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# REAGAN NATIONAL DEFENSE FORUM

## PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH IN AN ERA OF COMPETITION

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**DECEMBER 1, 2018**  
**3:00 PM – 3:45 PM**

### PANEL 10

#### THE ROLE OF ALLIES AND ALLIANCES IN GREAT POWER COMPETITION.

##### Panelists:

- The Honorable John Rood, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
- Congressman Adam Smith, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington
- Senator Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senate, Alaska
- The Rt. Honourable Gavin Williamson, Secretary for Defence of the United Kingdom

**Moderator:** Mr. Gordon Lubold, *The Wall Street Journal*

##### Video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXdpiU7yFbY&index=13&list=PLHNOi2zcxo7sBxM7HfhmB\\_tf6QXeqj48K](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXdpiU7yFbY&index=13&list=PLHNOi2zcxo7sBxM7HfhmB_tf6QXeqj48K)

Lubold: Welcome everybody. Thanks for showing up. It's a mid afternoon time when some people start to get distracted so it's great to see everybody here. I'm going to read a couple of things here, 'cause I will mess it up otherwise. Then we'll get right to it.

Lubold: I wanted to let everybody know that this is a live audience. The audience may submit questions via rndf app. It's [www.rndf2018.org](http://www.rndf2018.org). People viewing across the country can submit questions via twitter hashtag rndf. We'll get to some of those questions toward the end.

Lubold: Anyway, thanks for everybody for being here. As you know, we're here to talk about allies, particularly in the context for the U.S. and its allies in the context of this great power competition that we have with China and Russia. At other times in history there's maybe singular focuses of problem sets, but in this case currently you can name the issues that the U.S. certainly confronts and all the usual suspects.

Lubold: All those different issues, North Korea, Iran, China, Russia, Syria, Afghanistan, everything are all different. The way I was thinking about it though is that they have one common thing, which is a reliance on a network of allies. What I wanted to do was to skip down the path here and ask our panelists to answer a quick question, but first, to my right,

this is Congressman Adam Smith, who is soon to be the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

Lubold: Then to his right, John Rood from the Pentagon. He is the undersecretary for policy there. Then we have our token ally.

Smith: That's not a good way to start the [crosstalk 00:02:20].

Lubold: That's right. Defense Minister from the UK, Gavin Williamson. Can I just ask each of you, starting with you Congressman, briefly, 'cause we do have a tight thing here, to just tell us how you are seeing the world now in view of the need for allies as the U.S. is up against this great power [crosstalk 00:02:50].

Smith: Well, I'll try to hit three quick things because it's a complicated subject matter. I hope to not go on for too long. One, we have the national security picture that we face and it is incredibly complex, but it's Russia, China, North Korea, Iran and transnational terrorists. That by and large is what we are trying to control to try to make the world more peaceful and prosperous. Understanding that threat environment is number one.

Smith: Number two is understanding that the world has changed a lot in that the U.S. dominance of it isn't what it used to be. I know a lot of people lament that and talk about how it's like this complete collapse. It's not that. It's simply a recognition of how history has evolved. I always use the statistic that seems like a non sequitur but in 1948 the United States of America was responsible for 90% of global manufacturing, which is a staggering statistic and put us in a very powerful position. Basically, that was a historical accident. The entire industrialized world save us had just been blown off the face of the map. We had no competition. That wasn't going to last.

Smith: That type of dominance, hoping we'll get back to the point where we can dominate the world sufficiently that they have to bend to our will or at least not do anything that we'd rather they didn't do, not goin to happen, which is why the alliances are so absolutely critical in terms of how we meet those challenges that we just described. We cannot do it on our own. We simply do not have the resources or the size and capacity so we need to build as many friends as we can and also preferably try to reduce the number of enemies.

Smith: I will say a positive thing about Donald Trump to start and that is I like that he's talking to Kim Jeong Hoon. It's far, far better than we are running the risk of a war. We have to deal with that.

Smith: The third thing is to build those alliances we have to have a coherent message. Why should these countries be with us? With us on what? What is it that we are trying to accomplish? Why do we want these countries to work with us? I think the coherent message has got to build around the notion that freedom is better than autocracy. The other thing that all of those countries have in common is that they are all autocratic. They do not have much political or economic freedom. We offer greater freedom.

