US National Security Issues

Key Players & Their Playbook

Ty Cobb, Keith Hansen, & Rae Huffstutler

NSF Presentation

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Introduction

• Key Players and their biases \((Ty)\)

• Traditional decision making process & key challenges addressed in national security strategy documents \((Keith)\)

• Administration’s *paradigm shift* on process & issues \((Rae)\)

• Your questions!
The Trump White House
National Security Team

Key members of President Trump’s staff and cabinet dealing with national security affairs

Dr. Tyrus Cobb
## Structure of the National Security Council

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<th>Structure of the United States National Security Council</th>
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<td><strong>Chairman</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Statutory Attendees</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Military Advisor (and regular attendee)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Intelligence Advisor (and regular attendee)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Drug Policy Advisor</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Regular Attendees</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Additional Participants</strong></td>
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The National Security Council

President Trump, Secretary of Defense Mattis, VP Mike Pence
Secretary of State Mike Pompeo
Secretary of Energy Rick Perry
Director of Nat’l Intelligence Dan Coats
Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford
White House Chief of Staff John Kelly
National Security Advisor John Bolton
Trump’s Key Economic Advisors

Secretary of the Treasury Steve Mnuchin, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, Trade Advisor Robert Lighthizer and Economic Advisor Peter Navarro
Secretary of Homeland Security and Ambassador to the UN

Kirstjen M. Nielsen

Nikki Haley
Key Perspectives of the Trump National Security Team

• Neo-Isolationism

• America First Trade Policy (Fair Trade, Not Free trade)

• Regime Change in Iran; Scuttle Iran Nuke Agreement; Impose Sanctions on Iran

• Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula (Before a Trump-Kim Meeting?)

• Must Confront Russian Aggression in Syria, Ukraine

• Question Value of Existing Treaty Arrangements, including NATO
Policy Making Process

Keith Hansen
Traditional Policy Making Process

- Establish national strategy/policy guidelines
- Policy department inputs
- National Security Council deliberations
- Presidential decision
Current Sources

• National Security Strategy *(WH - Dec 2017)*

• National Defense Strategy *(DoD - Jan 2018)*

• Nuclear Posture Review *(DoD - Feb 2018)*

• Joint Strategic Plan *(State/AID - Feb 2018)*

• Worldwide Threat Assessment *(DNI - Feb 2018)*

• Official statements
Key Challenges Addressed

• Russia
  – Its military buildup and support for Iran & Syria
  – Pursue US force modernization & investment required due to technological advances
  – Maintain US nuclear arsenal -- essential for deterrence

• China
  – Its military buildup & technological advances
  – Blunt its economic aggression & unfair trade practices
  – Dilute its support for North Korea & Iran

• Rally the world against rogue states
  – Requires lethal, resilient & flexible force to meet diverse threats
  – Must constrain North Korea & Iran

• Crush radical Islamic terrorist organizations
  – Strengthen friends in Middle East & blunt Iranian influence
Key Challenges (Continued)

• **Protect US security at home & abroad**
  – Defeat terrorists & counter instabilities
  – Strengthen borders

• **Strengthen economy**
  – Renew US comparative advantage

• **Maintain critical alliances**
  – Strengthen friends, but seek fair contribution for common defense

• **Enhance US international leadership**
  – Make aid recipients secure partners
  – Use international organizations to our advantage
Changes in the policy making paradigm

Rae Huffstutler
Is the National Security Strategy Relevant?

• Shift in national security process paradigm

• Policies carried by momentum

• Policies in play (i.e. uncertain)
Policies Carried by Momentum

- The War on terror
- Relations with Pakistan
- Russia
Policies in Play (i.e. uncertain)

• The Iran Nuclear Agreement

• Syria

• North Korea

• China
Your thoughts & questions?
Backup slides ...
Russia

- Cyber threats
- Putin’s anti-US nationalistic policies
- Influence in Europe (e.g. Ukraine & natural resources)
- Syrian civil war, future of Assad regime & chemical weapons
- Supports Iran nuclear deal & North Korea
China

- Economic & trade relations *(piracy & tariffs)*
- Potential military confrontation in Western Pacific region
- Anti-US axis with Russia
- Supports Iran nuclear deal & North Korea
- Key to containing North Korean threat
Iran

- Declared enemy of US & Israel
- Desires regional power/influence & ability to deter US
- Receives support from Russia & China
- Seeks nuclear weapons (*status & deterrence*)
- State sponsor of terrorism (*Hezbollah & Hamas*)
Future of Nuclear Accord?

