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The View From the Senate

[Chris Coons](#), U.S. Senator for Delaware

[John Cornyn](#), U.S. Senator for Texas

[Dan Sullivan](#), U.S. Senator for Alaska

Moderator: [Ellen Nakashima](#), National Security Reporter, *The Washington Post*

Ellen Nakashima:

Good morning. It's great to be with you here today and with these three distinguished senators who may be from different parties but are well-versed in bipartisanship and in working together, passing legislation together, going on fact finding trips together. And while there may be some policy differences, there are very much aligned with the Aspen credo of using spirit of leadership and collaboration to try to work through these challenges to help make this a better world. I want to start with some current events including the Republican Convention in Milwaukee and wanted to start with you, Senator Cornyn. As I know I was, I guess expecting Donald Trump to give an acceptance speech that was more about unity and changing the tone. And while it started on a somewhat contemplative note about surviving last Saturday's assassination attempt, it quickly reverted to some more familiar Trump tone territory being a little more divisive and demeaning and recalling the Trump of 2016 and 2020 Senator Cornyn as the potential next leader of Senate Republicans. I just was wondering what you thought of that speech and that tone and does it help at all with the undecided in your party? And then how do you think, did it do anything to reassure allies who might be nervous about what a potential return of Trump might mean in terms of a transactional approach to diplomacy and the erosion of democratic institutions and the moral authority of the US on the global stage? Short question.

John Cornyn:

Thanks for the softball

Ellen Nakashima:

Right off the bat.

John Cornyn:

So obviously anytime you're speaking to a group, you consider the audience and I think the audience there and in Milwaukee expected President Trump to do exactly what he did. Obviously the trauma of the near assassination was the top of mind. This was unfortunately I think a terrible failure by the Secret Service, but we'll have plenty of time to do an investigation and look at exactly what happened and what should have happened. But obviously we would never want this to occur to any leader, any political leader in our country. But you're not going to change Trump, and I think people get frustrated. They think

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all of a sudden he's going to wake up tomorrow and be something different than what he is. But I happen to believe that the four years that President Trump was in office were a good four years for the country. Chris Coons may disagree with me on that.

I wish the president would talk more about the accomplishments of those four years, but you also have to consider the audience that was there. But in terms of the future, we'll see what happens on November the fifth. Again, I expect Chris and I have different hopes and wishes and dreams in terms of that outcome, but we have enormous challenges facing our country fiscally from a national security standpoint, and the only way we're going to be able to solve these problems are working together to the extent we possibly can. That doesn't mean that occasionally we won't use the budget reconciliation to do things of the 51 vote majority rather than a 60 vote majority. But as you know, if you're going to do anything lasting, it has to be bipartisan. That's the fact of life. Some people in the Republican primary don't like that. They think, well, we ought to be able to get everything we want, but the fact of the matter is the world does not work that way. So I'm looking forward to the opportunities next year, but I don't want to understate the complexity and the gravity of what it is we're going to have to do, but I'm glad to know I've got friends and allies like Chris Coons and Dan Sullivan to do that with

Ellen Nakashima:

Great. Senator Sullivan with his pick of JD Vance as his running mate. Trump seems to have consolidated the, what you might call isolationist or protectionist wing of the Republican party. JD Vance said he doesn't care what happens to Ukraine and President Trump, former President Trump has suggested he might not defend Taiwan accusing it of taking America's chip business. He said, Trump said last night, we will not let countries come in and take our jobs and plunder our nation the way they will fill their product in America is build it in America and only in America. Senator, has there been a fundamental reassessment in the party of America's role in the world? Is this a retrenchment of the conservative internationalism of Reagan sometimes called the piece through strength? Do you agree with the new direction of your party?

Dan Sullivan:

Well, Alan, that's another softball, so appreciate that. By the way, it's always great to be here. Excuse me, I kind of lost my voice. I was at the convention the last three days

Ellen Nakashima:

Doing a lot of cheering?

Dan Sullivan:

Well, I was doing a lot of press actually. Which is the hard work. Sometimes you got to raise your voice with our media, so I'm not going to do that with you though. I'm going to be really calm, but I always think some of, I work for one of the great honors of my life. I worked for Condoleezza Rice for over five

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years, and so I always liked being here and I was pre-Med in college for my first two years. I was flunking organic chemistry and I took this truly flunking organic chemistry, and I took this course at Harvard called International Conflicts by this really great professor Joe Nye, and I started thinking, well, maybe I'm not going to be a doctor, right? So it's always good to be here with 'em. Look, there's been a lot of focus on JD Vance. He's a friend of mine, really smart guy. He's got a lot of great attributes, one of which is really understands working.

