This program was sponsored by the U.S. Naval Institute.

The following is a production of the Pritzker Military Museum & Library

Bringing Citizens and Citizen Soldiers together through the exploration of military history, topics, and current affairs.

this is Pritzker Military Presents.

welcome to Pritzker Military Presents with retired 4 star admiral James Stavridis.

I'm your host Ken Clarke and this program is coming to you from the Pritzker Military Museum & Library in downtown Chicago and is sponsored by the United States Naval Institute.

This program and more than 400 others covering a full range of military topics is available on demand at PritzkerMilitary.org.

A 1976 distinguished graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Admiral James Stavridis spent more than 35 years on active service in the Navy.

He has commanded destroyers, and a carrier strike group in combat and served for 7 years as a 4 star admiral including as the first naval officer chosen to the supreme allied commander for global operations at Nato.

Since retiring from the Navy in 2013, he has served as Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University where he earned a PHD in 1984 and as the U.S. Naval Institutes chair of the board of directors.

Known as an innovator, and as an early adopter of technology, stravidis' ability to think outside the box and sail in uncharted waters is unmatched.
He has written articles on global security issues for the New York Times, The Washington Post, and the Atlantic and is the author and Co-author of several books including Command at Sea, and Destroyer Captain.

He is also a veracious reader of fiction and history.

He joins us today to discuss his latest work.

The Accidental Admiral, a sailor takes command at NATO.

A memoir of leadership and life lessons, the book offers a wealth of insights in the challenges of directing NATO operations in Afghanistan and Libya preparing for possible war in Syria countering Cyber threats and confronting piracy.

Please join me in welcoming back to the Pritzker Military Museum & Library.

Admiral James Stavridis.

Hi Ken.

thank you.

thank you.

What a pleasure to be with you.

Ken thank you for that very kind and slightly over the top introduction.

I often find that when people hear that introduction, Supreme Allied Commander in NATO, they think well... you know Stavridis if you're really that good, why were you not a naval aviator

(laughs) and you know the answer is I drove ships and the answer is I had a very traumatic experience when I was a young boy.

that uh *laughs* made aviation very difficult for me.
I'm here today to kinda talk a little bit about a book I've written about NATO.

But it's a book about the world today and the challenges that the world faces.

And what I'd like to do with our time tonight is to show a few images of some of these challenges and then talk to you about how we can collectively address those challenges.

Partially through the cooperation of NATO, but really a broader sense.

So let me begin by actually taking you back.

We're going to go back 100 years ago.

This is 1914-1915 and you see here the class of 1914 at the French Military Academy. And look at their faces.

They're vibrant, they're young, they're ready to step in to combat.

They swear they will go in to battle wearing their white gloves. And they do.

1914. By 1918 almost everybody in this photograph is dead.

The war decimates this class.

30 million people died in the first world war.

And you would think as a global population, we would learn something from World War I.

Do we?

Nope, this is World War II.

The Battle of Stalingrad.

I saw that you recently had Anthony Beevor here to speak.

He wrote, probably the best book about Stalingrad.

This is a battle in which it's hard to measure
the numbers, but probably 1.2 million people died.

in this battle over a 10 to 12 month period.

It is a grotesque failure of the effort to create security

in the 20th century

so the question is why does security fail in the 20th century.

I would argue it is because by in large we try to create security by building walls.

We have the Maginot Line, the Schlieffen Plan, the Iron Curtain, the Bamboo Curtain.

Most iconically is the Berlin Wall.

My view, 20th century security and walls do not work.

Walls do not work.

Now let me tell you where this really occurred to me, it was on 9/11.

And in this image you see the Pentagon on that dreadful day; beautiful, beautiful September day.

The little red circle that you see there was my office, I had a front row seat for the attack on the Pentagon.

And aa I picked myself up, amidst the fire and the smoke and the death in front of me, I realized that this is an extraordinarily ironic moment.

Because as I stood there, the most dangerous moment in my entire career, the point at which I came the closest to death, at that moment I was in the safest place in the world by
definition.

I was in the Pentagon, I was guarded by these five massive concrete walls, protected by the strongest military on Earth, in the capital of the richest country on the planet.

Was I safe?

Evidently not.

All of those walls did not protect me.

