

**HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS  
OF HONORABLE DEBORAH LEE JAMES TO  
BE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE; HON-  
ORABLE JESSICA GARFOLA WRIGHT TO BE  
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PER-  
SONNEL AND READINESS; LIEUTENANT  
GENERAL FRANK G. KLOTZ (RETIRED) TO  
BE UNDER SECRETARY OF ENERGY FOR  
NUCLEAR SECURITY; MARCEL J. LETTRE II  
TO BE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SEC-  
RETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE;  
AND KEVIN A. OHLSON TO BE A JUDGE OF  
THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE  
ARMED SERVICES**

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**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2013**

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:33 a.m. in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Reed, McCaskill, Udall, Hagan, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Kaine, King, Inhofe, McCain, Chambliss, Wicker, Ayotte, Graham, Vitter, Blunt, and Lee.

Other Senator Present: Senator Conrad.

Committee staff members present: Peter K. Levine, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Jonathan D. Clark, counsel; Jonathan S. Epstein, counsel; Gabriella E. Fahrer, counsel; Creighton Greene, professional staff member; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, general counsel; Thomas K. McConnell, professional staff member; Mariah K. McNamara, special assistant to the staff director.

Minority staff members present: John A. Bonsell, minority staff director; Daniel C. Adams, minority associate counsel; Steven M. Barney, minority counsel; William S. Castle, minority general counsel; Samantha L. Clark, minority associate counsel; Allen M. Edwards, professional staff member; Anthony J. Lazarski, profes-

sional staff member; Daniel A. Lerner, professional staff member; and Robert M. Soofer, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Daniel J. Harder and Kathleen A. Kulenkampff.

Committee members' assistants present: Carolyn Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Jason Rauch, assistant to Senator McCaskill; Casey Howard, assistant to Senator Udall; Christopher Cannon, assistant to Senator Hagan; Mara Boggs, assistant to Senator Manchin; Patrick Day, assistant to Senator Shaheen; Moran Banai and Brooke Jamison, assistants to Senator Gillibrand; Marta McLellan Ross, assistant to Senator Donnelly; Karen Courington, assistant to Senator Kaine; Steve Smith, assistant to Senator King; Paul C. Hutton IV, assistant to Senator McCain; Lenwood Landrum, assistant to Senator Sessions; Todd Harmer, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Joseph Lai, assistant to Senator Wicker; Brad Bowman, assistant to Senator Ayotte; Peter Schirtzinger, assistant to Senator Fischer; Craig Abele, assistant to Senator Graham; Joshua Hodges, assistant to Senator Vitter; Robert Moore, assistant to Senator Lee; and Jeremy Hayes, assistant to Senator Cruz.

#### **OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN**

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. The committee meets this morning to consider the nominations for a number of important and challenging assignments within the Department of Defense.

We welcome Deborah James, who is nominated to be Secretary of the Air Force; Jessica Wright, who is nominated to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; Frank Klotz, nominated to be the Under Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Security; Marcel Lettre, nominated to be Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence; and Kevin Ohlson, nominated to be a judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.

We also welcome your family members here this morning. The committee recognizes the immense contribution which are made by families and other friends for the success of the efforts which you undertake. We thank them for joining us today.

Our witnesses, during their opening statements, should feel free to introduce family members and others who are here to be with them today.

We're especially pleased to welcome back to our committee Senator Conrad, who is a—I won't say an "old friend," because he still looks a lot younger than he did when he left the Senate. I hope there is a connection between the two. [Laughter.]

For personal reasons. But, he's been a dear friend of all of us, and he made such a contribution here, when he was here, that we think about him all the time. So, please feel welcome here as you introduce Mr. Klotz, and say hi to Lucy for us, too, if you would.

The positions to which the witnesses have been nominated are some of the most demanding in the Department of Defense. We thank all of our nominees for their commitment and dedication, and especially for their willingness to continue to serve our country.