Smith: I think we have to develop that message and say that "We will give you the freedom and we will protect you from autocrats who don't want to give you that freedom." We gotta have a message. We gotta have allies. We have to understand that we can't do it on our own.

- Lubold: Perfectly brief. Thank you very much. Mr. Rood.
- Rood: Well, thank you Gordon. It's terrific to be here at the Reagan library to have a discussion about the role of alliances and the importance of building new partnerships because we are of course very familiar with President Reagan's dictum of peace through strength, but he did that in a way that really utilized the power of the western alliance. He really gave great prominence to that.
- Rood: Now, of course yesterday we saw regrettably we lost President Reagan's Vice President, a President who later became President, George H.W. Bush, the 41st President of the United States. One of the things he was known for of course was this amazing coalition put together during the Gulf War to win that conflict. I think ironically lesser focused on these days is the role that he played when the Soviet Union was ending and the wall was coming down in Berlin. This amazing management that he and Margaret Thatcher and the other allies did to prevent many of the horrors that we expected to happen at that period of time.
- Rood: Of course I always looked at George H.W. Bush as someone that I looked up to when I was starting government service 30 years ago at CIA as an intern. I remember waiting for a couple of hours just to watch him visit the CIA headquarters and to see this person that I had followed throughout the years in his government service.
- Rood: Now, for us of course today in the administration, we are very focused on the role that allies play in meeting the great challenges that we see articulated in the national defense strategy. The national defense strategy sets very clear priorities in saying that the greatest long term threat to the United States and our allies is China. In many ways Russia is a more lethal, near term threat. This return of great power competition, not transnational terrorism as the greatest threat to the peace and prosperity of the American people and that of our allies I think is very firmly noted there in a prioritization given.
- Rood: North Korea and Iran, certainly other major challenges. Now, as we go forward to do that, I think one of the things Gordon that from my seat in the Pentagon that I see is that there is a real focus on practical, tangible improvements with friends and allies. Things that we are doing. For instance, we have the Defense Secretary of the UK here. At the last NATO summit some very noteworthy agreements there for real capabilities with the alliance.
- Rood: For example, agreeing on a readiness initiative called the four 30s. That is to say 30 air squadrons, 30 naval combatants and 30 mechanized infantry battalions need to be ready to move in 30 days. Real capabilities agreed to by real allies. Another measure of merit in the way the alliance is stepping up together for this term. In 2014 the allies had only three of us that met two percent of our GDP devoted to defense spending. At the Wales Summit an agreement by the alliance for all allies to get to two percent of GDP by 2024.
- Rood: Now, as we sit here today, eight countries have now made it to that level of two percent and 19 have come up to the level that by 2024 they will be spending two percent on GDP. All allies last year agreed to spend more, 5.2% total increase across the alliance. Since President Trump took office 41 billion dollars of additional spending committed to by the allies.

- Rood: In terms of real commitments for real capabilities we see that the UK leading the way, even with the [inaudible 00:09:09] decision a firm commitment to stay at two percent or more of GDP. Then in other ways when we talk about the commitment of the alliance to commit to more forces for places like Afghanistan to the training mission in Iraq, real changes in the command and control structure of the alliance, I'm very pleased to see that.
- Rood: That's the kinds of tangible steps that we've got to see taken to deal with these threats. I'll just mention briefly in Asia another area of focus for us to develop new partnerships and expand those alliance relationships. For example, Indonesia is a very high priority for Secretary Mattis at the Defense Department. Why is Secretary Mattis fond of calling it, it is the maritime fulcrum of the Pacific. A five trillion dollars in trade flow through annually. Indonesia's waters, in and around that country. That's about half the world's global trade.
- Rood: A strong push to increase relationships with countries like Vietnam. Then to reinforce relationships and renew them with longstanding allies like Japan, the ROK and Australia and to continue the work that successive administrations have put underway with India to create a new relationship with that country and some noteworthy achievements there.
- Rood: I'll just close by saying I could go around the world, the middle east, or certainly in this hemisphere and speak of other examples, but again from my perspective a focus particularly under Secretary Mattis's leadership on tangible, specific things that are going to burnish those relationships, lead to the growth of them and allow us to meet shared challenges together.
- Lubold: Thanks John. Mr. Minister.
- Williamson: Well, can I just say, what a privilege it is to be here as the token ally.
- Smith: I prefer to call you an army of one.
- Williamson: It's nice to be allowed in. And may I from a UK perspective obviously pass on the condolences about the sad passing of President Bush. He was a man who very much epitomized someone who believed in the strength of alliances and what they actually could bring. Not just to the world, but actually importantly and was able to articulate what they could also bring to the United States. He was often referred to as the only Texan in the Royal Court at Buckingham Palace. It's obviously it is very sad to see him go, but alliances have been vital for the United States over numerous decades.
- Williamson: When you've seen the United States step away from the world stage, when you've seen the United States be isolationist in its approach, it's been able to sustain that for a short period of time, but invariably what it's had to do is to deal with the realities of what is happening around the world. We've seen over the last 20, 25 years a truly extraordinary set of events, which has meant the United States has been the sole super power on the world stage. That period and that chapter has come and is rapidly coming to a close.
- Williamson: How does the United States amplify and magnify its strength and it has to be through those alliances. You would probably say that's not surprising coming from a UK Defense Secretary, but actually it puts responsibility on allies themselves, because actually

