

Weekly ICON Report by Peter Huessy President, Geo-Strategic Analysis

June 19, 2020

Quote of the Week

The West must unceasingly seek to deter war, but if deterrence fails nevertheless and war ensues, U.S. actions should not be impromptu by default or a spasmodic nuclear response that consciously abandoned any purposeful goal beyond revenge and societal destruction. Rather, they should be guided by thoughtful planning to deter further nuclear escalation and to minimize societal destruction to the extent feasible—with full recognition that while neither goal was assured, to not try to limit the destruction would be grossly irresponsible. That is hardly a radical proposition.^[5] Keith Payne, NIPP, June 18, 2020

HAC Chairwoman Outlines Markup Schedule

House appropriators will launch a marathon of subcommittee markups on fiscal 2021 spending bills on July 6, followed by full committee markups and consideration of subcommittee allocations on July 9, Chair [Nita Lowey has told her colleagues](#).

The markups will allow for both in-person and remote participation from lawmakers, with plenty of time to clean the hearing room between bills, Lowey said. She stressed that times might change if the committee can secure a second hearing room.

“As a large committee, there are a limited number of spaces where we can meet and practice social distancing,” she said. “All attendees will be required to wear masks to protect their colleagues.”

House appropriators plan to include more pandemic aid and police reform measures in the annual funding measures — [two issues that have derailed markups in the Senate](#), which were supposed to begin next week.

“One of the most important things Congress can do to confront the twin crises of coronavirus and systemic racism is to thoughtfully utilize federal funding,” House Appropriations Committee spokesman Evan Hollander said in a statement.

“House Democrats will build on [The Heroes Act](#) with additional funding in fiscal year 2021 appropriations bills to address the emergency of the coronavirus pandemic and the economic collapse,” he said. “And, as Congress debates police reform, Democrats will use appropriations bills to promote a more fair and equitable justice system.”

Bill texts will be released about 24 hours in advance of subcommittee markups. The schedule:

July 6

4:00 p.m. — State-Foreign Operations

6:00 p.m. — Agriculture-FDA
8:00 p.m. — Military Construction-VA

July 7

9:00 a.m. — Homeland Security
11:00 a.m. — Interior-Environment
1:00 p.m. — Legislative Branch
3:00 p.m. — Energy-Water
5:00 p.m. — Labor-HHS-Education

July 8

9:00 a.m. — Commerce- Justice-Science
11:00 a.m. — Transportation-HUD
1:00 p.m. — Financial Services
3:00 p.m. — Defense

“Full committee markups will begin on July 9, when we will consider 302(b) allocations, State and Foreign Operations, Agriculture, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bills,” Lowey said in a letter to her colleagues Thursday night.

“The full committee will report out the Energy and Water and Interior and Environment bills on July 10. The following week I expect markups to begin Monday morning and end with only one bill being considered on Thursday, so that members can depart Washington that afternoon or evening.”

The full House is expected to vote on spending bills during the last two weeks in July. [From Politico]

UPDATED EVENTS PAST AND FUTURE

Mitchell Institute On-Line Video Events—Aviation, Space, Nuclear/BMD/NNSA Deterrent Series

April 17 Frank Miller, The Scowcroft Group

<https://www.mitchellaerospacepower.org/nuclear-deterrence-breakfast-series>

May 20 General Wilson, USAF Vice Chief. 10am

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNZaWFmGCKo>

May 22 Stephen Blank and Mark Schneider. 10am Nuclear

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHytWFZFyZo>

May 26 Drew Walters from OSD. 3pm NNSA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gd2QmC11bco>

June 4 Lt Gen "Jack" Shanahan, Director, Joint Artificial Intelligence Center, DOD
CIO on Aerospace Nation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAA0HdB7zqE&feature=youtu.be>

June 9 Dr. Will Roper, OSD AF AT&L. 10am
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z18El6omKX0>

June 10 Lt Gen Rice

<https://youtu.be/FneyByaGt6A>

Topic: Aerospace Nation Gen James Holmes, Commander ACC June 22,2020

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dTqcsHA6TJ6mSztchwtbmg

June 11 Rick Fisher and Gordon Chang. 10am Nuclear
<https://youtu.be/sAGTbofNN94>

Upcoming Confirmed Events

July 6th Robert Soofer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy

Brad Roberts and Ron Lehman, LLNL Date TBD

STRATCOM'S Admiral Charles Richard Date TBD

July 14 Uzi Rubin, BESA

July 27th Peter Huessy, "How the Arms Control Lobby Killed Arms Control", Institute of World Politics, 5-6pm

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-the-nuclear-arms-control-lobby-killed-arms-control-tickets-109665642890>

Key Reading from Morning Nuke

- ✓ Airpower Gets a Big Boost in the Senate's Authorization Bill
- ✓ B-52 bombers train with Japanese fighters over Sea of Japan days after deploying to Alaska
- ✓ NATO Looks to Counter Russia's Growing Nuclear Capabilities
- ✓ Iran Warns Against UN Nuclear Watchdog Resolution To Access Sites

- ✓ New tensions dim hopes for salvaging Iran nuclear deal
- ✓ China develops weapons to fry US electric grid, eyes high-tech 'Pearl Harbor' attack
- ✓ Trump Administration Takes on the Chinese Communists
- ✓ The Borei-A SSBN: How Effective Is Russia's New Nuclear Submarine?
- ✓ German intel report lays bare Iran's attempts to obtain nuclear proliferation technology

Key Reading From FDD

FDD Research and Analysis

- "Unfinished Business: How a Department of Justice forfeiture complaint may be an opening gambit against Iranian sanctions' evasion," Emanuele Ottolenghi, *The Dispatch*

The Must-Reads

- Iran is dealt a blow by U.N. over nuclear activity, fueling U.S. opposition
- WINEP's Omer Carmi: Iran is repeating its past errors with the IAEA
- U.S. sanctions firms, tankers it accuses of exporting Venezuelan oil

Key Nuclear ICBM, Bomber, Arms Control & Triad Essays, Seminars, Studies, Meetings and Memos

From Admiral Mies:

Revelations about Russia's Nuclear Deterrence Policy - War on the Rocks

<https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/revelations-about-russias-nuclear-deterrence-policy/>

Russia's new strategy for nuclear war – The Strategist

https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/russias-new-strategy-for-nuclear-war/?_cf_chl_jschl_tk__=3185872f867ad168e326d529dd388d2c0d995791-1592572577-0-AQbSXp5nRMF5BH7H0ErAhnasHnmkEkLUvGh-XfGG5EbW_wMisanOT8KEa_jZJTkQLNHxfrY4Wb1rQUrz2OxnvBnQ4dU7qtx

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Mitchell Institute Long Range Strike Seminar Now Online

Long-Range Strike w/ Mr. Mark Gunzinger, Lt Gen Nahom, & Brig Gen Winkler

https://youtu.be/LcSM98C_kl4

How China pushes for world dominance

With billions in investments and a stolen technology base, China is no friend

By Senators John Barrasso and Martha McSally - - Thursday, June 18, 2020

ANALYSIS/OPINION:

[China](#) will stop at nothing for world dominance. It seeks to surpass America's economy, our military might and our international influence. We cannot allow that to happen.

