TRANSCRIPT

Event

“The Future of Arms Control, Strategic Stability and the Global Order”

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FEATURING
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Welcome, everyone. My name is John Hamre. I’m the president here at CSIS. And I’m delighted to welcome you wherever you are in the world.

It’s morning in Washington, but wherever you are, we hope that you’re dialing in and enjoying this remarkable opportunity that we have to have a conversation with the national security adviser from the United Kingdom. This is Sir Stephen Lovegrove. A real privilege for us to be able to meet with him today, and honestly, there are probably 10 topics that would be timely for this conversation, but the topic we want to focus on today is nonproliferation.

It’s not a – it’s not a theme that’s prominent every day in policy circles, but it should be. These last six months have been somewhat startling. We’ve had North Korea threatening to have a seventh launch – or, a seventh detonation of their nuclear warheads. We have Iran declaring that they can make a nuclear bomb now. We’ve had – Vladimir Putin has said he put his nuclear forces on alert. He didn’t really do it, but he said he would. These are startling things in our world, and there’s a framework for this, to try to provide transparency and predictability. It’s the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

And we’re very fortunate that National Security Adviser Lovegrove focuses on its. It’s one of his priorities. He’s got about 15 of them, but this is one of them, and we’re going to have an opportunity to learn his thinking today. And so we’re very grateful in welcoming him to Washington and to CSIS. Dr. Seth Jones is going to lead the conversation today, but I believe we’re going to start with an introduction. Seth will begin by formally introducing the national security adviser. And then we look forward to hearing his thoughts. Thank you. Stay tuned.

Well, we have the honor today of having with us, as Dr. Hamre mentioned, Sir Stephen Lovegrove, the U.K. national security adviser. He has a long and distinguished career which I will not outline today, but it is on the website. Thank you, Sir Stephen, for coming to the Center for Strategic and International Studies. We look forward to hearing what you have to say. Welcome.

Well, good morning, ladies and gentlemen. And thank you to Dr. John Hamre and Dr. Seth Jones, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies, for hosting us today. And thank you to all joining us here at CSIS or virtually.

I must begin by talking about the war in Ukraine. We have recently passed the grim milestone of 150 days since President Putin launched this unprovoked, illegal war, bringing untold suffering to the innocent people of Ukraine. And I’m afraid the conflict fits a pattern of Russia acting deliberately and recklessly to undermine the global security architecture. That’s a pattern
that includes the illegal annexation of Crimea, the use of chemical and radiological weapons on U.K. soil, and the repeated violations that caused the collapse of the INF Treaty. And we will continue to hold Russia to account for its destabilizing actions as an international community.

What is happening in Ukraine is also a manifestation, though, of a much broader contest unfolding over the successor to the post-Cold War international order. And that contest has profound implications. It will decide whether we live in a world in which regionally aggressive powers, such as China and Russia, can pursue might is right agendas unchecked, or a world in which all states can ensure their sovereignty, competition does not spill over into conflict, and we cooperate to protect the planet. As this contest unfolds, we are entering a new and dangerous age of proliferation in which new technological change is increasing the damage potential of many weapons, and those weapon systems are more widely available.

We need to start thinking about the new security order. Both the elements that have guaranteed strategic stability in the past – effective deterrence, in all of its forms, combined with a renewal of a functional arms control framework – need urgent attention.

Now, policymakers have been urged recently to learn to navigate the absence of order and that is, in part, good advice, but it is important to build some handrails to guide our thinking as we prepare to negotiate the complex landscape ahead.

In the 1950s and ’60s, policymakers faced similarly uncertain terrain. The advent of nuclear weapons had created a tension between strength and stability – strength, having the speed, initiative, and surprise to ensure security, and stability, there being nothing for either side to gain from striking first. And out of this period, academics and policymakers developed the concept of strategic stability, building on the work of Thomas Schelling, Herman Kahn, and Samuel Huntington.

