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THE CONGRESSIONAL ROLE IN U.S. MILITARY INNOVATION: PREPARING THE PENTAGON FOR THE WARFIGHTING REGIMES OF TOMORROW

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Featured Speakers:

THE HONORABLE RANDY FORBES (R-VA)
U.S. House of Representatives

THE HONORABLE JIM LANGEVIN (D-RI)
U.S. House of Representatives

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. O'HANLON: Well, good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to Brookings and Carnegie. I'm Mike O'Hanlon from Brookings and we're grateful to our friends here in Carnegie to be allowing us to use their space as we have construction going on both sides with AEI moving in next door and Brookings redoing its auditorium this summer.

We are thrilled today to have two of Congress' leading lights on defense policy, Randy Forbes from Southeastern Virginia and Jim Langevin from Rhode Island, from the 2nd District there. And they are both members of the House Armed Services Committee. They are both members of the Seapower and Force Projection Subcommittee, where Congressman Forbes is the subcommittee chairman. They both have a number of other distinguished positions and important positions in the Congress. Just to mentioned a couple of them: they both have great interest in cyber and China, and so Congressman Langevin is the chairman of the Cybersecurity Caucus in the Congress and Congressman Forbes is the, again, the leader of the China Caucus. And so they both have additional interests above and beyond what they're doing with their committee assignments.

Congressman Langevin is also the chairman -- or excuse me, a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. And they both just contribute enormously across many areas of public policy, obviously with defense policy being one of them.

Our topic today -- and I'll briefly introduce the topic, then ask each of them to greet us and say whichever words of broad framing they'd like, and then we'll go to a discussion up here, followed by your questions a little bit later on. The topic today is Congress' role in defense and specifically in defense innovation. And I think this is a very

important topic.

Obviously, both the gentlemen to my left here are members of Congress. I used to work for the Congressional Budget Office. Maybe we're all a little pro Congress, but I think it's worth pointing out at a time when Congress is often criticized for its broader role in public policy and, of course, it's easy to demonize this inchoate body of 535 people and just sort of decide you're going to have a grudge against the whole group of them, but we know individually many of our members and senators are popular, but above and beyond that, we also know that they make a big difference in national policy and, quite often, for the better. And so often when there's a disagreement between the administration and the Congress, whichever party is in the White House, whichever party might be leading a house of Congress at a given moment, the refrain is always, well, Congress is giving the Pentagon weapons they don't even want or it's cutting weapons that the Navy or Air Force or Army or Marine Corps say they desperately need, or what have you. But if you look historically at much of our defense policymaking, Congress' role has been very important and often has been vindicated historically.

When I was at CBO, Sam Nunn and Les Aspin were the committee chairmen, and John Warner and others were important on the Republican side. And at this period of time, a lot of the thinking about how to shape America's post-Cold War military was being done in the halls of Congress. And we saw a very, I think, productive dynamic between Secretary of Defense Cheney and the first Bush administration at that time with the congressional leadership of both parties and both armed service committees.

And this has been a trend throughout. I'm suspecting that Congressman Forbes may talk a little bit about unmanned aerial systems, where Congress has been very important in sometimes pushing the Air Force and Navy and others to do a little

more than they might have wanted to at a given moment. And again, I think they've been vindicated by history.

So both gentlemen have a lot to say and contributed a great deal to national defense policy.

With that, I would just ask you to join me in welcoming them here to Brookings. (Applause)

And Congressman Forbes, over to you.

CONGRESSMAN FORBES: Good. Well, Michael, first of all, thank you and Brookings for having us here and it's just a delight for me to be here with Jim. And I want to tell you this, and not because he's sitting here, you can't get a better mind on national defense than Congressman Langevin. And it's an honor for me to, one, serve with him, but be here, so pay close attention to what he says because it's -- I can tell you he thinks through these issues very, very well, very principled on his stands on all of them. So, Jim, thank you for your service in Congress and your friendship.

He and I are both just delighted to be here. And I'm just going to try and open up a few avenues of thought for you and then look forward to your questions.

One of the things that I would say at the outset is that we listen to a lot of individuals: think tanks, writers, retired general, admirals, people currently in the military. I think it would be fair to say that the consensus among all of them today is that we are living in probably the most dangerous times we have lived in the last several decades. And that's almost to the man or woman that we would talk to.

The second thing is that we probably have more people getting up around the world today planning and training on how to kill Americans -- as much as we hate to talk about that -- than we have had in decades. And so the question that we must wrestle with is how do we best defend against that?

And when you talk about having a forum like this, I'm so appreciative -- as I was telling Michael coming -- of just having this forum because with all the issues that are going on, we find it more and more difficult just to get Congress sometimes to talk about national defense. But then as a subset beneath national defense, to talk about innovation, which is so crucial, is even more special. So, Michael, for that reason we appreciate so much you teeing this up today.

Let me, also, if I could tell you that I spend a great deal of my time getting up in the morning and going to bed at night worrying about the next game-changer. Whether it is a game-changer that we have or whether it is a game-changer that one of our competitors or perhaps our enemies have, it is something that we are constantly focused on how to prepare for that, how to make sure we are doing it the right way.

And when you talk about innovation, oftentimes we tend to talk about technology. One of my fears is that most Americans today believe that somehow or the other we have a presumption that we are going to have the competitive edge when it comes to technology and that presumption is based, I believe, on false evidence, which is that just because we've had it over the last several decades that somehow or the other we are destined to have it in the future. And I don't think that necessarily is true.

