

TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND AND U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011 AND THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2010

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:34 a.m. in room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Webb, McCaskill, Udall, Hagan, Begich, Burris, Kaufman, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Chambliss, Graham, Thune, Wicker, LeMieux, Brown, Burr, Vitter, and Collins.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Howard H. Hoege III, counsel; Jessica L. Kingston, research assistant; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, counsel; Jason W. Maroney, counsel; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; Michael J. Noblet, professional staff member; Roy F. Phillips, professional staff member; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Joseph W. Bowab, Republican staff director; Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Christian D. Brose, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, minority counsel; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member, and Dana W. White, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Paul J. Hubbard, Christine G. Lang, and Brian F. Sebold.

Committee members' assistants present: James Tuite, assistant to Senator Byrd; Vance Serchuk, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn A. Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Akaka; Greta Lundeberg, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Ann Premer, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Jennifer Barrett, assistant to Senator Udall; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Brady King, assistant to Senator Burris; and Halie Soifer, assistant to Senator Kaufman; Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator

Inhofe, Sandra Luff, assistant to Senator Sessions, Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Erskine W. Wells III, assistant to Senator Wicker; Brian Walsh, assistant to Senator LeMieux; Kevin Kane, assistant to Senator Burr; Kyle Ruckert, assistant to Senator Vitter; and Chip Kennett, assistant to Senator Collins.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody.

Before we begin the hearing, I want to take this opportunity to welcome one of our three new members to the Armed Services Committee. Senator Kaufman is the first Senator from the First State, which is Delaware's famous name; he's the first one to serve on this committee, according to our Senate historian. We know Senator Kaufman for his long, valuable service to the Senate, both as a Senator and before that as a member of the Senate staff.

So, a special welcome to you, Senator Kaufman. We'll welcome the others when they get here, but a special welcome to you. Delighted to have you.

The committee receives testimony this morning from General David Petraeus, Commander, U.S. Central Command, and Admiral Eric Olson, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command. Today's hearing continues the committee's review of the missions and operational requirements of our combatant commanders, in light of the priorities that are set out in the President's fiscal year 2011 budget request.

Nowhere will the President's budget priorities have a greater impact than with the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in the CENTCOM area of responsibility, including a significant portion of our Special Operations Forces. The men and women of CENTCOM and SOCOM have been engaged in major military operations for nearly 8 and a half years, most having served multiple deployments. Our Special Operations Forces are facing the highest operational tempo in their history. Yet, in Afghanistan and Iraq, our troops' morale is very high, they are dedicated to their mission, they are serving with courage and distinction.

General Petraeus and Admiral Olson, thank you for your leadership, and, on behalf of this committee, please pass along our gratitude to the troops that serve under your command.

The next 12 months will be critical in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The challenges are significant. In Afghanistan, the military operations in the central Helmand River valley are just the "opening salvo," as General Petraeus has said, of a long campaign, under General McChrystal's command, to implement the President's counterinsurgency strategy. As General Gates told Afghan soldiers in Kabul last week, this conflict is their fight to win, and Afghanistan's future is in their hands.

Key to this effort is the partnering of Afghan soldiers with U.S. and coalition forces living and operating together in the planning and conduct of military operations. Last week, NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral James Stavridis, said that the partnering ratio in Helmand Province had improved to nearly 1 to 1—close to one Afghan soldier for each coalition soldier in the fight.

General Petraeus, I hope you're going to update us this morning on the progress of our partnering efforts in Afghanistan.

I have been deeply concerned, however, that the effort to grow the Afghan National Army and Police is being slowed by a lack of trainers. Earlier this month, Lieutenant General Bill Caldwell, the head of the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan, reported an almost 900-percent increase in Afghan Army recruits in training, from 830 in September to 7400 in January of this year. But, at the same time, he reported that the NATO Training Command remains at just over half of the number of instructors and advisers required. At a recent conference to generate forces, NATO members pledged fewer than half the approximately 1,200 additional NATO trainers that are needed. As a result of this shortfall, Afghan Army recruits are having to wait to receive their basic training course.

And, General Petraeus, the committee would be interested in any recommendations that you might have for addressing these resource shortfalls.

Our Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan are also faced with resource challenges, particularly due to the lack of enabling capabilities, such as rotary wing aircraft support. We'd be interested in hearing from our witnesses as to what is being done to address this issue for our Special Operations Forces in theater today.

I believe there are reasons for cautious optimism. An ABC/BBC public opinion survey in Afghanistan in January found that 70 percent of the Afghans polled believed their country was headed in the right direction. In terms of governance, the Afghan Government is apparently now working better with local leaders in Helmand to deliver services, which surely improves the chances of building support in the country for the Afghan Government.

And with regard to Afghanistan's long-term economic future, President Karzai recently announced that a soon-to-be-released U.S. Survey report will show that Afghanistan has nearly a trillion dollars in petroleum reserves and mineral deposits, which are in great demand.

The coming months will also be important for the President's strategy in Iraq. By September 1st, the U.S. combat mission in Iraq will end and U.S. forces will transition to the role of advising and assisting the Iraqi Security Forces. According to General Odierno, our commander in Iraq, the Iraqi Security Forces performed well during the recent parliamentary elections, and that only a "catastrophic event," in his words, would prevent the drawdown of U.S. forces from 96,000, currently, to 50,000 by the end of August. The drawdown of those forces will be an important milestone on the way to withdrawing all U.S. forces from Iraq by the end of 2011, redefining the U.S.-Iraq strategic relationship, and transferring responsibility for Iraq's security to Iraqis, while keeping the pressure on Iraqi leaders to reach the political settlements and decisions so essential to achieving security in Iraq.

While our conventional forces reduce their footprint in Iraq, the requirement for Special Operations Forces and the unique skills they bring to the effort will continue. Special operators will have a continuing requirement for support from their general-purpose force counterparts, including for airlift, medical evacuation, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, as those Special Oper-

ations Forces continue throughout the U.S. drawdown to provide support to the Iraqi Security Forces.

The attempted Christmas Day airline bombing near Detroit reminded every American that al Qaeda is a global organization that continues to threaten harm to anyone that does not share its radical views. That nearly catastrophic incident also focused attention on Yemen, a country with an uneven record on counterterrorism and large ungoverned spaces that serve as attractive sanctuaries for al Qaeda and its recruits.

General Petraeus, I hope that you will let us know, this morning, what, in your opinion, the government is—our government is doing to support Yemen's capacity to respond to the al Qaeda threat and to stabilize its territory, and your recommendations for what more can be done.

Because the threat of violent extremism is not confined to Yemen or the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, SOCOM maintains a global focus. Special Operations personnel are deployed to dozens of countries around the world, working to address the underlying causes of violent extremism and helping to build the capacity of other nations to address the mutual threats that we face. Working with U.S. Ambassadors in priority countries, these special operators engage in a variety of training, civil affairs, and information operations intended to counter the spread of violent ideology.

And, Admiral Olson, we hope that you'll update the committee on the progress of those efforts to address violent extremism globally.

Finally, Iran remains a major security challenge. Iran continues to work to undermine stability in the Middle East and to stoke fears across the region. The brutal tactics and human rights abuses of the Government of Iran in its efforts to silence the voices of the people of Iran are of deep concern. As the administration continues its push for more significant sanctions against Iran, it will be critical to continue to work with our partners in the CENTCOM AOR on robust sanctions enforcement. This is going to require intense coordination and collaboration with other nations in the region.

General Petraeus, we look forward to hearing your assessment of the willingness of other nations in the region to cooperate in the robust enforcement of current sanctions against Iran and support even stronger sanctions against Iran until they comply with U.N. resolutions relative to the Iranian nuclear program. Nuclear arms in possession of Iran, in violation of those U.N. resolutions, will threaten the stability of the region and cannot be accepted by the world community.

I understand, now, that another new member of our committee has joined us. We welcome Senator Brown; he's the newest member of the Senate. He brings a very valuable perspective of having served for more than 30 years in the Massachusetts Army National Guard, and that is a very, very important contribution to us. And we all welcome you to a committee which is famous for working on a bipartisan basis. We all enjoy working here, for many reasons; obviously, the security of this country being our common mission, but it's also because we are—we work so well together across party lines. So, we welcome you.

We've already welcomed Senator Kaufman. And there's just one other Senator. If Senator Bingaman is not here yet, we will welcome him when he shows here.

Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

Senator McCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I join you in welcoming our—an old and dear friend, Senator Kaufman of Delaware, who I've known for many, many years.

And I would also like to welcome Senator Brown, also—a member of the Massachusetts Guard, served for 30 years, and all of that is very good news. Unfortunately, he joins Senator Graham as a lawyer. So—[Laughter.]

But, we are—we welcome him to the committee. And he brings knowledge and expertise of the challenges that our men and women serving in the military face on a day-to-day basis as we are engaged in two wars.

I thank our witnesses today, Admiral Olson and General Petraeus, for joining us. And let me extend my thanks to the men and women serving under your command, especially the families, who endure so much for the security and betterment of our country.

Amid the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the ongoing fight against violent Islamic extremism, the focus of the U.S. military, especially our lead forces, is the Middle East and South and Central Asia. And obviously, this is the responsibility of U.S. Central Command and the chief priority of U.S. Special Operations Command. So, it's fitting and important that both combatant commanders are here today together.

I'll keep my remarks brief and to the point. I'm concerned at what appears to be a dangerous and growing doubts about U.S. power and commitment on the part of both our friends and our enemies in the broader Middle East today. On the one hand, this perception is profoundly unjustified. America enjoys a position of extraordinary power and influence in this region. The United States did not abandon Iraq when the going got tough. Instead, we succeeded in turning it around, in large part, thanks to your leadership, General Petraeus.

A moderate majority was empowered in Iraq to turn the tide against violent extremists, and today the emergence of a democratic Iraq that can defend itself and sustain itself is becoming a hopeful new presence in an unstable region. And I might add, a country that has—the only country in the Middle East, outside of Israel, that has a contested election.

In Afghanistan, thanks to President Obama's decision to increase our civil-military commitment, the United States and our allies are now in a position to break the momentum of the insurgency and help our Afghan friends to secure their own country.

As you've noted before to this committee, Admiral Olson, our Special Operations Forces are making major strides in targeting the Taliban's leadership and keeping the pressure on al Qaeda—not just in Afghanistan, but also in places like Pakistan and Yemen.

At the same time, as you have noted before, General Petraeus, the United States is building an elaborate and robust security architecture in the broader Middle East, including shared early-warning systems, ballistic missile defenses, and major sales of defensive weapons that enhance the capabilities of our friends to defend themselves and to deter our enemies. Though we admittedly face many difficult challenges in the broader Middle East, the fact is, the U.S. capability and lead in this region is strong and enduring.

And yet, military capability is not the only measure of leadership. There's also the perception of our political resolve, and this is what concerns me. I'm concerned that the Government of Iran has spurned the President's offer of engagement. And not only has it experienced no real consequences for doing so, our deadlines for actions have slipped from September of last year to the beginning of this year, and now it's mid-March, and still there have been no consequences.

So, too, with the Syrian government. There's been plenty of U.S. engagement since the beginning of last year, but seemingly few changes to Syria's destabilizing behavior in the region as a result. Instead, the Syrian President is openly mocking U.S. leaders while meeting with the President of Iran and the head of Hezbollah. Meanwhile, despite constant refrains about cutting off the supply of arms to Hezbollah, the fact remains that Hezbollah is better armed today than ever before. When our allies and friends in the Levant and the Gulf look at these events, I worry that it feeds a lack of confidence in America's commitment to regional security.

In South Asia, meanwhile, the pledge to begin withdrawing our forces by July 2011 has injected unnecessary doubts about U.S. commitment in the minds of friends and foes alike, from Afghan fence-sitters to Pakistan's leaders to our strategic partners in India. Reports over the weekend, that reconciliation with Taliban leaders is now being explored before the vast majority of the 30,000-troop surge has even arrived in the country, only feeds the perception in the region that the U.S. Government is more eager to leave Afghanistan than to succeed there.

In short, I'm concerned that we are heading toward a situation in the broader Middle East where our friends don't trust us and our enemies don't fear us, because both doubt our staying power, our determination, and our resolve. We may be heading there, but we aren't there yet. And though this perceived lack of U.S. commitment may take a lot of time and effort to reverse, I'm confident that it can be reversed. As I said, the U.S. capacity to lead remains strong; what's more, our country is blessed with some truly first-rate civilian and military leaders, individuals like our two distinguished witnesses today and the brave men and women under their command. It's our job, here in Washington, to support their needs, including the resources they require to succeed in their missions on our behalf. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses how we will all work together to address the serious challenges we face, especially in this vital part of the world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

We now have a quorum of our committee; and so, I would ask the committee to consider three civilian nominations and a list of 802 pending military nominations.

First, the civilian nominations: I ask the committee to consider the nominations of Jessie Hill Roberson, Joseph F. Bader, and Peter Stanley Winokur to be members of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. Is there a motion to favorably report these nominees?

Senator MCCAIN. So moved.

Chairman LEVIN. Is there a second?

Senator REED. Second.

Chairman LEVIN. All in favor, say aye? [Chorus of ayes.]

Opposed, nay? [No response.]

The ayes have it.

Next, I ask the committee to consider a list of 802 pending military nominations. They've been before the committee the required length of time. Is there a motion to report these nominations?

Senator MCCAIN. So moved.

Chairman LEVIN. Second?

Senator REED. Second.

Chairman LEVIN. There's a second.

All in favor, say aye? [Chorus of ayes.]

Opposed, nay? [No response.]

The motion carries.

Admiral, I think we'll start with you this morning.

Admiral Olson.

**STATEMENT OF ADM T. OLSON, USN, COMMANDER, U.S.
SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND**

Admiral OLSON. Good morning, Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, other distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear again before this body to highlight the posture of the U.S. Special Operations Command.

It's a pleasure to join General Petraeus here this morning.

Your continued support and oversight of USSOCOM and its assigned forces has ensured that our Nation has the broad special operations capabilities that it needs and expects.

With your permission, Chairman, I'll submit my written posture statement for the record, and open with a briefer set of remarks.

Chairman LEVIN. That'll be fine.