In simple terms, strategic stability meant establishing a balance that minimized the risk of nuclear conflict. It recognized that an atmosphere of competitive armament generated the need for continuous dialogue. It was delivered through two core components, deterrence and arms control.

In Madrid last month, NATO reaffirmed strategic stability as essential to our collective security, but we should be honest: strategic stability is at risk. During the Cold War, we thought in terms of escalation ladders, thanks to Herman Kahn, largely, predictable linear processes that could be monitored and responded to.
Now we face much broader – a much broader range of strategic risks and pathways to escalation, driven by the developments of science and technology, including rapid technological advancement, the shift to hybrid warfare, and expanding competition in new domains such as space and cyber, and these are all exacerbated by Russia’s repeated violations of its treaty commitments and the pace and scale with which China is expanding its nuclear and conventional arsenals and the disdain it has shown for engaging with any arms control agreements.

Indeed, Rebecca Hersman and Heather Williams, former and current directors of the CSIS project on nuclear issues, have argued that we are now more likely to see escalation wormholes – sudden, unpredictable failures in the fabric of deterrence, causing rapid escalation to strategic conflict.

Moreover, the Cold War’s two monolithic blocks of the USSR and NATO, though not without alarming bumps, were able to reach a shared understanding of doctrine that is today absent. Doctrine is opaque in Moscow and in Beijing, let alone Pyongyang or Tehran.

So, the question is how we reset strategic stability for the new era, finding a balance amongst unprecedented complexity so there can be no collapse into uncontrolled conflict. The new NATO Strategic Concept sets the direction on which we must now build, and this will be difficult. But we have a moral and a pragmatic duty to try.

The circle can only be squared if we renew both deterrence and arms control, taking a more expansive and integrated approach to both. In March last year, the U.K. published the Integrated Review, our broadest and deepest review of national security and international policy since the end of the Cold War.

The Integrated Review’s emphasis on integration was a deliberate response to the blurring of the boundaries between war and peace, prosperity and security, trade and development, and domestic and foreign policy.

In both the U.S. and the U.K., we’ve already started moving to deeper integration in our approach to deterrence. From a U.K. perspective, integrated deterrence means bringing together all of the levers of state power – political, diplomatic, economic, and military – to deliver effect. It means tailoring our responses be they military, diplomatic, or economic, to the specific context, taking into account our understanding of our adversaries’ motivations.

Integrated deterrence also means working in a more joined up manner across government and society, more broadly. It means working more closely with our allies and our partners, through NATO, but also through new
groupings such as AUKUS and strengthening our relationships with partners in the Euro-Atlantic, Indo-Pacific, and around the world. And we must give due – arguably overdue – regard to improving and strengthening deterrence by denial.

In an age of revanchist, aggressive powers committed to the concept of spheres of influence we must ensure that the vulnerable have the ability to defend themselves, thereby deterring aggression in the first place. A central challenge, though, is to avoid this leading to inevitable proliferation.

So the next step should be that we develop our thinking on integrated arms control – advancing a dynamic new agenda that is multidomain, multi-capability, and draws together a much wider set of actors. Now, historically arms control has consisted of a set of regimes imposing limits on specific capabilities alongside strategic stability dialogues focused on risk reduction, and much of the existing architecture remains vital such as the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, and the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

That last, the NPT, has been the cornerstone in nuclear security and several nuclear prosperities for the last 52 years, and the U.K. remains committed to its implementation in full. We will work with all state parties at the forthcoming review conference to strengthen the treaty as the irreplaceable foundation and framework for our common efforts.

The reality, however, is that the current structures alone will not deliver what we need a modern arms control system to achieve. Many other longstanding agreements have fallen apart as a result of Russian violations, despite them offering the conflict management, confidence building, and transparency that Moscow claims to seek, and that logic would dictate that it should desire.

These include the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, and Open Skies – all of which were designed to provide stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Other proposals, such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, simply do not address the obstacles that must be overcome to achieve lasting global disarmament, and many of the frameworks that are still in place were designed for a world that no longer exists. They offer patchy coverage and don’t offer – don’t cover all capabilities, including some dangerous new and emerging technologies.

