

Defence Sub-Committee

Oral evidence: The security of 5G, HC 201

Tuesday 16 June 2020

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Members present: Mr Tobias Ellwood (Chair); Stuart Anderson; Sarah Atherton; Martin Docherty-Hughes; Richard Drax; Mr Mark Francois; Mr Kevan Jones; Stewart Malcolm McDonald; Gavin Robinson; Bob Seely; John Spellar; Derek Twigg.

Questions 109 - 183

Witnesses

[I:](#) Congressman Mike Turner, US House of Representatives.

[II:](#) Franklin C. Miller, Principal, Scowcroft Group.



Examination of witness

Witness: Congressman Mike Turner.

Q109 **Chair:** I am delighted to formally start today's Defence Sub-Committee session in our continuing study of the security implications regarding the introduction of 5G into the UK. I am very pleased to welcome two distinguished guests and long-established friends of the UK. The first is Congressman Mike Turner, who is a US politician representing Ohio's 10th Congressional District in the US House of Representatives. He was first elected in 2003, and was president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly from 2014 to 2016. He now serves as chair of the defence and security committee, and is on a number of other committees relevant to this study, including armed services and intelligence.

We also welcome Frank Miller, principal of the Scowcroft Group, where he provides clients with both strategic and tactical advice on defence, national security, foreign affairs and intelligence policy. He served for 31 years in the US Government, including 22 years in the Department of Defense under seven Defense Secretaries. He also served as chair of NATO's nuclear policy, the high-level group, from 1996 to 2001. I am delighted to report that he was awarded an honorary knighthood, Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire, by Her Majesty the Queen in recognition of his contributions to US-UK relations. Sirs, you are both welcome indeed—thank you very much.

We will do this in two parts, first turning to the Congressman. On behalf of the Committee, may I offer our condolences for the US Air Force pilot Lieutenant Kenneth Allen from the 48th Fighter Wing based at RAF Lakenheath, who sadly lost his life in the F-15 crash yesterday? Our thoughts and prayers are very much with his family, friends and military comrades. His loss is a reminder of the inherent dangers that all our service personnel face while training, let alone when defending us to keep us safe. Our thoughts are very much with him and his family.

Congressman Mike Turner, thank you for joining us today. Can I invite you to say a few opening remarks?

Mike Turner: Mr Chairman, thank you for having me today and recognising the loss of our pilot. It also shows the integration and strong relationship we have between our two countries as we operate in the mutual interests of our national and international security. I am honoured to appear with Frank Miller today and to speak to many of you, whom I count as friends and have had long relationships with, as a result of each of your dedications to our mutual international security.

On this topic of China, 5G and Huawei, I want to make some opening comments that I think are principles we all agree on, which can be a foundation for the discussion of our concerns. First, we are all aware that China has instituted a surveillance society. It has instituted a process of a social credit score that applies to its citizenry and it can affect their ability to travel, work, obtain education and their quality of life. It is also a score



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that is derived, in part, by accessing citizens' use of and access to data. China has also been very active in hacking both the United States and the UK, so we are aware that it seeks personal information on our citizenry and even those who serve in our Government.

We know that 5G is not like 4G and 3G. It is the integration of all things. It is not a prompt and response system; it is inherently an integrated system. Our "Five Eyes" relationship can certainly be threatened by this process as we share some of our most classified and important intelligence information, including operations, future capabilities and intelligence gathering.

We are also aware that China has no division between its commercial sector, its government sector and the Communist party. Unlike our systems, which have due processes and areas in which we can have protections of our citizens' private data, the integration in China of the party, the Government and industry represents a continued threat.

We have also seen that, as the UK has taken up the issue of whether Huawei should be integrated into your 5G system, China has begun to threaten the UK in terms of pulling out in other areas. That shows that, in China's view, this is not just a commercial transaction. This represents the proof, if you will, of the integration of all things commercial and government in China.

One of the reasons China has an advantage in 5G is that it has obviously been subsidised by the Chinese Government. This is not a market capability or a market-derived price that it is offering its potential customers. We have to be very concerned about their goals and objectives in that. One of the biggest concerns, even beyond just our national security, that one has to look at in integrating Huawei into a 5G system is that, when it is in, you cannot get it out. It cannot be segregated once it is in. You would be subjugating your population, including your Government, to the surveillance society that China is implementing.

We know that China's surveillance society does not end at its shores. Its 5G systems, data systems and telecoms systems are all part of its overall implementation of that. As we look to our sharing of information, the movement of information and data becomes threatened as we look at China being irreversibly integrated into our telecoms systems. With that, I would offer caution.

Chair: Thank you very much indeed. There is lots to unpick there. We will go through this by starting at a high level and then working our way down to focus on the technical aspects of 5G.

Q110 **Gavin Robinson:** Good morning, Congressman. Thank you for joining us. You mentioned the strong relationship in your opening remarks and of course we often refer romantically to the "special relationship" between our two countries. Could you give the Committee an assessment of where



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you think that relationship now sits in the light of recent conversations around Huawei?

Mike Turner: As you know, the special relationship is incredibly important for us, not just because of the alliance but because we rely on each other. We rely on each other not just because of your capabilities and our capabilities, how we have integrated them and how they are complementary, but because of the peer support—the peer review—where we have a dialogue about things we are looking at or are concerned about. We enhance each other's ability to assess and come to conclusions about the threats we have that are unfolding in the world.

The problem with 5G is that, as you know, it is the integration of all things. There is no ability to segregate a portion of the infrastructure of the system. We used to think of things as being hardwired. You could go to the end of the wire and know that that was the end of the system. As we progress with technology, all our systems are both sensing and broadcasting. As this sensing and broadcasting occurs, and communication between systems occurs, it inevitably touches those areas in which we operate on our most sensitive levels of data transfer and information.

That can inhibit our ability to communicate. We had this discussion with Turkey with respect to the S-400 and the F-35. They said they were going to segregate the systems. Again, they are both broadcasting and sensing systems. It is virtually impossible to segregate.

Q111 **Gavin Robinson:** How does that impact the special relationship? Do you see it enduring through these considerations or do you think it has been fundamentally altered?

Mike Turner: It will be fundamentally altered in the ability to share. The ability to have the same conversation, with the same almost academic level of trust when we are reviewing the same information, would be impacted. The amount of information we share would be impacted and there would be a concern about where that information may go. Once China is integrated into a system, in addition to just being able to take and alter information, it can shut things down. The ability for go/no-go can also be inhibited as we look to the access of area denial. Their ability to integrate themselves into a system can also affect basic operations.

Q112 **Gavin Robinson:** We will get into some of the more technical aspects later in the session. To keep it high level at this stage, could I ask you whether you believe there is scope now for greater international leadership from both your country and ours as we develop technologically?

Mike Turner: China has subsidised 5G and then jumped in advancement for both price and capability, which puts us at a disadvantage as we make decisions going forward. It is subsidising this because it has an interest and knows that once it has been integrated into the 5G system, it has an irreversible, irretrievable presence. Working together, certainly on



the technology side, since we have such a great ability to advance on technology, we can solve this.

Q113 **Chair:** The special relationship is so important to us. You are speaking to the converted here in understanding how important that is, particularly with the inherent growing threats that we see around the world. Is there not an obligation for United States commentators, in wanting us to move away from China, to understand the British position and the fact that we are in a different place regarding China at the moment? With Huawei embedded into 4G, the ability to unpick that is not the same as in, say, Australia or other countries that do not have a legacy of involvement with any Chinese company.

Mike Turner: In my opening, I started not just with how it compromises our relationship or the sharing of information, but with what China's motivation is in 5G and data. They have subjugated their population to a surveillance society. That is how they see data. That is how they see telecommunications. It is important that that is a motivation, not just in your relationship with the United States and our enduring alliance, but in the extent to which it is a threat to the populace of the UK. That one is fairly compelling.

