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Fireside Chat with Richard Moore, Chief of MI6, UK Secret Intelligence Service

Moderator: Jim Sciutto, Chief National Security Correspondent, CNN

Sciutto

I want to begin with a topic that is occupying an enormous amount of conversation here, but also your work in the work of US intelligence agencies and that's Russia's invasion of Ukraine. I could begin with a general question Who is winning?

Moore

Right. Well, before I come on to that to that question, first of all, I'm delighted to be here. It's, it's tremendous. It's lovely to be back. Stateside, I spent some of my teenage years in Chicago, my first paid employment was a beach attendant on Lake Michigan.

And I went to the you'll find universities it's actually wonderful to see a gentleman over there tonight who I was a teaching assistant for in 1986. So it's lovely to be here and great to be at Aspen where all of these issues are being talked about by this amazing group of people. On Ukraine, what would I what I say one has to start by just reflecting on the fact that this is the most egregious naked act of aggression that we've seen in Europe since the Second World War. And that you cannot condemn it too much. So we're seeing played out on our TV screens on a daily basis, just the true horrors of that war that are being visited on the Ukrainian people.

I think it also answered your question, I think you have to go back and think through what were Putin's war aims that I can think of three principal ones that he had going into this and we had the enormous privilege the US UK intelligence services of of knowing what his plan was, and he had three things you wanted, one was to remove Zelinsky second, was to capture Kyiv. And second was to sow disunity within the NATO alliance. And if you turn to those three, briefly, presidential he is still very much there and has proved to be a fantastically successful leader of his people in their resistance to invasion. So I think that's a that's a fail.

If you they completely failed to capture keys and received a very, very bloody nose doing it they continue to suffer badly on the battlefields. 15,000 Russians have lost their lives. That's probably a conservative estimate. That is the same number roughly, as they lost in 10 years in Afghanistan, the 1980s. And these these, these are not middle class kids from St. Petersburg or Moscow. These are poor kids from rural parts of Russia. They're from blue collar towns in

Siberia. They are disproportionately from ethnic minorities. These are as cannon fodder. And so we're still seeing that play out and it's early on NATO. NATO has proved extraordinarily united in the face of this. And they're all sort of tectonic plates shifting and European security, the change of European of German defence and security policy, overturning decades of an approach astonishing thing, and then Sweden and Finland in the lights I never thought I would see Sweden and Finland join NATO. Sweden's just given up 200 years of neutrality to do that. So on all of those, I think they count as epic fails. So I think he has suffered a strategic failure in in Ukraine. It's obviously not over. He's obviously made and the Russian forces have made some incremental progress progress over recent weeks and months, but you have it's tiny amounts, and we're talking about a small number of miles of advance, and when they take it down, there's nothing left of it. I mean, it is obliterated, and so and I think they're about to run out of steam. I think our assessment is that the Russians will increasingly find it difficult to supply manpower material over the next few weeks. they will have to pause in some way and that will give the Ukrainians opportunities to strike back.

Their morale is still high, they're starting to receive increasing amounts of good weaponry.

Sciutto

Why are the next few weeks and months particularly critical for Ukraine to maintain that position?

Moore

I think that it's important, I think to the Ukrainians themselves, that they demonstrate their ability to strike back and I think that will be very important for their continuing high morale. I also think to be honest, it will be an important reminder to the rest of Europe, that this is a winnable campaign by the Ukrainians because we are about to go into a pretty tough winter and to Donald sound like a character from Game of Thrones, but Winter is coming and clearly in that atmosphere with the sort of pressure on gas suppliers and all the rest. We're in for a tough time.

Sciutto

Your American counterpart made something of a headline here yesterday by saying that it's the US intelligence and given the Five Eyes agreement I have to imagine you have a similar assessment that Putin is not ill despite a lot of rumors and speculation. I wonder if you share that assessment but also more importantly, do you know, right, do you ask UK intelligence agencies have sufficient penetration of Putin's inner circle to know the truth not just of his health, but of his thinking?

