

ICON WEEKLY REPORT
FROM THE ICBM EAR- PETER HUESSY PRESIDENT OF
GEOSTRATEGIC ANALYSIS
WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2020

This Ear this week details the CR prospects; the reform push by candidates for the position of House appropriations Committee chair; the multiple new China threat analyses coming out of the Pentagon and from Admiral Richard; Brad Roberts of LLNL explores the nuclear-conventional integration issue; Global Strike Command initiating greater focus on Russia and China; Joe Bosco assesses the administration's growing success in the Middle East; plus a calendar of events for the week; and finally, *a NEW award for ICON members if they successfully choose the new title a new nuclear weekly BLOG Dr. Huessy will be writing for The National Interest.*

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Future wars will be won by fighting at machine-speed. JADC2 will win by massing all-Service fires at machine-speeds on fleeting Chinese targets, while China continues to target one-by-one at human-speed. Airmen must be ‘digitally-literate’ to be promoted in the future. USAF VCSAF Gen. Seve Wilson, (AFA Conf., Sept. 16, 2020):

ALERT: Senator Hoeven of the SAC and Senator Cramer of the SASC both speaking LIVE on the 22nd of September. Want to join the conversation? Contact phuessy@afa.org for an invitation.

**WHAT CONGRESS IS UP TO? PROSPECTS FOR A CR
BUDGET DEAL**

Congressional leaders on Friday were struggling to reach a deal to keep the government open through the November election, clashing on when the stopgap spending bill should expire, and which funding and policy exceptions should be included.

Republicans have pushed for a Dec. 18 end date for the stopgap, which would tee up a spending standoff during a lame-duck session of Congress, possibly in the middle of a presidential transition. Democrats have wanted to extend government funding until Feb. 26 — a more advantageous end date if they seize control of both chambers this fall.

House leaders have said they want to vote next week on the continuing resolution, despite a lack of agreement on major issues. The measure would drag current government funding levels past Sept. 30 and buy more time for negotiations on a slate of fiscal 2021 spending bills.

Democrats are fighting for a contentious provision that would extend the Census Bureau's Dec. 31 deadline to turn over apportionment data used to divvy up House seats to the president — potentially punting the final handling of census data to Democratic nominee Joe Biden if he's elected this November. They've argued that it would ensure an accurate 2020 census, while noting that Senate Republicans like [Lisa Murkowski](#) (R-Alaska) and [Dan Sullivan](#) (R-Alaska) have already endorsed legislation to this effect.

Democrats have also pushed for \$3.6 billion in election security grants. Republicans want an anomaly requested by the White House, which Democrats oppose, that would ensure farmer bailout payments can keep flowing through the Commodity Credit Corporation, which otherwise would soon run into its \$30 billion borrowing limit.

Despite the discord with less than two weeks until a federal funding lapse, lawmakers and White House officials have signaled that a catastrophic government shutdown — which would throw the country into further turmoil during the pandemic just before the presidential election — isn't a concern.

Senate Appropriations Chair [Richard Shelby](#) (R-Ala.) said Thursday that the December date is “non-negotiable.”

“The cleaner it is, the quicker it will be,” he said of provisions that could be tacked onto the continuing resolution.

Even if the stopgap lasts until December, lawmakers could still punt the government funding deadline into early next year if there's little appetite for bipartisan negotiations on a massive appropriations package in the weeks after the election.

“If it ends in December, then it could go either way,” said Rep. [Debbie Wasserman Schultz](#) (D-Fla.), the chair of the subcommittee that oversees military construction funding, on Thursday.

“We could negotiate in earnest and finish before we adjourn for the year,” she said. “I think a lot of it is dependent on the outcome of the presidential election ... There are a lot of balls in the air that are being juggled right now, a lot of uncertainty. “

If a “blue wave” materializes this fall and Congress punts appropriations action into early next year, Democrats might have the opportunity to pack annual spending bills with their priorities and divvy up overall government funding totals with little interference from Republicans. They

could also seek to revive an earmark-like system that would allow members to secure cash for some pet projects at home, while instituting new rules to boost transparency.

But Democrats would still be constrained by a two-year budget deal struck last summer that set overall funding limits for fiscal 2021. That budget accord only provided a \$2.5 billion boost for the military and a \$2.5 billion increase for nondefense programs over fiscal 2020 levels, capping the totals at \$740.5 billion and \$634.5 billion, respectively.

The short-term spending patch — which is traditional in an election year — comes after House Democrats finalized almost all of their annual spending bills, ultimately passing two packages that would have taken care of most government funding in fiscal 2021. But the Senate never started its appropriations process, with Democrats and Republicans mired in disagreements over whether to tack on coronavirus aid, police reform measures and more.

Democrats and Republicans remain far apart on a broad swath of spending issues, meaning it would be a huge lift for the House and Senate to compromise on a dozen appropriations bills to boost agency budgets before the holidays.

The continuing resolution, if it lasts through early next year, is once again expected to block a cost-of-living adjustment that could have given members a pay boost next year. The pay bump has long been a priority for House Majority Leader [Steny Hoyer](#) (D-Md.) after nearly a decade of salary stagnation, which he has argued hurts less wealthy members.

Despite an already-booming Atlantic hurricane season and catastrophic wildfires blanketing the West Coast, lawmakers aren't planning to combine a stopgap with a separate disaster relief package.

Such a move could ramp up the already dramatic task of avoiding a government shutdown or draw the ire of President Donald Trump, who has previously inflated the amount of disaster relief cash flowing to Puerto Rico and blamed California wildfires on the failure of state officials to clear away leaves, rather than climate change.

September 17, 2020, SASC [held a hearing](#) on the National Nuclear Security Administration's budget with Administrator Lisa Gordon-Hagerty, Pentagon acquisition chief Ellen Lord and U.S. Strategic Command chief Adm. Charles Richard

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR CANDIDATES PUSHING REFORM

Rep. [Rosa DeLauro](#) (D-Conn.) pitched a plan to the Democratic caucus earlier this week [for reforming the annual appropriations process](#) as her campaign for the gavel of the House Appropriations Committee intensifies.

What would the plan do? DeLauro's proposal largely focuses on making the process of writing annual spending bills more transparent and inclusive, while educating new members about how

the process works and holding retreats for appropriators to hear from experts on a variety of issues.

The Connecticut Democrat, who chairs the powerful Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee, wants to beef up caucus input during the appropriations process. She also wants to ensure that the bills do more to help “underrepresented communities,” while tackling racial and gender inequities.

DeLauro said she wants to bolster oversight of taxpayer dollars and help members better understand the process for crafting emergency spending bills, like disaster relief legislation.

Key context: DeLauro, a long-time ally of House Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#) and a champion of the public health community, is competing against Reps. [Marcy Kaptur](#) (D-Ohio) and [Debbie Wasserman Schultz](#) (D-Fla.) to succeed Chair [Nita Lowey](#) (D-N.Y.) when she retires later this year.

Kaptur, the head of the Energy-Water spending panel, is the most senior person on the committee. Wasserman Schultz, who chairs the Military Construction-VA Subcommittee, has been unexpectedly aggressive in her bid for the seat, pushing for generational diversity within the leadership ranks.

All three candidates [have been campaigning more openly](#) after more than a year of behind-the-scenes networking.

What’s next: The race won’t really get underway until after the November election, when Wasserman Schultz, Kaptur and DeLauro must win over the Steering and Policy panel that influences leadership selections. Democrats are banking on [retaining control of the House](#).

In a closed-door vote, that group will choose who to recommend as the spending committee’s top Democrat. But lawmakers can still request a vote from the full caucus, even if the Steering and Policy panel endorses another member.

Pentagon Report on China’s Military Build-Up

“Major Surprises” in DoD’s 2020 [China Report to Congress](#). (Sept. 1, 2020), (~200-pages). [“Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China”]

[McAleese-personal conclusions:](#) [[See specific DoD Report-text below:](#)]

1. Chinese Communist Party (CCP) President Xi intends to dominate the United States, both in economic-might & military-might, by ~2049. “Military-might-makes-right”, also directly-fuels critical China economic growth, through coercion of INDOPACOM neighbors & US Allies. The CCP believes that nothing can stop China’s manifest-destiny, of eventual global-domination.

2. China is waging a “whole-of-country” attack against the United States, through its “Military-Civil-Fusion” Initiative. China believes that its entire Economy, must be used for both “Competition-&-War”. China’s Military is the Economy. China’s Economy is the Military. They

are one-&-the-same. An economic competitor is an enemy of China. A military competitor is an enemy of China. China will continue its massive-theft of targeted US IP, until there is a credible-deterrent, or a painful US counter-reaction. Use of Chinese social-media “apps”, allows China to collect the private-personal-data of hundreds-of-millions of Americans, for future exploitation & coercion.

3. China will use whatever means necessary, to buy-or-steal those critical disruptive-technologies, that generate both economic-wealth & military-power. China realizes that “data is the new gold”. China plans to build the dominant global-digital-infrastructure. China then plans to harvest all of the private-sensitive-data of companies, governments, and citizens, that use China’s global-digital-networks. China plans to become all-knowing, through its global-surveillance-state. [Importantly, China clearly-fears the US Navy, particularly SSN nuclear-powered attack submarines]

4. China will do everything possible to hide its true intentions, and plans for economic, technological-superiority, and military-might, until it is too late for the US to stop China.

5. China is likely to become even more secretive, concealing its intentions, following the bruising-tariffs by the US, that directly slowed China’s critical 2019 GDP growth. However, it is increasingly likely that US Allies will recognize China’s true character, following China’s original-concealment of COVID-19 pandemic.

6. For China, the current international-order that fueled China’s economic rise, is merely a means-to-an-end, that must ultimately be destroyed, to enable China’s true unfettered economic development.

7. China blames the United States for slowing its manifest-destiny of world-domination. China believes that the US is “in-decline”. China is co-opting international organizations, to create a “multi-polar-system”, to generate “veto-power” over the United States, and to accept China’s revisionist-narrative. China characterizes itself as a struggling, “developing-nation”, until at least ~2035.

8. China conducts pervasive propaganda/information operations, paying/coercing/co-opting US public figures & institutions, to drown-out the growing-threat from the CCP.

9. All of China’s PLA armed forces are under the direct command of the CCP Central Military Commission, chaired by President Xi.

10. China’s “Active-Defense” Strategy openly-authorizes preemptive-attacks, against any “enemy preparing to attack”. China also advocates for attacking-first, if that will lessen the duration, or magnitude, of an expected-conflict. China’s Active-Defense Strategy also emphasizes asymmetric-attacks, to blunt or delay traditional US power-projection of conventional forces.