Admiral OLSON. The U.S. Special Operations Command's Service Component Commands—those being the Army Special Operations Command, the Air Force Special Operations Command, the Naval Special Warfare Command, and the Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command—through them, U.S. Special Operations Command organizes, equips, trains, and provides fully-capable Special Operations Forces to serve under the operational control of regional combatant commanders around the world, and, as you noted, by a wide margin, our forces most heavily committed to supporting operations in the Central Command area of responsibility under the operational command of General Petraeus.

On an average day, though, over 12,000 members of the Special Operations Forces are present in about 75 countries. They conduct a wide variety of activities. You listed several, Chairman. They

range from civil-military operations, like local infrastructure development in relatively benign environments, to counterterrorist operations under extremely demanding conditions. These indirect and direct actions conducted by Special Operations Forces are intended to support each other in contributing to environments where security and stability can be further developed and sustained by local organizations and forces. In fact, nearly every mission performed by Special Operations Forces is in support of an indigenous partner force.

As you know, Special Operations Forces do what other military forces are not doctrinally organized, trained, or equipped to do. The powerful effects of Special Operations Forces in the areas where they are properly employed are often recognized as game-changers. And our force operates very effectively in small numbers, in remote regions, often with a low profile, under austere conditions.

The deployment rate of Special Operations Forces is high. And, although the demand is outpacing the supply, I remain firm in limiting our request for manpower growth to the range of 3 to 5 percent per year.

If approved, the President's fiscal year 2011 budget would grow Special Operations Force personnel by 4 and a half percent. The overall baseline budget for Special Operations Command would grow by about 5.7 percent, to just over \$6.3 billion, with most of that increase in the Operations and Maintenance Account.

Significantly, the overseas contingency operations funds would increase by \$464 million, compared to 2010, bringing that account to about \$3 and a half billion, for a total 2011 USSOCOM budget of \$9.8 billion. This is sufficient to support our current level of special operations-peculiar activities around the world, as long as we are able to depend on the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps for service-common items and support.

The budget and acquisition authorities held by the commander of United States Special Operations Command are similar to the military departments, although not on the same scale. They are essential to meeting the emergent needs of an innovative force with a unique mission set, and this applies equally to United States Special Operations Command's research and development authorities, which enable rapid application of science and technology to meet urgent operational needs.

In my role as the commander responsible for the readiness of the Special Operations Force, I give high priority to training and education programs and to influencing, where I can, the career development of special operations personnel. Along with the pure operational skills that enable success in very complex and demanding operational environments, language skills and subregional expertise remain primary focus areas.

The special operations community, of course, includes the families of our servicemen and women, and caring for our injured and wounded, and for the families of those killed in action, is among our most solemn responsibilities. We are proud of our many successes in returning wounded warriors to their teams and of our lifelong commitment to those who are unable to do so.

You, on this committee, and all Americans, can be fiercely proud of your Special Operations Forces. They are fit, focused, supremely

capable, and incredibly courageous. They have impact well beyond their relatively small numbers, and I'm deeply honored by this opportunity to represent them to you today.

I stand ready for your questions, sir.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Olson follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, thank you so much.

General Petraeus, welcome.

**STATEMENT OF GEN DAVID H. PETRAEUS, USA, COMMANDER,
U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND**

General PETRAEUS. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the situation in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, and an opportunity to discuss CENTCOM's strategy and priorities for the year ahead.

It is a pleasure to be here with my colleague and good friend Admiral Olson.

I, too, have submitted a written statement for the record, and will summarize it here.

U.S. CENTCOM is, as you know, now in its 9th consecutive year of combat operations. It oversees the U.S. efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq and the assistance to Pakistan, as well as a theaterwide campaign against al Qaeda. We are also, of course, working on numerous contingency plans, and we continue the effort to build partnerships throughout the area of responsibility, working in concert with our diplomatic colleagues as part of whole-of-governments approaches to help increase the capabilities of partner-nation security forces.

Meanwhile, the conditions and dynamics that shape the security environment continue to evolve. Today, I'll briefly discuss these developments and our ongoing missions, as well as some of the dynamics that shape activities in the CENTCOM AOR.

First, Afghanistan. As President Obama observed in announcing his new policy, and I quote, "It is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan." As he noted, these forces will provide the resources that we need to seize the initiative while building the Afghan capacity that can allow for a responsible transition of our forces out of Afghanistan.

Clearly, the challenges there are considerable, but success there is, as General McChrystal has observed, both important and achievable. Our goals in Afghanistan and in that region are clear. They are to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and its extremist allies, and to set conditions in Afghanistan to prevent reestablishment of transnational extremist sanctuaries, like the ones al Qaeda enjoyed there prior to September 11.

To accomplish this task, we are working with our ISAF and Afghan partners to improve security for the Afghan people, to wrest the initiative from the Taliban and other insurgent elements, to develop the Afghan Security Forces, and to support establishment of Afghan governance that is seen as legitimate in the eyes of the people.

We spent much of the past year working to get the inputs right in Afghanistan; establishing the structures and organizations needed to carry out a comprehensive civil-military campaign plan; put-

ting our best leaders in charge of those organizations; developing the right concepts to guide our operations—the comprehensive campaign plan, the ISAF counterinsurgency guidance, and the tactical directive issues by General McChrystal; and providing the authorities and deploying the resources needed to achieve unity of effort and to implement the concepts developed.

These resources include, of course, the forces deployed in 2009 and the 30,000 additional U.S. forces currently deploying, some 9,000 more forces from partner nations, additional civilian experts, and funding to enable our operations in the training and equipping of 100,000 additional Afghan Security Force members over the next year and a half. I should note that the flow of additional forces and associated equipment would not have been possible without your continued support, in general, and your support of our expeditionary Military Construction Program, in particular.

With the inputs largely in place now in Afghanistan, we are starting to see the first of the outputs. Indeed, the recent offensive in central Helmand Province represented the first operation of the overall civil-military campaign plan developed by ISAF and its civilian partners, together with Afghan civilian and security force leaders.

Central to progress in Afghanistan will be developing the Afghan National Security Forces, an effort made possible by your sustained support of the Afghan Security Forces Fund. Expansion of Afghanistan's security forces is now underway in earnest in the wake of the Afghan and international community decision to authorize an additional 100,000 security force members between now and the fall of 2011.

This effort is facilitated considerably by the recent establishment of the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan, led by Lieutenant General Bill Caldwell. And ISAF-member nations are now working hard to field the additional trainers, mentors, partner elements, and transition teams to enable the considerably augmented partnering, training, and recruiting that are essential to the way ahead in this important area.

The civil-military campaign on which we have embarked in Afghanistan will unfold over the next 18 months, and as many of us have observed, the going is likely to get harder before it gets easier. As we seek to expand security for the people and to take from the Taliban control of key areas, the enemy will fight back. Moreover, we are not likely to see the kind of dramatic reduction in violence that we saw about 6 months into the surge in Iraq; in part, because the levels of violence in Afghanistan are nowhere near those of Iraq at the height of the sectarian violence, though they clearly are at levels that make progress in certain areas very difficult.

In any event, 2010 will be a difficult year, a year that will see progress in a reversal of Taliban momentum in important areas, but also a year in which there will be tough fighting and periodic setbacks.

Pakistan. We have seen important change in Pakistan over the past year. During that time, the Pakistani people, political leaders, and clerics united in recognizing that the most pressing threat to their country's very existence was that posed by certain internal extremist groups; in particular, the Pakistani Taliban. Pakistani

citizens saw the Taliban's barbaric activities, indiscriminate violence, and repressive practices in the Northwest Frontier Province and federally Administered Tribal Areas, and even in some of Pakistan's so-called "settled areas," and they realized that the Taliban wanted to take Pakistan backwards several centuries, not forward.

With the support of Pakistan's people and leaders, the Pakistani military has carried out impressive counterinsurgency operations over the past 10 months. The Army and the Frontier Corps have, during that time, cleared the Taliban from Swat District, which I visited 3 weeks ago, and from other areas of the Northwest Frontier Province, as well. Now, they are holding, building, and beginning to transition in those areas.

They have also carried out impressive operations in South Waziristan, home to the former Baitullah Mehsud, the leader of the extremist elements that assassinated Benazir Bhutto and blew up thousands of innocent Pakistanis and security force members in recent years. And they have carried out good operations in some other areas of the FATA as well, including in Bajaur Agency most recently.

These latter operations have been carefully coordinated with ISAF forces and Regional Command East, and that coordination enabled RC-East elements to engage extremists who fled Pakistani operations and crossed the Durand Line into Afghanistan. In short, Pakistani forces have been carrying out an impressive campaign, and the Pakistani forces and people have suffered tough losses during the course of it.

We recognize the need for considerable assistance to Pakistan as they continue their operations, and we will continue to work with Congress in seeking ways to support Pakistan's military.

Our focus has, in fact, been on supporting the Pakistani forces. They are doing the fighting. We are providing various forms of assistance. Our task, as Secretary Gates has observed, has to be to show that we are going to be a steadfast partner, that we are not going to do to Pakistan what we've done before, such as after Charlie Wilson's War, when we provided a substantial amount of assistance and then left precipitously, leaving Pakistan to deal with a situation we'd helped create.

It is, therefore, important that we provide a sustained, substantial commitment, and that is what we are endeavoring to do, with your support. The Kerry-Lugar-Berman bill does that by providing \$1.5 billion in economic assistance per year for 5 years. The provision of coalition support funding, foreign military financing, the Pakistani Counterinsurgency Fund, and other forms of security assistance provide further critical assistance for Pakistan's security forces. Together, this funding and our assistance demonstrate America's desire to strengthen this important strategic partnership and help our Pakistani colleagues.

Iraq. In the 3 years since the conduct of the surge, security in Iraq has, of course, improved significantly. Numbers of attacks, violent civilian deaths, and high-profile attacks are all down by well over 90 percent from their highs in 2006 or 2007. With the improvements in security has also come progress in a variety of other areas: in the repair of infrastructure damaged during the violence,

in the provision of basic services, in attracting international investment, and even in various social and political areas.

The conduct of the elections on 7 March, during which an impressive turnout of Iraqi voters defied al Qaeda attempts to intimidate them, provided the latest example of Iraq's progress since the sectarian violence of 2006 and 2007 ripped apart the very fabric of Iraqi society. As always, however, the progress in Iraq is still fragile, and it could still be reversed. Iraq still faces innumerable challenges, and they will be evident during what will likely be a difficult process as the newly-elected Council of Representatives selects the next prime minister, president, and speaker of the council, and seeks agreement on other key decisions, as well.

Our task in Iraq is to continue to help the Iraqi Security Forces—in part, through the Iraqi Security Forces Fund—as we continue to draw down our forces in a responsible manner. This task has been guided, of course, by the policy announced by President Obama about a year ago. Since that announcement, we have reduced our forces in Iraq by well over 30,000, to some 97,000, and we are on track to reduce that number to 50,000 by the end of August, at which time we will also complete a change in mission that marks the transition of our forces from a combat role to one of advising and assisting Iraqi Security Forces.

As we draw down our forces in Iraq and increase our efforts in Afghanistan, we must not lose sight of other developments in the CENTCOM AOR. I want to highlight the developments in two countries in particular: Yemen and Iran.

In Yemen, we have seen an increase in the prominence of al Qaeda as it exploits the country's security, economic, and social challenges. The threat to Yemen, to the region, and indeed to the U.S. homeland, posed by what is now called al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, has been demonstrated by suicide bombers trying to carry out operations in Yemen's capital, by the attempt to assassinate the assistant Minister of Interior in Saudi Arabia, and by the attempted bombing of the U.S. airliner on Christmas Day.

In fact, a number of us have been increasingly concerned over the past 2½ years by the developments we have observed in Yemen. And last April, I approved a plan, developed in concert with our Ambassador in Yemen, U.S. Intelligence Agencies, and the State Department, to expand our assistance to key security elements in Yemen. With Yemeni President Saleh's approval, we began executing that plan last summer, and this helped strengthen the capabilities demonstrated by the Yemeni operations that were carried out against al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in mid-December, and that have been executed periodically since then, as well. And with your support, we are working toward expanded, sustained levels of assistance in Yemen.

In fact, our efforts in Yemen should not just be seen as part of our overall counterterrorist campaign, but also as part of what might be termed "preventive counterinsurgency operations," for our efforts not only help develop key security forces in Yemen, they also contribute to the overall effort to help Yemen deal with challenges that could become much more significant if not dealt with early on.

Iran poses the major state-level threat to regional stability in the CENTCOM AOR. Despite numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions and extensive diplomatic efforts by the P5-plus-1 and the IAEA, the Iranian regime continues its nuclear program. Indeed, Iran is assessed by many analysts to be engaged in pursuing a nuclear weapons capability, the advent of which would destabilize the region and likely spur a regional arms race.

The Iranian regime also continues to arm, fund, train, equip, and direct proxy extremist elements in Iraq, Lebanon, Gaza, and, to a lesser degree, in Afghanistan. It continues significant intervention in the domestic politics in each of those locations, as well.

The Iranian regime's internal activities are also troubling, as its violent suppression of opposition groups and demonstrations in the wake of last years' highjacked elections has made a mockery of the human rights of the Iranian people and fomented further unrest. Those internal developments have also resulted in greater reliance than ever on Iran's security services to sustain the regime's grip on power.

Having discussed the developments in these countries, I'd now like to explain the importance of two key enablers in our ongoing missions, and to raise one additional issue. The Commander's Emergency Response Program, or CERP, continues to be a vital tool for our commanders in Afghanistan and Iraq. Small CERP projects are often the most responsive and effective means to address a local community's needs. And where security is challenged, CERP often provides the only tool to address pressing requirements.

In the past year, we have taken a number of actions to ensure that we observe the original intent for CERP, and also to ensure adequate oversight for use of this important tool. I have, for example, withheld approval for projects over \$1 million, at my level, and there has only been one such project since late last September. In the past year we've asked the Army Audit Agency to conduct audits of the CERP programs in Iraq and Afghanistan. We've established guidelines for the number of projects each CERP team should oversee, and we have coordinated with the military services to insure adequate training and preparation of those who will perform functions connected with CERP in theater, while we have also established procedures to take cash off the battlefield.

Beyond that, the Department of Defense is currently performing an internal assessment and undertaking additional initiatives. With the force increases in Afghanistan, CERP funding priority has understandably shifted from Iraq to Afghanistan. We pledge to continue aggressive oversight of the CERP program as this shift takes place. In addition, we will continue to seek innovative mechanisms and authorities to allow for greater cost-sharing and to spur the develop of similar counterinsurgency tools by coalition and host-nation partners.