They often rely on a clear distinction between civilian and military-use cases. They were largely designed for a bipolar context. They do not take fully into account the pace of technological development and information sharing, which can challenge the efficacy of the control lists, and they rely on an
information environment that is increasingly susceptible to corruption and disinformation. Further integrated arms control will need to extend across several interlinked and overlapping categories of proliferation.

First, we need to look at the increasingly large set of weapons where the barriers to entry and ownership are low and getting lower, such as cyber weapons, low-tech drones, small arms and light weapons, and chemical and biological capabilities. Now, these weapons alone may not change the strategic balance, though the jury is still out on cyber, but they will interact in unpredictable ways with broader strategic competition.

Second, we need to look at the new weapons systems or technologies that only the most powerful states can develop and that threaten to upset the strategic balance. Again, cyber is a key capability in this category – alongside space-based systems, genetic weapons, nuclear-powered cruise missiles, directed-energy weapons, and hypersonic glide vehicles.

We must also remain vigilant as technological development means that some of the second category could, over time, shift into the first. For example, the International Institute for Strategic Studies has assessed that in 2001 only three states possessed dedicated land-attack cruise missiles. Today, at least 23 countries and one non-state actor have access to these weapons, and that last point is important. Many non-state actors could, absent proper control, develop those capabilities.

A third category, we must be eternally vigilant for traditional nuclear weapons being developed by rogue states – dangerous in its own right, of course, but also potentially sparking a rush amongst regional neighbors to do the same. As the P-5 leaders agreed in January this year – and to use Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev’s resident phrase – “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.”

And a fourth category, we must acknowledge that existing nuclear states are investing in novel nuclear technologies and developing new warfighting nuclear systems, which they are integrating into their military strategies and doctrines, and into their political rhetoric to seek to coerce others. For example, we have clear concern about China’s nuclear modernization program that will increase both the number and the types of nuclear weapons systems in its arsenal.

Now, combined, this is a daunting prospect. Binding legal frameworks should remain our long-term goal, but there is no immediate prospect of all the major powers coming together to establish new agreements. So, as we agreed in the NATO Strategic Concept, our immediate focus should be getting on with the work of strategic risk reduction.
Today I propose four principles to guide our approach to integrated arms control.

The first principle is that we should have a pragmatic focus on establishing and regulating behaviors. That does not rule out the possibility of new formal agreements to regulate capabilities. We should keep pursuing them when they are useful and achievable and look for opportunities to update existing ones, as the U.K. did in supporting the extension of New START. But the breadth and complexity of the proliferation landscape means that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. We need to establish new norms for behavior in the context of hybrid and tech-enabled conflict, setting red lines for the gray zone as it emerges as a new arena for strategic competition. It is more likely that we will be able to find initial common ground and mutual benefit by raising our thinking above tit-for-tat exchanges on individual systems or technologies. And we can take encouragement from, for example, the work our two countries have led in the U.N. to introduce the framework to reduce space threats through norms, rules, and principles, and that has helped to galvanize a global discussion on what constitutes responsible space behavior. And here I commend the U.S. commitment earlier this year not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing. This behaviors-and-norms model is one that already has strong foundations for expansion. For example, the U.K. attorney general spoke earlier this year about the importance of bringing non-intervention principles to life in the context of cyber. She proposed an international congress on the kinds of cyber behaviors that could be unlawful in peacetime, such as using cyber to disrupt supply chains for essential medicines or vaccines.

The second principle is that we should widen the conversation. Strategic stability has historically been the business of major powers, but in the current context, strategic stability cannot be negotiated by this group alone. There remains a clear need for certain, specific conversation between limited partners, but we need to make a far stronger case that building and maintaining stability is in every nation’s interest and that there is a shared pool of responsibility. Future deliberations on arms control should, where appropriate, be global by design, extending not just to traditional allies and partners in Europe, but to a much wider group of countries, and we need to create a bigger tent, thinking beyond states to industry experts, to companies, to technologists who will play a critical role in understanding the risks and opportunities of dual-use and other new technologies and in setting the standards that govern them.