you've a point about other nations paying their way, contributing, actually stepping up to the mark in terms of what it spends on defense is absolutely right.

Williamson: It shouldn't just be the United States, Britain and a few other countries that are a spending a minimum of two percent. We should see two percent as a minimum. It's a floor and it most certainly is not a ceiling. Actually, it's not just about what you spend. I think we've got to actually have a complete change in attitude and approach. In the last 20 years you've been seeing United States taking a lead in so many different parts around the world. Whether that is in Afghanistan, whether that's in Iraq, whether it's increasingly in the Asia Pacific region as well.

Williamson: Actually, for alliances to really work, we've got to be looking at how other nations, whether that be the United Kingdom, whether that be Germany, whether that be France or Italy or Australia, actually taking a lead in different parts of the globe. The United States cannot lead in every part on every continent in every conflict zone. Actually, to really prove the worth of alliances other nation have to be the ones that say, "We will lead."

Williamson: Over the last 20 years, you've seen the UK and other nations who've contributed to the missions that the United States have led. What we need to do is to switch that around. What unites us is those common values of democracy, justice, freedom. Actually what we've got to be doing is thinking where in the world can Britain lead and maybe the United States come in behind us and support what we are doing and helping us deliver on our values and our shared and common aims in these countries.

Williamson: When we start seeing that more and more, which I'm sure we are going to do over the coming decades because the threats as was discussed over lunch, the threats aren't getting less, but you cannot expect the United States to deal with every single one of those threats. When we start doing that more and more, I think it sends a very powerful message. Not just to the people of the United States, but also to the people in Great Britain and right across Europe, right across the western world. There's these alliances that bring benefit to all.

Lubold: Thank you so much. Thank you. I wanted to jump in on China first. In preparing for this panel I was speaking with a friend who reminded me of a foreign affairs article written by two former Obama Administration officials who wrote that "Washington now faces its most dynamic and formidable competitor in modern history in China. Meeting this challenge, however, and meeting it properly must mean doing away with the hopeful thinking that has characterized U.S. policy toward China thus far." I'm wondering from each of you if you could share with us if you share that view-

PART 1 OF 3 ENDS [00:16:04]

Lubold: If you could share with us if you share that view and particularly for the Congressmen, is there a bi-partisan approach to countering China and how do you see each of that happening? How do you bring allies along with it?

Smith: Well that statement can mean a lot of different things. I did read the article and I get what their point is and I think Secretary Mattis actually did the best in terms of focusing this, is he said, "What is it ... yes, we're going to compete with China ... that's ... you know they're an economic power and in one way or another we are going to compete

with them. But what are the red lines? What is it that we want to try to prevent China from doing? What are the truly bad things? Because I honestly believe that there is plenty of room in this world for a rising China and a continuing powerful United States. How do we do that?

Smith: There's several steps that we look at. The biggest thing that we obviously want China to not do is to not become a hegemonization. Is to not start, you know land grabs as they are trying in the South China Sea. To try not to impose themselves on the sovereignty of nations around them. And I think that also gives us a natural outreach point to work with other countries because they don't want that either. So we want to prevent that.