I think, therefore, it's important when we look at innovation, we sometimes think of it as simply the next big technological breakthrough. It is far more than that. It is not just the technological piece of equipment or a concept that you come up with, but it's how we create the culture, how we create the training, how we are able to integrate that into our operations that may very well determine our success for the future.

When you look at just something like the Colt pistol, the United States military had it. They just didn't know what to do with it and discarded it until the Rangers

came along and said this is how we use it. We have to constantly be looking at that.

And the last thing I'll just tell you is this, Michael said this, but I think it's true, Congress plays a huge role in this because the danger we have is not that we don't have incredible, brilliant minds across this country. Oftentimes when we talk about our fears about innovation I'll have people push back and say wait a minute, we've got some of the smartest people in the world, and that is true. But I remember years ago watching a basketball game -- and I hate to use sports analogies, but I'll just use this one -- I think it was the University of North Carolina playing in a game and they had Michael Jordan on their team, one of the most prominent basketball players of all-time. But the coach kept him on the bench because he had four fouls and didn't put him in until late in the game, and they lost the game. So just having the best people, the most competent people in the world, the brightest minds in the world isn't enough unless we can find ways to transition them into those processes that we need and make sure it is creating the kind of -- meeting the needs that our national defense has.

And just two things I'll close with. The apparatus at the Pentagon is geared to do just the opposite. We are geared to protect our legacy systems. We're geared to protect the things we've all been trained on for years. We are geared to say let's have zero risk and just salute and continue to do things the way they are. And that's especially difficult when you've been dominated for several decades. That's something we have to analyze and look at.

And then the last part of this is what the whole topic is about: what Congress should be doing. And the worry with Congress is you're always trying to find that balance between not being an obstacle, not standing in the way of what we need to do with national defense, but still serving as that catalyst to be able to ask the questions, the tough questions, and stick with it to make sure we're getting the answers we need, so

that the next game-changer in the world is our game-changer. It's not one of our opponents or one of our enemies.

So thank you for having this forum and, Michael, thank you. Jim, thank you for being here. And I'm looking forward to hearing Jim's remarks.

MR. O'HANLON: Very good. Thank you, Congressman.

Congressman Langevin, over to you.

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: Very good. Thank you, Michael. I appreciate you having us here today and I want to thank Brookings for sponsoring this event. I have been a long-time fan of Michael's. We met many years ago at the Naval War College when he was the keynote speaker at one of the Current Strategy forums and I've followed him ever since and always enjoyed having the privilege of hearing him, especially when he testified before Congress.

And let me just say about my chairman. I'm a big fan of Chairman Forbes and we work very closely together on a number of issues. It's a privilege for me to be able to serve on the subcommittee that he chairs. And we're of like minds on so many issues, especially he need to be forward-thinking about where our defense capabilities really need to go, where they need to be. And he's a very, very thoughtful and intelligent member of Congress who I look up to and consider a go-to person when I have a question about defense-related issues. And so, Chairman, thank you for your kind words, but it's a privilege to be serving with you and to be with you today.

CONGRESSMAN FORBES: Thank you.

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: So I want to begin by echoing much of what Chairman Forbes had to say, and I share the concern of the challenges that we face as a country, challenges we face for our military. I, first of all, am so grateful and am always in awe of the men and women who serve in our nation's military. They are -- I'm

reminded every day sitting on the House Armed Services Committee of their extraordinary dedication, patriotism, the courage that they display each and every day going to work to protect this nation and our way of life. And their sacrifice can never be taken for granted or underestimated.

I also know that we have the most powerful military on the face of the planet, both because of their dedication and their service most especially, but also because we have some amazing companies and individuals across the nation that build the most amazing capability that keep our warfighters safe, strong, and highly effective. And so we have, in many ways, the best of both worlds. And I want to make sure that, of course, we stay the best, most effective military on the face of the planet. And in order to do that, we have to be much more forward-thinking and smarter about the way that we do things and where we make our investments than we ever have been in the past.

If you remember, we won the Cold War because not just our quantitative advantage, but it was our qualitative advantage that really ensured and helped us to win the Cold War. And my concern is that going forward, as asymmetric threats increase, as dual technologies proliferate, that we are in great danger of losing that capability.

For example, cyber is something that I specialize in quite a bit and have long been concerned about the threat of cyber attack or cyber intrusions, the vulnerabilities that we face. As you know, the Internet was never built with security in mind. And yet today, we are so incredibly dependent on it and yet it's fraught with vulnerabilities, we need to find a way to do a better job of closing those vulnerabilities, recognizing that we will never be 100 percent secure in cyberspace. There is no way to ever guarantee -- and anyone that would ever tell you that we can get to a point where we're 100 percent secure in cyberspace, they're misleading you. They're not being realistic or candid. And so it's about managing vulnerabilities and closing that aperture of

vulnerability to a much more manageable risk level than where we are now.

And it's an incredible asymmetric weapon that an adversary or an enemy could use against us, whether it is a terrorist organization, criminal enterprise, or a nation state. The fortunate thing right now is that the worst weapons are in the hands of mainly nation states right now that have the capability, but not necessarily the intent yet, to use them against us.

And then you have groups like Al Qaeda or other terrorist enterprises that have the intent, but not the worst weapons. And the question is how long is it before the worst weapons are in the hands of the worst actors? And so these are the things that keep me up late at night and the challenge of how do we do a better job being more forward-thinking, more aggressive in addressing those vulnerabilities.