Moore

But you won't be surprised to hear me say that I won't go too far into what sort of coverage we have around Putin's circle but there's no evidence that Putin is suffering from serious ill health.

Sciutto

Do you know his intentions? Do you have a sufficient understanding? The US lost, which we reported at the time, a tremendous source inside his inner circle. What is the state of the West? What is the state of the West, well let's just say the Five Eyes vision to understanding Kremlin's plans and desires?

Moore

Well, it's a very, very important part of what we what we do. And I think unusually the world got more of an insight into that than they normally do, because of the decision to declassify some of the intelligence which was showing us the plans that Putin has this invasion. So, you know, by the very fact that stuff was out there, it gives you some sense that we have an ability to monitor some of what's going on around him. And we by the way, you know that that declassification is something which we do it very carefully, because, for us in particular, I mean, I run a human intelligence service, and for us the secret agents who decided to throw in a lot with us and help us We have a sacred trust to protect them. so we are not going to reveal and declassify intelligence if it's going to lead to the uncovering and that was very much in our minds, as we move forward with that declassification

Sciutto

I want to ask you about human Intel because I know this is you're still a true believer even in the age of advancing technology, but before we get there, US UK Intel got a lot like about this invasion even the face of a lot of doubts from from Europeans and even Ukrainian deleting their public statements of the days prior to the invasion. How do you rate the performance of Russian intelligence in the lead up to this war and since then?

Moore

Well, I think I did. We did get some stuff right? And, and it was faced with some skepticism at the time, but I sort of understand that the partly because when you when you share intelligence, You don't go into the inner workings of this. so you know, inevitably you're faced with a better kind of doubting Thomas.

behaviors as people don't fully understand how On what basis you are you actually you are saying that you know this is going to happen, but it did allow people I think to prepare, and it

did allow us I think to completely defeat the sort of false narratives that Putin was putting around his invasion.

If I reflect on our Russian counterparts, like the Russian military, I don't think they're having a great war.

They clearly completely misunderstood Ukrainian nationalism. They completely underestimated the degree of resistance that the Russian military would face. And it was a sort of, I think, as far as I can tell, there's sort of a toxic combination of them, not really getting their intelligence right. But also, intelligence services reflect this, the societies they serve. Now I am answerable to democratically elected ministers. I'm answerable to parliamentarians, I'm answerable to judges over certain aspects of my work. It's a rather different system in Russia, and one thing that it doesn't pay is to speak truth to power. So I suspect some of the kind of reality of what they were about to encounter was just not being briefed. Up to Putin. And subsequent to this invasion, we've taken some pretty concerted effort against them. So across Europe, roughly half last camp, something north of 400 Russian intelligence officers operating under diplomatic cover have been expelled. And we reckon in the UK, that's probably reduced their ability to do their business to spy for Russia in Europe by half. We've also seen a number of illegals as some of you may have seen the rather good TV series *The Americans*.

Well, it's slightly less grammar glamorous, I think if you were a real Russian illegal and two of them had been arrested. Recently, one of them masquerading as a Spanish journalist chap called Gonzalez. The Yagi has been arrested in Poland. He was trying to go in to Ukraine to be part of the destabilizing efforts there. And another shout for check us off has just been jailed for 15 years in in Holland. So you, you stick around doing not a lot as an illegal for quite a long time with all the stresses and then you turn up and try and do a job and you're gonna get caught another 15 years in jail. So that's once

Sciutto

So, human Intel counter Intel, in general terms, let me ask about the other side as Russia has been cut off from the world, in effect, and a lot of Russians who are not happy with that, whether in business or perhaps in government as well. Has this been a target rich environment for recruiting potential assets?

Moore

I don't think I'm going to go there on that one.

I very much hope that Russians, many of whom will be within those intelligence services within their diplomatic service elsewhere in positions of influence inside Russia will reflect on what they are witnessing in the Ukraine. And if I think back to the impact, for example, that the crushing of the Prague Spring has in 1968. That was a moment when a number of Russians decided that Soviets in those days decided that it was their time to try and strike back against the system that they were representing. So we'll have to see Jim, That sounds like a pitch to me.

