



# **PROVIDING FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE**

The RSC Budget recognizes that President Biden has failed as commander-in-chief.

Last month, the Army announced they were cutting the force by 24,000 positions due to recruiting shortages. Two years ago, Senate Armed Services Committee discovered the Department of Defense spent 6 million man-hours on woke training and programing.<sup>12</sup> The military spent 5.3 million hours and \$535,000 carrying out the standdown order from Secretary Austin.<sup>3</sup> The military also spent 530,000 hours and \$477,000 on diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) training according to data given to Senate Republicans.<sup>4</sup> This is completely unacceptable; the RSC Budget would prohibit funding on woke policies in the Department of Defense.

Tragically, due to President Biden's weak leadership, the world is more unstable than it has been in decades. Since President Biden took office, Afghanistan fell to the Taliban, Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine, Iran is now closer than ever to obtaining a nuclear weapon, Hamas killed over a thousand innocents, and China is closer to invading Taiwan. Still, President Biden pushes for a military that focuses on a woke, social agenda.

The RSC Budget recognizes the steps taken by former President Trump to rebuild our military's strength and execute the visions outlined in his National Defense Strategy<sup>5</sup> and National Security Strategy.<sup>6</sup> The RSC Budget builds upon the Trump Administration as well as the work done by the RSC National Security & Foreign Affairs Task Force in their report "Strengthening America & Countering Global Threats."<sup>7</sup>

The RSC Budget would provide for a robust U.S. military, strong support for advancing American interests and values, and an efficient allocation of national defense resources. The RSC Budget seeks to achieve all these aims while attaining fiscal discipline and preventing trillions of dollars from unnecessarily being added to the national debt, in part because defense experts have said our bloated debt is the greatest threat to our national security.<sup>8</sup>

To provide for the nation's continued security, the RSC Budget would assume adoption of \$895.2 billion for FY 2025 national defense discretionary funding, in conjunction with the FY 2025 statutory cap. The RSC Budget also supports actions to bolster our security and that of our allies, advance human rights around the globe, support the formation of free and

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<sup>1</sup> Jessica Chasmar, "Biden's 'woke' agenda costs military 6 million man-hours, Republicans say," Fox News, February 14, 2022, <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/bidens-woke-agenda-military-6-million-man-hours-republicans>

<sup>2</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mark Milley, January 6, 2022, <https://www.blackburn.senate.gov/services/files/7FBCF19B-37D7-4BB4-82DF-270D4DDFDE87>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Department of Defense, "2018 National Defense Strategy for the United States of America." 2018 <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> The White House, "National Security Strategy of the United States of America, December 2017." <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> The Republican Study Committee "Strengthening America & Countering Global Threats" <https://rsc-hern.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicanstudycommittee.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/final-nstf-report.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> The Washington Examiner, by Tim Mak, "Former top military officer sees national debt as biggest threat to country", January 21, 2014, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/82417/former-top-military-officer-sees-national-debt-as-biggest-threat-to-country/>

peaceful societies, and promote the adoption of trade agreements with free, human-rights-respecting allied nations.

The RSC Budget would continue to invest in our national security and defense posture to ensure that the United States does not fall behind malign actors, like China, in a new era of Great Power Competition.

## **China**

Under Xi Jinping's reign as President of China, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has grown more assertive in its pursuit of power and assault on freedom and human rights, both within China and around the world. Within China, the CCP has perpetuated a genocide against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang and undertaken severe religious persecution of Christians and Tibetan Buddhists. The CCP continues to hold Taiwan in its sights, openly boasting of its intent to invade and "reunify" China.<sup>9</sup> China has grown so brazen as to send a spy balloon to fly above U.S. soil which gathered intelligence from sensitive U.S. military sites which was transmitted back to China in real time.<sup>10</sup>

China has also continued to modernize and enlarge its military, challenging the superiority of U.S. forces in the region. China's military budget is more than three times what it was in 2009,<sup>11</sup> and according to China's official statistics, its spending on R&D climbed to \$464 billion in 2023, a new high.<sup>12</sup> Its development of "carrier-killing" anti-ballistic missiles has caused many in the defense community to reevaluate U.S. naval strategy in Asia. These new weapons are key components of China's anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) strategy, which seeks to prevent the U.S. and its allies from operating in the region if a crisis or conflict were to arise. This strategy also threatens the basic freedom of navigation on the high seas that has always been a bedrock principle of the U.S. and the goal of our naval operations since its founding. Moreover, China is rapidly modernizing its nuclear arsenal, presenting an unprecedented risk to our homeland. Last summer, China tested a missile carrying a hypersonic glide vehicle that went around the world and flew through low-orbit space before cruising downward and landing within just 24 miles of its target. The test illustrated that China had made astounding progress on hypersonic weapons, which are difficult for U.S. missile defense systems to defend.<sup>13</sup> According to Admiral Charles Richard, "In the very near-term

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<sup>9</sup> AP NEWS. "China Renews Threat against Taiwan as Island Holds Drills," January 11, 2023.

<https://apnews.com/article/taiwan-politics-china-government-germany-88cd9b9fced9d5dba0e8ea364f4dac6>

<sup>10</sup> NBC News. "Chinese Balloon Got Intel from U.S. Military Sites, despite Efforts to Block It," April 3, 2023.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/china-spy-balloon-collected-intelligence-us-military-bases-rcna77155>

<sup>11</sup> China Power, "What does China Spend on it's Military?" Accessed June 6, 2022,

<https://chinapower.csis.org/military-spending/>

<sup>12</sup> A puzzle stumps statisticians: How much does China actually spend on R&D?

<https://sciencebusiness.net/news/international-news/puzzle-stumps-statisticians-how-much-does-china-actually-spend-rd>

<sup>13</sup> CNN Politics, by Chandelis Duster, "Top military leader says China's hypersonic missile test 'went around the world'" November 18, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/17/politics/john-hyten-china-hypersonic-weapons-test/index.html>

China will possess a credible nuclear triad, supported by its growing stockpile and weapon systems capable of multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles.”<sup>14</sup>

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP)'s threat to the world was made even more clear through their negligent handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. China allowed the virus to escape containment, leading to a shuttering of the global economy and killing more than 6.8 million people worldwide.<sup>15</sup> It is vital that America and our allies stand together in opposition to the CCP.

The RSC Budget would provide national security funding sufficient to support the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, which is critical for defending U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific. In addition, the RSC Budget would fund a number of the Pentagon's important, unfunded priorities for INDOPACOM, such as the Guam Defense System, which is a new integrated air and missile defense system for Guam.<sup>16</sup> The RSC Budget would support our allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific by treating India the same as Japan and Australia for purposes of accessing national security equipment and services.

On February 29, 2024, RSC Chairman Kevin Hern (R-OK) led over forty Members of Congress in introducing the Countering Communist China Act. This package serves as a framework for how to wholistically address the existential threat China poses to America. Specific policies include:

Reforms include:

- Reasserting Congress's Article I Authority over American trade with China;
- Restricting outbound investments in Chinese technology companies;
- Imposing sanctions on CCP military companies, as well as Chinese officials until fentanyl deaths in the U.S. drop;
- Allowing U.S. citizens to sue Chinese government officials for the death of an immediate family member caused by fentanyl;
- Prohibiting CCP entities from purchasing American real estate and farmland;
- Streamlining the approval process for coal projects and rare earth elements, critical minerals, and carbon;
- Implementing economic policies to bring jobs and investment back into America;
- Cracking down on malign CCP influence in American education; and
- Preventing agencies from recognizing China's claim of sovereignty over Taiwan.

In addition to the Countering Communist China Act, the RSC Budget would enact Rep. Lisa McClain's (R-MI) STOP CCP Act, an RSC initiative in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, which would impose sanctions on any person who is or was a member of any National Communist Party Congress of China, as well as any adult family member of such a person. Additionally, the RSC budget

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<sup>14</sup> Senate Armed Services Committee, "Testimony on United States Strategic Command and United States Space Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2023 and the future years defense program," March 8, 2022, <https://www.spacecom.mil/Newsroom/News/Testimony/SASC-Hearing-Transcript/>

<sup>15</sup> Johns Hopkins University and Medicine, "Coronavirus Resource Center" Accessed April 12, 2022, <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

<sup>16</sup> War on the Rocks, by Bradley Bowman and Mark Montgomery, "Fully Fund the Guam Defense System." July 29, 2021, <https://warontherocks.com/2021/07/fully-fund-the-guam-defense-system/>

opposes sending any taxpayer dollars to the Chinese Communist Party. For this reason, this budget supports Rep. Bob Good's (R-VA) No Taxpayer Funding for the Chinese Communist Party Act.

Finally, the RSC Budget supports Rep. Michelle Steel's (R-CA) DETERRENT Act, which would strengthen disclosure and reporting requirements for institutions of higher education (IHEs) that receive funds from adversaries, like China and Russia. This bill passed the House in December of 2023.