For example, their view of the surveillance society is cradle to grave. They would know someone. Imagine, if they have been watching your future Prime Minister for 20 years, what data and information they might have before anyone takes a leadership role in your country. That is of great concern, probably even more than just our special relationship.

Q114 **Chair:** I should declare my personal position as a dual national. When I occasionally hear public statements of threats to withhold intelligence, it goes against the grain of the importance of that relationship that Field Marshal Sir John Dill in the Second World War started, which is now called the "special relationship".

Mike Turner: There has to be some recognition of the reality of an impact, which should be considered overall as you go forward. Obviously, we all work in the areas of security and national security, and that impact is real. If you look at the classified data that is being shared between the UK and the US right now concerning China's intent and its operations in telecom, and how that may threaten our ability to use or share information, those are real concerns and could be impediments in the future.

Q115 **Stuart Anderson:** Hello, Congressman. You spoke about the special relationship and its value. Would you expand a bit wider afield on how you value the "Five Eyes" relationship?

Mike Turner: The bedrock is that you have capabilities and we have capabilities. On the intelligence side in "Five Eyes", that is incredibly important, because they are complementary and they give us the ability to, at times, see or understand things that we previously did not. Even more importantly than that, we are so integrated together in the "Five



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Eyes" structure and in the sharing of intelligence that we rely on your assessment as much as you rely on ours. That helps us as we look to what our adversaries are doing, what the threats are for the future and what we need to be doing.

So many times, one of us or the other may discount a threat or may not see something that we bring to each other's attention. Perhaps we see things that we believe are there that are not, and between each other we have the ability to say, "No, wait a minute; I have a different view." That leads us to a greater understanding of our environment and the threats.

Q116 **Stuart Anderson:** If the UK continues down this route with Huawei on 5G, will the "Five Eyes" cease to remain as it is? Will it have to repurpose, will it become the "Four Eyes" or will it evolve? What is your view, knowing what you do and what you have explained about Huawei and our current trajectory?

Mike Turner: It depends overall. The relationship between our two countries is never going to be diminished. Our purposes, our values, the fact that we start from the same place, and the fact that we have the same goals, in the end, of freedom and democracy are certainly not going to change. The ability, especially in the manner that we do so, to share information will inevitably be impacted. It will result in inefficiencies and it will result in some blindness. That, overall, inevitably, will affect the operational aspect of the relationship, which will diminish the exchange.

Q117 **Mr Jones:** Mike, can I pick up on what you just said? This certainly comes over very much from the Trump Administration. You have talked about China threatening us. I am certainly no friend or advocate of China but, equally, as the Chair said, some of the noise coming out of Washington is seen as threats. As a member of our intelligence committee, I am very clear—we asked our experts last week—that there is no way that any of our secret intelligence will go anywhere near anything to do with the Huawei equipment. Why should it compromise the continued relationship, apart from if it is used by certain people in the Administration as a threat to change policy here?

Mike Turner: It is important to look at the intelligence we have itself. I know there are different levels of sharing in Parliament than there may be in Congress. I can tell you that, from our assessment, it absolutely affects it. There is not really an ability to say that something is segregated, even just in the movement of data or the movement of individuals. The penetrating nature of China's implementation of the surveillance society inevitably affects that exchange.

It is important to understand that, since all things in this are sensing and broadcasting, it is really impossible to have something that is completely segregated. In that, it is not a technological answer where we can say we have to do it better; it really is one of being present in the system.



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We all know first off, besides the surveillance society, that China is a major source of hacking. It is constantly trying to get into our systems and at our information and data. Being outside the system when you are trying to hack into it is completely different from being the system itself.

Q118 **Mr Jones:** No, it is not. I would argue that hacking is actually where the threat is, rather than the hardware, but we will not go down that route. Can I turn to NATO? I might be making work for my own Committee here. Do you think there is a call for a NATO standard on telecoms throughout our nations?

Mike Turner: There should be. There are two things that can be affected here. One is the denial of service—the go/no-go. Obviously, it can affect the ability of a participating nation to deploy and to operate, and can affect its infrastructure and its own systems. Secondly, back to the surveillance society, it is about the movement of people and information. Private meetings suddenly become non-private meetings if China is invited infrastructure-wise into the room.

Q119 **Mr Jones:** Do you think that that is something NATO should be looking at—a telecoms standard across NATO?

Mike Turner: I do. We are just dealing with the first generation of 5G. This is just the beginning of what the capabilities are. Already, there is software, as you know, that can take a voice and go out on to the internet to determine whose voice that is. We are not far from the reverse being true, where the prompt in the system is, “Go find me this voice,” and the location and the identity will be found. That next generation of 5G—the application of artificial intelligence and where that goes—is also something we have to be concerned about as to what we let in, because of what we will never be able to put back out again.

Q120 **Chair:** NATO is perhaps searching for a new *raison d’être*. We focused on a resurgent Russia more recently, but I see that Jens Stoltenberg is saying that allies should be concerned about the rise of China, especially when it comes to its heavy investments in new modern military capabilities. This is partly about investing in new nuclear warheads, but also about developing new delivery systems.

Would you agree with that assessment? Advancing Mr Jones’s question, with all the organisations that are now becoming paralysed, perhaps because of China’s involvement, not many are left on the international stage that could be energised and ratcheted up to be the focal point for western nations that might be proactive in redesigning international architecture. The “Five Eyes” is one and NATO is another. The battlefield is now moving from terrain to data. Is there perhaps a question for NATO to get more involved in this new arena as the character of conflict changes?

Mike Turner: I think so, absolutely. We used NATO for the purposes of interoperability: the ability to have our troops in the alliance communicate. Threats to that should be taken up and are within the



jurisdiction of NATO. With our collective experience, we can come together with solutions that, on the commercial side, could provide us with applications to solve some of these issues.

Chair: That is very helpful. Thank you very much indeed.

Q121 **Martin Docherty-Hughes:** Mike, in your opening statement, you mentioned data. With the world relying even more strongly on data, why now is the security of telecom networks so important?

Mike Turner: It is part of the way in which individuals, institutions, Government and industry access data. We utilise it for the purposes of communicating and for the manner in which it accesses the rest of our systems. The whole concept of 5G is that systems will no longer be siloed. Your refrigerator, car, telephone, office and everything would become integrated in one part to try to make our lives more simple as we share data. At the same time, China's impetus for entering into the advancement of this technology is not just to use that data for quality of life and enhancement of commercial communications and activities, but, in the surveillance society, to implement control over the individuals who are utilising data. We have certainly seen it in other countries where China has misused its access to data and raised serious questions about giving it that wholesale access to systems.

Q122 **Martin Docherty-Hughes:** While I would agree with you about 5G and handing your network over to a communist party, I have grave concern that a lot of the discussion ignores what my colleague Kevan Jones did not want to talk about, which is hacking. We are talking about malware hidden in apps, fake public wi-fi networks, data leakage and smishing. We do not talk about any of this but it is already happening. My concern is that we are conflating 5G as a cellular network with the profound implications of data mismanagement through software.

Mike Turner: You are absolutely right; those are areas that should be expanded on. I commend the Chair for having this hearing. If you go out on the streets of either your town or mine, and you ask the average 20-something walking down the street, "Which is a greater threat to your overall privacy—Google, Facebook or China?", they are going to tell you that it is Google or Facebook. We have not done a really good job of telling the story of the very nefarious motivations of China and its insidious implementation in our own technology systems.

Q123 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** Thank you, Congressman, for your time this afternoon—or this morning, where you are. In your view, does President Trump value the US-European NATO relationship?

Mike Turner: Yes, absolutely. The President, rightly, along with Presidents Obama and Bush before him, has raised the issue, as my counterparts in the UK have done very well, of burden sharing and of ensuring that our NATO allies and partners make a contribution to their own capabilities. I have been involved in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly for over a decade now. I had parliamentarians who used to tell



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me that, when they would go to their floor, their fellow parliamentarians would say, "Why do we need to increase defence spending when we are in NATO?" That has now changed. People have begun the debate: "We need to increase our defence spending because we are in NATO." I appreciate the UK's assistance in making that cultural shift with our partners.

