

Deveny; Jeff Dickson; Lindsay Dirienzo; Ryan Eagan; Charlie Ellsworth; Marissa Emanuel; Tricia Engle; Kelly Fado; Sam Flood; Matt Fuentes; Joel Geertsma; Megan Glander; Patricio Gonzalez; Justin Goodman; Hayley Gray-Hoehn; Joshua Gutmaker.

Gunnar Haberl; Jasmine Harris; Marisa Hawley; Christina Henderson; Rob Hickman; Jon Housley; Amber Huus; Mike Iannelli; Steven Heka; Rachel Jackson; Jessica Jamaica; Rodney Kazibwe; Cietta Kiandoli; Mike Kuiken; Monica Lee; Julietta Lopez; Mike Lynch; Grace Magaletta; Steve Mann; Amy Mannering; Anneliese Marcojohn; Jordan Marshall; Ryan Martin; Hemen Mehta.

Ken Meyer; Michelle Mittler; Josh Molofsky; Catey Moore; Michelle Moreno-Silva; Rachel Morgan; Megan Murphy Vlasto; Gary Myrick; Leela Najafi; Alice Nam; Juan Negrete; Joe Nehme; Alex Nguyen; Jordan Nicholson; Diana Nunez; Andrew Odgren; Lorenzo Olvera; Suzan Orlove; Sol Ortega; Rebecca Osmolski; Nate Oursler; Lucy Panza; Stephanie Paone.

Vandan Patel; Liza Patterson; Mark Patterson; Gerry Petrella; Oriana Pina; William Reese; Tony Rivera; Alexandra Robinson; Scott Rodman; Angelo Roefaro; Zack Rosenblum; Tim Ryder; Jim Secreto; Nelson Seijas; Raisa Shah; Tyson Sharbaugh; Leeann Sinpatanasakul; Amanda Skapnit; Alexa Sledge; Hannah Smith; Bre Sonnier-Thompson; Amanda Spellicy; Dili Sundaranoorthy.

Emily Sweda; Hanna Talley; Meghan Taira; Catalina Tarn; Anna Taylor; Taylor Terri; Paige Tepke; Kirnarah Timothy; Dan Tinsley; Erin Sager Vaughn; Cyre Velez; Nicole Vorgona; Kai Vogel; Karine Vorperian-Grillo; Brad Watt; Veronica Watters; Emma Weir; Dan Yoken; Maxwell Young; Nora Younklin; Chris Zeltrann; Reza Zomorroddian.

Mr. SCHUMER. It is a lot of names. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE ANDERSON

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I would like to recognize a critical member of my staff, Mike Anderson—he is known as “Big Mike”—who left my office in August to pursue a legal career in his hometown of Anchorage, AK—something he has aspired to do since a young age.

Mike was my communications director, but it was much more of an appropriate title for Mike because he directed so many things in my office, so much of our communication both internally and externally. You would often find Mike going from staff member to staff member, asking them questions, relaying information from one team to the next.

In our office, if you had a question about what anybody was up to, what anybody was doing in Alaska, here in our DC office, in our Alaskan offices, you would ask Mike. That is a special quality. He is an incredibly hard worker, incredibly gifted young man, and we are going to miss that talent in Mike very much.

Mike is no stranger to Alaska political offices. Fresh out of college at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, he took a job with Congressman YOUNG and then worked for Senator MURKOWSKI.

In 2014, he was looking for a little more adventure on the calm side. I was looking for someone to help with my communications on my campaign. It was my first run for office. I was running against an incumbent with big name recognition in our State. Mike came on board and took a chance on me. It is something I will never forget—loyal, great worker.

He had been taking a lot of classes at night at Catholic University of America for the past few years, working in my office, and balancing it all. He was on the clock around the clock and did it with grace, humor, hard work, and excellence.

As I mentioned, he was our office communicator, but he was also the office friend, the person you would go to for advice on things big and small, the person you would call on for an assist if you needed to move. It helped that he lived up to his name—6 feet, 8 inches. He is a big guy. Mike always showed up, working together—as we called in our office one team, one fight. We got big things done for our State.