And again, we do have the greatest military on the face of the planet. I want to make sure that we stay there. So I'm reminded of the old -- the Wayne Gretzky quote, and I paraphrase in saying that he says that the good hockey players are where the puck is. The great hockey players are where the puck will be. And so I want to make sure that we're not just where the threats are right now or maximizing our capabilities as far as we know them conventionally, but how do we look down the road and bring us to capabilities that will make us much safer in unanticipated areas.

So I think it's vitally important that we invest in things like cybersecurity, both offense and defense. We also need to make sure that we're investing in game-changing technologies, like directed energy or railguns. One might think of -- might not have thought about missile technology, per se, that could threaten us as an asymmetric threat, and yet when you see how quickly and rapidly our enemies or adversaries are proliferating missile technology -- short-, medium-, and long-range missiles -- and the expensive targets that hold hostage, like aircraft carriers, and you -- and also the fact that

although we are developing significant kinetic abilities to be able to intercept missiles, we don't have enough kinetic nor could we afford to build enough kinetic defenses to intercept those incoming missiles. So directed energy, things like railguns are going to become vitally important going forward to keep us safe against those types of threats.

The last thing I'll mention before we go to discussion is the issue of intelligence, and I'll put on my HPSCI hat for a minute. I consider it a great honor to be able to serve on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. And I always wanted to serve on that committee and I always focus a great deal of my time and energy on intelligence because I've always believed that good intelligence is always going to be the pointy tip of the spear.

Good intelligence is a force multiplier. If you have good intelligence, you know where to target your resources, you know where the bad guys are, and your kinetic or other capabilities are going to be much more effective if you know exactly where to target them. So good intelligence going forward, both human, SIGINT, IMINT, all the INTs, all of those things are going to become vitally more important than they ever have been going forward.

So the challenges are great, the threats are great, but done right America will be safer going forward if we can be more forward-thinking and, hopefully, push the Pentagon in a direction that, again, will make them far more capable. And as both Michael and Randy have said, you know, there are times when we have to push the Pentagon to move. It is such a big apparatus and there's a number of cases in point as to, you know, how they had to be pushed along, going back to the 1920s, when the Navy was somewhat resistant to experiment with and start building aircraft carriers. The Predator drones and unmanned aircraft that we're all familiar with now, there was great reluctance to incorporate those into our forces. Now they're a vital weapons capability.

The MRAPs that Congress pushed the Pentagon to build -- all of those things are just examples of how Congress does have a vital role in moving us forward and making sure that we're taking advantage of game-changing technologies.

So thank you for having me here today. It's great to be with Chairman Forbes and with you, Michael. And thank Brookings for hosting us again. Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you both very much. And what I want to do now, just a couple of rounds of questions up here, is to delve a little deeper into some of the issues we've already touched upon and heard the congressmen raise in their remarks. I'll just do a little bit more detail on each of those.

So what I'd like to do is first ask each of the gentlemen to perhaps explain a little bit about where Congress has had an important role in innovation so far. So this is a little bit of a historical question, although it could be very much from your terms in office. Each of the distinguished gentlemen up here has been in Congress for about 14 years now, so they're basically 21st century guys and they've seen a fair amount in that century already, but they have perspectives that go back even further. So I want to ask you to maybe each give us just a concrete example of where Congress has really helped push an innovation, either during your term in office or even previously. And then that will set up the next question, which is where should we really be going next?

So, you know, again, a specific example or two to add to what you've already said by way of general introduction. And then I may ask a question about current crises and some of the roles you have in following and advising on these, as well, depending on how we're doing on time before turning to all of you.

So, again, if I could ask each of you. First, Congressman Forbes, could you give us a good example, just so people fully appreciate the role of Congress in

defense innovation, of where you think Congress has played a big historical role in promoting a system the Pentagon may not have initially wanted or maybe even in just improving the way the Pentagon pursued a new technology, a new concept, whatever innovation you want to talk about?

CONGRESSMAN FORBES: Well, I think Jim outlined them pretty well if you look at some of the flagships. If you go back to the '20s and '30s, it wasn't just Congress. It was a congressman. Carl Vinson was probably as important as anybody in the country. And when he teamed up with the President, they were able to really lay a foundation that prepared this nation to be ready to get prepared for war, too. And if you look at our aircraft carriers and even our submarines, if it wasn't for Congress we'd have probably gone in a totally different direction because we saw the Pentagon pushing back against them. They'd have probably used the carriers more as a ISR capability than they would have a platform to project power.

You also heard Jim mention the drones, which I think Congress was hugely important in keeping that program alive and focusing on where it was going. Even the Tomahawk missiles and where we're doing there.

I think if you look over and over throughout history, Congress has had a major role to play by doing two things. One is not just seizing on a programmatic thing and forcing that to happen, but to even making the Pentagon re-ask the questions that they need to ask and to buttress those. So I think if I were to look at the flagships that were there, no pun intended, it would be that carrier, where our submarine fleet's going, drone, Tomahawk missiles that are the big things Congress, I think, played a major role in making happen.

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: Thanks, Chairman. And so I'll build on that to look at -- and I mentioned this already -- the Predator drones, both in their ability to

deliver kinetic weapons from an unmanned platform which keep our personnel safe not having to go actually into these high-threat, denied areas, but also the capability of the Predators and other unmanned platforms in terms of their ISR capabilities.

Again, you have things like full-motion video that the Predators can provide. You know, you can actually see our enemies doing things that would be designed to harm our troops, planting IEDs and such. And so you know where they are and you'll be able to take them out before they can put our troops in harm's way. So, again, that was an area where the military really needed to be pushed.

