

To the extent there is extremism in the military—and it is rare—it is a problem we can work together on a bipartisan basis to solve, as Senator DAN SULLIVAN has repeatedly discussed, and I appreciate his leadership. But again I say it is extremely rare in the U.S. military.

In fact, many of the attempts to root out extremism have unintended consequences, including convincing potential recruits that they are not welcome in the military. These efforts have also punished Americans with earnest and deeply held beliefs—people who share the same beliefs as I do, people who want to serve in the military.

For example, as part of the “extremism stand down day,” the Navy issued training materials to sailors stating explicitly that conservative views of “marriage, abortion, and LGBTQ rights” are “not considered mainstream”—“not considered mainstream.” The U.S. Navy should not sideline traditional religious and moral views by declaring them out of step with the times.

Let me be clear. I hold sincere convictions about the sanctity of life. I may be in the majority in some States, and I may be in the minority in others, but I am entitled to my views, and our Department of Defense has no business characterizing them as outside the mainstream.

One thing that is not mainstream is the Pentagon’s unrelenting focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion over the past 2 years. The U.S. military is the largest and most diverse public institution in the country. For decades, it has been an engine of economic and social mobility and a place for Americans of all stripes to come together in support of a common mission. From the youngest private to the most senior general, our military is composed of Americans from every possible background you can imagine. We should celebrate that fact.

Sadly, this is not the operating mentality of the leadership at today’s Pentagon. The Department of Defense’s new Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan aims to, and I quote, “ensure equitable career progression” for military personnel by eliminating promotion and retention barriers.

By adding “equity” rather than “equal opportunity” to the military promotion process, the Biden administration is judging the selection of military leaders not on the content of their character but on whether an individual happens to be a member of one demographic group for another. Simply put, this amounts to quotas over merit.

This equity approach to promotions and assignments takes a sledgehammer to the foundation of the military, and, worse, it creates divisions that put our men and women in uniform at risk. It pits them against each other based on factors they cannot control.

More than any other public institution, our military represents the broad-

est picture of American society. That is as it should be. It is not “systemic racism,” as one senior member of the Defense Department said. This rhetoric draws the ridicule of our enemies. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the agents of the Kremlin have shown no hesitation in ridiculing the language of woke bureaucrats.

Rather than fighting culture wars at the Pentagon, our focus should turn to doing everything in our power to expand the population eligible and qualified for military service. I will partner with any other Member of Congress who wants to achieve this goal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Florida.

CHINA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, no issue dominates our attention more these days than our growing rivalry with China, and rightly so. It is a historic challenge. It is one that I think we waited way too long to recognize, and now we are scrambling to make up for that.

But I think, in all the attention that is being paid to this, it is important that we remember or at least recognize that the core, the essential issue here is not China, per se, by itself; the core issue here is a decades-old, bipartisan consensus that is entrenched in our economics and our politics—a consensus that said that economic globalization would deliver, well, freedom and peace. It was almost a religious faith in the power of the free flow of people and money and goods across borders as the answer to virtually every problem that faced the world. That is how we built our politics. That is how we built our foreign policy.

You know what, for about 50 years after World War II, it generally worked. The reason why it generally worked is because we didn’t actually have a global market. If you look at the economy we were engaged in, if you look at the free trade and the like during that period of time, it was primarily a market made up of democratic allies, of countries that shared common values and common priorities for the future.

Even when the outcomes during that time were not always in our benefit, even when maybe some industry left for a country in Europe or maybe during the time that Japan challenged us in some sectors from Asia, at least the beneficiary—even though it may have harmed us in the short term, the beneficiary of that outcome was not the Soviet bloc, the Soviet Union, or some geopolitical competitor; the beneficiary was another democracy and an ally in our confrontation with communism during that period of time.

The point is, it generally worked during that time because, by and large, the interests of the global market and the interests of our country never got out of balance too far.

Then the Cold War ended, and our leaders—and I say “our leaders” because this was really a bipartisan

thing—our leaders became intoxicated with hubris. I remember the lexicon was, it is the end of history, and the world will now be flatter, and every country is now going to naturally become a free-enterprise democracy, and economic liberalization will always result in political freedom. You flood a country with capitalism, and that country will not just get rich, but they are going to turn into us or some version of one of our democratic allies.

So, in pursuit of that historic gamble, which had no historic precedent, we entered into all kinds of trade deals and treaties and rules and regulations on an international scale, and we invited into that all kinds of countries that, by the way, were not democracies, did not share our values, and did not have the same long-term goals for the world as we do. Their long-term goals, in fact, were incompatible. Of all of the deals that were made, none has had greater impact than the decision that was made in the first year of this century: to admit China into the World Trade Organization.