Speaking of one team, one fight, my office has a pretty good hoops team. Mike, as you can imagine—UAF varsity basketball player back in Alaska—was the critical member of that team. We have won a lot of games, particularly against the Cruz Texans. In fact, Senator CRUZ once gave Mike the nickname “Denali” for his size and how he dominates the middle of the key on the hoops court.

Mike is going to make a great lawyer in Alaska. As a State, we have so much potential—the biggest fisheries in the country, the largest energy fields, huge military complexes, and fascinating, important Alaskan Native legal issues. More than anything, Alaska needs good leaders with integrity, brilliant lawyers, hard-working people like Mike who love their State and give it all back to their State, and that is what he is going to do.

We haven’t seen the last of Mike. He has always been part of our team, and I am sure that is what he will do, working continually in the great State of Alaska to make sure our State thrives.

Mike, great job. Good luck to you. You are going to be missed. Best wishes on a bright future ahead.

CHINA

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, despite what you might be reading in the press, there are a lot of recent, important, bipartisan achievements happening right here in the Senate. We are going to vote soon on another major COVID relief bill, which is really important. That will be our fourth major COVID relief bill this year—much needed, of course, for the health of Americans and for our economy. I think that when the history of this very challenging year is written, that is what is going to be remembered—four major, bipartisan, important pieces of legislation, not the rancor in

the Senate, which has been part of our history, part of the Republic since the founding of the Republic.

A number of other major bipartisan accomplishments have also occurred just in the past few months—the National Defense Authorization Act, which passed with over 80 Senators; the Great American Outdoors Act, probably the biggest conservation act in over 50 years; and the Save Our Seas 2.0, a bill I was proud to author, the most comprehensive ocean cleanup legislation ever to come out of the Congress. This is just to name a few.

Let me name another important bipartisan accomplishment that is starting to occur in the Congress, and that is dealing with China, the important issue of China and China policy. I know people might be saying: Wait, are you crazy? China? There is bipartisan agreement on what is happening with regard to this relationship, the United States and China?

The answer is, yes, we have made significant progress on this issue, too, and it is important. I want to explain that a little bit because I think it is a topic that we need to be focusing on more and more in the U.S. Senate.

Like the Presiding Officer, I am honored to be completing my first term as a U.S. Senator and honored, like the Presiding Officer, to have been re-elected to continue my service.

Six years ago when I started my time here in the U.S. Senate, I started a series of speeches that focused on the U.S.-China relationship and the importance of it. We all have been focused post-9/11 certainly on al-Qaida, ISIS, the big issue of violent extremist organizations, which has been the appropriate focus. But as I started my career here 6 years ago, I started to give a series of speeches where I said the biggest challenge that we face long term from a geostrategic standpoint for the United States for decades to come is going to be our relationship with the rising power of China.

What I was saying 4 years ago, 5 years ago in this body is that nobody is talking about it. It is really important, and we are not focused on it. You can’t say that anymore. Now everybody is talking about China. There has been an American awakening about China. And that is good. That is important. That is progress. And it has been bipartisan.

I want to thank President Trump and his team because I think they deserve a lot of the credit.

They laid out their national security strategy, their national defense strategy. These are very well-written strategies that, in essence, said that in the United States of America, post 9/11, it was appropriate to focus on al-Qaida, ISIS, violent extremist organizations, getting weapons of mass destruction. That was clearly the main focus of our national security.

But what their strategies have been saying is that, yes, we need to continue to focus on that, but now we need to prioritize the great power competition

that is upon us with China as the pacing threat.

As you know, most Senators—Democrats and Republicans—particularly the ones who focus on national security and foreign policy issues, particularly those on the Armed Services Committee—they agree with us. They agree with this reorientation. Again, this is important. This is progress, bipartisan progress, on what is really going to be one of the most—what is the most important bilateral relationship in the world.

What we need to start doing—and I say “we,” this body, the Congress, the executive branch—is we need to start putting details and principles into a long-term strategy, a bipartisan strategy that will be enduring to address this challenge, to address the challenge that is the challenge for the next decade—the rise of China and how we, as the United States of America, need to deal with it. As I mentioned, I believe this is going to be the defining national security issue for our Nation for the next 50 to 100 years.