Sciutto

That sounds like a pitch to me.

Moore

Our door is always open.

Sciutto

You have been very public about the growing threat from China. You said November the Chinese Communist Party leadership increasingly favored bold and decisive action justified on national security grounds, the days of Deng Xiaoping's hide your strength bide your time are long over the Ukraine invasion by the way, this was this was a process underway prior before the Ukraine invasion led many to finally we appraise Putin and Russia that there are many who still up until February 23 Right thought this is someone they could work with and many not all have changed. As you look at China, and she statements and things like stifling of Hong Kong or the incarceration of Uighurs in Xinjiang and other steps Are you reappraising China as as as a as a not just a competitor, but an adversary a greater threat?

Moore

MI6 has never had any illusions whatsoever of Communist China. So I think there has been a growing recognition right across government and our societies of some of the threats that the Chinese pose to our societies and I thought that the director general of MI five and the director of the FBI, who spoke in London a few days ago did a pretty good job of laying out why we shouldn't be naive about what the Chinese are trying to do to our societies. So that has been the case with us for some years. What is different, undoubtedly, Jim, is that we have putting more effort into China, we now devote more effort to China than any other single subject. So for example, it has just moved past counterterrorism in terms of our missions. And that feels like a very big moment post 911, post seven, seven in London, but it reflects the seriousness of the mission for us. And this is right across the piece. It's about if you like in my case, getting upstream against some of the threats that they pose, but also even where one wants to engage in a position of strength in China, whether you're trading with them or whether you're trying to

find some common ground on climate change, etc. This is still a pretty opaque system. I mean, at one level, understanding Zhi Jing ping, strategic intent is not difficult if you if you read China made in China 2025. He lays out for you their ambitions around technology and their desire to dominate key technologies. But if you go beneath that strategy in terms of how they implement how they organize how they what there is a tactical intent is and then what are the capabilities they're building up? That's a black box. And there's a role for organizations like mine and helping British ministers and policymakers to understand that so they can navigate this really complex, difficult relationship with the Chinese.

Sciutto

They're very public about their ambitions. They are also very public about their perception of American and Western weakness. I wonder, does China, do you think today look at the West response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as a cautionary tale for any designs they might have on invading Taiwan?

Moore

I think it's too early to too what llessons they will draw from Putin's misadventures in Ukraine. I think there is lots of signs of them, really going into overdrive trying to work out what they think about this as always with the Chinese system that is mixed in with a sort of ideological overlay that they're trying desperately to draw the right lessons, which will be approved by President G as they go into a party congress. So it's, it's quite difficult to read at the moment, but I am very clear, and this is one of the reasons why it is so essential that we toughed it out on Ukraine and we keep going through this winter. And we help the Ukrainians to to to win this negotiate from a position of significant strength is because Judy and peg is watching this Michael hawk. And as you say, he's got a very entrenched narrative of Western weakness. I have said in a previous speech that I worry about that because I think he underestimates us resolve and power and that might lead into miscalculate over the sort of issues that we've been talking about over the last couple of days particularly over Taiwan.

Sciutto

James Stavridis, a frequent participant in the in this conference wrote a book last year called 2034, which is a novel but envisions a war between the US and China. And he's told me and probably others in this audience that when he goes to the Pentagon, folks will say to him, the only thing you got wrong in that book was a date. 2034 we think war might come earlier. And you just heard this from Admiral Davidson, for instance, talking about the possibility and public comments of military conflict between the US and China. Do you believe that more between and when I say us I say really the US and its allies in China, Britain included? Is war inevitable?