In my thesis, which I try to expound in the book, The Accidental Admiral, is that walls will not protect us in this 21st century.

So let me do a quick survey of some of the challenges we face some of which you will recognize immediately and others you'll pause and say "boy I hadn't thought that some much".

This is a challenge on this image which you will recognize immediately.

It is violent extremism.

This is Afghanistan.

It is the result of a Taliban justice court.

That's quite a oxymoron.

This is a terrible video I've chosen three still images in which a man shoots a woman in the back of the head with an AK-47, killing her.

The voice over says the court has rendered its judgment, she is guilty of adultery, you must execute her because you are her husband.

This is violent extremism.

Radical Islam.

Something we have come to understand as a significant challenge.

Another manifestation of it moving away from
Central Asia is in Africa.

This is the Garissa University where a group of Islamic radicals chose to execute 150 Christian students in Kenya.

These are images that populate the Net and we see them over and over again each night.

But let me bring you closer to home in terms of violent extremism.

This is Europe.

A small peaceful country, this is Oslo, Norway, this handsome young man you see his image there blows up the government house he kills seven.

And then far worse, takes high powered weapons, goes to a small island in Oslo where a political convention for young people is in progress and he kills 77 young people between the ages of 18-24.

What we would think of in the United States is boy's state or girl's state.

That's a terrible day for any nation to lose that many people but think this about this on a population adjusted basis.

This would be a day in the United States when 4,000 young people were killed by violent extremism.

You see him also in this image, he's apologizing in court.

He's apologizing to the forces of right-wing-nationalism for not have killed more more people on that day.

Now this is violent extremism which has nothing to do with Islam.

All of this perpetrates itself around the world today.
More recently in Europe we saw killings in Paris.

The Charlie Hebdo attacks on free speech.

The attack on a cafe after a cartoonist we see echoes of that yesterday in Texas, on the United States.

So this kind of violent extremism, both from within radical Islam and from theories, populates the world today.

The most dangerous element is this, it is the Islamic state.

They are dangerous for two reasons which you see in this set of images.

First is the money.

ISIS is entrepreneurial.

They are extraordinary at finding ways to finance terrorism that range from human slavery, to selling artifacts, to selling oil, to good old fashion extortion.

This is a very dangerous group because they raise money rapidly.

Secondly, as you see here, their experts at branding.

They are able to move that image of that black flag around the world.

So when you couple funding, and advertising and marketing with the kind of horrific acts that they perpetrate, like beheading this brave American journalist James Foley on television, this is a very dangerous group.

More recently, they killed this young woman, Kayla Mueller.

I'm now the dean of Graduate School of International Relations I have seven hundred students like
Kayla Mueller who are idealistic.

She went to Syria to try and help the refugee population there.

She died in ISIS captivity.

This is a very dangerous group and worst, in my view, they have a plan.

Now look at that map of Europe, I don't think Spain is going to be called Andalus anytime soon but they have a theory of geopolitics.

So I combine their brutality, their ability to raise funds, their branding and advertising, and a detailed plan, I think that's very concerning.

Now it's not just these trans-national group we need to worry about, we have to worry about nations that live outside of the norms of international law.

One of which is Iran, which is under significant sanctions today because they are pursuing weapons of mass destruction.

Now I'm hopeful that we can arrive at a diplomatic solution to this challenge and I applaud the administration to pursue it but I tell you frankly I'm skeptical that we're going to be able to create this kind of outcome.

We will know more over time in terms of the nuclear weapons program but we should remember Iran is more than just a nuclear weapon.

Historically, it is an imperial power.

These are the flags of great empires of the Persians who of course are today's Iranians.

We think of Iran today as a middle-sized power in a region of great turbulence.

They think of themselves as the heritors of a true imperial empire, the stretch of which
you see in graphic above.

Having said all that, I don't think Iran is the most dangerous nation in the world, It's North Korea.

North Korea already has nuclear weapons.

It has a young, untested, untried, medically challenged leader with a really bad haircut.

And guess what, they can already deliver weapons at great distance to the west coast of the United States.

Here's the really bad news, I don't think Dennis Rodman is going to solve this problem for us.

So we need to worry about nation's like Iran and North Korea who operate outside these norms of international law.

We need to worry about Syria.