Q124 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** Why is he seeking to withdraw US troops from Germany rather out of the blue? What is your own response to that, especially given your time in the NATO PA?

Mike Turner: Our presence in Europe is incredibly important. The European Reassurance Initiative that began with our European forward deployed presence has been very important. It is certainly the foundational structure of our presence. It allows all of us in NATO to forward deploy and to respond. It is a huge and significant deterrent. I am not certain of the overall goal in the President's current discussions. I know that we are getting ready to put together the National Defense Authorization Act in the House of Representatives in our Committee on Armed Services. I know that there will be a strong statement in that Bill of support for a continued presence of our troops, including in Germany.

Q125 **Chair:** You mentioned President Trump. We sometimes find him a difficult person to read. Do you get any airtime with him directly?

Mike Turner: Yes. The President has his own way of communicating and I think it makes it difficult for anyone else to amplify or clarify what his purposes and statements are. In the end, the policy is linear. You have to look at the overall trajectory of the policy of the Trump Administration, and from that we can take a fairly confident understanding and analysis of a strong commitment to alliance and to the transatlantic alliance, and an understanding of the threat of Russia and China.

Q126 **Chair:** So don't listen to the man; just watch the policy. Is that what you are saying?

Mike Turner: I think he has a very straight ship and the person at the wheel has lots of communication that he sees as important to get to the destination.

Q127 **Mr Jones:** Mike, with your reply to the Chair's answer, the diplomatic corps beckons for you.

Can I be very clear? The two Governments have come to different issues around security and the use of Huawei in the 5G networks. We have quite a robust system of security dating back to 2003 when Huawei was first introduced into the system. Could you tell us your understanding of the robustness of the US's security around not just 5G, but also the wi-fi or telecoms network? We know, for example, that Huawei equipment is actually there in certain parts of your rural network. Could you give us an overview, please?



Mike Turner: That is an excellent point. That has also given us an opportunity to observe the operations of Huawei and the intentions of China in data. That has heightened our overall concerns, to the extent that people are working to remove Huawei from those more rural systems, because of the way that we have seen it can impact our security and the overall access to data. The short answer is that, yes, it is there; yes, it is proving to us that it is of even greater concern than we probably thought at the beginning; and, yes, we are working to eliminate that.

Q128 **Mr Jones:** One of the issues around the rise of Huawei—you mentioned that the Chinese state had basically bought into the sector—is a market failure not just in the United Kingdom but across Europe. We took evidence last week that gave us an indication that the existing companies in the 5G network are not robust in their financial position. How do you see it moving forward? Will we see the US working with the UK and other partners to develop technology cross-sector, or will we see the rise of a direct US competitor to Huawei?

Mike Turner: It will have to be a partnership. We do not currently, as you know—this gives us the ability to be a neutral partner in raising the alarm—have an alternative. It is not as if we are saying, “Buy product A and not product B.” As we assess the threats and what we see with Huawei, and our needs and capabilities, we can help to design a system. I also know that, from the US perspective across the board, we have industry that is working on this issue. We will see software applications, technology applications and infrastructure applications. This needs to be a partnership.

Q129 **Chair:** You have been very vocal that you do not want Britain to use Huawei. Would it not make sense then to collaborate and to be proactive in inviting America and Britain, commercially and from a state perspective, to work together, similar to the F-35, for example? The reasons as to why we are in this spot are twofold, I hope you would agree. First, companies that were pursuing this 10 years ago have fallen by the wayside. Secondly, China is investing heavily, from a state perspective, breaking World Trade Organization rules, which means Huawei is simply colossal in comparison with other international competitors.

Mike Turner: You are absolutely right. One of the best things we can do is to get the word out to encourage it. Your holding this hearing incredibly helps our ability to have that discussion, and to encourage industry and our two Governments to take this up. It needs to be fast-tracked more than it currently is. We can all agree on it, but we need some action. Your impetus of this hearing helps us begin that dialogue and push.

Q130 **Derek Twigg:** Hello and thank you for your time. It has been reported that the UK Government will change track and that they now aim to reduce Huawei’s involvement to zero by 2023. Will this move help to mitigate some concerns?



Mike Turner: I do not know the technical aspects of that, but I have read that. That certainly is an encouraging goal. The problem is that, as you begin to design and implement the system, we do not know what is going to be there in 2023. It may be best, as the Chair has said, to set off together on a path towards implementing an alternative rather than undoing what has been done.

I am very concerned that the 5G we are currently looking at with Huawei is just first generation. They are working very diligently on artificial intelligence and other aspects, using machine learning and applying it to data. We are going to have an even greater threat, as time moves on, to our ability to protect both the privacy of our citizens and the secrecy of our own Government and security data.

Q131 **Derek Twigg:** Given what you have said, going back to your opening comments, why do you think that, up to this point, there has been a difference of opinion between the US and us on Huawei and its use? Why has that occurred? Has there been a communication breakdown somewhere?

Mike Turner: I am not sure. If you ask industry these questions, you are going to get a somewhat biased response. If you ask our intelligence services these questions, you are going to get a more clear response, because they are not just watching the use of data and the implementation of technology. They are also watching the subject matter: China, its intentions, what it is doing elsewhere, how it is using data, how it is implementing the surveillance society, how it is using this as a Trojan horse to get in. Once this Trojan horse is in and it is opened, what comes out is invisible. By having the intelligence community monitor that, we have a greater picture of what the threat is here.

Q132 **John Spellar:** Mike, there have been reports that the British Government wish to form an alliance of democracies to create an alternative to China's suppliers, among other objectives. Do you think the United States would welcome such an initiative?

Mike Turner: Yes, absolutely. Again, it is important to our Governments, our security and our intelligence services, but it is also very important to our citizens.

Q133 **John Spellar:** Apart from the "Five Eyes" members, who would you see as being other possible members of that? Presumably it would include countries such as South Korea, Japan and Germany. Are there any others that should be considered?

Mike Turner: It definitely needs to include the community of democracies, because we view the relationship between a citizen and Government, and, in this, a citizen and data, differently. Although technology marches on, the issues of our individual liberties and privacy remain the same. It just makes it more difficult to protect them. Having that commitment to liberty, freedom and democracy is a very good



starting point within which to look at how we design a system to protect them.

Q134 **Chair:** We are grateful to you for sharing the views of the United States, but this is also useful for you to understand the situation here in the UK. Whatever the decision of the Government, we will be grateful if our counterparts across the Atlantic appreciate, as I mentioned before, that unpicking Huawei from our systems is complex. It can be done in a couple of years or it can be done, as we understand from those closer to the industry, over a seven-year period with less cost. There are implications for us to do that. It will be helpful, in this two-way exchange, for that to be appreciated. There is no doubt that we feel the pressure from the United States, but we also have to do this in a manageable way that works from a technical and a cost perspective.

Mike Turner: I also appreciate your focus on what we need to do. This is not just a to-do list of yours; it is a to-do list of ours and together. I appreciate your highlighting that, because we definitely need to take this on as a priority. We cannot expect people to implement an alternative if there is no alternative.

Chair: When you next have your one-to-one with the President, that is what he needs to understand. That would be appreciated.

Q135 **Stuart Anderson:** Thank you for your comments so far, Congressman. Looking more into China, do you believe that we are heading for a clash of global ideology between China and the West?

Mike Turner: If you look to their behaviour, they have certainly become much more aggressive. You can see that in the South China Sea. You can see that in the manner in which they have approached their neighbours. You can also see this emerging in their diplomacy and use of economic power, certainly in Africa and other areas. You can also see this in the manner in which they have become much more authoritarian and totalitarian in the relationship with their own citizens.

China is on the move. If you look to the implementation of their military equipment, they have moved to hypersonics and much more complex nuclear weapons systems. They are implementing, both on the sea and in the air, very capable overall operating equipment. That certainly shows that they see that we may be in conflict in the future.

