

Senior Officials Response during Senate Armed Services Hearings to a China Commission

Question: What is the greatest benefit a China Commission could deliver?

General Townsend – AFRICOM Commander

A unified, whole-of-government approach with an achievable objective. This could include regional and functional strategies that identify priorities and suggest supported/supporting relationships within the U.S. interagency.

General VanHerck – NORTHCOM/NORAD Commander

President Eisenhower created Project Solarium because his cabinet was badly divided on the correct course of action to deal with the Soviet Union, and internal political posturing threatened to undermine policy planning and national security. Our situation today is not dissimilar, though we face more than one peer competitor. The greatest benefit the Commission could deliver is a clear-eyed assessment of the current state of the world and our shifting position in it, and an honest no-holds-barred recommendation for how to best position the United States in what may be a multi-polar global economic and political system the future. This Commission can—must—think past administration and election cycles to make non-partisan, long-term plans and strategies that will endure past cultural shifts and administration changes.

General Berger – Commandant of the Marine Corps

An unbiased, non-partisan commission could help synchronize US Government efforts across all instruments of national power to focus on the current and future threat posed by the China. This commission could recommend policies that would support the US and allied Defense Industrial Base, aligning efforts across the US Government to accelerate or moderate efforts to shore up US competitive capabilities while avoiding triggering inadvertent escalation which could result in military actions.

Lt. General Langley – AFRICOM Commander Nominee

If such a commission was formed, it could potentially develop a grand strategy for approaching the growing challenges posed by the China and provide a conduit for other stakeholders in the international community to “plug in” to U.S. strategy.

Lt. General Fenton – SOCOM Commander Nominee

I take direction from the current NDS and Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, which consider the challenge of China and emphasize the importance of an integrated whole-of-government approach. I believe timely decision-making and synchronization of effects across government, across domains (land, sea, air, information, space, cyber), across the elements of national power, and across our network of partners and allies would be a worthy focus for any U.S. strategic review vis-a-vis China.