The coronavirus — and [China](#)'s deliberate misinformation strategy during the pandemic — is just the latest proof it is no friend of ours or the world's.

[China](#)'s 2050 plan is designed to unseat the United States as the world's superpower. It is backing up that plan with hundreds of billions of dollars, investments around the globe and the creation of a domestic technology base, much of it stolen from America.

For many years, the United States supported [China](#) and allowed it to position itself for a larger role on the world stage. We invited [China](#) into the global economy, and permanently gave it "most-favored nation" trading status in 2000.

Policymakers need to face the truth: [China](#)'s Communist leaders don't care about free markets — or freedom. They don't care about the rule of law. And they don't care about peace. They simply want dominance.

For too long, our leaders looked the other way as U.S. industries and American jobs moved to [China](#). [China](#) has profited from cheating on trade, manipulating its currency, and stealing our trade secrets and intellectual property.

The FBI recently revealed that [China](#) has even been trying to steal American COVID-19 vaccine research so it can be the first to develop a vaccine.

All this must end now.

The United States is demanding an investigation into [China](#)'s role in unleashing the coronavirus. The Senate passed legislation to delist Chinese companies from U.S. stock exchanges for violating our rules.

This month, the Senate will vote on the National Defense Authorization Act, which will provide another opportunity to get tougher on [China](#). It's also an opportunity to invest smartly in our defense to counter [China](#)'s military buildup.

It's time for America to defend freedom and ratchet up our influence in Asia. We need to support the brave citizens of Hong Kong fighting for democracy, and refuse to tolerate a Tiananmen Square-like crackdown on Hong Kong's autonomy. That includes sanctions, and ending preferential customs treatment. We also need to reassure Taiwan of America's support for its freedom.

Here at home, we have to root out the Trojan horse technology and banking companies that are subsidiaries of the Chinese military. Huawei, which wanted to run America's 5G cellular network, is a prime example.

Of course we want faster Internet and better rural broadband access. But we won't achieve that by allowing companies that spy for the Chinese government to gain control of our telecommunications infrastructure. We need to manufacture more of this vital equipment at home, and work with our allies for a reliable supply chain secure from Chinese interference.

Already, the Trump administration has taken action to move our semiconductor industry home. These small electrical components keep the lights on in our homes. Imagine an attack on our electric grid or Internet. Our ability to respond would be crippled in minutes.

From here on out, rare-earth minerals and other essential materials must be domestically sourced or supplied by our allies.

The coronavirus pandemic has also starkly illustrated that we need to end our reliance on [China](#) as a primary source of medical supplies and lifesaving drugs. This is about keeping control of the systems that make our country run. Moving key industries home is vital for national security, American jobs and our health.

We need to provide tax incentives for companies relocating back home. We should also place tariffs on critical industrial, electronic or medical products coming from [China](#) to remove the incentive to move supply chains there.

The virus has made it clear that, instead of helping [China](#), we have to rebuild America and get our people back to work in 21st century jobs. The United States — and the rest of the world — must end its reliance on [China](#) before it's too late.

• *John Barrasso, a Republican U.S. senator from Wyoming, is chairman of the Senate Republican Conference. Martha McSally, a Republican U.S. senator from Arizona, served for 26 years in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as a colonel, and sits on the Senate Armed Services Committee.*

Trump Takes on China, By Hudson's Senior Fellow Rebecca Heinrichs

Over the last few months, President Trump has unleashed the most intense round of U.S. actions against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in decades.

Throughout his first term, the president and his administration have been ramping up U.S. competition with China across multiple areas of the federal government. President Trump's personal rhetoric about China's leaders has been a mix of positive and negative, and the president himself has seemed primarily focused on achieving a new trade deal with China. But then, on May 19, when asked about the trade deal, [President Trump said](#), "I feel very differently now about that deal than I did three months ago...We'll see what happens." China's negligence, lies and cover-ups regarding the COVID-19 pandemic has ushered in a new era of U.S.-China relations.

Take U.S. reactions to the CCP's abuse of Hong Kong. On May 27, the State Department decertified that the CCP was granting Hong Kong sufficient autonomy to warrant Hong Kong special treatment and privileges. Two days later, President Trump revealed more consequences. The United States will review disclosures of Chinese companies listed in United States securities markets, eliminate policy exemptions that have been granted to Hong Kong, revise the travel advisory for Hong Kong and sanction officials involved in eroding Hong Kong's autonomy. The United States [will also move](#) to protect American intellectual property by restricting researchers connected to the People's Liberation Army (PLA) from entering the United States.

Appreciating China's emboldened posture, the Trump administration has been actively working to alter the dynamic with Taiwan and its global standing in an effort to prevent China from acting aggressively there. In July 2019, President Trump authorized a military sale to Taiwan worth more than \$2 billion that included 108 M1A2T Abrams tanks and portable Stinger anti-aircraft missiles. Then the following month, President

Trump authorized another military sales package to Taiwan worth more than \$8 billion, including 66 new F-16C/D fighter jets. Taiwan has wanted those fighter jets for years, but previous administrations demurred in the face of strong Chinese opposition.

But the Trump administration thinks the sales, meant to help deter what could result in a large-scale war, are worth the cost of irritating Beijing. On May 20, the State Department notified Congress of its [intent to sell](#) 18 MK-48 Torpedoes to Taiwan. And just a couple weeks ago, the U.S. Navy conducted yet another "Taiwan Strait Transit," its seventh of 2020. In April, when asked about two freedom of navigation operations in the Taiwan Strait, Lieutenant Anthony Junco, a spokesman for the U.S. Seventh Fleet, confirmed that the guided missile destroyer *USS Barry* transited the Strait. [He said](#), "The ship's transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific. The U.S. Navy will continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows."

One of the best ways to prevent confrontation with China is to convince the CCP that the cost of acting more aggressively will be too high. Essential to this is preventing international isolation of Taiwan and strengthening Taiwan's reputation as a responsible, fair and reliable global actor. On May 20, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Matthew Pottinger gave a video address, in Chinese, for Taiwan President Tsai's inauguration. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also praised her inauguration. Senior U.S. officials praising her and celebrating her inauguration has significant diplomatic impact.

Recent months also brought about a flurry of activity to crack down on CCP telecommunications. President Trump signed an executive order on April 4, "Establishing the Committee for the Assessment of Foreign Participation in the U.S. Telecom Services Sector," and then five days later, the new committee recommended the FCC revoke China Telecom's U.S. operating license. A few weeks later, on April 22, citing national security risks, the [FCC issued](#) "show cause" orders to state-operated China Telecom, China Unicom, Pacific Networks and ComNet, giving each 30 days to justify why the FCC should not revoke their U.S. licenses to operate.

On May 15, the Commerce and State Departments revealed that Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company [announced](#) a \$12 billion investment in an advanced semiconductor fabrication facility in Arizona. The same day, the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security moved to revise its foreign-produced direct product rule, as well as cracking down on telecom giant [Huawei](#).