The battle for Syria goes on and on.

How it comes out we don't know yet but it's more than just a humanitarian disaster.

They had 225,000 people killed, 7 million pushed across borders but its also a regional challenge.

Look at these flags in this graphic.

These are nations that are in dispute in the center of their world in the Eastern Mediterranean is a rich trove of hydrocarbons, natural gas, oil, border disputes.

You see here all sets of flags of really big nations, India, Russia, the United States, China; these are nations who operate warships in this region.

And I've put inside those major power flags the number of warships operating the day I
selected randomly last fall.

In that Mediterranean of course today are enormous refugee flows from Libya, principally, but also from Syria, some from Lebanon, coming into Europe.

In that slipstream of 200,000 refugees who can to Europe last year, probably 400,000 will come this year.

These are enormous numbers.

In these slipstreams of migrants will be terrorists from the Islamic State, from Al-Qaeda.

So this region, this turbulence will affect Europe where our NATO alliance is centered.

Now speaking of NATO, we all ought to worry a fair amount these days about Ukraine which has been invaded by Russia and had its territory in Crimea annexed.

This is a map that you see it's quite sterile looking.

Here's what it looks like on the ground, it's a war.

There is a ceasefire there but holding particularly well.

And frankly the strategic terrain is not this map, the strategic terrain is right there.

It's the mind of Vladimir Putin where we have not yet gained traction to turn this around.

The way Russia is approaching this conflict is in many ways a new mix of tools which some have called hybrid warfare.

And it's unmarked troops, it's cyber, it's social networks, it's propaganda, its insurgent techniques.

In addition to the other nations we've met we need to worry about Russia in today's world.
We got to worry about the flow of this.

What crop is this?

It's not corn, thank you, this is poppies which create opium and heroine moving across the Caucuses and into Europe.

Of course here in the Americas we face this challenge with cocaine.

This is photograph of a high tech U.S Navy vessel, it's capturing a drug runner.

The bad news is the high tech U.S Navy vessel is the one on top, the one on the bottom is the drug cartel submarine.

Built in Columbia, twin diesel power, when we caught it; and truth in advertising there's a Navy destroyer right outside the picture frame; when we caught this thing it was carrying ten tons of cocaine.

Now I worry about the drugs but what I really worry about is the cash.

Ten tons of cocaine has a street value of 150 million dollars.

This drug submarine cost about a million dollars to build.

That's profit, that's margin, and it goes to destabilizing fragile democracies, creating corrupt, and funding violent extremism.

We got to worry a little bit about Asia these days it's not peaceful.

Now I'm here to talk about my book but this is a terrific book that I highly recommend, by Robert Kaplan, about Asia and the tensions in Asia.

It's wonderful one-stop shopping to understand that.
It's about China, it's about Japan, and the increasingly strong posture of the Japanese military.

This is Shinzō Abe, he's the prime minister of Japan.

He's visiting, quite controversially, a war shrine to the Japanese dead.

This has enormous echoes in China, in Korea.

This potential collision between China and Japan is of concern in this region.

If all that weren't enough, the man-made challenge is we got to worry about this: This is ebola,

this is what the ebola virus looks like.

And you see here a photograph of patient 0, the first person who died of Ebola here in

the United States and some of the brave nurses that cared for him and other Ebola patients.

Ebola, we are lucky, because it can't be transmitted across an air gap.

I can't cough and give you Ebola it has to be passed by fluid transfer.

If we twisted the DNA slightly of Ebola we would have worldwide pandemic.

We'd be looking at this which is the zombie words which is another way of thinking about pandemics.

I will tell you that a pandemic is coming in this century.

Will it be as bad as the Spanish Influenza of 1918, which infected 20% of the world's population with lethality rate of 50%?

On today's population that would be hundred's of millions dead.

That's a distinct possibility.

Are we ready for it?
Think back on Ebola.

Probably not.

So we need to worry about that as well.

Now you may say "boy that's quite a list of challenges admiral, which one do you worry about the most?", and the answer is none of those.

The one I worry about the most is cyber.

Why?

Because we are all completely imbedded in the cyber world.

Our finances, the heat in our house, our electricity, our transportation grids, every aspect of our lives are wound in this cyber world.

These are flags of Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, and Georgia.