The Secretary of the Air Force is responsible for seeing all Department of the Air Force affairs, including organizing, training,

equipping, and providing for the welfare of nearly 330,000 Active Duty men and women, 176,000 Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members, 186,000 civilians and their families. And, if confirmed, Ms. James will assume control at a time of immense fiscal challenge. Her responsibility to oversee the Air Force's annual budget of more than \$110 billion is going to require the wise balancing of risk across the force while also ensuring core Air Force capabilities remain robust.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness is the Secretary of Defense's senior policy advisor on a range of issues, including total force management, military and DOD civilian personnel policy, healthcare, and compensation. If confirmed for this position, Ms. Wright will play a critical role in the Department's efforts to address many difficult issues; chief among them, eliminating the scourge of sexual assault and sexual harassment in our military. Ms. Wright is no stranger to the rigors of this position, having already served in an acting capacity for several months.

If confirmed as the Under Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Security, Mr. Klotz will be the administrator for the National Nuclear Security Administration. His responsibilities will include overseeing the safety, reliability, and performance of the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile and promoting international nuclear safety and nonproliferation. Mr. Klotz has held numerous positions in the fields of arms control and nuclear policy, including advising the President as the Director for Nuclear Policy and Arms Control on the National Security Council staff, experiences that will surely serve him well.

The Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence is a new position that will serve as the primary staff assistant and advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence. His responsibilities will include policy and strategic oversight of all DOD intelligence activities, counterintelligence and security policy, plans and programs, and exercise planning. Mr. Lettre has spent several years in the halls of the Pentagon, where he's currently serving as the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, and, prior to that, as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs.

Mr. Ohlson, if confirmed, will join four other civilian judges as a member of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, the highest court for military personnel on Active Duty and other subjects to the Uniform Code of Military Justice and others subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice beside personnel who are on Active Duty. The court exercises jurisdiction over all appeals from United States military courts and is a vital part of the military justice system. Mr. Ohlson has many years of relevant experience, serving currently as the chief of the Department of Justice's Professional Misconduct Review Unit and previously in the Office of the Attorney General and as a Judge Advocate General in the Army. This extensive background makes Mr. Ohlson a strong candidate for this judicial role.

So, again, we welcome all of our nominees today. We look forward to your testimony.

And I now will call on Senator Inhofe.

**STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE**

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm—you've done a good job of describing what you guys are going to be involved in, and—but, I look—at the risk of sounding negative, I look at some of the problems that you'll be faced with, I—and, General Klotz, the—you'd be taking the reins of the National Nuclear Security Administration at a time that—it's really difficult right now. And I think you know that, and I'm anxious to hear your testimony.

Congress has serious concerns about the management of the administration, and especially in respect to the cost-growth schedule slippage in all of that. So, we'll look forward to your thoughts on that.

Ms. Wright, I—again, I apologize for not having been there when you were at our scheduled visit, but we had a chance to visit vicariously anyway. You've served as the acting Under Secretary since January of this year, and have been involved in a lot of important but controversial things. And I am concerned about the—your thoughts on sexual assault, religious expression. I'm troubled by your September 4, 2013, decision concerning administrative leave. I'm also concerned about the impact of our civilian personnel furloughs. I know that we suffered some 24,000, just in my State of Oklahoma, 14,000 just at Tinker Air Force Base. It's something that is—it is serious, and I'm just wondering what we are accomplishing from that.

Ms. James, the Air Force is focusing—is forced to ground a third of its combat-coded Active squadrons for a time during 2013. And, according to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, it will now cost a minimum of 10 percent more for flying hours to recover, back where we were. So, it's a really—it's a tough time that you're getting into, in the—into that position.

It's also been reported that the Air Force is considering the retirement of its entire fleets of aircraft, including the A-10s, F-15Cs, B-1s, and—or the KC-10s. And I'm very much concerned about this. It's a kind of a disarming of America that bothers me a great deal.

Mr. Lettre, if confirmed, you'll be confronted with a number of significant challenges, including the ongoing uncertainty in Syria, and then the challenges in Iran, which have always concerned me more than the problems in Syria, quite frankly. The cyber operations, the development of a national cyber force, are also things that we're going to be—you're right in at the ground floor of that, and it's going to be something where—a matter of keeping up with the competition. It's going to be tough.

And finally, Mr. Ohlson, I—in terms of military justice, I know there are people like Senator Graham and others who have had a lot more personal experience. I go all the way back to before you guys were born, when I was in the Army and was a court reporter for the—that justice system, and I've developed some pretty strong feelings about it at that—since that time.