The third principle is that we should start with dialogue. We must create and preserve space and channels for dialogue to build trust and counter disinformation. In time this may lead towards our long-term aim of new or updated binding agreements, but there is a significant intrinsic value in dialogue itself. In the obligatory Churchill quotation, we want jaw-jaw, not
war-war. During the Cold War, we benefited from a series of negotiations and dialogues that improved our understanding of Soviet doctrine and capabilities, and vice versa. This gave both of us a higher level of confidence that we would not miscalculate our way into nuclear war. Today we do not have the same foundations with others who may threaten us in the future, and particularly with China. Here the U.K. strongly supports President Biden’s proposed talks with China as an important step. Trust and transparency built through dialogue should also mean that we can be more active in calling out noncompliance and misbehavior when we see it. At the Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference in August, we will stress the importance of Russia respecting its obligations under the NPT, in both deed and word.

And the final and fourth principle is that we should take early action to renew and strengthen confidence-building measures. The goal of confidence-building measures is to contribute to, reduce, or even eliminate the causes of mistrust, fear, tension, and hostility. They help one side interpret correctly the actions of the other in a pre-crisis situation through an exchange of reliable, uninterrupted, often private information on each other’s intentions. Confidence and trust grow when states are open about their military capabilities and plans. That is why governments can report every year their national military spending to the U.N., as well as their recent weapons transfers.

I’m afraid, is there any clearer example of the collapse of these mechanisms than the invasion of Ukraine? When I and others questioned the buildup of forces on the border, we were assured, it’s just an exercise. We didn’t believe it, and we were right not to do so. Nevertheless, we must try to get back to a point where reassurances like that are worth something. So we now need to reenergize the existing Euro-Atlantic architecture and extend the approach into new geographic regions. As we seek to strengthen confidence building measures, there is also a major opportunity to harness new technology and make better use of open-source materials to improve our capabilities and capacity to identify, share, and verify information.

For example, the U.K.’s recently published Defense AI Strategy sets a clear ambition for artificial intelligence to play a key role in counterproliferation and arms control, including for verification and enforcement. Again, confidence building is an area where I believe we should, as a global community, be able to make progress irrespective of wider political contexts. The indices of self-interest and mutual benefit are both clear to see. Let me be clear: this new agenda for arms control will be difficult to deliver. We will need to take incremental steps, but we can and must make progress.

History shows us that we can forge a path through uncertainty. After World War II, the world had no template for managing the atom bomb’s destructive
power. So we created new frameworks. It took years, but it was possible, and it was done. And it was possible despite the advent of the Cold War. Indeed, some of the most significant breakthroughs in arms control, including both nuclear arms control and the advent of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, came when tensions between the West and the USSR were at their peak.

Let me be clear: arms control frameworks, open to abuse and violation, as they always have been, are only one side of the coin. Effective deterrence mechanisms and capabilities tailored to the current and developmental threats are indispensable. So let us not neglect either side of the coin, deterrence or arms control, and start on the foundations from which we can build a strategic stability in these perilous times. Thank you.

Dr. Jones: Thank you very much, Sir Stephen, for your comments. They come at an opportune time. As you note, we have seen Vladimir Putin hint at the use – possible use of nuclear weapons to defend Russian sovereignty. We’ve seen the hints at proliferation with the Iranians. We’ve seen the North Koreans rattling. And, as you highlighted in your talk, we’ve seen the continuing development of nuclear capabilities from the Chinese. You talked about Schelling, Herman Kahn, Sam Huntington in your – in your talk, including issues related to strategic stability and arms control. But I wanted to hone in on the deterrence issue. How serious of a challenge right now is, and will be, deterrence on all of these issues? And how are you thinking about deterrence going forward?