11. China’s short-term military-objective is to “deter/delay/deny” US military power-projection, in any potential Chinese blockade or invasion of Taiwan, (or its smaller islands). China’s

promise of Taiwan “one-country/two-systems” no longer appears credible, given recent China-seizure of Hong Kong law enforcement, (breaching that “one-country/two-systems” agreement).

12. China will defy international law, and take provocative military action, to seize control of minerals & oil to fuel its Economy. China’s Achilles-heel is its need to import ~10M barrels of oil per day, to fuel ~80% of its industrial energy needs. China’s “One-Belt-One-Road” Initiative is targeted at countries that: (a) have valuable mineral/oil rights; (b) allow “Debt-trap-diplomacy”, to veto or silence disgruntled-neighbors; or (c) are at key logistical choke-points or “over-watch” locations.

13. China appears largely ambivalent on resolving the North Korea impasse, generally honoring UN sanctions; but is primarily focused on avoiding the collapse of Kim Jong-un’s Regime, that would then flood China with fleeing-refugees.

14. China appears to be spending at least ~\$200B/year on defense, (after excluded categories are re-added). [China claims its 2019 defense budget is only ~\$174B, (~25% of DoD’s \$705B 2021 Budget Request)] China’s defense budget has been growing at ~+8% inflation-adjusted-rate per year on average. **China is clearly avoiding large RDT&E costs, through its pervasive theft of US defense technology & weapon system designs, through cyber-attacks, espionage, and “adversarial-capital” activities. Separately, there is still a massive discrepancy, between China’s claimed ~\$174B/year of total defense spending, and the sheer number of new ships, IRBMs, ICBMs, submarines, aircraft carriers, and now hypersonic weapons, that China is fielding each year.**

15. DoD openly-warns that China is already ahead of US Forces in sheer quantities of: (a) ships; (b) Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles; and (c) Integrated Air Defense Systems.

16. PLAN Navy is clearly China’s crown-jewel, with ~350 ships, including: (a) four SSBN, (could increase to ~8 SSBNs by ~2030); (b) six SSN nuclear-powered attack submarines; (c) 50 diesel-powered attack submarines; (d) ~23 DDG destroyers; (e) ~42 corvettes/frigates; (f) ~two LHAs; (g) ~8 LPDs; and (h) 1st domestically-built aircraft carrier (Shandong).

17. PLA Rocket Force is China’s other crown-jewel, with: (a) ~1,250 IRBMs (including both DF-21 & DF-26 missiles, attempting to target Guam & aircraft carriers); (b) ~100 current nuclear-tipped ICBMs, (but growing to ~200 ICBMs in ~five-years), (including new MIRV-capable DF-41); and (c) hypersonic DF-17 glide-vehicle.

18. PLA Strategic Support Force contains all of PLA’s: (a) counter-space capabilities, (direct-ascent interceptors; ground-based lasers; jammers; on-orbit ramming spacecraft); and (b) EW/cyber-security/Information Operations.

19. PLA Air Force & PLAN Aviation have ~2,000 combat aircraft, with the goal of achieving a majority of fourth-generation fighters “over-next-several-years”. Production of claimed fifth-generation J-20 fighter is still in its infancy, (with smaller J-31 aircraft being developed for export, plus future Chinese aircraft carriers). DoD warns that PLAAF is closing traditional

combat-overmatch quickly. Lastly, DoD warns that PLAAF integrated-air-defenses, (of Russian S-300 & soon-to-be S-400), are highly lethal.

20. China has the world's largest standing PLA Army, (with ~915K Active Soldiers), but appears to be shifting resourcing to PLAN Navy; PLARF Rocket Force, (including ICBMs); and PLA Strategic Support Force (counter-space).

21. PLA's Achilles-heel appears to be a combination of: (a) poor Battle Management and C4ISR; (b) weak joint warfighting doctrine; (c) limited Readiness to fight; and (d) the "Five Incapables", (weakness of Officer Corps to understand Commander's Intent, and then fight in a decentralized-manner).

22. While China has a credible Air Defense Network, it is not yet truly clear whether China has a significant missile defense capability, (other than potential terminal/point defense).

DETAILED ASSESSMENT ON CHINA

1. Chinese Communist Party (CCP) President Xi intends to dominate the United States, both in economic-might & military-might, by ~2049. "Military-might-makes-right", also directly-fuels critical China economic growth, through coercion of INDOPACOM neighbors & US Allies. The CCP believes that nothing can stop China's manifest-destiny, of eventual global-domination.

- "PLA's objective is to become a 'world-class' military by the end of 2049...It is likely that Beijing will seek to develop a military...that is equal to—or in some cases superior to—the U.S. military..."
- "Given the far-reaching ambitions the CCP has for a rejuvenated China, it is unlikely that the Party would aim for an end-state in which China would remain in a position of military inferiority vis-à-vis the United States...For China to...willingly accept a permanent condition of military inferiority, would seem anathema to the fundamental purpose of becoming a 'great modern socialist country.'"
- "The CCP desires the PLA to become a practical instrument of its statecraft...particularly...to revise aspects of the international order."
- "The PRC's foreign policy seeks to revise aspects of the international order, on the Party's terms...forging an external environment conducive to China's 'national rejuvenation'."
- "In 2019, China intensified its efforts to advance its overall development, including steady economic growth, strengthening its armed forces, and taking a more active role in global affairs."

- **“As Party leaders view a divided China, as a weak China, they argue that ‘full reunification’—unification with Taiwan on Beijing’s terms’, and completing Hong Kong and Macau’s integration by the end of 2049—is a fundamental condition of national rejuvenation.”**
- **“The CCP’s leaders claim that their strategy to achieve national rejuvenation, requires the PRC to ‘lead the reform of the global governance system’, as...an intolerable constraint on their strategic ends...To the CCP, revisions are necessary to accommodate China’s development...”**
- **“For China’s strategy in the ‘New Era,’ [President] Xi laid out...a timeline linked to two symbolically-important ‘centenary milestones’ reached in 2021 (the CCP’s centenary) and 2049 (the PRC’s centenary). To bridge the lengthy gap between the two anniversaries, Xi added interim objectives for 2035, and laid out a broad two-stage modernization plan to reach 2049.”**
- **“In the first stage from 2021 to 2035...China will likely continue to prioritize economic development as ‘the central task,’...By 2035, China will also seek to increase its economic and technological strength to become a ‘global leader in innovation’ and to ‘basically’ complete its military modernization.”**

2. China is waging a “whole-of-country” attack against the United States, through its “Military-Civil-Fusion” Initiative. China believes that its entire Economy, must be used for both “Competition-&War”. China’s Military is the Economy. China’s Economy is the Military. They are one-&-the-same. An economic competitor is an enemy of China. A military competitor is an enemy of China. China will continue its massive theft of targeted US IP, until there is a credible-deterrent, or a painful US counter-reaction. Use of Chinese social-media “apps”, allows China to collect the private-personal-data of hundreds-of-millions of Americans, for future exploitation & coercion.

- **“The PRC pursues its Military-Civil Fusion (MCF) Development Strategy as a nationwide endeavor...The Party’s leaders view MCF as a critical element of their strategy for the PRC to become a ‘great modern socialist country’, which includes becoming a world leader in science and technology (S&T) and developing a ‘world-class’ military.”**
- **“MCF [Military-Civil Fusion] encompasses...fusing...China’s defense industrial base, and its civilian technology and industrial base...integrating...military and civilian sectors...to include all relevant aspects of its society and economy for use in competition and war.”**
- **“The Party conceives of China’s...‘basic economic system’ in which public ownership is dominant...comprised of China’s public ownership economy and the multi-ownership economy...The CCP sets more specific development goals in its Five-Year Plans (FYPs). The**

PRC is currently executing the 13th FYP, and the CCP is formulating the 14th FYP that will cover 2021-2025.”

- “Made in China 2025: First announced by the PRC in May 2015...setting higher targets for domestic manufacturing in...robotics, power equipment, and next-generation information technology by 2020 and 2025...awarding subsidies...while increasing pressure on foreign firms to transfer technology.”
- “The PRC has mobilized vast resources...in strategic S&T fields...The PRC’s state investment funds...have marshalled hundreds of billions of dollars in capital...China’s private sector, led by Internet companies Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent, and telecommunications equipment manufacturers Huawei and Zhongxing Telecommunications Company Ltd. (ZTE), is driving...facial recognition and 5G...In 2017, China designated Alibaba, Baidu, iFlytek, and Tencent as the country’s official ‘AI Champions,’ with SenseTime joining in 2018...In 2019, China added ten new companies, including Huawei, Hikvision, Megvii, and Yitu, to the champions list...AI and facial recognition firms like SenseTime, Megvii, and Deepglint, reportedly received hundreds of millions of dollars in investments in 2017. **China is the world’s largest market for video surveillance technologies. The 2017 National Intelligence Law requires PRC companies, such as Huawei and ZTE, to support, aid, and cooperate in China’s national intelligence work wherever they operate.**”
- “The PRC is pursuing...hypersonic weapons, electromagnetic railguns, directed energy weapons, and counter-space capabilities. The country’s effort to build national ‘corporate champions’, that achieve rapid market dominance...directly complements the PLA’s modernization efforts...Some emerging technologies include: > AI and Advanced Robotics: enhanced data exploitation, decision support, manufacturing, unmanned systems, and command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR). > Semiconductors and Advanced Computing...> Quantum Technologies: secure global communications, enhanced computing and decryption capabilities, undersea target detection, and enhanced submarine navigation. > Biotechnology...advanced human-machine teaming. > Hypersonic and Directed Energy Weapons: global strike and defeat of missile defense systems, antisatellite (ASAT)/missile/unmanned aircraft system capabilities. > Advanced Materials and Alternative Energy...”
- “In November 2019, a U.S. Federal grand jury indicted a PRC national who had worked as an imaging scientist for Monsanto...on...economic espionage...In December 2018, the U.S. Department of Justice indicted two PRC nationals associated with a hacking group operating in China, known as Advanced Persistent Threat 10 (APT10)...resulting in the theft of hundreds of gigabytes of sensitive data involving aviation, space and satellite technology, manufacturing technology, pharmaceutical technology, oil and gas exploration...communications technology, computer processor technology...In August 2017, a U.S. cybersecurity firm identified a separate hacking group in China, referred to as APT41, which has been operating since 2012...The hackers repeatedly targeted...machine learning,

autonomous vehicles, medical imaging, semiconductors, processors, and enterprise cloud computing software.”