And there is reason to believe more is coming. Last month, the White House released its "Strategic Approach to China." It is a [remarkable document](#) worth reading in its entirety. It outlines the ideology that motivates the CCP, connecting its domestic behavior with its behavior towards and against other nations. It says, in part:

The CCP's campaign to compel ideological conformity does not stop at China's borders. In recent years, Beijing has intervened in sovereign nations' internal affairs to engineer

consent for its policies. [Chinese] authorities have attempted to extend CCP influence over discourse and behavior around the world, with recent examples including companies and sports teams in the United States and the United Kingdom, and politicians in Australia and Europe.

Highlighting the regime's abuses of its people to force ideological conformity is key to understanding the nature of the CCP. Congress recently sent the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020 to President Trump's desk. The bill condemns the CCP for the prison camps and gross abuses against Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities. It passed with an overwhelming bipartisan House vote of 413-1.

Taken alongside the Trump administration's right and public [memorializing](#) of the Tiananmen Square protest, President Trump's signing of the Uyghur bill will send a clear message that the United States is not intimidated, and will not look the other way in the face of CCP abuses of the people inside and outside its borders. There will be consequences for overstepping.

NATO MEETING ROUNDUP & ASSURING NATO

Defense Secretary Esper also participated in the first of two days of virtual meetings with fellow NATO defense ministers on Wednesday. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters that “allies addressed the announcement from the United States about the intention of reducing the U.S. military presence in Germany.” That reduction would not take place if Germany meets its 2% target for defense spending as a percent of GDP.

“We had a good discussion and Secretary Esper stated very strongly that, of course, the U.S. stays committed to European security and the United States will consult with other allies as we move forward,” Stoltenberg added, [according to Bloomberg](#).

In two days of virtual discussions with fellow NATO defense ministers this week, Esper urged allies to ensure the Covid-19 pandemic does not become a larger security crisis, according to a readout Thursday from the Pentagon. He also expressed support for Supreme Allied Commander Air Force Gen. Tod Walters’ plan to prepare for a second wave of Covid-19, and encouraged allies to guard against disinformation and predatory

foreign investment while reducing their dependence on Chinese or Russian suppliers for critical resources.

Esper also addressed Russia's "destabilizing" behavior and stressed the urgency of "engaging in meaningful trilateral arms control efforts" with Moscow and Beijing, a nod to the Trump administration's efforts to come to an agreement on a follow-on to the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty that includes China. [This from Politico]

Institute of World Politics

Thank you for watching our webinar book event *A Covert Action: Reagan, the CIA, and the Cold War Struggle in Poland* with Dr. Seth G. Jones. If you missed this event or want to view it again, a video of the lecture can be found [here](#).

How to Prevent a War in Asia

The Erosion of American Deterrence Raises the Risk of Chinese Miscalculation

By [Michèle A. Flournoy](#)

June 18, 2020

Amid all the uncertainty about the world that will follow the pandemic, one thing is almost sure to be true: tensions between the United States and China will be even sharper than they were before the coronavirus outbreak. The resurgence of [U.S.-Chinese competition](#) poses a host of challenges for policymakers—related to trade and economics, technology, global influence, and more—but none is more consequential than reducing the risk of war. Unfortunately, thanks to

today's uniquely dangerous mix of growing Chinese assertiveness and military strength and eroding U.S. deterrence, that risk is higher than it has been for decades, and it is growing.

Neither Washington nor Beijing seeks a military conflict with the other. Chinese President Xi Jinping and U.S. President Donald Trump both undoubtedly understand that a war would be disastrous. Yet the United States and China could all too easily stumble into conflict, sparked by a Chinese miscalculation of the United States' willingness or capability to respond to provocations in disputed areas such as the [South China Sea](#) or to outright aggression against Taiwan or another U.S. security partner in the region.

For the past two decades, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been [growing](#) in size, capability, and confidence. China is also emerging as a serious competitor in a number of technological areas that will ultimately determine military advantage. At the same time, the credibility of U.S. deterrence has been declining. For Beijing, the 2008–9 financial crisis gave rise to an enduring narrative of U.S. decline and Chinese superiority that has been reinforced by perceptions of U.S. withdrawal from the world—as well as, more recently, by its perception of bungled U.S. management of the pandemic and societal upheaval over systemic racism.

What's more, Washington has not delivered on its promised “pivot” to Asia. U.S. troop levels in the region remain similar to what they were a decade ago. The current administration [discarded the Trans-Pacific Partnership](#) trade agreement its predecessor had so painstakingly negotiated. Senior diplomatic positions in the region remain empty, and the United States is often underrepresented or entirely AWOL from the region's major diplomatic forums. There has been no U.S. answer to Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative, even as its influence expands through Asia and well beyond. And Chinese activities in the “gray zone,” below the level of conflict—such as building militarized “islands” and using coercive measures to enforce disputed sovereignty claims in the South China Sea—have gone largely unanswered by the United States beyond the occasional diplomatic *démarche* or freedom-of-navigation operation.

All of this spells trouble for deterrence. The more confident China's leaders are in their own capabilities and the more they doubt the capabilities and resolve of the United States, the greater the chance of miscalculation—a breakdown in deterrence that could bring direct conflict between two nuclear powers. As tensions continue to rise and Chinese assertiveness in the region grows, it will take a concerted effort to rebuild the credibility of U.S. deterrence in order to reduce the risk of a war that neither side seeks.

DECLINING ADVANTAGE, INCREASING RISK

Since the 1991 Gulf War, the PLA has gone to school on the American way of war and developed an expanding set of asymmetric approaches to undermine U.S. military strengths and exploit U.S. vulnerabilities. Of greatest concern is the substantial investment Beijing has made in [“anti-access/area-denial”](#) (A2/AD) capabilities. Ranging from persistent precision strikes on U.S. logistics, forces, and bases to electronic, kinetic, and cyber attacks on digital connections and systems inside U.S. battle management networks, these capabilities are designed to prevent the

United States from projecting military power into East Asia in order to defend its interests or allies. As a result, in the event that conflict starts, the United States can no longer expect to quickly achieve air, space, or maritime superiority; the U.S. military would need to fight to gain advantage, and then to keep it, in the face of continuous efforts to disrupt and degrade its battle management networks.

The Chinese military has also made rapid advances in cyber- and artificial intelligence—thanks to China’s massive theft of Western technology, state support for its leading technology companies, and doctrine of “civil-military fusion,” which requires that any commercial or academic technological advancement with military implications [be shared with the PLA](#). Technological investments have come along with doctrinal innovations. Chinese military doctrine now holds that the side that can make and execute battlefield decisions most quickly will gain a decisive advantage in any conflict. China’s theory of victory increasingly relies on “system destruction warfare”—crippling an adversary at the outset of conflict, by deploying sophisticated electronic warfare, counterspace, and cyber-capabilities to disrupt what are known as [C4ISR networks](#) (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance), and thereby thwarting its power projection and undermining its resolve. Among other things, this means that the United States can no longer assume that its satellites—essential for navigation, communications, early warning, targeting, and much more—would escape attack during a conflict. Given China’s ability to interfere with, spoof, damage, or destroy U.S. satellites, Washington can no longer take space for granted as an uncontested domain during war.

