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THE RUSSIAN BEAR ON THE PROWL

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THE RUSSIAN BEAR ON THE PROWL

(9:45 a.m.)

MR. SWAN: Please take your seats. The good news is we get a longer break after this August panel. Well, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. I'm Guy Swan. I'm the Vice President for Education at The Association of the United States Army, and a proud member of the Aspen Institute Homeland Security Group. And it's my privilege to introduce our first panel of this year's forum, "The Russian Bear on the Prowl."

Let me start by complementing Clark and his team on putting together -- I guess, I'm the first one that gets to do that -- for putting on another wonderful forum this year. Your team's done wonderful, Clark. Let's give Clark a round of applause, please.

(Applause)

MR. SWAN: You get a lot of that this week, Clark, I know. Well, as a career army officer, the first half of my own career was spent focused on the Soviet Union, the Fulda Gap, and the Cold War in Central Europe and that's probably the same experience that many of you had in this room. When the wall came down and the Soviet Union broke up, clearly the Cold War had been won and it was the end of history as we knew it. Many in the West and certainly in the U.S. military moved on to Operation Desert Storm, Kosovo, Bosnia, Rwanda, the Asia-Pacific region and certainly a multi-decade experience in the Middle East that General Votel just covered so well.

Large numbers of military forces were withdrawn from Europe, a peace dividend was collected and NATO searched for other missions, Afghanistan being one. And in many ways, we left the Russians in the rearview mirror. But not unlike the Germans after the First World War, many Russian elites refused to accept the West's interpretation of the outcome of the Cold War. And now in retrospect, we are rediscovering that the Russians never really did go away.

The Russians are back and complicating the strategic calculus of the United States, its NATO allies, several former Soviet Republics and more recently contributing to the increasingly unstable Middle East with their intervention in Syria. And I won't get into what -- what's going on in the political campaign that may or may not involve the Russians.

So the question for today is what are the Russians really up to, or more importantly, what is Vladimir up to, and that's a question for our first panel and what they'll be diving into. To lead that discussion, it's my privilege to introduce our moderator, Massimo Calabresi. He is the Deputy Washington Bureau Chief and Senior Correspondent for *Time Magazine*. He's covered domestic and foreign policy issues for *Time Magazine* for nearly two decades.

A lot of experience in Central Europe and in the Balkans where he did some award-winning reporting on Srebrenica and ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. But more fittingly for this discussion, he began his journalism career in Moscow in August of 1991 when, you will remember, there was an attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev at that time, and he was serving as a freelance reporter. So we have the right moderator to lead this discussion. So let's give our panel a round of applause and I'll turn it over to Massimo.

(Applause)

MR. CALABRESI: Thank you very much, Guy, for -- for that kind introduction. It's true, I started my career in Russia and I will regale anyone with lots of anecdotes from the coup against Gorbachev if you need help going to sleep. Thank you, Walter and Clark as always for what promises to be a great forum, what's already started out as a great forum. The news gods have smiled upon this panel. We were already going to discuss, you know, the important challenges that Guy laid out that an increasingly aggressive Russia poses for the U.S. around the world, in Europe, in the Middle East and elsewhere. Little did we know that we would have to tackle the question of Russian aggression potentially in the United

States in this extraordinary presidential campaign.

We are very fortunate typically of the Aspen Institute, they have assembled a panel of experts with deep expertise on the subject and both at home and abroad. So without further ado, I'll introduce our panelists.

Elissa Slotkin is Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. She is the Principal Advisor to the Secretary of Defense for European Strategy and Policy including NATO, Russia and the Middle East. She has particular expertise in the Middle East having served as a Director on Iraq at the National Security Council and also for two years as an intelligence officer in Iraq working for John Negroponte who I think is here somewhere, the first director of National Intelligence.

