

Commentary on the Huawei indictment  
By Clare M. Lopez --- Monday, 04 February 2019

This coming Wednesday, February 6, 2019, U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., chairman of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, will convene the first full committee hearing of the 116th Congress titled, “Winning the Race to 5G and the Next Era of Technology Innovation in the United States.”

According to the Committee announcement, “This hearing will focus on key steps to maintain U.S. global leadership in next-generation communications technology, spectrum needs to accelerate deployment, and new applications and services consumers can expect with 5G deployments. The hearing will also examine current efforts to modernize infrastructure siting policies and the security of 5G networks.”

A ll well and good and very necessary. But, as I wrote at the Daily Caller in a mid-December 2018 piece, amidst the headlong rush to 5G and all the propaganda and tens of millions of dollars in advertising that accompany that, there are some critical issues regarding the nature of broadband satellite communications that need to be addressed. As I noted, there are existing satellite networks and frequencies that our nation relies on for serving Americans on the other side of the “digital divide” that separates urban and rural citizens as well as for critical communications systems, most especially those necessary for our warfighters and national security community, that could be placed at very real risk of direct interference by neglecting to check China’s drive to grab a dominant, even controlling, position in the 5G roll-out.

*As Newt Gingrich rightly reminded us in his February 2019 commentary on the Huawei indictment*, the Chinese model for society is drastically different than our own. A totalitarian communist system not only controls the lives of its people in ways utterly incompatible with the democratic Republic of laws (however imperfect) that we enjoy here in the U.S., but projects that dystopian authoritarianism outward in quest of even more domination in the international arena.

So, it’s important to realize that Huawei is not just some rogue company, run amok stealing technology and trade secrets, but rather a fully functioning arm of the communist Chinese government, at the service of that government, and under its control. As such, its mission, and the mission of all the other Chinese hi-tech firms out there, is not simply market share and profit. It is, as Colonels Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army laid out in their 1999 book, “Unrestricted Warfare: China’s Master Plan to Destroy America,” to “destroy America.” While the commercial aspects of China’s brazenly illicit behavior naturally concern Ericsson, Nokia/Alcatel, Verizon, and the rest, the national security threats attendant to China’s leading position in development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IOT), and the 5G telecommunications infrastructure that will connect it all must also be a main focus of Senator Wicker’s Committee hearing. As Speaker Gingrich noted, “A company exhibiting this type of illicit behavior and generating the level of concern that it has

within the US intelligence community should not be setting the global standards for the world's telecommunications industry.”

Senior officials of the U.S. Intelligence Community — including the CIA, DIA, FBI and NSA — who testified in February 2018 before the Senate Intelligence Committee were all in agreement that the risk of allowing any company (like Huawei) access into the U.S. telecommunications infrastructure is not worth the convenience or price advantage of using its equipment. Never mind the reality that the advantages of 5G are unlikely to reach much of those rural communities, such as in Sen. Wicker's own state of Mississippi, for years to come.

The bottom line is that the 5G technology revolution will transform the future in ways that affect all of our lives: the dramatic new advances in autonomous vehicles, consumer appliances/electronics, and personal communications devices will surely make life easier and more enjoyable for millions. But that same technology's ability to control critical national infrastructure, facilitate espionage and industrial theft, and conduct massive intrusions into personal privacy, must also spur us to consider the very serious implications for our national security of allowing a hostile global adversary like China, or any of its industrial entities, to gain control over this technology.

5G is racing toward us like a freight train but let us nevertheless take the time in this hearing and more to come to conduct a thorough review of the impact 5G may have on U.S. critical satellite infrastructure capabilities, our already allocated spectrum and its existing users, and national security overall.

Clare M. Lopez is VP for Research and Analysis at the Center for Security Policy. Previously a Senior Fellow at the London Center for Policy Research and a member of Board of Advisors for Canadian Mackenzie Institute, she was named to Senator Ted Cruz's presidential campaign national security advisory team in 2016. Lopez served with Citizens' Commission on Benghazi and now its successor, Citizens' Commission on National Security. Formerly VP of Intelligence Summit, she was a career operations officer with Central Intelligence Agency, professor at Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies and Executive Director of the Iran Policy Committee from 2005-2006. Lopez received a B.A. in Communications and French from Notre Dame College of Ohio and an M.A. in International Relations from the Maxwell School of Syracuse University. She completed Marine Corps Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Quantico, VA, before declining a military commission to join the CIA. To read more of her reports