Sir Lovegrove: So, I think the first point I would make on that is – first of all, I deplore the rhetoric that Russia has been occasionally using. Although, it has to be said, not backing up with activity – operational activity on the ground. I deplore the rhetoric that Russia has been using around nuclear use. And I commend very, very strongly the restraint with which your president, in particular, has responded to it.

The second thing I would say is that there has never been a remote suggestion of the West response to – and, indeed, the civilized world’s response to – the conflict in Ukraine being about the sovereignty of Russia. That is not in question. We have no remote desires which anybody should be concerned about with respect to the sovereignty of Russia. And indeed, actually, I do notice that Mr. Lavrov in the last week or so suddenly brought into question whether or not regime change should be occurring in Ukraine. So the boot is very much on the other foot there.

Clearly, that type of rhetoric is designed to intimidate. I think it is extremely reckless. The important response to it is to make sure that our communications are measured, predictable, and sensible so that nobody can find themselves into – find themselves moving into a miscalculation position.
But, as I said in the talk, alongside that restraint there needs to be effective deterrence. We need to ensure that we have capabilities which will, no matter what anybody says, deter them from making very reckless moves in that – in this regard.

So, I am a strong supporter of the recapitalization of the defense enterprises and defense systems in a number of different countries around the world at the moment. I applaud the commitments that have been made by Germany, by Japan, the kinds of statements which are being made at the moment in the U.K. in the context of the new prime minister coming in, and, of course, the continued immense contributions that the United States makes to world security.

Dr. Jones

So sticking with this – with the broader subject of nuclear weapons, particularly nonproliferation, the 10th Review Conference, or RevCon, of the parties to the Treaty on Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the NPT, will take place in August in New York. Can you talk about what are the U.K.’s main priorities and objectives, including in the context of the U.K.’s potential warhead stockpile increase, AUKUS, nuclear-powered submarines? What are the main priorities and objectives?

Sir Lovegrove:

Well, I’m going to disentangle – (laughs) – some of those points. I mean, our main objective is to have a conversation around nonproliferation in which potentially proliferating powers are actually, genuinely, and fully engaged in it. We don’t – we’re not sort of misty-eyed, naïve optimists. I mean, most RevCons do not come up with a document which everybody goes away and immediately puts into place. And it may well be that that is the case here. But we do need Russia and Iran and – we need everybody to start having proper conversations along the lines that I’ve just been trying to outline in my remarks earlier on.

The U.K.’s announcement in our integrated review that we were increasing very marginally the size of our stockpile, I think, needs to be taken in the context of a couple of things. One, we’re absolutely committed to the intention and the practice of Article 6 of the NPT. There’s no doubt about that. We have the smallest nuclear stockpile of any – of the avowed nuclear nations. We only have one delivery mechanism.

However, our policy has always been that we would have the minimal credible deterrence. And after a great deal of work which we’ve been doing over the last couple of years before the integrated review, we decided that the minimum credible deterrence required a very small increase in the stockpile numbers. It’s still way below kind of everybody else’s. And we stick to that.
AUKUS is not a proliferation issue, in my opinion. And that is the nature of the discussions that we’re having with the IAEA at the moment as well. Nonproliferation is obviously about weapon systems. AUKUS, I’m sure that everybody watching this or listening to this will know, is about the provision of a nuclear-powered submarine.

Now, I’m not saying that is an insignificant thing. It isn’t. I’ve described it in the past as being the most significant capability development in the last 60 years. And I believe that is dubbed a significant capability collaboration in the last 60 years, and I stick with that. But it is not about the proliferation of nuclear weapons. And indeed, the way in which we are discussing the arrangements we’ll put into place with the U.S. and Australia gives us the opportunity to set a new and higher bar for how we deal with nuclear materials in this particular context, which I welcome.

Dr. Jones: So you mentioned in your response to the question right now the Integrated Review. It’s a document we’ve read consistently, published in [2029] [correction: 2021]. Interesting, by the way, in the National Defense Strategy and all the U.S. national security documents – the Nuclear Posture Review – they will continue with this integrated deterrence role. So, we’re seeing the integrated term come up. We credit the British for putting it out first.