Deterrence could break down owing to either strategic or tactical miscalculation.

The upshot of the developments is dangerous new uncertainty about the U.S. ability to check various Chinese moves, which could invite risk-taking by Chinese leaders. Deterrence could break down owing to either strategic or tactical miscalculation. A strategic miscalculation might involve Chinese leaders choosing to blockade or attack Taiwan in the near term or midterm based on a set of strongly held beliefs about the United States as a [declining power](#)—one racked by internal political divisions, preoccupied with domestic crises, no longer showing up in the region diplomatically, lacking the military capabilities that might be effective in the face of A2/AD, and with an [uncertain commitment](#) to defending Taiwan. They could conclude that China should move on Taiwan sooner rather than later, a fait accompli that a weakened and distracted United States would have to accept.

Alternatively, a tactical miscalculation could have strategic consequences. For example, Chinese military planning for taking Taiwan by force envisions early cyberattacks against the electric power grids around key military bases in the United States, to prevent the deployment of U.S. forces to the region. But these same power grids also support the surrounding civilian population, including hospitals, emergency services, and other functions critical to public safety. Any such attack would have a [high risk](#) of killing American citizens. So rather than deter U.S. action, the envisioned cyberattacks could actually increase the U.S. determination to respond.

REESTABLISHING DETERRENCE

To reestablish credible deterrence of China, the United States must be able to prevent the success of any act of military aggression by Beijing, either by denying the PLA's ability to achieve its aims or by imposing costs so great that Chinese leaders ultimately decide that the act is not in their interest. And Xi and his advisers must believe that the United States has not just the capability but also the resolve [to carry through on any deterrent threat](#) it makes.

Given China's A2/AD networks and ability to field a far larger force in its own backyard than the United States can, U.S. policymakers need to start thinking more creatively about how to shape Beijing's calculus. For example, if the U.S. military had the capability to credibly threaten to sink all of China's military vessels, submarines, and merchant ships in the South China Sea within 72 hours, Chinese leaders might think twice before, say, launching a blockade or invasion of Taiwan; they would have to wonder whether it was worth putting their entire fleet at risk.

In part, the United States can develop such approaches to deterrence by using existing capabilities in new ways. Yet new capabilities will also be necessary, and here especially, the Pentagon's current efforts are lagging, notwithstanding some promising exceptions. The Defense Department continues to overinvest in legacy platforms and weapons systems while underinvesting in emerging technologies that will determine who has the advantage in the future. Although the [Defense Innovation Unit](#), Special Operations Command, and various military service organizations are doing a good job of scouting for new, transformative technologies, there is a "valley of death" between demonstrating a prototype of a new capability and getting it produced at scale and into the hands of deployed operators. And the Pentagon still [lacks the tech talent it needs](#)—at all levels, civilian and military—and has failed to give its acquisition workforce the right incentives to adopt cutting-edge technologies, such as artificial intelligence and unmanned systems, rapidly and at scale.

The Defense Department continues to underinvest in technologies that will determine who has the advantage in the future.

There are several steps that the Defense Department can take to accelerate innovation in service of deterrence. In the wake of the pandemic, there will be substantial downward pressure on defense spending, as other priorities compete for funding. A flat or declining [defense budget](#) will require making tough tradeoffs between legacy programs, which alone are insufficient to maintain the U.S. military's edge, and the new capabilities that will ultimately determine military success—such as resilient battlefield networks, artificial intelligence to support faster decision-making, fleets of unmanned systems, and hypersonic and long-range precision missiles.

Continuing to underinvest in these emerging capabilities will ultimately have dire costs for U.S. deterrence. For every existing major program, both defense officials and Congress need to ask whether buying one additional unit or platform is really worth forgoing investment in the new technologies and capabilities that are key to making U.S. forces effective in a far more contested and lethal environment. The secretary of defense should press each service chief to recommend tough choices, and Congress should back up the Pentagon when it makes those choices.

The U.S. military also needs to adapt its own overseas posture while shoring up the capabilities of allies and partners. It should expect that China will try to disrupt the U.S. ability to re-enforce

forward forces from the outset of a conflict, in all domains—air, sea, undersea, space, cyberspace. Accordingly, U.S. forces, bases, logistics networks, and C4ISR networks must be made more survivable and resilient. This will require investments in stronger [cyber- and missile defenses](#); more geographically dispersed bases and forces; more unmanned systems to augment manned platforms; and resilient networks that can continue to function under attack.

China's A2/AD capabilities can be thought of as having different rings of threat intensity that generally correspond to the first island chain (the first arc of archipelagos east of the East Asian continent, stretching from the Kuril Islands, to Japan and Taiwan, and then to the northern Philippines and Borneo) and the second island chain (further to the east, formed by the Bonin Islands, the Volcano Islands of Japan, and the Mariana Islands)—with anything inside the inner ring highly vulnerable to Chinese attack, and anything within and beyond the outer ring less so. Beyond the outer ring, the United States will likely want to maintain bases, fortified against threats, for staging and logistics.

But the overall operating principle should be based on "[places, not bases](#)": within the inner ring, the military should increasingly rely on smaller, more agile force packages such as submarines and unmanned underwater vehicles, expeditionary air units, and highly mobile marine or army units able to move between austere, temporary bases in order to complicate Chinese planning. Also, essential will be taking a more strategic approach to security cooperation, assessing what each U.S. ally and partner can contribute to deterrence and developing multiyear security cooperation plans for each.

The Pentagon will also need to implement a series of acquisition, investment, and workforce-development reforms. Acquisition officials must be trained on best practices for acquiring software and emerging technologies. There must be more funding for turning successful prototypes into successful programs. And to bolster its tech workforce, the department should work with Congress to expand programs that offer scholarships or debt relief to students in a broad array of tech fields in return for government service and to recruit mid- and senior-level talent by expanding fellowships for private-sector technologists. For employees at all levels, it needs to create opportunities for skill development and viable career paths for technical talent that allow for both promotion and continued technical development, including through rotations in the private sector.

Finally, defense officials need to accelerate efforts to develop new operational concepts—new ways in which the military will fight—in order to clarify which capabilities will be essential, or even game changing, and to accelerate their acquisition and delivery into the hands of service members in the field. There are ongoing efforts to develop and test "joint" (that is, applicable across the different military services) operational concepts, such as [Multi-Domain Operations](#), as well as service-specific operational concepts, which aim to erode the adversary's advantage in various ways. Determining which technologies will be essential to these will require iterative, ongoing development and experimentation—with dedicated funding from Congress.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL

Effective deterrence does not depend just on Chinese leaders believing the United States has the capability to thwart any act of aggression; they must also believe it has the will to do so. Today, Beijing has doubts on both scores. Accordingly, along with investments in military capabilities, Washington needs to clarify—and consistently demonstrate—its commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, making clear who and what it is willing to defend. It must deploy more senior officials and additional military forces to the region, to underscore its enduring presence, strengthen its relationships, and counterbalance China's influence. It should conduct more regular military exercises with allies and partners in the region, both to demonstrate capabilities it has already and to accelerate the development of new ones.

