

THE WICKER REPORT

By: United States Senator Roger Wicker



Wicker Underscores America's NATO Security Commitments

A U.S. Congressional Hearing in Poland

As Co-Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, I recently convened the first-ever foreign field hearing in the organization's 43-year history. That hearing took place in Gdansk, Poland, a city made tragically famous when Hitler launched World War II by attacking it in 1939.

Our hearing included seven of my colleagues from the House and Senate. Together, we underscored America's mutual NATO commitments that keep the peace today.

Those commitments advance our country's interests and have fostered unprecedented freedom and economic growth since the end of the Second World War. As Lt. General Stephen M. Twitty, Deputy Commander of United States Europe Command, said at the hearing, "The United States is safer when Europe is prosperous and stable."

Countering Russia's

We met in the Baltic region because the greatest threat to stability in Europe now comes from Vladimir Putin's Russia, just 80 miles east of Gdansk. The fall of the Soviet Union brought a welcome wave of freedom for millions of Europeans, but Mr. Putin has described that event as the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the [20th] century." It is clear he wants to restore Russian imperialism through force, as we have already seen with his invasions of Ukraine and the Republic of Georgia. Putin should be stopped from further aggression, but America cannot counter threats alone.

Our NATO allies nearest to Russia need to act in their own defense. President Donald Trump is correct to say they have become too dependent on our strength and to call on them to increase military spending. This comes at a pivotal moment in Euro-

pean history, as our own military professionals testified during the hearing that the area is more dangerous now than it was only a few years ago. I have been encouraged to see our partners grow their armed forces in light of this worsening security situation. They need to do more.

These actions will bolster every member of the alliance, not just the Europeans. It is important to remember NATO benefits America as well. The only time the organization's collective-self-defense clause has ever been used was on September 12, 2001, after the terrorist attacks on this country.

A Stable Funding Stream for Our Troops

However, the greatest force behind NATO's collective security guarantee will always be the United States of America. Our nation's military is the strongest in the world, and maintaining that edge over potential adversaries requires full congressional support.

Members from both sides of the aisle understand this. Providing for the common defense is typically one of the most bipartisan processes in Washington. To avoid the military budget uncertainty of the last few years, Congress

Judging of the Dairy



The 2019 Holmes County Dairy Products Judging Team scored victory at the recent Northwest 4-H Project Achievement Day in Moorhead. Team members are (pictured from left): Lawson Nichols, Jordan Brooks, Hanna Hood and Wyatt Nichols. Presenting their award is (at right) Cobie Rutherford, MSU Extension 4-H Specialist. Nichols was also awarded the high point award in the contest and Brooks earned a first place blue ribbon for his Meat Goat Visual Presentation in a separate contest.

(Photo submitted)

and the president need to take action in the next few weeks. Recent continuing resolutions and government shutdowns have actually wasted defense dollars. They also put a halt to military manufacturing, such as new aircraft, radars, and the shipbuilding we do

so well in Mississippi. As then-Secretary Mattis once said, during continuing resolutions, "We actually lose ground." If America loses ground militarily, the world becomes a more dangerous place.

Our hearing in Poland was

an important signal to our allies and the rest of the world about American engagement and strength. Gdansk saw the opening shots of the most destructive war in history. It is quiet today because our country and our allies learned from the hard lessons of the past.

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