• Trump has hesitated to pull the plug

• He recertified Iranian compliance, but with conditions...
  – Laid down conditions & deadline (*May 12*)
  – Make restrictions on Iran permanent!

• Potential reaction of others if US tries to change or kill accord?
  – Russia, China & EU
North Korea

- Nuclear weapon arsenal exists
- Source of nuclear proliferation
- Developing intercontinental-range missiles vs. US
- Trying to undermine US-ROK alliance
North Korean Goals

- Maintain regime’s control
- Deter the US militarily & eliminate US influence on peninsula
- Achieve international legitimacy
- Unify the peninsula
- Does regime want war?
What can the US do?

• Denuclearize North Korea?

• Install stronger ballistic missile defenses in South Korea & Japan?

• Use covert action to interrupt & influence?

• Make international sanctions effective?

• Get the Chinese to turn the screws on North Korea?

• Contain the nuclear missile threat?
Risks of not containing North Korea

• US credibility as a reliable partner in East Asia will suffer

• Possibility of “minor” acts of aggression & miscalculation

• South Korea & Japan may go for nuclear-weapon option
Potential Outcome of Trump – Kim Meeting

• Legitimize NK regime?
  – A breakthrough in relations similar to Nixon & China?

• Freeze North Korea’s nuclear & missile programs?
  – Is effective verification likely?

• Strengthen or weaken US-ROK relations?

• Impact on US military presence & influence in region?
Syria

• Russian & Iranian influence

• Is ISIS defeated militarily?

• Use of chemical weapons & Assad’s future?

• Spark new Middle East war?
Key National Security Players

• *National Security Advisor – John Bolton
• *Secretary of State – Mike Pompeo, fmr US Congessman
• Secretary of Defense – James Mattis, ret Gen USMC
• Secretary of Homeland Security – Kirstjen Nielsen, fmr Dep WH Chief of Staff
• Secretary of Energy – Rick Perry, fmr Governor (TX)
• Attorney General – Jeff Sessions, fmr US Senator
• Director of National Intelligence – Dan Coats, fmr US Senator
• *Director of CIA – Gina Haspel, career CIA & Deputy Director (?)
• Director of FBI – Christopher Wray, fmr Justice Dept
• C/JCS – Joseph Dunford, Jr., Gen USMC
• US Amb to UN – Nikki Haley, fmr Governor (SC)
• WH Chief of Staff -- John Kelly, ret Gen USMC
National Defense Strategy

• Losing edge over competitors; need more & sustained investment
  – Force modernization is essential given rapid technological advances
  – No discussion of force numbers & dollars (only in classified version)

• Five key threats: Russia, China, North Korea, Iran & terrorism
  – Requires lethal, resilient, & flexible force to meet diverse threats

• Alliances are essential to US military power & security
  – But, Allies must pay fair share

• Must be prepared to compete, deter and, if necessary, defeat aggression and win!
Nuclear Posture Review

• Nuclear weapons are essential for effective deterrence
  – Use only if deterrence fails; favor ultimate elimination
• Must maintain & modernize arsenal (i.e. keep effective & reliable)
  – Tailor capabilities to meet diverse threats (nuclear, cyber, space, etc.)
  – Ensure secure nuclear infrastructure/effective command & control
• Non-proliferation treaties are important (NPT, CTBT, & others)
  – Prevent further nuclear proliferation
  – No nuclear testing unless needed, but no ratification of a permanent test-ban
• Continue nuclear arsenal reductions under New START accord
  – However, no new treaties likely for now
• Must constrain North Korean & Iranian nuclear-weapon programs
State/AID Strategic Plan

- Protect US security at home & abroad
  - Defeat terrorists, counter instability, strengthen partners & borders

- Renew US comparative advantage
  - Open up markets, promote partners & opportunities, ensure energy security

- Enhance US leadership through balanced engagement
  - Make aid recipients secure partners; promote US values & goals
  - Use international organizations to our advantage

- Ensure effectiveness & accountability
  - Strengthen diplomatic & development investments
  - Enhance workforce performance, efficiency & effectiveness