### *Taiwan*

China's warplane incursions into Taiwan's air defense zone nearly doubled in 2022. In 2023, China continued its high pace of incursions, sending 1,738 planes into Taiwan's air defense zone.<sup>17</sup> In December of 2022, 71 Chinese aircraft flew into Taiwanese airspace, the largest breach in history (compared to 25 planes in 2021).<sup>18</sup> In addition, China has increased its intimidation of Taiwan through "gray zone" tactics, or provocations that fall below the threshold of armed aggression, such as coercive economic measures and disinformation campaigns.<sup>19</sup> According to the U.S. China Economic and Security Review Commission (USCC), China's military is at or near the ability to invade Taiwan.<sup>20</sup> The Commission also noted that "it has become less certain that U.S. conventional military forces alone will continue to deter China's leaders from initiating an attack on Taiwan."<sup>21</sup> CIA Director William Burns has stated that Xi has instructed China's military to "be ready by 2027" to invade Taiwan but that China's leadership increasingly has doubts over its ability to successfully invade following Russia's struggles in its invasion of Ukraine.<sup>22</sup>

The RSC Budget supports efforts to strengthen Taiwan's defenses through a "porcupine strategy," as outlined by former National Security Adviser Robert C. O'Brien. Such a strategy would equip Taiwan with certain lethal weapons, such as anti-ship missiles, air-defense capabilities, and drones, which would force China to mount a difficult amphibious landing and sustain a prolonged counterinsurgency.<sup>23</sup> In particular, this could include providing Taipei with significant quantities of the Naval Strike Missile, an anti-ship weapon which has a range of about 100 nautical miles. Quick strike air-dropped sea mines or other advanced sea mine

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<sup>17</sup>China Deployed Over 1,700 Military Planes Around Taiwan in 2023. <https://www.newsweek.com/china-military-aircraft-taiwan-strait-2023-1858106>

<sup>18</sup> Lee, Yimou. "Taiwan Reports China's Largest Incursion yet to Air Defence Zone." Reuters, December 26, 2022, sec. China, <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/taiwan-says-43-chinese-air-force-planes-crossed-taiwan-strait-median-line-2022-12-26/>

<sup>19</sup> Nippon.com, "Taiwan Under Siege: Behind China's Gray Zone Operations." March 24, 2022. <https://www.nippon.com/en/in-depth/d00787/>

<sup>20</sup> U.S. News and World Report, by Paul D. Shinkman, "Chinese Military at or Near Ability to Invade Taiwan, U.S. Agency Concludes." November 17, 2021. <https://www.usnews.com/news/world-report/articles/2021-11-17/chinese-military-at-or-near-ability-to-invade-taiwan-us-agency-concludes>

<sup>21</sup> U.S. China Economic and Security Review Commission, "2021 Report to Congress of the U.S. China Economic and Security Reform Commission." November 2021, [https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/2021\\_Annual\\_Report\\_to\\_Congress.pdf](https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/2021_Annual_Report_to_Congress.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> AP NEWS. "CIA Chief: China Has Some Doubt on Ability to Invade Taiwan," February 26, 2023. <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-taiwan-politics-united-states-government-eaf869eb617c6c356b2708607ed15759>

<sup>23</sup> The Wall Street Journal, by Robert C. O'Brien and Alexander B. Gray, "How to Deter China From Invading Taiwan." September 15, 2021. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-invade-taiwan-strait-pla-missile-mines-counterinsurgency-biden-xi-tsai-ing-wen-11631721031>

technology would help Taiwan create a denied-access zone in the Taiwan Strait. Stinger missiles would help Taiwan take down Chinese planes and helicopters. The Foreign Assistance Act could be amended to make Taiwan eligible to receive priority delivery of U.S. excess defense articles.<sup>24</sup>

The RSC Budget also supports efforts such as Rep. Tom Tiffany's (R-WI) resolution to abandon the "One China Policy," strengthening our allies in the region and our coordination with them to ensure proper containment of CCP aggression. This budget would support normalizing diplomatic relations with Taiwan, pursuing a trade agreement to push back against China, and ensuring Taiwan is recognized in international organizations.

### *The Uyghur Genocide*

Between 2017 and 2019, the Chinese government arbitrarily detained over 1 million ethnic Uyghur and other Muslims in reeducation centers. The CCP also engaged in forced sterilization of Uyghurs and using Uyghur slave labor most notably in its cotton and solar industries. President Trump and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo rightly declared these actions to be genocide. Congress passed the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act and the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act on a bipartisan basis to respond to China's atrocities against the Uyghurs. Unfortunately, enforcement by the Biden Administration has been lacking. As of April 2023, the Biden Administration has not issued a single sanction pursuant to the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act on any entity involved in gross human rights abuses against Uyghurs or in Uyghur forced labor. In addition, enforcement of provisions in the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, creating a rebuttable presumption against the import of products from Xinjiang, has also been spotty.

The RSC Budget supports Rep. Ken Buck's (R-CO) Countering Atrocities through Currency Accountability Act, which would sever the United States' currency markets from foreign adversaries that are committing genocide and crimes against humanity, the most prominent of which is the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) genocide in Xinjiang.<sup>25</sup> It also supports former Chairman Jim Banks' Sanctioning Supporters of Slave Labor Act, which would place secondary sanctions on entities involved in Uyghur forced labor. This would force international companies to choose whether to do business with the United States or with companies involved in Uyghur slave labor.<sup>26</sup>

### *Malign Influence*

In addition, the RSC Budget would drain the swamp of foreign influence by weakening the ability of China, Russia, and other foreign adversaries to promote their malign influence at home. The Budget would support Rep. Jack Bergman's (R-MI) Protecting Personal Data from

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<sup>24</sup> U.S. China Economic and Security Review Commission, "2021 Report to Congress of the U.S. China Economic and Security Reform Commission." November 2021, [https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/2021\\_Comprehensive\\_List\\_of\\_Recommendations.pdf#page=10](https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/2021_Comprehensive_List_of_Recommendations.pdf#page=10)

<sup>25</sup> Congressman Ken Buck. "Buck, Gooden, Banks, Torres Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Counter Genocide in Xinjiang," June 10, 2022. <http://buck.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/buck-gooden-banks-torres-introduce-bipartisan-bill-counter-genocide>

<sup>26</sup> Republican Study Committee. "RSC Members Introduce Bills to Hold Communist China Accountable for Genocide," June 9, 2022. <https://rsc-hern.house.gov/news/press-releases/rsc-members-introduce-bills-hold-communist-china-accountable-genocide>

Foreign Adversaries Act, to prevent mobile applications from engaging in the theft of user data on behalf of a communist country, foreign adversary, or state sponsor of terrorism. This bill would allow the executive branch to prohibit the use of mobile applications or software that provide US citizens' data to a communist country, a foreign adversary, or a state sponsor of terrorism.<sup>27</sup> It would also support House Committee on Foreign Affairs Chairman Michael McCaul's (R-TX) Deterring America's Technological Adversaries (DATA) Act, which would impose sanctions on applications of software involved in stealing personal data of Americans and require a determination into whether TikTok or ByteDance met the criteria for such sanctions.<sup>28</sup> The RSC Budget would also combat the United Front Work Department of the CCP, the CCP's malign influence arm, which has provided funding to several D.C. think tanks and American universities by supporting the RSC's Truth and Testimony reform resolution, which would strengthen the "Truth in Testimony" form required for nongovernment witnesses under House rules.<sup>29</sup> The RSC Budget would also support the RSC's Countering Communist Propaganda Act, which would impose sanctions on the United Front Work Department, as well as the RSC's No Communist Countries Participating in Lobbying Act which would make it illegal for former members of Congress to lobby for China or the CCP.<sup>30</sup> In addition, it would support Rep. Morgan Luttrell's (R-TX) resolution to prohibit Members, officers, and employees of the House from serving on the board of directors of any entity which receives funding from, or is affiliated with or owned or controlled by, the United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party, any other element of the Chinese Communist Party, or any foreign adversary.

The RSC Budget condemns the CCP's use of Confucius Institutes to infiltrate our higher education system and overt threats to manipulate U.S. companies into supporting the policies of the CCP. In particular, the RSC Budget supports RSC Chairman Kevin Hern's (R-OK) PROTECT Our Kids Act, which would prohibit federal funds from going to elementary and secondary schools that receive funding from the CCP. The RSC Budget would also support activities to counter China's IP theft, forced data and IP transfers, and other methods of industrial espionage, and would strengthen sanctions related to IP violations.