In the past year, CENTCOM has pursued several initiatives to pursue—to improve our capabilities in the information domain, and we have coordinated these actions closely with the State Department's Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, Judith McHale. This past year, we made significant headway in improving our ability to counter adversary information operations, include—including es-

establishing a full-fledged Joint Information Operations Task Force in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, we still have a long way to go, and we desperately need to build the capabilities of a regional IO task force to complement the operations of the task force that has done such impressive work in Iraq, and the one that is now beginning to do the same in Afghanistan.

In the broader CENTCOM AOR, Operation Earnest Voice is the critical program of record that resources our efforts to synchronize our IO activities, to counter extremist ideology and propaganda, and to ensure that credible voices in the region are heard. OEV provides CENTCOM with direct communication capabilities to reach regional audiences through traditional media, as well as via Web sites and regional public affairs blogging. In each of these efforts, we follow admonition we practiced in Iraq, that of being first with the truth. Full and enduring funding of OEV and other DOD information operations efforts will, in coordination with State Department initiatives, enable us to do just that, and, in so doing, to communicate critical messages and to counter the propaganda of our adversaries.

Cyberspace is becoming an extension of the battlefield, and we cannot allow it to be uncontested enemy territory. Indeed, in the years ahead, extremist activities in cyberspace will undoubtedly pose increasing threats to our military, and our Nation as a whole. DOD and other elements of our government are, of course, working to come to grips with this emerging threat. Clearly, this is an area in which we need to develop additional policies, build capabilities, and ensure adequate resources. I suspect, in fact, that legislation will be required over time, as well.

Within DOD, the establishment of the U.S. Cyber Command, proposed by Secretary Gates, represents an essential step in the right direction. This initiative is very important, because extremist elements are very active in cyberspace. They recruit there, they proselytize there, they coordinate attacks there, and they share tactics and techniques there. We have to ask ourselves if this is something that we should allow to continue; and, if not, then we have to determine how to prevent or disrupt it without impinging on free speech.

In conclusion, there are currently some 210,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen serving in the CENTCOM AOR. Day after day, on the ground, in the air, and at sea, these courageous and committed troopers perform difficult missions against tough enemies under the most challenging of conditions. Together with our many civilian and coalition partners, they have constituted the central element in our effort to promote security, stability, and prosperity in the region. These wonderful Americans and their fellow troopers stationed around the world constitute the most experienced, most capable military in our Nation's history. They and their families have made tremendous sacrifices, and nothing means more to these great Americans than the sense that those back home appreciate their service to our country.

In view of that, and on behalf of all those serving in the CENTCOM AOR, I want to take this opportunity to thank the American people for their extraordinary support of our men and women in uniform. And I also want to take this opportunity to

thank the members of this committee and of Congress overall for their unwavering support and abiding concern for our troopers and their families.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of General Petraeus follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General Petraeus.

We're going to try a 6-minute round of questions, here, given the large turnout this morning.

General Petraeus, Iran's actions and lack of willingness to comply with U.N. resolutions regarding their nuclear program continues to undermine security in the region. I believe that, while stronger U.N. sanctions against Iran are not only essential, but it's critically important that they be enforced.

Now, the President has—rightly, in my judgment—kept a military option to take against nuclear facilities in Iran on the table, should they be used for production of nuclear weapons, in violation of U.N. resolutions. I also believe that the possibility of a blockade or quarantine of Iran's oil exports and refined petroleum product imports should also be on a list of options—possible options for action. Can you comment on what actions you think might be successful in terms of sanctions that—against Iran, should she continue to violate U.N. resolutions relative to their nuclear program, but also as to whether we ought to keep those other options on the table?

General PETRAEUS. Well, first of all, Senator, as you noted, in fact, the President has explicitly stated that he has not taken the military option off the table. And, as you noted in your statement earlier, we have worked hard in the region to build the so-called regional security architecture, to build a network of shared early warning, of ballistic missile defense, and of other security relationships and partnerships that have been fostered in large measure—brought about in large measure because of concern by those states with whom we are carrying out these activities, about the developments in Iran that I spoke of in my opening statement.

I think, with regard to specific contingency plans or activities, that would obviously be something that we would want to do in a closed session. But, clearly now, having had the—given Iran every opportunity—not just the U.S., but all of the countries engaged in this effort—reaching out an open hand, providing the opportunity for diplomacy to discuss and resolve these issues, the emphasis is now shifting and the focus is shifting to what is termed the “pressure track,” as you know, and there is a variety of sanctions included in that, that are now being discussed in the administration. And I don't want to get ahead of them, if I could, in discussing those particular items.

Chairman LEVIN. We are going to have a full hearing on Iran, and we'll have both an open hearing, as I've mentioned to you in my office, as well as a closed hearing on that subject.

General, the—General Caldwell, who's the head of our NATO training mission in Afghanistan, has reported a very large increase in the number of Afghan Army recruits that are awaiting training. There's a shortage of trainers. We've gone into that, and I think you would agree that, one way or another, we've got to get those

trainers present to increase the speed with which the size of that army is increased.

My question is—goes to that issue, in a way, but—what General Caldwell told us when we visited him is that there were a number of reasons for that significant increase in the number of recruits, that one of them was the increase in pay, but he also said that a very significant cause of that increase, that surge, in the number of Afghan recruits was that the Afghan leaders are reaching out to their local folks, to the people in the provinces, to increase, significantly, the number of recruits that are coming in, and that one of the things that focused the mind of the Afghan leaders to do that was the decision of the President to set that July 2011 date to begin to reduce the presence of American forces—not to pull our forces out, not to have a total exit in any sense—but simply to begin reductions as a way of focusing the minds of the Afghan leaders on their responsibility to provide for their own security and to transition more of that responsibility to them.

Did you, and do you, both—do you support both the 30,000 troop surge? And do you also support the setting of that July 2011 date by the President?

General PETRAEUS. That is correct, Chairman. In fact, if I could note, there is a shortage of trainers. Admiral Stavridis, as I think you know, and the NATO Secretary General, did a force-generation effort. They got about half of those pledged. As you noted, we have to figure out how to get the rest of those, and we are looking at various options for doing that, on the U.S. side, while still urging NATO to generate the remainder.

The surge in recruits, indeed, was, I think, a result of two factors: One, the increased pay, without question, but also a sense by Afghan leaders that they do have to get on with it. I think it's correct to say that—in the speech at West Point, the President sent two messages. One was additional commitment, the other was urgency. And the urgency component of that was connected to the July 2011 date. And it has, indeed, concentrated the minds of Afghan leaders, to a degree, while we have been also sought to reassure leaders in the region that that is not a date when we bolt for the exits, but it is, rather, a date on which we begin a conditions-based process of transitioning some tasks to Afghan forces and begin a responsible reduction of our forces.

Chairman LEVIN. And you personally support that.

General PETRAEUS. I did. Yes, I have stated that on the record, many times.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank the witnesses.

General Petraeus, I want to talk about the issue with you, for a minute, that has dominated the news in the last few days, and that is the increased tensions between the United States and Israel over the settlements issue, the timing of it, and the implications of it. I note there's been increased Palestinian demonstrations and violence in the last day or 2 in Gaza and West Bank. The—first of all, I understand that you have the greatest confidence in Senator

Mitchell and his work to try to bring about progress in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process. Is that true?

General PETRAEUS. That is absolutely true, Senator. And, in fact—

Senator MCCAIN. I just wanted to get that on the record—

General PETRAEUS. Right.

Senator MCCAIN.—to make sure—

General PETRAEUS. That's why we've invited him to every single conference that we have hosted with CENTCOM, with ambassadors, with commanders, and so forth.

Senator MCCAIN. Now, the present issue is over some increased construction of settlements in Jerusalem, which Israelis view within the State of Israel when the peace process is concluded; Palestinians view it as part of a new Palestinian state. Isn't the issue not the issue of settlements as much as it is the existence of the State of Israel? Its neighbors, with the exceptions—with exceptions, have dedicated themselves to the extermination of the State of Israel. Ahmadinejad has said, time after time, they want to wipe Israel off the map. Isn't it true that we—the Israelis left Gaza, on the presumption that then there would be progress, and instead they got rocket attacks? And so, maybe you could put this in a larger context for us of what needs to be done to reduce the tensions between the United States and Israel, our closest ally and friend, in many respects. So, we'd like to hear a little bit about your views on that situation and what needs to be done to defuse it.

General PETRAEUS. Well, thanks, Senator.

First of all, again, just a reminder for all, as you know, neither Israel nor the Palestinian Territories are in the Central Command area of responsibility.

Senator MCCAIN. But, yours is all of—

General PETRAEUS. Having said that, we keep a very close eye on what goes on there, because of the impact that it has, obviously, on that part of CENTCOM that is the Arab world, if you will. And, in fact, we've urged, at various times, that this is a critical component. It's one reason, again, we invite Senator Mitchell to brief all of the different conferences that we host, and seek to support him in any way that we can when he's in the Central Command part of the region, just as we support Lieutenant General Dayton, who is supporting the training of the Palestinian Security Forces from a location that is in the CENTCOM AOR, as well.

And, in fact, although some staff members have, various times—and I have discussed and—you know, asking for the Palestinian territories or something like that to be added to it—we have never—I have never made that a formal recommendation for the Unified Command Plan, and that was not in what I submitted this year, nor have I sent a memo to the White House on any of this, which, some of this was in the press, so I welcome the opportunity to point that out.

Again, clearly the tensions, the issues, and so forth, have an enormous effect, they set the strategic context within which we operate in the Central Command area of responsibility. My thrust has generally been, literally, just to say—to encourage that process that can indeed get that recognition that you talked about, and indeed get a sense of progress, moving forward, in the overall peace

process because of the effect that it has on, particularly, what I think we would term the “moderate” governments in our area. And that really is about the extent of our involvement in that, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you believe that a policy of containment would be an effective option for dealing with a nuclear-armed Iran?

General PETRAEUS. Sir, I think that is a big policy hypothetical that I would like to go around, rather than into. I think the policy right now is very clear. The President has said that Iran cannot have nuclear weapons.

Senator MCCAIN. Are you concerned about the fact that we need a—the President’s plan was 30,000 American troops, 10,000 additional ally contribution. We now have the Dutch obviously going to remove 2,000 troops. We—as Senator Levin pointed out, we don’t have sufficient number of trainers. And we—do we have any plans for the additional troops that are necessary in what—what way we can accommodate for what is clearly a shortfall of the number of troops that was, in my view, minimum, recommended by—minimum necessary, recommended by General McChrystal?

General PETRAEUS. In fact, Senator, part of that is, of course, why we sought the additional 100,000 authorization for the Afghan National Security Forces, which came, as you’ll recall, I think, in the wake—the official authorization, in the wake of the policy announcement.

It is also, frankly, why Secretary Gates asked for and received some flex factor, as you know, that he has discussed. And so, that is in the background there—if there came to be an emergent emergency need, that that is available, as well.

Senator MCCAIN. Finally, General and Admiral Olson, do you believe that the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” needs a thorough review before action is taken?

General PETRAEUS. Senator, my position is that—can I—give my statement on that, sir?

Senator MCCAIN. If—yes, but we’re—we’re short of time, but please, go ahead.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, how long is that statement?

General PETRAEUS. About 8 minutes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. No, no.

General PETRAEUS. Well, look, sir—this is not—this is not a sound-bite issue—

Chairman LEVIN. I understand.

Senator MCCAIN. It’s a pretty straightforward question, though.

Chairman LEVIN. We respect, believe me, the thoughtfulness that you are applying to it. We’ve read your public statements. But, an 8-minute answer—unless someone else wants to use all of their time for it, I’m afraid would violate our—the spirit of our rules.

I would suggest, however, that if nobody asks you that question and you use—and their time is used for that purpose, that you make that part of the record. But, someone may very well ask you. I just don’t think it would be right, because of our time limit, to take 8 minutes out of someone else’s time, what—what it would amount to. But if no one asks you the question, okay? All their time would be used for your answer—

General PETRAEUS. Right.

Chairman LEVIN.—then we would ask you—

General PETRAEUS. I understand.

Chairman LEVIN.—to consider making part of the record. But, we respect very much the thoughtfulness that we know that you have put into a statement—I haven't seen it—but you've made public statements which reflect that thoughtfulness.

Senator MCCAIN. I think you've just made it very unlikely that you'll be asked, if it's 8 minutes. [Laughter.]

Admiral, do you want to make a comment? My question is pretty straightforward, to be honest with you. Do you believe that a thorough review of the policy and the legislation needs to be conducted before repeal?

Admiral OLSON. Yes, sir, I do.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you.

General PETRAEUS. And, Senator, let me just answer that. I believe the time has come to consider a change to "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," but I think it should be done in a thoughtful and deliberative manner that should include the conduct of the review that Secretary Gates has directed; that would consider the views in the force on a change in the policy; it would include a—an assessment of the likely effects on recruiting, retention, morale, and cohesion; and would include a—an identification of what policies might be needed in the event of a change, and recommend those policies, as well.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

And, as you've said, I believe, in my office, the likely effects could go in either direction. The likely effects on—could go in either direction, I believe you told me; either negative or positive, the study could show.

General PETRAEUS. It could, it could.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay.

General PETRAEUS. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks, to both of you, for your leadership.

General Petraeus, I just want to ask you a couple of quick questions about Iran, first. I thought your statement—your prepared testimony was very strong and clear, here. You describe Iran as, quote, "the primary state-level threat to stability in the region," add that its nuclear program is, to use your words, "serious," and, quote, "part of the regime's broader effort to expand its influence." I agree, of course.

You also mentioned, just in response to questions, that President Obama has said that the military option remains on the table. It's not our first choice, obviously; that's why we're pursuing economic sanctions.

I just want to reinforce the fact that, I believe, previously you've said that in the exercise of your responsibility at CENTCOM, you are working on actual military plans with regard to Iran, which, we all hope, you never have to use, but as the military works on contingency plans for a host of scenarios around the world. Is that correct?

General PETRAEUS. Sir, again, probably best for a closed session, but, I mean, as you know, we get paid to prepare for contingencies; it would be irresponsible if we didn't do that.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General PETRAEUS. And we try not to be irresponsible.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes. Well, you—because I know how responsible you are, I assume you're working on plans. So, I'll leave it at that for now.

