world power, of coping with the internal challenges and holding up a good example to the rest of the world.

I’m very, very troubled about applying that Kennan yardstick to today’s reality. We just saw this attack on the Capitol, sadly perpetrated by the repetition of a Big Lie over and over and over again about the election. Some of the people who were the attackers that day were people with really bad backgrounds, neo-Nazi white supremacist militias, but a lot of people weren’t those folks. They were just people who got bamboozled, and some of the people who got bamboozled and got arrested had been ex-military who the U.S. had trained to defend the nation, and they instead breached the Capitol.

This is a committee that’s going to focus on the budgets and the weapons systems and the external reality. But what should we be doing to try to meet the Kennan standard of again becoming a nation that seems like it’s coping successfully with its own internal challenges and where huge swaths of the population, including the military, aren’t so easily bamboozled by the Big Lie?

General McMaster: Well, Senator, I think the way to think about this is how do we turn what the Chinese
Communist Party views as our greatest weaknesses into our greatest competitive advantages? They see the fact that the people have a say in how they’re governed, they fear that more than anything else and would see that as a weakness to the Party.

Hey, we have representative government. We should be more confident that all of us have a say in how we’re governed, and if we’re not happy with the way we’re governed, we have recourse in our elections. That’s why we have to guard our confidence in our democratic processes and institutions, like the election.

They see freedom of speech and freedom of the press as a tremendous weakness to the Party. We have to encourage at least the Fourth Estate to reform. I mean, why are we in this situation where if you lean one way politically, you watch one cable news station; you lean another way, you watch one of two others? Social media is even worse in the pseudo-media world, where a lot of these conspiracy theories are sown.

So we have these forces in the information sphere which are polarizing us and pitting us against each other and reducing our common identity in who we are. But we can turn that into our greatest strength, and I think we can be more confident ourselves in our ability to do what our Founders said we had to do, right? Our Republic was always going to
require constant nurturing.

Senator Kaine: Mr. Chair, could I ask if Dr. Wright could just briefly answer the question, as well? Thank you, briefly.

Dr. Wright: Thank you, Senator. I think while we sort of aspire and work toward dealing with these problems at home and to perfect U.S. democracy, I think it’s important to remember that it’s precisely because there is a struggle at home on these issues and precisely because people are working to improve democracy that the U.S. ought to stand up for this abroad as well, because the U.S. has a stake in the outcome of this struggle, and I think it makes it even more important to stand for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Kaine.

And now via Webex, Senator Rounds.

Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Dr. Wright and General McMaster. First I want to thank you for your service and being with us today. Your expert testimonies on our nation’s global security challenges and strategy are coming at a critical time.

My first question is for both of you. Dr. Wright, as you know, there are some who believe that the nuclear triad has outlived its usefulness and that a force of bombers and nuclear missile submarines will suffice to maintain a
credible and reliable nuclear deterrent. In other words, this school of thought deems the ICBM force to be no longer needed. Others believe that the dollars the Air Force has identified as necessary to modernize that force would not be well spent. I’m curious as to your thoughts on these arguments.

Dr. Wright: Thank you, Senator. I think modernizing the triad and maintaining a credible deterrent is a necessary pre-condition of a sort of successful U.S. defense, a national security strategy. So I think that has to be viewed in balance with the other priorities that the Department has and to make sure that we’re allocating resources to be competitive in all domains, but I think also maintaining a credible deterrent is an important priority.

General McMaster: Senator, I would just add to that that there is a tremendous bow wave of deferred modernization in the nuclear forces, as you know. I would stand by the tremendous work that went on in the nuclear posture review in 2018. It was published in 2018. I think that, again, this is one of these areas where it takes a sustained effort over multiple administrations to make headway.

And then finally, going without the land-based element of the triad works until it doesn’t work anymore, because our adversaries and potential enemies have counter-measures
available to them that could one day make us wish we had
that capability. And once you divest from a capability like
that, it’s super hard to build it back.

Senator Rounds: I agree.

Let me ask you, just in the interest of time I’m only
going to ask you to think about one item in particular, but
once again for both of you. We all know that we face ever-
growing threats in cyberspace. If you could make one change
with regard to DOD’s role in the defense of our nation in
this domain, what would that be? Right now it seems that
DOD, when we talk about defending this, we talk about
defending internally. And yet the purpose of DOD in the
first place is to protect our nation, and yet we seem to
have a challenge in that we’re not allowed to work inside;
we work outside of our country with regard to our protective
nature. We defend forward and so forth.

But would there be anything that you would change in
terms of our policy in responding to these very aggressive
cyber attacks?

Dr. Wright: Senator, while we need to work across all
areas, including strengthening deterrence by denial in this
space, I think that ultimately is very difficult and we need
to give a lot more thought to offensive options to deter by
threat of punishment. We need to also think about ways for
us to respond to attacks like the Solar Winds attack by
working collectively with allies, too. I think in that particular case, a NATO-wide response to Solar Winds would be appropriate.

General McMaster: I would just add that the key is the integration of efforts across departments and agencies. The Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency I thought was off to a great start under Chris Krebs. I thought he did a very good job there in a very short period of time, and I think there are some good foreign examples to look at. I mean, we are not Estonia. We are much more complicated than Estonia. But Estonia has taken a very good holistic approach to cyber security, and I think we can learn from some of our international partners on how to better integrate especially the security of infrastructure, which is in private hands, and to incentivize security measures that otherwise companies who are in a position to make those investments are not really incentivized to do so.

So I think that’s the biggest area. If I could change one thing, it would be the incentive structure such that companies that have and entities that have responsibility for critical transportation, health care, you name it, infrastructure are prioritizing those investments in security.

Senator Rounds: General McMaster, one last question, just briefly. There’s been some discussion about nuclear
command and control and the decision-making process. Given the speed with which nuclear weapons can be employed, do you think diffusing nuclear command and control authority by introducing multiple decision-makers will increase or decrease the credibility of our nuclear deterrent, both in the eyes of our adversaries as well as those of our allies and partners?

General McMaster: Sir, I won’t go into any specifics of the system because I think there’s already been too much discussion about this in the public domain, but I have complete confidence in it. Part of my responsibility was to oversee exercise and so forth, ensure that we could, in unimaginable circumstances, bring those decisions to the right people. So I think the current system that’s in place is time tested. It’s worth always looking at, and it’s consistent with your oversight responsibility to do so, but my opinion is that it should stay as it is.

Senator Rounds: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

Senator Blumenthal, please?

Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for being here today.

I want to pursue the line of questioning that Senator Rounds began on the issue of deterring cyber attacks. We
have sanctioned our adversaries, we’ve indicted their hackers, and we engaged in cyber operations to stop their attacks, but clearly none of it has worked to deter, and I emphasize deter those kinds of attacks. Just last week, Microsoft CEO Brad Smith testified before our committee and told us that our deterrent strategy has failed because we’re not communicating red line. As he put it, “It takes real clarity about the lines that others cannot cross without consequences, because without that kind of clarity I don’t think a deterrent doctrine can be effective.”

I’m assuming both of you would agree we have failed to establish red lines and our deterrence strategy, if it ever existed, simply hasn’t worked. Would you, in fact, agree?

Dr. Wright: Senator, yes, I would agree, but I think when we talk about red lines in cyber, I think it’s important to recognize that we can’t deter all types of cyber attacks on all levels, right? I think what we’re focused on is those major state-sponsored attacks like Solar Winds or like the attack on Australia in 2020 and how do we deter those.

Senator Blumenthal: Well, I agree, we can’t deter every single skirmish, but as you just put it well, a major attack that invades a number of government agencies, including Defense and possibly Intelligence, is in my view an act of war, but we have no idea what constitutes an act
of war in terms of red lines.

General McMaster?