What do they have in common?

They've all been attacked in the cyber world.

Georgia will go down in military history as the first nation to be attacked simultaneously in the cyber world and kinetically with bombs and rockets and tanks.

We will see more of this in the time to come, but of course it's not just security, it's your wallet.

60 million Americans credit cards were hacked as the Home Depot and Target hacks.

The cyber crime comes out of this group of nations, not nationally sponsored, but sponsored by private citizens in these countries and sometimes we just don't know what's happening.

J.P. Morgan Chase, one of the largest institutions in the world, revealed about a year ago that
they had 87 million accounts comprised.

Data not destroyed, balances not altered but 87 million accounts surveilled.

Was it hackivism?

Was it Russian attempt to put a shot across our bow?

Was it a preparatory move for cyber crime?

We just don't know.

Now here’s one we do know about, this is the Sony hack where the young leader, Kim Jong-Un, in North Korea was offended by this movie, The Interview.

It's really a terrible movie too by the way I don’t know if anybody’s watched it.

I tried to watch it as a matter of professional diligence and I got through about 12 minutes of it.

But this attack came out of North Korea, it intruded upon every aspect of Sony’s cyber world and it destroyed 300 million dollars of Sony hardware.

300 million dollars.

That's what a cruise liner ship costs.

That's what a big ocean going tanker costs.

If the North Koreans sunk a tanker valued at 300 million dollars, would we call that a hack?

I don't think so.

That's an attack.

This conversation about what constitutes an attack show us that even a small, poor nation like North Korea can reach out and strike us in the cyber world.
What I really worry about is our grid, our electrical grid.

It's highly at risk.

So I know I've given you quite a bit to worry about tonight but what I worry about the most is and where I'm doing a great deal of personal resource, personal research, personal engagement is on the grid and how to protect it.

I'll close on cyber by saying it's also very personal.

Jennifer Lawrence; beautiful young actor, Academy Award winner; takes some intimate photographs of herself, posts them, she thinks quite securely on the ICloud, accessed only by her significant other.

Unfortunately, it was hacked and these intimate photographs, I mean extremely intimate photographs, go viral all around the world.

This is an unbelievable violation of her privacy but also her personal life.

So my point is that cyber runs the gambit from the most fundamental questions of our national security to our finances, to personal wallets, to our very lives.

Think about all the information you carry on her IPhone or your Galaxy or Blackberry today at risk.

This is very challenging and I think over time will be the greatest threat we face.

We also have economic challenges.

Our friends in Europe continue to push the Euro up the hill like Sisyphus.

I'm Greek-American so I'm allowed to use Greek mythological analogies.

I feel that the Euro is about to roll back
down on our friends.

Here in the United States, political gridlock, what does it lead to?

Isolationism.

A sense that the world is just too difficult.

We ought to withdraw behind these wonderful oceans.

Big mistake.

We've tried that a couple of times.

Well right about now you ought to say "okay Admiral that's quite a list of challenges


what do you think?

What should we do?

How can we approach this as a nation?

What are the best strategies for us?

Are there opportunities?"

I think there are.

I'll start with this, we all ought to listen a little bit more.

Frankly, I know this in my own life, I think it is true of our nation I think it is true of many nations, we don't stop and listen.

We don't do what the Pritzker Military Museum and Library allows us to do which is to think, to read, to build intellectual capital, to listen and understand the position of others before we leap into action.

So top of my list is spending more time in institutions like Pritzker or at the U.S Naval Institute.
Or in places like this, the U.S Navy's War College which located in Newport, Rhode Island and is a center of learning and study and the building of intellectual capital.

And what's the other image in side this photograph?

It's a bridge.

We tried in the 20th century to create by building bridges and it failed us.

60 million people died in two epic world wars. In this 21st century, our best chance is, along with listening, is to try to build bridges.

So let me talk about how we can do that.

I would argue reading is the most profound and important bridges we can build.

And we should not only history and biography, an auto-biography, and memoir, we should read some fiction.

Here's some books I've read over the last few years.

One Soldier's War, by Arkady Babchenko, is a memoir of a Russian conscript fighting in the wars in Chechnya.

Elmore Leonard, everyone loves Elmore Leonard from just a few hundred miles away in Detroit he past away, one of our great writers, wrote a book called Djibouti about the pirates off the coast of Somalia.