Let me go to Iraq. It's—we've watched the election that's going on there now with great satisfaction. It's not a perfect situation, but when you think about the fact that, a little more than 3 years ago, it looked like Iraq was going to descend into chaos, and now we have a government operating, an economy coming together, increasing self-defense by Iraqi Security Forces—I was struck by the success of the united parties, as it were, the nonsectarian parties. And so, I look forward to continued progress there, though it not—will not—

I want to note, in your statement—these words are very important—that we've now gone from—there was a time when we'd say Iraq was—gains in Iraq were fragile and reversible. Today, I note in your statement, you say gains in Iraq—and I quote, "Gains in Iraq remain fragile and reversible, but increasingly less so," end of quote. I appreciate those four additional words.

I wanted to ask you whether, in light of all that, but understanding that they remain fragile and reversible, our gains in Iraq, whether it is still going to be possible, or we should desire to reach the—to draw down to 50,000 American troops in Iraq by September 1st of this year. It's obviously not a goal—a drawdown required by the status-of-forces agreement with Iraq. It's a good goal, but I'm sure you'd say—be the first to say that we don't want to arbitrarily go to it if we think there's significant risk of reversal as a result. So, give me your sense, at this moment, of whether we're going to be able to get down to the 50,000 by September 1st.

General PETRAEUS. I think we will be able to do that, Senator. I think that, in fact, we may reconfigure the force a bit over what we originally were thinking it would look like, say, 4 months ago, or so. We're constantly tinkering with it. There's a possibility that we may want to keep an additional brigade headquarters, as an example, but then slim out some of its organic forces and some of the other organic forces elsewhere. Headquarters really matter in these kinds of—because they're the element of engagement. And if, indeed, we think that there's a particularly fragile situation, say, in a certain area in the north, then we might—might do that. And that's something that we are looking at. But, we still believe that we will be able to stay on track to get down to that 50,000 figure.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Okay, that's encouraging. That would mean, I assume, that there'd potentially be a 7th Brigade headquarters.

General PETRAEUS. That's correct. That is a—that is one option that we are looking at, but still within the broad 50,000.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And I take it, from what you've said, that that probably would be in the areas of Kurdish-Arab conflict around Kirkuk, where I know—

General PETRAEUS. That's correct, Senator.

Senator LIEBERMAN.—that our forces, working with other forces there, have really helped to maintain stability.

General PETRAEUS. That's correct, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate that.

Let me go to Afghanistan with this question. There's been a lot of public discussion recently about reconciliation with senior Taliban leaders. Some senior officials in our coalition seem to be pushing really aggressively on the idea that we should try to cut some sort of deal with the Taliban, perhaps with the help of historic allies of theirs in Pakistan. Personally, I worry that these ideas are ill-advised, although I'm sure we all look forward to the time when there can be reconciliation, particularly beginning with lower-level Taliban, or probably not zealots. In that regard, I agree with Secretary Gates, that we need to first make the Taliban understand that they are destined to lose this fight, before any serious consideration of reconciliation at the higher levels can take place. And therefore, I worry that the current public talk about reconciliation is counterproductive. And I want to ask you what your view is on that.

General PETRAEUS. Well, I agree with Secretary Gates on that, Senator. I think, certainly, thinking ahead to that moment when perhaps the Taliban—and we're talking, now, senior-level Taliban—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Exactly.

General PETRAEUS.—because, indeed, there has been what's called "reintegration"—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General PETRAEUS.—at low- and mid-levels. In fact, yesterday—again, I've got to confirm it—but there were open reports about a couple of Taliban leaders coming in with their hands up. It is not an uncommon event over there; but, again, there are many low- and mid-level leaders. That's part of the strategy, is reintegration with our Afghan partners, very clearly, to, indeed, try to break off from the greater-Taliban movement, those who might become part of the solution instead of a continuing part of the problem.

On the other hand, reconciliation at the senior levels, as Secretary Gates has observed, is probably a bit unlikely, at the conditions that the Afghan Government has established for it, if, indeed, they are not feeling a considerably greater amount of pressure than they probably are right now. And so, that's what's behind Secretary Gates' view, and that happens to be my view, as well.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate that, and that's reassuring. Thank you very, very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wasn't going to ask this question, but you—General Petraeus, you spent quite a bit of time talking about the CERP program, and my favorite program is the partner programs that train and equip—1206, 1207, 1208 and the CCIF and IMET and all that.

General PETRAEUS. Right.

Senator INHOFE. The whole reason for this, initially, was to get more authority to the commanders in the field to be able to do things, to respond. We've had some really, I think—testimony that

talks about how much more effective it is if you're able to do this without going through a lot of the bureaucratic time delays that would come otherwise. I was—I'd like to know, since they're talking about 1207, which is the civilian-to-civilian portion of this, now kind of reverting more back to the way it was before, or at least having a greater State Department influence in it, do you see this is creating any kind of a problem, number one? And, number two, do you think, starting with this, that it may spread to some of the other elements of train and equip?

General PETRAEUS. Well, again, CERP—

Senator INHOFE. That's a policy thing that you may not have any—

General PETRAEUS.—CERP—hugely important. Want to continue it. Want to make sure we have the oversight that can guarantee to you and to the other committees, obviously, that we're responsibly overseeing the expenditure of taxpayer dollars. We are, indeed, trying to work very closely with our partners in AID, other civilian elements, to make sure that we do coordinate what we are doing in the field. And one of the achievements in Regional Command East, in particular, of ISAF, has been to build, literally, a civilian chain, if you will, that parallels the military chain all the way back to Kabul, and allows them to coordinate much more closely in their thresholds for various levels, and so forth, as you go up. I think that's working well. I think we have to continue it. We also, though, want to make sure that, again, it can be the responsive tool that it is; and so, we're sensitive to a sense, if there's too much bureaucracy building up, then that would defeat the purpose of it in the first place. So, we're trying to find that balance between a sufficient amount of coordination and oversight and still allowing the free use of it, if you will, in the way that it was intended.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, well, if you see that the effectiveness is impaired at all, if you'd let us know, that would be very helpful.

And would you agree with his comments, Admiral Olson, in—first of all, in these—all of these programs; and second, his comments about what changes might be coming, and what to look for?

Admiral OLSON. Absolutely, sir. I agree 100 percent. I think the 1206, 1207, 1208—and, as you mentioned, but which is often neglected in the conversation, the IMET funding—are absolutely key to success. And I applaud the initiative for CERP. I think that combatant commanders responsible for ultimate success—military success in the region ought to have the kind of responsiveness that CERP funds provide.

Senator INHOFE. And you also agree, then, because you have a broader responsibility, that the CERP transition—the CCIF in other areas is a good program.

Admiral OLSON. Yes, sir, I do.

Senator INHOFE. Admiral Olson, I've always been very sensitive to the training process in Afghanistan, and one reason is that, way back, probably 5 or 6 years ago, we had—our Oklahoma Guard over there was very active in the training of the trainers. And right now you have Special Forces and conventional forces that are involved in the training. How is that broken up?

Admiral OLSON. Sir, the Special Forces trainers—the cleanest way to divide it is that the Special Forces trainers are training their Afghan counterparts. They're in a program that originated as a commando training program, selecting battalions, kandaks, from the Afghan National Army and putting them through a 12-week training course that then created a commando program within the Afghan National Army. That's now been expanded slightly, or recently, to include a special forces counterpart within the Afghan National Army. Most of the training of the Afghan National Army—the raising of the army, if you will—is being done by—

Senator INHOFE. Okay.

Admiral OLSON.—our general-purpose force trainers.

Senator INHOFE. Good. Good.

And in terms of your responsibility in the special operations, the fact that you're not only dealing with a asymmetric threat, but also with the more conventional threats posed by North Korea and Iran—do you have the resources to be able to confront those threats, in your opinion?

Admiral OLSON. Sir, from a—yes, sir. Again, with the—depending on Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps for service com and support, we are in the tracking and planning business. To go beyond that, I think we should go into closed session.

Senator INHOFE. Do you think as the drawdown occurred—first of all, what's the ratio right now to special operations and conventional that are over there, in numbers of personnel?

Admiral OLSON. Sir, Special Operations Forces number about, oh, plus or minus 10 percent, roughly 6,000—

Senator INHOFE. Roughly 10 to 1.

Admiral OLSON.—each in Iraq and Afghanistan, relative to just about 100,000 in Iraq now, as that draws down and as Afghanistan moves up again.

Senator INHOFE. So, when the drawdown occurs, would you see somewhat of a proportional drawdown? Or, do you have any thoughts on that?

Admiral OLSON. No, sir. We don't expect to see that. In all my conversations with General Odierno and General Petraeus, it's my expectation that the level of Special Operations Forces will remain about constant in Iraq.

Senator INHOFE. Okay, let me just—I have a final question, General Petraeus—or, for both of you, really. When—as we continue to fund Pakistan's efforts—you know, I've read it on several things that have—a concern has resonated, at least with me, that we might be inadvertently getting those fundings to the wrong places, like the Pakistan-based jihadists, either through the madrassas that—I'm not sure I pronounced that right, but the educational institutions—or the Federal funds going to Pakistan. What kind of cautions—precautions are we taking to make sure they don't get to the wrong people?

General PETRAEUS. Well, the security force funding elements are going directly to the security forces. Again, any of the different categories of funding that we have for them—whether it's foreign military financing, IMET, Pakistani Counterinsurgency Capability Fund, 1206, whatever—these all buy either equipment, training, or education for members of the Pakistani military.

Senator INHOFE. Okay.

General PETRAEUS. So I—I'm confident that that money is going where it should.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, that's good. There have been a few articles that have been written that have drawn some question to that, and I felt that was the case.

Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

Gentlemen, thank you for your service.

General Petraeus, can you give us your initial evaluation of the election in Iraq? It appears that—well, let me ask. In terms of, sort of, the sectarian lines—there has been a lot of discussion—Senator Lieberman mentioned—of the—these nonsectarian alliances, but the results of the votes appear to strengthen some of the sectarian positions.

General PETRAEUS. Well, the—Prime Minister Maliki's State of Law coalition is the leader, overall, if you will, and it will certainly not get a majority; it will get a plurality. Second, interestingly, appears to be, although it's very close, former Prime Minister Allawi's coalition. He, of course, is a Shi'a leader of a coalition that has substantial Sunni backing. And, in fact, he was the lead—his was the leading coalition in many of the Sunni-majority provinces. Very close to him is the coalition of the Supreme Council and Sadrists and Prime Minister Jaafari's party, Chalabi's party, so that is in there, as well. And then the Kurdish—if you will, overall number of Kurdish votes is in there, also.

At the end of the day, clearly there will have to be, at the very least, cross-ethnic coalitions. There will certainly have to be Arab and Kurd, without question. And I think what remains to be seen is how much cross-sectarian coalition-building will take place. And that will be the dynamic, I think.

Senator REED. You expect this process of selecting a new government to stretch for several months?

General PETRAEUS. Yes, we do.

Senator REED. And one of the interesting results is the apparent success of Sadr and his party, or at least his grouping—

General PETRAEUS. Again, I don't know if it would be a surprise, candidly. I think, actually, the—sort of, the pollsters that—those who watch it would have predicted that. I—actually, I think the fact that Maliki's coalition is higher, actually, is quite significant.

And again, the question will be—you know, the parties don't have to stay with their coalition. They can join other coalitions. And that's going to be the interesting dynamic that plays out.

Senator REED. One final question about the elections. The Iranians were involved, at least in the sense of supporting, financially, some of the parties. What's your—what influence do you think it'll have—they'll have, given what we know preliminarily?

General PETRAEUS. Well, I think Iran, in the past, has had influence when it comes to deal brokering. They're not alone in that—in influencing those, certainly. Other actors in the region will have some degree of influence, as well. And I'm sure that they will continue to try to exercise that. The fact, however, that they were not

able to succeed in getting all of the Shi'a major parties to run as one coalition was quite significant, as that was a goal of theirs. The fact that, in the January 2009 elections, the parties most associated with them did not do all that well, was significant. Frankly, the fact that there was a strategic agreement is quite significant in that regard, as well.

So, you still have this dynamic that Ryan Crocker—Ambassador Ryan Crocker used to talk about, that there is a certain degree of self-limiting aspect to some of Iran's influence, given that Iraq does not want to be the 51st state, if you will, of Iran, in that it is very conscious of its Arab identity, versus the Persian identity.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Admiral Olson, can you comment about Yemen? I know it's an area that you're concerned with. And then I'll ask General Petraeus afterwards. It is a country beset with huge problems. They're depleting their oil resources; they're depleting their water resources; they have demographic challenges, a youthful population; they've got a civil war, despite al Qaeda. With that good news, besides saving money on your car insurance, what can you tell us?

[Laughter.]

Admiral OLSON. Sir, Yemen is clearly a place that's being challenged. And I second what General Petraeus said about the rising presence of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and their focus on Yemen as a place where they are seeking some sanctuary.

Our involvement, from the special operations community, is relatively low-level. We have a relatively small training engagement with certain Yemeni forces. But, beyond that, sir, I think we'd have to go into closed discussion—

Senator REED. Right.

Admiral OLSON.—to talk about specific activities.

Senator REED. General Petraeus, you want to comment further, on—

General PETRAEUS. I'd just second the motion.

Senator REED. Very good.

Let me switch to Pakistan. The Quetta Shura appears to be dispersing to Karachi and elsewhere. And is that a result of what you talked about, the different orientation of the Pakistani Armed Forces and Security Services? Are they putting real pressure on the Quetta Shura?

General PETRAEUS. I think there's a number of factors in play. That may be one of them. Certainly, pressure—actually, just in Afghanistan—is yet another factor, and just perceptions, I think, or fears that have resulted from that campaign, from the campaign by the Pakistani Army and Frontier Corps in what—albeit, targeted at the Pakistani Taliban, as distinguished from the Quetta Shura or Afghan Taliban. But, of course, several Afghan Taliban shadow governors, Mullah Baradar and others, detained in Pakistan, just as there have been some also in Afghanistan. I think just feeling a bit more pressure, worried about what might be out there in the future, perhaps, has resulted in some of this dispersal.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

Thank you, gentlemen.