What I want to do today is lay out a couple of key principles on what I see are some of the ways in which we can bring a bipartisan approach to addressing this challenge. Last year, I was honored to be invited by the heritage center—the Heritage Foundation—as part of their lead lecture series on the Asia-Pacific to talk about this issue. I gave remarks, an address that I called “Winning the New Cold War with China and How America Should Respond.”

Some of the principles that I laid out in that address from some of my experiences in the U.S. relationship with China over the last quarter century are what I would like to talk about. Those experiences for me have kind of run the gamut as a U.S. marine; as a National Security Council staffer and Assistant Secretary of State under the exceptional leader, Condoleezza Rice, when she was National Security Advisor and then Secretary of State; as the State of Alaska cabinet official in charge of energy and natural resources—which are so important to my State but also to Asian markets—and as a U.S. Senator.

First things first: I believe, as I mentioned, there has been an awakening about the challenge posed by China. As I mentioned, 6 years ago in this body, not a lot of Senators were talking about it. Now everybody is, and that is important. I also think that there is a recognition—whatever you want to call the tensions that have arisen—that the U.S. and China have entered into a much more strategic competition era—phase—with tensions that I have referred to as a “new Cold War” with each other. This state of relations has only been exacerbated by the pandemic, which, of course, started in China and was covered up by the Chinese Communist Party.

When I talk about this issue of a new Cold War with China, I want to be clear on one thing. This is not a challenge—or tensions—of our choosing. It is the

result of a conscious decision by the Communist Party leadership of China to overturn key elements of the U.S.-led, rules-based international order, despite that order enabling China to emerge prosperous and strong from its so-called century of humiliation. This new Cold War is not an inevitable consequence of China’s rise or our status as an established power. Rather, I believe, it stems from China’s rejection of becoming a “responsible stakeholder” in the international system that the United States has led since the end of World War II—a system from which China probably, more than any other country in the world, has benefited from.

But recognizing that we have this new tension, that we have a new Cold War with China, does not mean that the nature of the global challenge is identical to that posed by the Soviet Union or that our response should be the same. However, it does mean that the United States and our allies need to recognize this challenge, address it, counter it in ways that avoid major conflict but in ways that also avoid compromising our core values and interests and principles in liberty.

Let me talk a little bit about what I call America’s awakening.

Since President Nixon initiated the opening of relationships with China, many hoped that the country’s political and economic system would open as the country developed and joined this broader, Western-led international system. Others believed that even if the Chinese Communist Party remained in control, its external behavior and relationship with the United States would not be affected. When the United States supported Chinese entry into the World Trade Organization, President Bill Clinton remarked that American workers and consumers would be the greatest beneficiaries—American workers. Ultimately, this has proven not to be true.

Equally misguided was the hope that as China grew economically, it would liberalize politically. The expectation was that China would lower its trade barriers and follow WTO practices, respecting intellectual property rights, promoting basic safety standards for exports, curbing subsidies of its main industries, and not subjecting imports—our imports—to illegal, non-tariff barriers. None of that has turned out to be true. China did not meet most of its commitments under the WTO and still hasn’t. Rather, it has employed its new access to Western markets—American markets—to pursue large-scale theft of technology, exploiting the openness of the American economy without allowing American companies reciprocal access to its markets as it is required to do.

Let me give one example of this that I have seen in my experience. In 2003, over 17 years ago, I was in an Oval Office meeting as a National Security Council staffer with President George W. Bush, Condoleezza Rice, and the

Vice Premier of China, Madam Wu Yi, at the time. The President, President Bush, strongly believed in the protection of intellectual property rights, and he raised this issue with Madam Wu Yi right there in the office—very aggressively, leaning over in his chair. Madam Wu Yi looked at the President of the United States and said: Mr. President, I am in charge of this. We are going to fix this. We are working on it. You have my commitment, Mr. President. That was in the Oval Office, 17 years ago.