So, this is a time we—I look at you, and I wonder why in the world you're doing this, but I'm glad you are, and we're anxious to hear your testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

I'm going to ask the standard questions of all of our civilian nominees first, then I'm going to call on Senator Conrad, who has a— is going to introduce Mr. Klotz, and then I'm going to go to the order in which we've indicated on our hearing notice, calling first on you, Ms. James.

So, first let me start with the questions that I ask all of our civilian nominees.

First, in order to exercise its jurisdiction, we must receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information; and so, these questions and their answers become very important to us.

Have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest?

[All five witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

Chairman LEVIN. Have you assumed any duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

[All five witnesses answered in the negative.]

Chairman LEVIN. Will you ensure that your staff complies with deadlines established for requested communications, including questions for the record in hearings?

[All five witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

Chairman LEVIN. Will you cooperate in providing witnesses and briefers in response to congressional requests?

[All five witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

Chairman LEVIN. Will those witnesses be protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

[All five witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

Chairman LEVIN. Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify, upon request, before this committee?

[All five witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

Chairman LEVIN. Finally, do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly-constituted committee, or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any good-faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

[All five witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you all.

And now let me call on Senator Conrad.

**STATEMENT OF HON. KENT CONRAD, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**

Senator CONRAD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I also want to acknowledge the vice chairman of the committee, Mr. Inhofe. Thank you very much for this opportunity to introduce General Klotz. I might say that I miss very much our association after retiring.

I want to acknowledge that General Klotz is here with his wife, Nancy, as well as his son, Justin. His son, Justin, actually runs a nursing home, which may have special relevance for me now that I've left the Senate, may have special relevance for some of you who are about to leave.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you for reminding us. [Laughter.]

Senator CONRAD. It is so good to be back with colleagues that I like and respect.

I am here to commend to you General Frank Klotz, somebody that I've known for more than 20 years and have grown to greatly respect.

Frank Klotz is a renaissance man. He's extremely well educated, he has a distinguished service in the military, and he has a remarkable record of accomplishment in the diplomacy of arms control.

Let me just briefly remind you of part of his life story:

In 1973, he graduated with distinction from the U.S. Air Force Academy. He was named a Rhodes Scholar and holds a Ph.D. from Oxford. In 1983, the U.S. Jaycees named him one of the ten outstanding young men of America. In 1986, he became commander of the Strategic Missile Squadron at Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota. In 1990, he was made the chief of the Nuclear Biological and Chemical Plans Branch at the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels, Belgium. In 1991, he became commander of the 321st Operations Group at Grand Forks Air Force Base, ND. In 1993, he became director of the Chief of Staff's Operations Group at the U.S. Air Force Headquarters here in Washington. In 1995, he became commander of the 91st Missile Group at Minot Air Force Base, ND.

Notice a pattern, here?[Laughter.]

North Dakota—Grand Forks, ND; Minot, ND.

In 1999, he was our Defense Attache in Moscow. He was the senior U.S. military officer based in Russia. In 2001, he became the director for Nuclear Policy and Arms Control at the National Security Council in the White House. In that position, he advised the President on all aspects of nuclear weapons policy. He represented the White House in talks leading to the 2002 Moscow Treaty that reduced deployed weapons by two-thirds. And, as I recall, that Treaty passed the Senate on a vote of 95 to zero. Pretty good.

In 2003, he became commander of the 20th Air Force. In that position, he led 9500 men and women of our ICBM forces. In 2005, he became Vice Commander of U.S. Space Command, so he was second in command of over 39,000 men and women. In 2006, he was awarded the General Thomas D. White Trophy for Most Outstanding Contribution to Aerospace in 2006. In 2007, he became the Assistant Vice Chief of Staff and Director of the Air Force staff—again, here at headquarters.

In 2009, he became Commander of Global Strike Command at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana. He stood up that command. In that position, he led 23,000 Americans, men and women, and oversaw all nuclear-capable bombers and missiles.

In 2011, he won the prestigious General Larry D. Welch Award for his leadership. And in 2011, he became a senior fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations.

