

Interview with Representative Allen West



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ANCHOR: Back to one of our big stories today. China on the attack. Strongly denying reports it had anything to do with the cyber attacks that apparently targeted several high-ranking U.S. government officials, members of our military, and political activists.

Now Google is alleging that China is behind a series of these hacks into their Gmail e-mail accounts. In fact, Google now says today that they've traced the origins of this attack to a military vocational school in China.

Now it's a difficult diplomatic dance for Secretary of State Clinton with all these different reports. She's calling these allegations today very serious, and says the FBI is going to be investigating this.

All this again, though, shining a spotlight on China and our next guest says we need to do more

to counter that threat. He's Congressman Allen West.



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Congressman Allen West. -Search using:

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He's a Republican from Florida and is joining us now.


Congressman, nice to have you today.

REP. ALLEN WEST, 

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R-FLORIDA: Thanks so much for having me, Jenna.

LEE: So what do you think about these reports?

WEST: Well, I think that we have known for quite some time that we have been undergoing cyber attacks from China, as well within the 2 1/2 years that I spent over in Afghanistan, we were experiencing the exact same type of cyber attacks against our communication systems and our information technology systems from China there in the --

LEE: Can I stop you there, sir? I'm sorry, Congressman. I haven't heard that. When you were in Afghanistan, you were experiencing amongst your men attacks that you knew were from the Chinese?

WEST: Yes. Yes. We experienced that, and so you know, once again, there are a lot of things that are happening in our world and to the United States of America. We're engaged in an economic confrontation with China and China has clearly said that they do see us as an adversary and they're in a competitive struggle against us.

So I think it's very important that we recognize that and we take the right and proper precautions. We have already stood up, the United States Cyber Command, because we realize that this is an incredible threat.

LEE: You are advocating, according to a recent speech that you gave just this week, more spending to build the military up. You say a strong Navy, for example, is what we really need to combat these type of threats.

Why do you think we need more money for the military right now? Why do you think that's the right call for spending?

WEST: Well, what I am advocating in the speech that I gave at the Heritage Foundation that we need a national security roadmap. We need to look at the respective areas of responsibilities where our combat and commands are in charge and we need to look at the threats that are there, we need to match capabilities and requirements to that.

And the most important thing that I don't want to see is containment to try to use the United States military as a bill payer for government reckless fiscal irresponsibility, although I will admit

that there are some places where we could transfer funds to the Department of Defense.

But when you look at the (INAUDIBLE) of commerce that have to be protected, the fact that in 1990, we had 546 naval war vessels, and today we have 283, and we know that China is working very hard to have the world's largest blue water Navy within the next 10 years. So I think that that's a threat that we have to face up to.

LEE: Just real quick here. We only have about 30 seconds. But how would you deal with China especially with our economic ties right now? I mean what's the way forward?

WEST: Well, I think that that is one of the key things that we need to be talking about, when we look at the debt that we have and China owns about 29 percent of that debt. We need to start to turn around the fiscal situation here. We need to look at our spending and we need to curtail that.

And we need to start setting out a roadmap for our economic success, and the growth of our private sector which with the jobs report that just recently started to come out, once again, we have big concerns.

LEE: Congressman West, nice to have you today, sir. Thank you for joining us.

WEST: Thank you. Thanks, Jenna.