Moore

I don't think it's inevitable at all. And it's still very much I think the desire of all of us to see the differences between the peoples on either side of the Taiwan Strait settled in through peaceful means that's what we would all aspire to do. But coming back to those lessons from Ukraine, and lessons from other aspects, of Western behavior. It is really important that President G as he calculates what he may or may not do on Taiwan, I think looks at what can go wrong with a misjudged invasion. And we're seeing that played out and I think it's important that we remind him of those risks. It's important that we prepare accordingly. I don't think it's inevitable at all. But clearly, we need to find ways of messaging with clarity and and getting the sort of deterrence in place as necessary. To avoid that type. of miscalculation.

Sciutto

So in the age of high technology on so many fronts, including facial recognition, a whole host the things that make human intelligence human so much harder, and enormous tools and you know, what satellites can see and sensing far away and electronic surveillance, etc. Why do you still believe that human spies work and they're essential, and how can they operate?

Moore

Because I see on a daily basis I mean, that's that's my backer I'm a case officer by background. You'd expect me to believe in Him whatever was done and and we continue to recruit and run incredibly brave men and women who help us and we will always continue to do that. And of course, yes, the technology arrayed against us is more sophisticated. And as a means that we have to, you know, we have to develop and adapt at the pace of that technological change. And there's no doubt about that as big challenge, but we find ways of doing it. We will continue to find ways of doing it. One of the ways we will do that is by partnering in a very different way with tech and with industry, to help us for the technology we need to hide and get on and do our business but so far so good.

Sciutto

You speak very often about this about the the new sort of fields of competition Going forward, whether it's quantum computing, These are areas where the UK the US its partners have to really up their game, right, right to compete and as you know, there's a great deal of nervousness in the West that we are losing. That's right. we're losing to China on quantum computing and and other things I wonder in your view, is the West, losing that battle holding its own or winning the battle today as it stands for? Or, don't we know?

Moore

I think we're definitely in a battle. We're in the competition, but I'm really confident we can win. Because we have advantages that the Chinese simply don't. And that's about having free society and having an ability to think freely in our universities and to innovate. And the UK has got an extraordinary s&t pedigree. I have extraordinary technologists in my own organization. So I'm very confident we can win but we do have to get ourselves very organized in that competition and technology and we also have got to get the other thing about winning in this competition is that we have if you like, something that offer the middle ground of countries, you know, there are a lot of countries out there that may not share our values. They may not share our political systems, but they are a vital battleground for us as we seek to compete with the Chinese and if we leave a vacuum in those places, the Chinese will fill it and I look at this again, I fall back on I guess on on being a case officer and being an intelligence officer, when I when I go in and try and forge a relationship with the service of a country that might fall into that category. You know, I'm looking for common ground. I know they may have different I'm not leaving. I'm not leaving my values at the door. By the way. I'm you don't have to stay within UK law and my values are critical to my service, but they may not share them. I will find ways of finding a common ground and I think we've got to do that. And part of that is frankly, not seeing this as some kind of set of a 1950s cowboy movie. you know the bad guys blackheads and we all have white house, it's a messy contested world out there and we've got to be prepared, I think, to to mix it in that space as well as in the technology arena.

Sciutto

You speak about this theme often the ambiguity inherent in relationships, folks that you got to deal with folks in the middle I wonder if you could give us an example of that where that's working and do you consider resurrecting potentially the Iran nuclear deal as an example of that given the partners involved right because it's not just Iran, but I mean Russia and China will parties to that deal prior.

Moore

I mean, on the on the Iran deal, and I continue to believe that for all of the limitations of the nuclear deal of the JCPOA it's probably if we can get a deal it's probably the best means still available to constrain the Iranian nuclear program. I'm not convinced we're gonna get there and it could be a bit academic. I mean, discussion, because I don't think the Supreme Leader of Iran wants to cut a deal. Iran won't want to end the talks either. So that they could run on for a bit and if the Iranians dropped some of their preconditions as a deal ready and waiting for them, but I think you know, there is a connection between un even if we do the deal, by the way, there's still plenty of work for my service to do because of what they're up to in terms of

destabilizing activity around their region, what they're doing in Iraq, in Syria, even down in the Yemen to their sponsoring of the Hutus. So then you do and they're still assassinating, or attempting to entrap dissidents overseas as well as I've tended to do, but it's to my point about the middle ground, you know, that our partners in that space may not all share our that but we have got to work with our friends in the Gulf. In order to enhance their security, some of the progress they've made in recent years, in terms of opening up the relationship with Israel is deeply welcomed. And I helped I think that helps and strengthens that partnership, but that's a good example of where we need to engage with this.