Also joining us, Heather Conley is Senior Vice President for Europe, Eurasia, and the Arctic and the Director of the Europe Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. During the tenure of Colin Powell at the State Department, Ms. Conley was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State responsible for European and Eurasian Affairs.

So, getting right to it. Elissa, we are told that the federal government believes with a high degree of confidence that Russia is behind the theft of e-mails from the Democratic National Committee that were subsequently released by WikiLeaks causing disarray at the first day of the Democratic National Convention and forcing the resignation of the DNC's leader Debbie Wasserman Schultz. What can you tell us about the U.S. government's assessment of the theft of those e-mails and Russia's possible role in it?

MS. SLOTKIN: Very, very little.

(Laughter)

MS. SLOTKIN: So I know it is the topic du jour and I am going to therefore start off by disappointing the crowd by saying, as other government officials have said,

it's an ongoing investigation, so I'm not going to be able to get into the specifics. The FBI is handling it, that's their job. I'm happy to talk about, as we go through the panel, happy to talk about some of the behavior similar to this that we've seen in a separate context from Russia and other state actors. But as for the actual investigation, I will leave that to the FBI.

MR. CALABRESI: Well, eventually we will get to -- to motivations and whether such an action would fit with what you describe the cyber interventions of Russia in the political affairs of other countries and whether this is beyond that in some way. But let me ask Heather, if you have a particular opinion based on your reading of what Putin is up to here.

MS. CONLEY: It certainly fits a pattern. And this is -- we have to recognize what this pattern is. Cyber is used as a tool of statecraft and we have to remain very, very vigilant. I am a big person on thinking about anniversaries and next year is the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution of 1917, so we'll reach for inspiration from Lenin and if you probe with bayonets and if you find mush, you push.

We have some mush at the moment in our country. Our democratic processes are full of mush and that mush will be pushed and it will be exploited. And this is an exploitation and we can talk further about other exploitations, ask the German Foreign Minister and the German government when a social media story which was total fiction about a 13-year old that was reportedly raped by a Syrian migrant. It was completely false. It went on for days. It's desired to stir the public. This is a pattern.

MR. CALABRESI: So let me ask you, Elissa, just generally, as Heather describes Putin's motives, they sound almost without outer limit. Is it your assessment of his intentions worldwide that in fact wherever he finds a vulnerability, including in the electoral process in the United States, that it would fit with his MO that he would pursue that?

MS. SLOTKIN: Yeah, I think it's safe to say that Putin is pushing the boundaries on what Russian foreign policy is going to be about for the next decade. He is pushing where he thinks there's weakness, he's pushing to see how far he can get. And I think -- as I think our -- Mr. Swan said at the beginning of this, here -- there is this disgruntled feeling about how the end of the Cold War went for them.

And I think Putin is playing on that with the public and his public and I think he is looking for ways to sort of be a global peer competitor of the United States. He wants the image of Russia to be that as a competitor and an equal and he's pushing boundaries in order to do that in his near abroad certainly, but also we see all over the world; Syria, South China Sea, lots of places.

MR. CALABRESI: So we're going to talk about a bunch of different regions where things are very active, obviously Europe, Middle East, the Far East, as you mentioned the South China Sea, news just this morning on that with regard to Russia and China. But as a sort of a public diplomacy matter, what is the proper message from the United States and its leaders in response to that? Not necessarily, you know, disposition of forces, order of battle, what should we be saying to Russia in the world?

MS. SLOTKIN: Yeah. So I think when Putin decided to go and attempt to annex Crimea, it really forced us to do some serious thinking about how we should approach Russia going forward. And the approach we've chosen to take, and it's not just a bumper sticker or a talking point, is strong and balanced. And you have to have the two of them. And the strong means the U.S. and NATO have to have the capabilities they need in the right places to deter Russia and we have to support partners, not our allies but our partners, in building their resilience in response to Russia; Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, that's the strong.