3. China will use whatever means necessary, to buy-or-steal those critical disruptive-technologies, that generate both economic-wealth & military-power. China realizes that data is “the new gold”. China plans to build the dominant global-digital-infrastructure. China then plans to harvest all of the private-sensitive-data of companies, governments, and citizens, that use China’s global-digital-networks. China plans to become all-knowing, through its global-surveillance-state. [Importantly, China clearly-fears the US Navy, particularly SSN nuclear-powered attack submarines]

- “China seeks to become a leader in key technologies...AI, autonomous systems, advanced computing, quantum information sciences, biotechnology...China has invested significant resources to...subsidize companies involved in strategic S&T fields...China continues to undermine the integrity of the U.S. science and technology research enterprise through...hidden diversions of research...and intellectual property.”
 - “The PRC leverages foreign investments, commercial joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions, and state-sponsored industrial...espionage, and the manipulation of export controls for the illicit diversion of dual-use technologies...In 2019, the PRC’s efforts included efforts to acquire dynamic random access memory, aviation, and anti-submarine warfare technologies.”
 - “Digital Silk Road...seeks to build China-centric digital infrastructure, export industrial overcapacity, facilitate expansion of Chinese technology corporations, and access large repositories of data...China is investing in...next-generation cellular networks—such as fifth-generation (5G) networks—fiber optic cables, undersea cables, and data centers...satellite navigation systems, artificial intelligence (AI), and quantum computing...”
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4. China will do everything possible to hide its true intentions, and plans for economic, technological-superiority, and military-might, until it is too late for the US to stop China. To China, the ends-justify-the-means.

- “CCP leaders recognized China’s growing strength could flare tensions with others, without careful management. Deng Xiaoping’s reputed approach to this dilemma...was for China to, ‘hide our capacities and bide our time’ ...The Party’s leaders have also offered a view of competition based on relative levels of economic, technological, and military power.”
- “PLA writings divide military operations into two categories: war and non-war. The PLA’s concept of non-war military activities (NWMA) is...expansive...ranging from...suppressing domestic unrest, to maritime rights protection...And may include the threat of violence, or the use of violence, from low levels to levels approaching war.”

5. China is likely to become even more secretive, concealing its intentions, following the bruising-tariffs by the US, that directly slowed China's critical 2019 GDP growth. However, it is increasingly likely that US Allies will recognize China's true character, following China's original-concealment of COVID-19 pandemic.

- “In 2019...U.S.-China trade tensions exacerbated a slowdown in China's economy...In the first three quarters of 2019, China posted an official gross domestic product growth rate of 6.2 percent, marking the slowest rate of growth in nearly 30 years.”

6. For China, the current international-order that fueled China's economic rise, is merely a means-to-an-end, that must ultimately be destroyed, to enable China's true unfettered economic development.

- “The Party views a shift towards a ‘multi-polar’ system as vital for China to advance its strategy. China's leaders have eagerly embraced narratives of the West's relative decline and the inevitability of China's rise, as largely consistent with their strategy...Despite China benefiting enormously from the general peace and prosperity of the current international system, the Party views core aspects of the system as incompatible with its strategy...”
- “China desires to continue benefiting from the general peace and prosperity it has enjoyed for decades under the current international system, in order to advance its overall development towards ‘national rejuvenation’. Simultaneously, China's national ambitions...induce it to adopt more assertive and revisionist policies which threaten the peace...”

7. China blames the United States for slowing its manifest-destiny of world-domination. China believes that the US is “in-decline”. China is co-opting international organizations, to create a “multi-polar-system”, to generate “veto-power” over the United States, and to accept China's revisionist-narrative. China characterizes itself as a struggling, “developing-nation”, until at least ~2035.

- “Beijing has also expressed concerns over...mounting sense of insecurity towards the United States. The PRC's 2019 defense white paper criticized the United States as the ‘principal instigator’ of global instability...The PRC's leadership...views the United States as more willing to confront Beijing...CCP leaders' perceptions of...an increasingly confrontational United States, is consistent with the Party's long-held opinion...that the United States seeks to prevent China's rejuvenation.”
- “China differentiates its goals...among...major powers, peripheral nations, developing nations, and international organizations...China contends that a new framework for relations is necessary...in essence a multipolar system. With peripheral nations, China seeks...[to] create a more favorable environment along its maritime and land borders...For developing

countries, China emphasizes solidarity and...‘actively’ carrying out multilateral diplomatic work...such as the World Health Organization (WHO)...”

- “In 2019, President Xi Jinping made seven foreign trips, [including to]...the G20 Summit. In June 2019 alone, President Xi traveled to Russia, Central Asia, North Korea, and Japan. President Xi also hosted a number of large-scale diplomatic events in China, including the second ‘Belt and Road’ International Cooperation Summit Forum.”
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8. China conducts pervasive propaganda/information operations, paying/coercing/co-opting US public figures & institutions, to drown-out the growing-threat from the CCP.

- “The PRC conducts influence operations...by targeting cultural institutions, media organizations, business, academic, and policy communities in the United States...and international institutions...to condition domestic, foreign, and multilateral political establishments and public opinion, to accept Beijing’s narratives.”
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9. All of China’s PLA armed forces are under the direct command of the CCP Central Military Commission, chaired by President Xi.

- “The PLA is the principal armed wing of the CCP...The CCP Central Military Commission (CMC), currently chaired by Xi Jinping, is the highest military decision-making body in China. As a party-army, the PLA is a political actor...Party leaders and official propaganda have increasingly emphasized the principles of the Party’s absolute control over the PLA, and the PLA’s loyalty to the Party...”
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10. China’s “Active-Defense” Strategy openly-authorizes preemptive-attacks, against any “enemy preparing to attack”. China also advocates for attacking-first, if that will lessen the duration, or magnitude, of an expected-conflict. China’s Active-Defense Strategy also emphasizes asymmetric-attacks, to blunt or delay traditional US power-projection of conventional forces.

- “China’s military strategy is based on ‘active defense’...Active defense encompasses offensive and preemptive aspects...China’s 2019 defense white paper reaffirmed active defense as the basis for its military strategy. Minister of National Defense Gen Wei Fenghe reiterated this principle of active defense in his speech at the Ninth Beijing Xiangshan Forum in 2019...”
- “The PRC’s 2019 defense white paper describes this principle as, ‘We will not attack unless we are attacked, but we will surely counterattack if attacked.’ Active defense may entail...preemptively striking an adversary preparing to attack...This aspect emphasizes...avoiding enemy strengths, and concentrating on building asymmetric advantages against enemy weaknesses...”

· “The ‘dialectical unity of restraining war and winning war’. This tenet seeks to resolve the dilemma that using too little force may protract a war, instead of stopping [a war]...If war is unavoidable, however, this aspect calls for restraining war by taking the ‘opening move’ and ‘using war, to stop war.’”

· “The PRC’s stated defense policy is to ‘resolutely safeguard’ its sovereignty...according to its 2019 defense white paper...To oppose and contain ‘Taiwan independence’...to safeguard China’s maritime rights and interests...to safeguard China’s security interests in outer space, electromagnetic space and cyberspace...and to support the sustainable development of the country.”

11. China’s short-term military-objective is to “deter/delay/deny” US military power-projection, in any potential Chinese blockade or invasion of Taiwan, (or its smaller islands). China’s promise of Taiwan “one-country/two-systems” no longer appears credible, given recent China-seizure of Hong Kong law enforcement, (breaching that “one-country/two-systems” agreement).

· “Relations between the PRC and Taiwan remained at an impasse through 2019. Since the 2016 election of Tsai Ing-wen as Taiwan’s president, China halted formal communication with Taiwan...The PLA also is likely preparing for a contingency to unify Taiwan with the mainland by force, while simultaneously deterring, delaying, or denying any third-party intervention on Taiwan’s behalf...”

· “In January 2019, President Xi Jinping publicly reiterated China’s long-standing refusal to renounce the use of force to resolve the Taiwan issue. In the same speech, Xi also reaffirmed China’s long-standing position for peaceful unification under the principle of ‘one country, two systems.’”

· “The PLA could initiate the military options...[1] Air and Maritime Blockade...Large-scale missile strikes and possible seizures of Taiwan’s offshore islands would accompany a Joint Blockade...China will also likely complement its air and maritime blockade operations with concurrent electronic warfare (EW), network attacks, and information operations (IO)...[2] Limited Force or Coercive Options...Such a campaign could include computer network or limited kinetic attacks against Taiwan’s political, military, and economic infrastructure...Similarly, PLA special operations forces (SOF) could infiltrate Taiwan and conduct attacks against infrastructure or leadership targets; [3] Air and Missile Campaign. China could use missile attacks and precision air strikes against air defense systems, including air bases, radar sites, missiles, space assets, and communications facilities...[4] Invasion of Taiwan...The objective would be to break through...shore defenses, establish and build a beachhead...and...seize and occupy key targets or the entire island...These stresses, combined with China’s combat force attrition, and the complexity of urban warfare...make an amphibious invasion of Taiwan a significant political and military risk...**China could launch an invasion of small Taiwan-occupied islands in the South China Sea such as Pratas or Itu Aba. A PLA invasion of a medium-sized, better-defended island such as Matsu or**

Jinmen is within China's capabilities. Such an invasion would demonstrate military capability, political resolve, and achieve tangible territorial gain, while simultaneously showing some measure of restraint. However, this kind of operation involves significant...political risk, because it could galvanize pro-independence sentiment on Taiwan, and generate international opposition.”

· “Taiwan’s military spending remains at approximately two percent of its gross domestic product. In August 2019, Taiwan said it would increase the island’s defense budget by 5.2 percent to NT \$358 billion (\$11.6 billion). Meanwhile, China’s official defense budget continues to grow, and for 2019, is roughly 15 times that of Taiwan, with much of it focused on developing the capability to unify Taiwan with the PRC by force.”

12. China will defy international law, and take provocative military action, to seize control of minerals & oil to fuel its Economy. China’s Achilles-heel is its need to import ~10M barrels of oil per day, to fuel ~80% of its industrial energy needs. China’s “One-Belt-One-Road” Initiative is targeted at countries that: (a) have valuable mineral/oil rights; (b) allow “Debt-trap-diplomacy”, to veto or silence disgruntled-neighbors; or (c) are at key logistical choke-points or “over-watch” locations.