## **Russia**

Vladimir Putin did not attempt to invade Ukraine during the Trump Administration. President Trump rebuilt our military, revitalized NATO by pressuring our allies to pay their fair share and provided lethal assistance to Europe (including javelin missiles to Ukraine). Yet soon after President Biden came into office, the U.S. posture towards Russia changed. Weak American energy policies left European nations completely dependent on Russian oil and gas imports. Whether lifting sanctions on Nordstream 2, caving to Russian demands for the New Start Treaty or refusing to impose real sanctions over Russia's hack of the Colonial Pipeline, President Biden's consistently weak posture towards Russia did not lead to peace. It created

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<sup>27</sup> U.S. Representative Jack Bergman. "Bergman Introduces Bill to Protect Personal Data from China," July 30, 2021. <https://bergman.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=916>

<sup>28</sup> H.R. 1153. 118<sup>th</sup> Congress <https://www.congress.gov/bills/118th-congress/house-bill/1153>

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Congressman Jim Banks. "Rep. Jim Banks Introduces Truth in Testimony Rule," November 23, 2021. <https://banks.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=1962>

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Congressman Mike Johnson. "Johnson Introduces No Communist Countries Participating in Lobbying Act," May 7, 2021. <https://mikejohnson.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=864>



war and led to the worst security crisis in Europe since World War II. Rather than deter Putin, Biden's weakness encouraged him to act more aggressively than ever before.

Putin's invasion of Ukraine is being closely watched by Beijing as it increasingly lays eyes on Taiwan. Putin's campaign also has the potential to be the biggest strategic setback for Russian ambitions since its failed invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980's. Yet, in response to Russia's invasion, the Biden Administration has responded without a strategy or end game and has consistently taken steps that may only drag out the conflict, increasing the long-term cost on the American taxpayer. For instance, President Biden imposed sanctions on Russia only after the invasion, did not fully kick Russia out of the SWIFT code system, and has failed to impose secondary sanctions on Russian financial institutions that would apply to China and other countries. In addition, President Biden took real energy sanctions off the table early on (thanks to pressure from Germany and other countries addicted to Russian gas) while undercutting U.S. domestic energy production. While the Biden Administration supported a global price cap on Russian oil, the actual implementation of these measures has not worked out as planned, especially with India and China buying discounted Russian crude oil.<sup>31</sup> Lethal aid to Ukraine was also held up before the invasion out of fear of provoking Russia,<sup>32</sup> until finally the Biden Administration began sending large quantities of stinger missiles and other lethal aid to Ukraine. The Biden Administration has provided just enough lethal assistance to help Ukraine withstand Russia, which has unnecessarily prolonged the war and the cost to U.S. taxpayers.

Any further taxpayer assistance to Ukraine should be provided in a transparent and accountable manner with meaningful oversight mechanisms to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse, including with respect to non-security assistance. As John Barsa, former USAID Director for President Trump, pointed out "lots of money being spent means lots of opportunities to fund ineffective programs, or worse, social justice and other programs not 'on-mission.' The rule of thumb is, or should be, 'the more that is spent, the more oversight is needed.'"<sup>33</sup> In addition, the Administration has provided to international institutions which have a terrible track record with regards to accounting of funds. Even worse, many of these international organizations which the Biden Administration is supporting in Ukraine have a history of promoting abortion or sexual orientation and gender identity programs (SOGI).<sup>34</sup> In addition, the Administration, and the previous Congress, has provided almost \$1 billion in assistance for Ukrainians living in the U.S. - even those who are not technically refugees nor even asylum seekers. The RSC Budget would rescind funds provided by the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (P. L. 117-128) which provided \$900 million for TANF, SSI, and Medicaid provided for Ukrainian resettlement to 100,000

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<sup>31</sup> Bala, Sumathi. "Sanctions on Russian Crude Oil Have 'failed Completely,' Oil Analyst Says." CNBC, February 3, 2023. <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/02/03/sanctions-on-russian-crude-oil-have-failed-completely-oil-analyst-says.html>

<sup>32</sup> Foreign Policy, by Jack Detsch, "White House Delays Moving Military Assistance to Ukraine." December 16, 2021. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/12/16/us-ukraine-russia-military-support-congress-biden-delay-aid/>

<sup>33</sup> The Daily Signal. "Trump USAID Chief Explains Need for Oversight of US Billions for Ukraine," February 28, 2023. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2023/02/28/too-important-to-screw-up-trump-usaid-chief-explains-need-for-oversight-of-us-billions-for-ukraine/>

<sup>34</sup> USAID. Ukraine—Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #9 FY2023. February 24, 2023. [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/2023-02-24\\_USG\\_Ukraine\\_Complex\\_Emergency\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_9.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/2023-02-24_USG_Ukraine_Complex_Emergency_Fact_Sheet_9.pdf)



Ukrainian and other non-Ukrainian individuals in response to their displacement from Ukraine.

The RSC Budget emphasizes that any potential future assistance provided to Ukraine must be done with the American taxpayer in mind, and lethality should be the goal. Had existing assistance focused more on lethality,<sup>35</sup> the war may already be over. Sadly, the Biden administration has thus far failed to cohesively and clearly articulate what the strategy for U.S. aid is. Thus, the RSC budget would require the Biden administration to provide a clear strategy to Congress and the American people.

To impose real economic costs on Putin, the RSC Budget continues to support the enactment of the RSC's Putin Accountability Act, introduced last Congress by former RSC Chairman Jim Banks (R-IN). The Putin Accountability Act includes a package of economic sanctions that would hold Putin and the oligarchs around him accountable, kick Russia out of the SWIFT Code system, and designate Russia as a State Sponsor of Terrorism.

The RSC Budget would also impose secondary sanctions on Russia's energy sector to cut off Putin's regime from the billions of dollars per day that he is using to finance his aggression. It would fully sanction the Russian central bank and the Russian financial sector, rather than just singling out a couple of Russian banks. In addition, it would sanction Russia's mineral and timber industry and enact full export controls. Energy sanctions should require that payments for oil and gas only be permitted into blocked escrow bank accounts held by non-Russian financial institutions outside of Russia.

Finally, the RSC Budget would impose enhanced sanctions on all oligarchs close to Putin and expand the existing provisions to seize Russian oligarchic assets, which are already successfully being used to support Ukraine, while respecting due process. The US, our allies in Europe and the G7 have frozen roughly \$300 billion in Russian central bank assets. These are assets the RSC Budget would use to defray the cost of supporting Ukraine, by buying weapons, and rebuilding what Russia has destroyed in Ukraine. These frozen assets must not be used as a bargaining chip or returned to Putin as a reward as part of a possible peace overture. Last, the United States should allow the transfer of confiscated Iranian weapons, such as those intended to be provided to the Houthis in Yemen, to go to Ukraine.

As is appropriate, given the war in Ukraine is in Europe's backyard, European allies and partners are providing Ukraine more economic and humanitarian assistance than the United States as of this year. The United Kingdom, Poland, and the Baltics have provided the bulk of this support, however.

The United States and Europe should play to our respective strengths, with the United States focused more on providing the security assistance necessary to end the war as quickly as possible while looking to European contributions to make up a significantly greater percentage of Ukraine's direct budget support needs. General Keith Kellogg of the America First Policy Institute has stated, Europe should contribute dollar for dollar what the United States is contributing. In that vein, the budget would tie some economic assistance to European countries to Europe's contribution to the Ukraine.

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<sup>35</sup> Air defense systems such as PATRIOT missile batteries, ATACMS long-range missile systems, cluster munitions Bradley and Abrams tanks, MQ-1C Gray Eagle and MQ-9 Reaper drones and F-16 fighter aircraft are all examples of such lethal aid that the RSC Budget would provide.

If the U.S. were to send additional non-lethal aid, the RSC Budget would support direct budgetary support to Ukraine in the form of a non-interest-bearing loan to Ukraine, as proposed by former President Donald Trump. This loan would include an acceleration clause allowing the President to either demand repayment from Ukraine in the case that Ukraine acted against the foreign policy interests of the United States or reduce direct budgetary support to Ukraine's government. In addition, the RSC Budget supports codifying accountability provisions ensuring that U.S. assistance goes where it is most needed. Inspectors General responsible for Ukraine assistance oversight should form a task force which reports quarterly to Congress regarding Ukraine assistance accountability. Congress should also prohibit any assistance to Ukraine from going to any international institutions involved in abortion, SOGI-related programs, or any other woke-priorities.

The RSC Budget recognizes that the invasion of Ukraine has been fueled by European reliance on Russian gas imports. This reliance was facilitated by failed policies propping up inefficient green sources of energy. To combat this problem, the RSC Budget would implement RSC HEAT Chairman August Pfluger's (R-TX) and former RSC Chairman Jim Banks' Midland Over Moscow Act. This bill would impose sanctions on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline to ensure Germany never revives this Russian malign influence project, require the executive branch to develop a comprehensive energy strategy related to counter Russian interest, and allow for expedited approval of U.S. Natural Gas exports to any nation—not just ones with free trade agreements with the U.S. (with exceptions for countries subject to U.S. sanctions or excluded for national security reasons).