On the balance side, it's absolutely holding open the idea that there are things of mutual interests that we should negotiate with and work with Russia on Iran

deal, Syria, if we could possibly do it, and holding the door open for them to rejoin the family of nations in international standing, good international standing. We don't want to be adversarial with the Russians. That said, we can't stand aside while they push and illegally annex places and sow dissent in places and destabilize places. We have to have the sort of twin, you know, deter and dialogue message.

MR. CALABRESI: Well, a balanced and, you know, sober approach and sober method, not everybody appears to agree with you on that. And without venturing too far into domestic politics, I do have to ask you about the response to the DNC hack by the Republican candidate. For those of you who were traveling and didn't see the news --

MS. SLOTKIN: Or living in a hole.

MR. CALABRESI: Yeah. The -- I'll just read the lead from the Times today, "Donald J. Trump said on Wednesday that he hoped Russian intelligence services had successfully hacked Hillary Clinton's e-mails and encouraged them to publish whatever they may have stolen, essentially urging a foreign adversary to conduct cyber espionage against the former Secretary of State." So I'll just toss it out for either of you. Is this domestic spectacle or is a response like that in some way going to affect our relationship, our posture with Russia?

MS. CONLEY: Well, let me link your two questions together. I think we need to redefine national security as the health of our democracies. Former commanders, Joint Chiefs of Staff has said, you know, our health is about our budget and our economy, but how about our democracies and our institutions and our oversight? And I think this is linked because we're not an incredibly healthy democracy at the moment. We're deeply polarized, our institutions aren't working the way they should be. And these can be exploited for populace means.

So when a presidential candidate makes the suggestion that a foreign government attack, cyber attack the United States, that should give us pause about the health of our democracies, the health of our societies.

What struck me -- well, and I have to say if Mr. Trump is asking that, could we find his tax returns in any of those cyber attacks because I guess it goes both ways. If you'd like those e-mails, I'd be interested in his tax returns. But this also gets back to the other thing you said that wasn't covered as much, and that's about that perhaps he will think about perhaps the United States if he becomes President, recognizing the illegal annexation of Crimea. He would rethink sanctions. I hope he is aware that there is a movement within Russia that sort of a #WeWantAlaskaBack, would he think about that too?

But this gets back to influence, questioning the democracy and this is an attack on information, on fact, creating a parallel universe where you don't know what's truth and what's not truth so a populous can make that truth become what they wish it to be. And that's what the Russian information campaign has been so effective in doing, creating an alternative universe where you're so confused you don't trust anything. I don't trust the media, I don't trust elected officials, I trust what my friends are sending me on Facebook, that must be truth. This is the challenge that's in front of us. And the health of our democracies and how we attack that is how we will be successful or how we'll be unsuccessful. And I have to say, yesterday was a huge example of unsuccess of democracy -- of American democracy.

MR. CALABRESI: I have spoken to a few folks who feel that whether or not Putin is taking sides in the election, the larger effort that fits with his MO is simply to discredit our democracy and that generally speaking, and this one for you, Elissa, that there is a larger strategic goal simply everywhere he can to undermine the idea that the American system and the American view of democracy is strong and resilient and the best option for potential allies, for our potential allies around the world. Is that an abiding part of Putin's effort?

MS. SLOTKIN: I think that the Russians have had for years a doctrine of what they call active measures of these steps to sow dissent generally, either on a specific issue or just to create chaos in a political system of a

neighbor in order to create an opening for themselves. So I think Russia has a history of doing this and they continue doing it. We certainly see them attempting to divide Europe. That's a huge goal for them because they think it gives them an opening, and part of dividing Europe is dividing sort of the views of America and the views of our democracy and whether that's a model to pursue.

So I don't think, as Heather said, there's definitely a pattern separate from any incident that's happened recently. There is a pattern and it's part of their doctrine, which is fundamentally different I think from the way we approach military doctrine. It's a -- it -- and it requires a fundamentally different approach than a conventional approach we had during the Cold War. And I'm sure we'll get into it. But this idea that somehow the Cold War is back, I would love to hit that one.