Q136 **Stuart Anderson:** It is interesting that you say they are on the move. Understanding how far they have moved is quite important. Would it be fair to say that they have already gained a significant victory over the West by damaging "Five Eyes" over Huawei?

Mike Turner: I do not think so. What they have gained is a fidelity of what we know and how we operate. That certainly is dangerous and unfortunate, because it gives them the ability to adapt, to plan for the future and to thwart. That should give us the ability to say, "As we now



know what they are looking to do in the future, we need to configure ourselves in a manner in which we can protect ourselves”.

Q137 Stewart Malcolm McDonald: I want to ask a quick follow-up question on China and the Huawei issue specifically, Congressman. There have been some voices in the UK—admittedly very few, but there have been some—who have thought that a change in the White House or in Congress this year might bring a change in direction as far as China or the Huawei issue is concerned. I have noticed a remarkable sense of cross-party unity on both. Could you speak to that briefly? For the people who think that a political change might lead to a policy change, do you want to dispel them of any comfort at all?

Mike Turner: The assessment on China and Huawei is bicameral and bipartisan. It is held by the Administration, Congress and the Senate. That is because it is a technical assessment. It is about China’s own motivations and what we have seen it do. It is not really a destination determination; it is an assessment and it is widely held.

One thing that is important, which I know you have all experienced, is that we have a very bipartisan national security process in Congress. We are one of the few Committees that require a bipartisan outcome for the final Bill. The final Bill is determined by the two chairs and the two ranking members of the Republican side, and it takes a vote of three out of four of them for an item to move. What you usually hear out of Congress with respect to a national security issue has already been through that process and it is very unlikely to have significant change.

Q138 Stewart Malcolm McDonald: Come November, even if there is a change—which I appreciate you are not looking for—there is unlikely to be a change in the assessment or the policy.

Mike Turner: Right, and even if you look to the Obama Administration, when they talked about the pivot to the Pacific, it was not to engage with China as with our NATO partners; it was in a response to China.

Q139 Martin Docherty-Hughes: In answer to a question from my colleague Stuart Anderson, you talked about this collection of democracies. While we may share a range of democratic principles, in the regulation of data, its ownership and sharing of it, there are some differences. Some of us in Europe are gravely concerned not just about the cellular network issue but about the issue of data ownership through software. We see GAFAM—Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple and Microsoft—as commercial and individual manipulators of our data, just as much as the Chinese conglomerates like Ali Baba. Some of us have a concern that we would rather not be a digital colony of China or of the United States. There is a bit of a quandary for some of us in this debate.

Mike Turner: That is why it was so important in my opening statement to talk about some of the things we all agree upon. For example, a UK company or a US company is not the UK and is not the US. In China, the Communist Party, the Government, the telecoms industry and certainly



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Huawei have no differentiation. You see that in the fact of China's response when the UK began to discuss possibly not implementing Huawei. They have said, "We might not participate in your nuclear power plants or other areas of your sectors of industry".

China, as a Government, has considered this to be specifically not an issue of trade but an issue of direct relationship between the UK and China. By being that collection of democracies, we view these things separately, because they are separate. The integration, or even the penetration, of them is subject to due process.

Q140 **Martin Docherty-Hughes:** I totally agree with you in terms of the Chinese conglomerates, but a company like Amazon, which has some of the largest server deposits in the world—bigger than those of the Governments in the United States and the rest of Europe—has power that is equal and untarnished in some ways by your own Government's legislation. For some of us, it is as big a threat as the Chinese.

Mike Turner: I mentioned earlier the issue of going on to the street and asking people whether they are concerned about Google, Amazon and Facebook or the Chinese Communist party. It is our failure, as leaders, to describe to people what that threat is. A commercial application of the utilisation of data is significantly different from espionage use or spying use by a communist party that obviously has goals and objectives that are contrary to liberty, freedom and all the aspects supporting our democracies.

Q141 **Chair:** On this wider issue, we are talking about building up resilience, protecting ourselves from China and having a secure, self-contained telecoms infrastructure. Would you agree that we perhaps need to upgrade our own ability to update the international rules-based order? I look specifically to the UN, which the United States is increasingly less involved with. We saw what happened with the World Health Organisation but most critical is the World Trade Organisation. The reason China is able to trade in the way that it does is because, as I touched on earlier, the state investment in these commercial companies is eye-watering. It is in a different ballpark compared to what other countries are allowed to do. At the same time as providing this resilience and protection, should we not try to create a new level playing field?

Mike Turner: That is so important. What you have just laid out is really a failure on our part, in both enforcement and supporting our own infrastructure and industries. We need to do better at that. Rewarding China for its violations by conceding is probably not the best route.

Q142 **Sarah Atherton:** Hello, Congressman. Recently, the Chinese Foreign Ministry has taken a strident approach to its discourse. We have heard veiled threats of undermining the plans by the Chinese companies, for example with HS2 and the UK nuclear plants. It is accepted that China General Nuclear is a separate matter, but how concerned should we be about this wolf-warrior mentality?



Mike Turner: It is very important. I have here the article that talks about the threats. This shows that, when someone is a self-declared adversary or competitor, to ascertain their intention, we sometimes have to listen to what they say. Here, the Chinese Government have been speaking as if, if the UK does not concede to Huawei, they will take action in other areas to punish the UK. That is contrary to this merely being a commercial transaction or a market-based relationship. This exposes what we all fear, which is that China's commercial enterprises and its use of telecoms and data really are all unified.

Q143 **Sarah Atherton:** What is your assessment of how the West should best manage this clash of ideology?

Mike Turner: One of the important things is the "Five Eyes" relationship, because we share information and data as to how we monitor and look at what they are doing. Right now, our sharing of information and data to do that assessment is really important and has to be continued.

Next, we need, as the Chair is doing, to have these discussions in public. There is not enough understanding among the public of the threat. When one of us steps out and talks about the Chinese Communist party, and its use and access of individual data of the citizenry of either one of our countries, it sounds like a leap. We have not brought the public along with us.

Thirdly, as the Chair has said, as soon as we identify these areas where we have gaps in industry, we need to come together to encourage and seek ways in which we can have our innovative economies respond.

Q144 **Sarah Atherton:** What course is China plotting? What is it trying to achieve?

Mike Turner: If you look at what it is doing to its own population with the surveillance society and what it is doing in Africa, where we have seen its nefarious intentions with the use of data, this is the implementation of a system of control. We have to be concerned about that subjugation of our populace.

Q145 **Mr Francois:** Mike, it is good to see you again. With regard to Huawei in the United Kingdom, you and your colleagues in Congress may or may not be aware that we need a Bill in the House of Commons to facilitate the creation of a 5G network. The Government have now realised that they will not get such a Bill through the House of Commons unless it specifically excludes Huawei from our 5G network. The Government have announced a review of Huawei's involvement, which is effectively a fig leaf for dropping it because they know that the legislation will never pass. I just wonder to what extent your colleagues in Congress are aware of that.

Mike Turner: That is a very encouraging statement. Your dialogue today is so important in that process. That would be very helpful, as are the statements by the Chair and others: "Let us not just say no. Let us find a



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way in which we can have an alternative together that represents our values.”

Q146 **Mr Francois:** I think it was Lyndon Baines Johnson who once famously said that the first requirement for a career in politics is an ability to count. In No. 10, they have done the math, as your countrymen would say, and effectively the Bill will never pass. They are looking for a way to back out of it whether the Chinese ambassador happens to like it or not. Perhaps you could give us some idea as to whether the opposition in Congress to Huawei involvement is now as strong as it is becoming in the United Kingdom.

Mike Turner: It is resounding in Congress. People have enough information to know what its threat is.

Mr Francois: It was a simple point. You can take some reassurance as to why there will be no such Bill. They are already out of the network. We just have not ripped them out yet.

Mr Jones: To respond to Mark, it is a simple remark, being very simplistic about the extent of the cost to the UK economy and everybody else to just rip out what we are doing on the technological side. I would not read too much into what Mark has just said. I would look at the actual detail in practice.