Smith: And then the second is what they're doing in terms of stealing intellectual property. And I do think you know putting tariffs on steel and sort of ... that sort of misses the point. The biggest problem with China is the way they are stealing intellectual property, stealing technologies and not competing in a fair way.

Smith: So we have to figure out, what are we trying to stop China from doing? You know, people freak out because China's you know providing foreign aid in Africa and they do it in a way that isn't necessarily outstanding. But that doesn't concern me as much. I mean look, if we get other great economic powers they're going to start to try to build economic power in parts of the world that have been struggling. That's not a bad thing. So I think we've got to be focused on what it is ... what do we want to stop China from doing?

Smith: And then we have to look for places to partner with them. And I mean Secretary Mattis has done a terrific job of this. He's done great outreach. But you know, the environment ... you know China for all of their progress ... for the 6-7-800 million people they've taken out of poverty, they're going to get to a point where they're go to have trouble breathing. And that's a bit of a problem.

Smith: So global warming, the use of [inaudible 00:18:26] on fossil fuels ... we can work together on that. They face you know threats from violent extremist terrorist groups as well. So we need to look for places to work together and this is where ... just to make things a little bit more interesting ... you know I think there's room for criticism of the way the Trump Administration has approached this. I think DOD's doing it. I don't know how many ambassadorships ... they don't pay any attention to the State Department. I mean lord know what Rex Tillerson was doing there, but he didn't work out too well. And has it gotten better? I don't know but I do know that there are a ton of ambassadorships that are unfilled.

Smith: There seems to be a disdain for diplomacy outside of everywhere but the Pentagon. Okay, and I really do praise folks over there. You are trying to build partnerships with India. But meanwhile, the State Department seems to be sort of thumbing its nose at everybody and ... now I'm a great admirer of George H. W. Bush as well. But both he and his son had a way of building coalitions that were a little bit different.

Smith: When Iraq was invaded ... and I don't know if this is true or not, but I read it in a book ... George H. W. Bush's first phone call was to the Secretary General of the UN to say, "Hey. We got a problem. How do we work together to solve this?" Alright. An inclusive approach. And we all know that our current President has a slightly different tactic in terms of how he talks to people. And I gotta believe that, that's a problem. The people

as a general rule do not like to start off conversations by being insulted and where does that lead us? And I'll give you just the one example.

Smith: "America first." We should flat-out stop saying that. Because if you're trying to build these alliances that are so crucial to everything that we're doing ... now you are a very patient gentleman and I'm sure you get along quite well with us and you can take the occasional barb and see the broader interests and work with us. But as a general rule ... what's the cliché, "You catch a lot more flies with honey than you do with vinegar." What "America first" says to the rest of the world is, "Screw you! We're in it for us." Alright, and you know, "If you've got something that going to help us, we'll do it. If you don't, get away."

Smith: So I think diplomacy needs to be significantly improved, whether we're dealing with China or any place else. If we're not going to undermine the very things that all three of us just talked about ... and we do have better models. Like I said, the coalitions that you described, the George H. W. Bush was able to put together by respecting other people. By respecting their interests and working with them in a way that isn't insulting I think does matter.

Lubold: I'd come back to you on something but let me just go to John next. Go ahead.

Rood: Sure. With respect to China, I think that as I mentioned that, that is the greatest long-term challenge we face. And it's the greatest long-term challenge both because of the magnitude of that challenge and the potential to affect our way of lives. But also it's a very complex challenge and it does not resemble exactly or neatly those that we face before, even during the Cold War.

Rood: What you see China doing is, not only propagating a larger influence in its region, but also trying to expand that influence globally and really competing for influence across the globe.

Rood: The Chinese leadership led by a president for life now, President Xi is a very ambitious group of people and a very self-confident one. And I think President Xi aspires to be perhaps, not only the most influential Chinese leader in modern history, but perhaps in China's long history. And I think the perspective of the Chinese leadership is that, that while they ... we would disagree with this characterization in the United States ... while they've gone through a bad century that China will be back to take its rightful place and there's a sense of grievance at times through what we would regard as inaccurate reading of history about what occurred in that period of time.

