MEMORANDUM FOR SCUSA 74

SUBJECT: The Threat and Promise of Innovative Technology

1. **Issue:** In response to the continued development of innovative technologies and the threats that they pose to critical infrastructure, social polarization, data privacy, and warfare—policy is needed to manage the risks and harness the advantages of technological innovation as it relates to protecting American national security.

2. **Strategic Analysis:** Innovative technologies if not addressed will continue to outpace the United States’ ability to counter the threats and harness the benefits these technologies offer. As this technology is further disseminated internationally a double-edged sword is introduced, with the downsides including risks to critical infrastructure, potential data privacy violations, and the escalation of increased disinformation. Whereas the positives promise to revolutionize manufacturing, industrialization, drive humanitarian efforts forward, and foster an increased sense of social cohesion.

3. **Relevant National Interests:** The United States’ geopolitical position and relevance are based on the ability to adapt. Adapting to the changes that are raised by the threats and promises of innovative technologies allows the United States to maintain a competitive edge internationally, as the adaptation to innovation leads to revolutions in military and civilian affairs. Technological innovation allows the United States military to be better equipped to respond to the novel threats that are posed by artificial intelligence and social polarization while dissuading adversaries who seek to spread disinformation. Lastly, innovative technologies need to be addressed to maintain the liberal, educational, and inclusivity that historically has been a cornerstone of United States values.

4. **Strategic Options:**

   1. Increase technological innovation education alongside the development of legal processions to protect consumers: The development of inclusive data literacy in the population allows more people to become familiar to the risks of technological innovations while also being exposed enough to the benefits of novel technologies to drive future production, growth, and domination in industry. Developing exhaustive national legal precautions on the protection of individual data, more akin to existing legislation in California’s Consumer Privacy Act or the European Union’s General
Data Protection Regular, would protect the privacy of individuals while allowing individuals to decide if their digital information is collected.

2. Promote, incentivize, and leverage industry and academia's expertise with innovation to collaborate and maintain the United States' critical technological edge: A majority of these companies are already in the leader of technological innovation this could allow the United States to increase our ability to integrate and invest in maintaining our strategic edge.

3. Leverage the existing United States institutional architecture to consolidate disconnected technological innovation efforts of the United States until the ideal technological position is achieved: Change is inherently slow in an organization as large as the United States government, but if all technological innovation efforts are consolidated into one entity the United States can start to move in the right direction before extra-governmental collaboration and legislation can be fully enacted.

5. **Recommendation and Implementation:**

   Critical infrastructure, truth, trust, and data privacy are vital to national security and international norms, but they are increasingly threatened and undermined by technological innovations such as cryptocurrency, artificial intelligence, autonomous weapon systems, and social media.

   The United States should enact a Joint Technological Innovation Fusion Center consisting of the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, the Directorate of National Intelligence, and government research organizations at the federal level, before sharing information down to the state and local levels. This will enable the United States to augment existing governmental institutions before legislation or extra-governmental cooperation can be fully developed. While this task force can also be used as a means to counter the negatives that technological innovation is associated with, it can also be used to take advantage of the promises of technological innovation to create some internal good that will allow the United States to maintain its international superiority. These inclusive and positive discussions of technological innovation should revolve around how innovation can be leveraged to augment industrial processes, reduce waste in industry, enable strategic planning, and increase standards of industry and standards of living, while also creating more inclusive teams.

   The creation of this Joint Fusion Center should be done under an executive order as soon as possible to enable a quick governmental reaction. The speed of the Fusion Centers' Creation would allow the United States to harness innovations instead of being forced to react. This fusion center would allow the United States enough time to promote extra-governmental cooperation, investment, recruitment, and legislation and education creation while also providing a location where once these efforts are finalized—results could be directed through.

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