This budget supports the efforts of Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R-NY) to pressure the Biden Administration to reverse its decision to rescind support for the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Pipeline. The RSC Budget would also combat money laundering and corruption by Russian (and CCP) elites in the United States by supporting the ENABLERS Act, sponsored by RSC National Security Task Force Chairman Joe Wilson (R-SC). The bill would close loopholes that crooks and kleptocrats from around the world use to launder money in the United States. The RSC budget also supports by Rep. Wilson's (R-SC) Bassam Barabandi Rewards for Justice Act, which would allow the State Department to provide funds in its Rewards for Justice account to individuals who give the U.S. government the identity or location of individuals and entities that defy U.S. sanctions.

The RSC Budget fully supports former President Trump's decision to withdraw from Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty). Russia continuously fails to comply with the intent of the treaty.<sup>36 37</sup> Further, the RSC Budget strongly opposes President Biden's re-entry into the New START arms treaty with Russia that would not include China and would allow Russia to continue building tactical nuclear weapons while drastically limiting our own stockpiles.

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<sup>36</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Director of National Intelligence Daniel Coats on Russia's INF Treaty Violation." November 30, 2018. <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/newsroom/speeches-interviews/speeches-interviews-2018/3270-director-of-national-intelligence-daniel-coats-on-russia-s-inf-treaty-violation?highlight=WYJnbylsImdvaW5nliwiJ2dvlI0=>

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Department of State, Key Topics- Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, "Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty." Accessed June 6, 2022. <https://2017-2021.state.gov/inf/index.html>

Many Americans have grown weary of the ongoing cost of the war in Ukraine when they see the effects of Biden's failed policies at home, especially the invasion at the U.S. southern border. The RSC budget does not overlook challenges abroad but prioritizes America's problems at home. If the RSC budget policies articulated in previous sections were enacted, America would have a balanced budget, a secure border, and economic prosperity.

## Iran

The October 7, 2023, attack on Israel by Hamas—with Iran's backing<sup>38</sup>—illustrates the failure of the Biden Administration's approach to Iran, the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. The Biden Administration's efforts to re-enter the failed Iran nuclear agreement have not led to success. In fact, Iran's regime is closer than ever before to a nuclear weapon and has begun enriching uranium close to weapons-grade levels.<sup>39</sup> The regime continues to back militias that attacked U.S. bases in Syria, which led to the killing of three American servicemembers in Jordan.<sup>40</sup> Iran-backed Houthi militias in Yemen continue to attack shipping lanes in the Red Sea undeterred, which has had significant impacts on the global economy.<sup>41</sup> However, the Biden Administration still has not shut the door on a nuclear agreement, even as it says that current talks with Iran are "not on our agenda" due to Iran's ruthless crackdown on unprecedented protests prompted by the killing of Mahsa Amini.<sup>42</sup>

Rather than continue a failed policy of maximum concessions to the regime in Tehran, the RSC Budget supports building upon President Trump and Secretary Pompeo's successful maximum pressure campaign against Iran.

To this end, the RSC Budget supports codifying the campaign through the Maximum Pressure Act, sponsored by former RSC Chairman Jim Banks (R-IN). The Act would implement the toughest package of sanctions on Iran ever proposed by Congress. The Maximum Pressure Act has garnered the support of Secretary Pompeo and a long list of foreign policy organizations. The RSC Budget also supports Rep. Bob Good's (R-VA) Iran China Accountability Act, which would block any taxpayer dollars from being used to advance a nuclear agreement with Iran until it has terminated its cash ties with China and terminated its ties to terrorist groups like Hamas.

Iran continues to be the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, seeks a nuclear weapon, and desires the destruction of the State of Israel, our closest regional ally. Iran has given aid and comfort to Hamas, Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, and the Taliban, as well as other Iranian-backed terrorist militias. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has created, sponsored, and commanded a worldwide legion of tens of thousands of militia fighters from as far as

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<sup>38</sup> Granitz, Peter. "Fighting with Israel signals coordination between Hamas and Hezbollah, analysts say." National Public Radio. October 10, 2023. <https://www.npr.org/2023/10/10/1204789074/israel-hamas-hezbollah-iran>

<sup>39</sup> NBC News. "Iran Enriching Uranium to near Weapons-Grade Levels, Nuclear Watchdog Warns," March 8, 2023. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/iran-enriching-uranium-weapons-grade-nuclear-iaea-rcna72753>

<sup>40</sup> U.S. strikes Iran-backed militias in retaliation for deadly attack on American troops February 2, 2024," March 25, 2023. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/u-s-strikes-iran-backed-militias-in-retaliation-for-deadly-attack-on-american-troops>

<sup>41</sup> Bertrand, Natasha. "Inside the US Navy's frontline fight against the Houthis in the Red Sea." CNN. February 14, 2024. <https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/14/politics/us-navy-houthi-fight-red-sea/index.html>

<sup>42</sup> Rod, Marc. "'No Movement' on Iran Deal, 'It's Not on Our Agenda,' Envoy Malley Says." Jewish Insider, November 1, 2022. <https://jewishinsider.com/2022/11/rob-malley-iran-nuclear-talks-protests-negotiations/>

Afghanistan and Pakistan who, in part due to the cash provided by President Obama's failed nuclear deal, have created a "land bridge" where such militias now control vast territory leading to the border of Israel. This is a geographic area far larger than ISIS at its peak.

The RSC Budget supports President Trump's designation of the entire IRGC as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO) and would codify this designation and other sanctions on the IRGC. According to the State Department, the IRGC "is responsible for the deaths of at least 603 American service members in Iraq since 2003. This accounts for 17 percent of all deaths of U.S. personnel in Iraq from 2003 to 2011."<sup>43</sup> Still, the Biden Administration considered the idea of removing the IRGC from the FTO list, or only designating one of its subparts such as the Quds Force as part of its nuclear negotiations with the regime.<sup>44</sup> The RSC Budget would also enact the MAHSA Act, introduced by former RSC Chairman Jim Banks, to keep in place sanctions on Iran's Supreme Leader, Iran's President, and other institutions of Iran's state involved in the brutal crackdown. In addition, the RSC Budget would include the No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act, sponsored by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX). This bill incorporates an amendment that would permanently freeze all Iranian assets, offered by RSC HEAT Chairman August Pfluger (R-TX).

U.S. aid for our allies in the region, especially Israel and its Iron Dome, helps provide a critical deterrent to the Islamic Republic. Israel continues to face threats to its existence from an emboldened Iran that continues to support Hezbollah and Hamas terrorists on its doorstep. The goal of former President Trump to work toward lasting stability in the Middle East region is critical. The RSC Budget applauds his successful efforts to bring about the Abraham Accords and shore up our allies across these regions.

In countering Iran, it is vital that we prohibit U.S. aid from going to Iranian puppet regimes in the Middle East. Lebanon's government has come fully under Hezbollah's control as the terrorist group has a monopoly on the use of force in the country. The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) has also been involved in the detention and torture of U.S. citizens such as Amer Fakhoury, who died shortly after being released from Lebanese prison.<sup>45</sup>

Accordingly, the RSC Budget supports cutting off aid for the LAF and requiring sanctions determinations for current and former Lebanese security officials involved in the detention and torture of U.S. citizens. This would include Maj. Gen. Abbas Ibrahim, the former head of the Lebanese General Security Directorate. In January 2023, the Administration rolled out its program to provide direct salary payments totaling \$72 million to the LAF and Internal Security Forces (ISF), essentially providing them a slush fund in a country where Hezbollah's economic presence is endemic.<sup>46</sup> The RSC Budget also supports cutting assistance to Iraq's

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<sup>43</sup> U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson, "Designation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps." April 8, 2019. <https://2017-2021.state.gov/designation-of-the-islamic-revolutionary-guard-corps/index.html>

<sup>44</sup> Reuters, by Arshad Mohammed and Parisa Hafezi, "Analysis: Politics, not substance, seen guiding U.S. and Iran on terror listing." April 11, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/politics-not-substance-seen-guiding-us-iran-terror-listing-2022-04-11/>

<sup>45</sup> McCORMACK, KATHY. "US Judge Rules That Family Can Proceed with Lawsuit Alleging Torture by Lebanon." Accessed April 27, 2023. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/us-judge-rules-that-family-can-proceed-with-lawsuit-alleging-torture-by-lebanon/>

<sup>46</sup> Beirut, U. S. Embassy. "Ambassador Dorothy C. Shea Remarks for LAF-ISF Livelihood Support Program Rollout Ceremony." U.S. Embassy in Lebanon, January 25, 2023. <https://lb.usembassy.gov/ambassador-shea-remarks-laf-isf-livelihood-support/>

Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense until Iraq's security forces are no longer under the effective control of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF). The PMF is a group of militias and includes the Badr Corps, which is commanded by the IRGC and attacked the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad in December 2019.