But since the publication of the Integrated Review there have, obviously, been a number of developments around the globe, including the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

So how have these developments impacted the priorities, even the implementation, of the Integrated Review, if at all?

Sir Lovegrove: I had a look at the Integrated Review again a couple weeks ago, actually – (laughs) – just to check that we were in – you know, whether or not we needed to make some adjustment. We did a slightly more formal review a couple months ago, actually.

I mean, what the Integrated Review said was that we are going to pursue British advantage through science and technology. It was going – we were going to play the fullest possible part in the reconfiguration of the international order which is going on at the moment.

We were going to strengthen resilience both at home and abroad, and that was a very broad definition of resilience and slightly prompted, obviously, by the COVID epidemic, and we were going to improve and invest in defense and security at both home and abroad.

And the things that were driving those policy prescriptions were, really, two things. One was the reemergence, and much more complicated reemergence,
of state powers – great state competition – and the impact of science and technology across the board, and I cannot see anything about those basic – that basic sort of kind of skeleton that is wrong.

What has changed is that we have seen the reemergence of state-created war on a very significant scale in a timetable and at a level of intensity which we did not anticipate. So, we are adjusting a bunch of things as a result of it, but the basic prescription, I think, is correct.

There are some things, I think, that have been set in train by the war in Ukraine, which we will need to deal with in slightly slower time and definitely do have consequences. So the revitalization of the – you know, of political Western alliances is definitely part of that. NATO is, clearly, the primary example. The accession of Finland and Sweden is very important. The acceleration of energy transition, I think, is another thing which is important that we need to think about.

The role – critical role – of nonaligned states, I think, we need to spend more time on. I think it has been very impressive in the way in which the world has come together but it is not – you know, there’s more than one narrative out there and it’s important that we pay attention to that rather than assume that, you know, just because we’re saying something everybody will agree to it. That isn’t the case.

And I think the other thing that, I think, which is a long-term – this is a long-term trend that you could see anyway, but it’s quite difficult not to see Russia and China getting more closely involved with each other and, by and large, that will be a – Russia, I think, uncomfortably falling into a Chinese orbit. Russia, at the moment, will find it difficult to find investment from anywhere probably but China, although I notice that China is not investing in Russia either. (Laughs.) It will find it difficult to find access for its goods and services and its energy except through, possibly, Chinese. There is going to be a – for Russians it is going to, I think, be uncomfortable to find themselves in that kind of relationship with China for the future.

And, I mean, the last point, I think we need to be mindful that there is a potential sort of bifurcation seeming to emerge. Not – I mean, people have talked about the splinternet a lot, and sort of the IT information sort of kind of environment being bifurcated. But I think you can – you can begin to see some aspects of that in the financial system developing. You can also see potentially sort of different – I mean, not one single global energy market emerging as well. And these are significant things that in a slightly slower time I think we’re all going to need to address and try and deal with.

Dr. Jones:

I want to pick up on your comment about Russia-China relations. We’ve seen some talk about an axis. I think, as you note, there are going to be some
challenges moving forward. We’ve seen recently the Iranians talk about providing unmanned aerial vehicles to the Russians. I want to go back to the early post-World War II period. The situation today is a little bit different, but we had Sir Winston Churchill in the U.S. in March of 1946, who gave his iron curtain speech, arguing that “From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent.”

The situation today is a bit different around the globe, but some have argued that we are starting to see a new iron curtain, perhaps both physically and digital in that sense, from the Finnish-Russian border – potential new NATO member – through the Baltics, down through Ukraine, into the Middle East, where we see strong – relatively strong Russian-Iranian relations in Syria, in Lebanon, in Iran itself, and then into the Indo-Pacific. So, my question to you is, how do you see competition along those lines? Do you see the emergence of a new iron curtain? And how would you describe competition globally?