They opened up our economy to the most populous nation on Earth, controlled by a communist regime. They did it not because anybody argued that it would be good for American workers. Remember, they made the argument that eventually it would be, but they weren’t arguing that this was going to help us in the short term and that this would be good for our industries. The central argument behind doing this with China is that we think capitalism will change them. They are going to eat Big Macs and drink Coca Cola. They are going to literally ingest democracy, and it will transform them. They argued that capitalism was going to change China. Now we stand here 23 years later and realize that capitalism didn’t change China. China changed capitalism.

They opened up their doors and said: Come on in. They attracted industries with cheap labor. They said: We have cheap labor and cheap workers, and it flooded. Millions of American jobs, important industries, and factories flooded into China, and they did it with the promise of luring American investors and American money, which poured into China—all of it with the promise that you could make a lot of money in this huge market very quickly, with huge rates of return, and, obviously, for the companies, lower labor costs and therefore more profits for them.

We lost jobs and factories closed and towns were gutted, but the leaders at that time said: Don’t worry. They are only taking the bad jobs. The jobs that have left are not the good jobs. These bad jobs are going to be replaced by good jobs—better jobs. Americans are going to be able to have those jobs. Those Chinese workers who took your jobs are going to get richer now, and with that money they start to make, they are going to do two things: They are going to start buying American products and they are going to demand

democracy and freedom and they are going to change China.

Well, I don't think I am going to spend a lot of time today explaining that that did not work out. That is not how it played out. China allowed our companies in, but do you know what they did? They forced every one of these companies to partner with a Chinese company—a small one at the time. They forced you to partner with them, and they stole your trade secrets. So they invited them in and learned how to do whatever it was you did. When they no longer needed you, they kicked you out; their company took over. In many cases, they put the company that taught them how to do it or that they stole the secrets from out of business. That is what they did. They used it to build up their own economy, their own companies.

The Chinese middle class also grew at a historic rate, but ours collapsed—an almost inverse effect. The numbers are stunning. If you look at the destruction of these American working-class jobs and the rise of the middle class in China, they happened at the same time and on almost the same scale.

China did get rich—they most certainly got rich—but they didn't use that money to buy our products. They used that money to buy the products that are made in China. They didn't become a democracy either. What was once a poor Chinese Communist Party is now a rich Chinese Communist Party that has tightened its grip on the country and has actually started going around the world to try to export their authoritarian model.

They literally go around telling countries: Democracy cannot solve problems. Our system is so much better at solving problems. We can move quicker. We don't have to have a town-hall meeting before we do everything. We can have strategic 20-year plans. We can solve your problems.

For developing countries around the world, it potentially has some appeal.

The fact is that we are now confronted with the consequences of this historic and catastrophic mistake, and it is important to understand what some of these are. They will be familiar to you because we see them every day. They play out not just on the floor of the Senate, but they play out in our society and in our politics and on television.

First, we are a nation that is bitterly divided. It is easy and lazy to say: Oh, we are divided as Republicans and Democrats or as liberals and conservatives. Frankly, the biggest divisions between Americans are not even ideological per se. They seem to be attitudinal, and, largely, they seem to be along the lines of an affluent class of people who work in jobs and careers and in industries and live in places that have benefited from this rearrangement of a global economy. They do jobs that pay well and that work in a system like this. It is divided against the millions of working people who are

left behind by all of these changes and who live in places that are literally hollowed out—once vibrant communities that have been gutted.

By the way, remember when they would say, "Don't worry. Those people will move somewhere else in the country for those new jobs"? They didn't move because people don't like to leave their communities; they don't like to leave their extended families; they don't like to leave all of the things that they have ever known that have supported them. It didn't work that way. It has left us a country that is addicted. We are addicted to cheap exports from China, and we are dependent on Chinese supply chains for everything—from food to medicine, to advanced technology. We just had a pandemic that reminded us of this.

And what does that mean, these long supply chains being dependent on a geopolitical competitor. It means we are vulnerable—vulnerable to blackmail, vulnerable to coercion.