General McMaster: Thank you. I would say that I think there have to be really four aspects of cyber threats to consider. First is cyber-enabled information warfare, which we’re talking about, that the Russians are the best at, right? Polarizes, pits us against each other, and reduces our confidence in our democratic institutions and principles and processes.

The second is what you’re talking about, attacks on infrastructure. I think the first way to deter is to try to harden that infrastructure so that your adversary doesn’t believe it can take it down without incurring costs. But as Dr. Wright said, to also make clear that we have the ability to impose costs on that actor that go far beyond what they may factor into their decision to make that attack to begin with. Those costs could be within cyberspace, but they also have to be outside of cyberspace as well, and this is what you’ve seen us do with sanctions probably more than any other tool, as well as offensive cyber capabilities.

I think that sometimes the government gets it right and they put the right person in the right job, and I think that’s General Paul Nakasone right now. I mean, I would ask him these questions. I think he is absolutely the right person to help us address what you see as real deficiencies
in deterrence.

And then the third, there’s criminality, which maybe North Korea is best known for this right now.

And then the fourth is cyber espionage, which is in the purview of APT-10, and also this recent attack by the Russians.

I think that we need a range of capabilities so we can apply them very quickly in combination based on scenarios that we know will happen. None of this is really surprising, right? I mean, in 2007 the Iranians went after our financial infrastructure. So I think that we should have a range of responses prepared across the government. They should be classified, briefed to you, on how we can integrate all elements of national power and, as Dr. Wright mentioned, with efforts of like-minded partners to impose the kind of costs that could deter future attacks.

Senator Blumenthal: Taking your frame of analysis, imposing costs, do you think at this point sufficient or proportionate costs have been imposed on the Russians for their attack on us in Solar Winds?

General McMaster: No, probably not. Russia will continue as they have with Russian new-generation warfare and the cyber-enabled information warfare against us.

You know, Senator, I’ll tell you, this is going to be a battlefield every day, as it is already. I just don’t see
it ever ending. I think the key question to ask is when
does this cyber activity cross over from the cyber world and
cyberspace into the physical world and begin to affect the
daily lives of Americans, and then how do we protect that
from happening? Of course, the likelihood of that happening
is growing greater and greater because of the Internet of
things and the degree to which we are connected.

So it isn’t in our nature, because we’re all about
customer experience and making our lives easier, but we have
to develop systems that can degrade gracefully, that have
firewalls in place.

Senator Blumenthal: Let me just close because my time
has expired. There will never be a mushroom cloud as a
consequence of a cyber attack. What it will look like is
what happened in Texas as a result of a natural disaster,
shutting down electricity and water supplies, but we have to
stop this kind of cyber attack on our country before we see
that kind of consequence by imposing proportionate costs.
And I agree with you, we haven’t so far on Russia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Kaine: On behalf of Chair Reed, I recognize
Senator Ernst.

Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Dr. Wright and General McMaster. Very good
to see you. Thank you, gentlemen, so much for your service
and dedication to our country.

This is important testimony today. I’m glad to hear it. There’s been some very, very good topics brought up, but certainly, as the Ranking Member of Emerging Threats and Capabilities, we have to understand what our future challenges are in order to secure our great nation.

General McMaster, if we could talk about Special Operations Forces and how they fed into our National Security Strategy and Great Power competition. We know that our SOF has played a large part in carrying out our foreign policy and enforcing our National Security Strategy throughout the global war on terrorism. Now we must prepare these elite forces for that challenge of the future and our Great Power competition. So how do we continue to enable these types of forces into the future to combat those Great Power competitors?

General McMaster: Senator Ernst, I’d like to make two points on this. First of all, we oftentimes define Great Power competition as just the U.S. conventional forces against Chinese or Russian conventional forces. As you know, those arenas have viewed strategic competition, if we could think about the unthinkable, a major war, are going to play out really across the world, against our interests and presence abroad and their interests and presence abroad.

So first of all, our Special Operations Forces can work
with allies to enable them to bring them a whole range of our joint force capabilities.

The second is I don’t know how many of you saw the 60 Minutes report on the attack on Al Asad Airbase. That’s the world we’re living in now. We are like London in World War I and the susceptibility to V1 and V2, those threats. And we’ve seen this before. These are SCUDs out of the western desert in Desert Storm. This is what Israel deals with out of southern Lebanon or out of Gaza.

So the only way to really get at those capabilities, what maybe tells rolling out of mountains in North Korea, is to deploy forces on the ground. Well, that sounds kind of crazy. Well, that’s what we had to do. That’s what Israel had to do to defend itself. That’s what we had to do in the Gulf War in ’91, is put Special Operations Forces.

So what we need is we need capable ground forces that can be deployed rapidly into unexpected locations and transition immediately into reconnaissance operations to confirm or deny the presence of these sorts of capabilities.

So I think that our Special Operations Forces are keeping us safe right now against jihadist terrorists, but they also have to be capable in connection with this other mission set.

Senator Ernst: Yes, absolutely. I would agree, General. We use these forces with direct and indirect
actions. So can you describe, maybe for those who might be viewing today, the types of indirect actions we can use soft forces for to deter any type of future war in this Great Power competition? Because you mentioned with the pandemic, the best way to stop the pandemic is to prevent it in the first place. How can we utilize SOF, then, to prevent war?

General McMaster: Right. I think it’s Special Operations Forces and also conventional forces rotating into these missions. It’s working with partner forces to develop those relationships, that mutual trust, that allows us to work together effectively so that when there is a crisis, we can hopefully deter it ahead of time but then respond to it.

In the fight against jihadist terrorism, we are getting tremendous results for a relatively small investment, because essentially we are enabling other forces who are on the front lines of really these modern-day frontiers between barbarism and civilization to fight against these organizations who want to commit further mass murder attacks against our country.

So I think the American people should know more, really, about what these forces are doing at a relatively low cost to protect us. I wish the Department of Defense would more often make public the evidence and intelligence of external threats that are uncovered while operating against groups like Al-Shabaab in Somalia, for example, or
1 Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, or fill in the blank.

2 Senator Ernst: Right on target, sir. You mentioned

3 the low cost of our soft forces. Their annual budget is

4 right around $14 billion out of our Defense budget, so it is

5 a very small cost with a very large return on investment.

6 So as we’re operating in a constrained environment when

7 it comes to our monetary resources and looking at how we

8 should be budgeting, this is definitely not an area to be

9 cutting because of the return on investment.

10 General McMaster: I agree completely with you,

11 Senator, on that.

12 Senator Ernst: Thank you. My time has expired. Thank

13 you, gentlemen.

14 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Senator Ernst.

15 On behalf of Chair Reed, I recognize Senator King via

16 Webex.

17 Senator King: First I want to thank the Chair and the

18 Ranking Member for even scheduling this hearing to give us a

19 chance to look at the broader issues.

20 Lincoln once said, when he was asked what he would do

21 if he was told he had an hour to split a cord of wood, that

22 he’d spend the first 15 minutes sharpening his axe. Most of

23 us would just commence chopping, and today we’re having a

24 chance to sharpen our axe, to think about some of these

25 larger strategic issues, and I really appreciate that.
General McMaster, it’s wonderful to see you again. I still think you’ve written the very best book on Vietnam that explains what went on, and let me take a page from that book. Both of you touched on this earlier in your discussion.

It seems to me that one of the problems with American foreign policy is that we think the rest of the world thinks like us and that they’re going to react like us and that everything is sort of a transaction from one minute to the next, and we don’t spend enough time understanding the culture and the history of our adversaries.

General McMaster, do you think that would better inform our foreign policy if we could get into the heads of Xi Jinping or the Taliban or Mr. Putin?

General McMaster: Sir, thank you for that question. I covered this at some length in my statement for the record, and I think what you’re talking about is what the historian, Zachary Shore, calls strategic empathy, and to pay particular attention to the emotions and the ideology and the aspirations that drive and constrain the other. And I think you’re right.