· “In 2019, China imported approximately 10.1 million barrels per day of crude oil, which met approximately 77 percent of its needs. Also in 2019, China met 43 percent of its natural gas demand with imports...Most of China’s oil and natural gas imports come primarily from the Persian Gulf, Africa, Russia, and Central Asia...In 2019, approximately 77 percent of China’s oil imports, and 10 percent of its natural gas imports, transited the South China Sea and Strait of Malacca.”

· “China and Japan have overlapping claims to both the continental shelves and the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) in the East China Sea...Japan maintains that an equidistant line from each country involved should separate the EEZs, while China claims an extended continental shelf beyond the equidistant line to the Okinawa Trench.”

· “The South China Sea plays an important role...because...[of]...flow of oil and commerce through South China Sea shipping lanes...China claims sovereignty over the Spratly and Paracel Island groups...within its ambiguous self-proclaimed ‘nine-dash line’ – claims disputed...by Brunei, the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan...In 2016, a tribunal established pursuant to the Law of the Sea Convention, ruled that any PRC claim to ‘historic rights’...within the area depicted as the ‘nine-dash line’, could not exceed its maritime rights...set out in the Law of the Sea Convention. China did not participate in the arbitration, and PRC officials publicly voiced opposition to the ruling. By the terms of the Convention, the ruling is final and binding on China and the Philippines.”

· “In 2019, China did not resume South China Sea land reclamation or major military infrastructure construction at its seven Spratly Islands outposts. China’s outposts...include

advanced weapon systems; however, no large-scale air presence has been yet observed in the Spratly Islands. In 2019, China deployed PLAN, CCG, and civilian ships in response to Vietnamese and Malaysian drilling operations within China's claimed 'nine-dash-line' and construction by the Philippines at Thitu Island."

· "In July 2016, an arbitral tribunal convened pursuant to provisions in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, ruled in a case brought by the Philippines, that China's claims to 'historic rights' in the South China Sea...depicted by the 'nine-dash line', could not exceed...relevant provisions of the Law of the Sea Convention...**China has deployed anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCMs) and long-range surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) to the Spratly Islands, and fighters and SAMs to the disputed Paracel Islands.**"

13. China appears largely ambivalent on resolving the North Korea impasse, generally honoring UN sanctions; but primarily focused on avoiding the collapse of Kim Jong-un's Regime, that would then flood China with fleeing-refugees.

· "China largely continues to enforce a number of the UN Security Council's resolution sanctions against North Korea, but Beijing regularly fails to act against illicit ship-to-ship transfers in China's territorial seas...In 2019, President Xi Jinping met twice with Kim Jong-un...China's focus on maintaining stability on the Korean Peninsula, involves preventing North Korea's collapse and military conflict on the Peninsula. Toward these ends, China continues to advocate for a dual-track approach towards North Korea, that embraces both dialogue and pressure, and that encourages the resumption of U.S.- North Korea talks."

14. China appears to be spending at least ~\$200B/year on defense, (after excluded categories are re-added). [China claims its 2019 defense budget is only ~\$174B, (~25% of DoD's \$705B 2021 Budget Request)] China's defense budget has been growing at ~+8% inflation-adjusted-rate per year on average. **China is clearly avoiding large RDT&E costs, through its pervasive theft of US defense technology & weapon system designs, through cyber-attacks, espionage, and "adversarial-capital" activities. Separately, there is still a massive discrepancy, between China's claimed ~\$174B/year of defense spending, and the sheer number of new ships, IRBMs, ICBMs, submarines, aircraft carriers, and now hypersonic weapons, that China is fielding each year.**

· "In early 2019, the PRC announced a 6.2-percent inflation-adjusted increase in its annual military budget to \$174 billion, which is approximately 1.3 percent of gross domestic product. This year's budget...sustains the PRC's position as the second-largest military spender in the world, after the United States. The PRC's defense budget has nearly doubled during the past 10 years...China's official military budget grew at an annual average of approximately 8 percent in inflation-adjusted terms...The PRC's published military budget omits several major categories of expenditures...In 2019, China's actual military-related spending could be more than \$200 billion..."

- “Economic forecasters project that China’s economic growth will slow during the next 10 years, falling from 6.1 percent in 2019, to 3 percent in 2030, which could slow future defense spending growth.”
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15. DoD warns that China is already ahead of US Forces in sheer quantities of: (a) ships; (b) Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles; and (c) Integrated Air Defense Systems.

- “China is already ahead of the United States in certain areas such as: [1] Shipbuilding: The PRC has the largest navy in the world, with an overall battle force of approximately 350 ships and submarines, including over 130 major surface combatants...[2] Land-based conventional ballistic and cruise missiles: The PRC has more than 1,250 ground-launched ballistic missiles (GLBMs) and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs) with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers...[3] Integrated air defense systems: The PRC has one of the world’s largest forces of advanced long-range surface-to-air systems—including Russian-built S-400s, S-300s...”
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16. PLAN Navy is clearly China’s crown-jewel, with ~350 ships, including: (a) four SSBN, (could increase to ~8 SSBNs by ~2030); (b) six SSN nuclear-powered attack submarines; (c) 50 diesel-powered attack submarines; (d) ~23 DDG destroyers; (e) ~42 corvettes/frigates; (f) ~two LHAs; (g) ~8 LPDs; and (h) 1st domestically-built aircraft carrier (Shandong).

- “The People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is the largest navy in the world with a battle force of approximately 350 platforms, including major surface combatants, submarines, ocean-going amphibious ships, mine warfare ships, aircraft carriers, and fleet auxiliaries...As of 2019, the PLAN is largely composed of modern multirole platforms, featuring advanced anti-ship, anti-air, and anti-submarine weapons and sensors.”

- “**Modernizing the PLAN’s submarine force remains a high priority for the PRC.** The PLAN currently operates four nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) with two additional hulls fitting out, six nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs), and 50 diesel-powered attack submarines (SSs). **The PLAN will likely maintain between 65 and 70 submarines through the 2020s...**China continues to increase its inventory of conventional submarines capable of firing advanced anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCMs). Since the mid-1990s, the PLAN has purchased 12 Russian-built Kilo class SS units, eight of which are capable of launching ASCMs. During these years, China’s shipyards have delivered 13 Song class SS units (Type 039) and 17 Yuan class diesel-electric air-independent powered attack submarine (SSP) (Type 039A/B). The PRC is expected to produce a total of 25 or more Yuan class submarines by 2025.”

- “Over the past 15 years, the PLAN has constructed twelve nuclear submarines – two Shang I class SSNs (Type 093), four Shang II class SSNs (Type 093A), and six Jin class SSBNs (Type 094)...Equipped with the CSS-N-14 (JL-2) submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), the PLAN’s four operational Jin class SSBNs represent the PRC’s first credible sea-based nuclear deterrent. Each Jin class SSBN can carry up to 12 JL-2

SLBMs...China's next-generation Type 096 SSBN, which will likely begin construction in the early-2020s, will reportedly carry a new type of SLBM. The PLAN...could have up to eight SSBNs by 2030.”

- “The PLAN remains engaged in a robust shipbuilding program for surface combatants, producing new guided-missile cruisers (CGs), guided-missile destroyers (DDGs) and corvettes (FFLs)...In December 2019, China launched the sixth Renhai class cruiser (Type 055)...The Renhai carry a large load out of weapons including ASCMs, surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), and anti-submarine weapons, along with likely LACMs, and anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs) when those become operational. By the end of 2019, the PRC had launched 23 Luyang III DDGs—including 10 lengthened Luyang III MODs...Both...have a 64-cell multipurpose vertical launch system...By the end of 2019, more than 42 Jiangdao class FFLs had entered service, out of an expected production run of at least 70 ships...”
- “China’s investment in LHAs signal its intent to continue to develop its expeditionary warfare capabilities. In 2019, China launched its first Yushen class LHA (Type 075) and a second Yushen class LHA is under construction, with additional hulls expected during the 2020s...The Yushen class can carry a large number of landing craft, troops, armored vehicles, and helicopters. In addition, the PLAN has seven large Yuzhao class amphibious transport docks (LPDs) (Type 071), with an eighth ship expected to commission in 2020...The Yushen and Yuzhao can each carry several of the new Yuyi class air-cushion medium landing craft and a variety of helicopters, as well as tanks, armored vehicles and PLAN marines...”
- “In December 2019, the PRC commissioned its first domestically built aircraft carrier, Shandong...The new carrier is a modified version of the Liaoning (Soviet Kuznetsov) design and likewise uses a ski-jump takeoff method for its aircraft. China continued work on its second domestically built aircraft carrier in 2019, which will be larger and fitted with a catapult launch system...The PRC’s second domestically built carrier is projected to be operational by 2024, with additional carriers to follow.”

17. PLA Rocket Force is China’s other crown-jewel, with: (a) ~1,250 IRBMs (including both DF-21 & DF-26 missiles, attempting to target Guam & aircraft carriers); (b) ~100 current nuclear-tipped ICBMs, (but growing to ~200 ICBMs in ~five-years), (including new MIRV-capable DF-41); and (c) hypersonic DF-17 glide-vehicle.

- “The PLA Rocket Force (PLARF) organizes, mans, trains, and equips the PRC’s strategic land-based nuclear and conventional missile forces...The PLARF, previously known as the PLA Second Artillery Force, was elevated to the status of a full service, alongside the PLAA, PLAN, and PLAAF...in late 2015.”
- “The PLARF continues to grow its inventories of DF-26 intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs)...against ground targets, as well as conventional strikes against naval targets.”

• “The PLARF’s conventional missile forces includes the CSS-6 (DF-15) short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) (range 725-850 km); the CSS-7 (DF-11) SRBM (600 km); the CSS-11 (DF-16) SRBM (more than 700 km); land-attack and anti-ship variants of the CSS-5 (DF-21) medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) (approximately 1,500 km); the DF-26 IRBM (approximately 4,000 km); and the CJ-10 (DH10) ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM) (approximately 1,500 km)...The DF-21D has a range exceeding 1,500 km, is fitted with a maneuverable reentry vehicle (MARV) warhead...”

• “China has placed a heavy emphasis on...hypersonic glide vehicles. In August 2018, China successfully tested the XINGKONG-2 (Starry Sky-2), which it publicly described as a hypersonic wave-rider vehicle. The PLARF also paraded the DF-17 missile for the first time as part of the PRC’s 70th anniversary parade in 2019.”