Americans was raised in a tough situation in Ohio, saw the de-industrialization of his communities and cares deeply about those and saw the devastation of things like the opioid crisis and the fentanyl crisis. By the way, one thing, and I was breaking news in Milwaukee on this, my team researched it. There's never been a Marine who's been president of the United States. There's never been a Marine who's been vice president of the United States, and JD Vance like me is a marine, and I certainly hope that he's going to make history that way for all the Marines in the audience. You know what I mean? But in all seriousness to your question, the media was focused a lot on the pick 80 V. What they didn't focus on is the platform. I actually have it right here and you talk, so I mean it. It's really good. It's a reaganesque peace through strength platform.

As a matter of fact, the title of this chapter on national security is a Return to Peace through Strength. That's what the Republican platform is. Was that the last number, number 10 or this is chapter 10 in the very last chapter, concise 16 page platform. In all seriousness, I encourage everybody here to read it, it's short. Marcia Blackburn was the chair on the Senate side. Mike Waltz, who's a strong defense member of the House, was the chair on the house side when President Trump read it, edited it. I'm not sure President Biden's going to edit the 240 page Democrat platform, but in all seriousness, it talks about modernizing the military. It talks about strengthening alliances, it talks about reviving our defense industrial base. That's an area where I've worked with JD Von really, really closely. That is a huge challenge right now. We have no ability to build weapons.

We have no ability to build ships, and I'm usually the more right-leaning member who comes here. But I am going to say this is a huge difference between the Democrats and Republicans on the Democratic side. You look at Carter, Clinton, Obama, and now Biden, when they get into power, they always cut defense spending and undermine readiness. President Biden has put forward four budgets, each of which is a defense inflation adjusted cut. This budget shrinks the Army, shrinks the Navy, shrinks the Marine Corps next year's two years. Biden budget will be in two years below 3% of GDP. We've been along 3% of GDP four times since World War ii. That is the wrong direction, and our platform is very much focused on rebuilding our military and readiness, and that's in the platform.

Ellen Nakashima:

Let me give Senator Coons an opportunity to respond here on Senate appropriations and I think no thing or two about the budgeting process.

Chris Coons:

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Ellen, let me, before we dive into the full on, let me just say I'm grateful to have these two colleagues with me in front of this audience. I do think this is a moment where our allies and partners around the world, many of whom have been represented here in the last few days, and anxious Americans need to be reassured that there are strong bipartisan relationships in the Senate. I have traveled, I have legislated, I respect both of these gentlemen led an amazing CODEL to the border and to Mexico City that had strong bipartisan engagement to look at some of our toughest policy issues. Senator Sullivan led a recent codel. I was on to Taiwan to Singapore together we were on a C 17 full of vaccines to Taiwan at the height of the pandemic and a trip to South Korea. I respect these men. I work well with these men.

I have legislated with these men. It is important that folks realize the Senate is a center of stability, in particular on national security and foreign policy and that whole raft of things that are very capable Secretary of State said yes, there are all these other issues that we need more time and capacity to focus on. I'll just pick one Sudan. I'm about to introduce a bipartisan bill on Sudan with Senator Risch, not a liberal. Figuring out how we have a continuous focus on foundational issues of our values and stability and our democracy regardless of who is president, is what I believe the framers envisioned as the role for the Senate. I am. Yes. That deserves a round of applause for a moment. Forgive.

I am a defense appropriator, and I will simply say this briefly. The annual appropriations bills signed into law, which is quite different from the posturing of the budget. Proposals of every president have made substantial investments in particular in our defense industrial base. And Dan, it is just not true that we have no capacity to build ships and no capacity for munitions. I will agree with you. We don't have enough and I know that's what you meant to say, and I frankly think that if we had more time to go into more detail, I agree with Senator Sullivan more than I disagree about the urgency of our need for innovation, for rebuilding the capacity to manufacturing the United States, not just cutting edge weapons and material, but everything. And I would argue that President Biden has led efforts that have been broadly bipartisan to invest in America, to invest in our infrastructure.