Ultimately, competition with China is [far more than a military one](#), and its economic, technological, political, and ideological elements cannot be neglected. The most consequential thing the United States can do is to invest in the drivers of competitiveness at home—especially as it emerges from the current crisis. It is a time for investments in everything from STEM and higher education to critical technology and twenty-first-century infrastructure, such as 5G. It is also a time for restoring a smart immigration policy, welcoming foreign-born talent that poses no risks to national security and encouraging it to stay and build innovative enterprises in the United States.

Competition with China is far more than a military one.

The United States should also leverage its unique advantage of having an unrivaled network of allies and partners around the world. The best way to deal with the challenges China poses, be they [unfair trade practices](#) or orchestrated disinformation campaigns, is by making common cause with allies and partners whenever possible, confronting violations of the rules-based order as a coalition of like-minded states committed to a shared set of norms. The United States should work closely with its allies and partners to make a clear-eyed assessment of what each country can contribute to stabilizing the region and deterring increasingly aggressive behavior. This will also require reassuring them in words and deeds that they can count on the United States to have their backs in disputes with Beijing and ultimately to help defend them against gray-zone coercion or outright attacks.

Washington should spell out to countries in the region the stark contrast between what international rules and norms shaped by Beijing would look like and those the region has enjoyed to date—especially when it comes to enduring norms such as the freedom of navigation and peaceful resolution of disputes. In an Asia dominated by an authoritarian, revisionist China, ships that today can freely navigate the seas would be vulnerable to possible harassment. Decisions taken today by independent governments could increasingly fall prey to coercion. And failure to resist these coercive measures would, in turn, limit the collective ability of the United States and its allies to deter aggression or, if aggression takes place, to reverse it.

Yet even as it strengthens its capacity to deter China, Washington must also reopen a sustained high-level strategic dialogue with Beijing—a practice that every administration since Richard Nixon's has adopted, until the current one. Reestablishing a forum in which China and the United States could regularly discuss their respective interests and perspectives, identify areas of potential cooperation (such as nonproliferation and climate change), and manage their

differences short of conflict is essential; tactical discussions on trade issues are simply not enough. After all, deterrence depends on the clear and consistent communication of interests and intent in order to minimize the risk of miscalculation. Given Beijing's assumption that the United States is preoccupied and in decline, Chinese leaders' propensity to test the limits in areas such as Taiwan or the South China Sea, and the faulty, potentially escalatory assumptions embedded in Chinese military doctrine, such a dialogue cannot come too soon.

- MICHÈLE A. FLOURNOY is Co-Founder and Managing Partner of WestExec Advisors. From 2009 to 2012, she served as U.S. Undersecretary of Defense for Policy.

U.S. fears China attack on Taiwan

By [Bill Gertz](#) - The Washington Times - Wednesday, June 17, 2020

Senior American officials are increasingly worried that stepped-up Chinese threats against democratic Taiwan are signs that Beijing is planning a future military takeover of the island — a move that would trigger a major U.S.-Chinese conflict.

In recent weeks, Chinese officials and state media outlets have escalated their threatening rhetoric against the island state 100 miles off the coast where Nationalists fled at the end of China's civil war in 1949.

An example appeared Wednesday in the online China Daily, one of the central propaganda outlets of the Chinese Communist Party. Noting reports in foreign media of increased concerns about the possible use of force by the People's Liberation Army against Taiwan, the article bore the headline "Secessionists should refrain from provoking Beijing."

It accused Taiwanese President **Tsai Ing-wen** of promoting formal independence from Beijing and stated that if Taipei continued on that course, "Beijing will have to intensify crackdowns on the Taiwan secessionists and use non-peaceful means to safeguard national sovereignty and security."

Two days earlier, a military spokesman at the Chinese Defense Ministry criticized a Taiwan overflight by a U.S. [Air Force](#) C-40 transport, a militarized Boeing 737. Senior Col. **Ren Guoqiang** said the June 9 flight "grossly violated China's territorial sovereignty and seriously undermined peace and stability of cross-strait relations, which was extremely wrong and dangerous."

The spokesman said the PLA has "sufficient capability to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity, protect the common interests of compatriots on both sides of the strait, maintain regional peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, and resolutely thwart any attempt to create so-called 'one China, one Taiwan.'"

Separately, satellite photographs revealed that the PLA has constructed a full-scale replica of Taiwan's presidential palace at a Chinese military base identified in state media as the Zhurihe Combined Tactics Training Base. The model is said to be used by PLA troops preparing to take control of Taipei in a future military conflict, The Drive news outlet reported.

A state-run video from 2015 also showed live-fire exercises by PLA troops, tanks and artillery storming the palace mock-up. Previous satellite images revealed similar replicas in China of Taiwanese military bases and airfields that also are used in assault training.

Increased Chinese pressure on Taiwan comes amid growing tensions in other locations, including Beijing's announced plan to impose new security laws on Hong Kong, in violation of a 1997 Basic Law agreement guaranteeing the former British colony's autonomy for 50 years.

Further east, tension also heightened after PLA and Indian troops clashed in a disputed border region, a confrontation that led to the deaths of some 20 Indian soldiers and an undisclosed number of Chinese troops.

A Trump administration official said, however, that the hottest of the hot spots appears to be Taiwan, and within the White House there is high-level concern that some type of military action against Taipei could take place in the future.

Under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, the U.S. is committed to preventing the forcible reunification of Taiwan with the mainland. To bolster ties with Taiwan, the Trump administration has stepped up arms sales and increased military contacts and activities near Taiwan.

The most recent sign of support was the passage through the Taiwan Strait on June 4 of the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Russell. The date was significant because it was the anniversary of the 1989 Chinese military-led massacre of unarmed protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

In a further show of U.S. force, two [Air Force](#) B-52 bombers on Wednesday conducted long-range training flights from Alaska near Taiwan, passing through the Sea of Japan, East China Sea and South China Sea.

LOSS OF CIA CYBERTOOLS DISCLOSED

A declassified 2017 report by the CIA's WikiLeaks task force provides new details on a major leak of cyberweapons used by the agency.

The report stated that the "Vault 7" documents obtained by the anti-secrecy website were stolen by a CIA employee in the spring of 2016. The theft compromised 180 gigabytes to 34 terabytes of sensitive data — or 11.6 million to 2.2 billion Microsoft Word document pages.

The breach took place at the CIA's Center for Cyber Intelligence (CCI) in Northern Virginia, and the report's authors said tracing the origin has been difficult because of poor security on the center's computer networks.

"We cannot determine the precise scope of the loss because, like other mission systems at that time, [the software development network] did not require user activity monitoring or other safeguards that exist on our enterprise system," the report said.

The stolen software was among the agency's cyberweapons used to conduct cyberattacks and foreign penetrations to obtain intelligence.

"Most of our sensitive cyber weapons were not compartmented, users shared systems administrator-level passwords, there were no effective removable media controls, and historical data was available to users indefinitely," the report said.