Absurdistan, by Gary Shteyngart, is about the post Soviet world in a thinly disguised Azerbaijan.

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, a classic of Russian literature by Solzhenitsyn.

If you think we're going to crack the Russian with sanctions you might want to go back and
read that book to understand them.

The other two are non-fiction treatments of Europe that informed greatly my experiences as the Supreme Allied Commander.

More recently the books about conflict that I've read, I had a chance just outside the door here to see a signed poster from Karl Marlantes who wrote this incredible book, Matterhorn about the failures of the United States in Vietnam.

Steven Pressfield, who writes historical fiction, his book about the Afghan Campaign is not about the current NATO campaign, not about the Russian campaign, not about the British campaign, it's about the first Afghan campaign, Alexander the Great.

And two extraordinary memoirs by young officers coming out of Afghanistan and Iraq.

A book that's a touchstone for me because you know you're not going to get out of this room alive without being exposed to a Navy book.

This is a book about the Royal Navy, the British Navy, it's the part of a long series of 20 novels by Patrick O'Brien which are about leadership in the Napoleonic Wars.

These are good books, there are many great books to read, I would simply suggest reading more, building intellectual capital, and finding books that help inform and are books that in effect are listening to others.

Here are some more.

Where's the United States in all this?

I would agree that our nation remains an opportunity. I am not a declinist about the United States.
I'm not a triumphist, I don't think the United States is going to run the world, nor do I think we should, nor should we be the world's police men.

But our nation enjoys many advantages.

There's an image here of the President of the United States at a G20.

When the President of the United States speaks others turn and listen, that's political capital.

Our economy has challenges, deficits, and debts but in the end our innovation, our ability to create the new continues to drive global markets.

Our military is unmatched, our demographics are good, we're a young nation, our immigration is a source of energy for us, and in the center of set of images what do you see?

It's a fracking tower.

Energy independence is probably on the horizon for us.

I think the United States remains an opportunity in this world.

The really interesting question is who should be our partners?

I would argue NATO of course I'll say that, Former Allied Commander of NATO.

And we have great partners in Asia, I've spoken about a few, Japan Korea, Australia, the Philippines, we have Singapore, we have great partners in Asia.

There's enormous partner in Asia out there, it's India, the world's largest democracy.

India had an election.

Elected a new Prime Minister Modi and at that election they had 600 million people vote.
That's twice our population, let alone the number of people who vote in the United States.

600 million people voted and Modi is taking India in a very, very dynamic direction.

I would argue that the linages between the world's oldest democracy, the United States, and the world's largest democracy, India, are profound and a potential source of real strength and opportunity for us.

Of course I think NATO remains a strong opportunity.

28 nations, 50% of the world's GDP.

We also have coalitions, I know you had General John Allen hear to speak recently.

General Allen, now retired, heads up the effort to build this coalition against the Islamic State.

So it's not just NATO its also coalitions like this one against the Islamic State.

And it's also coalitions that are capable of taking on individual challenges like piracy.

This is a pirate takedown.

Many of you will have seen the movie Captain Phillips, terrific film.

That was the U.S Navy responding.

This is a coalition responding.

Here you see French, Spanish special forces taking down a group of Somali pirates.

They have been refueled as their helicopter landed from a Italian Frigate.

they have a Portuguese time patrol aircraft over head, U.S satellites watching this working on intelligence provided potentially by Iran.

So it's not just alliances and very constructed coalitions, it's also this kind of loose coalition.
This building bridges to find allies to solve security problems.

Now do we still need a strong and capable U.S military?

Absolutely.

I would argue that our military will look a little different going forward.

Now this is, by the way, another really bad movie, Endor’s Game.

Terrific novel, I highly recommend the novel but what is it about?

It’s about a cyber force.

It’s about a group of young, very young women and men defending their nation.

So here’s a little quiz for you, to go back hundred years ago, what are Armed Forces of the United States?

Hundred years ago.

The Army.

The Navy.

The Marine Corp.

Coast Guard could be called in.

Did we have a Air Force a hundred years ago?

Heck no, why not?

Because we didn't fly airplanes.

Today what do we have?

I know you all know this.