The RSC Budget supports cutting off aid to United Nations programs in areas of Syria that are held by the Assad regime. Even former Obama Administration Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford has admitted this aid has been diverted to directly fund the brutal Assad regime, Iran's main ally in the region.<sup>47</sup> Following the earthquake which struck Turkey and Syria in February 2023, the brutal Assad regime blocked humanitarian assistance to Syria for several days with the exception of aid given through the UN—aid that was diverted and stolen.<sup>48</sup>

Iran continues its material support for the murderous Assad regime in Syria. The IRGC directly assists Assad's forces which are responsible for the worst human rights crisis of the 21st Century. This has allowed Syria to become a haven for terror groups while flooding Europe with refugees. The Biden Administration has refused to enforce the bipartisan Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act. Instead, the administration gave a green light to Syrian participation in regional electricity and gas deals, a direct violation of the Caesar Act. One of these deals would allow Egypt to sell natural gas to Hezbollah-dominated Lebanon by moving the gas through Syria via the Arab Gas Pipeline. Unlike the Trump Administration, the Biden Administration has given its tacit approval to countries pursuing normalization with the Assad regime. In fact, State Department Assistant Secretary Barbara Leaf now says that regional governments should pursue engagement with the Assad regime so long as they receive benefits in return.<sup>49</sup> To counter these efforts, the RSC Budget would support further expanding sanctions on the Assad regime by updating the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 with new sectoral-based sanctions and opposing efforts to normalize the regime by some Gulf states, Turkey, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and other Middle Eastern governments.

Finally, the Assad regime has been described as "the world's biggest drug cartel," producing millions of pills of Captagon at more than double the scale of illicit drug production by Mexican drug cartels.<sup>50</sup> The RSC Budget supports efforts by Rep. French Hill (R-AR) for the Department of Treasury to label Syria as a major illicit drug producing country—something the Biden Administration has failed to do and the Treasury Department designating the regime as a transnational criminal organization.<sup>51</sup>

## **Keeping Woke Politics out of the Military**

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<sup>47</sup>Atlantic Council, by Emily Burchfield, "The Dangers of U.S. Assistance to the U.N. Rewarding Assad." March 8, 2018. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/syriasource/the-danger-of-us-assistance-to-the-un-rewarding-assad/>

<sup>48</sup> Lister, Charles. "Syria's Earthquake Victims Are Trapped by Assad." Foreign Policy (blog), February 7, 2023. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/02/07/syria-earthquake-aid-assad/>

<sup>50</sup> Daly, Max. "Is the Syrian Regime the World's Biggest Drug Dealer?" Vice (blog), December 14, 2022. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7v8k8/syria-captagon-pills-drug-trade>

<sup>50</sup> Daly, Max. "Is the Syrian Regime the World's Biggest Drug Dealer?" Vice (blog), December 14, 2022. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7v8k8/syria-captagon-pills-drug-trade>

<sup>51</sup> U.S. Congressman French Hill. "RELEASE: Rep. French Hill Leads Letter to State Department on Syria's Narcotics Trade," July 19, 2022. <https://hill.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=8999>

The RSC Budget remains committed to an effective, strong military force focused on defending the homeland and free of politicization of any type. Identity politics and Critical Race Theory (CRT) have no place in our military. Unfortunately, the Biden Administration sees things differently. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin seems more interested in ridding military ranks of "extremism"<sup>52</sup> and making climate change a "national security priority"<sup>53</sup> than taking on the real threats we face in China, Russia and Iran.

These policies not only waste time and taxpayer dollars but affect soldier morale and harm military recruitment. Under the Biden Administration, the Pentagon spent almost 6 million man-hours on woke discussions about extremism and "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" training.<sup>54</sup> While military recruitment continues to decline, the Air Force has gone on a DEI hiring spree, hiring several diversity officers, many of whom have six-figure salaries.<sup>55</sup> These positions are used to push radical left wing and even racist ideas. Kelisa Wing, who was appointed in 2021 as diversity, equity, and inclusion chief at the Defense Department's Education Activity (DoDEA), even called for a "racial reckoning" and "revolution" and said she was "exhausted by 99% of the white men in education and 95% of the white women. Where can I get a break from white nonsense for a while?" Yet Ms. Wing received no disciplinary action from the Pentagon.<sup>56</sup>

Woke indoctrination extends to the service academies. The U.S. Naval Academy has taken a number of actions to promote Critical Race Theory (CRT) in its curriculum.<sup>57</sup> <sup>58</sup>Biden's Pentagon has reversed guidance issued in the Trump Administration that prohibited the promotion of CRT within the Department.<sup>59</sup>

In 2022, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Gilday placed Ibram X Kendi's book *How to Be an Antiracist* on the Navy's reading list. Kendi's work promotes fundamentally anti-American ideas, such as the notion that the U.S. is a racist country and that capitalism is a

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<sup>52</sup> Mitchell, Ellen. "Navy Unveils Nearly 60 Recommendations to Counter Racism, Improve Diversity." Text. The Hill (blog), February 3, 2021. <https://thehill.com/policy/defense/537091-navy-unveils-nearly-60-recommendations-to-counter-racism-improve-diversity/>

<sup>53</sup>Mehta, Aaron. "Climate Change Is Now a National Security Priority for the Pentagon." Defense News, March 17, 2021. <https://www.defensenews.com/pentagon/2021/01/27/climate-change-is-now-a-national-security-priority-for-the-pentagon/>

<sup>54</sup> The Washington Free Beacon, by Adam Kredo, "Pentagon's Latest Strategy: Promote Socialism To Combat China." February 15, 2022. <https://freebeacon.com/biden-administration/pentagons-latest-strategy-promote-socialism-to-combat-china/>

<sup>55</sup> Kasperowicz, Peter. "Air Force Goes on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Hiring Spree: Top Job Pays up to \$183,500." Text.Article. Fox News, March 14, 2023. <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/air-force-diversity-equity-inclusion-hiring-spreed-top-job>

<sup>56</sup> Grossman, Hannah. "Pentagon Diversity Chief Receives No Disciplinary Action after Probe into Anti-White Posts," Fox News, March 23, 2023, <https://www.foxnews.com/media/pentagon-diversity-chief-receives-no-disciplinary-action-after-probe-anti-white-posts>

<sup>57</sup> Critical Race Training in Education. "United States Naval Academy," July 24, 2022. <https://criticalrace.org/service-academies/united-states-naval-academy/>

<sup>58</sup> Wong, Kristina. "Navy Chief Omits Critical Race Theory Books from Updated Reading List." Breitbart, May 9, 2022. <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2022/05/09/navy-chief-omits-critical-race-theory-books-from-updated-reading-list/>

<sup>59</sup>Losey, Stephen. "The Military Is Resuming the Diversity Training That Trump Banned." Military.com, March 8, 2021. <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/03/08/military-resuming-diversity-training-trump-banned.html>



racist idea.<sup>60</sup> In February 2022, National Defense University's Institute for Strategic Studies hosted an event on Wednesday making "the case for global justice and democratic socialism" as a means to combat China's rise.<sup>61</sup>

Shockingly, it was revealed early last year that the Department of Defense spent 6 million man hours on woke training and programing. Specifically, the military spent 5.3 million hours and \$535,000 carrying out the standdown order from Secretary Austin. The military also spent 530,000 hours and \$477,000 on diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) training, according to data given to Senate Republicans. For FY 2024, DOD has requested \$114.7 million "for dedicated diversity and inclusion activities."<sup>62</sup>

These woke policies are having a major impact on recruiting. Last year was the worst recruiting year for the U.S. Army since the military became an all-volunteer force in 1973. While the other branches managed to hit their recruiting goals on paper, they did so at the expense of 2023 recruiting numbers by dipping into "delayed entry" candidates, putting them measurably behind for this year.

The President's budget would also undermine the traditional basis of American military might by directing over \$5.1 billion, an increase of \$2 billion from last year, in funding towards climate change initiatives.<sup>63</sup> Last year the Pentagon even conducted a war game in how to combat climate change.<sup>64</sup> In fact, the Department requested \$17.2 million for FY 2024 to incorporate climate risks into modeling, simulation, and wargames.<sup>65</sup> Biden's Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth has said that the "Army must adapt across our entire enterprise and purposefully pursue greenhouse gas mitigation strategies to reduce climate risks" and the Army has put forward a plan for "greening" its operations, including providing "100 percent carbon-pollution-free electricity for Army installations' needs by 2030," and achieving a "50 percent reduction in [greenhouse gas] emissions from all Army buildings by 2032."<sup>66</sup>

The RSC Budget would prohibit funding for DEI activities and ban teaching CRT in the U.S. military and in educational institutions under the Department of Defense. It would also defund all woke programs and priorities in the military, including programs established to further the Democrats' so-called "green" agenda.

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<sup>60</sup>Representative Jim Banks, Member of Congress, "Letter from Rep. Jim Banks to Adm. Michael Gilday." February 26, 2021. [https://www.scribd.com/document/496122359/2-26-2021-Letter-to-Admiral-Gilday-Kendi#from\\_embed](https://www.scribd.com/document/496122359/2-26-2021-Letter-to-Admiral-Gilday-Kendi#from_embed)

<sup>61</sup> The Washington Free Beacon, by Adam Kredo, "Pentagon's Latest Strategy: Promote Socialism To Combat China (freebeacon.com)." February 15, 2022.