Sciutto

You sound skeptical though that there's a path forward for the Iran nuclear deal. I'm skeptical.

Moore

I'm skeptical that the Supreme Leader will go for the deal. I think the deal absolutely is on the table and the European powers and the and the administration here are very, very clear on that and I don't think that the Chinese and Russians on this issue would block it. But I don't think the Iranians want it

Sciutto

You spent a lot of time here in the US as you say, as as a young man. You went to two prestigious US universities, you have come away as a fan of the Cubs and the bears as I understand it. Absolutely. And you're choosing this forum for your first interview, public interview outside of the UK. Clearly you have admiration for the US and you spend a lot of a lot of time here. Do you look to this country ever with some concern about the state of our politics, about the state of violence in this country, the state of its climate commitments, as someone who spent a good deal of time here, do you look across the pond, and say, I'm worried?

Moore

So I come out and do these things publicly as discussed later on, because I think in the 21st century, I got to come out and talk a bit about my service and what we do, although, as you discovered, Jim, there are constraints around this. It's important, I think for for renewing our license to operate in a democratic society. Doing it in the US, just gives me an opportunity to recognize the extraordinary partnership we have with the US intelligence community and particularly with CIA. We've been together with CIA for all 75 years of their history. And that partnership, I'm proud to say keeps the citizens of both our countries safe and helps promote our interests and values overseas. Now more broadly, as I look on America, I think this is the joy of the sort of, I was lucky enough I got a thing called a Kennedy scholarship when President Kennedy died. There was a public subscription in the United Kingdom when towards the set of

scholarships every year, and I was lucky enough recipient of that and the brilliant thing about these programs The brilliant thing about the fact that Joe came over as a Rhodes scholar to the United Kingdom is that you learn about the society warts and all. You don't you know you so in I'm not going to give my views on the US society here in front of a camera but of course I have views but I it starts from a position of huge affection for this country, oration for what it's capable of doing. And I said, you know, this phrase, special relationship is around a lot and people sometimes angst about it. All I can say is the bit that I am lucky enough to look after, and and curate for five years is the most special of all elements of that relationship. It is an extraordinary, intimate, high trust relationship. We share our most intimate secrets with one another and that keeps our two countries part of.

Sciutto 26:34

To that point, Boris Johnson's parting words the other day included that keep keep whoever follows him keep that relationship with us close. I'm gonna ask this in a slightly different way if you feel indulge me on this stage. I think it was five or six years ago I asked DNI Clapper who had the opportunity to speak to him and I asked him if he ever applied as a decade's long intelligence officer much like yourself if you ever applied his services, stability tests on the US to look at the US not just not look look far but in to look for trendlines on political instability and others that might concern him and then he answered he said, Yes, I do. And I see some trend lines. I can't remember the quote exactly what he said at the time, perhaps presciently, that the DCS trend lines on political division, eroding confidence in institutions across the board that worry him and I think in retrospect, those comments would prescient. So in that way, do you ever apply mi sixes, stability tests or paradigms on the US?

Moore

Well I have a great advantage over the CIA in that I have no analytical function. So I don't need to do that. Of course, the health of the society you represent the economic strength of that society, all of that parlays into one's influence overseas, and that includes the Secret Intelligence Service. So of course it counts. But one of the joys of our system to use I think the Aspen Institute describes itself as resolutely nonpartisan and that is one of the great things about my service is that we are above the fray. We have a job to do for Queen and Country and we get on and do it. And the UK has been through a pretty turbulent time in its history over the last few years, but that has not affected the work of the service and frankly, it hasn't affected the sort of partnerships we've had with the United States. But of course, with many of our European partners, I mean, it's fantastic to have I can't spot him here, but he will be somewhere around Mikk Marran, who's the head of the Estonian service we who are brilliant service I mean gosh, pound for pound probably knock us into a cocktail. Fantastic.