We have an army, a navy, a marine corp., an air force, coast guard on occasion.

Do you think we should have a cyber force?

I do.

I think we are in fact, right on the edge
of creating a cyber force.

So I think as we think about these kind of platforms, these powerful, expensive hardware platforms, we need to be thinking about cyber force as well.

We're also going to see more of this, more unmanned aircraft.

And we're going to see this, special forces.

I was brought to tears a few moments ago when I looked at the SEAL exhibition here at the Pritzker Museum and Library.

Many of those SEALs that died, died under my command.

This is Michael Murphy.

He died right before I took command and Michael Murphy was a proud Navy SEAL.

I put him where to remind us that it's about the people, not the hardware.

But also that many of these special forces are going to be intimately involved in our defense.

Now Michael is a proud Navy Destroyer, you his ship the U.S.S Michael Murphy sailing behind him.

We're also going to do more of this.

These photographs was taken four days ago.

This is the mission to Nepal looking at life at Kathmandu.

These are U.S military doing humanitarian work.

Here's another example of it, the hospital ship comfort which is sailing in the Caribbean today doing eyeglasses and operations and dental work.
These kinds of missions create security as well.

Why?

Because they create bridges between those who might be opposed to us we have a chance to change their views, their vision of the United States.

And we need this kind of thing, this is soft power.

These are Afghan policemen who are reading.

And you ought to say "Well that's strange, I thought I read somewhere that Afghan police army can't read?"

You would be write because the Taliban withheld education from them.

So why are these particular policemen reading?

The answer is that they're in literacy class we're teaching them to read.

We're teaching them to fight, there's guns in that image as well, but we're teaching them to read.

Why?

Because that will connect them with their society and they will be much more productive.

This is soft power and hard power together.

There's great opportunities in the bio world as well. You may be looking at this image thinking, "Why is there a picture of Hugh Jackman in this picture?"

The answer is because my wife says, "Every presentation ought to have a picture of Hugh Jackman in it somewhere".

He's here to represent the potential of bio in human performance enhancement.
The really arresting image in this collection of course is the cover of Time magazine a few weeks ago with a baby and the caption is, "This baby may be able to live to 142 years old".

There are serious, serious scientists who believe this.

As we sequence the human genome this will change international relations and ability to provide security.

We will have both upside and challenge but its part of the opportunities ahead for us.

We need to think more about the role of women who are doing this hard at the Fletcher School.

We need to be in the social networks.

This is the world according to Facebook, the brighter the white the higher concentration of Facebook users.

If Facebook were a nation, it would have 1.4 billion people, the largest in the world.

Why is this important?

It's because this is where he have to move our messages.

What are our messages?

They're pretty good ones it's democracy, liberty, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, gender equality, racial equality.

We execute them perfectly but we need to move those messages because I can assure you the Islamic State is crushing us in these social networks, moving their messages of hatred and bigotry and dominance.

This image is also the Command and Control Network for Islamic State.
We need to be in it.

Because let me tell you something, it's not a war of ideas it's a marketplace of ideas.

We have to sell our ideas in this world.

Well let me wrap up, I will very definitively tell you, as this image implies, that we are very good at hard power.

Your military can launch very precise tomahawk missiles strikes, that's what's in this image, over 1500 miles.

And we can decide to fly it into that door or that door.

This weapon is so precise.

We are very good at launching missiles, we need to get better at launching ideas.

That's what I try to outline in the Accidental Admiral.

And the key concept is that, do why need hard power?

Yeah, unfortunately, we do need hard power but the long game, how we're really going to succeed in this 21st century is not building walls and not strictly through hard power, it's going to be turning that dial.

It's a rheostat not an on and off switch.

So, Wikipedia I put it up here to remind us of the fact that no one of us is as smart as all of us thinking together.

Wikipedia is this incredible body of knowledge created by everyone.

Everyday tens of thousands of people put information into the Wiki and everyday millions of people draw it out.

The vision of Wikipedia is a world in which
every human being can freely share in the
sum of all knowledge.

It's the perfect metaphor for the fact that
no one of us is as smart as all of us thinking
together.

That's what Pritzker is all about, is bringing
people together.

Building bridges, sharing knowledge, that's
what the Naval Institute is all about and
that is how we'll create security in the 21st
Century.