Where are we on intellectual property theft from China? It is worse today than when Madam Wu Yi made that commitment in the Oval Office. As a matter of fact, the U.S. Trade Representative Office estimates that Chinese theft of American intellectual property costs the U.S. economy an estimated \$600 billion annually, not to mention the thousands of jobs lost. President Obama also tried to stem these blatantly unfair, nonreciprocal practices, but Beijing did not honor the common understanding reached by President Obama and Xi Jinping in 2015, curbing cyber hacking of government and corporate data for economic gain. Such theft continues unabated today.

These episodes raise an even bigger problem between the United States and China. It is the problem that I call “promise fatigue” with China. Think about it. Broken promises extend well beyond the economic sphere, like intellectual property.

Here is another example. Standing next to President Obama in the Rose Garden in 2015, President Xi Jinping promised the President of the United States not to militarize the South China Sea. The commitment was broken within months, when China took a very aggressive policy of militarizing many of the islands and built up islands in the South China Sea to the consternation of every single country in the region. After enduring this promise fatigue with the Chinese for decades, we, the Congress, the executive branch of the U.S. Government, are finally getting wise. Everybody thinks trade should be a win-win, but Chinese leaders appear to view it much more as a zero-sum game.

Ironically, this promise fatigue and China’s predatory, nonreciprocal trade practices have brought about—and did bring about—the new, much tougher, and, in my view, much needed approach from the Trump administration that we had prior to the pandemic.

We have this situation where we are not trusting our relationship with China with promises that have been made but have not been kept across a whole host of spheres, where the tensions in the South China Sea are growing. But this current state of affairs was not preordained.

In 2005, then Deputy Secretary of State and future World Bank President Robert Zoellick encouraged China in a very well-regarded speech to become a

“responsible stakeholder” in the international system, which had done so much to enable China’s rise in prosperity. Zoellick’s speech challenged China to change its behavior, to support and promote and, certainly, not undermine the U.S.-led economic order that had brought peace and prosperity to China and so many other countries in the Indo-Pacific.

For a time, it appeared that China’s leadership was contemplating this American offer to be a responsible stakeholder in this global system—the one that we had set up after World War II. In my trips as an Assistant Secretary of State to China, I heard China’s leadership in many meetings—including in meetings with Hu Jintao, the President, and other senior leaders—where they talked about being a responsible stakeholder, where this invitation on working through the system we had developed was clearly something they were contemplating. But over time, it has become increasingly clear that the Chinese Communist Party has rejected this concept, this idea to be a partner with us in bolstering the international order that has benefited China so significantly.

In fact, the opposite has happened. China is now working to systemically build an illiberal sphere of influence that threatens to exclude America and erode our alliances in the region that have kept the peace in the region for decades. The challenge we face today is rooted in the attempt by the Communist Party of China to popularize its authoritarian model abroad to ensure China’s rise as a great power under the Communist Party’s leadership. President Xi made this clear at the 19th Party Congress, where he championed China’s model as a new option for other countries and nations that want to speed up their development. We must always remember, the Chinese Communist Party’s primary goal in domestic and foreign policy is to ensure the survival and preeminence of the party.

The key driver of U.S.-China competition and tension today is China’s ambition to project its authoritarian model abroad. China’s development under a Leninist political model serves as an inspiration for many illiberal actors and aspiring autocrats around the world. It uses its economic influence as a means of exerting political pressure. Additionally, Chinese companies and state-owned and state-subsidized industries are not bound by the anti-corruption laws that American and Western companies must adhere to.

Chinese indifference to establishing standards of transparency, which we have certainly seen now with the pandemic, and project implementation through its Belt and Road Initiative result in elite deals that concede corruption abroad, weaken prospects for long-term prosperity, and undermine the sovereignty of weaker nations.

China is seeking to undermine democracy and human rights and the rule of law and international institutions—

from pushing its norms for controlling cyber space to silencing critics of its human rights record, including critics in the United States, to pushing for the enforcement of the Belt and Road Initiative at the United Nations. China is using its growing voice on the global stage to legitimize an approach at home and abroad that undermines American interests.