Thank you, Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, as we continue down this road of trying to make sure that we recruit and retain the finest men and women that America has to offer, it's the two of you guys that our junior officers, mid-level career folks continue to look to; you're providing the right kind of leadership that's going to allow us to retain those folks. So, thank you for the great work you do.

General Petraeus, I want to go back to what Senator Lieberman was talking about, relative to meeting this goal of 50,000 troops in Iraq by the end of August. General Odierno, as well as General Cucolo have recently expressed some concern about the fact that we're going to need some, probably, buffer-zone-type troops, maybe a BCT, in the northern end, because of the Iraqi National Forces and the Kurdish Regional Forces issue up there. Is that going to be a part of this plan that you're talking about, from a disbursement standpoint, or are you—is this going to be some additional—

General PETRAEUS. No. This would be for—

Senator CHAMBLISS.—troops we're going to need?

General PETRAEUS. Our goal right now, Senator—and we think we're on track to do that, to achieve it—is to reach the 50,000 with—possibly with some rescoping. Again, as was mentioned, possibly a 7th Brigade headquarters, not necessarily all of the brigade's elements; don't need all of those. What we need are headquarters. Headquarters matter enormously when you're coming down, because they are the engagement element that is there, and particularly in an area where our contributions, as honest brokers and so forth, are important. That is seen as, again, an option that we're looking at. No decision's been made on that yet. And again, the intent would be to do that within the 50,000, so it would be a rescoping of the force, rather than an increase.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Okay.

General, the—two of the issues that we've had ongoing in Afghanistan are the rule of law, or lack thereof, as well as a corruption issue in the government. Can you bring us up to date on both those issues, please?

General PETRAEUS. Well, the rule of law—again, three elements of that. As always, police—much more emphasis on not only training police, but also on partnering with them and insisting that, before they actually put the uniform on, that they receive training. And so, this is all part of, as I mentioned, getting the inputs right and the concepts right. Those are among those.

The detention side of that, the corrections side, we're working hard to help them. State INL does it with the Afghans, directly. We're doing it with an element that will eventually be able to take over the detention facility that we have at Bagram, a goal that we have for early next year; and that is on track, so far.

And then, the judicial leg of the three-legged stool of rule of law is an area that I think everyone agrees there needs to be greater effort. There have been additional resources and partnering activities carried out, with a special element in Kabul that has, indeed, been productive; supported by the FBI and DOJ, as well. And we

think that is an effort, overall, that is going to need to expand over time, just as, frankly, we had to do in Iraq, as well.

With respect to corruption, President Karzai announced his anticorruption campaign. There have been some actions taken to remove corrupt individuals, and there is no question that there need to be more.

Senator CHAMBLISS. With respect to prisoners that we have arrested and are being detained at Bagram, the President looks like he's committed to moving down a path of closing Guantanamo. What are we going to do with all those battlefield combatants that we have picked up and are now being housed at Bagram?

General PETRAEUS. Well, again, what we're doing with respect to those that are at Bagram is, indeed, preparing a plan to transition control of that to an Afghan corrections force that we are training, equipping, and will mentor and partner with. We won't just hand it to them and leave; we will provide continuing partnering with them for some period of time. That's the plan for what we want to do in Bagram.

Senator CHAMBLISS. At this point in time, are you confident that we're going to be able to take those prisoners who are comparable to the remaining prisoners that we have at Guantanamo, and that the Afghans are going to be able to deal with them a way that doesn't put them back on the battlefield, either in Afghanistan or potentially in some other country around the world, including maybe the United States?

General PETRAEUS. Well, that is certainly what we're endeavoring to do. That also includes rehabilitation efforts; it includes engaging tribal leaders and mullahs and families—again, as we did, frankly, in Iraq. And I might note that, in Iraq yesterday, we transitioned the Taji detainee facility. We're now down somewhere in the 2,000 to 2500 number of detainees from some 27,000 that we had there during the height of the surge. And that is quite an accomplishment, really, for those of our elements that have been engaged in that, including at various times, Colonel Lindsey Graham, U.S. Air Force, but also the—very much the Iraqi Security Force elements that are in charge of that now. And again, we don't just hand off to them; we train, we equip, we mentor, we monitor, and so forth.

Senator CHAMBLISS. I'm always concerned about the security of our country when Colonel Graham is in theater over there. [Laughter.]

The glide path—

Chairman LEVIN. Let me give Senator Graham an extra minute on his time to—[Laughter.]

Senator CHAMBLISS. He needs more than that to defend himself. [Laughter.]

The glide path for troop strength in Afghanistan and the collateral issue of training the security forces in Iraq, are we on the right glide path? Are we going to be able to meet that goal, of next year?

General PETRAEUS. Are you—you're talking about Afghanistan?

Senator CHAMBLISS. Yes, Afghanistan.

General PETRAEUS. Not—in terms of the deployment of the additional forces, we made the commitment to the President to have

them all there by the end of August, with the exception of a division headquarters that's not needed by that time, so it's about 99 percent of the 30,000. We are on track to do that. I can tell you that transportation command, the logisticians of the world, and others, have done absolutely magnificent work to enable that, and to also get their equipment into theater so that they have what they need, obviously, shortly after they get there, or beforehand. That's on track.

We're somewhere close to the 10,000 mark of the 30,000. It's increased a good bit recently. And again—touch wood—that's on track.

With respect to the Afghan National Security Forces, we are behind a bit on the Afghan National Army side, somewhere around 1300 or so below the glide path that we need to be on to take us to that additional figure that we've talked about out in the future for them. As I mentioned, the combination of additional army and police will be somewhere around 100,000 over the next 18 months or so.

So, clearly there's going to have to be greater recruiting and better retention on the part of the Afghan National Army. That's the goal. It is an important reason that Afghan leaders have to grip this, and that's exactly what they have done, as I think Senator Levin mentioned. And we also have to expand the training capacity there, and that's linked to the need for the additional trainers; there's no question about that. And that is, again, part of General Caldwell's plan with NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Akaka.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to add my welcome to Admiral Olson and General Petraeus and thank you very much for your leadership and your distinguished service to our country. Also, thank you, the men and women that you lead, and also their families, for the support that they give our troops. We're really grateful.

General Petraeus, Afghan forces are taking an important part in operations. Many times, lead and even making up the bulk of forces involved, Afghan soldiers and police forces must not only expand greatly in a short amount of time, but they must be trained to a higher standard in order to—for them to gain the trust and confidence of the people. I believe a—well-trained and properly-sized Afghan National Army and Police Forces are a prerequisite to America leaving Afghanistan.

My question to you, General, are, What are the most difficult obstacles to successfully building the Afghan National Army and Police Forces? And how are we coping with these obstacles?

General PETRAEUS. Senator, you're exactly right, this is a critical element, a component, of the overall strategy. Among the challenges is insufficient training capacity. Right now, again, with this authorization of the additional forces, we need to ramp up the capacity to train them. And that's not just basic recruit training, but it's also, if you will, "branch" training for the different elements of the military and the police, it is leader training, it's development of institutions, as well as just basic trainees.

A challenge there, beyond needing more trainers and, in some cases, more facilities, is also the challenge of illiteracy. As you know, illiteracy runs somewhere in the 70-or-so-percent range in Afghanistan, a bit less in the cities, a bit more in the rural areas; and obviously that's a challenge if you want the police to be able to read the laws that they should be enforcing. And so, there is actually going to be a modest component of literacy training made part of the training plans. It will be brought in a bit at a time, and we'll work with this, but to see if that can help with the effort as we go forward, as well.

I think that the facilities, the equipping, and the other components—again, there are some challenges there, but those are generally surmountable. And really, I think, it comes back to the issues of having the numbers of trainers and then partner elements over time. And then, frankly, dealing with a culture in which there is a—acceptance of a degree of corruption in which tribal norms, and so forth, intrude, understandably, as well.

Senator AKAKA. Admiral Olson and General Petraeus, I believe we must grow our—since you mentioned the culture—we must grow our foreign language capability. There seems to be an emphasis within DOD to improve these capabilities so that our servicemembers can better perform counterinsurgency and stability operations. Admiral and General, what are your impressions regarding the DOD's efforts to develop servicemembers' cultural knowledge and foreign-language skills to better perform traditional and nontraditional warfighting activities?

Admiral?

Admiral OLSON. Sir, I applaud the efforts of the Department and the services to increase language skills, and regional and sub-regional and microregional expertise along with it. I think that they are progressing in that regard. I think that they are demonstrating much more effectiveness in projecting a relatively shallow level of language and regional skills across a very broad force. We're still challenged to steep people in the environments, develop true expertise, native-level language—sort of, native-born regional skills, if you will. But, the discussions are taking place, and I think the latest QDR and the latest budget submission highlight those requirements.

Senator AKAKA. General Petraeus?

General PETRAEUS. Senator, again, I also agree with the need. And again, it's not just language, it's cultural awareness and appreciation, as well. There have been a number of initiatives pursued—again, some of them at a fairly shallow level—entry level, if you will—but, that is very, very helpful for our forces. But, then beyond that, there are other initiatives, including targeted recruiting, reenlistment bonuses, proficiency pays, and others, to try to demonstrate the Department's recognition of the importance of language proficiency.

With respect to Afghanistan and Pakistan, in fact, there's a program called the Af-Pak Hands Program, led out of the Joint Staff, but with both of our headquarters involved in it, and the services, as well, to develop, indeed, individuals who have a real understanding of the culture, language, history, and so on, of Afghanistan, and of Pakistan, as well, and then do repetitive tours, either

out in the region or in assignments back in the States, that keep them working in that particular arena.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Akaka.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The 96-hour rule, General—I understand, that's under review, and we're getting some relief from that rule. Is that correct?

General PETRAEUS. In fact, there is, Senator. The Secretary of Defense has approved, in a sense, a U.S. caveat, if you will, that goes along with our transitioning of authority of U.S. Forces to NATO control, and it includes up to 14 days for interrogation, for analysis, and then, in some cases, for those who need longer detention, that is also available, as well.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, I want to thank you for leading that charge, because I think our warfighters will appreciate that, particularly the marines down south. And has that been well-received by the force?

General PETRAEUS. It has, sir. And again, as you know, if you want to live your values, you have to set conditions in which our troopers can do just that.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, thank you. Thank you. Yes, I'm glad as—you've been given some relief, because the old rule just didn't make a whole lot of sense. And I think the new way forward does make sense.

We've talked a little bit about Iran. From your point of view, how much time is available to the world before Iran gets a nuclear weapon, given what they're doing today?

General PETRAEUS. Again, probably best for a closed session, but—

Senator GRAHAM. Gotcha.

General PETRAEUS.—but, I mean, it has, thankfully, slid to the right a bit, and it is not this calendar year, I don't think.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. But, it's not forever, either.

General PETRAEUS. It is not infinite.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay.

Now, my favorite topic: detainees. I just want to let the committee know that you and Doug Stone and others involved with Camp Bucca is probably one of the great, great success stories of Iraq, maybe military history, really, turning a prison around that was a recruiting center for the enemy and becoming part of the COIN operations. And I just want to put on the record how much I appreciate what you all were able to do with Camp Bucca, to turn it into a model military prison that would rehabilitate people. And those that were irreconcilable were segregated out, and it was just—it is a great success story.

But, that takes us, now, to Afghanistan. Detention operations over there are part of this surge, I would think. Is that correct?

General PETRAEUS. They are, Senator. And, in fact, your former wingman, Colonel—now Brigadier General—Mark Martins, is, in fact, a full-time resident of the area of Bagram that—of the detention facility there, now called the Parwan detention facility. He is spearheading the effort, first of all, to ensure absolutely the same

kinds of initiatives are pursued there that you saw firsthand in Iraq, and then to develop—to help develop the concepts, and then implement the concepts, for Afghan Forces to be trained, equipped, and then take on the tasks there, increasingly, so that we can step back as—in a number of areas in which, over time, we'll need to step back. And that's the plan for there.

His boss, Vice Admiral Harward, the—in fact—

Senator GRAHAM. Right.

General PETRAEUS.—out of the SEAL community, I might add—is the overall Task Force 435 commander. He—Colonel Martins—General Martins is the deputy. Vice Admiral Harward is overseeing the overall effort, also working more with our State Department colleagues, INL and others, to ensure that the Afghan facilities, say, outside Kabul and Kandahar and other places, are also conducting their business appropriately. And there are also partnerships of the future in some of the other rule-of-law areas, as well.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

Do we have people at Bagram—in Bagram confinement facility that are non-Afghan foreign fighters?

General PETRAEUS. We do. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. And is it fair to say—I mean, we need a closed session, eventually, about this, Mr. Chairman, but just kind of put out for public consumption, the best I can, that we have a dilemma in this war; we're running out of jail space for certain people, and we need to find confinement facilities that work. Would you support sending Guantanamo Bay detainees to Afghanistan, to Bagram? Is that a good idea? Some have suggested that.

General PETRAEUS. I think that, at the very least, over time, that's an idea that we need to go sit under a tree until it passes, I think.

Senator GRAHAM. I'll take that to be, "That's not a good idea."

General PETRAEUS. It's a—again, if we transition this to Afghan control, as we should—

Senator GRAHAM. But, I'm talking about taking Gitmo people here, and sending them to Afghanistan. Wouldn't that create great problems for the Afghan Government if you did that?

General PETRAEUS. Well, again, this is why I think that we need to think pretty hard about that. Again, we're going to transition this facility to Afghan control.

Senator GRAHAM. Right.

General PETRAEUS. And we're going to do it in the relatively—

Senator GRAHAM. Right.

General PETRAEUS.—near term, in the course of a year.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, these foreign fighters that we're talking about, are the Afghans willing to take them?

General PETRAEUS. Sir, again, I—you're—I'd defer to the Department of Justice or others, because it—this is a big policy issue. It is one that people are certainly—

Senator GRAHAM. Well, isn't it fair to say, General, there are some prisoners in Afghanistan, that are non-Afghan, held by the American military, that it may be very difficult to convince the Afghans to take them, or it may not be wise to send them to the Afghans. Is that a fair summary?

General PETRAEUS. Well, sir, you're the lawyer, and I—we're happy to have you—

Senator GRAHAM. Well, just say yes, then. [Laughter.]

General PETRAEUS. I mean, the fact is, though, that they—those individuals, there, broke the laws in Afghanistan.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes.

General PETRAEUS. And so, you know, again, as we're transitioning to—

Senator GRAHAM. Sure.