The Chips and Science Act was strongly bipartisan. The investments we've made in the strategic advances we've made in the Indo-Pacific, for example, Inus, which is bringing together a strategic alliance around manufacturing of submarines, one of our most critical strategic advantages. There have been strong moves by both parties to embrace this need. And if I had one comment, it's we need to have a sense of urgency to not overly politicize just how critical this moment is and to find a path forward no matter who the next president is. I think Joe Biden has a very strong record on manufacturing in America, and I'm thrilled if the Republican platform, which I have not yet read, also calls for strong investment in manufacturing in America.

Dan Sullivan:

Just real quick, Chris is correct. That was a bit of an exaggeration. It's not that we have no capacity, but our capacity for munitions, for submarines, for ships has dramatically atrophied and we're in a real dangerous world right now. We all agree with that, and I think getting our defense industrial base and

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our ability to produce weapons and innovations with the Pentagon is critical and so point well taken.
Okay,

Ellen Nakashima:

Great.

John Cornyn:

So let me just weigh in just a second. We're not going to do this by maintaining the status quo in terms of our annual appropriations process. Bob Gates, who I had the great pleasure of visiting with again this morning, told me a few years back, he said the worst thing Congress could do is pass a continuing resolution. What do we do? We pass continuing resolutions almost routinely, but the fact of the matter is we're not going to be able to do what we need to do in terms of keeping the peace by being the deterrents to dictators, tyrants, autocrats around the world, spending 3% of GDP on defense. We're now spending more money on interest on the debt than we are on defense. That's unsustainable. So you

Ellen Nakashima:

Want to raise the amount spending too.

John Cornyn:

I Want to look at the \$6 trillion that the federal government spends each year. Put all that on the table and say, what are our priorities? I think maintaining the peace and maintaining American primacy in the world is the number one priority. Everything else comes after that.

Ellen Nakashima:

What percent of GDP do you think you would be optimal?

John Cornyn:

Well, I think the number is, I mean more

Ellen Nakashima:

5%?

John Cornyn:

I agree with Senator Wicker who wrote, I think is in the Washington Post in an editorial. He said, we need to get to 5%, but as we've discussed already at this conference, more than just how much we spend, it's how we spend it and what you spend, and we've got a lot of work to do on that front.

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Ellen Nakashima:

Great. I want to get back to that, but first I have to throw Senator Coons a softball, and I can't ignore the elephant in the room, but I want to ask you to reflect donkey on another matter that's top of mind. You are a close friend of President Biden co-chair of his campaign, and I know you're incredibly proud of the achievements of the past three years, this administration, but the last three weeks must've been incredibly difficult for you as calls have mounted on Biden to

Chris Coons:

Great softball so far, Ellen.

Ellen Nakashima:

I'm sure they're difficult for him. What factors do you think he's weighing or has been weighing as he decides how to proceed?

Chris Coons:

That's it

Ellen Nakashima:

I want to hear the answer and then I'll follow up.

Chris Coons:

Look, just to be brief, because this is an internal party matter and a matter of the campaign that is playing out very publicly, I think our president is weighing what he should weigh, which is who is the best candidate to win in November and to carry forward the Democratic party's values and priorities in this campaign? He has been an exceptional president. He has campaigned effectively, he has led effectively, I'll just briefly reference last week, which was unless I misremember the NATO summit and folks like me who after what was a very bad debate performance said, you got to get out there, you got to do more work, you got to campaign harder, you got to do press conferences, you got to do long form interviews. He had a week where we had our 31 NATO allies and five other heads of state, at least in Washington, and he chaired bilat after bilat meeting, after meeting three days of a NATO summit, strongest NATO's ever been, did a press conference, did campaign events, did campaign rallies, and there are folks still saying he is not strong enough or capable enough to be our next president. I disagree.

Ellen Nakashima:

Okay. Certainly

Chris Coons:

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I'll note for the record, that was not really meant to be an applause line, but thank you to the very few of you who applauded.

Ellen Nakashima:

Have you talked to him recently in the last few days at all?

Chris Coons:

I'm not going to get into the details of our private conversations, but I am confident he is hearing what he needs to hear from colleagues, from the public, from folks, the number of people who've given me input this week from here,

People I grew up with in Delaware, former roommates, ex-girlfriends, people I didn't realize, still had my cell phone number. I mean with all due respect, what did they say? Literally, people who ride the train with me, people who are my neighbors, people who are journalists, people who are friends. There is a lot of concern and anxiety about this because the stakes are so significant. The consequences of this election are profound. The differences between our two candidates, our likely nominee, Joe Biden, the nominee Donald Trump, the differences are stark and the differences in our parties are stark, and there is a huge amount of concern about the consequences of this election. The one thing that unites every Democrat I've heard from is they believe Donald Trump should not be returned to the White House. And I will say this not meaning to be overly sharp, his former vice president, secretary of Defense, chief of staff and National Security Advisor have also said he should not be returned to the White House, and I think we should listen to that group of individuals who had direct experience with his leadership capabilities. I recognize that this is a sharp and partisan issue, and I did not mean to open the can, but you did. So here we're okay.