MR. CALABRESI: Right.

MS. CONLEY: Well, I think it's what makes what Elissa was saying about, the balance and the partnership, that's what makes the partnership, I think. We can seek it, we can look for it, it makes it so hard because of that doctrine --

MR. CALABRESI: Let me frame that up a little bit. Since December '91, the U.S. policy towards Russia has essentially been this hopeful notion that it could serve -- that NATO's door is open ultimately even to Russia that it could serve as kind of an eastern anchor in Europe hold free and at peace. You know, that model clearly not operative at this point. But as Elissa says, Cold War 2.0 not necessarily apt either. So why don't we start with Europe and picking apart a little bit why you think that's the case? He's, as you've noted in our conversations, done snap exercises, built up troops. Let's -- in fact, why don't we just start with a list of the things that indicate to you that Russia is actually on the prowl before we go to whether or not that constitutes a new Cold War?

MS. SLOTKIN: I don't know about on the prowl,

but pushing boundaries for sure. And I think --

MR. CALABRESI: Both in terms of hardware and --

MS. SLOTKIN: Sure.

MR. CALABRESI: -- more than message now.

MS. SLOTKIN: Sure. You know, I guess when we think about it at the Pentagon, we think about capabilities and intentions. So on the capability side, we've obviously seen a significant modernization of the Russian military, we've seen them invest more heavily in the Arctic, which Heather does, all the -- looks at all the time, and we've seen them build up and create a doctrine of these snap exercises, not predictable, suddenly divisions of troops on their borders and using that sometimes, as we've seen in -- with Crimea as cover for an invasion of another country. So there's the sort of capability side that they've built up, not to mention all the other what we call hybrid techniques, their use of cyber, their use of space, their use of propaganda, all these asymmetric tools that they use that are deniable, that are hard to see, that are hard to identify as indications and warning the way we usually think about seeing a buildup before an invasion.

They've used that to great effect, not to mention soldiers out of uniform, "little green men" as they're called, that we've seen them use in Eastern Ukraine. So you have all of these capabilities that they've build up and then you have this question of intent. With Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, it was clear. Them going into back up Assad, well without any forewarning, it sets a certain tone and it opens up certain questions about their intent. Their activities in terms of engaging in an extremely close proximity with U.S. forces, almost taunting U.S. forces, it just leaves open these fundamental questions about intent.

So when you put those two together, capabilities and intent, it leads you down a road to an assessment that Putin has decided to take on a decidedly more aggressive foreign policy. And that deeply concerns us.

MR. CALABRESI: Let's do Europe a little bit. Are we -- Heather, are we appropriately postured in Europe for that threat?

MS. CONLEY: We've made an important step in the right direction. The NATO Summit in Warsaw basically created what I would call the land component of an increasingly credible deterrence. And I think the work of the NATO Summit in light of the developments following the UK referendum was amazing. It went forward and there was a strong message of solidarity, no one makes it through the 134 paragraphs of a NATO communiqué, we read it so you don't have to. But it's -- there was a very strong message also on nuclear deterrence, which is another incredibly important part.

MR. CALABRESI: And also boosting our troops and the U.S. commitment --

MS. CONLEY: Absolutely. Absolutely.

MR. CALABRESI: -- in putting boots on the ground in --

MS. CONLEY: So four NATO battalions, right.

MR. CALABRESI: Right, Estonia and --

MS. CONLEY: So, being the analyst, my criticism, it's a first step, the piece that we are really missing and this is the piece of the Arctic, it's Russia's growing anti-access/area denial capabilities. The -- from the Arctic and the Bering Sea to the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea to the Eastern Mediterranean, they are increasingly able to deny NATO and U.S. access to areas should we want to get in there. And we don't have an answer for that right now. We bemoan it. We have to rethink about where to pre-position stocks and forces because of it, but we don't have an answer now. And --

MR. CALABRESI: The Arctic important because of resources and defense.