One of my biggest concerns, it's not that we won't develop the capability, and look at drones or directed energy. My concern is equally on the policy end of it and the reluctance of big military to want to incorporate new technologies, moving away from those old legacy systems, getting away from that comfort zone of doing what we do because that's they way we've always done it, but pushing them to get into new areas, adapting this new capability rapidly enough so it has a meaningful impact in terms of keeping our troops safe and keeping them highly effective.

MR. O'HANLON: And can I just build on that? Because you set up sort of a perfect segue to the next question. Maybe I can just stay with you, Congressman, and work back this way. An example of where today the services continue to need the push or need the oversight, need the alternative point of view from Congress, which, of course, actually writes the appropriations bill, so we sometimes have to remember our basic constitutional 101s. You folks actually control it. The Pentagon can offer up requests and arguments, but you folks actually wrote the appropriations bills.

So can you give an example perhaps in today's debate, because you did a very nice job, both of you, outlining some of the broad areas we have to worry about with cyber, with robotics, with unmanned systems, a number of other things, but maybe

one or two concrete examples of where you sense that it's really important in this year's appropriations and authorization debate or in the next couple of years as you would anticipate the debate going forward?

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: Sure. So in one of the areas that I'm following very closely is in the area of directed energy. The directed energy, laser technology, laser weaponry, for example, is getting to the point where it's reaching maturity levels whereby some of it is ready to be fielded. Some of these capabilities, both in terms of directed energy, in terms of a weapon system, but also in developing kind of standoff capabilities that would keep our troops safe, the capability may be there, but I sense a real reluctance on the part of the Pentagon to incorporate it because there hasn't been a policy decision as to how to use it, for example. Microwave technology is a good example.

I am pleased to see that at least the Navy in this case is moving forward with a directed energy system, a solid-state laser that will be fielded on the *USS Ponce* that'll be a platform. It will be actually in-theater, so it'll be a test platform, but it also will be operational. They recently had a very successful test where they were able to shoot down a drone. It's not to the level where it can yet shoot down an incoming missile, for example, but that will come as power levels increase and the capability is mastered and better understood. But I just want to make sure that the policy is in place to be able to actually use it.

Cyber is another area where not so much that the Pentagon hasn't embraced it. Obviously, they're doing more. The Congress, I think, our role is to help shape both the policies of how cyber is used and how the Pentagon structures its cyber capabilities. It has to do with Cyber Command moving from just NSA to now Cyber Command and how that's going to look going forward with all the services having cyber

capabilities, but making sure that there's not overlap and duplication of effort; making sure that we're streamlining and using those capabilities most effectively.

MR. O'HANLON: Could I follow up before we go to Congressman Forbes on the directed energy issue? Because, of course, a lot of people are now fascinated by Israel's success not with a directed energy system, but a short-range missile defense or anti-artillery or even mortar system with their Iron Dome concept. And this raises questions about the plausible range.

I was very glad that you emphasized that, you know, the power levels are such that now you can maybe shoot down a drone, maybe soon it'll be a missile. But I assume you're talking about terminal defense of a specific ship, for example, or a specific military unit.

As you look out 10 and 15 years, do you think we can even get beyond that to the point where you could start to have area defenses that would be based on directed energy or is that really too far away to talk about just now?

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: Without question, I'd say certainly within the next decade you're going to be up with the megawatt class range where you're going to be able to shoot down incoming missiles that would be directed at our ships, so not only for ship defense, troop defense, but long-range, I hope, that it would be even used in terminal defense at some of the hardest targets, like potentially ICBMs. But, again, it's going to take continued investment in these areas.

I know all the services are invested in the technology, so my concern, you know, long term is not the development of the system. It's the how do we incorporate it? And I've been pushing the Pentagon to make sure that they're ready for it when it's finally here.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Congressman Forbes, same question to

you, please.

CONGRESSMAN FORBES: First of all, Jim's exactly right. I think directed energy, probably five years ago, Jim, we thought it was tomorrow. You know, it was futuristic. And all of a sudden, we woke up and it was here today, and I think that's where it is. I think let me offer, in terms of Congress' role, perhaps what it can do in an industry, a system, a program, and a culture.

Industry, I think modeling and simulation. We need to be leaders in pushing the Pentagon and the Department of Defense to do far more modeling and simulation than they are because I think that that's a great opportunity for us, especially with cutting budgets the way we are, to be able to get a greater utilization in our planning and our capabilities there. And the Pentagon has been the driver of this, and I think in the last few years they have put the brakes on that and slowed down. But if you talk folks over there, they are recognizing now they need to do more with that.

The great thing, too, if they plant a seed, then the private sector can do 10 times what they were doing with that. That's one.

System-wide, I think testing and evaluation are things that we can do now. We have the great capabilities to do that, but we need to make sure we're doing it in a future-looking methodology because we can do it -- one, we can do it better, we can do more of it, and we can do it far cheaper if we do that.

Third thing, programmatically I think UCLASS is a perfect example. I think UCLASS will help decide the relevance of our aircraft carriers 20 years from today. And I think the way we pour that concrete will determine whether we're going to have a sophisticated ISR capability platform or whether we're going to have a platform that can have a deep strike capability. And why that's going to be important: if it's an integration with our carrier wing I think it does a lot of things. I think it, one, makes our carriers much

more relevant in projecting power, but the second thing is I think it's going to be a huge cost imposition strategy on some other countries, which is a time that we need to do that.