A recent Hoover Institution study argues that China is looking to gain influence in the United States to shape attitudes and, ultimately, American policy toward China. And although we have not experienced the same level of political interference as, say, some of our allies, like Australia, where politicians and donors linked to the Chinese Communist Party try to sway the country’s policies on sensitive issues, China is clearly engaged in what the National Endowment for Democracy calls a significant, sharp-powered campaign to influence American policy here at home. This recent spy scandal with a Congressman from California is just a recent example of this.

Fortunately, the Trump administration and Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have awakened to the long-term challenge that China poses to America’s national security and economic security interests. As I noted, the Trump administration’s more realistic approach on China, laid out in its national security strategy and national defense strategy, offers a clear-eyed view of Chinese ambitions and our need to counter them. At a time when there is not enough bipartisan agreement—although, I think there is more than, certainly, we get credit for—there is broad, bipartisan focus and support within the U.S. Government and, I believe, in the U.S. Senate on the strategic challenges posed by China.

So we have had an important American awakening and a good beginning with the recent U.S. national security and national defense strategies, and I believe it is strongly in America’s interest for the incoming Biden-Harris administration to continue these strategies that have strong bipartisan support here. In fact, in my recent meeting with Secretary of Defense nominee GEN Lloyd Austin, I encouraged such an approach on national security issues, particularly as it related to China.

Yet these strategic documents that we are talking about need more meat on the bones. What are more details and principles that we can add to the national security strategy of our Nation that can ensure bipartisan support for a longer term U.S.-China strategy? Let me recommend five core elements that, I think, should be key in moving forward with regard to our relationship with China.

First, we need to demand reciprocity in all major spheres of the U.S.-China relationship. Second, we need to reinvigorate American competitiveness so we can outcompete and outinnovate China. Third, we need to continue to

rebuild our military’s strength and capability. Fourth, we need to deepen and expand our global network of alliances. Finally, we need to remember that employing our democratic values is a huge, critical, comparative advantage in countering China’s global authoritarian influence around the world. So let me briefly touch on each of these.

First, we need to demand reciprocity. The United States must insist that the relationship with China be defined by reciprocity and fairness. For too long, the United States has ignored the promise fatigue—that I have talked about—with China and accepted unfulfilled Chinese promises across so many spheres of the bilateral relationship. You have seen it. When you raise the issue of reciprocity with senior Chinese officials, whether that be in Beijing or with the Ambassador, and they finally acknowledge that, yes, the relationship isn’t reciprocal, they say it is because “China is still a developing country.”

I would respectfully tell senior Chinese officials: Don’t use that argument anymore. It is an insult to the intelligence of American officials. We need a reciprocal relationship because every American understands and agrees with this—that it is about fairness, basic fairness.

I posed an important question of reciprocity to former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing a couple of years ago, and he acknowledged that, to have an important, sustainable, great-power relationship between two of the most important countries in the world, reciprocity was critical. The citizens of our country need to feel that the relationship is fair and that a general policy of reciprocity is important and critical in that regard, but we all know it hasn’t been that way.

The Trump administration has made significant progress on pressing for more reciprocal relationships in our trading relationships, which is very important, but we all know that the reciprocal relationship doesn’t exist. Chinese companies and government-backed investment funds can come to the United States and buy companies, but we would have no opportunity to do the same. Yet it needs to go much further than economics. Let me give you an example. We need reciprocity in the free exchange of ideas. American journalists are not allowed to travel freely in China, and if they are not, then, why should Chinese journalists be allowed to travel freely in the United States?

Similarly—and this body is focused on this—there are over 100 Confucius Institutes, established by the Chinese Communist Party, at American universities. When I was in Beijing a couple of years ago and met with senior Chinese officials, I mentioned this.

I said: I was recently with the Ambassador, and he said that just to go on the campus of Beijing University you need to be accompanied by a Chinese

official. So if there were real reciprocity in the relationship, if you can have Confucius Institutes at American universities, how about we get James Madison Institutes of freedom and liberty at Chinese universities?

Of course, the Chinese wouldn't accept that.