• “The number of [nuclear] warheads on land-based PRC ICBMs, capable of threatening the United States, is expected to grow to roughly 200 in the next five years. China’s fixed ICBM arsenal consists of 100 ICBMs, including the shorter range CSS-3 (DF-4), as well as the silo-based CSS-4 Mod 2 (DF-5A) and MIRV-equipped Mod 3 (DF-5B)...The solid-fueled, road-mobile CSS-10 class missiles complement this force. The CSS-10 Mod 2 (DF-31A), with a range in excess of 11,200 km, can reach most locations within the continental United States...Development of the CSS-X-20 (DF-41), a new MIRV-capable, road-mobile ICBM, continued in 2019, and the PRC paraded at least 16 road-mobile DF-41 launchers during the 2019 parade...”

18. PLA Strategic Support Force contains all of PLA’s: (a) counter-space capabilities, (direct-ascent interceptors; ground-based lasers; jammers; on-orbit ramming spacecraft); and (b) EW/cyber-security/Information Operations.

• “The CMC established the PLA Strategic Support Force (SSF) in 2016...to centralize the PLA’s strategic space, cyber, electronic, and psychological warfare...capabilities...The SSF oversees two deputy theater command-level departments: the Space Systems Department responsible for military space operations, and the Network Systems Department responsible for information operations (IO), which includes EW, cyber warfare, and psychological operations...The PRC continues to develop counter-space capabilities, including direct ascent, co-orbital, electronic warfare, and directed energy capabilities—that can contest or deny an adversary’s access to space domain...”

• “The PLA continues to acquire and develop a range of counter-space capabilities...including kinetic-kill missiles, ground-based lasers, and orbiting space robots, as well as expanding space surveillance capabilities...As of May 2018, the PRC’s reconnaissance...fleet consisted of more than 120 satellites...The PRC is developing electronic warfare capabilities such as satellite jammers; offensive cyber capabilities; and directed-energy weapons. Moreover, China has demonstrated sophisticated, potentially

damaging on-orbit behavior with space-based technologies. China has an operational ground-based Anti-Satellite (ASAT) missile intended to target low-Earth orbit satellites, and China probably intends to pursue additional ASAT weapons capable of destroying satellites up to geosynchronous Earth orbit.”

19. PLA Air Force & PLAN Aviation have ~2,000 combat aircraft, with the goal of achieving a majority of fourth-generation fighters “over-next-several-years”. Production of claimed fifth-generation J-20 fighter is still in its infancy, (with smaller J-31 aircraft being developed for export, plus future Chinese aircraft carriers). DoD warns that PLAAF is closing traditional combat-overmatch quickly. Lastly, DoD warns that PLAAF integrated-air-defenses, (of Russian S-300 & soon-to-be S-400), is highly lethal.

- “The People’s Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and PLAN Aviation together constitute the largest aviation forces in the region, and the third largest in the world, with over 2,500 total aircraft...of which approximately 2,000 are combat aircraft (including fighters, strategic bombers, tactical bombers, multi-mission tactical, and attack aircraft)...The PLAAF is rapidly catching up to Western air forces. This trend is gradually eroding longstanding...U.S. military technical advantages vis-à-vis the PRC in the air domain.”
- “The PLAAF and PLAN Aviation continue to field greater numbers of fourth-generation aircraft (now more than 800 of 1,500 total operational fighters...) and probably will become a majority fourth-generation force within the next several years. **For fifth-generation fighters, the PLAAF operationally-fielded limited numbers of its new J-20**, while development continues on the smaller FC-31/J-31 for export, or as a future naval fighter for the PLAN’s next class of aircraft carriers...**Finally, the PLAAF is preparing upgrades for the J-20, which may include increasing the number of AAMs the fighter can carry in its low-observable configuration, installing thrust-vectoring engine nozzles, and adding super-cruise capability by installing higher-thrust indigenous WS-15 engines.”**
- “China’s bomber force is composed of H-6 Badger variants, which are domestically-produced versions of the Soviet Tupolev Tu-16 (Badger) bomber...In recent years, China has fielded greater numbers of the H-6K...The H-6K can carry six LACMs, giving the PLA a long-range standoff precision-strike capability that can range Guam...More recently, PLAN Aviation has begun operating the H-6J...This aircraft carries six supersonic long-range YJ-12 ASCMs and can attack warships out to the Second Island Chain...During the PRC’s 70th anniversary parade in 2019, the PLAAF publicly revealed the H-6N...optimized for long-range strikes...The H-6N’s air-to-air refueling capability also provides it greater reach over other H-6 variants that are not refuelable in-air.”
- **“In addition, the PLAAF is seeking to extend its power-projection capability with the development of a new stealth strategic bomber. PLAAF leaders publicly announced the program in 2016, however commentators speculate that it may take more than a decade to develop this type of advanced bomber.”**

- “The PLAAF possesses one of the largest forces of advanced long-range SAM systems in the world, composed of Russian-sourced SA-20 (S-300) battalions and domestically-produced CSA-9 (HQ-9) battalions...The PRC has contracted with Russia to acquire the SA-21 (S-400) SAM system, and is developing the CSA-21 (HQ9B) as follow-ons to its SA-20s and CSA-9s...”
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20. China has the world’s largest standing-army, (with ~915K Active Soldiers), but appears to be shifting resourcing to PLAN Navy; PLARF Rocket Force, (including ICBMs); and PLA Strategic Support Force (Space).

- “The People’s Liberation Army (PLAA) is the world’s largest standing ground force, with approximately 915,000 active-duty personnel in combat units...The PLAA has now standardized its 13 group armies...which were reduced in number from 18 in 2017...In total, these 78 combined-arms brigades serve as the PLAA’s primary maneuver force...The PLAA delineates its combined-arms brigades into three types: heavy (tracked armored vehicles), medium (wheeled armored vehicles), and light (high-mobility, mountain, air assault and motorized)...Each group army controls six additional brigades...an artillery brigade, an air defense brigade, an army aviation (or air assault) brigade, a special operations forces (SOF) brigade, an engineer and chemical defense brigade, and a sustainment brigade.”
 - “The PLAA also continues to bolster its armor capabilities in heavy combined-arms brigades with the initial fielding of the Type-15 light main battle tank...with the firepower of its 105mm main gun...The PLAA also fielded the Z-20 medium lift helicopter...”
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21. PLA’s Achilles-heel appears to be a combination of: (a) poor Battle Management and C4ISR; (b) weak joint warfighting doctrine; (c) limited Readiness to fight; and (d) the “Five Incapables”, (weakness of Officer Corps to understand Commander’s Intent, and then fight in a decentralized manner).

- “The PRC’s goals for modernizing its armed forces...as stated in the 2019 defense white paper, are: [1] By 2020: ‘To generally achieve mechanization...with significantly enhanced informationization and greatly improved strategic capabilities;’ [2] By 2035: ‘To comprehensively advance the modernization of...organizational structure, military personnel, and weaponry and equipment...and basically complete the modernization of national defense and the military...’; and [3] In 2049: ‘To fully transform the people’s armed forces into world-class forces.’”
 - “PLA media outlets have identified the need for the military to address the ‘Five Incapables’ problem: that some commanders cannot: (1) judge situations; (2) understand higher authorities’ intentions; (3) make operational decisions; (4) deploy forces; and, (5) manage unexpected situations.”
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22. While China has a credible Air Defense Network, it is not truly clear whether China has a significant missile defense capability, (other than potential terminal/point defense).

- “China is working to develop ballistic missile defenses consisting of exo-atmospheric and endo-atmospheric kinetic-energy interceptors...The HQ-19 mid-course interceptor has undergone tests to verify its capability against 3,000 km-class ballistic missiles...Indigenous radars including the JY-27A and JL-1A...reportedly provide target detection for the system.”

REPORT SAYS CHINA WILL DOUBLE ITS NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Pentagon

Published September 8

China will double its arsenal of nuclear warheads, report says

'United States believes it is time for China to participate in nuclear arms control.'

By Kris Osborn | Warrior Maven

China's clear ambition to massively expand its nuclear arsenal is generating extreme concern among U.S. military leaders who recognize the pace at which new weapons are being added dramatically alters the global calculus, according to the Pentagon's 2020 China Military Report.

“We do believe that over the next decade, that China is likely to at least double the size of its nuclear stockpile in the course of implementing the most rapid expansion and diversification of its nuclear arsenal in its history, China's history,” Chad Sbragia, deputy assistant secretary of defense for China, told reporters according to a Pentagon transcript. “An ability to double the stockpile demonstrates a move away from their historical minimum deterrence posture.”

The report specifies China's fast increase in the number of warheads arming Beijing's intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) capable of threatening America will likely grow to 200 in the next five years. As an element of this expansion, China is increasing its inventory of long-range land-fired DF-26 Anti-Ship missiles able to fire both conventional and nuclear missiles.

“Combined with a near-complete lack of transparency regarding their strategic intent and the perceived need for a much larger, more diverse nuclear force, these developments pose a significant concern for the United States,” the report explains.

The report also makes the point that China is solidifying a [nuclear triad](#) by developing nuclear-capable air-launched ballistic missiles and, according to the text of the report, “publicly revealed a modified bomber that would carry this missile.”

Meanwhile, all of this is taking place within the context of [U.S. nuclear modernization](#), which, among many things, includes the construction of 400 new ICBMs. However, many U.S. [Air Force](#) leaders believe the new [Ground Based Strategic Deterrent](#) (GBSD) may not come soon enough, given the age and obsolescence issues associated with the decades-old Minuteman III ICBM. Interestingly, the Air Force is working aggressively to sustain its arsenal of Minuteman IIIs while concurrently developing GBSD. In fact, Air Force leaders often cite the high-number of ongoing [Minuteman III modernization](#) programs, adding that the service recently test-fired a Minuteman III as part of an effort to [demonstrate nuclear readiness](#).

“A team of Air Force Global Strike Command Airmen launched an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile equipped with a test reentry vehicle at 12:03 a.m. Pacific Time Sept. 2 from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.,” an Air Force [statement](#) said.

Given all of these dynamics, the report makes the clear statement that the “United States believes it is time for China to participate in [nuclear arms control](#). While China has praised agreements such as the [New START](#) and INF, it has also sought to avoid participating in the arms control itself.”

-- Kris Osborn is the Managing Editor of [Warrior Maven](#) and The [Defense Editor of The National Interest](#) --

[1. Global Strike Command is shifting its focus to China, Russia](#)

https://www.airforcetimes.com/news/your-air-force/2020/09/13/heres-how-global-strike-command-is-shifting-its-focus-to-china-russia/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Air%20Force%20DNR%209.14.20&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Air%20Force%20-%20Daily%20News%20Roundup

By: [Stephen Losey](#) for the Air Force Times // 1 day ago

Unlike the wars the nation has fought over the past two decades against terrorists and violent extremist groups, the next one — potentially against China or Russia — threaten the nation’s survival, said Gen. Timothy Ray, head of Air Force Global Strike Command.