Thank you very much.

Let me take a few questions or comments.

Yes sir right here.

Thank you for your talk, my question's regarding
is there anything we shouldn't be scared of.

You gave us an amazing list ISIS, and Russia
and North Korea, and Right Wing Extremism

it just kept going.

I think the media does a real good job in
highlighting a lot of those things.

Is the media doing something- highlighting-
that is a little more fear mongering?

Is there something that the media is doing
that we can think less about?

I love your question.

There is a great deal we should not be afraid
of and, again, because it's a book talk I'll
give you another book, it's Steven Pinker's,
Our Better Angels, which is a study of violence

and war over 2500 years and it very definitively
and very metrically shows us that violence

is going down, societal control is improving.

All of the things that we really value are
actually on the ascendance.

there are so many more people living in democracy, so many people with access at least to basic care and food then was the case a thousand years ago.

In the day to day press of what the media shovels in front of us, it pretty easy to fall into that shopping list of disaster.

What I hope I show is that if we work together and we try to create bridges and we try to communicate some of the good things that are happening as well as the bad ones, which are always on display, I think our chances are better of having a more balanced picture and of actually taking advantage of positives.

Let me close by giving you some examples of really good news.

If you go back to Columbia, anybody here from Columbia, the nation of Columbia?

In the United States we have a significant Columbian population.

The reason is they all fled Columbia 10-15 years ago because Columbia looked like Syria does today.

It was ridden by death and murder and rape and torture and gangs.

Columbia is about to sign a peace deal with it's insurgency.

It has capped this level of violence all by any metric this is down 80-90%.

I'll give you another example, the Balkans.

Look at the Balkans ten years ago.

Again, looked a lot like Syria.

Hundreds of thousands of people killed, millions pushed across borders, an entire region in
flames with the U.S Secretary of State say "Don't get involved we don't have a dog in that fight".
Yet the international community working together has created, not the Garden of Eden in the Balkans, but a place where four of the seven nations are members of NATO and when they want to solve a problem they don't reach for an automatic weapon they reach for a telephone to call Brussels, to call the European Union. We can do this we're gradually doing it.
And I hope my presentation shows some of the way we can continue that.
It's a terrific question.
The refusal by European countries, meaning mostly NATO countries, to appropriate enough money to rescue drowning Africans was what he called Passive Capital Punishment and there was an underlying cynicism that if enough of them die they'll stop coming.
Now is this fair, or is this accurate?
Let me give you the numbers and the numbers are shocking.
Over the last year 200,000 migrants, the vast majority of them economic migrants, attempted to come to Europe by one form or another. Thousands have drowned and died we have exact numbers. I don't think it is a concerted effect to ignore the challenge I think democracies have a hard time getting traction and moving out on these.
I'd point to our own history looking at the Mariel Boatlift coming from Haiti and Cuba back in the 1980's.
It took us, as a nation, a period of time to get galvanized and to deal with that.
If you look over the last 2-3 months you're seeing a real turn-around in the European approach to this, more money being allocated, real support to Italy. I think the vector is going in the right direction. But I think last year was not the best hour for our European colleagues in terms of responding to this. I don't ascribe this to racism or to cynicism, I ascribe it to incompetence and an ability to pull together to the previous question.
I think now the trajectory is in a better direction sometimes democracies need time to galvanize resources to deal with it.
Thanks it's the right question to ask.
Yes sir.
Real quick before we go to the next one I've got a James T. Hardy asking a Livestream question for you. Or Jeffrey T. Hardy.
Jeffrey's question is what does China's advances in the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea pertain for other countries in the region to include the U.S?
Yeah, just to get everyone on the same sheet of music there's a body of water called the South China Sea which is enormous body of water kind of between the Philippines and China.
Vietnam is a part of this.
It is clearly international waters, clearly the high seas by an scholar or historians' estimate.
Unfortunately, our Chinese colleagues believe they have a historical claim to much of the South China Sea, moving out to something called the Nine Dashed Line which encompasses an enormous body of water.
If they were to militarily enforce that claim it would create havoc in Southeast Asia.
At the moment, the Chinese are building artificial islands in the region of the Spratly Islands and other parts of the South China Sea. It is a flashpoint and a significant one.
I think China is taking it progressively more aggressive stance under the current leader, Xi. I am concerned about that, the United States is concerned about it, certainly our allies in the region, notably the Philippines and Vietnam whose territories are most directly impacted are extremely concerned about it.