So all of those partnerships are in very good order and we crack on mi six deals with the world as it is not as we would want it to be. So we're pretty pragmatic and we get on and do our job.

Sciutto

You frequently identify for big threats as a principal in Russia, China, Iran, we've dealt with those before as being international terrorism. We're coming up on the one year anniversary, which is I almost can't believe it doesn't seem like it's been that long but of the Afghan withdrawal. In the view of MI6, can you credibly and sufficiently monitor and disrupt international terrorist groups in Afghanistan from the outside in, as you say, or over the horizon, as US intelligence services say? Can you?

Moore

Well, as I just said to you, my MI6 deals with the world as it is, not how we wish it to be, and I'm not going to re-litigate decisions around the withdrawal.

Sciutto

I'm just curious: are we less safe?

Moore

Well, I think I said very clearly that this was the reverse for us, you know, when it happened, and it's now more difficult, but the fact is that preventing Al Qaeda from regaining the sort of capability that we saw in the run up to 911. And I was a sort of close witness to that, I was serving in Islamabad in the late 90s when Osama bin Laden moved to Afghanistan. I don't want to go through that again. And my service and of course, our US allies are absolutely determined that it won't. So we'll have to find different ways and again it comes back to my point, you have to find some middle ground partners in that space, who you may not normally like to deal with, but you're going to have to in this space, because we need to find a way to do it. So, more difficult, but the importance of that mission hasn't gone away and we need to execute on it.

Sciutto

I asked you about the performance of the Russian intelligence services as it relates to, to Ukraine, if we can talk about Chinese intelligence services, or for a moment here. the US suffered about 10 years ago, and enormous loss with with the loss of many of its human sources inside, inside China. And US intelligence officials speak to me very candidly about how much that set them back, right? Has that recovered to some degree in terms of US and UK working hand in hand with its partners there? What is the state of the 5 eyes vision into China today?

Moore

The five eyes are pretty joined up on China and of course one of the five eyes. Our Australian allies are right under the cosh at the moment with the Chinese trying to make an example of them to them having had the temerity to call for an investigation into the origins of the pandemic. So we're pretty tight as a group of five nations in terms of what we're up against and the Chinese intelligence so again, as the director of the FBI and and Ken McCallum, my five colleagues did a pretty good job of laying that out. They are extraordinarily well resourced. I mean, there are hundreds of 1000s of civilian intelligence officers let alone their military capability.

They are ferociously active, right impacted right across the cyber domain. And it's not just the pure intelligence service and we've had a broad celebrated case in in the UK recently of somebody working on behalf of the United united front workers department, which is whose job it is is to try and influence our societies towards a pro China position now influencing other countries as you know, I went off and was a diplomat for a few years, that's fine. It's influencing other countries towards your position covertly. undeclared using funding that's not on so there's a lot of that going on, but I would just say that they're not 10 feet tall. And they are certainly possible to work against and that's what we're determined to do. And we have this huge advantage that the Chinese don't we have friends, we have allies, we have an ability to work in a trusted way to try and take on this challenge.

Sciutto

Are Russia and China speech partners now? For years, the way it was described was that it was more of a not quite even a marriage but a relationship of convenience where things overlap, they would work together, but do you see the two joining forces more, more deeply, but also for the longer term?