Mr Francois: I am just looking at the votes, Kevan.

Mr Jones: Well, you might be, but if you can get a magic money tree to pay for it and actually technically do it, tell me how you can do it, Mark.

Chair: Can we focus, please, on the Congressman, rather than having another cross debate?

Q147 **Mr Jones:** In terms of countering China, not just in telecoms but across a whole host of other areas, Five Eyes and NATO have an important role. How do you see that strategy developing for countering Chinese policy, not just in telecoms, but across the whole of defence policy?

Mike Turner: On the industry side, we are already beginning to have that level of conversation. I know the Chair was at the Munich Security Conference, as was I, and there were representatives from industry there including the chair of Microsoft, who was already beginning that inter-industry conversation as to how we do this. Our encouragement by giving them an understanding that we have a timeline here and that we need to have this conversation expedited will be really important. It is so important to have a dialogue like this because it moves it as a priority up everyone’s agenda.

Q148 **Mr Jones:** Where do you think NATO should go? The Secretary-General has already spoken this week about China, but do you think it is something we should be looking for a new strategy and policy on?

Mike Turner: Yes. As many of us have related in this discussion, a lot of people are unaware of the threat of the Chinese Communist Party, the



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surveillance society and its implementation through data and telecom. Having this conversation at the NATO level and sharing the intelligence is incredibly important, so that people understand what they are up against, because they can so easily begin to take these steps and then subsequently find what the threat has been. Having this conversation now will hopefully give people the ability to make better decisions in the future.

Q149 **Chair:** You mentioned the Munich Security Conference. I would love to share the breakout room with you. Maybe I can bring some colleagues along with me next time and we can prove that that special relationship exists. Thank you very much for looking after me when I was there.

My final point is to do with defence spending. It is very likely that all Governments across the world will be hit in the consequence of Covid-19 with the economic recession that we expect. GDP will go down, per se. The NATO commitment remains at 2%. I hope you would agree that, temporarily, that is superfluous—it is obsolete—and we should be fighting on both sides of the Atlantic to ensure that there is no real-terms cut in defence spending, for the very reasons we have been discussing, given the wider global threats we face. Would you concur?

Mike Turner: Yes, absolutely. We would not want failure in one area to, by virtue, give us success in another. I can tell you that, even though there have been calls in the US House for reevaluating our defence spending based upon the increased deficits that this has generated for us, we are going to give a budget and fund our defence at the exact level that we would have before this crisis, and we will certainly see that next year. You fund your defence based upon what your threat is and that is what we will continue to do.

Chair: Thank you so much indeed for joining us this afternoon. It has been very informative and it has been really good to catch up with you. We would have invited you in person, but you would have been kept at Heathrow for 14 days in quarantine and we would not want to inflict that on you. On behalf of the Committee, thank you very much indeed.

Examination of witness

Witness: Franklin C. Miller.

Q150 **Chair:** We continue our session with Sir Frank Miller. Welcome as we continue our study of 5G. Would you like to say a couple of opening remarks to kick us off?

Franklin C. Miller: Thank you, I would. It is good to see you again, albeit virtually, and a special hello to my long-time friends John Spellar and Kevan Jones.

The Committee is aware that I am a policy expert. I am not a cyber-security specialist, but your entire discussion has placed the Huawei



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discussion in the broad context of China's increasingly assertive role in the world. In my previous appearances before this Committee, I have spoken of the danger of Russia, and indeed Russia is a threat to NATO, particularly in the Baltics and the high north. I believe China, on the other hand, has emerged over the last several years as the most dangerous and pre-eminent threat to the democracies of the world and to our way of life. In its regional, military and economic build-up, it seeks first to be a regional hegemon but ultimately to be the most powerful nation on earth. It uses its military forces today to blackmail and intimidate its South China Sea neighbours.

As a Government, they have shown themselves to be utterly untrustworthy. We know what they are doing in the WTO. We know what they are doing with Hong Kong. We know what they are doing in terms of militarising islands in the South China Sea that they promised they would not militarise. As Government policy, China rapaciously steals Western military and advanced commercial technology.

Importantly, and this was not discussed in the previous session, China today is conducting a massive grey zone influence operation against our media, our culture, our business, and our academic and policy communities. It is attacking us every day. Sarah Atherton asked about China and blackmail. There is a threat to Britain's own sovereignty. China threatens and employs economic blackmail against Governments whose actions it disapproves of. In the past week, we saw it cut off tourism to South Korea in retaliation for the US missile defence system. We have seen it cut off rare earth metals to Japan in retaliation for territorial dispute. It is cutting off imports of Australian products because Canberra had the temerity to suggest an international study into the origins of Covid. Now it is making threats against the UK, Denmark and Germany regarding Huawei.

We have heard of One Belt One Road. One Belt One Road is a very interesting trap because, far too often, the projects that it promises turn out to be death traps that result in the loss of partner country sovereignty, as they incur debts they cannot repay and are forced to cede control of key ports and facilities to Chinese management. This is not an accident.

The Chinese Communist party's Made in China 2025 initiative is a high-priority policy designed to transform China into a manufacturing superpower. This is important. The goal is not merely to catch up with other advanced economies, but to surpass them and to displace them in these industries on a worldwide basis. The Chinese Government subsidies that you were discussing are designed to drive Western competitors out of business so that the Chinese companies are the only ones there.

The previous discussion mentioned China's repressive authoritarian techniques. Huawei is a key enabler of this repressive monitoring programme. Turning to Huawei specifically, on 2 June the other US



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representative, Mike Rogers, told this Committee that Huawei is a rogue actor on the international scene. In the United States, it is charged with racketeering, conspiracy to steal trade secrets, conspiracy to commit bank fraud, etc. By the way, given Huawei's role in the subjugation of the Uighurs, is supporting Huawei economically not morally the same as supporting IG Farben in the late 1930s?

As I indicated to the Committee at the outset, I am not a cyber-security expert. I am well aware that there is a divergence of views between US and Australian experts on the one hand and British experts on the other as to the degree to which Huawei's risks can be mitigated. Far be it from me to say who is right and who is wrong, but I am here to say that the view that Huawei's inclusion represents an unacceptable risk is widely held by US officials, by US political appointees and by a wide bipartisan majority in Congress. Press reports now indicate that, although the Government have punted the issue, Canadian companies are going to exclude Huawei from 5G. Unfortunately, that is going to isolate the United Kingdom.

Your statement of inquiry, as I wrap up, says that the British Government have said they want to be a global leader in 5G. My concern for the UK, America's closest ally, is that, if it permits Huawei to be part of its 5G plan going forward, the Government will soon find that Huawei will come to dominate British telecoms for decades to come, while Huawei quietly eviscerates UK telecommunication firms and expertise.

In your 2 June hearing, Martin Docherty-Hughes—excuse me, because I will not get the accent right—pointedly observed, “We have an expression where I am in Scotland. You buy cheap; you buy twice.” Quite clearly, he said that is where the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is heading now. “My question,” he said, “is: how can western Governments work together to prevent high-risk Chinese vendors from gaining a foothold in our networks? I suppose that is, you don't buy cheap and you don't buy twice; you work with our key allies”. I think that is the answer.

Secretary Pompeo has stated that the United States is ready to assist our friends in the UK with developing 5G solutions. I would urge the British Government to take that offer up and to press the American Administration for concrete action with the democracy group of 10 and with a notion that, if we do not work together on a broader scale, we may soon be swallowed up by the tidal wave that Xi Jinping intends for us. Thank you, Chair, and I am ready to answer your questions.

Q151 **Chair:** Frank, thank you very much indeed for that. Again, there is much to consider. You touched on Russia and we have not really looked at that. Before we get into the details of the network security, could you give us a couple of seconds on the advancement of the relationship between Russia and China, particularly in the Arctic, and, for that matter, Iran as well? Is there an axis developing there quietly that we should also be concerned



about?