Sir Lovegrove: When I mention bifurcation, that’s exactly the concept I was after, and I do think that that is a potentially troubling development. I would not welcome implacably opposed blocs emerging in the globe. I don’t suppose sort of any of us would. And it is incumbent on us, I think, to make sure that we deal with this particular question, you know, sort of properly, and analyze it properly, and try and get ahead of it. I would say a couple of things, though. 1946, the information environment was inherently much more capable of being locked down. Now it is not the case that, you know, for instance, the Great Wall of China and all – the digital Great Wall of China – it is possible to lock down information, right? But it’s not as easy as it was then. And I think that modern communication technology will continue to provide, over a period of time, access to different ideas, different notions, different values, which I think we need to think through because there will be – that – it’s not going to be an iron curtain. Or if it’s any kind of curtain, it’s going to be quite porous in terms of information technology, I think.

However, we need to be quite careful that the digital standards that are being created on one side of that curtain, however porous it might be, are not the ones, merely by virtue of the fact that they are cheap, are being exported to some of the nonaligned countries, which quite rightly want to advance their digital economies. And I think there is a big job of work to do to make sure that countries such as the U.K., the U.S., but also, you know, others in Europe and further afield are in a position to be able to offer a more benign information environment than otherwise the one that may sort of ultimately be imposed upon them.

The other thing I would just say about whether or not the blocs are capable of emerging like that is that the international trade is vastly more interconnected now than it was in 1946. I mean, by and large it was – it was
possible for a long time for the USSR to operate a sort of broadly closed economic system, and China was clearly not the – playing the role in the international system that it plays today. So it’s very difficult to see how it would be in the economic interests of China and Russia to sort of kind of close themselves off from the rest of the world. I mean, it would – in China’s case, it would – it would sort of close themselves off from the sort of engine of growth which has brought their country to where it is today. So, I think that’s going to be very – it will be much more problematic than that if it were to develop, and I don’t think it will be complete.

But I do think there are dangers in this area, as I say. I mean – and standard setting in a whole host of different ways, on the – as I say, on the digital and the financial services areas, I think those are things to watch.

Dr. Jones

So, I want to end the way you started your talk, and that is to go back to the Russians, the way you expressed a strong statement about Russian activity. And I want to – I want to see if you can outline for us and for everybody listening what the U.K.’s main objectives in Ukraine are and, more broadly, from your perspective what are the global implications of the Russian war in Ukraine of concern to the U.K.

Sir Lovegrove:

Our objectives with respect to the war in Ukraine are by and large those of the Ukrainian government. The prime minister has been very clear that he doesn’t want to be more Ukrainian than – (laughs) – than the Ukrainians. And President Zelensky has been very clear what he would like to see happen, which is the ejection of Russian troops from his country. And he has not wavered in that, and he has been magnificent in his – in his belief and commitment and ability to inspire and rouse his country.

It is for him to decide what boundaries he’s talking about there. It is for him to decide whether or not there are phased approaches to that. But we will continue as the U.K. to stay the course and continue to give him both material and moral support. And we will work with friends in Europe and around the world and America to encourage everybody else to do the – to do the same.

I mentioned some of the broader consequences of it. It’s a very, very, very sharply defined example of what can go wrong when the norms of sovereignty and territorial integrity and, by and large, an approach to international affairs which prioritizes dialogue, understanding, and access goes wrong. As I say, I’ve mentioned Russia/China. I’ve mentioned the other things. But I do think that this is a very sharp fracture where the integrated review was identifying cracks, and we need to sort of kind of address it in that context.
Dr. Jones:  Well, thank you very much. Thanks for your interest in pushing for strategic stability. Thanks for the push on deterrence and nonproliferation.

Thanks for visiting with us at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. We have ranged our conversation from Herman Kahn to Huntington to Tom Schelling, so I have marveled at your willingness to span both the academic down to the very practical policy-oriented. So, thanks for coming to CSIS. We very much appreciate it.

Sir Lovegrove:  Thank you very much indeed.