Ellen Nakashima:

Now, I'm going to close it for a little bit because time is running and I have the world to get through here. I don't think we'll get all the way through it, but let me at least talk a little bit about nato, the summit last week in Washington, and obviously you mentioned some of the partners that came and met and projected sort of a sense of unity and support for the big issue, Ukraine, right? Ukraine came away with some, but not all of what it wanted. It got reassurances of an irreversible path to membership, but no official invitation or timeline. Secretary Blinken spoke to this a little in the last panel, but I do want to ask you all, do you think NATO should have provided a clearer path, an official invitation with a timeline, three years, whatever it is to send a signal to Vladimir Putin that the alliance is dead serious about backing Ukraine and is in it for the long term? Anyone?

Chris Coons:

I think we have taken consistent and strong action before, during and after Russia's broad spectrum invasion now just over two years ago. I think the strategic sharing of intelligence in advance of the

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invasion, I think building a coalition not just of our NATO allies, but of 50 countries around the world who have burden shared with us and have invested as much as we have. And I think the signals that have been sent both through munitions, through support, through investments, and through what Secretary Blinken was talking about, which is strengthening Ukraine's ability, investing in its munitions industry. I do think we are sending all the signals we need to, I don't think we should say in this many months you will be admitted to nato, but I do think we need to send as strong a signals we possibly can that we will continue to fight for Ukraine.

We'll continue to invest in Ukraine. Look, Republican support for Ukraine in the Senate has been strong, has been encouraging, has been forceful, and so has Democratic support for Ukraine. There is a lot of attention paid to what is a very small segment of the Republican caucus in the House and Senate that has spoken out against funding. And there have been criticisms of the Biden administration for the timing of weapons deliveries. Yes. What I wish we would say with one strong and clear voice is there is a consistent sustained commitment to Ukraine regardless of the path forward.

John Cornyn:

I think it's less important what the timeline is for Ukraine's admission into NATO than it is that we continue to support Ukraine and that Putin not prevail. I don't know anybody who believes, I don't know anybody with any sense of history who believes that Putin will stop at Ukraine. And the Ukrainians have been incredible in terms of their will to fight. But I do think there's a very important point with regard to nato. NATO needs to do more. I think that's something President Trump was very intuitive about years ago when he said NATO needs to step up and do, and I'm not just talking about 2%. We heard on the panel with General Ola yesterday, which I actually thought was pretty encouraging what the European commitment is going to be here, but this is in their backyard and they know that NATO could well become, get attacked, and then Article five will be invoked and we'll be involved not only in a regional war, but perhaps something much, much, much more dangerous.

But the United States' responsibilities are not regional. We have global responsibilities, but we also have responsibilities to our taxpayers to say, we're not going to let other, let other countries free ride on American power. So I think there's a important conversation that is taking place here about what that burden sharing should look like. And I think Europe needs to take more responsibility. And I agree with Dan and others who said that, and Chris said, our industrial base is not up to where we need to be. We are playing catch up. And if President Xi decided to pull the trigger tomorrow, we would be in a world of hurt in the Indo-Pacific.

Dan Sullivan:

I would agree with both of my colleagues that a timeline is not something that should have been put forward. Chris mentioned a point, I want to dig into it a little bit more as kind of the other side of the aisle here, but I was a really strong proponent of the security supplemental. We reshaped it first came from the White House, it was very Ukraine focused. A number of us said, no, no, no, this has to be

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focused on all of the authoritarian aggression going on in the world. So we added a whole bunch, really an Indo Paycom, Taiwan Israel that made it more strategically important but also more politically palatable. But I do think the notion that we're going to be doing this every six months for another a hundred billion, that's probably not politically realistic. And then one other thing that I've been a big critic on with President Biden on this is Chris mentioned it, but look, the way in which this war has been prosecuted on our side has not been so great on every single weapon system that the Ukrainians come and say they need.