Do you know what else it left us with? An economy that is highly concentrated and fragile. Our economy is primarily based today on two sectors. What is all the news about? Turn on the financial networks, and you will see what all of the discussion is about. They are primarily two sectors: finance, meaning people who take your money and invest it somewhere else. They don't make anything, but they invest your money. That is fine. It is a legitimate business. But it is finance and Big Tech. Those two industries that are now the pillar of our economy are controlled by just a small number of giant multinational corporations—the same ones that, by the way, outsource their jobs. These multinational corporations have more power than the government. In many cases, they have more power than the government, and they have no loyalty to our people or to our country. Their interest is not the national interest. They are multinationals. In fact, they are owned by shareholders and investment funds from all over the world.

This idea that globalizing our economy would prevent a great power competition between nations was always a delusion. I think the people of Hong Kong and Taiwan and Ukraine can tell you that this idea that free trade always and automatically leads to peace isn't true either.

None of us have ever lived in a world where America was not the most powerful Nation on Earth. I was born into and grew up in a world where two superpowers were faced off in this long, cold, and dangerous Cold War between communism and freedom, between the free world and people who lived enslaved behind an Iron Curtain.

Then I came of age—literally came of age in 1989–1991, 18 to 20 years of age—my first years in college. I came of age, and, suddenly, I watched the Berlin Wall fall, and I saw the Soviet Union collapse. Let me tell you, if you had told me 10 years earlier—or told any-

body—that the Soviet Union was going to vanish off the face of the Earth, that it would be no more, I wouldn't have believed it. It was a time that was truly historic and unprecedented.

Now, three decades later, we find ourselves once again in a rivalry with another great power, and this rivalry is far more dangerous and our rival is far more sophisticated than the Soviet Union ever was. The Soviet Union was never an industrial competitor. The Soviet Union was never a technological competitor. The Soviet Union was a geopolitical and a military competitor. As for the near-peer rival in China that we have now, they have leverage over our economy. They have influence over our society. They have an army of unpaid lobbyists here in Washington—unpaid lobbyists because these are the companies and the individuals who are benefiting from doing business in China. They don't care if, 5 years from now, they won't even be able to work here anymore as they are making so much money off of their investments, their factories, and their engagements there now that they lobby here for free on their behalf.

By the way, this is a rival that has perfected the tactic of using our own media, our own universities, our own investment funds, and our own corporations against us. They have used it against us every day.

With all of this focus on China—look, I have talked as much about China as anybody here, going back 5, 6 years now, but this is not the story of what China has done to us. What China has done is—they saw a system that we created. They took advantage of its benefits, and they didn't live up to its obligations. Do you know why? Because China was trying to build their country. They were making decisions that were in China's national interests, not in the interest of the global economy or some fantasy about how two nations are in business, and if there are McDonald's in both countries, they will never go to war.

This is not the story of what China has done to us. This is the story of what we have done to ourselves because we have allowed this system of globalization to drive our economic policies and our politics, and it remains entrenched. Even now, people who agree that we have to do something about this will tell you: But we can't do that. We can't do that because it will hurt exports. They will put a tariff on some industry or China will kick us out.

None of this is going to matter in 5 or 6 years. They won't need the tariff on farm goods from the United States. They will own the farm. They are already buying up farmland. You won't have to worry about the investment funds not being able to make a return on an investment in 5 years. They won't need their money anymore.

So this system was a disaster, and the result of the system was not global peace and global prosperity. The result

was not a world without walls in which we were all part of one big, happy human family. The reality is that people live in nations, and nations have interests, and, by and large, for almost all of human history, nations have acted in the interests of their nations. Now we see what happens when one side does that and the other does not. The result has been the rise of China and Big Business—the two big winners. All of this is the consolidation of corporate power in the hands of a handful of companies and key industries and the rapid and historic rise of China at our expense.

China is a populous country. They were always going to be a superpower—they were always going to be one—but they did it faster because they did it at our expense. They didn't create these jobs; they moved them. They didn't create these industries; they took them.

We buy solar panels from China. Who invented solar panels? We did.

They lead the world now in battery production for these electric vehicles. We invented it. They make them; they have perfected them; and they now lead in the technology. I can go on and on.

They are building more coal-fired plants than any country on Earth. Today, China has more surplus refining capacity for oil than any nation on the planet.

This era has to end now. It is not about just taking on China; it is about changing the way we think. It is not 2000 anymore. It is not 1999 anymore. This is a different world.

In a series of speeches over the next few weeks, I am going to attempt to outline a coherent alternative moving forward in the hopes that we don't just sit around here all day and try to outdo each other about who is going to ban "this" and who is going to block "that" from going to China. This is about a lot more than just banning "this" and stopping "that." It is about having a coherent approach to a difficult and historic challenge. Look, it is a complicated one, and complicated problems rarely, if ever, have simple solutions.