Those potential adversaries are modernizing in a way that the United States is not, Ray said Sept. 11 in an emailed response to questions. Those peer nations have modernized their nuclear

weapons and systems to deliver them, Ray said. To keep pace, he said, the United States needs to modernize its network of bombers, submarines, and intercontinental ballistic missiles, in part by developing new technologies. This is how Global Strike plans to respond to Chief of Staff Gen. Charles “CQ” Brown’s recent call for the Air Force to “accelerate change or lose,” Ray said.

The Air Force is already working on this by developing the B-21 Raider bomber. But until enough B-21s are ready, the Air Force will need to keep sustaining and modernizing the existing — and aging — B-1, B-2, and B-52 bomber fleet, he said. The Air Force awarded a contract to Northrop Grumman Sept. 8 to build the next generation of ICBM, the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent. This will replace the 50-year-old Minuteman III ICBM, Ray said, which was originally only meant to serve a decade.

“Our contribution to the joint fight, and frankly national-level power, is not a birthright and must be continuously invested in and evolved,” Ray said. “We must keep our nuclear modernization and investments in long-range strike stable and on time to ensure we’re positioned for the 21st century.” The Air Force will continue to invest in long-range strike. In fact, it has “no substitute ... regardless of what you hear to the contrary,” he said.

“No matter where you look, the Air Force has proven time and again that rapid, flexible power projection — anywhere and anytime — is one of our bread-and-butter mission sets, and the premium on those attributes increases as we look ahead,” Ray said. Global Strike’s ability to keep operating during this year’s COVID-19 pandemic, with just a small number of cases, was one of the things of which he is most proud.

ICBM airmen began pulling two-week alerts, he said, the longest in history. And in January, Global Strike began conducting tabletop exercises, worked with local civilian agencies, and reached out to academia and business to create real-time models to map the spread of the virus around bases. That predictive modeling gave wing commanders data they needed to make accurate, timely decisions to protect bases without applying a “one-size-fits-all” solution, Ray said. Commanders had the ability to dial up or down protective measures as they saw fit, he said.

“We never faltered,” Ray said. “The nation expects us to be ready under all conditions. ... The coronavirus has not, and will not, stop us.” As the pandemic spread across the planet, Global Strike Command kicked off a series of engagements and training missions by sending bombers and their crews to the Western Pacific, Europe and the Arctic, Ray said. These Bomber Task Force missions — including the recent “Allied Sky” mission, in which six B-52s from Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota flew over all 30 NATO countries in Europe in a single day — helped build relationships with allies and partner nations, he said.

Global Strike also focused on trying to fix its ailing B-1B Lancer fleet, Ray said, by preparing a two-year “roadmap to recovery.” Some B-1s have taken part in deployments to the Pacific region, he said, showing the fleet’s improving health. However, some B-1s still need “significant structural repairs,” and Global Strike is working to retire 17 that have most frequently been flown in ways they weren’t designed for in the Middle East, he said.

In December, Global Strike stood up Detachment 7 at Duke Field in Florida to prepare to receive the MH-139A helicopter, known as the Grey Wolf, Ray said. This will replace the UH-1N fleet and provide security and support for ICBM fields in Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, Colorado, and Nebraska. Over the next year, Ray said, he hopes Global Strike will continue improving its culture, by dealing with issues of race, diversity, and inclusion.

And, he said, Global Strike will continue moving forward with programs such as the B-21, the B-52 modernization, the GBSM missile, and the Grey Wolf helicopter. “We’re building an enterprise that is naturally inclined to innovate while moving forward,” Ray said. “These airmen will be the ones who will preserve and perfect the production of American air and space power, in the same way our airmen accomplish this today.”

China's nuclear arms buildup 'inconsistent' with no-first-use policy, Stratcom chief says

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/chinas-nuclear-arms-buildup-inconsistent-with-no-first-use-policy-stratcom-chief-says/ar-BB191KTS?ocid=uxbndlbing>

By: Abraham Mahshie for the UK Examiner

China’s nuclear weapons buildup is “inconsistent” with a declared no-first-use policy, making more urgent American nuclear modernization efforts, **U.S. Strategic Command’s Adm. Charles Richard** said Monday.

“It’s not where they are, it’s where they’re going,” the combatant commander told Pentagon reporters, warning that China intends to double its nuclear warheads by 2030. “When China sets its mind to something, they are very impressive in their ability to go accomplish it,” he said. “We’re going to have to move equally as fast in order to pace that threat.” Nuclear modernization figures prominently in the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, whose differing versions have passed both houses of Congress and await reconciliation.

Richard referenced the recently released Pentagon China Military Power Report, which speaks about China harnessing 200 nuclear weapons within five years and doubling that number by the end of the decade. In Monday’s briefing, the commander overseeing America’s nuclear triad warned that China has streamlined bureaucracy and demonstrated that it can quickly create the industrial base to meet its ambitions.

“We are going into a very different world,” Richard said of America’s imperative to deter two nuclear-armed great power rivals, China, and Russia. “China in particular is developing a stack of capabilities that, to my mind, is increasingly inconsistent with a stated no-first-use policy,” he said. The Military Power Report also noted that China is developing its own nuclear triad. “China’s nuclear forces will significantly evolve over the next decade as it modernizes, diversifies, and increases the number of its land-, sea-, and air-based nuclear delivery platforms,” the report states.

New developments also indicate that China is moving to a launch-on-warning posture with an expanded silo-based force. China can already hit U.S. with ballistic missiles with a submarine force of 65 to 70 submersibles roaming the Pacific, Richard said China has already reached a “watershed” moment. “China now has the capability ... to directly threaten our homeland from a ballistic missile submarine,” he said. “I get apprehensive that we are not fully conscious as a nation of the threats that we face.”

Chief among the dangers in China's military ambition is a government system that allows it to build its capabilities quickly, the commander said. Richard used the example of the Chinese Coast Guard, which was only stood up in 2013 and now fields 255 ships. Separately Monday morning, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Brown said China is on pace to exceed American, ally and partner platforms in the Pacific by 2025.

“We are outnumbered,” he told a virtual gathering of the Air Force Association. “If we don’t start doing things a bit faster, we’re going to be behind.” Brown called for the elimination of bureaucratic hurdles so the United States can make acquisitions faster and keep up with great power competitors. Richard said there is no more time to wait. “As a military commander, what I look at more is another nation's capabilities, less about what their stated intentions are, and I see China developing a stack of capabilities,” he said. “We have to go recapitalize our strategic triad.”

He added: “There’s no margin left.”

STRATCOM preparing for China to join Russia as U.S. nuclear peer adversary

MEDIA: Inside Defense

DATE: September 14, 2020

BYLINE: Jason Sherman

China's military modernization -- particularly development of its strategic forces -- is driving the U.S. military to begin preparing for the advent of Beijing as a nuclear competitor on par with Russia, a development that will require a different deterrence strategy from the playbook the Defense Department has long maintained to counter Moscow, according to a senior U.S. military official.

U.S. Strategic Command chief Adm. Chas Richard, speaking to reporters today at the Pentagon, also said China's strategic forces modernization appears at odds with its stated "no-first-use" policy -- and that this drives an imperative for the United States to modernize its offensive strategic forces as soon as possible.

"We are on a trajectory for the first time in our nation's history to face two peer nuclear-capable competitors who have to be deterred differently," Richard said. "And we're working very hard to meet that challenge."

According to Pentagon assessments, China aims to double the size of its nuclear stockpile by the end of the decade, including fielding a survivable nuclear triad as well as a host of weapon systems to challenge the U.S. military's ability to project power in the Indo-Pacific region. These developments include fielding of the H-6N Badger bomber, the DF-41 intercontinental ballistic missile, the DF-17 medium-range ballistic missile, and improved submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

"I'd ask you to consider that just measuring a nation's stockpile is a relatively crude measure of their capabilities, you have to look at the totality of the delivery systems, what they're capable of, what their readiness is," Richard said. "And China in particular is developing a stack of capabilities that in my mind is increasingly inconsistent with a stated no first-use policy."

The Pentagon's most recent annual report on China's military strength states range limitations on the JL-2 submarine-launched ballistic missile require the Jin-class submarines to sail in waters north and east of Hawaii in order to target the U.S. east coast.

"And I would actually pay more attention to their JL-3 missiles that they're working on, which gives them a greatly expanded range," Richard said. "I get apprehensive that we are not fully conscious as a nation of the threats that we face. China now has the capability . . . to directly threaten our homeland from a ballistic missile submarine. That's a pretty watershed moment. And that's why when I come up here and say that we need to maintain the forces that give us a deterrence capability against that, why we have to go recapitalize our strategic triad, why I say that there's no margin left and why that's the most important mission in the Department of Defense."

Richard said that he is thinking about capabilities that China's strategic forces could field in a decade -- noting that Beijing in 2013 set out to create a coast guard and has since fielded a fleet of 255 ships for the new organization.

"I just think strategic forces are next on their 'to do' list," the admiral said. "I'm trying to posture us for the threat we're going to face -- not the one that we have today."

Richard said he was recently meeting with Air Force officials and Northrop Grumman representatives in charge of the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent program to discuss the new ICBM program; the Air Force earlier this month awarded Northrop, the sole bidder, a \$13 billion contract to develop the new offensive strike weapon. The admiral said he is "very impressed" with "the cutting-edge ways that the GBSD program [is] going about accomplishing the acquisition tasks they've been handed."

In particular, the admiral highlighted what he sees as the GBSD program's ability to move quickly.

"If you asked me what keeps me up at night, it is our ability to move fast," he said, noting China's ability to field a new maritime fleet. "We're going to have to move equally as fast in order to pace that threat."

"In the end, it is time for us to start getting some of our bureaucracy out of our way," Richard continued. "I think that is the fundamental thing that slows us down; I pointed the GBSD program as a pathfinder in terms of how to achieve the old standard by a new way."