And the list is really long, just in my head, high Mars Javelin stingers, Patriots, Abrams tanks, attack SF sixteens every time the Biden administration has delayed those for months, even years. And yet what happens, the Senate in a bipartisan way pushes the White House saying, look, because the White House says, well, this is going to provoke Putin, provoke Putin, the guy already invaded a country. Get them the weapons they need. We met with President Zelinsky two weeks ago after the meeting. I went up to him, where are we on the F sixteens? Two years ago, I hosted some Ukrainian pilots who came to Washington DC you might remember they were kind of famous, the ghost of Kyiv who were shooting down migs. Unfortunately, one of these guys call sign juice is already dead since we've met with 'em. They said, we set 'em up with meetings, senior level Pentagon officials to get F sixteens.

Two years ago, bipartisan group of centers. We wrote Austin, we wrote General Millie, get them the F sixteens. So real quickly, sir, just let me finish. So Zelensky two weeks ago, I looked at 'em, where are we in the F sixteens? We don't have 'em yet, Senator. It's two years. This is ridiculous. And we have not been in it to win it. Imagine if we had all these weapons systems, Ukrainians at the outset of this war, how different the war could have been. And then finally we were at the Munich Security Conference. The number one issue that didn't get any press number one issue at the Munich Security Conference was President Biden's call to halt LNG exports to Europe and Asia. It was the number one issue raised by the Chancellor of Germany with us. Every ally was like, what are they doing? We need energy from America. It saved us and now you're stopping it. So there's a real challenge in some Republicans who voted against the national security supplemental aren't isolationists. They're just saying, look, this administration's not it to win it, so I'm not going to support it. So it's a big problem and we've worked together to try and get this administration to move forward. But that's one of the biggest issues on the Ukraine challenge is the administration's halfway in and it's not helpful.

Ellen Nakashima:

Well, real quickly, I'd like one minute answer please. To your point about pushing the White House to move weapons in faster, what about the issue of lifting the restraints on firing us, provided long range weapons into Russia, like using attack S to get at airfields with from which the Russians are launching glide bombs. Do you think that the administration should lift those restraints and would you be willing, if so, would you be willing to push them to do so?

Dan Sullivan:

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Yes,

John Cornyn:

Yes.

Ellen Nakashima:

Oh, that was great. Less than one minute. Thank you. You hear that Secretary Blinken

Chris Coons:

And Ellen, the F sixteens are flying this summer. Secretary Blinken just confirmed that. I respect.

Dan Sullivan:

We'll see. I don't believe it.

Ellen Nakashima:

Okay,

Chris Coons:

Dan.

Ellen Nakashima:

All right. On us, China, the most consequential relationship that the US is engaged in, though the Obama administration coined the pivot to Asia, the Trump administration gets credit for making a true turn for establishing the idea that China and Russia were strategic competitors with the United States. The Biden administration built on that strategy. It continued Trump tariffs on China, added more export controls on semiconductors bound for China. But where it really has made its mark is strengthening military economic and diplomatic partnerships with a range of Indo-Pacific allies and partners from Japan and the Philippines to Australia and India. How well is this strategy working as a deterrent to China and how much or what aspects of it do you expect to continue or even expand under a potential Trump administration senator?

John Cornyn:

Well, we're playing catch up. To me. It's again, a great incredible contrast between the way that the United States treated communist Russia. We said we can't change them, we got to contain them. But Deng Xiaoping and others said, hide your motives, bide your time. And they welcomed us investment into China, which has helped build them into an economic superpower. And oh by the way, they use that economy to re-arm and to threaten our friends and allies in the region. I think we are still trying to figure

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this out. I don't think we'll ever decouple from China, but we can. I like the language where people say we need to de-risk. A lot of the work that we've done, for example, the White House has done on export controls of sensitive technology is important. The outbound investment transparency Bill that Bob Casey and I introduced that I know Dan and Chris both support, we need eyes on exactly how that money is being spent because frankly, there's a lot of American investors who are making money on these investments in China. Why get that? That are dual use technology that can be used to kill Marines in the Indo-Pacific, and that should cause us all concern. Okay.

Ellen Nakashima:

Alright. I need to move to Taiwan.

Dan Sullivan:

Can I just on that one, Ellen, I would say it's the guy who's kind of been rabbleroxing here a little bit. I think it it's a new role for you, senator. It's actually a really strong area bipartisan agreement in the Senate. Yes, the reorientation, which was the proper reorientation that the Trump administration did and their national security strategy document, it really focused on the reemergence, a great power competition, the dangers of Xi Jinping and just look at what they're doing all over the world, not just in the Taiwan Strait and others. And then I would say that the Biden administration building on what the Trump administration did with the quad, taking that to the leader level with this new trilateral leader initiative with Korea and Japan in the United States. And very importantly Chris mentioned early Aus, which has really strong bipartisan support in the Senate. Those are all areas that I think really strengthen us because our allies are certainly one of our greatest strengths.