<sup>62</sup> Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) FY 2024 Budget Request Overview Book, [https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2024/FY2024\\_Budget\\_Request\\_Overview\\_Book.pdf#page=74](https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2024/FY2024_Budget_Request_Overview_Book.pdf#page=74)

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Kent, Simon. "U.S. Navy to Wargame Impact of 'Climate Change' on Future Conflicts." Breitbart, June 24, 2022. <https://www.breitbart.com/environment/2022/06/24/priorities-u-s-navy-to-wargame-impact-of-climate-change-on-future-conflicts/>

<sup>65</sup> Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller). "Enhance Combat Capability--Mitigating Climate Risk." [https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2024/PB\\_FY2024\\_ECC-Mitigating\\_Combat\\_Capability.pdf#page40](https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2024/PB_FY2024_ECC-Mitigating_Combat_Capability.pdf#page40)

<sup>66</sup> Starr, Penny. "Army Has Plan to Deal with 'Global Disruptions' from 'Climate Change.'" Breitbart, February 11, 2022. <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2022/02/11/army-unveils-strategy-to-deal-with-global-disruptions-from-climate-change/>

## **Ensuring an Efficient National Defense**

The RSC Budget remains committed to a strong national defense but recognizes that fiscal discipline is essential to a sustainable and capable military. As expensive as peace-time military operations are, major wars demand the quick expenditure of large amounts of capital. The American Revolution, the Civil War, and World War I all required adding roughly 30 percent of GDP to the national debt. World War II alone required roughly 60 percent. We must ensure the federal government's fiscal house so America can win in another worst-case scenario. The grievous level and trajectory of our national debt led a bipartisan group of leading national security officials to write that "[o]ur long-term debt is the single greatest threat to our national security."<sup>67</sup> Regardless of how capable our standing military is, if our enemies know we cannot afford to use it for long, it will not serve as an effective deterrent or guarantee our freedom and safety.

Congress and the Department of Defense should commit to comprehensive acquisition reform, not just to prevent wasteful spending, but also to ensure America's warfighters have the best equipment available. Until 2018, "DOD was the only large federal agency not under full financial statement audit."<sup>68</sup>

Current Department of Defense contracting requirements are burdensome and have only grown over time. Reducing contracting requirements and increasing competition would increase speed and could save billions of dollars at the Department. The RSC Budget would reduce such requirements and also require the Department to break up prime contracts into smaller awards so small businesses and others can compete for the awards. In 2021 alone, the top six Defense Primes received over \$120 billion in defense contracts,<sup>69</sup> while in the same year small businesses received only \$17 billion of the awards.<sup>70</sup>

The Department of Defense currently employs approximately 340,000 active-duty military personnel to perform support functions in commercial positions. As CBO has pointed out "those functions require skills that could be obtained from the private sector so that, in principle, those same positions could be filled by civilian employees."<sup>71</sup> The Budget would replace military personnel in these commercial positions with civilian employees, which, according to the Heritage Foundation, would result in \$19.6 billion in the next ten years.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Peter G. Petersen Foundation, The Coalition for Fiscal and National Security, "Strength at Home and Abroad: Ensuring America's Fiscal and National Security", May 10, 2016. <http://www.pgpf.org/pgpf-programs-and-projects/2016-cfns-statement>.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

<sup>69</sup> Walter, Chip. "It's Time for New Incentives for Defense Primes to Invest in Startups." Breaking Defense (blog), January 12, 2023. <https://breakingdefense.sites.breakingmedia.com/2023/01/its-time-for-new-incentives-for-defense-primers-to-invest-in-startups/>

<sup>70</sup> Federal News Network. "Navy to Break up Some Big Contracts to Increase Small Business Participation," October 26, 2022. <https://federalnewsnetwork.com/navy/2022/10/navy-to-break-up-some-big-contracts-to-increase-small-business-participation/>

<sup>71</sup> Congressional Budget Office. Replacing Military Personnel in Support Positions With Civilian Employees. December 2015. [https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/114th-congress-2015-2016/reports/51012-Military\\_Civilian\\_Mix\\_OneCol.pdf](https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/114th-congress-2015-2016/reports/51012-Military_Civilian_Mix_OneCol.pdf)

<sup>72</sup> The Heritage Foundation. "Budget Blueprint for Fiscal Year 2023: Policy Proposal." Accessed April 27, 2023. <https://www.heritage.org/budget>

The RSC Budget would focus on providing school choice to military families by allowing military dependents to utilize education savings accounts (ESAs) and provide for the transfer of children to local schools. As The Heritage Foundation has pointed out, only 4 percent of military-connected children use the military's operated school system (the Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) system), making this system unnecessary.

According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), "Members of Congress are frequently lobbied to support adding funding to the annual defense appropriation for medical research on a wide variety of diseases and topics."<sup>73</sup> In recent years, the defense budget has included over half a billion dollars for the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP). While medical research is a laudable activity, many of the programs funded within the CDMRP are not for military-specific conditions and are duplicative of the type of research done at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).<sup>74</sup> According to the Taxpayers for Common Sense, "These programs are clearly earmarks and therefore take money away from other necessary Defense Department functions."<sup>75</sup> The RSC Budget would transition the non-defense related medical research out of the defense budget.

DOD should not waste valuable taxpayer dollars on inefficient forms of energy. Energy needs should be met through the most cost-effective and tactically sound methods possible. The DOD should be prohibited from entering into any contract for the procurement or production of any non-petroleum-based fuel for use as the same purpose or as a drop-in substitute for petroleum. Further, the Armed Forces should be exempt from procurement requirements for clean-energy vehicles and renewable energy portfolio standards for DOD facilities. The RSC Budget also opposes efforts by Democrats to turn the annual defense authorization bill into a testing ground for its progressive social and environmental goals.

Finally, the Budget would put in place a zero-sum rule, prohibiting the creation of any new Assistant Secretary, Under Secretary, and Deputy Assistant Secretary roles at DOD unless others are eliminated on a one-for-one basis.

## **The Needs of Our Armed Forces**

The Trump Administration's efforts to rebuild our military have strengthened our forces, made troops and equipment more ready for combat, addressed readiness shortfalls, and modernized our military. President Trump sought to overcome the consequences of decades of delayed weapons modernization.<sup>76</sup> Delays in modernization eroded the competitive advantage that our Armed Forces have enjoyed with China and Russia. China *already* has the world's largest standing army, navy, coast guard, maritime militia, and sub-strategic missile

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<sup>73</sup> Congressional Research Service, "Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs Funding for FY2022", March 29, 2022. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10349> .

<sup>74</sup> National Institutes of Health, "Estimates of Funding for Various Research, Condition, and Disease Categories (RDCD)", March 31, 2023. <https://report.nih.gov/funding/categorical-spending/>

<sup>75</sup> CQ, by John M. Donnelly, "Funding Medical Research with Defense Dollars", July 28, 2012. <http://public.cq.com/docs/weeklyreport/weeklyreport-000004132596.html>.

<sup>76</sup> STATEMENT OF GENERAL MARK A. MILLEY, USA 20TH CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BUDGET HEARING, FEBRUARY 26, 2020, <https://www.congress.gov/116/meeting/house/110584/witnesses/HHRG-116-AS00-Wstate-MilleyM-20200226.pdf#page=3>

force.<sup>77</sup> The Defense Department's China military power report judges that the Chinese military is qualitatively ahead of the U.S. military in land-based missiles and integrated air defenses, including new technologies such as hypersonic and directed-energy weapons.<sup>78</sup>

The RSC Budget would ensure that our men and women in uniform have the resources they need to keep America safe and counter the growing threat posed by China and Russia in this new era of great power competition. Below are some of the reasons the RSC Budget proposes a strong national security budget, including \$895.2 billion in total discretionary defense spending for FY 2025.