The final thing I would say Congress needs to play a role in is the whole culture because what happens right now is we are really unilaterally disarming for a number of reasons. First, are our compensation packages. It is what it is and we have to look at that at some point in time and ask a lot of questions about can we have a different packaging which perhaps meets the needs better of our men and women who are serving in the service, but also doesn't continue to drain our capabilities the way the current compensation package is?

The second thing is healthcare. The cost of healthcare is enormous. We just have to get our hands around that.

The third thing is the acquisition process itself. Whenever you have 40 different approvals, it makes it very difficult to not see our costs spiraling out of control.

Now, the reason all that's important for innovation is this. When you have tighter budgets driven by those three items I just suggested, then what happens is members of Congress are like anybody else, they're going to tend to be more parochial, so they'll reach out to protect the National Guard unit in their area or perhaps a facility that's near them. But research and development is something that's always easy to grab and cut because it's normally not just in somebody's backyard. You know, it's kind of floating out there. I think we have to create a culture at the Pentagon that says we're not going to cut research and development short and we're going to start finding ways to reward innovative thinkers instead of penalizing them. And I think that's a huge role Congress can play.

MR. O'HANLON: Excellent. So what I'd like to do now before opening up is to ask you each about a current issue that's in the news that integrates crisis

management with military modernization because you're both thoughtful on both issues. And so I want to pose one question about Iraq and Syria to you, maybe starting with Congressman Langevin, and then on China to Congressman Forbes. And either of you can comment on both, but I'll start, as I say, with one of you on each.

So on the Iraq-Syria issue, Congressman, it appears right now we've obviously got a big mess and there's been a fair amount of partisan, you know, blamesmanship about who caused it more: George Bush or Barack Obama? I'm not interested in that question today unless you want to go there, and my guess is neither one of you really does because it's a future problem now for us to deal with going forward. And this is a sanctuary that is bigger than anything an Al Qaeda affiliate's ever had before and so we've got a problem as a nation regardless of the origins.

Because you both think a lot about innovation in defense and about intelligence and about finding targets and so forth, I wonder if you have any broad guidance that you think we need to keep in mind as a nation, not necessarily specific recommendations about exactly what to do next week or next month, but some broad guidance about the kinds of military tools we may need to ultimately consider either employing ourselves or making sure the Iraqis and the Syrian opposition have to be able to deal with this very industrial-scale extremist group known as ISIL or ISIS or now the Islamic State. They call themselves the Islamic State because they actually control territory and they're running a quasi-country at the moment. And so they've dropped the last two letters of their acronym and just call themselves the Islamic State and, frankly, they can back it up by the fact that they're now governing about 5 million people.

So do you have any thoughts on what we're perhaps going to be, you know, required to do as a nation, not necessarily with our own military, but in helping the Iraqis and other regional actors deal with this big new threat?

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: So I guess although you might want to have me answer it militarily, let me say I'm going to start by saying that this in Iraq, in particular, is more of a political problem in that Maliki has been an unmitigated disaster as a prime minister. And we warned him that he was being too exclusive and he's got to be more inclusive. And clearly, not giving the Sunnis a place to go, they had nothing to lose and hence ISIS has grown in their influence and now we are where we are.

So, you know, either one of two things has to happen: either Maliki's got to go and you need someone in there that is more inclusive or he's going to have to become more inclusive than he has been in the past. I don't know that he can survive. He may be too much in terms of damaged goods and maybe you need someone new there, but, again, this is more of a political problem.

I personally believe that the -- I think it's going to be hard for ISIS to govern, per se, long term because I don't really believe that the Iraqi population really wants their kind of Sharia law. They don't want to live under that, per se. But I think that for right now, since there's no love lost for Maliki and the way he's running Iraq, I think that, you know, they're -- probably the population is putting up with ISIS right now. So the long term, we need more of a political solution.

But I will say in terms of its threat to America, the Islamic State, if you will, and also what's going on in Syria is far more dangerous than Al Qaeda in a pre-9-11 Afghanistan ever was. And I asked this question directly of Director Brennan when he was before us and the Intelligence Committee, what is more dangerous to America, whether it's a pre-9-11 Afghanistan and the threat that Al Qaeda faced or the threat we're facing now with ISIS in Syria? And, you know, hands down there's no comparison that we are much more threatened now. The presence of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan was in terms of a couple hundred. Now we're talking about tens of thousands of these foreign

fighters, ISIS fighters, that are in both Syria and Iraq.

And my concern from an intelligence point of view is the amount of Westerners that are there, and the number is significant, whether there are U.S. citizens that are over there fighting that are eventually going to come home or our Western allies, whether it's European or Australian or New Zealand. Those with Western passports are going to go back there and then question is what do they do and what threats do they pose?

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Do you care to comment on that or shall I go straight to the China question?

CONGRESSMAN FORBES: I'll supplement.

MR. O'HANLON: Thanks.

CONGRESSMAN FORBES: You want to do it with China?

MR. O'HANLON: Well, okay, yeah, so I'll put the China question on the table. And actually you're both very well positioned given the districts you represent, given the history you've both got in the Congress of addressing this, so, again, maybe we can start with you, Congressman Forbes, and then see if Congressman Langevin wants to respond, also.

But my question is about what's commonly called in the Pentagon Air-Sea Battle. And, of course, this is a big concept that most people in this room are familiar with, not necessarily the general public writ large. It's a set of innovations, a set of ideas that talk about everything from military modernization to war planning and how we should be thinking about future responses to countries like China that have long-range weaponry increasingly precise, increasingly threatening to a number of our platforms.