We have this tendency towards strategic narcissism, to define the world only in relation to us, which is a problem because it’s self-referential, but it also doesn’t consider the authorship over the future that the other has. And I
think as a result of this strategic narcissism we oftentimes have implicit and fundamentally flawed assumptions that underpin our policies and strategies. So I think this is a fundamental aspect of strategic competence, is this quality of strategic empathy.

Senator King: Thank you. I want to move on.

We talked a lot about cyber. I totally associate myself with Senator Blumenthangal and all the others who have talked about cyber deterrence. I’ve been working, as you know, on the Cyber Solarium Commission for the past two years. It’s one of our major recommendations.

But I want to touch on another theme that’s come up a lot today, and that’s allies. Deterrence, whatever form it takes, is much more effective if it’s done multilaterally rather than unilaterally. This goes also --

General McMaster: I think we just lost you. I think you might be muted.

Chairman Reed: Senator King, we cannot hear you.

Senator King: Yes, I’m sorry. I think I’m okay now. Can you hear me now?

Chairman Reed: Yes, we can. Go ahead, please.

Senator King: Okay. The question that I wanted to posit to Dr. Wright is to talk about the essential quality of allies, which frankly we have. Russia doesn’t have much in the way of allies. China has customers, not allies. I
think it’s a major asset that we should be taking greater advantage of. Cyber is a perfect example. If you can have worldwide sanctions instead of just U.S. sanctions, I think it would be much more effective.

Dr. Wright?

Dr. Wright: Senator, thank you. I 100 percent agree, and I would actually link your second question to your first question, which is I think we also need strategic empathy with allies and partners, too, to understand where they’re coming from on this, that what’s happening in Asia is not all about China. It is about our allies and partners, as well.

And on your second question, precisely when I think we look at cyber but we also look at other means of coercion and interference, including, for instance, what is happening currently in Australia, I think a collective response by free societies is incredibly important. And most of the time in this environment it would be a non-military response. It would be political, diplomatic, economic.

Senator King: Finally, General McMaster, I want to differ with you a little bit on climate change and the Paris Accords. The Paris Accords were aspirational, not regulatory, as you know, and I agree that there are no teeth there, but at least it was an international recognition of the issue. And you talked about China. China today is the
largest user of renewable energy in the world. Yes, they are building coal plants because they have such high growth in their economy, but they are leading in electric cars and renewable power.

But I want to get to the basic point, which is climate change is an enormous threat to us and it’s one that has to be dealt with internationally. I totally agree with your point that we could do everything here, but if China and India don’t do anything, it’s not going to work. But I think it needs to be acknowledged that other areas of the country are, in fact, working on limiting CO2 emissions, and that’s important to the future of the country.

So I’ll leave it at that, but I appreciate both of you all being here for the discussion today, and I yield back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you again for calling this hearing.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator King.

Senator Sullivan, please?

Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank the witnesses for appearing here.

General, always good to see you.

Let me go to the issue of China, as well, for both of you. You know, I’ve talked a lot about how I think this period right now is analogous to kind of the 1946–’47 period where our country is awakened to a new challenge, like we did after World War II with the Soviet Union and the Cold
War and George Kennan and others laying out a long-term bipartisan strategy of containment, and I think we’re at a similar position here.

I’m always amazed how quickly things have changed, in my view, in a positive bipartisan way. When I got to the Senate six years ago, I used to give a pretty regular speech about China and the challenges, and I would say nobody is talking about China. We’re the U.S. Senate and nobody is even talking about it. Well, you obviously can’t give that speech anymore. Everybody is talking about it. That’s good.

And to be honest, the National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, which you had a lot to do with, General McMaster, was a huge reason for that, and that’s very bipartisan, the recognition of Great Power competition.

But what do we need to do next? What do we need to do next? We need to put meat on the bones, from my view, of a strategy that you started. I’ve been reaching out to the Biden Administration saying, look, this needs to be long term, it needs to be bipartisan. This committee can help.

But do you, both of you, have ideas and suggestions on kind of the next step? The awakening has occurred thanks to you and others. But what kind of details for a long-term bipartisan strategy do we need to address this issue, which I’ve been saying is the next issue for our country for the
next 50 to 100 years? What do we need to do, General?

General McMaster: Well, Senator, we recognized that we need to translate this recognition of the threat from the Chinese Communist Party and its policies into real action, and there we did develop seven components to that strategy that you saw declassified, the Indo-Pacific Strategy.

I believe these are fundamentally sound. They all need to be improved on in terms of conceptually, how they’re conceptualized, and how they’re implemented.

But, for example, one of those is probably of paramount importance, which is how to counter Chinese economic aggression, because I think we understand what we have to do. We have to commit the resources and do it from a military and a deterrence perspective. But this sustained effort by the Chinese under “Made in China 2025” and under the overarching concept of military-civil fusion aims to give the People’s Liberation Army a differential advantage in future war, and to do so mainly by vast state resources committed, but also by sustained industrial espionage against us and other developed economies and like-minded liberal democracies.

So I think the most important thing is really, first of all, let’s defend ourselves. Let’s make sure that the MSS, the Ministry for State Security, and the People’s Liberation Army have not infiltrated our research activities, which
they did with almost impunity. I mean, it’s gut-wrenching
to see how much has been stolen right out from under our
noses, and much of that research funded by the Congress.

But we have to go beyond defense. We need investments
in our own research and development programs and a greater
partnership with the private sector, and a recognition
across our entrepreneurial class that this is a real
competition. I think the financial dimension of this is
something worth a great deal of scrutiny. We are, in large
measure, underwriting our own demise by investments in
Chinese companies and in China which allow them to commit
those resources to gaining a differential military advantage
over us, and then to gain a predominant advantage in the
emerging data-driven global economy.

I’ll ask Thomas to comment on this, as well.

Senator Sullivan: If you don’t mind, before my time
runs out I want to throw out another idea for both of you to
comment on. Dr. Wright, I’d like you to comment on my first
question and the second one.

I couldn’t agree more with Senator King on allies. We
have to look at comparative advantages. That’s a huge one.

Let me give you another one that I think is actually
important. Senator King mentioned that China is the largest
producer of renewables. They’re also by far the largest
emitter of greenhouse gas emissions. The United States from
2005 to 2017, we reduced greenhouse gas emissions by almost 15 percent. No major country in the world is even close to how well we’re doing on this. Meanwhile, China is double the amount of emissions we have.

The comparative advantage I’m talking about is the United States is now the world’s energy superpower once again. Prior to the pandemic, largest producer of oil, natural gas, and renewables in the world. Is that a comparative advantage in the competition with China we need to accelerate? Or, unfortunately, with the Biden Administration, they’re focused on actually crushing this advantage unilaterally. I guarantee you, the Chinese are loving that policy from this new administration.

So if you’d both comment on these issues very quickly, I’d appreciate it.

Dr. Wright: Senator, if I could address maybe the climate change part of it and --

Senator Sullivan: Energy superpower.

Dr. Wright: Yes, and maybe merge it into the answer to your first question, too. I think General McMaster and I disagree on the Paris Agreement, but I think one element of climate policy that’s really important to look at in the context of Great Power competition is that climate policy will itself become a zone of competition, right? And particularly in new clean technology and in access to
precious resources. I document some of these in the written statement: magnets, batteries, high-performance [inaudible], LEDs and the like.

Senator Sullivan: Clean burning natural gas from America?

Dr. Wright: There will be a competition between democratic countries and China. So I think it’s important to look at that part of it, as well.

And then in answer to your first question, I think one area where the Congress could really help in bringing forward the strategy of Great Power competition is understanding, as we rebuild the U.S. economy after the pandemic, how to make investments that make the United States more strategically competitive, and I think there is common ground across the aisle on that issue.