Rood: Now for us in the United States we are recognizing that we are in a global competition with China. But we don't fear the competition as Congressman Smith said. It's really about is it a fair competition. Is it a competition that seeks ... unfortunately, what we see China doing is trying to overturn the global order put in place in the post World War II period to allow for free movement of people, free movement of ideas, openness of expression, promotion of democracy, respect for individual human rights, individual rights in terms of their relationship with their state. Respect for the sovereignty of other states and not seeking to overturn those disputes simply through use of force. Respect for intellectual property, trade, patent rights, etcetera ...

Rood: So there are many reasons why we have concern now. The approach that we've taken in the defense sphere is first to try to baseline ourselves and Secretary Mattis of course has led the way on this to explain our strategic intentions to China. And to begin with a discussion around the lines ... along the lines that we're the two nations on earth with the greatest potential for good, or if we have conflict for ill, and to change the global landscape.

Rood: It's been a long time since we have had a global conflict between the great powers and we want to avoid that and we want to avoid being another chapter in the many pages in history with emerging powers choosing to militarily confront the established powers. And so beginning with an explanation of what our strategic intentions, explaining the competition in our lexicon does not mean that we are not destined to be foes, we are not destined to a future of conflict. That future is for us to write.

Rood: But there are certain things that we think that global system has actually aided China's rise. That the demise of things like the ability for free movement of people and ideas and goods is not in their interest. But at the same time we can't do that and we certainly don't wish to do that by ourselves. That's where the role of friends and allies is so critical. And we've had ... and we continue to have like a special relationship with Her Majesty's Government. You've got to start with those things at your core.

Rood: But in addition to that as I mentioned, the growth of these alliance relationships are very important. For example, I mentioned Indonesia. We've done 1.8 billion dollars in foreign military sales with Indonesia. We're trying to cultivate a different relationship with Vietnam after the Vietnam War. This last year we had for the first time since that conflict the visit of an aircraft carrier to Vietnam. The Secretary of Defense has met with his counterpart there four times. We've begun transferring and having a defense trade relationship with Indonesia. First through an access Coast Guard cutter but also through agreements on things like UAVs, [inaudible 00:25:22] aircraft.

Rood: Now these aren't easy relationships and we have to deal with the legacy of conflict. For example, one of our projects at DOD is the clean up of agent orange, or dioxin in Vietnam. So you've got to deal with the legacies of conflicts. You've got to be clear-eyed about a complex relationship. But the hard work of not only maintaining our core relationships, but building them and keeping them vibrant. But building these new relationships has got to be a part taken hand in hand while we reach out to the Chinese and try to manage that relationship and their rise in a way that we are cooperative with them. But also being vigilant and knowing we've got to have not only defense capabilities but we have to friends and allies for this to work well.

Williamson: If I could just jump in-

Lubold: But I think a lot of folks want to see ... and this get into a different conversation about the national defense strategy and NSS ... but people want to see where the U.S. is gonna challenge China, militarily or otherwise. I don't mean getting into a conflict or a war, but looking to see ... I think a lot of the rhetoric has been let's work with China in a lot of ways ... when I think there's-[crosstalk 00:26:34] [inaudible 00:26:34] a demand signal for counter [crosstalk 00:26:38][inaudible 00:26:38]

Smith: Well we're challenging China in the South China Sea, right now. You know we are you know sending you know our aircraft battle groups through waters that they say we

shouldn't be able to send through, so ... we're kind of doing what you say ... I don't think there's a lot of call like you said for us to like just lob a missile at them- [crosstalk 00:26:56]

Lubold: No, of course not and that's not what I mean.

Smith: But we are ... and it's the same with Russia ... we are challenging them. We are deterring them in a variety of different ways. And many of the ones that you just outlined I think are crucial, by making more friends in the region. But go ahead-

Williamson: I think the real strength is not necessarily always acting alone. So when we saw the attack on ourselves in Salisbury with the use of chemical weapons on the streets ... well if I said to you a year ago that we had seen the use of Novichok virus in a sleepy English cathedral sissy nestled in the countryside you would have probably thought it was crazy. But the strength of a response is actually about nations coming together and speaking with one voice.