USAF SAYS MAJOR ISSUE OF CONCERN IS THE NUCLEAR/CONVENTIONAL INTEGRATION OF WARFIGHTING

<https://warontherocks.com/2020/09/on-the-need-for-a-blue-theory-of-victory/>

General Clark in his breakfast seminar remarks to the Mitchell Institute/Huessy series explained that the Issue of how to defeat a nuclear armed adversary in a conflict that starts conventionally but may escalate to the nuclear level is one of the highest challenges for the USAF. On that issue, Brad Roberts of LLNL addressed in a new essay "On the Need for a Blue Theory of Victory", in War on the Rocks, September 17, 2020, posted here. Roberts reiterates what Senator Jon Kyl told the Ear two years ago that during his service on the National Defense Strategy Commission he feared that for the first time the US could lose the "next big war". The United States could well lose the next big war — not because it lacks the right capabilities but because it has not done the hard-intellectual work to know how to win. This is a central conclusion of the bipartisan National Defense Strategy Commission in its November 2018 [report](#). It goes on to argue that defense planners understand neither the fundamental characteristics of regional conventional wars against adversaries capable of all-domain, transregional escalation nor how to shape the dynamics of such wars to safeguard U.S. interests.

As commissions come and go frequently inside the Washington beltway, their impact on public policy is typically short-lived. But this report struck a nerve — and rightly so. At a time when the risks of such regional wars are rising, the United States has lagged behind in the development of the needed new strategic thought, which has magnified risk. It is time for the U.S. defense community to put its intellectual house in order about modern major-power war and especially its strategic dimensions.

Lest anyone think that the criticism emanates from a single cranky commission, consider the judgment of Gen. Joseph Dunford, who as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2016 [declared](#) that "we're already behind in adapting to the changing character of war today, in so many ways." Or consider the views of the director of military sciences at the Royal United Services Institute in London, Peter Roberts, who [wrote in 2017](#):

Potential adversaries ... have reconceptualized warfare and reimagined conflict without the boundaries the West imposes upon it. ... A belief in Western conceptual or intellectual superiority remains deeply entrenched in the Western orthodoxy; such hubris has distinct dangers.

The United States is "already behind" because Russia and China have worked for three decades to put their intellectual houses in order. Their development of new strategic thought has been robust, sustained, and distressing. Russian and Chinese planners have "reconceptualized warfare

and reimagined conflict” with the United States in ways that the West has been slow to grasp. They studied the American way of war in Kuwait, Iraq, Kosovo, Afghanistan, etc. They monitored closely periodic U.S. reviews of defense policy, strategy, and capabilities for what they signal about U.S. military ambitions and the future American way of war. They then revised military strategies, developed new concepts of operations, realigned military organizational structures, developed, and tested new doctrines, and designed, acquired, and fielded new capabilities aligned with those concepts and doctrines. Finally, leaders in Russia and China mustered the political will and sustained focus to overcome significant bureaucratic, technical, and financial obstacles.

Their intellectual homework has focused on a realm most U.S. military experts have long considered America’s to dominate — the realm of escalatory action. But where Americans perceive strength, experts in Russia and China perceive opportunity. This mismatch is at the core of the National Defense Strategy Commission’s concern. U.S. adversaries have put together ideas about how to shape regional conflicts by shaping the decisions of the United States and its allies in a manner conducive to their objectives by imposing cost and risk through escalation and the threat of more to come. This implies that future major-power wars are likely to be contests of will, stake, and risk-taking, involving coercion, blackmail, and brinkmanship at least as much as direct armed hostilities between general-purpose military forces. Accordingly, the commission was critical of the absence of clear thinking at the Defense Department on “what deterrence means in practice,” “how escalation dynamics might play out,” “how the U.S. military would defeat major-power adversaries should deterrence fail,” and how to win against an adversary willing to employ nuclear weapons “in ways that would fall short of justifying a large-scale U.S. nuclear response.”

Theories of Victory

As I argued in my 2015 [book on U.S. nuclear policy](#), the collection of ideas about how to shape these regional conflicts combine into something that can usefully be labeled as a theory of victory. A theory of victory is not a strategy. Strategy, [in Thomas Schelling’s foundational formulation](#), is a “rational, conscious, artful kind of behavior aimed at trying to ‘win’ a contest.” A strategy should plausibly link actions and outcomes. In the more formal catechism of the war colleges, strategy is an approach that aligns ends, ways, and means. It seems logical that a strategy for “trying to win a contest” would encompass a theory of how to do so — that is, of victory. But strategy is not necessarily explicit about the logic behind the links between actions and outcomes. In the ends-ways-means construct, the theory is unexpressed even if the ends, ways, and means are lined up. It is implicit, not explicit. Thus, a theory of victory is a set of propositions about how and why the behavior of one belligerent in war or conflict short of war will or might affect the behavior of another belligerent in a desired manner. It is a “continuous thread” [running through strategy](#) with an “internal logic” and “causal links” among ends, ways, and means. Invoking Clausewitz, a theory of victory explains how to bring an enemy to a “culminating point” where it chooses not to run the costs and risks of further conflict and instead to acquiesce to the preferences of the first actor in terminating the conflict. A variant invokes Sun Tzu, with victory associated with subduing an enemy without fighting.

Borrowing from the wargamer's vocabulary, in 2015 I associated Red with the theories of victory of Russia, China, and North Korea, and Blue with those of the United States and its allies. There is a Red theory of victory — that is, they have developed a set of ideas about how to out-compete the United States and its allies to a preferable regional order and, if necessary, to deter and defeat them in crisis and war. The Red theory of victory consists of two notions. First, that decisive military action by the United States to reverse a *fait accompli* can be prevented by exploiting divisions within and among its allies and the United States itself. And second, that the United States can be persuaded to cede some important regional interest rather than employ its full military potential because its stake is not sufficient to engage in sustained brinkmanship and competitive escalation. The Red concept of victory includes more than just seizing and holding some gain. It also encompasses the choice by Blue to terminate conflict on terms that sacrifice the interest it was defending, thereby showing America's security guarantee to be unreliable.

There is no comparable Blue theory of victory. Until 2014 or so, the United States and its allies were too busy fighting other wars to focus adequately on this task. After Russia's [annexation](#) of Crimea in 2014, they have taken some steps in the right direction. The Obama administration's ["third offset"](#) and call for a ["new playbook"](#) on Russia helped to restore focus on major-power war and to renew thinking about the requirements of deterrence at the conventional level of war. The Trump administration's [National Defense Strategy](#) put the defense planning focus on regional conventional conflicts against major-power rivals with nuclear and other high-leverage means to defend their interests. The Joint Staff and armed services have begun to [update doctrine](#) to fight in contested environments. And the expert community has begun to explore [Russian](#) and [Chinese](#) strategic thought about modern conflict. This was all hard-won progress. But does it add up to success, in the form of a credible Blue theory of victory? The harsh judgments of Chairman Dunford in 2017 and of the National Defense Strategy Commission in 2018 provide a stark answer. In turning to the problem of modern war in 2014, the United States discovered the price of three decades of strategic atrophy in the form of the clutter of old thinking, the allure of quick fixes, and limited analytical capacity for new problems.

A Blue theory of victory can be further developed in a three-step process: "go to school" on Red the way Red has gone to school on Blue; develop a generic counter to the generic Red theory of victory; and tailor that model to specific regional contexts. As suggested above, pieces of this puzzle exist, but the puzzle as such has not come together. Its core concept should not be deterrence or escalation control. Rather, it should focus on stripping away the confidence of leaders in Russia and China in their escalation calculus. This is their assessment of the benefits, costs, and risks of escalatory action in crisis and war and also in the gray zone (i.e., part of the spectrum of conflict not involving armed hostilities). Blue must be capable of reducing Red's expected benefits of actions while increasing Red's expected costs and risks. Think of this as a counter-escalation strategy and not as an escalation dominance strategy. The generic Blue theory of victory should also account for the requirements of deterrence in a second theater from which assets might be stripped in time of crisis and war. A credible theory of victory in the neglected second theater requires that the United States both become more dependent on allied deterrence capabilities and more willing to ensure a credible nuclear deterrent for this particular problem.

Despite many years of proselytizing for a Blue theory of victory, I continue to find many skeptics in the United States about the value of such a way of thinking (among America's allies,

there are few such skeptics). Some are uncomfortable with the word “victory” (especially in conjunction with nuclear conflict) and with being asked to win, as opposed to deter or prevail. Conspicuously, the word “victory” is not in the official Defense Department [dictionary](#). Other skeptics place great confidence in U.S. military supremacy and believe that no adversary would ever dare to cross major American redlines, including the employment of nuclear weapons against the United States or its allies, because they must fear a punishing American response. Still others believe that the current imbalance in Red and Blue strategic thought and preparedness can be quickly rectified by a superior American ability to out-think, out-innovate, and out-compete its adversaries (to cite the *National Defense Strategy*). These skeptics simply haven’t taken on the message of the National Defense Strategy Commission. The United States has been out-thought and out-innovated by adversaries with clear visions of victory in crisis and war and also in peacetime. Moreover, as the commission argues repeatedly, U.S. military supremacy is slipping away. Put differently, the skeptics noted above have no reason to be complacent. Dangers are mounting.

What might be the consequences of continuing to limp along without a Blue theory of victory? Four stand out. First, without such a Blue theory, leaders in Moscow and Beijing could be emboldened to test their newfound confidence and the perceived weakness of underprepared U.S. alliances. They might precipitate crises and try to manipulate them to their long-term advantage. Second, the United States and its allies, though armed with many powerful tools, military and otherwise, have no coherent set of ideas about how to marshal them to achieve objectives in crisis and war. The United States and its allies “could lose,” in the words of the *National Defense Strategy*. Or they could win — but in a heavy-handed manner that only sows the seeds of resentment and further conflict.

Third, without such a Blue theory, the United States may be inefficient and/or ineffective at mobilizing competitive responses to multi-domain strategic competition in a multipolar security environment. And fourth, without such a Blue theory, leaders in allied countries could choose independence and proliferation rather than continued reliance on the United States as guarantor of their security. Doubts about U.S. credibility are an enduring feature of alliances, but they have spiked in recent years. Both [right](#) and [left](#) in America talk today about the supposed burdens allies impose on the United States. Allies seeking strategic autonomy from neighboring major powers face sharper than ever choices about how to secure that autonomy and/or how much deference to show to those neighbors.

In sum, a Blue theory of victory is a necessary condition for strategic competence and strategic success. And in 2022, the National Defense Strategy Commission will again come looking for one. With the next iteration of the U.S. defense strategy in hand, it will again render judgment on the military thought devoted to modern war, especially its strategic dimensions. If we in the U.S. defense community have failed by then to make significant headway in putting our intellectual house in order on this new problem, the commission will have to report a further deepening of the crisis of American power.

Brad Roberts is the director of the Center for Global Security Research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The views expressed here are his personal views and should not be attributed to his employer or its sponsors. This essay is a distillation of key arguments from a

new monograph of the same title and available at <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/research/livermore-papers>.