You represent a district that is good at innovation, but is also good at old-fashioned, you know, big boats. And some people say the big boats are becoming

vulnerable and we shouldn't build as many of them. You talked about long-range unmanned systems operating off carriers. I assume that's part of your answer. And what we should do to make these ships less vulnerable is allow them to operate from further away with longer-range platforms.

But I just wanted to ask you to interpret in your own mind how we need to focus on future naval modernization and Air Force modernization, you know, and think about Air-Sea Battle, so that we get the mix of capabilities correct at a time when some of the older assets are becoming more vulnerable, and yet they still may have a role; where China at some level is making it harder for us to operate closer to its shores, and yet we still need to, to be able to reassure our allies. So it's a complicated mix and I just wanted to ask you what do you think is the right mix of American naval and air force capabilities that will best address this growing threat?

CONGRESSMAN FORBES: First of all, Michael, wonderful question. I could take two hours to answer that question. Let me just ditto kind of Jim's comments on Syria and Iraq, so that I don't have to address that too much longer.

But secondly to say your question kind of is the core of what we're talking about here. When you're talking about innovation or you're talking about big boats, none of that is going to work if you don't have the right strategy to incorporate all of that into. And so when you're talking about innovation and you're looking at the world today, we tend to have these blinders that think it's just about putting a lot of good engineers in a room and coming up with the next big technology. It is far more than that. The world as we look at it today is not a linear thinking process. It's a multifaceted process that we've got to have the right mix. So whether you're looking at China or Iran or many other countries in the world, if they start developing A2AD defenses the Air-Sea Battle concept will help us with those defenses.

But on a bigger picture we have to ask why are we having the big boats? Why are we having the innovation in the first place? It's not just to win the next fight. It's to stop the next fight from happening. And I would suggest to you that as we look at all of that, it requires three things.

The first thing is it requires that we have the right strategy. The second is that we are able to articulate that strategy consistently and clearly so our allies understand it, can come alongside of us, and our enemies understand it. But the third thing is that we have the capacity and the capability to make sure that strategy actually has some teeth to it.

Now, without being partisan, because we have people on my side of the aisle and people on Jim's side of the aisle becoming more and more isolationist, you know, in how we're looking at it, I would say over the last several years we've just had the strategy wrong, and I'll take you around the globe. Number one concern the Russians wanted was to get our missile defense system out of Europe. We gave it to them. I think we then lit a green light that said you can do anything you want to in Europe. As you know, we put that on the back of the Navy, but we didn't give the Navy any additional resources, so we have huge gaps in that missile defense system.

You know, then if you move to Iraq -- or let's move to Iran. Number one thing they wanted, of course, we know was to get rid of the sanctions. We just gave it to them.

The number one thing the Afghan insurgents wanted was a time-certain because if I know when you're leaving, I can come to Jim and say, all right, you support the United States, but on this date at this time we're going to come get you and your family.

Then let's move to China. Number one thing the Chinese wanted was to

keep a lid on our Navy because our Navy is going to be the one thing that keeps China from doing some of the things it wants to do in the world. So what did we see? We saw a budget come out that took a carrier out of our fleet; beached half of our cruiser fleet, which is our muscle; was not given the Marines the amphibious ship they need; and also talking about beaching six destroyers next year. I think that's a terrible strategy.

And then go to North Korea. The number one thing the North Koreans wanted was to get rid of the landmines along the DMZ, and the administration was actually moving towards doing that. Remember, these are not the old landmines that you planted 20 years ago and a child steps on them. These have to be activated and then they're deactivated within about 48 hours afterwards.

So I would say that before I can tell you the right mix, I have to say we've got to change our strategy. We've got to then communicate that very clearly to our allies.

Over and over I'm having prime ministers, defense ministers, and ambassadors come in my office and say we don't know what your strategy is right now, and they want to come alongside of us to supplement what we're doing. So when you ask about the Navy, it's important that the Japanese work with us so that we can supplement what we're doing with undersea warfare, that the Australians do the same thing.

And let me just tell you when it talks about communicating it, I have enormous respect for the CNO. I think he's a wonderful man, does a great job. But when he responds to a question at the War College about how we talk about China and he says that just to talk about it publicly goes over the line and we shouldn't be doing that, you have to stand back and say, oh, my gosh, now the Chinese have a veto on what we can even talk about. I think that's wrong.

Then it comes to your question about capacity and capability. One thing

we know is that almost everybody we talk to now says the minimum level of ships we need in the United States Navy is going to be 306 ships. That's the Navy's own minimal amount that we're going to need. Many people think we need as many as 346, 348. But let's take both of that off the table and look at what Admiral Locklear testified before our committee. He said if we move to 260 ships, we cease to be a superpower and we become a regional power. If you look next year, according to the Navy ship-building plan, we move to 274 ships. That's heading closer to 260 than it is to 306 ships.

So, Michael, I think the thing we've got to do is change that direction and I think we'll send the message to the world that we're going to have that presence and that presence is going to be, for the next decade or two, United States Navy.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Congressman, you care to weigh in?

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: Sure. So I'll just briefly comment. You know, one of the things, probably to state the obvious, is that on a lot of these things, the pressure that we face, hopefully we'll be able to avoid sequestration. If we can avoid sequestration that's going to put us in a much better place and allow both our military planners and leaders at the Pentagon to plan and have certainty going forward, as well as the industry that are building the capabilities that we rely on. So we're hopeful that we're going to move in that direction.