This is an uncommon man with a common touch. He is smart, with remarkably good judgment—who has dedicated his life to the defense of our country. I could not be more honored than to recommend to you General Frank Klotz to be Under Secretary for Nuclear Security. I know of no one more qualified or more prepared for the position than General Frank Klotz.

Thank you very much for this time. It's good to see you all again, and I hope I'll have other chances to see you in the future.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Senator Conrad, for a very powerful and heartfelt introduction. And we know you have to leave, so please feel free to do that.

Ms. James.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DEBORAH LEE JAMES, NOMINEE TO BE  
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

Ms. JAMES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Inhofe, other members of the committee. I am deeply, deeply appreciative of the opportunity to appear before all of you today. And I want to also thank Secretary Hagel for his support, as well as President Obama for the confidence that he has placed in me by putting my name forward as the nominee to be the 23rd Secretary of the Air Force.

Needless to say, I view this opportunity as the privilege and an honor of a lifetime. And, if confirmed, I will work very hard to ensure that I live up to what is an enormous amount of trust that may be placed in me.

I'd also like to take just a moment to say to all of the airmen who may be with us today here in the committee room, or who may be listening from elsewhere—I want to wish them all a very happy 66th birthday. And I think I speak, certainly, for all of this panel and all of America to say that we are very, very proud of our Air Force. I know I am.

I also want to recognize some very, very important people who are in my life. They're very important to me, personally, and they give me great joy every day. Seated behind me is Frank Beatty, my husband, and three of our four children. So, with me today is Sam Lee, Regina Lee, and Michelle Beatty. Paul, our fourth child, could not be with us here today. He is in school at George Mason University, and he was not going to cut class. And I thought that was a good decision on his part.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, what is the excuse for these kids who are with you, then? [Laughter.]

Ms. JAMES. But, anyway, you guys, thank you so much for being here and supporting me. I love you all very, very much.

Incidentally, Senators, I would love you to know that Sam and Regina were here with me almost precisely 20 years ago when I first appeared before this committee to be considered as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. So, if you take a real good look at them now, I think you will agree with me that they are a whole lot taller and must less squirmy than they were 20 years ago.

I also notice that I have quite a few friends and colleagues who turned out to support me, so a quick shout-out and thanks to Michelle and Tom, Amy, Jim, Mason, Linda, Shaleen, Paula, Larry, Louise, Mick, Tom—I have quite a gang back there. So, thank you all very much; it means a great deal that you've taken the time to be here.

Senators, I have worked for more than 3 decades as a civilian in support of our military. I've had experience in the executive branch, on Capitol Hill; I've been in the world of think tanks; and I've been in the defense industry. I've also been a volunteer in some of the wonderful nonprofit organizations that help our military, our

veterans, and their families in ways that the government simply cannot.

Specifically, I've served 17 years in the government and 15 years in the private sector. My prior government service includes a decade where I served on the staff of the professional staff of the House Armed Services Committee, and then I was 5 years in the Pentagon as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs.

Currently, I'm serving as a member of the DACOWITS, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, which is an advisory body to the Secretary of Defense on matters affecting our women in uniform. While in the private sector, I've spent the bulk of my time with the company which is my current company, Science Applications International Corporation, or SAIC.

I'd like to now come right to the point and give you my bottom line. And that is, I'm coming before you today absolutely committed to keeping the United States Air Force the very best Air Force in the world. Now, what does this mean to me? Well, if confirmed, it means that I want to focus on people. And, as you said, Senator, there's more than 690,000 Active Duty, Reserve, Guard, and civilian airmen who form the backbone of everything that we do. It also means taking on what will—which will most assuredly be program budget decisions, making tradeoffs, finding the right balance between preserving the Air Force of today and building toward the Air Force of tomorrow. And I have no illusions, this is going to be very hard, and we'll need everybody's help to get there from here.

It means ensuring that our Air Force is ready to take on whatever missions our leaders may task, missions to protect us and our interests overseas, as well as missions to protect Americans here at home.

Since virtually all missions nowadays are joint, it also means being an effective partner with the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. And ultimately, here's what it means. And this would be my goal, if confirmed. And that would be to leave our Air Force, some years from now, on a path toward greater capability and better affordability for our taxpayers and with the people, who underpin everything, who are second to none. And I pledge to you to work on all of these areas very hard, if confirmed.