General McMaster: Senator, I would just offer that I think the way you framed it is exactly the right way to look at it. I think what happens is we only look at one dimension of interconnected problems, and then we sub-optimize in a way that cuts against what should be our advantages, as well as our ability to help solve that interconnected problem set.

What you’re talking about is really the connection between energy security, economic growth to a certain extent, obviously, and then the very real problems of
climate change and global warming. I think if we disconnect those, we miss opportunities, as you were mentioning. I should mention that I advise a company that is engaged now in exporting LNG. The reason I’m doing that is because I’m a true believer in it. It was that conversion that reduced carbon emissions to a very significant level here in the United States, and this is I think a clear bridging capability. But let me also say, though, that renewables now are more affordable.

The point that I was making was not that we should be out of Paris. It’s that Paris can’t give us a false sense of security, right? We need to do more than what’s in Paris, and the only way to do it is with solutions that are economically viable in developing economies such that the Chinese will want to do it, the Indians will want to do it.

So that’s really, I think, the way ahead, is to look at the interconnected problem set and to work on it holistically, because this also involves food and water security as well. But I think that’s the right frame to have.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Sullivan.

Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Let me recognize Senator Manchin.

Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to our guests. I appreciate very much
the service they’ve given to our country and basically what
they’re continuing to do.

I have a couple of questions I want to ask. My first
one is going to be that I’m now chairman of the Cyber
Subcommittee. I’m particularly concerned about our
adversaries, both large and small, moving towards cyber and
influence operations due to the greater bang for their buck
and the ability for them to have plausible deniability they
offer.

So my question would be how can we ensure our allies
are effectively prepared and monitoring for those
destabilizing attacks, and how do we hold those perpetrators
accountable? So what I’m really asking is how do we make
sure that our allies are prepared but also let our
adversaries know we will not allow these attacks to go un-
responded to? We should respond to them, but I’ve heard
people say it should be an act of war. I think that might
be a little bit harsh, but we could sure show them the same
abilities that we have when these attacks happen to us.

So your thoughts on those, really quick, if possible.

General McMaster: Well, I think, Senator Manchin, your
point is immensely important. There are two ways to deter:
one, by denial, to convince your adversaries they can’t
accomplish their objectives through the use, in this case,
of offensive cyber capabilities against you, and that has to
do a lot with defense but it’s sort of the active-layer
defense that Joe Nakasone has advocated for and has put in
place; but then it’s also the ability to deter by the threat
of punitive action later, and that would have to include
examples of responses from us that exceed the costs that a
malign actor in cyberspace factored into his decision-making
to begin with.

Now, the problem is going to be when non-state actors
over time get more and more of these capabilities. It will
be difficult to find something of value for that adversary
or enemy to hold at risk.

Thomas, any further comments?

Dr. Wright: I fully agree with what General McMaster
said, and I would just add that I think looking at the
alliance part of this is quite important. I don’t think we
should see every cyber attack, or even major cyber attacks,
as an act of war, per se, because of what that would entail,
but I do think we should see them as acts of aggression that
have to be responded to. There may be ways to look at
elements of NATO and Article 5 and other mechanisms to have
a collective proportionate response, and we may also need to
consider ways in which that proportionate response may occur
outside of the cyber domain. So you might want to respond,
for instance, on sanctions or anti-corruption efforts or on
other measures short of war to deter future cyber
aggression.

Senator Manchin: Thank you. Well, the Russian attack is quite extreme, as we know, and we don’t know the far reaches of that yet, how it’s going to affect us, but we know it was a very broad attack.

I have two more questions, very quickly.

Based on work resuming on the Nord Stream II project, China’s near monopoly on critical minerals that we’re using every day in America and depending on China for the ingredients, if you will, we’re reaching a point where a line must be drawn between the typical economic growth and economic warfare, because they can hold some of these resources from us, which would really cripple our economy into economic warfare. So, your thoughts on that?

And then finally, if you can, the 2 percent requirement that we have with our NATO allies on defense spending. They’re meeting the spending levels, we thought, by 2024. In 2020 we had 10 NATO nations meet the mark. That still fell short of the full 30 members. So do you believe the 2 percent is an adequate figure, and do you believe that we should keep the pressure on to make sure the others join in their commitment?

So the economic warfare, and the 2 percent.

Dr. Wright: Senator, thank you. The economic warfare piece of it I think is demonstrative of a broader -- what
political scientists are calling a weaponization of interdependence, how our links with China, Russia, and others are vulnerabilities for us, and their links are vulnerabilities for them. I think our task is to increase the resilience of our system so it is less exposed to that weaponization on their side, and I was encouraged by President Biden’s statement on supply chains the other day. I think there’s a broad agenda set that can go out from that.

On 2 percent, I mentioned this earlier but I think it’s important in the context of the post-pandemic economic situation to realize that there will be severe downward pressure on defense budgets in many countries. I think with the view to Great Power competition, it’s important to measure their contribution to the collective defense effort by whether or not they’re retaining capabilities that will ensure they are competitive. Some of those are in the space of the 2 percent, but some are not. So I think we ought to reform that concept to measure their effectiveness in this competition more accurately.

General McMaster: I would just say that we need a real focus on economic statecraft, as you’re mentioning, and to recognize that economic security is national security. There have been some really encouraging signs across the last two administrations. I think that Undersecretary Keith

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Krach’s work to develop a comprehensive strategy in this area is worth resurrecting and widespread adoption from the Biden Administration. I think the Biden Administration’s initiative now to audit critical supply chains is immensely important. As you mentioned, rare earths is part of that. And I think the legislation that I don’t think has yet been fully approved on computer chips and on 5G infrastructure, for example, is an example of what we have to do to compensate for the Chinese Communist Party taking advantage of its authoritarian mercantilist system and weaponizing it against our free market economic systems.

So I think we’re on the right track, but obviously there’s more work to do, and I think Congress has been great at taking a look at some of these issues. I think the strategic act that was being drafted in the Foreign Relations Committee is another good example of this.

So I think we’re awake to it. There’s a lot of great work going on. I just don’t know -- I mean, certainly it’s not adequate, but we’re doing some of the right things already.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Manchin.

I’m now prepared to call on Senator Cramer. Senator Cramer?

Senator Cramer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank both of you. This has really been a fantastic hearing. I
say that every week in this committee, by the way. But this really has been great. And I’m about to blow up everything my staff prepared for me because I think we started a discussion that I’d like to carry just a little further.

You’re going to find that when it comes to the Paris Accords, I probably am the oddest member of Congress from a fossil fuel-producing state, especially a right-wing ogre. But I kind of think that we should be in Paris, and I’ll tell you why. While it was aspirational -- I think we forget that oftentimes, that Paris was aspirational, not regulatory, an important point. But the one thing, General McMaster, that I fear more than a large international body trying to do good things is a large international body that doesn’t have us sitting at the head of the table. To that end, I do think that we can bring some things that are helpful.

But one very specific characteristic of China that I want to ask you both about, a short answer, and then maybe we can expound on a couple of other things, is should China continue to be treated like a “developing” country? Because therein lies one of the challenges. We kind of make an excuse for them being able to do everything differently than us while they’re our near-peer adversary in many respects.

I would turn to Dr. Wright first.

Dr. Wright: Thank you, Senator. I mean, I view
climate change as a major national security threat. I think it merits involvement diplomatically in all of these forums. I think you have it exactly right, that it’s important to shape those agreements. Paris wasn’t perfect. I’m glad the U.S. is back in it. But I think looking forward, I think there’s a wide array of strategies needed. Part of that is working with China, but part of it is actually working with other countries to create an environment in which China has to make better decisions.

Senator Cramer: General?

General McMaster: I would just say that I argued unsuccessfully when I was National Security Advisor to stay in Paris for all the reasons that you mentioned. But then also what I wrote about in this recent book is that in retrospect it wasn’t all bad. There was a silver lining because it had been a false sense of security. So I think there is certainly more that has to be done.