Williamson: When you look at China without a shadow of a doubt China presents the globe with so many great opportunities. But also it does present it with challenges. And actually the way that you will best be able to influence behavior is not expecting the U.S. to do all the running, or to be all the running on its own, but actually the other nations to be actually saying a common thing. So whether it's for South China Sea, it's good that the U.S. does a rights of passage FONOPs, but actually other nations have to be doing the same and that's why you've been seeing British vessels actually traversing through the South China Sea for the first time in a number of years.

Williamson: But we also have to be willing to call out poor behavior, not constantly turning the other cheek. And actually where there is something that frankly from our point of view as western nations with those shared values ... actually if China is doing something wrong, or Russia is doing something wrong, the strength is speaking with that one voice and saying why it's wrong and what the consequences could potentially be to that.

Lubold: Earlier this week French President Macron said that President Trump's recent decisions had been done to the detriment of his allies. The elephant in the room to me, and I think some of you have eluded to it earlier is the mixed signals that come from the U.S. Government to allies. And I just wanted to ask you all to kind of expand on that a little bit. How does ... how do you bring folks along when you do have in many ways mixed signals? Mr. Trump's kind of transactional approach to allies can make it very difficult. Now looking at you at some point to speak to as an ally, what that feels like and what it feels like, what it means. But you know also with Mr. Trump's own popularity in Europe so low, how do you bring ... how does your government bring your people?

Williamson: It's talking about the value of alliances and actually the common values that you have between nations. And actually it's very easy to focus on divisions. It's very easy to focus on different ... a different style, a different approach, but what is important actually to see the common value that all nations have.

Williamson: I'm not sure if many of you have ever been to the Imperial War Rooms in London where you saw ... where Winston Churchill executed the Second World War. And the most powerful image that you see there is you look at the map of the globe. Where are the greatest number of pin pricks. It's not in France or Italy or North Africa or the Far East. It

is in the north Atlantic. That vital bridge that united two continents, two sets of you know Europeans and Americans in a fight against something that we all knew was evil and would destroy our sets of values and everything that we stood for.

Williamson: And actually we need to talk positively about alliances and what they bring to both our nations. And actually if you look at what the United States is doing in terms of ... in NATO you're seeing an increase in terms of investment; an increase in terms of the commitment to what NATO does. So I say judge a nation by its actions. That's the most important thing to do.

Williamson: But again, it comes back to my earlier point. It's about all allies pulling their weight. You cannot outsource European defense and security to the United States. It's simply not right and it's not a sustainable argument that the American people will buy. What we do need to be doing is showing an activism, an interest and a willingness to be involved across all European nations. And I think Britain can play an important leadership role in that. It's always been a useful bridge between-

PART 2 OF 3 ENDS [00:32:04]

Williamson: It's always been a useful bridge between the United States and the rest of Europe, But actually, it's not just about Europe, it's right across the globe because sometimes nations such as Britain and France will be able to reach into parts of the world which actually, frankly the U.S. sometimes struggle into doing so, so we've got to show that leadership. But again, let us focus on the values that are common between our nations, let us focus on all of the good things. Let us not sort of constantly bicker over some of the small or more minor things, that occasionally divide.

Smith: I think there are plenty of places now where other nations are leading the example that leaves to my mind is a West Africa, where we have the lawless region in there with all kinds of international criminal terrorists elsewhere and it's really France that has ... Because the history there that has taken the lead in trying to confront to ensure Mali and Niger and deal with the bombs that have come out of Libya. So there has been that leadership that has started and I think the other thing is, I'm trying to figure out how to say this, and not terribly for ... America is about more than just President Trump, and thank God. Sorry, just had to. It's late in the afternoon.

Smith: And so I think while the rest of the world may not think President Trump, might not find him popular for some things he said and done, I think when you look at Great Britain, and you look at Europe, they can have problems with our president and still say America is still America. It's still that vital leader in the world, that vital partner on a whole service levels. So just because the president tweets something unbelievably offensive about one of our allies, I think hopefully, what happens is those countries recognize that larger relationship, and it's about more than that.