MS. CONLEY: Absolutely.

MR. CALABRESI: Right.

MS. CONLEY: Absolutely. The other component that's not quite there yet is the maritime component. We're starting to get our hands around the increase in Russian submarine activity, anti-submarine warfare has to come back. And I'm very concerned and Russian Defense Minister Shoygu had a statement, I believe yesterday or at least I read it early this morning, the Black Sea I think is going to now become a much more strategically dynamic region. We've focused so much on the Baltic region, for understandable reasons, that's where the Russian presence has certainly been the most dynamic. But now the Black Sea I think is increasingly vulnerable because of their build-up in Crimea as for hundreds. But this is where events in Turkey over the last week and a half may start swinging us into a very new and challenging area. President Erdogan and President Putin are meeting August the 9th. Here you have two authoritarian leaders, that increasingly President Erdogan sees us as either part of the problem or not helping. And this is where the strongman, you know, mantra can pull together, and I worry about the strategic implications.

MR. CALABRESI: Let me follow right on that. I want to ask two getting towards your region of expertise. Are we in danger in some way of Putin luring or seducing Turkey out of NATO and into his orbit? And two, you said -- well, I'll save the Syria friction question because our diplomacy is very active on Syria and so the idea that he might or at least some of the Russian forces might actively be seeking confrontation with us there, it seems worth unpacking, but let's do Turkey first.

MS. CONLEY: So I would just say -- I mean we all know that since the Turk shot down a Russian plane over their airspace back in, I believe, November of '15, the relationship between Turkey and Russia has been quite tense. And they have reached some reproshma in recent weeks, even weeks and months, which we think is a positive thing. It's definitely not a good thing to have those two states, especially their operators, working so closely

together, Syria and Turkey. So that's a positive thing.

I just don't think fundamentally that Turkey is at risk of being sucked out of NATO. In fact, we have the opposite signals. Particularly since the attempted coup, we've had nothing but positive signals from the Turkish military and from the Turkish political leadership saying, "Please stay with us. Please, you know, come and visit, engage with us," really trying to assure that the U.S.-Turkey relationship is strong and then NATO-Turkey relationship is strong.

MR. CALABRESI: They may fear their own leadership, but that's one bright spot. So on the question of friction with Russian forces and potential confrontation there, how does that jibe with our diplomatic efforts and how does it threaten them?

MS. SLOTKIN: Yeah. So just to do an overview, and I know General Votel hit about that -- hit on this and his panel just a little bit, but the -- you know, you have a situation where U.S. and Russian forces are working more closely in the same airspace than I think potentially ever in history. I was speaking with someone who was an old Cold War hand and I was describing to him how close we are in airspace and working near the Russians and the risk of miscalculation, of accident is very high, which is why we have a flight safety memorandum of understanding with them to get at this fundamental issue of how do we de-conflict from one another, it was vital back in September, October.

So we do have engagement with the Russians on safety issues as General Votel said. We call that de-confliction and it benefits us more than anything. In separate from that, the Department of Defense is not doing any military cooperation, collaboration, joint planning, joint exercises, joint operations, none of that. And we remain, I think the Secretary has been very clear on this, skeptical about our ability to do so.

Now, Secretary Kerry is engaged in negotiations at the political level on Syria. It is clear that there is not a military solution to Syria. That means there's a political solution that must be had. And the Russians are

going to be a part of that. They decided to throw their lot in last year with the Assad regime, the Iranian's Hezbollah and a bunch of other unsavory actors. They made that decision and that made them a major stakeholder and responsible party in what happens in the future of Syria. So they're going to be a part of any political transition.