They said: Well, Senator, Confucius Institutes only teach culture and language, and a James Madison Institute of freedom and liberty and democracy in China would be teaching propaganda.

That is what they said.

This is just one of many examples wherein we must have a reciprocal relationship between the United States and China going forward.

Second, we must reinvigorate American competitiveness. The United States is no stranger to global military and economic cooperation, as we have known throughout the Cold War with the Soviet Union. Our comparative advantages globally remain significant, but we can and should do more to bolster other areas at home. We should bolster STEM education, double down on basic research, and support Federal agencies like the National Science Foundation.

We need to be able to outcompete and outinnovate China, and, importantly, better understand China, its culture, its language, its history, and its strategy with the new generations of Americans who are focused on these issues, just as Russian and Soviet studies were emphasized during the Cold War with the Soviet Union. Many of our most significant challenges—our national debt, infrastructure projects that take years to permit, an education system that leaves too many Americans behind, a dysfunctional immigration system—are all self-inflicted wounds.

I believe that the real challenges posed by China, as they become more broadly apparent throughout our country, will start to spur the bipartisan motivation that will be needed to address these significant but solvable American challenges in order to make us stronger.

Third, we must continue to rebuild our military. From 2010 to 2016, the Department of Defense's budget was slashed by 25 percent. Readiness plummeted, and at the same time, the Chinese undertook a massive building of its military and the modernization of its forces while it also made concrete moves to militarize the South China Sea. History shows, particularly with regard to America's authoritarian rival, that American military weakness encourages authoritarian provocations globally. We must make sure that, as we continue to engage China, a strong U.S. military provides a hedge against Beijing's contemplating risky and destabilizing military actions as its military strength and capabilities continue to grow. China has a long history of using its military to achieve strategic ends when countries are not ready, and we must be ready.

As the Presiding Officer knows, I have mentioned that, gosh, almost 25 years ago, I was a young marine infantry officer who was deployed as part of an amphibious task force to the Taiwan Strait, which included two carrier battle groups as part of the U.S. response to Chinese provocations on the eve of the Presidential elections in Taiwan. It was a long time ago, but it was certainly an example of the American commitment and resolve of one of our allies during a period of heightened tensions in the Taiwan Strait that we need to remember and be able to react to with a strong military.

Fourth, we need to expand and deepen our alliances. The recalibration of our relationship with China should be done in partnership with our allies. The cultivation and nurturing of these relationships must be a foundational pillar of any American strategy as it deals with China.

Our greatest strategic advantage in dealing with China is this: We are now a rich nation with longstanding historical ties that have been reinforced by decades of diplomatic, military, and economic cooperation based on shared values with our friends and allies in the region. By contrast, China is an ally-poor nation, with North Korea as its closest friend and ally. The unity of the West and our Asian allies is essential to maintaining high global standards and transparency, accountability, anti-corruption, a peaceful resolution of conflict, and the importance of international law, particularly in the global areas of sea, space, and cyber space.

Finally, we must employ America's democratic values as a critical comparative advantage. We should never forget that our democratic values were critical in our successful victory over the Soviet Union during the last Cold War. In President Reagan's famous Westminster speech before the British Parliament in 1982, in which he launched the National Endowment for Democracy, he argued that America would win the Cold War not through hard power alone but through the power of our ideals.

As he reminded our audience and our close allies in Britain, "Any system is inherently unstable that has no peaceful means of legitimizing its leaders." China's unelected leaders, like all authoritarians, ultimately fear their own people. Our leaders do not.

It is fear that has driven China to develop an Orwellian social credit score to rank its people, while detaining as many as 1 million Chinese workers in concentration camps. Why else does the Chinese Communist Party invest so heavily in facial and gait recognition technology to monitor their own citizens? Why comprehensively censor the internet to preclude even the most glancing criticism of the Communist Party and its leaders? Why do China's internal security services employ more people than the People's Liberation Army, the world's largest military?

The answer lies in fear, and the goal, above all else, to make sure the Communist Party remains in power.