Smith: And then also within the Trump administration, there are a lot of people that are doing just the opposite, and this is the mixed signal problem, did you say? I don't think there's ever been an administration that had this battle schizophrenia from, one tweet, one day to someone say, "No, actually, no, we didn't really mean that", to the next, but at least there is that other. Okay. At least there is the Department of Defense and others out there trying to mend those fences and trying to show a different face. Not I know, maybe there's some sort of mad scientist strategy here that Trump scares them, and

everybody else comes in and tries to make him feel better. I don't think that's the case. And I do think we will be better off if our president occasionally struck a more conciliatory tone towards both our allies and our potential allies for that matter.

Smith: So it is a problem. But again, I'll just say America is about more than who happens to be president at the moment. There is a problem, but I've taught for too long. There's one other issue that's worth getting into, but I'll save that for later.

Lubold: We'll remember it. And I just want to say to John, I've been on numerous trips, I've been lucky enough to be on numerous trips of different [inaudible 00:35:05] matters, where you stop in country X, Y or Z and the headline is, "He sought to reassure allies blah blah blah." How from where you sit in depending on the you manage what are to most allies these kind of series of mixed signals?

Rood: Well, the best signal we can send in Secretary Madison is fond of saying at the Defense Department our role is to get it done. And so look at some of the actions that we take. And I think that that is the best way to explain and to deal with sending the right kind of message. So for example, in Europe, one of the things that we've tried to send with the European Deterrence Initiative as part of NATO is a substantial increase in commitment, whether that's during the Trump administration \$3.1 billion of additional spending for that purpose, the commitment of advanced capabilities to that activity.

Rood: But it's got to be, as Secretary Williamson was saying, we hope that this is a shared commitment. I mean, that's the kinds of things that are going to make an alliance more vibrant. And so while we saw adaptations to the NATO command structure, as I said, to make it fit for our times, able and willing to confront the kind of threats that we face, there were adjustments to the command structure arrangements. And some of that was a willingness from us in the United States, also to bear a load in that regard. And so a lot of what I focus on and my colleagues focus on is that getting these practical, real things done based on the not that are sort of have a shell or a facade of capability, but real capabilities for things like the NATO Alliance, that is the best way that we can keep the relationships vibrant.

Rood: That's the best way over time where there are ... We all live in democracies, whether it's France or Germany or the UK, this alliance of democracies occasionally has cacophonous sounds that that emerged from it. But if we're true to our commitments to each other, if we're true to the purpose, and we're willing to take joint steps together, and it's not just there, if I look elsewhere, I spent a lot of my day on things like the Defeat ISIS Campaign, because 75 nations engaged in that, as Secretary said, 79 if you include the organizations also part of that activity.

Rood: But they're not coming just with words, there is real money, they're real capabilities. And in other areas we've had a very good relationship as congressman Smith started to say, with our French colleagues in Africa, in the Sahel, and we are playing a supporting role there. This is a French lead, a European lead activity, but it's one that we support because we see not only an affinity in the Alliance, but we also see some shared aims there. And we're going to have to keep that vibrant also by renewing our focus on as much as there are occasionally differences amongst our states. We have core values that are similar about democracy, about promotion of freedom about individual liberties. And as Secretary Madison said today, we don't buy our friends here in the

United States, we earn them, we earn them through working together on these kinds of activities.

Rood: And for me and my team that's what we try to do every day in the Pentagon, we need to earn these relationships, we need to earn that capability and that trust and go out and work on those things together.

Lubold: Got it, thanks John. Let's segue quick because we have very few minutes left to the kind of Russian portion but do it through the lens of NATO and as you may have heard earlier in the conversation earlier today yeah there was a survey that they did here. A majority of Americans are favorable towards NATO's 59% favorable towards NATO with a 24% unfavorable and then kind of more interesting to me even a majority of those with a favorable view of NATO think that our allies should do more And it goes down, I think ... Yeah, thank you. I didn't even ask for the slides and they're there. So the audience can see them. But what's your kind of gut reaction to the survey that suggests that numbers still need to do more at NATO?

Smith: I agree with the survey. And no, I think and let me just say, I mean, that's always the case, you will always like your partner to do more and [crosstalk 00:39:30] and you are doing.