General PETRAEUS.—Afghanistan, that's an Afghan legal issue. But, again, I'll be happy to defer to the legal community.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. Admiral Olson, we catch somebody in Yemen. Where do we send them?

Admiral OLSON. Sir, that—that's a question that, on so many levels, we would have to go into a closed session—

Senator GRAHAM. Okay, fair enough.

Admiral OLSON.—to—

Senator GRAHAM. Fair enough.

Last question. General Petraeus, you've indicated in the past—and, I think, very eloquently—that Gitmo—the jail, Gitmo—is counterproductive to the war effort and, if possible, should be closed. Could you tell me why you believe that?

General PETRAEUS. It—rightly or wrongly, and probably wrongly, because I think that they—that that facility by—and many of you have visited it—actually is conducted in an appropriate manner, but, at the very least, it has a symbol attached to it that is one that is used in our area of responsibility against us. It, in some cases, is even lumped in with Abu Ghraib. Completely different case, there's no reason to do that, but again, it has become iconic in certain respects, and those are not helpful respects in the CENTCOM AOR.

Senator GRAHAM. And one last, very simple question, Isn't it true that some of our allies refuse to turn prisoners over to us if they believe they could work their way to Gitmo?

General PETRAEUS. Sir, I do—I don't know the answer to that question.

Senator GRAHAM. You've never had an ally tell you that, "We can't turn a prisoner over to the Americans if they're going to go to Gitmo"?

General PETRAEUS. I—first of all, I'm not sure we've sent anybody to Gitmo in—on my watch as the CENTCOM Commander, with respect, so I—it is not—

Senator GRAHAM. We haven't sent anybody to Gitmo on your watch?

General PETRAEUS. I—sir, I—

Senator GRAHAM. Okay.

General PETRAEUS. I don't—I think—

Senator GRAHAM. I think you're right. I think you're right.

General PETRAEUS. Fifteen, 18 months, now, so—

Senator GRAHAM. Okay, thanks.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

Senator Ben Nelson.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, gentlemen, for your service and for being here with us today.

General Petraeus, we've heard, from all of the services, that combatant commanders have difficulty getting enough ISR. And this budget starts to address that by adding more UAVs, but the focus has primary been on the number of aircraft and not on the personnel required to operate the aircraft and analyze the intelligence collected. In some respects, it seems to me that the easier part may be getting the UAVs, the tougher part may be in manning the UAV mission, in terms of staffing as well as intelligence. Can you give us your opinion on this overall picture of ISR personnel versus equipment?

General PETRAEUS. I'd be happy to, sir. In fact, there's something called the F3EAD process—that is, Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze—or Assess—and Disseminate. Of that, the hardware you've just talked about, what might be on a UAV, is a subset of that. It's a very, very critical subset—

Senator BEN NELSON. Yes.

General PETRAEUS. But, again, without all the people that do the tasks associated with the Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze, and Disseminate process, it certainly is not fully exploited to the extent that we need to. We have actually spent quite a bit of time pulling back up to strategic level, when folks start talking procurement issues, and talking about the overall intelligence process that involves, again, these various platforms, and a whole host of other platforms and capabilities. And, in fact, I think that the Air Force is to be commended for the enormous shifts that it has made, in particular, to man all of these different elements, and the same for, obviously, the other services, and the intelligence community more broadly.

Senator BEN NELSON. Well, the—between the Army and the Air Force the fiscal year 2011 budget request includes about 1.6 billion to buy 77 Predator-class UAVs. And by 2016, both Services project to have spent 10.2 billion on 499 of these UAVs. In looking at the unmanned platforms and the requirements for staffing to fit all of those requirements, is there adequate coordination between the services to get that done so that we don't end up with a stovepiping of each branch having its own approach to dealing with this?

General PETRAEUS. There is, sir. In fact, in OSD there's an ISR task force that looks at this very broadly, and it analyzes it, together with the services, for—all the way down to the tactical level, on up to the strategic level. Again, it is a hugely important element of what we need out there. And again, hardware without the people is not sufficient, and they're addressing that.

Senator BEN NELSON. In achieving the goals, sometimes referred to as "benchmarks," can you take two of the major benchmarks and give us your impression of how we're doing on achieving those goals—two of the most important ones?

General PETRAEUS. Well, again, I hate to go back to hardware, but hardware is one of them, because we're—I think we've literally maxed out the production capacity in—I mean, there's been intense scrutiny on where every one of these platforms is. And then there's been equal scrutiny on what, again, is termed "the back end." It's everything that allows it to stay in the sky, or a—a line, as we call

it, to stay in the sky for 24 hours a day, to provide the unblinking eye.

I think, in each of those areas, we—I think we’ve pushed, again, industry about as far as it can go, is my understanding. And I think we’ve got—the personnel pipeline has been expanded dramatically—again, not just in terms of those who pilot these unmanned systems, but also in terms of all of the others who are doing the Exploit, Analyze, Disseminate piece.

And fusion. Because the real breakthrough in intelligence, in recent years, has been fusion of imagery, human intelligence, signals intelligence, measurement intelligence. It’s been pulling all of that together. That’s the real key.

Senator BEN NELSON. We’re in the midst of implementing a new missile defense plan in Europe, called Phased Adaptive Approach. And, of course, one of the benefits of this, it allows for an immediate missile defense against—system—against Iran. What impact does the approach have affecting regional stability in the AOR?

General PETRAEUS. Well, we’re looking at the ballistic missile defense, frankly, in the AOR itself. We have made our requirements known to the department, and also there’s, obviously, an effort to tie in what we do, because now it’s all about shared early warning, and again, sharing across combatant commands. And so, as the deployment sequences are sorted out, we will then tie in with our European Command brethren in making sure that what we see, they see, and vice versa.

Senator BEN NELSON. And an area that has more intrigue perhaps than others, piracy in the vicinity. How much of our time and our financial resources and personnel and equipment would be assigned to dealing with the piracy in the vicinity that is within the AOR?

General PETRAEUS. It’s not a substantial portion of NAVCENT, but it is a—an important mission that the Naval component of Central Command performs. But, it does so, together with a coalition maritime force, and also with EU, NATO, and even independent elements, including China; and Russia has been out there, as well. Ultimately, Senator, the key there is going to be maritime shipping companies taking more defensive measures, including up to, we think, at some point, armed security elements.

We have changed our tactics and so forth, as well. We’ve learned a lot about the networks that carry out the pirate attacks, which are really quite extraordinary; in some cases up to 5-, 600 nautical miles off the coast of Somalia, in very open boats with lots—big, huge, 55-gallon drums of fuel throughout them, and their other paraphernalia.

But, it’s a very challenging mission, because we have the authorities relative to pirates only that police have relative to an alleged criminal. This is not the declared hostile enemy for a military force; it is a reduced set of authorities, if you will, that we have in this arena. And so, if you then detain a pirate, you are right back to the question of, Who do you turn them over to? There are not authorities in Somalia that will deal with them. We’ve made arrangements with some neighboring countries in the region, but some of their facilities are starting to get fairly full.

Senator BEN NELSON. Well, with respect to those authorities—and my time is up—is that something we should be looking at, in terms of rules of engagement, if we're going to be patrolling and protecting those arenas? I realize it's very sensitive.

General PETRAEUS. It is a sensitive one, sir. And we've offered this to the policy arena. It becomes an international legal issue, again, and so forth. And I think the U.N. has given about the authorities that, generally, the international community is willing to provide.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you.

Thanks, to both of you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Admiral and General, thank you very much for your extraordinary service to our country during some very interesting and dangerous times.

General Petraeus, the advanced weapons systems designed for anti-access and area-denial are being proliferated through the world, including in the CENTCOM area of responsibility. Iran, for example, is seeking to purchase one of the latest, most advanced surface-to-air-missile systems, the Russian S-300. I'm interested in what your views are with regard to the activities by the Iranians to pursue some of these anti-access and area-denial strategies.

General PETRAEUS. All right. And, in fact, with respect to the S-300, I think you know that has not been delivered. And there's quite a bit of focus, in fact, on that, whether it will be delivered, because it would represent a significant increase in the capability—air and missile defense capability of the Iranian forces.

There's no question that they are trying to increase their anti-access capabilities against maritime as well as air threats. It's something that we watch, and that regional partners and others in that area watch very closely, as well.

Senator THUNE. What's your view on the pursuit of these—this strategy by Iran, and how it would affect our ability to project power in the Middle East—specifically, in the Gulf of Iran and the Strait of Hormuz?

General PETRAEUS. Well, we—

Senator THUNE. If they are successful in their pursuit of these.

General PETRAEUS. Well, again, we have a—you know, the most capable military in the world. We can deal with the threats that are there, but they make it more difficult. I mean, that's basically the short answer to that, without getting into the specifics of each type of system and what we have in return.

We think, for example, that we could keep the Strait of Hormuz open, in the event of a crisis, if we are properly positioned, and so forth. But, again, that—these are—that would be a challenging task. And again, these are the kind of tasks that we have to be prepared to perform.

Senator THUNE. General, I wanted to get your views, too, on the development of the air-sea battle concept that's currently underway in the Pentagon. The new QDR directs the Navy and the Air Force to develop a joint air-sea battle concept for defeating adversaries with some of these anti-access and area-denial capabilities that I

just mentioned, which, in turn, will help guide the development of future capabilities that will be needed for effective power-projection operations. And some of these anti-access and area-denial weapons can be low-tech weapons, such as mines and—or small boats—small boats using swarm tactics, and sometimes can be as effective—just as effective in creating these denied areas. Could you, kind of, give us your views on the development of this new air-sea battle concept, so far? Where does CENTCOM fit into the overall concept and development and evaluation, and ultimately, the implementation of that concept?

General PETRAEUS. We are being consulted on that, but I can't really give you all that much, because it is very much in the early conceptual stages at this point in time. The truth is, our focus, as a combatant command, is on dealing with what we know exists right now, and could exist in the near term with what we have right now, and know we'll have in the near term. That really is our focus, although we, again, do get the opportunity to contribute to the services developing these concepts.

Senator THUNE. Okay. Your—it's not like—it's not, I mean, they're—I assume they're consulting and there are—

General PETRAEUS. Absolutely.

Senator THUNE.—discussions—okay—that are occurring.

Do you have a view about how long-range strike capabilities would fit into that kind of a battle concept, an air-sea battle concept?

General PETRAEUS. I—again, I—unless we get into real specifics, I'm not sure where I would head with that. I mean, we've—

Senator THUNE. Okay.

General PETRAEUS.—we've got a variety of long-range strike capabilities, as you know.

Senator THUNE. Right.

General PETRAEUS. Some, quite impressive. We've used some of those in recent years, certainly. And, again, I—without really—

Senator THUNE. Right.

General PETRAEUS.—getting into the details of the concepts—

Senator THUNE. Okay.

Let me ask one other question, if I might, having to deal with Afghanistan. Let me find it, here. It has to do with the intelligence operations there—military intelligence. And I'd direct this both to you, General, and to you, Admiral, if you're—as well. Major General Michael Flynn, who's the top military intelligence officer in Afghanistan, published what he titled, "A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan." The report notes that, and I quote, "Our intelligence apparatus still finds itself unable to answer fundamental questions about the environment in which we operate and the people we're trying to protect and persuade." I would pose this question to both of you, do you agree with General Flynn's overall assessment in this report? What actions have you—are you taking in response to that report? And have any of the initiatives that he directs in the report been carried out?

General PETRAEUS. In fact, Senator, when I—when we conducted the strategic assessment that's customary with a new commander coming in to a position like that of Central Command, one of the biggest of the big ideas was that our capacity and capability for Af-

ghanistan and Pakistan was not adequate. And, in fact, I went to Admiral Blair, early on, and asked if he would appoint a mission manager for Af-Pak; he did one better, he appointed an associate deputy director of national intelligence for that. We then set about beefing up the capability and capacity there, including sending General Flynn there, among others, of course, to help build that. We formed a Center of Excellence for Af-Pak in the Joint Intelligence Center at Central Command. The Af-Pak Cell, or PAC Cell as it's called in the Joint Staff, has also done the same. And so, what we've tried to do, as part of the overall effort, is just to build the capability that we had. This is not unlike what we did in Iraq, actually, as well. In early 2007, one of the first requests I made, before even going to take command in MNFI, was from—a substantial augmentation of our intelligence capability. We got that, and we've been working on providing that kind of augmentation in Afghanistan, as well.

Senator THUNE. Okay.

Anything to add, Admiral?

Admiral OLSON. Sir, I think it's natural for the early energy of the intelligence community to be focused on identifying the immediate threats to our force, but as the battlefield has evolved, the transition into using intelligence capabilities to better develop our understanding of the environment, and to seek opportunities for engagement, is a transition that I applaud.

Senator THUNE. Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Thune.

Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for your continued service to our country. And I'm especially proud that both of you reside in my State, in the wonderful area of Tampa.

Gentlemen, last week I did a hearing for the Chairman in our Emerging Threats Subcommittee on the increased radicalization of young men and the extremist elements that are so bedeviling the civilized world. And the conclusion that came out of a lot of the testimony in this hearing was that we could continue to do everything that we are doing very well—that the military is doing, just exceptionally well, particularly in the responsibility that you give to these young officers with the CERP funds, that they can go in and help a village, a community, and it helps us, ultimately, from our military objectives. And we talked about how all the other agencies of government, working with the military in a place like Afghanistan—agriculture, health, digging wells, education—all of these things are so important, but that if you don't get right to it, about the radicalization of young men by presenting Islam as something that it is not—that is not taught in the Koran—that you're still going to have these extremists that'll go out and blow themselves up and threaten stability. I'd love to have your comments on that conclusion.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, I think this really gets at the heart at—one of the big ideas out there, which is that it takes much more than just military security activities, it takes whole-of-governments approaches. And, not just our government, but host-

nation governments, all other partners. Because, indeed, you have to get at the conditions that give rise to extremism, to the kind of discontent, and so forth, and unfulfilled expectations and all of the rest of that, that can give rise to extremism, and you have to get at the issues of actual education, in some cases, which, again, in some cases, creates fertile ground for the planting of extremist seeds, as well. And, again, that takes a very comprehensive approach; it is one that some of our partners in the region have actually done quite well in recent years, if you look at some of the countries in the Arabian Peninsula, in particular; some others have not. But, that is the kind of approach that is necessary to this overall challenge.