"Furthermore, CCI focused on building cyber weapons and neglected to also prepare mitigation packages if those tools were exposed. These shortcomings were emblematic of a culture that evolved over years that too often prioritized creativity and collaboration at the expense of security."

The report said the publication of the cyberweapons by WikiLeaks exposed "multiple ongoing failures," including a lack of computer audit capabilities, poor security management, and a failure to recognize that a person with access to classified information — a so-called "insider threat" — posed a risk to national security.

WikiLeaks obtained secret cybertools from two programs code-named "Confluence" and "Stash" but did not obtain more complete information from a folder called "Gold," which contained all finished tools and source code.

Federal prosecutors charged former CIA engineer **Joshua Schulte** with stealing the cyberweapons in 2018. A jury could not reach a verdict on the case in March, and prosecutors have said they plan to retry the case. Mr. Schulte pleaded not guilty to the espionage-related charges.

The redacted CIA document was made public during Mr. Schulte's trial and was released this week by Sen. **Ron Wyden**, Oregon Democrat.

RUSSIAN BOMBER INCURSION

[Air Force](#) F-22 jets intercepted two Russian bombers and Su-35 escort jets near Alaska on Tuesday night, marking a sharp increase in military missions along the air defense identification zone.

"For the eighth time this year, Russian military aircraft have penetrated our Canadian or Alaskan Air Defense Identification Zones, and each and every time NORAD forces were ready to meet this challenge," said [Air Force](#) Gen. **Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy**, commander of the Northern

Command as well as commander of the U.S.-Canada North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

The Russian aerial incursions have been taking place regularly for years under Russian President **Vladimir Putin**.

Defense analysts say the bomber flights usually are part of practice nuclear strikes on the United States during military exercises, or are designed to test U.S. and Canadian air defenses — to monitor how NORAD responds to various flights near their territory.

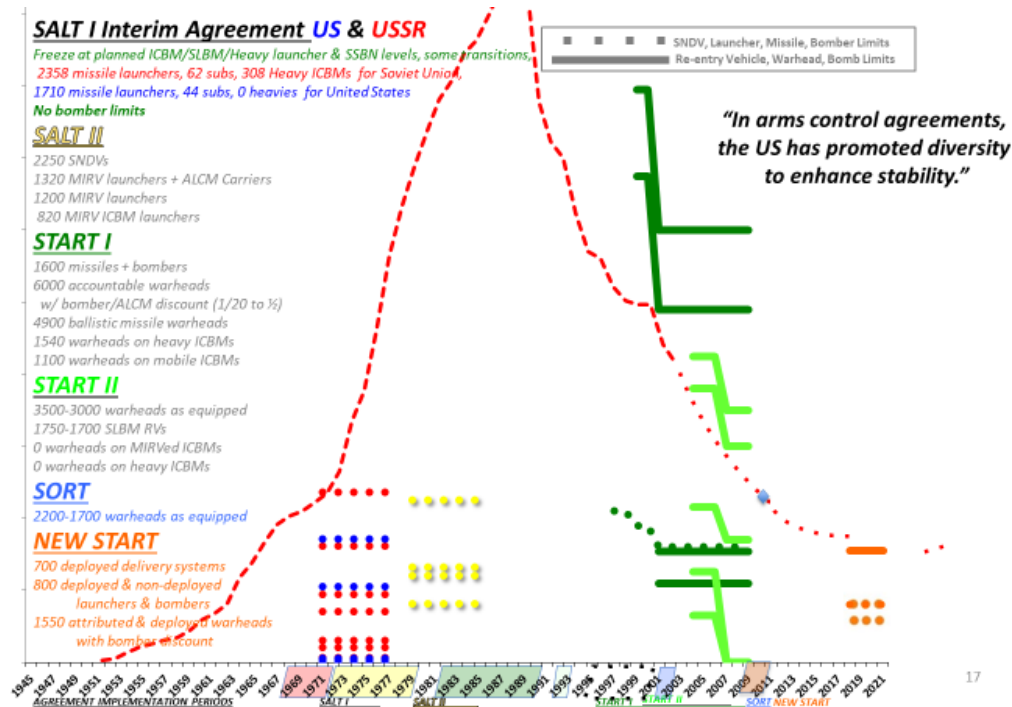
Along with the F-22s, KC-135 refueling tankers and an E-3 airborne warning and control aircraft took part in the two intercepts. The first Russian formation included two Tu-95 Bear bombers, two Su-35 jets and an A-50 airborne warning and control plane. That was followed by two more Bear bombers and an A-50.

“The Russian military aircraft came within 32 nautical miles of Alaskan shores; however, [they] remained in international airspace and at no time did they enter United States sovereign airspace,” NORAD said in a statement.

• *Contact Bill Gertz on Twitter at @BillGertz.*

Ambassador Lehman of LLNL Assesses History of US and Soviet Deployed Nuclear Weapons

Summary: The Soviets saw their number increase tremendously during the 1970s as they heavily MIRVed their missiles. Although SALT II was supposed to cap the growth potential, the theoretical ceiling was huge. Thus, during the period SALT II would have been in effect, the number of operationally deployed warheads was allowed to increase greatly and quickly. Of course, neither SALT I nor SALT II limited total strategically operational deployed warheads. They limited launchers and the number of warheads that could be deployed (tested) on the missiles for those launchers. This is shown graphically, but without the numbers, on SLIDE 17 which shows the growth in Soviet Warheads during what would have been the duration of SALT I and SALT II.