## **The Navy**

Since the Allied victory in World War II, the forward deployment of U.S. Armed Forces has been a key instrument in maintaining global order and in securing freedom of navigation to promote trade and prosperity around the world. A key component of this force structure has been a robust effort to sustain the most capable and agile Navy in the world as a "global force for good." Our Navy currently has a fleet of 292 deployable ships,<sup>79</sup> 63 less than China's fleet of 355 ships.<sup>80</sup> This fleet is half the size of what it was under the Reagan Administration (592 ships).<sup>81</sup> China plans to increase the size of its fleet to 460 ships by 2030.<sup>82</sup>

The Navy's shipbuilding account had been neglected for the greater part of a decade, leading to a severe readiness crisis and a series of deadly accidents. The RSC's Budget supports investing in our shipbuilding account in order to reestablish our Navy's global reach and capabilities and deter aggressive Chinese naval activities. Specifically, the RSC Budget continues to support the SHIPS Act which makes it the official policy of the United States to achieve the Navy's minimum requirement for a 355-ship fleet.<sup>83</sup>

## **The Air Force**

The Air Force is key to our defense posture in the face of a rising China. The communist nation has invested massive resources into a strategy of "anti-access, area denial" (A2/AD), which would prevent the U.S. Air Force from projecting power in the event of conflict. In 2018, the Air Force performed a congressionally mandated study to assess its force structure and modernization requirements by 2030. The study found that 386 squadrons would be needed

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<sup>77</sup> War on the Rocks. "What to Expect When You're Expecting a National Defense Strategy," September 27, 2021, <https://warontherocks.com/2021/09/what-to-expect-when-youre-expecting-a-national-defense-strategy/>

<sup>78</sup> Department of Defense. 2020 DOD China Military Power Report, <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Sep/01/2002488689/-1/-1/1/2020-DOD-CHINA-MILITARY-POWER-REPORT-FINAL.PDF>

<sup>79</sup> U.S. Naval Institute News, "USNI News Fleet and Marine Tracker: February 12, 2024." <https://news.usni.org/2024/02/12/usni-news-fleet-and-marine-tracker-feb-12-2024>

<sup>80</sup> China has the capacity to build PLA combat ships at 200 times the rate that the US can, per leaked US Navy intelligence. September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023. <https://news.yahoo.com/china-capacity-build-pla-combat-053331757.html#:~:text=The%20country%20has%20the%20world%27s,and%20440%20ships%20by%202030.>

<sup>81</sup> The Daily Caller, by Harold Hutchison, "Obama Navy Now Half The Size Of Reagan Navy," October 18, 2015. <https://dailycaller.com/2015/10/18/obama-navy-now-half-the-size-of-reagan-navy/>

<sup>82</sup> Jeff Schogol, Task and Purpose, "Is China's navy as dangerous as so many fear?" April 8, 2022, <https://taskandpurpose.com/analysis/chinese-navy-dangerous-us-military/>

<sup>83</sup> U.S. Senator Roger Wicker. "Wicker Proposal for 355 Ships Signed Into Law," December 12, 2017, <https://www.wicker.senate.gov/2017/12/wicker-proposal-for-355-ships-signed-into-law>

by 2030 to meet the demands of the Trump administration's 2018 National Defense Strategy. In comparison, at the end of the Cold War, the Air Force had 401 operational squadrons.<sup>84</sup> In addition, a number of the Air Force's aircraft will reach the end of their service life in the next decade, including the Air Force's 234 F-15C/Ds.<sup>85</sup> As Mackenzie Eaglen has pointed out, "80 percent of the Air Force's roughly 2,050 fighters are A-10s, F-15C/Ds, F-15Es, and F-16C/Ds—all originally designed in the 1970s and purchased through the 1990s."<sup>86</sup>

The Air Force must be able to meet modernization goals in time to avoid fielding an outdated fleet and delaying next-generation aircraft programs.<sup>87</sup> The RSC Budget would invest in Air Force modernization to meet current threat requirements. The RSC Budget would support the procurement and fielding of the B-21 Raider Long-Range Strike Bomber, eventually replacing older aircraft like the B-52, which first flew in 1952, as well as procurement of F-35 and F-15EX fighters in order to maintain effective force structure to deter current and future threats. Both China and Russia have dramatically increased their procurement of 5th generation fighters including the Sukhoi Su 57 and the Chengdu J-20.

## **The Army**

Despite the shifting of defense priorities to the Navy and Air Force, the Army continues to require investment in both readiness and modernization. Former Defense Secretary Esper under President Trump has stated that the Army needs at least 500,000 soldiers.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, the M-1 tank and the Bradley tank are now 40 years old and need replacements. Attempts to replace the Army's thousands of Bradley tanks have been underway since 2003. Given current budget constraints, the Army may have to slash troop strength and training to fund its "Big Six" modernization priorities: Long-Range Precision Fires (LRPF), Next-Generation Combat Vehicles (NGCV), Future Vertical Lift (FVL), air and missile defense, secure battlefield networks, and soldier lethality. Of these, the most pressing priority is the modernization of long-range artillery and missiles in the LRPF, which would replace the Cold War-era ATACMS.<sup>89</sup> As the Congressional Research Service (CRS) has noted, "Both the 2018 National Defense Strategy and the Army's Multi-Domain Operations operational concept call for improved Army LRPF capability to counter what has been described as Russian and Chinese anti-access, area denial (A2/AD) strategies designed to limit the freedom of movement and action of U.S. forces in both Europe and the Pacific region."<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>U.S. Air Force, Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs, , "The Air Force We Need: 386 operational squadrons," September 17, 2018, <https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1635070/the-air-force-we-need-386-operational-squadrons/>

<sup>85</sup>AEI, by Mackenzie Eaglen and Hallie Coyne, March 2020, "The 2020s Tri-Service Modernization Crunch," <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-2020s-Tri-Service-Modernization-Crunch-1.pdf?x91208#page=19>

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Myers, M. "Esper: The ultimate size of the Army is a moving target." ArmyTimes. April 17, 2019.

<sup>89</sup> Institute for Defense and Government Advancement, by Elizabeth Mixson, May 29, 2019, "The Army's Top LRPF Strategic Priorities & Developments," <https://www.idga.org/land/whitepapers/long-range-precision-fires-in-2019-the-armys-top-priorities>

<sup>90</sup> Congressional Research Service, March 16, 2021, "U.S. Army Long-Range Precision Fires: Background and Issues for Congress", <https://fas.org/sqp/crs/weapons/R46721.pdf>

The RSC Budget supports allocation of resources needed to advance the Big Six priorities, especially the procurement of LRPFs. The RSC Budget also recognizes that enlarging the Army's force structure would be appropriate to meet Combatant Command needs. Finally, it supports the continued deployment of Terminal High Altitude Air Defense (THAAD) batteries, Future Long-Range Assault Aircraft, Future Attack Reconnaissance Aircraft, and the procurement of CH-47 Block II heavy-lift helicopters.

## **The Marine Corps**

In entering the new era of great-power competition, the Marine Corps has pivoted its focus away from land armies for ground warfare in the Middle East and South Asia and toward a new concept focused on amphibious assault in the Indo-Pacific. In implementing this new concept, Marine Corps Commandant General David Berger has envisioned smaller units of Marines operating across a large geographic area. As Eaglen has pointed out, "this will drive the need for longer-range transportation, communications, sensors, and fires to support a more distributed, agile force."<sup>91</sup> In modernizing its ground forces, the Marines will be replacing the aging Assault Amphibious Vehicle with the Amphibious Combat Vehicle. It will also be replacing the high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle with the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV) and will soon replace the almost 40-year-old Light Armored Vehicle with a new vehicle. The Marines will also be replacing the F-35B/C and CH-53K aircraft in the next 5 years.

The RSC Budget supports the expansion of the Pacific Deterrence Initiative and recognizes the Marine Corps' vital participation in those efforts. The RSC Budget supports the development of the Marine Corps' long-range precision fires capability, which is key to deterring the Chinese military throughout the Pacific region. The RSC Budget opposes efforts by House Democrats to slash funding for the program.<sup>92</sup> This budget supports the Marine Corps' development of Ground-Based Anti-Ship Missiles and the procurement of Marine Corps Tomahawk missiles. It also supports the construction of 31 amphibious ships as required by the Marine Corps Commandant. Finally, it supports the Marine Corps' continued replacement of its Assault Amphibious Vehicle, and plans to replace the Light Armored Vehicle, and continued procurement of CH-53K heavy-lift helicopters, and F-35B-Cs.

## **The Space Force**

The RSC Budget continues to support the Space Force and former President Trump's goal of ensuring American dominance in space. The Space Force is absolutely essential in the new era of great power competition, especially as both China and Russia have established a space force of their own and continue to upgrade their capabilities.<sup>93</sup> As John Venable from The

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<sup>91</sup> AEI, by Mackenzie Eaglen and Hallie Coyne, March 2020, "The 2020s Tri-Service Modernization Crunch," <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-2020s-Tri-Service-Modernization-Crunch-1.pdf?x91208#page=47>

<sup>92</sup> Defense News, by Jen Judson, December 23, 2020, "Lawmakers slash funding for Marine Corps' long-range fires development," [Lawmakers slash funding for Marine Corps' long-range fires development \(defensenews.com\)](https://www.defensenews.com/news/2020/12/23/lawmakers-slash-funding-for-marine-corps-long-range-fires-development/)

<sup>93</sup> The Heritage Foundation, "Does the United States Need a Space Force?" <https://www.heritage.org/space-policy/heritage-explains/does-the-united-states-need-space-force>



Heritage Foundation has noted, "The U.S. is only now reaching parity with Russia and China's counter-space capabilities."<sup>94</sup>

The Space Force has just six dedicated satellites for space situational awareness (SSA) and launched the last two in 2021. As John Venable of The Heritage Foundation has noted, this will still be far too few sensors to monitor the satellites of China and Russia.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, despite the establishment of the Space Force in 2019, only around half of all space-related assets and personnel have been assigned to the Space Force.<sup>96</sup>

The RSC Budget supports the fielding of a new constellation of less costly surveillance platforms in low earth orbit (LEO) by the Space Force. It supports placing space-related assets in the primary responsibility of the Space Force. In addition, the RSC Budget supports the continued development of the X-37 Orbital Test Vehicle for the Space Force, as well as the deployment of space-based radars capable of rapid revisit rates. Finally, the RSC Budget continues to support the creation of an independent acquisition office for the Space Force.