Ellen Nakashima:

And that future President Trump would continue,

Dan Sullivan:

I would imagine he started, he kind of revived the quad in a lot of ways. I was actually started by President Bush, president Obama let it go by the wayside. And the Trump administration revived the quad, president Biden took it to the leaders level. So I would imagine those are initiatives that would continue to get bipartisan support.

Ellen Nakashima:

What about Taiwan? Former President Trump recently told Bloomberg, I think that Taiwan should be paying the US for its defense. He said, we're no different than an insurance company. Taiwan doesn't give us anything. Senator Sullivan, how concerned are you that a President Trump would not be

Dan Sullivan:

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Committed to President Trump? Talked about Taiwan a little bit in his speech last night. I like to say on a lot of these issues, the record is probably more important than the rhetoric. I think the Trump administration probably had one of the strongest records with regard to Taiwan of any administration when they were in power. We sent them more weapons during that time than probably any other, certainly the last several administrations combined and sent high level delegations, even cabinet officials. So to me, a huge part of what we need to do in the Taiwan Strait is continue to help train them that isn't getting a lot of press. Maybe it shouldn't be getting a lot of press to have a military that's capable if called upon to respond. My first deployment as a US Marine was to the Taiwan Strait in 1995 and 96 when President Clinton sent two carrier strike groups in a marine amphibious ready group during a very tense time during the Taiwan Strait. And I think one of the most important things we can do, I have legislation on it, is let Xi Jinping know if he invades Taiwan that we will impose massive economic, financial and energy sanctions on him. My bill's called the Stand with Taiwan Act. It's bipartisan. But those are the three layers of deterrence that I think will keep deterrence in the Taiwan straight, unless Xi Jinping wants to roll the dice. And if that happens, I would certainly hope we defend them

John Cornyn:

Quickly. I don't know who said it originally, but I agree with this. All of our policy toward Taiwan ought to be focused on President Xi waking up each morning and saying, not today, and waking up tomorrow, Admiral Phil Davidson and saying, not today. And we need to keep that up as much as we can. That should be the focus of our strategy.

Ellen Nakashima:

Do you think he does that? Did he wake up today, pull back the curtains and say, not today?

John Cornyn:

Well, he is got the PLA on a path to be ready by 2027 according to published reports. But when you have one person making that decision just as you had Putin be the one guy to make the decision to invade Ukraine, president Xi, we just hope he wakes up on the right side of the bed.

Dan Sullivan:

But we are going in the wrong direction. Admiral Aino, I think Admiral Papapa, they both talked about Overmatch, right in the Overmatch in that region, the Chinese, we are shrinking the Navy. Again, this is a fact shrinking the Navy. And by 2027, when Xi Jinping says he wants to be able to invade Taiwan, our Navy will be at about 293 ships. So PLA Navy will be at about three 40. So this is really, no, I'm sorry that number's wrong. It's a much higher number for the PLA. They'll have about 150 more ships and our ships are higher quality. But at a certain point, particularly with the Navy, quantity becomes its own quality. And we are getting overmatched in the Indo Paycom region. That is a fact. And we need to wake up to that

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Ellen Nakashima:

Final word to you, Senator.

Chris Coons:

And there is no region of the world and no scenario where the urgency of innovation in our military, in how we harness better, what is really our global competitive strength, which is the capability of the United States to innovate solutions and to do it more quickly. That is a real challenge for us in the defense space. But if there's a lesson from Ukraine, it's that our partnerships and our alliances matter deeply. And we need to continue to invest in owning and earning and sustaining the trust of our partners and allies in the Indo-Pacific as well as in Europe and in the global south. And we have to invest more in being prepared for conflict globally. And part of that means investing more here. I frankly think the single greatest strategic threat to the United States is our political division. And if anything good has come out of what was a tragic day on Saturday, bill said it is a reduction in the temperature. I am proud that our president picked up the phone and called his political opponent and conveyed the prayers and best wishes of Jill and Joe Biden to Don, excuse me, to former president and First Lady Trump. And that we hopefully in front of you have shown that while we have strong policy differences, we know each other, we respect each other, and we intend to continue working hard to keep our country safe. Thank you.

Ellen Nakashima:

Thank you very much.