Let me just go back to the issue of China and it really does speak to the A2AD threats that we face and the defenses that we're going to have to build up. And it's why, I believe, that things like ISR and unmanned capabilities are going to be exponentially more important going forward. There are places we're not going to be able to get into and that also hold our carriers, our carrier battle groups at risk. As they get more and more sophisticated in developing their anti-ship missiles, it pushes our carriers back if we don't have robust defenses that would allow us to go into denied areas. So

the more robust our ability, our capabilities are being able to defend the fleet or other areas of interest, the greater our ability to go closer in to shore, closer in to denied areas, whether it -- god forbid, you know, something were ever to break out or conflict with China, which I hope never happens, but also looking at other areas that have robust defenses that keep us out of those areas, for example, Syria or North Korea.

And as time goes on -- and China, as well -- as radar technology is becoming more and more sophisticated, there's game-changing technologies that our adversaries, our enemies are working on right now that are even going to hold our highest end capabilities at risk, it is incumbent upon us more than ever to invest in these areas that will counter that capability. So, again, it comes down to ISR, R&D, and doing the proper planning to incorporate these technologies.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Well, I've been very selfish taking most of the time with my questions. What I'm going to do now to try to be efficient here in the few minutes we have left is to take three questions. I'll take notes on them just to make it easier on you folks, but we'll just have one round of responses here for all three.

So please wait for a microphone. We'll start right there in the back and then have a couple from up here as well. And then we'll get to the congressmen for their responses.

Please.

MR. WONG: Thank you very much. My name is Khan Wong with Hong Kong Phoenix Television.

You mentioned, Congressman Forbes, that the U.S. strategy is not to win the war, it's to prevent. So could you elaborate on that, specifically what do you mean? And you were saying that the U.S. Navy needs more ships, so which means you're trying to project that greater deterrence. What do you think that the Chinese

government's assessment of the U.S. determination -- or involved in the Asia-Pacific issues? Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay, thank you. Then we'll take two more questions up here in the front. We'll start right here in the second row. Actually, and then we'll take two more after that, Sydney and Otto, and then we'll have to wrap it up, I'm afraid.

MR. LYNGAAS: Hi. This is Sean Lyngaas from *Federal Computer Week*. This is a question for Congressman Langevin.

You mentioned you were worried about a bit of an overlap in DOD in terms of cyber capabilities, whether it be in the services or elsewhere. Can you elaborate on why that's problematic and what Congress can do, if anything, to help with the cybersecurity shortage in cyber expertise in the government?

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. And then we'll just take these last two over here. Hopefully, it'll break neatly again with one for each congressman.

MR. FREEDBERG: Actually, I'm afraid this is probably for both of them. Sydney Freedberg, *Breaking Defense*.

When I hear you folks talking about, you know, the hideboundness and the risk aversion in DOD, I can't help but think that Congress is at least as, if not more so, risk adverse, you know, willing to punish failures, and tie up 10 innovators in red tape and new law and, you know, more of those people have to check in with programs to prevent, you know, one possible case of waste, fraud, and abuse. And even Mr. Thornberry, who has been leading one of the committee's efforts on acquisition reform, said there's a lot of, "Physician, heal thyself," in terms of Congress often having a chilling effect on innovation and prolonging legacy programs and not allowing the innovators the "freedom to fail."

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. And then Otto for the last one.

MR. KREISHER: Hi. Otto Kreisher with SEAPOWER Magazine.

Sydney covered part of mine and I was going to have a pushback, particularly Mr. Forbes, you know, you talk about DOD wanting to hold onto legacy systems. You know, this year we've got Congress refusing to get rid of any of the legacy systems that DOD says they need, you know, to spend money on readiness. But, again, I want to add just to Sydney's question on the acquisition system with the requirement to go through all the loops prevents rapid innovation. Most of the big systems we have developed, you know, in recent history have been through the BLAT programs, you know, where Congress doesn't get to meddle with it too much. How do we get things to move forward without Congress putting their thumb on the scale to keep things from moving?

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: Do you want to -- which one do you want to --

MR. O'HANLON: Sure. Well, so there was the question about cyber and about specifically why cyber preparedness is inadequate I think was sort of the thrust of the question. And then, of course, the broader issue of to what extent is Congress holding back innovation? The last two questions that were, I think, intended for both of you.

CONGRESSMAN LANGEVIN: Sure. So the one growth area that clearly is evident in the Pentagon budget is cyber. Rightly so. And I just want to make sure that we are resourced both in personnel and capabilities the right way, and that we're not, again, squandering precious dollars. And I don't think we are at this point. I think we're moving in a very good direction. But, again, with all the services having these capabilities, I want to make sure that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing. That's something I know that Admiral Rogers is committed to doing.

I like the way we're going in terms of developing these cyber mission teams that are going to be very closely co-located within the combatant commands, right down almost to the unit level. And that's going to help, again, work as a force multiplier going forward.

Also, by the way, the question of how do we incorporate and more effectively use potentially the National Guard and what role do they play? By way of example, we have tremendous people that are in our Guard and Reserves who, by their day jobs, are off doing work in potentially the IT field. And yet, they come and they also, as part of the voluntary force, are in our Guard and Reserves and fulfilling a role there that is cyber-related. How do we make sure that we are leveraging those capabilities?

I want to make sure, also, that we're thinking about a career path going forward. How do we attract and recruit and retain the best and the brightest and make sure that they see a career path going forward in the military so that they will stay there long term?