And the specter of suffering is so significant in Syria that I, frankly, respect Secretary Kerry very much for trying to hammer away at some sort of political deal. A political deal has to come with the lowering of violence, humanitarian access for people, particularly in Aleppo, and this is oppression issue given what's going on there today. And it must come with a commitment to, instead of supporting the Assad regime and hitting the opposition, actually focusing on the terrorists they claim to be so worried about. Those things have to come into pass before we will consider greater cooperation, which is something they seek very adamantly.

MR. CALABRESI: Interesting. Okay. I think before I open it up for questions, it's important to make one point, I think, because in a discussion like this it's very easy to say Russia is on the prowl, Russia's pushing here, Russia is dangerous there. The fact is, at home, they're quite weak, right? The economy is hurting. How much of what you see Putin and the Kremlin and Russia broadly doing is from a position of weakness rather than strength and how should that inform our response? First Elissa, then Heather.

MS. SLOTKIN: Sure. So I would say it's from -- they're acting from a position of weakness. I think the combination of the economic sanctions after Crimea and Eastern Ukraine plus the low price of oil has really hurt them and you can see this borne out in the numbers of foreign direct investment and a bunch of other economic standards. And I therefore think that there's a heightened interest by the political leadership in Russia in talking about conflicts abroad, in championing conflicts abroad. I think that that is a tactic we know well from our Cold War history. But the other lesson we -- I hope we have learned from our Cold War history is not to overestimate the competitor. I think we were at fault

for thinking that the Soviet Union was this amazing, uncrackable empire and there were many places, particularly in the U.S. government that just fundamentally did not predict the fall of the Soviet Union.

And I would offer that we should be taking those lessons, those analytic lessons, and applying them to Putin's Russia today. They are not unbeatable. They are not operating from a position of strength. In some ways that makes the situation more dangerous. So I don't want to laud this as a positive thing. It is not good that the Russian people and their economy is suffering. But I just want to be clear about the analysis. I do not think they're operating from a position of strength.

MS. CONLEY: So I think there's a general misunderstanding about Russia's economic weakness. Clearly, the drop in energy prices, commodity prices has done an enormous amount of damage. The sanctions served as an accelerant, sanctions in some way denying Russian businesses access to the international financial system is probably the most devastating part in the long term. But for the last two years, they have stabilized and in fact, if anything, using this to invoke a survivor's mentality. And this is where I think we -- sort of the mythology is, "Oh, they're so weak, they can't possibly sustain operations in Ukraine and Syria," that I - I think we misunderstand that they are now in a prolonged period, they've stabilized enough, in fact the last two years, you know, loyalty has been secured by the inner circle, they're managing this and President Putin is settling in for the long haul.

So I think there is a long-term issue here of instability that we think "Well, this can't last" and that's absolutely not right. I agree though this is an expression in some ways of Russia's long-term decline, demographically it cannot diversify or modernize its economy, and this -- there had to be a breakout moment where it would be -- Russia would be recognized as an equivalent power to the United States, that it would be taken seriously and with respect on the international community, something that it has not, I believe, it has

received for the last 25 years, "You will take me seriously, I have a serious military and I will show you how serious it is. You cannot solve any international problem, the U.S., unless you come to Moscow and you negotiate it with me." And that returns that national identity.

Russia lost its national identity at the end of the Cold War. And he's recreating it very, very effectively, but he needs more crises to mobilize the community. And this is my concern, actually to -- absolutely, to Elissa's point. If you have to mobilize your population to be on a war footing to be in survival mode, you have to create the wars --

MR. CALABRESI: Okay.

MS. CONLEY: You have to keep feeding that. And that's the instability that we're going to see.

MR. CALABRESI: Okay. So questions, please. Wait for the mic. Stand, identify yourself and ask a question. If you make a statement, I'll cut you off and we'll both be embarrassed, so please don't. Let's see. Yes, with the glasses in back, yeah.