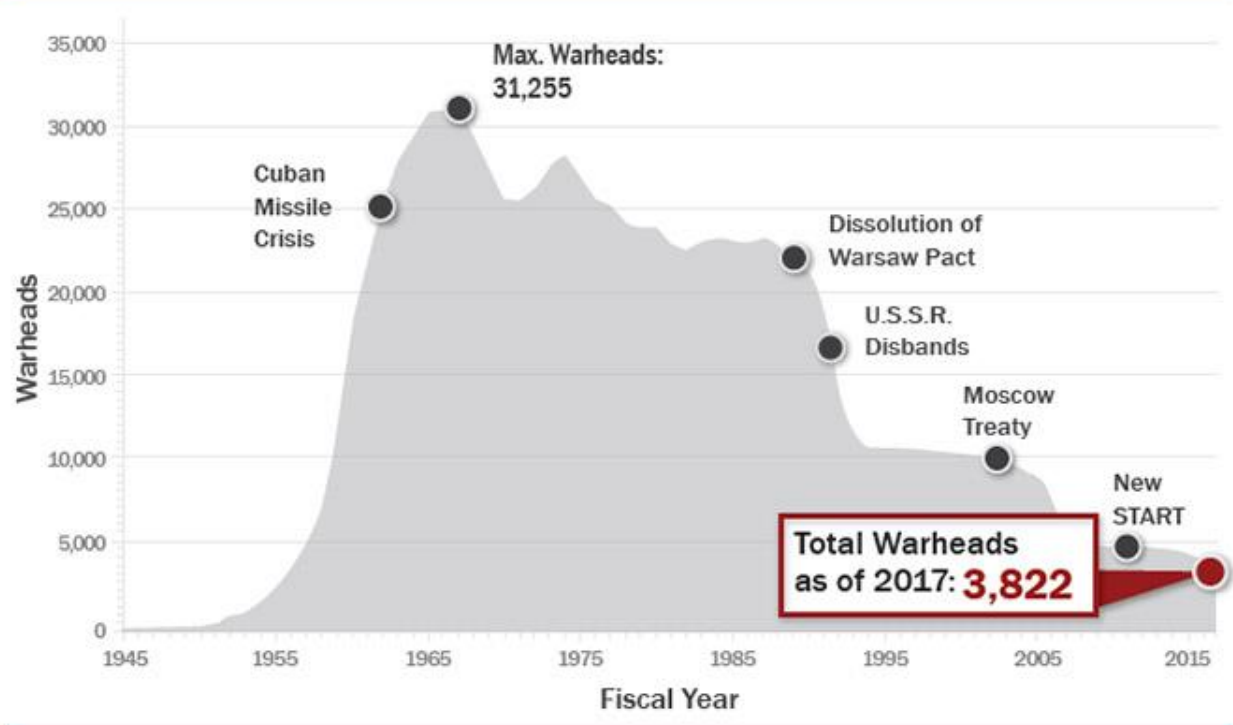
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AGREEMENTS AND THEIR CEILINGS	Date Signed	SNDV, Launcher, Missile, Bomber Limits										Re-entry Vehicle, Warhead, Bomb Limits									
		Subsea ICBM	SLBM	Heavy ICBM	SLBM	Heavy ICBM	SLBM	Heavy ICBM	SLBM	Heavy ICBM	SLBM	Re-entry Vehicle	Warhead	Bomb	Re-entry Vehicle	Warhead	Bomb	Re-entry Vehicle	Warhead	Bomb	Re-entry Vehicle
SALT I (US & USSR)	10/2/72	44	3054	54	710	0	0	0	0	0	0	1600	6000	1540	1100	1540	1100	1540	1100	1540	1100
SALT II	6/18/79	44	3054	54	710	0	0	0	0	0	0	2250	1320	1200	820	0	0	0	0	0	0
START I	7/31/01	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1600	6000	1540	1100	1540	1100	1540	1100	1540	1100
START II	1/3/98	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3500-3000	1750-1700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SORT	3/24/02	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2200	1700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New START	4/8/10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	700	800	1550	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Caution needed in comparing numbers in agreements because of different approaches, including:

- Scope (e.g. SALT I excluded bombers, others address them in various ways)
- Categories (e.g., SALT I & II focus on missile launchers, START I & II focus on accountable warheads by various definitions)
- Reduction Phases (e.g. START I has interim ceilings, SORT has single date)
- Asymmetrical limits (e.g. different ceilings for US and USSR in SALT I, different counting rules for some ALCM carriers in START I)
- Counting rules (e.g. ALCMs not covered in SALT I, ALCM carriers limited in SALT II, ALCMs themselves discounted about 1/2 in START I, discounted approximately 1/8 to 1/20th in New START, counted "as equipped" in START II, and if "operationally deployed" in SORT)
- Interaction of limits (e.g. Most important number in START II actually not in START II, but carries over from START I, where it was not so important, i.e. the 1600 SNDV limit, which when combined with the ban on MIRVed ICBMs and the SLBM RV limits – both limits existing only in START II – encourages diversification of forces to reach overall ceiling)

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SASC Complete Markup of Fiscal Year 2021 NDAA

[SASC summary of the NDAA \[Repeat from June 12, 2020 Weekly\]](#)

Thursday, June 11, 2020

U.S. Senators Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) and Jack Reed (D-R.I.), chairman and ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, announced that the Committee had advanced the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021* on an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 25-2. During the subcommittee and full committee markups of the legislation, the Committee considered 391 amendments and adopted 229 bipartisan amendments. The bill now heads to the Senate floor for consideration.

“This year marks the 60th year in a row that the Committee has fulfilled our Constitutional duty to provide for the common defense by advancing the National Defense Authorization Act — once again with overwhelming support. There’s a reason for this: It’s because this bill is, to its core, bipartisan, reflecting equal input from Republicans and Democrats alike. There isn’t too much Congress does anymore on a bipartisan basis and for so many

consecutive years — but we all agree that supporting our troops and defending our nation are two of our most important priorities,” Senator Inhofe said.

“Building on the last two years, this year’s NDAA charts a decisive course of action to implement the National Defense Strategy, regain a credible military deterrent, and, ultimately, achieve a lasting peace, not only for us, but for our children and grandchildren,” Senator Inhofe said. “It does so by prioritizing strategic competition with China and Russia, particularly in the Indo-Pacific theater, investing in a modern, lethal joint force, spurring innovation at every level of the Pentagon, and, of course, ensuring our troops have the training, equipment, and resources they need to succeed in their missions. I thank Senator Reed for his partnership and the entire Committee for their input and work. Next up — I look forward to another overwhelming show of support when it receives swift consideration on the floor.”

“This bipartisan NDAA is a needed step toward strengthening national security and prioritizing national defense resources. It provides our troops with a well-deserved pay raise and tools to protect the health and well-being of our forces and their families. I commend Chairman Inhofe for his bipartisan leadership, collaboration, and commitment to ensuring our troops have a budget and policies to match their extraordinary courage and sacrifice,” said Senator Reed.

Highlights:

Nuclear Modernization Measures

Improves DOD coordination, insight, and participation in the NNSA budget development process and improves transparency of the NNSA budget for Congress and the public, Prohibits the use of FY21 funding to reduce the quantity or alert status of intercontinental ballistic missiles below 400, Improves cybersecurity requirements for NNSA contractors and subcontractors, Clarifies the role of the Nuclear Weapons Council in validating nuclear weapons requirements, Authorizes certain military construction projects to convert Minuteman III launch facilities to Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent configurations under certain conditions.

The SASC bill, which was approved by the committee 25-2, includes a series of noteworthy funding increases. Here is a rundown:

Budget: It authorizes \$740.5 billion, including \$636.4 billion for the base Pentagon budget, \$69 billion for overseas operations and \$25.9 billion for national security programs under the Energy Department.

Planes: The bill includes \$9.1 billion to buy 95 F-35 fighters — 60 Air Force F-35As, 12 Marine F-35Bs and 23 carrier-based F-35C variants — or 14 more than requested. It also prohibits the

Air Force from retiring the A-10 and from divesting older KC-10 and KC-135 tankers until technical issues with the new KC-46 are fixed.

Ships: Senators boosted funding, but not the number of vessels, for the Navy's shipbuilding budget. The bill authorizes \$21.3 billion — an increase of \$1.4 billion — for seven ships, or one less than requested (one ship requested was previously authorized). **SASC also gave the green light to a two-boat block buy for the Columbia-class ballistic missile sub.**

Indo-Pacific: The bill would also establish a new Pacific Deterrence Initiative to beef up the U.S. military posture to deter China. It would earmark \$1.4 billion in fiscal 2021 and another \$5.5 billion for fiscal 2022.