The simplest way I can describe how I think we should move forward—and I will have to describe it, obviously, in more detail—is that we need to fundamentally realign the assumptions and the ideas behind our economic and foreign policies. We need a new system of global economics where we enter into global trade agreements not with the goal of doing what is good for the global economy but what is good for us. If a trade deal creates American jobs or strengthens a key American industry, we do that deal. If it undermines us, we don't do the deal just because it would be good for the global economy or because, in the free market lab experiment, it is the right thing to do. We don't live in a lab. We are human beings of flesh and blood. We live in the real world.

In economic theory, when a factory leaves and a job is lost, it is just a

number on a spreadsheet. Realize, when a factory leaves and a job is lost, a dad loses his job or a single mom, for example, loses her ability to support her family, and a community is gutted. So we will need to enter into the world of trade agreements. We are not talking about isolationism here, but the criteria for every agreement needs to be, Is it good for our industries and workers or is it bad? It sounds pretty simplistic. I don't know how anyone could disagree that we should not enter into trade agreements that are bad for American workers and bad for key industries.

We also, by the way, need to enter into foreign policy alliances that reward our allies and strengthen those who share our values and our principles. That also, by the way, helps to create American jobs and strengthen American industry, and if it can't be here, then have it strengthen the ability of an ally to be the source of our supplies.

But I will tell you this at the outset: It will not be easy because those who have prospered and flourished under the status quo, they still have a lot of power, and they will use it to protect that status quo. But we have no choice but to change direction because our success or our failure is going to define the 21st century.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I am here to speak about the Congressional Review Act that the Senate and House passed this week on a bipartisan basis and particularly about the President's decision to veto that Congressional Review Act.

Now, protecting Americans' property is what government should do—period; end of story. The American people deserve to know that the property that they invest in for their retirement is going to go to its highest, best use; that the person managing that money is going to make sure they maximize the return so that the couple, the family, the individual investing in that retirement is making the wisest decisions for their future.

Instead, President Biden's new environmental and social governance rule authorizes those who manage that money to prioritize President Biden's political agenda over the long-term financial health of the retirement fund of that fellow American. Think about that. It isn't what is best for their retirement, in their golden years when they are 65, 70, when they have to retire. It is what President Biden wishes to do now as a political agenda. He is

willing to jeopardize the retirement of the 152 million Americans who are planning for their future to fulfill his political goal.

Now, it is easy to speak about 152 million people. Let's bring it down to the young couple. They are 28 years old. They just had their first child. They are feeling responsible. They are feeling like they need to put money aside so that—my gosh, it seems so far away—when they retire, they have taken care of their financial future.

And they read the literature. If the return on my investment is 1 percent more, I have a much better life. If it is 0.5 or 1 percent less, I have not as good of a life because that is the power of compounding. Over that long period of time, that little bit of extra which continues to compound makes the difference sometimes between having to continue to work and the ability to buy the RV, take off west, and to see the Grand Canyon. That is kind of putting a human face upon this. Congress knew that.

When the President said that he was going to endorse this rule—promulgated it, if you will, put it out there—that told the asset managers, "Don't prioritize the best return on the investment; prioritize what we tell you is the better way to invest the dollars for our political goals." Congress voted on a bipartisan basis to end this ESG rule and to stand up for that American worker and that American family who are diligently saving and depend upon the best rate of return to securely retire.

Now, instead of joining Congress and supporting the workers, protecting their retirement, the President announced he will veto the effort. Oh, he doesn't say that he is going to do it to hurt their long-term retirement plans, but that is absolutely what it does. It puts window dressing around it: He is saving the planet. You name this; you name that. He is hurting their retirement plan, and he knows it, but that is of secondary importance to him.

Now, by the way, for Louisiana energy workers, this is more than a betrayal of their retirement. It weaponizes their retirement accounts not just against their future but also against their present. Those energy workers who are helping to produce the natural gas and the oil that is fueling our modern economy, that is helping to send natural gas overseas to Europe so that they can better withstand the financial and the energy pressure exerted by Russia over their economies, they are going to be hurt because this ESG rule will tell these financial institutions not to put as much capital into the development of this essential oil and natural gas for both our economy, for our European allies, and, by the way, for natural gas, in terms of helping to decrease global carbon emissions, and—did I say it—for the retirement accounts of these workers.

It is another effort by Washington, DC, Democrats to dismantle America's