Franklin C. Miller: It is an area where there are some areas of mutual interest, but I do not think it is really a co-ordinated policy. Russia is very much a junior partner. China is content to see it play a role in meddling in our societies and make grey area attacks, but I do not think there is a co-ordinated strategy there.

Q152 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** I cannot tell you how funny it is to hear that phrase “you buy cheap; you buy twice” in an American accent, because I have only ever heard it said by Scottish grandmothers and mothers over the years.

Franklin, thank you for that opening. There was so much there that I agreed with. I really want to ask a question about Russia-China co-operation and I wondered if you could speak to that. What is the extent of the co-operation? There was an interesting article—I forget the author—in *The Atlantic* magazine recently stating that the extent of the co-operation has surprised many, including even President Putin himself. What would your assessment of it be?

Franklin C. Miller: As I say, there are areas of mutual interest but, as far as grand policy, Russia has no role as an equal partner for what Xi Jinping is thinking about for China in 10 or 15 years. It will be very much a junior partner. At the risk of being snarky, Russia is really a gas station with nuclear and cyber weapons. It does not contribute very much to what China is trying to do, which is economic and social domination of much of the world. The grey area threats, the cyber intrusions and all the bots are not co-ordinated. The targets may be the same, as in the US with the prospect of trying to divide the American people, but I think each is coming up with policies separately, with China clearly wanting to be dominant.

Q153 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** Thinking in particular of Hong Kong and Taiwan, and, in Russia’s case, Crimea, eastern Ukraine and Georgia, do you think there would be any similarities, or what would be the major differences, in how, for example, China may try to reunify Taiwan by force? Presumably they would not go for little green men, for example. Do you think it would be much more obvious?

Franklin C. Miller: I think it would. It would be overt military capability and China is building that up. You see their amphibious fleet and their vast arsenal of midrange missiles, conventional and nuclear. The similarity is that, in both cases, Moscow and Beijing view those territories as rightfully theirs. China has said that Taiwan is a rogue province right now that ultimately will be returned. You are absolutely right in the sense that any move against Taiwan will have to be with a major conventional threat backed up by China’s nuclear capabilities.

Q154 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** What does all of this mean for the Security Council? These are two permanent members of the Security Council utterly upending the rules by which we have normally been



governed. My assessment, and that of many in the Commons across political parties, is that the Security Council is just completely broken. What is the future for it if this behaviour is to get worse by two of the P5?

Franklin C. Miller: I do not want to compare the Security Council to the League of Nations, at least not yet, but let me put it bluntly: Putin and Xi Jinping have been very clear that the rules-based international order that we have lived under since world war two is not one that they find appealing, and it is one that they seek to overturn, each to their own advantage. I am afraid that we need to do much more in NATO. We need to do much more with our allies in the Pacific. NATO has to defend up in the high north and in the Baltics, but there are things NATO can do with the Pacific allies. It also talks to what we do at home and what we can do with keeping Huawei out of our networks. It means protecting our own industries. I hate to sound protectionist, but the West needs to be aware that China's goal is to drive our high-tech companies out of business.

Q155 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** Can I ask a question about the Belt and Road initiative and the way in which China picks off countries to play them against others? Although the United Kingdom is in the process of leaving the European Union, we see it within the European Union with countries like Hungary, for example, and, perhaps to a lesser extent, Greece. How would you suggest liberal democracies counter that? What would be the best way to do that in your view?

Franklin C. Miller: The piggy bank is getting empty as we all try to recover from Covid, but we did have the Marshall plan and we did have foreign aid. The Prime Minister just said that foreign aid is now coming back under the Foreign Office in London. The Marshall plan and foreign aid in the past has not been the kind of thing where you come in and you trick the host country, bring in your own workforce, cause them to pile up debts they cannot pay and then say, "Thank you very much. We will take control of your port facilities in Piraeus, Indonesia or Israel."

It comes back to the point that we have to recognise the threat. This is not benign. This is not capitalism. This is not foreign aid. This is state-controlled policy. I hate to sound like someone on the far fringe right, but this is something that China is doing with a plan.

Q156 **Chair:** Should we be worried about the DF-41?

Franklin C. Miller: Yes, absolutely. China has the most advanced ballistic missile programme in the world. It has a whole host of accurate, modern, conventionally tipped and nuclear-tipped missiles. They are continuing to work on hypersonics and other kinds of advanced capabilities, including in space. It is always amusing to listen to the Chinese talk about a treaty to demilitarise space, when it is really China that has militarised space on a very quiet basis. The whole Chinese military threat is part of this big picture.

Chair: Thank you. That is very helpful.



Q157 **Stuart Anderson:** Thank you, Mr Miller, for your very straight-talking opening statement. Looking at national security and telecoms security, we have talked about the importance of data and data storage. To what extent is telecoms network security now a matter of national security?

Franklin C. Miller: It is a matter of national security because of all the things that Congressman Turner was saying earlier. I am not an expert on telecommunications security per se, but clearly, given the Chinese ability now to get into our networks, to influence the way people think and to gather data, it is only going to get worse in the future. It was mentioned in the earlier session that we do have Huawei in the States. Congress has now appropriated money in a Bill that the President has signed to strip out Huawei from all the networks that we have. It is a smaller problem than you have in the UK and a smaller investment, but we are going to strip out Huawei. Coincidentally, those Huawei towers are all across our ICBM fields in the mid-west, just by accident.

Q158 **Stuart Anderson:** Going on to that point, how long will it take you to strip out Huawei? What is your projected timeline?

Franklin C. Miller: I think it is three or four years. Do not hold me to that, but I think it is three to four years. The operators do not want to stop service to strip out and replace. They want to keep service going, so that will have to be worked out with the authorities.

Q159 **Stuart Anderson:** On that point, the Chair mentioned earlier how hard it is for us to strip out in the period of time. As you said, you have a smaller task and that is still going to take you three to four years, where we are potentially looking at 2023 for a much bigger task. Can you see the problems that we will face? We will move straight to this alternative and, as you say, partner with you to look to develop our own systems. It is not a very easy task for us.

Franklin C. Miller: We need to look at this in two parallel tracks. One is what we do with the 3G and 4G systems already extant. The second track is about the future and whether it is 5G level 1, 5G level 2 or something even newer, as was discussed in your 2 June hearing with some of the experts. That can be a separate track.

Q160 **Gavin Robinson:** Good morning, Sir. I wonder if I can ask you a general question at this stage. Does the inclusion of technology from another state within our critical telecoms infrastructure inherently bring with it a national security risk?

Franklin C. Miller: Being absolutely honest, I can only tell you that that is what US national security officials and the intelligence and defence community believe. I understand there is a difference of opinion as to whether that risk can be mitigated but, as Congressman Turner told you, the view is strongly held here in the States, on a bipartisan majority basis on the Hill, and by officials and the political appointees within the current Administration. In a Biden Administration, because that subject was brought up, that view would not change.



Q161 **Gavin Robinson:** Because the question was general rather than specifically on China, do you think there is an inherent risk associated with any other state being inherently or more intricately involved with your critical infrastructure? In the UK, we have three providers within our infrastructure from three different states. You have China and the close connection there with the industry, but then it is less close with Sweden and Finland. More generally, do you see an inherent risk if you, as a country, do not control your infrastructure in totality?

Franklin C. Miller: No, because I do not think that the United States alone has the answers to this. This notion of the D-10 democracies is the kind of thing where we can work something out together, with standards and agreed levels of protection. I am not worried that Finland or Sweden is going to try to bend the minds of our people by putting out all sorts of bots.

Gavin Robinson: Thank you. That is very fair.

Q162 **Mr Jones:** Hi, Frank. In terms of Huawei, we have been talking about infrastructure, but an increasing threat to our security and yours has been cyberattacks from both Russia and China particularly. In countering that, what more can be done to hold those countries to account? As you say, they are selective in their use of international institutions when they want to. What mechanism is there to counter that?