Covid-19: The bill would authorize \$44 million for vaccine and biotechnology research.

Inhofe and Reed in War on the Rocks: The Pacific Deterrence Initiative - Peace Through Strength in the Indo-Pacific [Repeat from June 12, 2020]

The credibility of American deterrence rests on a simple foundation. America prevents wars by convincing its adversaries they cannot win. Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis [said it](#) succinctly: Deterrence is achieved when the enemy decides, “Not today. You, militarily, cannot win it, so don’t even try it.” Currently, in the Indo-Pacific, that foundation of deterrence is crumbling as an increasingly aggressive China continues its comprehensive military modernization.

This is not a partisan issue. Five years ago, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter [warned](#) that China was modernizing its military “to try to close the gap and erode our superiority in every domain.” Then, two years ago, Mattis [assessed](#) that’s exactly what happened, stating that America’s “competitive edge has eroded in every domain of warfare ... and it is continuing to erode.” Even more bluntly, the bipartisan [National Defense Strategy Commission report](#) cautioned, “America’s military superiority...has eroded to a dangerous degree” to the point that “the U.S. military could lose the next state-versus-state war it fights.”

The best way to protect U.S. security and prosperity in Asia is to maintain a credible balance of military power. But America's ability to do so is at risk. And it's not just U.S. interests at stake. Allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific are watching closely, and wondering whether they will be able to count on America.

With the stakes so high, the time for action is now. That's why this year we intend to establish a Pacific Deterrence Initiative in the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021*. The Pacific Deterrence Initiative will enhance budgetary transparency and oversight, and focus resources on key military capabilities to deter China. The initiative will also reassure U.S. allies and partners, and send a strong signal to the Chinese Communist Party that the American people are committed to defending U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific.

What the Pacific Deterrence Initiative Will Do

The Pentagon is taking challenges in the Indo-Pacific seriously, and has made some important progress implementing the [National Defense Strategy](#) in the region. That's especially true when it comes to rebuilding readiness and investing in modernization. Unfortunately, the progress to date has been insufficient to achieve the ["urgent change at significant scale"](#) that is required. The Pacific Deterrence Initiative will improve the implementation of the *National Defense Strategy* in the Indo-Pacific, and incentivize the Pentagon to better prioritize the region in its annual budget process.

First, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will enhance budgetary transparency and congressional oversight. The *National Defense Strategy* refocused the Pentagon on strategic competition with China and Russia, elevating the priority of the Indo-Pacific and European theaters. But while translating regional priorities into budget priorities is a critical aspect of implementing the *National Defense Strategy*, it's also a major challenge for the current Pentagon budget process.

The one notable exception is Europe. The European Deterrence Initiative, created in 2014 to respond to rising threats from Russia, provides a snapshot of the key efforts the Defense Department is taking to deter aggression in the theater. The [detailed budget justification materials for the European Deterrence Initiative](#) allow Congress to track these efforts over time, assess their progress, and make adjustments when necessary.

The Pacific Deterrence Initiative would serve the same purpose, allowing Congress and the Pentagon to view the defense budget through a regional

warfighting lens while increasing the visibility of options to advance U.S. priorities in the Indo-Pacific.

Second, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will focus resources on key capability gaps to ensure U.S. forces have everything they need to compete, fight, and win in the Indo-Pacific. The current budget process has been heavily tilted towards investments in modernization and readiness. Both are absolutely necessary, but ultimately insufficient on their own to achieve the goals of the *National Defense Strategy*.

In particular, the Pentagon's investments in modern platforms have not been sufficiently matched by investments in the joint and enabling capabilities those platforms require, especially as envisioned by new operational concepts. Posture and logistics remain serious weak spots for credible American deterrence in the Indo-Pacific region, a major point of emphasis in the *National Defense Strategy*, as well as a [recent assessment](#) submitted to Congress by the commander of Indo-Pacific Command, Admiral Phil Davidson.

Investments in theater missile defense, expeditionary airfield and port infrastructure, fuel and munitions storage, and other areas will be key to America's future force posture in the Indo-Pacific. As one example, it doesn't matter how many F-35s the military buys if very few are stationed in the region, their primary bases have little defense against Chinese missiles, they don't have secondary airfields to operate from, they can't access prepositioned stocks of fuel and munitions, or they can't be repaired in theater and get back in the fight when it counts. The Pacific Deterrence Initiative will incentivize increased focus on posture and logistics, and help measure whether these requirements are being matched with resources.

More broadly, we hope that the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will help reorient the Pentagon's approach to planning and budgeting. The United States needs to shift the balance from the current focus on platforms and programs toward the specific missions its warfighters may be called upon to perform. A mission-oriented approach will bring more attention to the joint and enabling capabilities that are essential to their success.

Third, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will reassure allies and partners of America's commitment to the Indo-Pacific region. We hear over and over again from foreign counterparts that they are hedging their bets for the future because they don't know if they can count on the United States. Congress took a major step forward with the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, which clearly outlined U.S. policy and interests in the region on security, economics, and human rights and boosted resources for the State Department and U.S.

Agency for International Development (USAID). The Pacific Deterrence Initiative will be a complementary effort focused on the Department of Defense to demonstrate that America's commitment to the region is bipartisan and enduring. By increasing security assistance resources dedicated to the Indo-Pacific, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will help U.S. allies and partners build the capabilities they need to protect their sovereignty. And the initiative will assure U.S. allies and partners that they will not face the threat of Chinese coercion or aggression alone.

Fourth, and finally, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will help deter Chinese aggression by strengthening the credibility of American deterrence. The initiative will focus resources on efforts to convince the Chinese Communist Party that there is no quick, easy, or cheap victory to be had against the American military. A well-distributed posture will complicate Chinese targeting of U.S. forces and infrastructure. More capable missile defenses at American bases will make them more difficult and costly to strike. Greater numbers of combat-credible U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific will make it harder for China to seize and maintain the advantage early in a conflict. More resilient logistics will make it harder to take U.S. forces out of the fight or delay reinforcements. New land-based, long-range strike capabilities will provide a new source of resilient and survivable U.S. power projection. The Pacific Deterrence Initiative will focus resources on these efforts and others with the aim of injecting uncertainty and risk into Beijing's calculus, leaving just one conclusion: "Not today. You, militarily, cannot win it, so don't even try it."

The Pacific Deterrence Initiative is Only a First Step

The Pacific Deterrence Initiative will not be a panacea. It will not solve every military problem America faces in the Indo-Pacific, let alone the numerous non-military challenges the United States faces there. It is clear that China presents a challenge that requires a comprehensive response that includes a focus on economic security, international development, diplomacy, human rights and democratic norms, and multilateral cooperation. Moreover, while the Pacific Deterrence Initiative is a regionally-focused initiative, we recognize that the challenge from China is global in scale. But it is an essential step to reorganize U.S. thinking and resources around the key priorities for the joint force, and restore the credibility of American deterrence in the Indo-Pacific. The Pacific Deterrence Initiative will help ensure that America's adversaries know that whether it's today or tomorrow, there will never be a good day to test America's military.