Moore

Well, President Putin and Xi when they met they came up with this agreement didn't know what the term no limits now I can see over your right shoulder that there are limits in terms of the amount of time you're allowed on the stage. And so, but that no limits is a rien phrase, isn't it? That's a really phrase, and I think it pays. And when President Xi says these things, he means that and we ought to listen heart. So I think that relationship is very clear. The Chinese are helping the Russians over Ukraine by buying their oil. As Jim, as Bill Burns said yesterday, I think they've been quite conservative about military assistance. I'm sure if they could provide that and get away with it. They would. And on the diplomatic front, I mean, they are right. We witnessed a bit of that yesterday. They are right on the front foot, beating the Russian drum and selling the Russian narrative around Ukraine. And doing it without any sense of irony. This

is a country that spends a lot of time banging on about sovereignty and territorial integrity. Here is the most egregious example of someone tearing their love in Europe, and Chinese keep on selling their snake oil all around the world. So yeah, it feels pretty tight, but it's not an equal partnership. and Ukraine has made it less equal. Moscow is very much the junior partner and the Chinese are very much in the driving seat.

Sciutto

One thing that struck me in covering the run up to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and and while we're there and since then right is, and I'm sure many folks in this room too is just how public us Intel services were with what they knew right there. They were declassifying a whole host of things that quite normally would, they would not right or you would have to squeeze the squeeze out of them and even here we're sitting next to you and you're answering you know, what I hope are hard questions right about about issues that typically intelligence services don't want to talk about. And by the way, you have a Twitter account, right, and each tweet, is that public face working? Do you see that it worked, for instance, in this conflict, but by say exposing Russia's plans for you know, false flag operations. etc. Did it work?

Moore

So, a bit of humility required here because what it didn't do was stop the invasion. Bill Burns traveled to Moscow to look Putin in the eye. and while insofar as you can on VTC link and spoke to some of the other seniors and despite laying it out in front of them and warning them off the consequences, they went ahead. but I think it did take away his false narrative from him. And that's been really important, I think, in shaping world opinion on this. so it's helpful but it was done. I emphasize again, with great care because our responsibility to our sources, whether they are technical or human, is paramount. So that was done carefully, but I think it was justified on circumstances Absolutely.

Sciutto

As we come closer to the end of our time here, I always ask I try to ask as often as I can, folks in your position, similar positions, particularly at this time in this country, and the world, it's a time of genuine challenges and crises whether it's climate change or a land war in Europe, right almost, you know, that we haven't seen on this scale since World War Two. We have political division at home. You've the winter is coming right phenomenon with perhaps energy shortages in Europe. What is the most positive development that you're seeing play out on your on the things that you watch closely from a national security perspective? I mean, I suppose to some degree, NATO standing together with Ukraine against Russia, but but give us something that perhaps we're not paying enough attention to on the positive side of the ledger?

Moore

Don't underestimate that, as I say, this feels like tectonic to me to see the Germans changing their policy and the way that they are doing is astonishing. So don't underplay that. And also, let's not overplay the power and the attractiveness of the Chinese model. There's some pretty interesting news breaking isn't there about indebtedness around the Belt and Road Initiative, and this is building and Bill Burns talked yesterday about Sri Lanka and other countries so close to my heart. I lived in Sri Lanka as a kid, a beautiful, beautiful place. That so many natural advantages, and the relationship with China and in particular, the sort of elite capture that the Chinese achieved in Sri Lanka and the sort of really misplaced economic decisions they've taken. You see the results at the moment and so I think that would be my other thing here to say back ourselves back on model back our our freedoms and our ability to think independently and be creative. And make sure that when some of that some of those promises are not fulfilled by the Chinese that we're pretty open about, about revealing and making sure that countries understand the issues you know, around I've spoken about data traps as well as debt traps. The data traps are where you allow people into your critical infrastructure, you allow the Chinese to a place where they control a lot of your sovereign data that creeps up on you. And it's really important that services like mine help partners to understand those sort of threats.

Sciutto

It speaks to the broader point, right, imagine either either Putin or she you or Russia or China or 10 feet tall can often be mistaken and we've seen evidence of that.

Moore

Absolutely.

Sciutto

Richard Moore, I enjoyed the conversation very much. I hope that you maintain this openness to me and us in the future. We'll take you up on it and we wish your Cubs the best of success. As long as they're not playing my Mets.