I will just mention that to connect these two issues of energy security, economic statecraft and, of course, climate, it’s important to recognize that China is the leader in renewable manufacturing because they stole our intellectual property, right? And they subsidized the manufacturing of solar panels and wind turbines at levels far below what the normal market would have borne and dumped them on the international market to drive the U.S. companies
who gave them that technology out of the global market. The same dynamic is at work now with batteries and electric cars.

So I think it’s really important for us to recognize that this is not a free, fair, and reciprocal trade and economic relationship. You already alluded to it in your question as well, that they have never played by the rules, even the rules in the WTO in 2001. They just never played by the rules. And this is why, when they make the great promises, when the Party does, about global warming and carbon emissions, I would just say don’t fall for it. Watch their actions, not their words.

Senator Cramer: Amen to all of that. And that’s why I think if we sit at that table, and especially if we assume, and I think we ought to, a leadership role, we ought to shape a lot of those things, including those warnings about their behavior and the trust factor.

I would also add to all the things you’re talking about things like clean coal technology. If, in fact, China is going to build 30 to 50 new coal plants a year, perhaps the solution to carbon capture, utilization and storage comes from us and we become the marketer of that technology, because I believe that the best will be invented here, provided we don’t kill our own industry, which is another factor altogether.
I would just raise this one issue which happened just last year. It serves to me as an illustration of what not being at the table means. When Engie Gas, an LNG company, as you know, Engie Gas had a deal to purchase U.S. liquid natural gas, the French government intervened and killed that deal and instead they’re buying that natural gas from Russia. Now, you don’t have to be an expert to realize that that’s a national security problem. But worse than that, the natural gas from Russia emits like 46 percent more emissions than the LNG coming from the United States.

General McMaster: Let alone a dirtier production process, as well.

Senator Cramer: All of that; exactly right. So anyway, I’d like to see us reform Paris by being in Paris. With that, I yield. Thank you.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Cramer. Let me recognize Senator Duckworth by Webex, and also remind all of the committee that the 5-minute timer is on and should be observed. Thank you.

Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here. I have to say, I want to give you another example, following my colleague, Senator Cramer, of the fact that the PRC colluded with their commercial arm, used corporate espionage to steal from Lockheed Martin, and then they turned around and gave that
information directly to the PRC government, which then
allowed them to solve their problem with the landing gear of
their 5th generation fighter jet that is supposed to be the
competitor to the F-35. And they were very proud of that,
that partnership between their government and their private
sector. There’s no real private sector.

I’m going to get to the events of foreign adversaries
on our national security, but I think we also need to start
at home. I think that with President Biden in the White
House, I am confident our Commander in Chief understands
that restoring alliances is critical to advancing American
security interests, and I know that President Biden
recognizes that the strength of our nation is not solely
derived from military might but also the strength of our
values. We have a president who now understands the wisdom
of then-General Washington’s admonition to his troops that
discipline is the soul of the Army.

My relief at the arrival of the current occupant of the
Oval Office does not lessen my concern over the significant
and lasting damage that former President Trump inflicted on
the principle of good order and discipline, from denigrating
U.S. service members as killing machines to pardoning
individuals accused of committing war crimes. Over the past
four years, the former Commander in Chief sent a really
dangerous message that members of the military are above the
law, and we saw that on January 6th. Our nation witnessed the consequences of such reckless behavior as President Trump incited his followers, which disgracefully included veterans and active-duty service members, to engage in violent acts of sedition and insurrection. Effectively addressing external security challenges abroad, I believe, demands that we strictly correct internal deficiencies in good order and discipline within the ranks.

General McMaster, you served in uniform for more than 30 years and have extensive experience commanding troops in combat during the Gulf Wars. Can you please address why it is critical to our own national security and stability that the United States military, starting with the Commander in Chief, prioritizes the principle of good order and discipline and faithful adherence to the rule of law?

General McMaster: Well, Senator, thank you, and thank you for your tremendous service to our nation in uniform, and now as well.

I really think that it is most important for us to maintain our professional military ethic and our warrior ethos. I mentioned that in the opening statement. I have more in the statement for the record. And I think that there is a misunderstanding about the nature of our warriors, their calling, and what motivates them to fight in our name. I think most Americans don’t recognize, don’t
understand that our warriors are warriors and humanitarians. They’re humanitarians because they are engaged today against the enemies of all civilized people, and they’re also humanitarians because they use force with great discipline and discrimination, often taking on much more risk themselves to protect innocent lives.

That ethos is one about honor and courage and self-sacrifice. But, as you’re alluding to, it’s also what bonds them together under mutual respect and common purpose and affection for one another, and pride, pride in what they’re committed to, to one another, and pride in their commitment to our nation. And nothing is worse for unit cohesion and confidence than breakdowns in discipline and if expectations for our own conduct are lowered.

I think the question to ask of any unit is what do servicemen and women in this organization expect of one another? And your answer to that helps you understand the health of that organization. I believe our ethos is strong. I wish more of the American people understood what it is. And, of course, our leaders have to nurture it and protect it.

The one thing I would say is what is really dangerous is if political leaders try to drag the military into partisan politics. I think that we’ve seen a tendency to do that. The most extreme one was on the part of the
president, but I think others across the political spectrum have done that at times, and it’s really a danger to that professional military ethic.

You know, Senator, I will just mention that I never voted -- I voted just recently, but when I was on active duty, ever since I took the oath of service to the country at the age of 17, I followed the example of George Marshall, and the reason was to keep that bold line between our military and partisan politics. I don’t expect that from anybody else. I expect all Americans to vote. But I think that’s an important aspect of the military professionalism you’re alluding to.

Senator Duckworth: Can you speak, then, General, to the efforts of right-wing extremists and domestic terrorists to recruit and radicalize members of the U.S. Armed Forces and tie that to what you have worked on extensively, written on extensively, which is Russian disinformation activity? Because our adversaries recognize the strength of that warrior ethos, and I do think that there is a threat to our military’s strength with these concerted efforts to provide disinformation to our troops.

General McMaster: Thank you, Senator. I feel good about our Armed Forces and their ability to insulate themselves from that kind of infiltration and disinformation. There may be some members who come into the
military with really a skewed interpretation of what military service means. This isn’t new. I remember as we were waiting to attack into Iraq in 1991 Baghdad Betty on the radio talking to our soldiers. It was very unsophisticated, but the effort was to get our soldiers to be pitted against each other and lack confidence in who they were and to get them to focus on micro-identities rather than their identities as soldiers in service of our citizens.

So I think it’s incumbent on every leader to protect and nurture our warrior ethos and our professional military ethic, and I think we have the right leaders in place in our military to do it. But I think this is obviously an area worth more scrutiny after what we witnessed on the 6th of January.

Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Duckworth.

I will now recognize via Webex Senator Blackburn.

Senator Blackburn, please?

Senator Blackburn, I think we have a problem with the connection.

Let me now recognize Senator Tuberville. And before I do that, let me commend both Senator Tuberville and Senator Kelly for their patience, persistence, and determination as
they come first to the meeting and leave at the end of the
meeting, for obvious reasons. So, thank you very much.

Senator Tuberville?

Senator Tuberville. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I’m new
on the job, but I’m glad to be here.

I’m a military brat. Dad died on active duty, and I’m
going to do my due diligence on this committee.

But I want to thank both of you for your service.

You know, I grew up in team sports, and you know a lot
about the other teams when you play them. And we’ve talked
about Korea and Russia and China, and we’ve got national
security, and we should know all that. I’ve had buddies
just died in the military. I just barely missed the Vietnam
War.

But we have to take care of ourselves here. If we
don’t have a military here that’s organized, well trained,
well funded, we’re going to be in trouble. Over the years
I’ve seen political correctness take over. I’ve talked to
generals who said, Coach, we spend more money on gender
equity than we do covering for $35, $40 million airplanes.