Franklin C. Miller: Five or six years ago, we created the United States Cyber Command to put up stout defences. Cyber Command works with your Government and the other "Five Eyes" Governments. The first thing is a layer of defence of current networks. Part of that means we need to root out the vulnerabilities in our current networks. For example, in the US, the controls systems that our power plants use to send information for electric power distribution are vulnerable. We know that and we have not fixed it. That is a crime. We need to fix that.

The second thing we need to do is name and shame. The security services say we cannot reveal anything, but we do—we have to. We need to make a point persistently on the international stage, if the Chinese, Russian or North Korean bots are putting false stories into our press and our media, such as Facebook, where people get their news today. There is naming and shaming.

The third part of the deterrent, and it gets a little bit sensitive and dicey here, is to say that, at some point, there is a price: "If you keep doing this to me, I am going to do something to you that you really do not like." That is going to be at a low threshold and it is not going to be the kind of thing that would create war. At the moment, Russia, China and North Korea are doing this without any cost. Again, we need something that has been lacking in the past several years, which is called a strategy. It is not only a national strategy, but it is a "Five Eyes" strategy, at a minimum, and a broader NATO strategy. That is going to be absolutely necessary.



Q163 **Sarah Atherton:** Hello, Sir. There is no doubt that the UK and US intelligence sharing relationship is of strategic benefit to both countries, but in these uncertain times what is your assessment of the current state of our special relationship?

Franklin C. Miller: It is a lovely question. I have been part of the special relationship since 1982. The special relationship consists of thousands and thousands of military, intelligence and scientific officers across the US and the UK, people who do things every day that do not get recognised but which are the true fabric of the special relationship. Like a family or marriage, we need to bring on the next generations to understand that.

That is the one part. The second part is what happens at the highest political level, the tweets and all that, where people try to understand whether Tony Blair was George Bush's poodle, whether the CD set was appropriate as a gift. That is important, but it is not the fabric of the special relationship. Indeed, the fabric extends to the Parliament and what you do with the US Congress in the meetings between our two countries' legislatures. The special relationship is absolutely vital.

Q164 **Sarah Atherton:** You spoke about family. Over the next 15 years, will we be happily married or will we require couples' counselling?

Franklin C. Miller: It is my firm hope that we will continue to be happily married. By the way, I say that on my 41st wedding anniversary.

Sarah Atherton: Congratulations.

Q165 **Chair:** Congratulations, Frank. Advancing that a bit further, you epitomise the importance of the special relationship. The frequency in which you visit this country and choose to meet, understand and engage with British parliamentarians' expertise is much appreciated. It is fair to say that we would like to feel the love a bit more from your President and he sometimes does give curious messages. Does more work need to be done on the top-level communications between the White House and No. 10?

Franklin C. Miller: That relationship obviously needs to be improved. As someone who has served in both Republican and Democrat Administrations, I think that the White House and No. 10 need to have shared views and objectives to the maximum degree possible. I simply think that things should get a lot better than they are now. I will leave it at that.

Q166 **Chair:** Seeing as you have worked for both sides, could I ask about the differences on China between the Democrats and the Republicans? Traditionally, it seems that your foreign policy in America is very much bipartisan. Is there a difference of views on China? It seems to be playing out a little bit, given the fact that there is a presidential election looming.

Franklin C. Miller: I do not think there is a significant difference between the two parties. You will have some in the Democratic party who



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think we are being too reactionary. Given what China has done, particularly given the hopes that all our Governments had, and the Democratic Party had, that by admitting China to the WTO and by working with China it would gradually come to adopt our standards and become a partner, those scales have dropped from the eyes and people now see what Xi Jinping is really about.

You could argue that, by moving to be President for life and moving so quickly to confront the West, Xi Jinping has not been particularly wise in revealing his hand, but he has done. There will continue to be a bipartisan view that, at a minimum, China needs to be contained.

Q167 **Richard Drax:** Good morning, Sir Frank. Thank you very much for coming before the Committee. How important are the joint security standards for telecoms across the "Five Eyes" alliance? Could this ensure all partners are confident in the confidentiality of intelligence shared?

Franklin C. Miller: I believe the answer to that is yes, recognising that I am not a cyber-security expert.

Q168 **Richard Drax:** The US Administration have warned of limiting intelligence sharing, should the UK continue to allow Huawei into its 5G network. How big a blow would this be to the alliance?

Franklin C. Miller: As I understand it, the Administration are saying that, if Huawei is involved, there will be vulnerabilities and certain parts of the intelligence sharing will have to be limited, not ended. The answer is that it would be a loss, but not a dreadful loss. We all hope that the UK will now join the other four members of the "Five Eyes" to exclude Huawei in 5G and so it will not come to that.

Q169 **Richard Drax:** We have heard evidence from other contributors that getting 5G out of the system is going to cost us a huge sum of money. If this proves impossible and we have to rely on it, albeit for a longer period of time than we would otherwise like, for example 10 years, would that very much damage our relationship with the United States?

Franklin C. Miller: As I said in my opening remarks, I fear that, if you give Huawei 10 years to embed itself in the UK, you will find that you do not have very many UK firms left that are active. Huawei will have so embedded itself that you will never get it out.

Richard Drax: To the question of the cost, one witness told us that it will cost billions of pounds to remove it and could take up to seven or eight years.

Franklin C. Miller: As the Chairman knows, I do not want to talk about things that I do not know anything about. I take the point, but there are going to have to be economic recovery projects as we emerge from Covid. This could well be an area where "Five Eyes" funds are in fact commingled.

Q170 **Richard Drax:** Please do not get me wrong; I am as suspicious of China



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as you are and very concerned for the security of our country, particularly so having served in HM forces. We are witnessing a shift in US foreign policy priorities away from the north Atlantic and towards the western Pacific. What role do the "Five Eyes" and NATO have in a less Euro-centric world?

Franklin C. Miller: I would contest that. It was the Obama Administration that did the pivot to the Pacific. While I understand the rhetoric and some of the words coming out of the White House, you will note that we have reinforced NATO by putting rotating battalions in the Baltics and we are doing more and more combined arms training with our NATO forces. We remain a part of the air policing and the intelligence gathering against Russia continues.

There may be a role for NATO in the far east. I do not know that it is a collective role as such. I know some have advocated a NATO cell at the US Indo-Pacific Command headquarters in Honolulu. I know the United States is grateful for the fact that, on occasion, the Royal Navy is able to show the Union Jack in the Pacific. I do not believe we are decreasing our focus on what Russia could do in the north and in the Baltics.

Q171 **Richard Drax:** I am relieved to hear you say that, because it is peddled quite frequently over here that the US is more interested in the Pacific than the north Atlantic. As a final question, while I have got you, we heard the other day from another witness that Taiwan is potentially under threat from China. Were China to take Taiwan by force, what could or should we in the West and NATO do?

Franklin C. Miller: One always has to be careful about making predictions on things that lead to war. The United States had pledged to defend Taiwanese independence. I do not think that would be a fait accompli by any stretch of the imagination. That could well result in significant hostilities in the Pacific, which could lead God knows where. China's view of war is that it is not regional; for China, war is global. It begins in space and with cyber. It has regional components. That is the sort of thing where deterrence is really important.

Richard Drax: The presence of the US, and other navies and so forth, in the South China Sea and elsewhere, is very important.

Franklin C. Miller: Yes.

Chair: Frank, you mentioned that you do not want to talk about things you do not know. If you ever stood for Congress, you would have to re-evaluate that position. Could I also take the opportunity to thank you and the Americans for revamping the second fleet and what they are doing in the north Atlantic? You touched on the invigorated threat that Russia poses in the North Sea. I know that our two navies work very, very closely indeed, and that is very much appreciated.

Q172 **Sarah Atherton:** We have seen recent sabre rattling by the Chinese Foreign Ministry. It is accepted that it is an authoritarian regime exerting



increased pressure on the world. How concerned should we be about Chinese foreign policy priorities?