This is why you see Vietnam and the Philippines moving closer to the United States.

So this will continue to be a major, major source of tension in Asia.

I think the United States can most effectively try and calm things by being engaged, by supporting the legitimate viewpoint of smaller nations who we cannot allow to be bullied by China in this body of water.

This gentlemen right here with the red tie.

Sir there is a microphone.

What are we doing in regard to our friend, Mr. Putin, and effectively taking and countering his activities he’s done together? These former enemies of his, together have been banned together with various techniques.

Yes sir, good question.

I think there are four things we should do to counter President Putin.

The first is we should enforce NATO, reinforce the alliance we should be moving more of our troops on a rotational basis eastward into the alliance, into Poland, the Baltic States and other nations that feel at risk to President Putin.

So assurance to our NATO allies.

Number two, we should continue the sanctions on Russia. They’re having real effect.

We see the Ruble has gone way down and has come back a bit.

Oil prices have come down and oil prices are going to go back up although I don’t think sky high.

But the sanctions have had a run affect on the Russian economy that has not yet translated into a demotion of popularity for Putin but I think keep the pressure on economically.

Number three, we need to continue the political narrative, accurate one, that what Russia has done is unacceptable.

It’s an invasion, it’s an annexation of territories that simply not acceptable in today’s world.

So I think there’s kind of a political and economic and a military set of solutions which I’ve outlined.

Fourth, and most controversially, I think we should the Ukrainian military.

I think we should give them not a overwhelming force they’re not going to defeat Russia in a war but we ought to give them sufficient defensive ability that they can inflict a real cost on President Putin if he continues this behavior.

I think if we do those four things we have a somewhat, better than even, chance that over time we will keep the lid on this and we will not stumble backwards into a cold war.

Even as we do all the things I just describe we need to maintain our dialogue and our negotiations with Russia because we don’t want to break what we’ve gained since the end of the Cold War.

Our Russian friends are not helping us very much at this moment but we need to at least keep our hand out for dialogue even as we do the four fairly aggressive things I’ve outlined.

Thank you.

Yes right over here.

Do you think there is some way to cut off the funds to ISIS to stop them from selling oil without the oil prices- well it would be nice if they got lower- but without the whole thing collapsing?
That's a great question. The short answer is can we impact ISIS's funding, absolutely. We're doing by going after their bank accounts, their Bitcoin accounts. Bitcoin is a artificial currency that circulates on the web. A lot of terrorists are using Bitcoins, we can use cyber techniques to go after that- to after their funding and accounts. We can also freeze their ability to move oil across borders by doing more border enforcement in a nation like Turkey which receives a great deal of the oil that moves out of Syria and Iraq today. So tactically speaking, yes we can impact it- back to the question over here- it's the economy. You can go after so many different things economically before you start dropping the bombs and we need to be doing more of that.

I want to conclude that picking up a comment from this wonderful person which is she said thank you for your service and I appreciate that. I want to make the point that it's not just the military, it's our firemen, our policemen, it's our teachers, it's our medical people who are working-many of them- in very, very hard conditions. It's our educators, it's people who are running libraries and museums, 501c, 401c organizations, charitable organizations. There are so many people who serve our society and our nation so I'm always grateful when people say "thank you for your service" I know in this room tonight there are many who serve in so many different ways. Thank you for all your service and thank you for having me with you tonight. Thank you to Admiral James Stravridis for joining us today and to the U.S Naval Institute for sponsoring this program. The book is the Accidental Admiral, A Sailor Takes Command at NATO, published by U.S.N.I. To learn more about the book, our sponsor, or the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, visit us in person or online at PritzkerMilitary.org. Thank you and please join us next time on Pritzker Military Presents. Pritzker Military Presents is made possible by members of the Pritzker Military Museum and Library and its sponsors. The views and opinions expressed in this program and not necessarily those of the Museum and Library. if you would like to be a part of our studio audience, become a member, or learn more, visit PritzkerMilitary.org. The preceding program was produced by the Pritzker Military Museum and Library.