### **Nuclear, Space, and Cyberspace Capacities**

Regardless of the advances and investments made in America's conventional forces, a failure in the U.S.'s nuclear, cyberspace and outer space capabilities could incapacitate our conventional military and leave our homeland vulnerable to attack. The RSC Budget continues to support the Trump administration's goals to maintain and modernize our nuclear warheads, our triad of delivery vehicles, and our command and control and early warning systems. This budget also supports new low-yield device development, which adds flexibility to our nuclear arsenal.<sup>97</sup> It is imperative that the U.S. maintains the ability to deploy both strategic and low-yield weapons by submarine and land-based missiles, as well as air-launched and dropped vehicles. It is also essential that we maintain our capacity to produce the plutonium-239 and tritium (heavy hydrogen) that is required to produce warheads and keep existing ones operational.<sup>98</sup> The RSC Budget supports the B83 nuclear gravity bomb, which is the sole weapon capable of blasting deeply buried targets and which the Biden administration has proposed cutting.<sup>99</sup> The RSC Budget also rejects the Biden administration's efforts to set back nuclear deterrence and cancel the Sea-Launched Cruise Missile-Nuclear (SLCM-N).<sup>100</sup> The SLCM-N was proposed as part of the Trump administration's Nuclear Posture

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<sup>94</sup>The Heritage Foundation, by John Venable, April 27, 2021, "Rebuilding America's Military: The United States Space Force," <https://www.heritage.org/defense/report/rebuilding-americas-military-the-united-states-space-force>

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, "2018 Nuclear Posture Review" February 2018, <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF>.

<sup>98</sup>Defense News, by Franklin C. Miller and John R. Harvey "Commentary: The looming crisis for US tritium production." March 6, 2017 <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2017/03/06/commentary-the-looming-crisis-for-us-tritium-production/>.

<sup>99</sup> Defense News, by Joe Gould, "Biden plan to shelve Trump-era sea nuke comes under fire." April 1, 2022. <https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2022/04/01/biden-plan-to-shelve-trump-era-sea-nuke-comes-under-fire/>

<sup>100</sup> Harris, Bryant. "New US Nuclear Chief Takes Fresh Stance on Sea-Launched Cruise Missile." Defense News, March 14, 2023. <https://www.defensenews.com/congress/budget/2023/03/14/new-us-nuclear-chief-takes-fresh-stance-on-sea-launched-cruise-missile>

Review as a regional, sea-based nuclear launch option, in response to Russia's and China's growing nuclear forces.<sup>101</sup>

In addition, this budget supports the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, the land-based intercontinental ballistic missile system to replace the obsolete Minutemen III missiles. While Russia, China and North Korea continue to expand their nuclear and missile capacities, a failure in any component of our nuclear and missile systems could allow these adversaries to negate all the other abilities of our military and to destroy critical military infrastructure, including even our ability to use nuclear weapons in a second-strike capacity. As such, the RSC Budget flatly rejects the Biden Administration's misguided and ill-informed plan to diminish our nuclear capabilities and block modernization of these vehicles and warheads.

Beyond the commonly discussed threat from nuclear weapons, they can be used to generate an electromagnetic pulse (EMP).<sup>102</sup> A single nuclear device, detonated at high altitudes, can produce an EMP capable of destroying electronic devices and power grids over a large region of the U.S. This threat, and the developments of both the Russians and Chinese to produce anti-satellite weapons, highlights the prudence of former President Trump to centralize military space functions under a Space Force so the United States can continue to enhance its presence and capacities in outer space.<sup>103</sup> This budget supports the goals of former President Trump to ensure the U.S. is capable of intercepting long range missiles, most of which would traverse space if used, and can have adequate offensive and defensive abilities with regard to satellites. The satellite network around our planet is vital for banking, telecommunications, GPS, and a host of other military and civilian systems that support our modern life and national security. Without the ability to operate in outer space, our enemies could easily destroy these systems, on which every American relies.

Furthermore, the RSC Budget supports continued investments in U.S. cyber operations. This arena is similarly vital to Americans' everyday lives. The failure of our military to adequately defend cyberspace could allow an adversary to incapacitate our entire electrical grid. This would bring our nation to the edge of destruction. This is not simply a future threat. For instance, North Korea and Russia have launched repeated cyber-attacks on Americans.<sup>104 105</sup>

## **International Assistance Reform**

The RSC Budget views international assistance as a tool to help develop a freer, more prosperous, more stable, and more peaceful planet. However, it recognizes that it can also be

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<sup>101</sup> The Heritage Foundation, by Patty-Jane Geller, "Dangerous Nuclear Policy Idea No. 4: Defunding the Nuclear Sea-Launched Cruise Missile." September 27, 2021, <https://www.heritage.org/defense/report/dangerous-nuclear-policy-idea-no-4-defunding-the-nuclear-sea-launched-cruise-missile>

<sup>102</sup> Department of Homeland Security, "Secretary Nielsen Statement on Executive Order to Protect the U.S. from Electromagnetic Pulse Attacks", March 27, 2019 <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2019/03/27/secretary-nielsen-statement-executive-order-protect-us-electromagnetic-pulse-attacks>.

<sup>103</sup> Space News, by Sandra Erwin, "U.S. intelligence: Russia and China will have 'operational' anti-satellite weapons in a few years." <https://spacenews.com/u-s-intelligence-russia-and-china-will-have-operational-anti-satellite-weapons-in-a-few-years/>.

<sup>104</sup> The New York Times, by Nicole Perlroth, "As Trump and Kim Met, North Korean Hackers Hit Over 100 Targets in U.S. and Ally Nations." March 3, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/03/technology/north-korea-hackers-trump.html>.

<sup>105</sup> BBC, "US imposes sanctions on Russia over cyber-attacks", April 16, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-56755484>

used as a tool of the left to spread woke ideology. It is also an arena of the budget of great waste and fraud. Still, the RSC Budget supports efforts that directly advance American interests and defend traditional human rights and freedoms. We should ensure that U.S. aid is used for its intended purpose and not to support corrupt regimes.

In addition, the RSC Budget would ban any funds from going to any attempt by the State Department to promote anti-American ideas such as Critical Race Theory (CRT) or to allow the U.N. to audit the U.S. human rights record. Last year, the State Department invited the U.N. Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism and the U.N. Special Rapporteur on minority issues for an official visit to examine the U.S. human rights record. The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, E. Tendayi Achiume, is a member of the critical race studies program at UCLA and is a proponent of CRT.<sup>106</sup>

The RSC Budget would also reform and replace the State Department and the Foreign and Civil Service systems with a modernized hiring standard based on merit. The RSC Budget would also reform U.S. global broadcasting programs and counter-disinformation efforts by moving public diplomacy bureaus, and the Global Engagement Center, out of the State Department and into a reconstituted U.S. Information Agency (USIA) run by a chief executive officer. A reconstituted USIA should also be able to allow its media organizations to subject grants to a competitive process for both for-profit and nonprofit private organizations to create content to counter foreign disinformation efforts. In the media landscape, the private sector is more dynamic and creative than government bureaucrats at the Department of State.

The RSC Budget supports a realistic review of our support of multilateral and international organizations in the mold of the United Kingdom's multilateral aid review. Such a review should withdraw support from international organizations that are corrupt and unfixable, such as both the World Health Organization and the UN Human Rights Council. Upon withdrawal, the United States could attempt to establish alternative mechanisms of multilateral cooperation with democratic partners. At the same time, the RSC Budget would seek to reform other international organizations or UN bodies that the U.S. remains a part of to work with allies and partners to compete against China.

Finally, the RSC Budget would defund select international affairs related organizations and government agencies funded annually by State and Foreign Operations appropriations, which are discussed in the "Non-Defense Discretionary Spending" section. Examples include the Wilson Center, a foreign policy think tank, as well as the U.S. Institute for Peace, a government-funded center meant for promoting peace around the world. Both institutions could carry on their operations with private funding, so it is unnecessary for taxpayer dollars to be spent on these entities.

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<sup>106</sup> UCLA Law, "E. Tendayi Achiume, Professor of Law, Alicia Miñana Chair in Law." Accessed June 6, 2022. <https://law.ucla.edu/faculty/faculty-profiles/e-tendayi-achiume>