We’ve got to have our priorities right. This country
that pays the taxpayers’ money, that pays the money for our
military, needs not just a military because we’re in
trouble; we need a killing machine. We need people who are
well trained that’s going to attack, that when we’re
attacked or if we have to do something to defend other people, we can count on them. We need to get out of this political correctness stuff, the climate change. We just had a secretary of defense who said we need to look at domestic terrorism within our military. That’s fine. But we need a military that will fight.

I just want to know, just both of you, the only question I’ve got, what do you think about the direction that we’re going in terms of what we’re doing here, of what we’re doing, not what anybody else is doing but what we’re doing to make that killing machine prepared and ready to fight?

Dr. Wright?

Dr. Wright: Senator, I feel pretty good about where the U.S. military is at. I think much that remains to be done was articulated in the NDS in 2018. But I think we need a pretty broad conception of national security if we’re to compete in the next decade or two. To me, that includes traditional threats and challenges, whether it’s ISIS and China and Russia, but it does also include the transnational pieces, pandemics and climate change, because of the problems they pose and the way in which they intersect with those traditional challenges.

I think it also is about perfecting our values at home, as well.
So I think you can do all of those. I don’t see that
-- I guess we might disagree a bit here -- as political
correctness. I think much remains to be done on that, but I
think that will make the military and the United States
stronger over time.

General McMaster: Thank you, Senator. What I want to
say is, hey, the military is not perfect. Even though we
have a small professional force, we reflect all the maladies
in our society. But one of the things I loved about serving
in our Army is you see new soldiers come in from all
different backgrounds. They bring all kinds of prejudices
and biases with them. But then, in the crucible of tough,
challenging training where they’re relying on each other,
you see that melt away and they become cohesive teams that
rely on each other, that are bound together by affection and
mutual trust and respect for one another. That’s where real
combat power comes from, and that’s why I think it’s
extremely important that we cultivate and maintain in our
military that we don’t judge anybody by skin color or
religion or sexual orientation or any category. It’s what
you bring to the fight.

And when you’re in a fight and there are bullets coming
in your direction, nobody is checking skin color. I mean,
you’re fighting together as a team. I think we can learn
from that in our society, and we have to guard that kind of
environment where military units take on those
characteristics of a family.

I think there is a fundamental choice, and I think it’s
going to be our leaders who understand how to do that by
either getting mired down into this interaction between
racism and white supremacy, whatever you want to call it,
all forms of bigotry and prejudice, and identity politics
and critical race theories, whatever you want to call that,
that emphasizes micro-identities at the expense of who we
are as Americans and who we are as human beings. You can
either get sucked down into that or you can transcend it,
and I think we’re better off transcending it. Not to paper
over any problems, but to ensure that we understand who we
are as a people, but in a military unit who you are as
soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, and how you rely on
each other and don’t categorize each other because you all
have a role that’s much bigger than yourselves.

So I hope that we can continue to insulate our military
from some of these maladies we see in our society, but we’re
not going to be able to do that perfectly. Our leaders, our
commanders at each level are going to be the ones who are
best positioned to do that.

Senator Tuberville. Thank you, General. Thank you,
Dr. Wright. You’re exactly right, we have to have a team,
and I’m afraid we’re getting away from it. We need to take
politics out of it and build a team that’s going to defend this country because it gets more dangerous, as we know, every day. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Tuberville.

Senator Peters, please?

Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, gentlemen, for your testimony here today and your service.

Two days from now in Beijing the Two Sessions begins, and from there China will approve its 14-year plan going forward. It’s most likely going to be focused on a variety of things, but will also continue the state-led development around the world, the Belt and Road project that they’ve been engaged in.

So my first question is just an assessment from both of you. How concerned should we be about those types of efforts, and what should we be doing to respond to them? And I guess the second part of that question, too, is related to the fact that as we’re thinking about the competition with China, that we also have to be concerned about gray zone activities and to what extent should that be leading a lot of our thoughts.

I’ll start with you, General.

General McMaster: Well, I think we have to be
extremely concerned about what I would describe as the Chinese Communist Party strategy of cooption, coercion, and concealment, coopt companies and countries with the lure of profits or attractive loans or corrupt payments or access to the Chinese market, and then once you’re in, to use that for coercive purposes to advance their foreign policy agenda, to punish you if you act against their agenda. This is the case of Australia that Dr. Wright already brought up. This is under the philosophy of kill one to scare 100.

So the approach of one belt, one road fits into these other strategies which are designed to create servile relationships that China can then use to create really exclusionary areas of primacy across the Indo-Pacific region, and then to challenge the United States globally.

I think the most important point to make about this is that when countries say, hey, don’t force us to choose between Washington and Beijing, we have to really highlight the fact that this is fundamentally a choice not between Washington and Beijing but a choice between sovereignty and servitude, and I think we have to work together. I think what the Administration has done initially to convene like-minded liberal democracies around this problem set is immensely important, and there was a great deal of international cooperation under the Trump Administration as well that didn’t get a lot of billing. But I think it’s
time to build on that, to accelerate it and expand it.

Dr. Wright: Thank you, Senator. I would just add to General McMaster’s comments that I think in addition to being concerned, which I think we should be, and to reacting, as I think we should on many occasions, I would just underscore a point he made that it’s very important to have a positive, affirmative vision for democratic free societies about what the U.S. and what liberal democracies are offering. It’s not about American interests that they must follow. It’s about their own interests as they articulate it.

And then I think it’s important when we look across the regions for all of those free societies to work with each other and to show solidarity with each other when they are threatened on an individual basis, whether that’s traditionally militarily or non-traditionally in the coercive economic political sphere.

Senator Peters: Well, Dr. Wright, you talked about the importance for folks to look at our democracy here, the small “L” liberal democratic system as a model for what they may aspire to and ways that we can help. Could you comment a little bit about what we are seeing here domestically? You know, it’s interesting that we’re talking about our position globally and how to influence the global community, and tomorrow we’re going to have a hearing talking about the
insurrection on our Capitol and the violent attack on the
citadel of democracy and the perpetration of the Big Lie of
trying to undermine the integrity or the perception that the
election was not free and fair.

What sort of message is that sending to our allies and
our adversaries? Isn’t that something we should be very
cconcerned about?

Dr. Wright: Yes, I think they are worried. Yes, I
think we should be worried. And, yes, I think it’s very
important to work on that and to strengthen democracy at
home. I would also add, though, that that does not mean
that we should not be active in standing for that abroad, as
well. It’s precisely, I think, because of the stakes and
the importance of that small classic “L”, as you said,
liberal democracy and those values of freedom and liberty,
it’s precisely because of that, I think, that it’s important
to stand for that abroad as well.

Senator Peters: And, General, we talked about the
Pacific Defense Initiative that you’re very familiar with.
To what extent should the PDI allocate resources to create
opportunities for irregular warfare, particularly in the
cyber space and other activities that will likely be the
main domain of conflict going forward?

General McMaster: Senator, absolutely it has to,
because as my friend the historian and retired colonel,
Conrad Crain, says, there are two ways to fight, asymmetrically and stupidly. You hope your enemy picks stupidly, but they’re unlikely to do so. China has developed, obviously, a very sophisticated capability, also like Russia has under Russian new-generation warfare, to accomplish objectives below the threshold of what might elicit a military response. You see this with the maritime militias and how active they are in the South China Sea and toward the Senkaku, for example. You see it with their use of organized crime and illicit networks, the use of corrupt networks to extend their reach into countries that become kleptocracies, like Cambodia or Zimbabwe.

So you have to be able to really integrate not only what you’re doing militarily but what you’re trying to achieve diplomatically in the information sphere, with law enforcement and intelligence operations, and with economic policies. And that requires really a sophisticated look in cyberspace, as well, and organizations that can integrate those elements of power in a multinational environment, because that’s what magnifies our responses, when we can do it with partners.