Admiral OLSON. Senator, I agree with that completely. I'd just add that the Department of Defense plan for addressing a violent extremist threat does include actions led by the military, as you laid it out, to conduct the traditional military kinds of actions, but it also lends strong military support to the whole-of-government, whole-of-nations approach to dealing with the environment.

Senator BILL NELSON. If you are as successful as you have been, certainly in Iraq and, we hope, in Afghanistan, and now in our relations that—through the Pakistani government, that they are successful, too—but, yet if young men are led astray as to what the Koran teaches, and they're willing to go and commit suicide, that is going to continue to be a great hindrance to us. And I think we've got to look at this through our Northern Command, as well, the radicalization of young men here, inside the United States. But, that means we've got to be able to find clerics who know what true Islam is and are willing to go out and educate the ones that are being radicalized. How do we do that?

General PETRAEUS. Sir, I think the answer has to lie, needless to say, in the Islamic world. And it has to start there. And it has to be Islamic leaders who identify the issue that you have just raised about the importance of religious leaders who will—who have the courage to deny extremism as an aspect of Islam. Those leaders are out there; they are carrying out some of these initiatives. Some of their countries were threatened enormously by this extremism, correctly diagnosed the threat, and have then taken appropriate actions in the wake of that. And needless to say, that has to continue to spread to address this threat of extremism as you've laid it out.

Senator BILL NELSON. All right, you take a country like Saudi Arabia—now, they can deal with the radicalization problems by going to the tribes, which is the family of the young fellow that's been radicalized, and work at it that way. And they've had some measure of success in doing that. But, in other countries you can't do that, you can't work through the tribes.

So—my time is up—I want to lay the problem out. I want to continue to work with both of you and with the overall problem that's in this country, as well.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, just a follow up. I mean, Saudi Arabia has not just worked it through the tribes, frankly—which they have, and that's been an important component—they've done a very whole-of-government approach to this overall issue. And indeed, it has been quite impressive for a country that, 5 years ago,

was seriously threatened by extremists who blew up their Ministry of Interior building, so threatened foreign-oil workers that thousands of them departed, took over our consulate in Jeddah, and so forth. And again, what they have done has been quite impressive.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, gentlemen.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you.

Thank both of you for your service and—to our country. I—the more, I think, the American people see our men and women in uniform perform, the prouder they are of them. And I continue to talk to them in airports and places like that, and they're just an inspiration to me. And—but, good leadership is important, it does make a difference, and you're providing that. Thank you so much.

With regard to the training of the Afghan military and police, General Petraeus, your second tour, I guess, in Iraq was to come back and train there, and you spent, I guess, a year or so training a force. And I'm sure you developed some ideas about how that ought to be done. It seems to me that, if you've got a local defense force that's willing to defend their community against Taliban or al Qaeda—perfect training—if it's going to delay, dramatically, the ability of those people to be effective—is a danger. And I recall the al Anbar model, where we quickly got Sunni tribal leaders to empower their local young men to turn on al Qaeda, and that was an effective part of that effort.

So, I guess my question to you is—I see there's some tension in the State Department, or other people within the military, about how trained in Kabul or in—I'm talking, in theory here—how much—trained by the central government before they can be allowed to defend their home territories, and with a little salary and support of a good tribal leader or mayor or a community leader, much good can be done. Do you understand? Where are we? Are we demanding too much centralized training before we join with friendly local leaders?

General PETRAEUS. In fact, we are trying to take advantage of that in cases where that's appropriate, Senator, and to empower, in some cases, with good oversight and partnering, some local elements. It's called the Community Defense Initiative. Now I think there's eight or nine or so that are ongoing, these great Special Forces elements that are typically the ones partnering with them, tied into the Afghan Ministry of Interior, because it's very important that we not just empower warlords to stand up their forces—again, given the effort that it took to disperse and disarm a number of those elements.

Really, it is the same dynamic that we had in Iraq—different terrain, different culture, different social makeup and so forth. It's every valley, as opposed to larger tribal areas, say, in Anbar. But, in fact, in Anbar, over time—and we knew this in the beginning—the situation in Iraq was so desperate that we were willing to just take individuals who were willing to oppose al Qaeda, and then we would figure out afterwards how we were going to mesh them into the greater Iraqi structure. And it has taken us quite some time to do that, but it has happened; and, in fact, Iraq now pays the sal-

aries of all of the remaining so-called “Sons of Iraq” who still have not been provided jobs in various ministries, or what have you. And a number of them have, indeed, already transitioned in that form.

So, that’s what we have to be sensitive to here, as well; and recognizing that Afghanistan is a country that doesn’t have the financial means that Iraq has. And so, that’s yet another dynamic that we’re wrestling with.

But, we are, indeed, taking advantage of some of these opportunities, in very careful ways, in partnership with our Iraqi colleagues.

Senator SESSIONS. What strikes me—this is a large country—25, 23 million people—we’ll soon be drawing down our troop levels, many of them now are going to have to be concentrated in some of the more dangerous areas, and that leaves a lot of areas that we don’t have any presence in, or very little presence, so it seems to me that we may be desperate enough, we may have to take some chances with leaders we believe are pretty good local leaders, and see if we can’t support them. Do you agree?

General PETRAEUS. Well, there’s—some of this is going on naturally, as well. There are areas in which Afghans are the security forces, have been for some time; areas in the north, for example, where we have virtually no other presence than perhaps the force protection elements that work with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. So, again, there’s a variety, as always; these endeavors are somewhat of a patchwork quilt. And what you’re trying to find is the right answer for that particular location, and then to try to figure out how to make it an enduring answer, as well.

Senator SESSIONS. General Petraeus, with regard to the shortage of trainers, perhaps our trainers can be a little less skilled as trainers or something? It seems to me, that would be one area you really don’t want to be short on. Can we full—do you see the—how long it will be before we can get to sufficient number of trainers there?

General PETRAEUS. Well, let me just say that, again, what we would like to see right now is for our NATO partners to generate the additional trainers that have been requested. Again, in the theory of always having contingency plans, there are thoughts about how to fill that, if we have to, in other ways.

Senator SESSIONS. Admiral Olson, with regard to the CERP program and how you train our Special Operating Forces, isn’t it true that we believe the best policy of our government is to have a seamless relationship between government aid and our special operation forces, and that we use all of those factors—political, financial, as well as military—to achieve maximum progress toward our goals?

Admiral OLSON. Senator, I’d say it’s certainly true that the more interagency cooperation there is, the better the outcome typically is.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, with regard to the aid that’s going through USAID and State Department and other things, it seems to me that when you’ve got a skilled Special Operations Forces team in an area, and they really have little or no other U.S. Government presence there, aren’t they sort of the representative of the United States? And do you feel like they’re empowered sufficiently, financially, to make commitments with those leaders to—

if—to say, “If you will do this, we’ll do this”? And could that, if we had more—if they’re empowered greater, that they could be more effective in reducing violence and protecting the lives of our own people?

Admiral OLSON. Sir, I’d leave the answer regarding sufficiency to General Petraeus, because the money flows through him, for the most part.

It is true that Special Operations Forces often are somewhat more remote and do become, if not diplomats, at least representatives of the U.S. presence. And it is important that they be able to apply benefits in the regions where they live. And so, within the special operations community resides the active component of the civil affairs capability of the Army, for example, and that is a very strong—and strengthening a relationship between USAID and the special operations community in many of those regions.

Senator SESSIONS. General Petraeus, just—my time is out, but, briefly—you feel like that we’ve made progress in that area?

General PETRAEUS. I think—

Senator SESSIONS. And can we make more?

General PETRAEUS. I think we’ve made progress, but I think we can make more. In fact, one of the important elements of General McChrystal’s overall approach is to achieve greater unity of effort. And that means conventional forces, special forces, civilian elements, and so forth, all working together to a common aim, trying not to duplicate efforts, but—and trying to do it in a way that is as little bureaucracy as necessary, but recognizing that some of that is necessary. So, no, there is a need to do more in this area, and that is one of General McChrystal’s thrusts in his effort.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, I strongly support that.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral Olson and General Petraeus, as other members of the committee have already said, I thank you for your service to our country and for your testimony today.

You know, I am proud that North Carolina is home to the Joint Special Operations Medical Training Center at Fort Bragg. And, as you know, all special joint operations combat medics are trained at this facility to obtain the skills they need on the battlefield. Just several months ago, I had the opportunity to visit this facility and witness the great training that’s taking place there. But, I understand that combat medics need to have the capability to perform complicated procedures, often in the dark, in the middle of the night, and under hostile live-fire conditions in remote locations. I also understand that the DOD sees tremendous value in live-tissue training, especially since they’re faced with the task of taking these young men and women, with no prior medical schooling, and transforming them into combat trauma specialists in 26 weeks.

While simulators may hold promise, according to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, simulators currently lack the realism and the ability to replicate combat wounds and the emotional stress found on the battlefield. And also, moreover, all patients don’t bleed the same and—or react to medical procedures in the same fashion.

Admiral Olson, can you describe the operational and the institutional impact we would see if live-tissue training was stopped?

Admiral OLSON. Senator, there are many compelling examples of how live-tissue training has directly contributed to the preservation of human life on the battlefield. And I have not been exposed to any simulation, any technology that adequately substitutes for live-tissue training.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

I'm also pleased that the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and the Marine Corps Special Operations Command have developed a close relationship with the University of North Carolina. And the University of North Carolina recently signed a memorandum of agreement with both Special Operations Commands. This MOU includes, but is not limited to, cultural awareness and linguistic training, business practices, degree-completion opportunities, and a senior service college fellowship program.

My question is, Admiral Olson, can you provide your view on the educational needs of our special forces and how public and private universities can assist, and are you interested in creating a fellowship in counterterrorism and public policy for members of the U.S. Special Operations community?

Admiral OLSON. The way you've highlighted it really is a good example of how the military and the academic communities are interacting. The kind of support that we are—the kind of relationship that we've developed enables us to—in areas where we simply don't have the capacity within the military forces to perform that kind of training, that kind of education. I certainly would support an effort to create similar kinds of fellowships for specialized kinds of education, as you've described.

Senator HAGAN. You know, in that area—around the Fort Bragg area, the UNC system has 16 public universities, with Fayetteville State, NC State, Chapel Hill, all within a—very close—and then we have some excellent private universities, too, such as Duke University and Wake Forest, that does excellent work, too. So, I think this MOU will go a long way to helping, from educational needs, especially from the linguistics and cultural, for our men and women in the special operations in these special forces.

I also wanted to talk about the Iranian influence in Iraq. Despite the fact that the Iraqis are increasingly expressing their discontent with Iranian influence in Iraq, we need to keep in mind that Iraq has—that Iran has people in Iraq that it uses to drive a wedge between the Sunnis and the Shi'ites in Iraq, and these actions ignite the ethnosectarian tensions. These Iranian actions can undermine Iraqi security in the delicate political situation. How do you foresee DOD using its future relationship with the Iraqi Security Forces to steer Iraq's defense strategy and acquisition of weapon systems in order to avoid Iranian meddling that could jeopardize Iraq's stability?

General PETRAEUS. Well, in truth, Senator, I don't think we'll have to steer at all. Iraq's leaders and its security force leaders share a concern about neighbors who arm, train, fund, equip, and direct proxy elements on their soil. And they have continued to carry out operations against these illegal elements, and I'm confident that they will continue to do that in the future, even as we

draw down. They've conducted a number of unilateral operations against these elements, as well.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Senator Wicker.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Petraeus, Chairman Levin began, early on, asking about Iran. He mentioned the U.N. resolutions, asked about being more explicit about the possibility of a blockade or quarantine. You said that the President was explicit not to take the military option off the table. And you recently talked about combining engagement with Iranian leaders, backed up by the threat of further sanctions. And I think this is a quote of yours, "That puts us in a solid foundation now to go on what is termed the 'pressure track.' That's the course on which we're embarked now." And you alluded to that, but if you could explain a little more about what the "pressure track" will involve, and, if you could, tell us, Has anything the international community done so far yielded positive results? Do we have any success stories at all, with regard to all of these sanctions and options and all of the talk that we've done about Iran? And then, after that, I want to ask you about the dissidents in Tehran. But, if you'd answer the first part of it, I would appreciate it.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, first of all, again, over the course of last year, the effort has focused on the diplomatic track. All the countries of the world have given Iran ample opportunity to discuss the issues that are out there, and to try to resolve them. And, of course, that has not happened. And that—

Senator WICKER. Then it's totally unsuccessful.

General PETRAEUS. And that has led to what the President has—and others, the Secretary of State—have termed the "pressure track." And that is the effort now, with the U.N. Security Council and other countries, and other organizations, as well—the EU is involved in this, countries do it as single actors, and so forth—in a variety of different ways, everything from, you know, on the U.S. side, Treasury designations and a host of financial and trade restrictions, and so forth. And that is now about to ramp up, needless to say; that's what the increased pressure will result from.

With respect to what this has done in the past, indeed some of these actions have resulted in the interdiction of money, of weapons, of technology, and so forth. It has limited the—even the travel of some of the leaders of the key security elements, and so forth. So, there have been.

Now, has it dissuaded them from the path that some analysts believe they're on, in terms of developing the components of a nuclear weapon? You know, again, there may have been some initiatives that have made that more difficult—a good bit more difficult perhaps; but, that—again, I think the assessment of all is that that continues to march on.

Senator WICKER. Have we squandered precious time?

General PETRAEUS. I don't think so. In fact, I think that this has given us a foundation—a very firm foundation from which to work as we transition to the pressure track, in fact. No one can say that Iran has not had every opportunity made possible to them, includ-

ing, you know, the reaching out of the open hand, and so forth, and they have not grasped that. In fact, the response has been the opposite. And again, that provides—no one can say that the United States and the other countries of the world have not given that every opportunity. And that, therefore, I think, translates into the—into the greater possibility that the pressure track could come up with meaningful actions.

Senator WICKER. The actions on the pressure track will have to be agreed to by the United States and a number of our allies? Or—

General PETRAEUS. Well, in the—

Senator WICKER.—would it be solely—

General PETRAEUS. Again, it depends—

Senator WICKER.—American action?

General PETRAEUS. Again, it depends which action you are talking about. If you're talking about U.N. Security Council resolutions, it obviously has to be the Perm-5 and then there have to be nine total members. So—and again—you know, either abstention or for, in the case of the Perm-5, and then nine total votes in the affirmative, as I understand it. But, I'd be happy to defer to the State Department on that.