President Reagan saw the power and promise of our democratic ideals as a potent critical instrument to challenge America's global rival, then the Soviet Union, because the aspiration of freedom is universal and remains the core commonality that underpins the strongest partnerships of the United States with other nations. The belief that liberty, democracy, and free markets reflect and strengthen the size of our alliance system is something that is fundamental to the United States and our allies during the Cold War with the Soviet Union and now during our challenges with China. Helping countries protect their sovereignty so they can be responsive to their citizens and effective partners of our Nation is imperative at a time when Chinese influence risks pulling nations into a new "Sinosphere" hostile to American interests and our democratic ideals.

Let me conclude by predicting that the new challenges I describe with China are going to be with us for decades. We must face this fact with confidence and strategic resolve and bipartisan work in the U.S. Senate.

America has extraordinary advantages relative to China: our global network of alliances, our military power and economic leadership, our innovative society, our abundant energy supplies—we are now the No. 1 producer of oil, natural gas, and renewables in the world—our world-class universities, the world's most productive workforce, and a democratic value system that makes countries far more comfortable as American partners than subservient members of a new "Middle Kingdom" led by China.

As a result of the long twilight struggle with the Soviet Union, we also know what works—maintaining peace through strength, promoting free markets and free people at home, and having the confidence in George Kennan's insight that the Chinese Communist Party, like the Soviet Communist Party, likely bears within it the seeds of its own decay.

While democracies are resilient, adaptive, and self-renewing, there are many vulnerabilities embedded in China's perceived strengths.

One-man rule creates acute political risks. Historical grievance can breed violent nationalism. State-directed economic growth can produce massive overcapacity and mountains of debt. The gradual snuffing out of freedom in places like Hong Kong creates spontaneous protests of tens of thousands and huge global backlashes across the world. China's budding military power and historical view of itself as a nation and culture superior to others is beginning to alarm neighboring states, inspiring them to step up security cooperation with our Nation. Nearly half of all wealthy Chinese want to emigrate—and these are the winners from China's four decades of heady economic growth.

As we have in the past, Americans can prevail in this geopolitical and ideological contest, but doing so will require a new level of strategic initiative, organization, and confidence in who we are and what we stand for. This also means that we must redouble our efforts in making this strategic case to others around the world, particularly our allies, and we must continue to work on bipartisan solutions that have enduring support in this body for decades to come as it relates to our challenges with China.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Alaska.

CORONAVIRUS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, this is the time of year when we all look forward to wrapping things up, as they say.

Many around the country, when they think about wrapping things up, think about presents that they are going to put under the tree for their family. We think about it as closing up business for the balance of the year, and that is really where we are.

Hopefully, in a couple hours here, the House will proceed in taking up the omnibus bill, along with the COVID relief package, along with a host of other matters that the Congress has been working to address in this past year.

I would like to speak this evening for a few moments on the significance of where we are, but I want to start with just a story that I just now received from one of my staff people back in Alaska, and she got a video from the medical staff at the Sub-Regional Clinic there at St. Mary's. St. Mary's is a small community up on the Yukon River, and probably, I would say, 500 people, maybe more, in St. Mary's. But it is just a reminder to me that, regardless of where you are, hope is coming with the vaccine.

The comment that she shared is this video, a pictorial of the health aides, the PA—the physician's assistant—and personnel getting their COVID shots.

It was 13 degrees out. And the mobile office where the vaccine was administered was inside a chartered Cessna 208 Caravan sitting on the airport tarmac there in St. Mary's. After the shot, she and her staff hung out in their heated trucks for about a half an hour to see if they had any allergic reactions. When none showed signs, the Caravan took off to the next village airport.

It is just an example that no matter where you are, how remote you may be, the logistics that may be required to provide for this hope that comes by way of the vaccine.

People around the country are hopeful. Our job now, as we wrap up, is to make sure that we deliver this relief quickly.

I mention the COVID relief. I have been fortunate to be teaming with a bipartisan, bicameral group of lawmakers for the past 5 or 6 weeks to see

if we couldn't come up with a proposal that could kick-start the COVID talks.