MS. NEUMANN: Hi, Vanessa Neumann. My company Asymmetrica, we do counter transnational organized crime, counter illicit trade. Won't surprise we have come up against the Russians a few times. I have my own opinions, but I'd rather hear your opinions, obviously, on the links between organized crime in Russia, Russian intelligence, and how they're using, to the extent you can, to the extent that they're using transnational organized crime to launder money, break sanctions and bring money back into Russia, which is, as I say, something we encounter.

MR. CALABRESI: Elissa.

MS. SLOTKIN: Sure. So I will claim I'm -- be clear, I'm not an expert on this, but I do think there is an increasing focus by our intelligence community to look at the links between organized crime sanctions busting but also movement of migrants into Europe and the role of

destabilizing political situations across Europe, political campaigns and debates. It's an area of interest, I don't think there is conclusive answers yet on the real depths of the connection. And so, it's a to be continued type story. But you're right to raise it because it's definitely piqued the interest and if you go to Europe, there is significant interest. And I think they're having -- their intelligence communities look at this much more seriously, they're ahead of us, because it affects them so directly. So I don't have a concrete answer, but I think there's a thread there that has captured a greater number of our analysts' interest.

MR. CALABRESI: The idea of weaponizing migrants and so, yeah.

MS. CONLEY: Your work is exactly what I think is now the national security challenge. And we have to look at these, the nexus of these networks and how they achieve political as well as economic influence in NATO countries. And you're absolutely right, Europe suffers from it the most greatly. But we're not immune to it here as well. It's a very sophisticated campaign. The only way we break it, I -- America's greatest soft power was the FIFA corruption investigations, the world anti-doping, this is all linked. They're using western systems to further their own interest. The only way we stop it is to shine a light on it. But the problem is, as we shine a light on it it's going to -- the confidence in our own institutions and our own systems of governance will be harmed because they have been used so effectively. So your work, in my view, and really how we attack this problem is probably more important right now in the short term than how many NATO battalions that we have in the Baltic region. That's how we --

MR. CALABRESI: Margaret Warner here. She is --

MS. WARNER: Thank you. Margaret Warner from the PBS NewsHour. Elissa Slotkin, you spoke about what the Russians call active measures they're using to undermine democratic systems and cooperation in a lot of the neighboring countries, particularly in Eastern Europe but in France also. And you said this is a really part of

their doctrine, it is not part of ours, we need new measures to counteract that and we don't have them. Well, what would they be?

MS. SLOTKIN: Yeah. So it's a great question and this is a perfect entree into the bigger philosophical question that is sort of are we in another Cold War, should we be in another Cold War. And I reject it because of the fact that the doctrine that the Russians are using is so fundamentally different from what we saw in, you know, during the Cold War. They are using these techniques and they are challenging not just the United States, NATO, but also civilian institutions and their ability to react, right?

In most countries, cyber issues, cybercrime propaganda, counter-propaganda, it's handled by domestic agencies, by civilian agencies, not necessarily the ministries of defense, so it's exposed these seams between defense and interior industries or sectors. So what we've sort of determined is that we need what we call a new playbook, that the Cold War playbook doesn't work. It doesn't work for this kind of threat and we need a new playbook. And that means our contingency planning that the military always done for emergencies, they're based on models that are not the thousands of tanks rolling through the Fulda Gap, they are hybrid propaganda little green men, our scenarios have changed, the integration of field.

So it's not just what are we going to do conventionally. It's how we going to mix conventional forces with cyber response, with space response, with counter-propaganda response. It's forcing us to come up with a different model. It is about, frankly, reorienting how we think about intelligence collection on this threat because it's not, you know, it's not counting tanks and seeing where they are near the borders of NATO, it's saying, "I'm seeing a cyber attack in this Baltic state, is that the beginning of a soft invasion?" It's saying, "I'm seeing this manipulation with this Russian speaking community in this place. Is that an indication and warning?" And there is -- that is a revolution, I think, in how we have to see threats coming from Russia. So it's about this new playbook and we were very open about it,

we've had to adapt. And we've done a lot of work in the two years since Crimea to adapt that playbook to something that's being presented to us by Vladimir Putin.