Calendar of Events to Watch and View Next Week

- *Brad Roberts speaking Monday at Mitchell Institute on Theories of Victory, Red and Blue as part of the nuclear seminar series.*
- The Mitchell Institute invites you to join a live webcast of our **Nuclear Deterrence Forum** with **Dr. Brad Roberts, Director of the Center for Global Security Research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory**, on **Monday, September 21, 11:30 am EST**. Drawing on a five-year effort at the Center for Global Security Research to understand Russian and Chinese strategic thought, their approaches to conflict with the United States and its allies, and the requirements of integrated strategic deterrence, Dr. Brad Roberts joins us to discuss the United States and its allies' need for a coherent and robust theory of victory against great power competitors, the obstacles that have hindered past progress, and where the United States should go from here. Registration link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_21dhiAKPTECMzllqLPbmCA
- The Minot Task Force 21 Symposium is Featured Tuesday September 22 with Senators Hoeven and Cramer and with remarks as well from General John Hyten, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.
- Here is an interactive media report on all AFA national convention media coverage over the last two weeks. Over 10,000 participants!! Enjoy clicking, opening, & reading articles from across the globe and in your specific area of interest. <https://app2.cision.com/report?id=db83ea11-9916-4d68-8ab6-d93981bfd3f7>
- Nuclear Weapons Council and Developing the Nuclear Deterrence/Weapons Budget: https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2020/09/16/the_nuclear_weapons_council_and_its_critical_role_in_developing_a_budget_for_nuclear_warhead_activities_577588.html?utm_source=Sailthru

SASC APPROVES NOMINATIONS

- John Whitley to be director of the Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation office
- Shon Manasco to be undersecretary of the Air Force
- Michele Pearce to be Army general counsel
- Bradley Hansell to be deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence and security
- Lucas Polakowski to be assistant secretary of defense for nuclear, chemical, and biological defense programs
- Liam Hardy to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces

[GOP's New Coronavirus Relief Bill No Longer Includes Billions For Defense](#)

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) on Tuesday introduced Republican's new slimmed-down coronavirus relief package, which no longer contains billions of dollars for defense spending including in an earlier version. A vote on the \$500 billion bill may take place...

Reimbursing Industry's Billions In COVID Claims Could Take Up To Six Months, Lord Says

The Pentagon's top acquisition official said Tuesday it may take up to six months to reimburse the defense industrial base's billions in COVID-related claims, if the department receives appropriated funds to cover such costs. Ellen Lord, the undersecretary of...

Trump's foreign policy successes confound his detractors

By Joseph Bosco, opinion contributor — 09/15/20 10:00 AM EDT [261](#)

The views expressed by contributors are their own and not the view of The Hill



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Critics say [President Trump](#)'s foreign policy has seriously undermined America's world leadership. Recent events tell a different story.

The charges start with the president's attacks on members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for failing to meet their agreed contributions to the common defense.

Yet, after the controversy erupted, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [praised the U.S. president](#): “Let me thank you for the leadership you show on the issue of defense spending. ... It is really having an impact because ... allies are now spending more on defense.”

The military threat that NATO budgets are intended to repel, of course, is aggression from Russia. The president also has opposed member policies that strengthen Russia, including Germany’s support for Russia’s undersea gas pipeline. Chancellor Angela Merkel is now [reconsidering](#).

Merkel and other Europeans also see the danger emerging from the Indo-Pacific, adopting the Trump administration’s term for the region.

The pandemic has opened European eyes to the nature of the Chinese Communist regime. An EU study last year labeled China a “[systemic rival](#).” On both interests and values, Europeans now challenge China in the same terms the Trump administration uses, providing the basis for a strong trans-Atlantic response.

Trump’s unilateralism is accused of vitiating America’s moral authority to achieve peaceful diplomatic outcomes.

That censure will be dramatically refuted this week when Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) [formalize mutual relations](#), the first breakthrough since Jordan recognized Israel in 1994. The Trump team achieved the historic event through years of quiet negotiations. Last week, Bahrain prepared to become the fourth Arab state to [normalize relations](#) with Israel, further breaking the Mideast logjam that has stymied U.S. administrations for decades.

Earlier, Trump’s team skillfully invigorated the complex coalition, including Sunni Gulf states and Israelis, in the regional alliance against Iran and ISIS. (A Norwegian legislator has [nominated Trump](#) for the Nobel Peace Prize, an honor more richly deserved than some earlier awards.)

China, which President Obama’s national intelligence director called “the greatest mortal threat to the United States,” will remain the new administration’s paramount security challenge.

Critics fault Trump for bypassing the [Trans-Pacific Partnership](#), which Obama did not seriously push and [Hillary Clinton](#) also opposed. More favorable U.S.-Asia trade relations, including a U.S.-Taiwan free trade agreement, are now possible.

Trump’s demand that South Korea boost its share of defense costs is blamed for alienating a loyal security ally. But the fivefold jump is under negotiation and the parties may settle on a more modest increase.

Yet, the real issues in the relationship go beyond respective financial burdens. The administration of Moon Jae-in is clearly more conciliatory toward both Pyongyang and its Chinese Communist ally than Washington deems prudent — a problem that helped precipitate Trump’s harsh demand.

The Trump administration has greatly intensified America's pushback against China's expansionism in the South China Sea. In both the quantity and quality of Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS), it has discarded the Obama approach of limiting transits to "innocent passage," which implicitly conceded China's territorial claims.

The Trump team's maritime leadership and encouragement of allies to join the effort are paying off; the United Kingdom, France and Australia have undertaken their own FONOPS in the South China Sea.

China's aggressive economic and diplomatic behavior, and its grossly irresponsible and [opportunistic handling](#) of the coronavirus pandemic that originated in Wuhan, have helped garner international support for Trump's confrontational response.

In his Nixon Library [speech](#) last month, Secretary of State [Mike Pompeo](#) articulated the need for global cooperation against China: "I call on every leader of every nation to ... insist on reciprocity, transparency and accountability from the Chinese Communist Party. ... Maybe it's time for a new grouping of like-minded nations, a new alliance of democracies."

In an international security conference last week, an Indian scholar echoed the idea: "We need an Indo-Pacific Charter like the Atlantic Charter."

Several Asian and European countries have directly supported America's confrontation of China (United Kingdom, France, Vietnam) or have grouped with other like-minded partners (India, Japan, Australia) or acted independently in the same direction (the Czech Republic, Germany, Indonesia). The South Pacific island of Palau has invited Washington to [establish an active military presence](#) on its territory.

Vietnam, chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said its members are "open to cooperation with the U.S. We welcome a constructive U.S contribution in the South China Sea."

In 2010, China successfully bullied the ASEAN, declaring: "China is a big country and other countries are small, and that's just a fact." In the Trump era, [a mayor](#) in a small country such as the Czech Republic defied China's threats over a visit to Taiwan. Germany's foreign minister confronted his visiting Chinese counterpart and sided with the Czechs. He also said, "We want to help shape the order in the Indo-Pacific region with countries that share our democratic and liberal values."

The geopolitical returns from around the world demonstrate growing understanding that "America first" does not mean America alone. The Trump administration's leadership by example has laid the groundwork for a multi-regional, even global, coalition of like-minded nations determined to stop China's expansionist and exploitative behavior.

Trump critics are right that, since his three major speeches on North Korea's atrocious human rights record and his meetings with North Korean defectors, he has not personally spoken out

forcefully on human rights. But, once again, it is important to look at the president's actions and those of the people he has appointed and enabled.

Over Beijing's vehement objections, Trump has signed every piece of human rights legislation sent to his desk: on the Uighurs, Tibet, Hong Kong, and enhancements to Taiwan's democratic status. Using executive orders, he has imposed economic sanctions on scores of China's human rights violators.

Further, he has given unfettered authority to Secretary Pompeo and his colleagues to launch a broad information offensive against China's human rights abuses. Pompeo has gone so far as to challenge the political legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party and called for a joint effort by the Chinese people and the international community to change the regime's behavior.

In American politics, demonizing an opponent is fair game, and sometimes deserved. But the devil — to many, that would be Donald Trump — should be given his due when it comes to judging the effectiveness of his foreign policy and national security team, and the policies he has directed or enabled.

What was said about Wagner's music also applies to the Trump foreign policy record: It is better than it sounds.

Joseph Bosco served as China country director for the secretary of Defense from 2005 to 2006 and as Asia-Pacific director of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief from 2009 to 2010. He is a nonresident fellow at the Institute for Corean-American Studies and a member of the advisory board of the Global Taiwan Institute.

Peter Huessy Speaks to the Institute of World Politics, November 2, 2020, 5-6pm. Title:

How popular national security policy narratives lead to grave mistakes in American foreign policy.

Description:

American national security and foreign policy is often described with the use of slogans or bumper stickers which in and of themselves are not a problem. However, when we accept certain narratives on which national security policy rests, and that narrative is incorrect and badly thought out, we get ourselves into serious trouble.

One is reminded about a debate in the British parliament between Winston Churchill and Mr. Chamberlain, with the latter arguing that rearming Britain to take on Germany would probably result in a diminution of trade with Nazi Germany. To which Winston Churchill said shouldn't that be the idea?

The United States in 1969-70 we adopted detente and peaceful coexistence as descriptors of American security policy; at the end of World War II we adopted the idea of containment of the USSR; we also adopted “another Vietnam quagmire” to often describe the feared end result of the use of American military force; we have adopted “peaceful rise” as the way to describe the growing military and economic strength China; and we have long held out the idea that a successful foreign policy in the Middle East had to go through the “peace process” and a successful response to 9-11 required the USA to win the “global war on terror or GWOT”.

We will examine how such narratives were developed and created and what political forces such narratives served. My lecture will also explore each of these narratives and what dead ends they led us to reach, or are still leading us, and compare them to President Reagan’s peace through strength strategy. We will and examine the current administration’s policy with respect to China, the Middle East, and Russia/NATO. Reagan’s peace through strength is often described —wrongly—as no more than simple bullying---a narrative we will also address. Part of this discussion will include my own part in these foreign policy fights over the 1975-2020 period.

Huessy will be featured EVERY week as the author of a nuclear blog to be published by THE NATIONAL INTEREST journal. Huessy will pay for a meal for two at the restaurant of your choice up to \$100 if your proposed name is chosen for the title of his new nuclear blog. So, the contest is on among ICON Members and Friends. This will be the first regular pro-nuclear deterrent featured weekly essay. On the left are anti-nuclear blogs titled: Nukes of Hazard, The Button, and the Arms Control Wonk now published weekly.