And I'd like to close by thanking the members of this committee, as well as the professional staff, personal staff that I see in the background, because I know that our military would not be the military that it is today had it not been for all of your efforts and all that has happened that has brought us here today.

So, thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. James follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Ms. James.  
Secretary Wright.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JESSICA GARFOLA WRIGHT, NOMINEE  
TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL  
AND READINESS**

Ms. WRIGHT. Good morning. Chairman Levin, Ranking Member Inhofe, members of the committee, I am humbled to be sitting before you, and I thank you for the opportunity to be here again. I'm very grateful for the confidence that President Obama has placed



in me, first to nominate me as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and now the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. I want to thank Secretary Hagel and Deputy Secretary Carter for their support of my nomination.

It's been my great honor to serve this Nation, first in uniform, for 35 years, and the last 2-plus years as a civilian with the Department of Defense.

My career in public service would not have been possible without my family. My husband, Chuck, who is here with me today, is my most avid supporter and my champion. He's a combat-tested Army officer who retired with 24 years of service. Our son, Mike, is an Army lieutenant, and he is presently serving in Afghanistan. I have a great pleasure to recognize my mom, Cass. She's here with me today, too. She's the reason that I clearly have grown into an independent woman.

A few days ago, our family buried our dad, John Garfola. My dad served in World War II as a combat medic in the China-Burma-India campaign. He was the role model for my family, and he is my hero.

I've enjoyed the tremendous opportunity of serving as the acting Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness since January of 2013. In this role, I have the responsibility of advocating for the outstanding men and women of our Active, Guard, and Reserve components, and their families, and the dedicated Department of Defense civilians. It is evident to me that our people, and those that support them, are the Department's greatest asset and their strength.

I fully acknowledge that there are many challenges facing the Department, and the most pressing challenge is the constrained fiscal climate. The Department has two sacred obligations. One is to care for its people, who are willing to sacrifice their lives in order to protect the National interest, and the second is to ensure the National security of the United States. Having had the privilege of wearing our country's uniform for 35 years, I bring a special understanding to both obligations. Our servicemembers and their families selflessly put the interests of our Nation first. Because of the sense of duty, the America's military remains one of the most trusted institutions in our society. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting Secretary Hagel, to ensure that the Department honors both of its obligations, and to sustain an agile, capable force.

One of the most significant challenges we face is the stress on our force as a result of the long, continuous period of armed conflict. For more than a decade, we've repeatedly deployed soldier—servicemembers to combat zones, hotspots, and areas of the world that are devastated by natural disaster, separating them from their loved ones for months and years at a time. Although our servicemembers never hesitate to answer the Nation's call, this call causes the toughest challenges on the battlefield and here at home. Our servicemembers and their families are under significant strain. Their minds, their bodies, their spirits require healing. If confirmed, I will ensure that the efforts are—that the efforts necessary to provide care for our people is continued.

This year, the Department celebrated the 40th anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force. This force helped win the cold war, stood

against aggression in the Persian Gulf, kept peace in the Balkans, fought in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the next several years, we, as a Nation, will be further challenged by shifting operational requirements abroad, evolving threats to national security, and significant budget challenges. If confirmed, I will be vigilant and ensure the Department provides the leadership and vision necessary to rebalance, adapt, and involve the All-Volunteer Force at—it has done so well over the last 40 years. I'm also committed to ensuring that we maintain the military's status as the strongest, most capable, most respected fighting force in the history of the world. I'm grateful to the members of this committee for your continued leadership for the support of our military forces, their families, and the civilian employees of the Department of Defense. If the Senate confirms me for this position, I pledge that I will work diligently with you to best serve the men and women of the Department and their families. I'm deeply honored for this nomination and the potential to continue to serve our Nation.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wright follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Secretary Wright.

General Klotz.

**STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL FRANK G. KLOTZ (RETIRED), NOMINEE TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF ENERGY FOR NUCLEAR SECURITY**

General KLOTZ. Thank you, Chairman Levin, Ranking Member Inhofe, distinguished members of this committee. It's a great honor to again appear before the Senate Armed Service Committee. The uniform I'm wearing today may be different this time, but it's—my desire to serve our Nation remains as strong as it ever was. For that reason, I'm enormously grateful to President Obama and Secretary Moniz for their trust and confidence in putting forward my nomination as Under Secretary and Administrator of the NNSA.