Senator Peters: Thank you, appreciate it.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Peters.

Senator Hawley, please?

Senator Hawley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
And thank you both, General and Dr. Wright, for being here.

General, let me start with you, and let me talk about our pacing theater, China, or our pacing theaters into PACOM and our pacing threat, China and Taiwan. I know you’ve been asked about this some already. Let me just get your views.

If China moves slowly with regard to a threat to Taiwan, that will obviously give us more time to react. But what if China moves quickly? What if we find ourselves in a fait accompli scenario? I just want to ask you, do you share my concern that the fait accompli possibility scenario against Taiwan is one of the most serious, maybe the most serious that we face in that theater, and therefore we need to maintain combat credible forces postured forward in the region to deal with it?

General McMaster: Yes, Senator, I do. I do think it’s the most significant flashpoint now that could lead to a large-scale war, is Taiwan, and I think that has to do with really Xi Jinping’s belief that he has a fleeting window of opportunity that’s closing and he wants to, in his view, make China whole again. You see this with the extension of the Party’s repressive arm into Hong Kong and this horrible genocidal campaign in Xinjiang. Taiwan is the next big prize.

So I think what we have to be able to do is have
forward positioned capable forces because what Xi Jinping wants to do with what would be the largest land grab, so to speak, in history if he succeeds in the South China Sea is to weaponize the South China Sea and just make it too difficult for us to be able to employ forces inside of that inner island chain.

If you have forward positioned forces there, that automatically transforms denied space with the PLA, the People’s Liberation Army, into contested space.

Senator Hawley: Very good. Thank you. Thank you for that very clear articulation. Now let me just play out some of the implications of that. When you think about our other security commitments across multiple theaters, so not just in PACOM now but in Europe and elsewhere, my concern is we may lack the resources to fulfill our various commitments all at the same time.

So let’s think about, for instance, in the European theater. Do you think our NATO allies should be developing the capability to, for example, defend the Baltics with minimal support from us so that we can focus on PACOM and the Chinese threat should we face a simultaneous or near-simultaneous challenge in both of those theaters?

General, I’ll ask you that, and then, Dr. Wright, I’d like your opinion on that too.

General McMaster: Yes, definitely. I mean, these are
countries that have the means to be able to do that within NATO, and I think they have to bear their fair share of the burden. Of course, it’s been a disappointment with Germany, which is a nation that could commit a good deal more resources to defense. So I think yes. I think it is our forward presence as well that enables sometimes others to do more. Sometimes we have this idea, hey, if we do less, others will do more. Sometimes if we do just a little bit more, we can get others to do a lot more, and I think this is the case with burden sharing in Afghanistan these days, for example.

Senator Hawley: I want to come back to Afghanistan.

Dr. Wright, give us your views. I’d like your views on the same question about the simultaneity problem and the burden sharing problem.

Dr. Wright: Yes, Senator, I would like to see Europe do much more in this area, but I don’t think, really as an analytical matter, that it is likely that they will be able to carry 90 percent of the burden in a simultaneous sort of challenge in the Asian Pacific and in Europe. I guess I would say that as we think about the 2 percent burden sharing, I’m probably more concerned about Europe developing capabilities that would make it more competitive vis-à-vis China. So I probably care more about their decisions in 5G, on high-end technologies and incurring costs now to be more
resilient in the future than in transferring 90 percent of
the burden of fighting in the Baltics. I think the U.S.
forward presence there will continue to be required and be
necessary for the security of NATO.

Senator Hawley: Just on that last point in terms of
their capabilities, our European allies’ capabilities,
shouldn’t we be pushing them to develop capabilities that
are devoted towards the theater in which they are? I mean,
I agree that we could use their help on China, we need them
to do more vis-à-vis China, and we should certainly use as
much help on PACOM as we can get. But with regard to a
Baltic scenario, a fait accompli scenario in the Baltics,
for instance, shouldn’t we be encouraging them to focus
their stand-up capabilities there so if we find ourselves in
this extremely stressing position of two near-simultaneous
conflicts, we presumably -- if we have a problem in PACOM on
the order of a Taiwan fait accompli, we’re going to have to
direct the bulk of our resources there. Am I missing
something?

Dr. Wright: I think that in that scenario they will,
of course, be called on to do a lot more, and I do think
they should be doing more now. But my view is that the NATO
posture in Europe basically works at present. I think the
European Deterrence Initiative was helpful in that regard.
I am more concerned, frankly, about Europe’s exposure to
China and about that collective resilience of free societies, particularly in the non-kinetic space and those long-term investments in technology. So to the extent that we have limited political capital, I would be going to Berlin, Paris, and elsewhere, and trying to build that coalition to make sure that over a 10-, 15-, 20-year period, that we come out of it in a much more competitive posture on those new technologies.

Senator Hawley: Just one more quick question, if I may, Mr. Chairman. The same question, but now it’s to the Gulf, switching regions. Shouldn’t we be in the Gulf broadly? Shouldn’t we be pushing our partners and allies there similarly to develop capabilities so that with regard to Iran, for instance, they can carry most of the cost of resisting around themselves, barring something very serious, but deterring Iranian aggression without our forces needing to get involved for the same reason, the simultaneous conflicts? General, and then Dr. Wright.

General McMaster: Yes, I think that’s the goal, but it will take some degree of forward positioned U.S. forces, not a large number, and a sustained commitment. The problem is we keep saying we’re leaving the Middle East, and people believe us. We never really leave, but just by saying that we encourage hedging behavior, and this is why some of our key partners in the region, besides the suspension of arms
sales and that sort of thing, don’t believe we’re reliable partners, and they hedge with Russia in particular, and Russia is the key enabler of Iran. Russia gets away with being both the arsonist and then posing as the fireman because the countries in the region think we’re about to leave completely.

So I think a small U.S. sustained commitment and a common vision for the region in terms of the defense architecture, they can step up over time. As you know, the Gulf states, nobody disappoints you more than the Gulf states. Some partners are stronger than others, and I think we ought to go with those who make good on their commitments and develop those kind of capabilities.

Dr. Wright: Senator, I agree. Actually, in this case I would agree that it’s important that the Gulf allies take on more of the burden. I do think there is a tradeoff between long-term security and strategic commitments in the Indo-Pacific and long-term strategic commitments in the Middle East, and I do think there needs to be a managing of that not just militarily but also diplomatically, and I think that may involve some difficult choices over time. But I think it’s important to communicate that message to the Gulf Arab states. I think Israel is in a different category there, but that’s sort of how I would see it.

Senator Hawley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Hawley. Let me recognize Senator Rosen via Webex.

Senator Rosen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to both gentlemen for being here today. I’d like to continue to build on talking a little bit about Iranian aggression, as Senator Hawley was talking about. One of the most pressing security challenges that the Biden Administration faces in its early days is a rapidly escalating crisis with Iran. Iran continues to be the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism. It’s a threat to the region. It’s a threat to our U.S. interests.

Last year Senator Toomey and I co-led a bipartisan resolution, co-sponsored by 58 senators, that called to extend the arms embargo on Iran. That embargo, which limited the flow of sophisticated weapons to Iran and restricted Iran’s ability to provide its proxies with arms, expired last October.

So, Dr. Wright, and then General McMaster, now that the UN embargo has lapsed, what policy options do we have to curb the flow of advanced weapons to Iran?

Dr. Wright: Senator, I agree that this ought to be a concern of the U.S. I think that we ought to see continued action to push back on Iranian assertiveness and aggression in the region, and I agree about the continuation of an arms embargo. I think, obviously, we’re seeing a particular sort
of space open up that would mix with diplomacy, but I think
a precondition of the success of that diplomacy is regional
stability and a broader conception of the problem, which I
think is understood and being acted on.