The other thing I want to make sure that we're doing which is somewhat related is that we're properly investing in our people because, again, this all comes down to developing the capability. It starts at the very youngest levels. We're not doing enough in growing people in the STEM field: science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Other countries are doing a far better job at graduating people with degrees in this field; China, by way of example. So I've been long pushing the effort to make sure that we are investing in our human capital, not only the capabilities.

The last thing I'll mention, bringing it back to this, in this National Defense Authorization Bill for FY '15, I've required a GAO study to look at Cyber Command and our cyber resources to make sure that we are properly resourced in all those areas.

CONGRESSMAN FORBES: And I just want to say I think Jim does a wonderful job on the cyber area. And the one thing about the cyber area I will say, I think the Pentagon is really doing some great things on there. We just can't talk about all the great things that they can do, but that is one area that I think they're doing some really good stuff. And, Jim, thanks for your work on there.

Let me start with you and say this. There's a lot of different definitions of "innovation," but one definition I've never heard anybody use is the definition that says this is what we need to do, but we just can't afford to do it, so we're not going to do it. And if you look at all those programs you're talking about, you can't find anybody in the Navy that walks over there and says we don't need these. What you can say is we don't have the budget to do them. And the thing we've been fighting against for the last several years is this concept that our budget should drive our strategy instead of our strategy driving our budget. And I think that's just dead wrong, whether Congress does it or the Pentagon does it or the White House does it. It is a dangerous situation for us to be in.

So what we're constantly doing, Otto, is trying to make sure they're talking apples-to-apples. You can't come over here and cut $778 billion out of the budget and say we're good to do this, but then, all of a sudden, when you start having sequestration on 500 billion, you say, but wait a minute, when you start making the cuts, it's wrong. And where I say that was important is these ship-building budgets are not six-month budgets. They're 30-year plans that they put out. So they knew 5 years ago they were going to have shortfalls, about 4- to $6 billion a year, but yet they continued to cut $778 billion out of the budget before sequestration ever hit.

I think Congress has a role to stand up and say wait a minute, do you need these cruisers or don't you? Do you need the carrier or don't you? And if you do,

then we've got to roll up our sleeves and say how do we fund them and get them done?

Sydney, for your question, if you think Jim and I either one are coming here defending Congress, then we have not been very articulate in what we were doing. I think there's just as much problem with Congress, and you hit a number of these. When you're looking at what we do, we love to layer things over and put another acquisition review on top of another one. I think you're exactly right, we've got to change that.

And one of the things I tried to preface at the beginning is we are constantly making sure we're walking the right line between being the stumbling block, you know, that stops innovation and between making sure that we are the catalyst that says we're not going to settle. What I don't want the Navy to do or any other our services is to walk in here and say, oh, because of budgetary concerns we're just going to settle on this. I want to make sure they've asked the tough questions, they've answered the tough questions, and then we roll up our sleeves jointly and say, okay, how do we fund this if we really have to do it?

But Congress can be just as much of a hindrance to innovation as the Pentagon has. The only thing is they're not always a hindrance. Sometimes, what is it, that blind hawk finds an acorn or something like that? I mean, and you heard everybody up here mentioning that there are a lot of historic examples where Congress got it right. One that we didn't even mention was several years ago when the Chinese came out with their -- they called it a "carrier buster." They've had three generations since then, you know. And I looked at the Navy and said what are you doing to fix it? And you know what their answer was? Nothing. And so we said here's 10-, $14 million. Go find a fix for this. I think that's what Congress' role should be.

And then coming back to the first question that was asked about the role of the Navy and presence, I didn't mean to suggest that the only role of our military was

to stop wars from happening. That's just the predominant role. That's our number one goal is to make sure we don't have a fight. We want whoever it is that wants to do harm to Americans to look across that bow of the ship and say not today. Maybe tomorrow, maybe six months from now, not today. Nothing says that like strength.

But if that fails, we want to make sure that if we're in fight we win the fight and it's not a fair fight. And I will tell you this, from every one of our allies, presence is absolutely important, and nothing says presence like an aircraft carrier or our ships across the globe. Admiral Locklear, once again, when he was asked in our committee, well, he said, you know, we spend more money on our Navy than the next six countries. All of you have heard that, you know, comment before. And he said, look, if you want me just to defend Long Beach and Norfolk, I'm good to go. But if you want me to defend the shipping lanes across the globe, I need more ships.

And the reason for that is 85 percent of the goods that we buy in our stores are coming over the oceans. Ninety-five percent of all the international financial transactions are coming underwater cable that the only Navy in the world protecting both of those is the United States Navy, and they need the ships to be able to do it.

So with that, I just want to thank you for having this forum, tell you you're an integral part of doing this. It's not just Congress, it's not just the Pentagon, but it's the think tank groups, it's the writers, as we all come together to try to ask the tough questions and make sure we're getting this right.

The last thing I'd like to say, I've taken too much time, but the reason we're doing all this is not so Jim can sit in the seat or I can sit in the seat. We had an ambassador in my office several months ago, some of you have heard me say this before, but he looked at me and he said, you know, he said, we made a lot of cuts to national defense in our country and the world didn't come to an end.

And I looked at him and I said that's right, Mr. Ambassador. I literally put my hand on his shoulder, like I did Michael, and I said but if you had guessed wrong, if you had miscalculated, if you'd made a mistake, who would your backstop have been? And he said you.

I said we don't have a backstop. We're the backstop for freedom in the world. We can never forget that. That's why we have to get this right.

So thank you, guys, for letting us be here.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you all. (Applause)

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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