MR. CALABRESI: Fascinating. Let's see, yes, here, yes.

MS. HARRIS: Hi, Gail Harris with the Foreign Policy Association and a former Cold War lawyer. What are the techniques -- well, first, the question is this hybrid warfare which not just Russia is using, but China. President Reagan put out the word that what the war fighters had to do when they came up with a new plan, they had to go war-game it at the war colleges and then you had people like me playing the bad guys --

MR. CALABRESI: We're short on time, sorry, the question?

MS. HARRIS: Okay. So the question is, have we looked at wargaming to help us out with hybrid warfare?

MS. SLOTKIN: Yeah. So we love our wargaming at the Department of Defense, rest assured you cannot imagine. You might even be concerned by the amount of wargaming we've done on these scenarios because, as the last questioner mentioned, it's just so different for us. So we have done -- this is what I'm talking about when I say contingency planning. Our contingency planning is based on a number of wargaming scenarios that showed us what we think the most likely invasion scenarios are and they're not traditional. So, absolutely. If you're interested in playing Team Red, we are happy to sign you up, but we have done significant wargaming on different scenarios.

MR. CALABRESI: In the blue check shirt here, there we go, just give me the mic.

MR. SCARLETT: Thank you. John Scarlett, former Head of MI6. Our representative in Moscow in '91 to '94, so I'm not --

MR. CALABRESI: Good to see you again.

(Laughter)

MR. SCARLETT: There's a great deal of expertise that you're displaying here. You're quite right to repeat the importance of being seen to be the equal of the U.S., although in fact I think the economy of Russia is smaller than South Korea or Canada, that there is a fairly fundamental point in spite of all very good points. A quick question, I know we are coming to an end. What message do you think the U.S., which is what Vladimir Putin is thinking about, what message is he getting about U.S. policy, U.S. attitudes, U.S. sort of firmness, if you like, maybe, into the future, because this business of getting the balance right between being strong and open to dialogue is very open to misinterpretation.

MR. CALABRESI: Do you mean also with regard to whether or not we'll stand by our NATO allies, for example?

MR. SCARLETT: I'll steer away from that.

MR. CALABRESI: Okay.

MR. SCARLETT: If I may, leaving that sort of aside, just the -- you know, the message coming out now from, you know, the administration since Crimea and so on.

MS. SLOTKIN: Yeah. It's a -- it is going to be honest, I think you've hit on the fundamental question that the U.S. government is going to be facing for the next decade, how do you get the balance right? Are we being too charitable and giving them too many opportunities to come back to the table or are we providing such a high level of deterrence that we're potentially provoking them, right? That's the fundamental question right there. And I think, I hope, that the message that Russia is receiving now is that "We want to talk to you, we'll send John Kerry to Moscow, we are open and we are ready to talk," and I think he -- no one is more open than John Kerry to talking with the Russians.

MR. CALABRESI: 10 hours to block --

MS. CONLEY: Comment on that, I may.

MS. SLOTKIN: But -- and if that were the only thing we were doing, then that would be a concern. But as we just said at the NATO Summit, we have the movement, the greatest number of NATO forces to the eastern flank of NATO, since the end of the Cold War. We've put a divisions worth of equipment and soldiers back on the European continent. And I think Russia understands that we want to talk with them and they also understand posture and presence of U.S. and of NATO. And I hope that we are getting that balance right. But that is the fundamental question because I don't think you can have one without the other. You just can't keep talking if they don't actually believe that you're capable of fighting, quite honestly, and it's a sad truth. So you got to have them both, but you're at risk every day of getting out of whack.

MR. CALABRESI: Okay. That is the right note to end on, and we are out of time. Thank you very much to both the panelists and thank you for your presence.

(Applause)

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