Senator WICKER. How public have we been about what form these actions might take?

General PETRAEUS. Again, I'd defer to the State Department on that. Again, I think, you know, if—a lot of this is understandably, I think, going on behind closed doors; that's how that is generally best pursued.

Senator WICKER. Okay, well, you may to—you may want to defer to the State Department on this—

General PETRAEUS. I'd be happy to.

Senator WICKER.—on this next question.

General PETRAEUS. Oh.

Senator WICKER. But, I do want to ask it. It's been said in this committee, and it's been said on the floor, we should be showing our moral support for the reformers in Iran, for the people who are willing to take to the street and stand up and risk their lives and safeties. If you were a reformer in Tehran, what you would be hoping the United States would do? And do we need to send some signals as to the limits of what can be expected of us, as we try to give some sort of moral support, but we also try to be realistic about what we can do to help these people who are striving for freedom and democracy?

General PETRAEUS. Well, as you suggested, Senator, with respect, I think that's one for the State Department and the folks who pull together all the different strands of this policy, because I think just talking about one element of this without talking about the others in a comprehensive approach could be misleading.

Senator WICKER. All right.

Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Following up on some of the sanction stuff on Iran, you know, the Iran Sanctions Act was passed 14 years ago, and we've never enforced it. And recently there has been some attention given to

this. And one example, of many examples, is a very large South Korean engineering firm that entered into a contract with Iran to upgrade oil fields in Iran, in 2007. It was a \$700-million contract. And in 2009, the U.S. Army gave the same company a contract for a \$100 million to build housing for our Army in South Korea. And then, just a few months after that, they entered into another contract with Iran.

You know, I understand that we have not enforced this law because our European allies squawked about it when it was first passed. And then, when we tried to enforce it with Japan—a company in Japan—Japan squawked and said, “Well, you didn’t enforce it against the European countries.” Brazil, we just gave a huge export/import loan to, in an effort to try to get some oil out of Brazil, as opposed to all being in the Middle East. And then, what do they do? They turn around and have Ahmadinejad come to town and kiss and hug.

I’m a little worried that our talk of sanctions has been too much talk, and that we haven’t even followed up within our military contracts to make sure we’re not contracting with people who are doing business with Iran, especially in the oil and gas and the petroleum sector.

Do you have any take on that, General Petraeus, and whether or not this is something that is being driven through State, as opposed to whether or not the military is taking a look at their contractors and whether or not we’re doing business with the wrong people?

General PETRAEUS. I honestly don’t. I mean, I’m not in the contracting business. I don’t know what it takes to get someone on a blacklist, if you will, where they can’t compete for a contract, and what that process is, and why, for example, a particular country that has done something in Iran is not on that list. I just don’t—it’s not my area of expertise. My apologies.

Senator MCCASKILL. Well, I’m going to—I’ll continue to follow up on it, but I think it’s maybe one of the reasons Iran is not taking us as seriously as they should. Because we talk about the carrot and stick, and using the stick, and frankly, I don’t think we’ve used the stick very effectively in a law that’s been on our books for 14 years.

Let me talk also a bit about the size of the military. You and I had a chance to talk after I got back from Afghanistan, but I want to put this on the record, Mr. Chairman, because I think it’s important that this be talked about, the size of the army we’re building and Afghanistan’s ability to sustain that military. You know, if you’re over there, the Afghans—the Afghans say that they want 400,000. I think we’re at the number 300,000, and there has been no indication that we’re going to build an army above 300,000. But, even if we keep it at 300,000, General Caldwell briefed me that that’s going to be somewhere around \$5 and a half billion to sustain that level of military in Afghanistan. And their GDP, depending on which number you look at—their total GDP of the entire country, is somewhere between 10 and 12 billion. I’d like to put on the record your response to that problem and whether or not we have, in fact, signed up for the American people to do the heavy

lifting, in terms of sustaining Afghan's military—the Afghanistan military—for decades to come?

General PETRAEUS. Well, I'm not aware of anyone signing up to do that for decades to come, but clearly we are helping Afghanistan build a military force to which we can transition tasks so that our forces can go home. And as you know, frankly, it's a lot more expensive to maintain our forces in Afghanistan than it is to maintain even the comparable number of Afghan forces that might be able to replace our forces in that country. And so, in a sense, in a business case, actually, I think there is some logic to continuing to support, over time—although obviously no commitments have been made in that regard—but continuing to support, over time, a substantial Afghan national security force, and indeed, one that they will not be able to pay all the expenses for over that time.

Senator MCCASKILL. I did notice much more of an international presence there than I did in Iraq, and I guess we can continue to hope that our friends in NATO will step up, although, so far, they're—while they're there and they're making a bigger commitment, in terms of monetary support, there has been—we are still shouldering the vast majority of that. Isn't that correct?

General PETRAEUS. It is. You should note, of course, that there are some very important non-NATO nations, as well. I mean, Japan, I think I would—

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

General PETRAEUS.—single out as providing quite substantial resources also.

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

Lashkar-e-Taiba, LeT, the radical terrorist group in Pakistan—I know this is more of a priority for the Pacific Command than your command—but realizing that they're now operating—I think the latest—one of the very destructive bombs that went off recently in Kabul was—in fact, is—all indications, that was LeT. As we've made great progress against the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Taliban in Pakistan and the al Qaeda that we have successfully targeted and gone after, I'm worrying that this organization is growing in strength. And I know it's tricky because of the historical connection between LeT and the Pakistani military and their government, because of the Kashmir area, but I do want to sound an alarm that I'm concerned about LeT and whether or not it is high enough on our priority list, and whether we're putting enough pressure on Pakistan—as they've responded, I think, well, in terms of their military going after terrorism in their country now, I wonder if we're pushing hard enough on that front.

General PETRAEUS. Well, it certainly has been a source of dialogue. Of course, the real issue in this regard was, of course, the bombing in Mumbai, which by all accounts—

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

General PETRAEUS.—was carried out by LeT. And I think our entire government—different elements of our government has had quite a bit of interaction with the Government of Pakistan over this. And obviously, India has expressed its concerns, as well.

There's no question but that there are elements in Pakistan that have not yet been the focus of the Pakistani counterinsurgency efforts, but there's also no disputing the fact that the Pakistani Army

and Frontier Corps have got a lot of short sticks and a lot hornets' nests right now in the Northwest Frontier Province and the FATA. And they are continuing those campaigns. They are not just holding and—what they've got; they do continue their efforts. And I know what the plan is. And again, it is impressive. And they've taken very tough losses in the course of this, as have—as has their civilian population.

Senator MCCASKILL. I know I'm out of time. Let me briefly say there's some good news. Premature to say how effective it's going to be. But, compared to when I went to Iraq on contract oversight, the systems that are in place in Afghanistan are much better. And I want to compliment you and General McChrystal and everyone for realizing that we had the Wild West of contracting in Iraq, in terms of logistical support and a lot of other contracting issues. I think we have the structures in place now. Now, it remains to be seen whether those structures are going to provide the oversight that we need, but at least we've got the right people gathered in the right rooms.

I have some significant questions about CERP, big projects and continuity, but I'm out of time. So, what I will do, Mr. Chairman, is—I will make those questions for the record. I know 67 percent of the CERP money is going to projects over 500,000.

[The information referred to follows:]

General PETRAEUS. Actually, Senator, I need to give you numbers on that, because the average project for this past year or—or, for this year so far, in fiscal year 2010—

Senator MCCASKILL. For fiscal year '10.

General PETRAEUS.—is somewhere around \$20,000 per project in Iraq, and 40,000 in the other country. Or is it vice versa? I'm looking at my J8. Anyway, I mean, it's—the average is somewhere around 30,000 this year.

Senator MCCASKILL. So we're pulling back down from—

General PETRAEUS. We have pulled way down.

Senator MCCASKILL.—projects.

General PETRAEUS. We have pulled way down.

Senator MCCASKILL. That's great.

General PETRAEUS. I think that was a—I mentioned that in my opening statement, that I retain approval authority for the \$1-million projects and above. I've only approved one of those—

Senator MCCASKILL. And I noticed you said only one.

General PETRAEUS.—in quite some time. That's right.

Senator MCCASKILL. I knew that there—

General PETRAEUS. And that's a critically important—

Senator MCCASKILL.—was a bunch of them.

General PETRAEUS.—road project—

Senator MCCASKILL. Because, you know, some of the folks I talked to over there talked about the continuity and the problem as units would rotate out—

General PETRAEUS. Right.

Senator MCCASKILL.—the big CERP projects that started before, they didn't want to finish those, because they weren't going to get, quote/unquote, "credit" for them, they wanted to start ones that they thought they could finish on their watch and some stuff was sitting on the shelf, and so forth. So—

General PETRAEUS. Well, we—I think we have good oversight, a rational approach. We’re trying to find that right balance between not too much bureaucracy, but enough, and not such high level that they’re doing AID’s work instead of AID. And I’ll pass on your comments to those who are in the contracting business. We do try to be a learning organization, and we’ve learned a great deal about contracting over the course of the last decade or so.

Senator MCCASKILL. And over the course of the last 3 years.

General PETRAEUS. Well, that that, too. That, too.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, General. I’ll get—

General PETRAEUS. In particular.

Senator MCCASKILL.—my questions to the record.

General PETRAEUS. That’s right.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, General Petraeus, for that continuing effort at oversight. It’s a very important to this committee.

We want to especially thank Senator McCaskill for her special efforts in this regard. They’re very, very important to the citizenry of our country.

Senator Brown.

Senator BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to first thank you for your warm welcome, and I appreciate your recognition of my service.

And, just to correct the record a little bit, Generals and Admiral, I am—I started out as an enlisted man and was branch-qualified as an infantry officer at Benning and then quarter master, now I’m a JAG and a head trial defense attorney in Massachusetts, so I have a—some knowledge that I don’t think the average attorney understands, just being a traditional JAG.

One of the things that Senator Graham was commenting on, I have great concern about, because when I hear about the Guardsmen serving from Massachusetts and throughout New England, they are confused a little bit as to how they treat folks when they are captured. And I also want to kind of go on the same vein, and I’m concerned about how we treat the detainees, where we send them. What rights are they actually given? And then, do we send them to Afghanistan, do we keep them where they’re captured, do we bring them to U.S. soil, do we get them to Gitmo? I know I’m new here, but, being in the military, these are the questions that my troops are passing on to me when I’m representing them. And if there’s any insight you can give as to the policy, as to where we’re heading with that, or if it’s an offline conversation, I’m all ears, because I think it’s creating indecision with our soldiers as to what to do with the folks when they’re captured.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, let me talk about that, because I—with respect, I don’t there’s indecision in Iraq or Afghanistan, and I’m not aware of us detaining people anywhere else, in quite some time. When someone’s detained in Iraq or Afghanistan, there are quite clear procedures for what—that are done. By the way, we don’t detain virtually any at all in any significant number in Iraq at this point. The operations are generally led by Iraqi Security Forces, and they are now warrant—warrant-based there. We have transitioned to—we believe in the rule of law, and we are helping the Iraqis. They have taken the lead, in terms of making arrests based on warrants, except in the cases where obviously someone

has threatened our soldiers directly or you have a case of self-defense or an immediate threat response.

In Afghanistan, as I explained to Senator Graham, we have clear rules. Now, they have recently been implemented for all of our forces that have transitioned to NATO, and we are able to hold them for 14 days, if necessary, and can, indeed, send them to Bagram, if they hit a certain category after that. And then, we're working hard at Bagram, over time, to transition that facility, and the tasks of running it, to our Afghan partners, so that, over time, indeed, that transition can take place, as well.

But, we've worked very hard, because of the idea that you have to create conditions in which your soldiers can live our values. And one of those values has to be, if someone puts his hands in the air, you take his—you detain him instead of shoot him. But, if you think he's going to be back on the street within 96 hours, or something like that, because of a catch-and-release policy, then it becomes much more difficult, obviously, to live your values. We take that very seriously. We've worked this very hard. And, as Senator Graham highlighted, this policy has gone into place.

Senator BROWN. There's more in Afghanistan than Iraq. I know Iraq's—you know, that that's been settled somewhat. But, Afghanistan, I know there was a transition period, and there had been some concerns. I'll speak to Senator Graham about some additional questions that he and I were discussing, and maybe we can, offline, touch base.

But, I am chairing a hearing on Afghan Police training next week, and I'm concerned and wondering if the mission has lagged in—as it's been divided between the State and the Defense Departments.

General PETRAEUS. Well, I think, candidly, that there's a reason that we have, over time, transitioned tasks from traditional executive-branch elements to the military, and that is because we have more capacity and capability. I mean, I stood up the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, and, over time, we took on more and more responsibility because the capacity of our partners in some of these areas—in INL—there's a bunch of heroes in State Department INL, but they are armies of one, in many cases.

Now, we are going to transition the police task back to State Department, over time, in Iraq, and we believe that that process can work. But, with respect to Afghanistan, we have taken on more and more of that, and we are now going to oversee the training aspect of that, as well, as you probably know.

Senator BROWN. Great. Thank you, General.

Thank you, Admiral.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Brown.

We thank you both. We will have a hearing on Iran. At that time, we will have—with whoever our witnesses will be, and they're not yet determined—we will then have an executive session at that time, taking up some of the questions that you left for executive session. It's possible that some of our questions for the record to you may be of—relate to Iran, that you could perhaps answer, even though you won't be there, in a classified way for that executive session.

General Petraeus, you, I know, have spent a lot of time on the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" issue, thinking about it, and we would welcome your statement for the record, but we leave it up to you. Usually we don't do that, we just simply ask people for a statement for the record, but in this case, I think I'll just simply say we would welcome that statement for the record, leaving it up to you as to whether you would prefer to do it that way, which means it would be immediately made public, or whether you'd prefer to give your thoughts in a different form, at a different time. We didn't give you that opportunity, because of our schedule here, to do that. So, that's something we would just leave up to your good judgment. But, we would very much welcome that statement, and if so, you would know, then, that, of course, it would be made public at that time.

General PETRAEUS. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Just, again, Admiral, thank you so much for your service. And all of us feel very deeply about the men and women that you command and that you work with. And we thank them through you.

We will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:20 p.m., the committee adjourned.]