Williamson: And in fairness, I mean, you see in the UK were open to spending on defense above inflation every single year, we sort of increasing the proportion of GDP that we've been spending on defense and as was touched upon by John earlier that every nation in NATO is increasing the amount. Now, as to whether it's at the pace that people want to see some people will argue this isn't as speedy but direction of travel and trend is heading in the right way. But it isn't just about spending and it's not just about pound shillings and pence, is actually how you use and how you develop those capabilities and how you come together to use those capabilities to deal with the common threats. And yes, 2% is a very, very important powerful political tool. But it's not actually just about percentages, is actually what you're spending that money on and how you use those capabilities going forward. And I think people are expecting us to do more, and I think we'll have to do more because the threats are increasing.

Lubold: John, real quick, if you could just respond to that real quick and then I have a Brexit question.

Rood: Well, I think I'm not surprised by the survey results as was discussed and certainly I'm in the category also that I favor NATO and also think our ally should do more but I think to Secretary Williamson's point how you do more. The Alliance has talked for some time about framework nation approaches to certain areas of capability. We've seen some of the member states really leading those areas. I mean, her Majesty's Government leads in so many areas, we've got to be more serious of purpose in that regard. And it's not just the level of spending. It's not just that these are usable capabilities. But it's the degree that the sum of the parts is greater than the individual elements in some discipline amongst our allies. And that's where as an example, we're favorable in general towards the idea that some European Union states or the European Union as a whole would increase its capabilities.

Rood: But done in a way that is complimentary that that adds to the capabilities of NATO because, after all, as the NATO Secretary General is fond of pointing out, while there are

many European union member states that are also members of NATO, today 82% if you include the UK as non-EU members, 82% of the spending resides outside of the European Union in NATO. And so with this differentiation to capabilities, this willingness to recommit to a capability approach where if you will, different allies are having different capabilities that they bring so that the sum is greater than the parts. That's the kind of approach we've got to take.

Smith: And the only thing I would add is it's not ... I know this is the defense form, the partnership is not just about NATO when we say we want our allies to do more and you say well how much you putting into NATO? And that's the be all and end all of it. There were a lot of other ways that we partner. I do a lot of work on global health and the Department for International Development in Great Britain is a major leader on confronting global health challenges. George W. Bush helped put together the Alliance on combating HIV in Africa but that was an alliance that was global so when we as Americans like of what are our partners doing to help us I don't think we should narrow it simply down to what are they spending on defense? There are a ton more issues out there that are important internationally.

Rood: With your ally there, a fair point, quick Brexit question we didn't talk.

Williamson: I traveled a way to be the United States to avoid the Brexit question. I mean it's a-

Smith: I think that's a very coarsed.

Lubold: I think the question no ... Here's the question I'm going to add to it. How has Brexit affected European security policy without the voice of one of our more reliable allies at the table in Brussels? Will EU member states be less likely to take decisive action to counter Russia or terrorism?

Williamson: I certainly hope notes and there is a common misunderstanding with Brexit. People look at Britain exiting the European Union. They think that Britain is wanting to step away from the world and I would say it's quite for reverse. Britain wants to and will play a much more significant part on the world stage and actually exiting the European Union gives us an opportunity to be both more decisive and more clear about our intent and standing up for our values. Not just talking about our values but very much defending them. And let's not forget that actually Britain has been involved in European security not just since the creation of a European Union but I think it's fair to say we've been interfering on European security for a few centuries before that and we're going to have no less than interest in terms of making sure interest, our values and our friends are properly defended whether we're out of European Union or not.

Williamson: But I do think that for us, for Britain, actually the importance of NATO grows even more than it was beforehand, actually as a forum actually to reach out and to talk and there is a challenge that there will be maybe influences within the European Union should we say Gallic influences and that will have a different vision of the European Union without Britain there but this is why it's so important to make it clear as to what NATO delivers, not just Europe, not just the United States and Canada, right across the North Atlantic, but actually what NATO can do in terms of a platform of nations. There's actually care passionately about the values that we all subscribe to, and how we use that more and more around the globe. And we see that in Afghanistan today in terms of resolute support. Afghanistan was never thought as a country that NATO would operate in when

it was created over 69 years ago. But actually, NATO delivers a value to so many parts of the world and that's how we need to expand it more into the future.

Lubold: And deference to our allies, we'll let the ally have the last word. I ask everybody to join me in thanking our panel.

Williamson: Thank you.

Smith: Thank you.

PART 3 OF 3 ENDS [00:46:06]