Franklin C. Miller: We should be very concerned. As I said earlier, threatening the UK that, unless it allows Huawei into the 5G, it will suffer consequences is trying to erode British sovereignty. It is the same thing where they take control of ports in Greece, Israel and Indonesia. This is China trying to put itself in a position to control decisions made, rightfully, by sovereign Governments. The wolf-warrior diplomacy is designed to threaten our populations, our lawmakers and, indeed, our companies. There was something in the China Research Group's press clippings today from the *Global Times*, where the Chinese were warning, "There is no way that the UK can get out of having Huawei in 5G". This is a concerted effort to change public opinion and force people to cave to Beijing's desires.

Q173 **Sarah Atherton:** What strategy should the UK adopt to challenge this sort of ideology?

Franklin C. Miller: Again, this is the kind of thing where the UK, the US, NATO and the other members of the "Five Eyes" need to tell our publics what is going on. Again, this is not Huawei as a commercial entity. This is Huawei with Government backing and huge financial resources, a key element in the repression of the Uighurs, trying to get its way inside the heart of British telecoms and to stay there. If our publics are not aware of that and if we do not tell our publics about that, where do we get our popular support?

Q174 **John Spellar:** To go back to what you mentioned about Xi Jinping's policy, to what extent does Washington assess whether there may be some concerns in the upper reaches of the Communist Party in China as to this far-reaching policy and certainly the rapid extension of it? It is a departure from the previous policy of Xi Jinping, but may also be a departure from the views of some of those who have been more economically focused.

Franklin C. Miller: There are concerns there, but he has sufficient control right now that those concerns are muted. One of the reasons why Xi Jinping is so concerned about what is going on in Hong Kong is that he cannot show weakness and allow the situation to go bad, so, if necessary, he will come down, as he has, with the iron first. If some of his policies blow up in his face, that could embolden some of his challengers. Again, this is a man who has overturned the Chinese Communist party system since Mao Zedong to proclaim himself President for life.

I am quite sure that there are other members in the Chinese Communist party who are not happy with that. We could look at things like Khrushchev being ousted by Brezhnev. Uneasy sits the crown, as it were, if he fouls up on a couple of his initiatives.

Q175 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** What should the relationship look like for a country like the United Kingdom or a body like the European Union? I



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am a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House of Commons. We have lots of interesting and detailed discussions on what China's ambitions are and how it would impact on the West. We have very few discussions about what the relationship should actually look like. I agree that we should not have Huawei and all the rest of it, but we have to co-operate with China on climate change and other emerging technologies. What do you suggest

Franklin C. Miller: There needs to be a realistic assessment of what China's aims are. That is the first step. Secondly, we need to understand that there are areas where we need to co-operate with China, on things like climate change, although China is one of the worst pollutants on earth and yet it comes away as if it is a champion of climate change. It needs to be called out. The pictures of air over Beijing during and post the Olympics or the Covid lockdown are stunning. It is more than just a one-day newspaper story, isn't it?

We need to have studies. Perhaps the Foreign Affairs Committee can do that, although I do not want to suggest to my friend Tom Tugendhat what you should study. What is China about? Then, given what China is about, where can we co-operate? The other part of that is where we, as the US and the UK, need to work with our partners to block China in those areas where it intends harm to the West and to our democracies.

Q176 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** If we take the Belt and Road initiative, and we understand the motivations behind that strategy, is there a positive way to engage with the initiative?

Franklin C. Miller: It will come down to a matter of money and diplomacy. How can we help some of those countries that are being taken in by China in some of the Belt and Road areas? That is part of the study into China's intentions and how it goes about achieving its goals.

Q177 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** I mentioned climate change. I take your point about China being a major polluter and you are correct on that. If you could suggest two or three ways in which co-operation could be increased or be something positive, in your view, what would those areas be?

Franklin C. Miller: One of the first areas has to be resetting the proper relationship inside the WTO. We cannot keep having China prevent western industries from having access to the Chinese market while it has full access to ours. That is absolutely fundamental. That is why the business communities are pushing us to accede more to what Beijing wants to do.¹ That is foundational.²

Q178 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** This Committee had Senator Tom Cotton appear before us a couple of weeks ago. He talked a bit about where we

¹ Mr Miller clarified the business community wants the US and U.K. governments to push China to respect its WTO commitments and to allow Western firms full unhindered and fair access to Chinese markets.



went wrong in the past and where the assumptions may have been wrong. I believe he was of the view that allowing China into the WTO was a mistake. Would you share that assessment? Where do you think we have made mistakes in the past that have led us to where we are now?

Franklin C. Miller: Retrospectively, it was a mistake, because they were admitted on the premise that they would play by the rules and be part of the international community. That turned out to be an incorrect assumption.

Q179 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** Do you think it was right then? Do you think that, when they said that at that point, it was the case under that leadership and that it is just no longer the case under Xi Jinping's leadership?

Franklin C. Miller: I think that, over the past several years, even under previous leadership, they were not playing by the rules. I do not think the initial decision was wrong. We were trying to bring China more into the community of nations. That is the right thing to do. Trying to reach out to China's billion citizens and to the Uighurs is the right thing to do, but we are not doing any of that. China pays no penalties for playing the game that it is playing inside the WTO. Indeed, as it works in the WTO, it still continues to say it is a developing nation, even though it is the second largest economy in the world. That is just wrong. Penalties need to be built in if they do not play by the rules.

Q180 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** For example, we have a huge number of Confucius institutes around the world. I know that in your own country that number has gone down somewhat. If I think of the United Kingdom and Scotland, where I represent, we have four of those institutes in Scotland alone. Should that continue? Should the Government start to wean our universities off our reliance on foreign students from China, who provide a lot of funding for these academic institutions?

Franklin C. Miller: The Confucius institutes are dangerous because they serve as repositories for Chinese propaganda and a method of recruiting Britons who have Chinese ancestors or relatives in China into espionage. The United States needs to kick out most of the Confucius institutes. Just this morning, it was announced that some 50-odd US scientists who work for the National Institutes of Health are being thrown out of the National Institutes of Health, because they were taking under-the-table grants from China and working with China. Another thing your Government can do is to make sure you understand where the funding comes from for all your academic research, so that it is not being funnelled through the back door to China.

Yes, there are things we need to do to protect ourselves against an invasive power that seeks to exfiltrate data and to change the way we think. I am pretty hard line on that. I am a democrat.³

² Mr Miller clarified I am a democrat and believe we need to protect our democracies.



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Q181 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** Finally, in the UK, there was a story a couple of months back that the London School of Economics has taken quite substantial sums of money from Huawei. If that was a university in the US, what would the penalty be? Would there be a penalty?

Franklin C. Miller: Not yet, but I think it is coming. There has to be some sort of scrutiny and, indeed, tightening of this so that all that would need to be declared up front and then the question asked, "Is this working against the interests of the United States of America?" In your case, it would be the interests of the United Kingdom.

Q182 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** There is no suggestion that the money was given unlawfully or anything like that. I suppose it is a question of values and security.

Franklin C. Miller: In the US, the question is one of illegal subsidies. I think those scientists are all supposed to declare where their funding is coming from and they were deliberately concealing that. That leads you to question why.

Q183 **Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** Just to be clear, you think we should start closing down Confucius institutes.

Franklin C. Miller: I think we should. We need to be aware that these are not benign organisations as advertised. This is one part of the attack on our culture, our institutions and our way of life. I hate to sound as hard line as I am, but I think that is the truth.

Stewart Malcolm McDonald: I find myself not disagreeing with you.

Chair: Frank, thank you so much for joining us this afternoon. We are exploring and learning a lot more about China. We will be applying for visas to go to China in the near future once Covid-19 permits. Whether we will get there is another story. We will have to wait and see. Certainly, understanding what is happening there is very important indeed. On behalf of the Committee, can I say thank you to you, Sir, and indeed to Congressman Mike Turner, for joining us this afternoon in what has been a very informative session? Thank you very much.

Franklin C. Miller: Thank you, Chairman and the Committee. I hope that Covid allows me to see you in person ere long.