We have had an opportunity for many of us to come to the floor to speak to not only how that came to be but the ultimate result, which was a multihundred-page document, legislation, that totaled \$908 billion. But it addressed everything from vaccine development and distribution to what we are going to do to assist our small businesses with additional rounds of PPP, to extensions to unemployment insurance, to what we can do with food assistance, nutrition assistance, and what more might be done to help with rental assistance. It was truly responsive to the need.

Where we are today is having moved that conversation and that debate forward, I think, in a constructive, in a positive way. We are here with a proposal that looks different than what we had produced, but that is the nature of what happens in a body where you have to come together to sort out the issues.

And what we will have is legislation that, again, like the CARES Act, is likely going to be proven imperfect, but we have to respond to the situation on the ground, whether it is in Alaska or whether it is in Arkansas, and we cannot do it too soon. So this is going to be key, and it is going to be critical.

I am very pleased that legislation that I had introduced that would extend the coronavirus relief funding—the opportunity for States and localities and Tribal governments to be able to spend those funds down. Running up against the deadline here of the end of this year was a real concern for so many, and so that has been included as part of this bigger package, in addition to so much that is good.

The carrier for all of this is the Omnibus appropriations bill. I have been really pleased to be a member of the Appropriations Committee. For some years now, I have been chairing the Appropriations Interior Subcommittee. This is significant, certainly, for our State, with oversight of our public lands, and also of Native affairs, including the EPA. It is a pretty broad portfolio.

We have been working on this dutifully as a subcommittee all year—all year. I certainly wish that I had had the opportunity to be able to bring my bill—our bill—to the floor for full debate by all Members, and then we could move to the Ag bill, to the T-HUD bill, to the Defense bill—do them all separately.

But for a host of different reasons—most of them all come back to politics—unfortunately, we have not been able to do that. That is something that I regret. That is something that I would hope that we, as Members of the Senate, can say: We can do better.

We pledge to do it better every year. We put our colleagues in a heck of a spot. Not all of us are on the Appropriations Committee. Not all of us have the privilege to be a chairman or a ranking member and know the guts

and the insides of each aspect of these bills.

But we come here with a process like this at a late hour, and we say: This is one where you need to know that we have been working it hard. We have taken into account all the priorities and considerations on both sides. We worked it back and forth. We worked it with the House, and here we are. But this is not a good process. We can and we must do better with that.

Now, having said that, I am very proud of the Interior bill that we have built. I am proud of my staff. We were a little bit leaner this year in terms of our staffing, but with good leadership, led by Emy Lesofski and Nona, as well as Lucas on the team, we were able to do the work that we needed to do and in a way that I am proud of and proud of their efforts.

There is so much that is wrapped up in this bigger, broader bill, and I think it is going to almost be gaspworthy when you see the 5,000-some-odd pages I am told that we will have.

It is not only the appropriations. It is the COVID bills. It is the water resources development bill, the WRDA bill—very, very significant. There are good bills from the Indian Affairs Committee that I have participated in, water bills that we have been working on.

But the one that I want to speak to a little more in detail this evening—and I was hoping that my ranking member, Senator MANCHIN, might be here on the floor, but not yet—but I wanted to speak about title Z in the omnibus bill.

Z, I just imagine that they put it at the end because they figured it was the best or maybe because they knew that the process that the Energy Act had gone through had probably been more rigorous and lengthy than just about anything out there. But Z we are at.

I begin my comments with regard to this Energy Act that is contained in this bill by acknowledging that I am probably speaking on the floor for the last time as the chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee because I have hit my limit, if you will. I have had the honor and the privilege to be both the chairman and the ranking member on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee now for a total of 12 years, which is pretty good.

It is pretty good to be in a position to be able to advance legislative policy. I have been very, very fortunate to work with great members. Senator Bingaman was the chairman when I was his ranking and, of course, I was with Senator WYDEN as the ranking member when he was chairman. I have had the great privilege to work with Senator CANTWELL when I was the chairman and now Senator MANCHIN. I think about these past 2 years and what we have been able to accomplish and just kind of the recap of where we have been and how productive we have been as a panel.