General McMaster: Senator, thank you for the question.
I agree that this is a huge problem, and our allies have to
work with us. Saying we need stronger alliances is great,
but it has to be better than a better atmosphere at cocktail
parties in Paris, right? When you look at the Iranian
regime, I think we have to consider two fundamental aspects
of the threat from the regime that we often overlook.

First of all, the regime has been fighting a four-
decade-long proxy war against the Great Satan, us, the
little Satan, Israel, and the Arab monarchies, and they
haven’t let up in that proxy war, and in large measure they
have been able to escalate it with impunity, at will.

The second is that the ideology of the revolution
drives the regime. There was, over time, some tension
between the conservatives and the reformists, or you might
want to call them the Republicans and the revolutionaries.
But the revolutionaries won, and we keep talking to the shop
window of Rouhani, who is about to be voted out here, in an
election where they only let people who support the ideology
of the revolution run in the election, and Zarif, the
foreign minister, when they are powerless. It is the
Supreme Leader who is getting up there in age. What’s going to happen next? I’m glad the Pope is going to visit Sistani. This is going to be very important for Shi’ism and the direction it takes and maybe a rejection of the rule of the IRGC. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps has preponderance influence over foreign policy decisions.

This is why, combined with the irresponsible behavior -- the attack on an Israeli ship just in the last couple of days, the attack on our bases in Iraq -- this should get our allies to help us with sanctions. We know that Russia and China are going to throw them a lifeline, but our European allies should not be aiding and abetting a regime that is permanently hostile to the United States, Israel, the Arab countries; and, by the way, they’re hostile to Europe too.

So I think this should be top of the agenda for better cooperation with our European allies to force the Iranian regime to make a choice. You can either be treated like a responsible nation or you can suffer the consequences of economic isolation.

Senator Rosen: Thank you. I want to quickly build on what Senators Duckworth and Peters talked about, white supremacist terrorism. The violent white supremacists are increasingly interconnected. They’re international. They transcend national boundaries. They exploit the same technologies that ISIS used to create a decentralized
network of global terror. We can talk about people challenging Ukraine, the Russian Imperial movement. There are so many things going on. But in the interest of time, what more can the U.S. Government do to keep Americans safe from white supremacist terror and to gather intelligence on the global nature of this threat?

Dr. Wright: Just very briefly, Senator, I think two things. I think, number one, making it a priority on intelligence collection and making it a domestic priority, which I think the Biden Administration has done. And secondly, to the extent that this is an international network problem -- and I agree that it is -- I think working with allies and partners, particularly in the security services and law enforcement internationally, is an important part of the response.

General McMaster: Senator, I think a way to think about this longer term is as a cycle, the cycle of ignorance, hatred, and violence. Ignorance is used to foment hatred, and then hatred is used to justify violence against innocents.

So I think you have to break that cycle at all points, and it begins with education. There is a study that is going to be announced this afternoon, the results of civic education and what we need to do to teach our history and to build our confidence in who we are as a people, to recognize
the great gifts of our republic and for all Americans to
work together toward our unalienable rights that all men and
women are created equal.

So I would just highlight education as a long-term
solution and to recognize that this is fundamentally a
destructive cycle that is part of this problem of
centripetal forces that are pulling us apart from one
another. It has a lot to do with the information sphere.
It has a lot to do with those who feel as if they don’t have
a voice. They feel disenfranchised. They feel left behind
economically. There are a lot of causes of this, but I
think we have to attack it holistically and begin with
education.

I think if you look at the curricula to which many of
our young people are subjected in primary and secondary
education, I would characterize it as a curriculum of self-
loathing, not that we should replace it with a curriculum of
a contrived happy view of our history, but we should
recognize the great gifts that we have in our democracy and
recognize our common identity as Americans and our ability
to work together to build a better future.

Senator Rosen: Well, I love the idea of investing in
education. Investing in good, quality, diverse, broad
education is always a great thing. We agree on that one for
sure.
I know my time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rosen.

Senator Kelly, I commend you for your patience.

Senator Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: You have 5 minutes.

Senator Kelly: Thank you.

And thank you, General McMaster and Dr. Wright.

Senator Cotton highlighted a specific risk that we face with regards to China and Taiwan. The most advanced semiconductor chips in the world that are in regular use, the 5-nanometer chip, is only made in Taiwan and South Korea. And even without any issue there currently, during COVID-19 some U.S. industries have experienced disruption due to chip shortages, and this shortage threatens to hamper auto production, medical devices, and health care systems.

So with that in mind, the shortage and the risk of further constraint on supply, how integral should our industrial policy, ensuring that we have a chip supply, and education policy be as we construct a national strategy that’s responsive to this challenge?

General?

General McMaster: Senator, I covered this in my statement for the record because I agree this should be important. I would call it economic statecraft. But I think we have to recognize that there are real
vulnerabilities associated with the way that the global economy has developed, especially after the accession of China into the World Trade Organization in 2001.

We have put our industries and our workers at a competitive disadvantage and, as you mentioned, this has a big impact on not only our ability to grow our economy and to compete effectively internationally in the global economy, but for national security as well.

I think chips and 5G and the legislation associated with both of those ought to be funded and pursued, and I think this is for the Biden Administration top on the agenda for cooperation with the so-called T-10, the group of 10 technologically advanced, liberal-minded democracies.

So I think economic statecraft has to be a priority and a recognition, as you’re mentioning, that now economic security is national security.

Senator Kelly: Dr. Wright?

Dr. Wright: Senator, I completely agree with the premise of the question and with General McMaster’s comments. I would just underscore that this, to me, demonstrates the need to really think about in new ways the domestic economic agenda to ensure that the U.S. remains competitive. So things that may not have been of interest in the past, like a targeted industrial policy on high-end technology, that may be necessary when you’re dealing with a
competitor that is not bound by normal market rules, that is massively subsidizing their own industries and is benefitting from the theft of intellectual property. I think we have to think about that in a wholly new way, as you suggest, and then also to work with those countries, those allies that are critically important, including Taiwan and South Korea, of course, but also Germany and others, particularly on semi-conductors.

Senator Kelly: We’re looking into legislation here that would appropriate funding for the CHIPS Act, the CHIPS for America Act that would support development of a domestic production capability here. Any specific policy approaches that you would recommend?

General McMaster: The only thing I would recommend -- and I’m not an economist. A general should not talk about economics. But I would just say how do you guard against the disadvantages associated with subsidies, that we don’t get complacent? How do we maintain our competitive advantages? And then in particular, how to bridge into next-generation capabilities, from basic research to applied research into rapid prototyping? We’re so far behind on 5G, I think the telecom sector is an area to look at.

What’s coming next? How do we make sure that we can regain our competitive advantage? I think nuclear energy is another area where next-generation could give us another
tremendous advantage.

So I think really looking further down the line. The immediate problem is chips, but I think we have other key sectors that have big implications for security that we should focus on longer term, as well.

Senator Kelly: We’ve got to figure out how to get to the point where, as the industry shifts to a 3-nanometer chip, a 1-nanometer chip, how do we have that capability here? What do we have to do today to build that capacity, to have the educated workforce available, to graduate the number of electrical engineers, software designers, to be able to meet the challenge of not only getting back to par with other nations on this, because we are lagging behind, but to getting ahead and being the first one to roll out a 3- and 1-nanometer chip? It’s going to take some time, it’s going to take an investment, and we’ve got to have the commitment as a nation to do this.

Thank you.

Senator Inhofe. As Ranking Member and representing also the Chairman, I’ve got to say this is one of the best hearings we’ve had. I really mean it. You offered two different perspectives on several things. Of course, General McMaster, you covered areas we haven’t covered before, and you’ve said some things that weren’t easy to say, and I want you to know that I appreciate it very much.
We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:15 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]