I'm also thankful to Senator Kent Conrad for his very generous and gracious introduction. Senator Conrad has been a mentor, a role model, and a dear friend for many years. I had the opportunity to work closely with him on several challenges confronting our Nation's nuclear deterrent forces, and always in a very open and candid and collaborative manner. I like to think that we did some very worthy and noble work together.

I'd also like to thank my wife, Nancy, for her loving and steadfast support, not just today but for the nearly 40 years we shared on Active Duty, including the 29 times that she had to uproot home and family as we moved to new assignments.

Our oldest son, Justin, who lives in Philadelphia and, as you heard—Senator Conrad said, is administrator of a long-term care facility, is also here today. And our youngest son, David, is watching in Boston via Webcam.

The spouses and children of those who wear our Nation's uniform serve in countless and often unrecognized ways, and routinely deal with many difficulties and hardships. They, too, deserve our deepest respect and our gratitude for their own invaluable contributions to our country. I'm certainly very proud of my wonderful family and their accomplishments.

I'm also delighted to be joined by my best friend and classmate of the Air Force Academy, the Class of 1973, which, as we speak, is convened out in Colorado Springs for our 40th anniversary. Steve was the first graduate of any service academy to become a Catholic priest, and today he is the president of Saint Luke Institute in Silver Spring, MD.

And finally, but certainly not least, Oliver Bloom, who serves as my research associate at the Council on Foreign Relations, is also here. He's a recent graduate of Princeton University but hails from the State of New Hampshire.

The National Nuclear Security Administration has a unique and special responsibility for pursuing two different but complementary principles that have traditionally guided American nuclear weapons policy:

The first is that the United States must continue to lead international efforts to limit and reduce nuclear arsenals, combat nuclear proliferation, and secure nuclear materials across the globe.

The second principle is that appropriately sized nuclear forces still play an essential role in protecting U.S. and allied security interests even as we seek to reduce the overall number and role of nuclear weapons in our national security policy. As President Obama and congressional members have repeatedly emphasized: as long as nuclear weapons exist, we must maintain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal.

If confirmed to be the Under Secretary and the Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration, my highest priority will be to ensure that NNSA delivers on the commitments made to Congress and to its many stakeholders in sustaining our nuclear weapons stockpile, both now and in the future, in conducting leading-edge scientific research and preventing nuclear materials from falling into the hands of terrorists and would-be proliferators, in supporting the Navy's nuclear reactor program, in modernizing our facilities to meet the demands of the future, and in protecting the safety and security of our sites, our employees, and the public.

The military services often say that people are their most important asset. It's true. And it applies to NNSA, as well. Highly trained, experienced, and motivated scientists, engineers, technicians, and security personnel are essential to performing the highly complex and technically challenging task associated with nuclear—the nuclear security enterprise. If confirmed, I will be guided by the principle of “mission first, people always.” To this end, I will be an unrelenting champion for the professional development and personal welfare of everyone associated with NNSA, including recruiting and mentoring the next generation of leaders and scientists.

The NNSA performs enormously important work each and every day. Its many successes go largely unheralded. It has made tremendous progress in helping to achieve the President's goal of securing vulnerable nuclear materials around the globe. It is delivering the life-extended W76-1 warhead to the Navy on schedule and is currently transferring work at the Kansas City plant into a new, modern facility that will greatly improve efficiency. And that plant, by the way, has been constructed on time and on budget.

That said, escalating costs in several major programs are a cause for serious concern, especially as pressures mount on overall government spending. Restoring trust in NNSA's ability to deliver on its commitment requires strong leadership focus on managing cost to deliver capability for less expense. It also requires rebuilding partnerships between the headquarters and the field, between Federal employees and the laboratories and plants, and between NNSA and the Congress and the Department of Defense.

In dealing with these priorities, I expect to draw upon recent experience as the first commander of Air Force Global Strike Command. When we established the Command in 2009, our task was to establish clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability. We also placed strong emphasis on strengthening the safety and security culture while, at the same time, streamlining processes and eliminating needlessly burdensome non-value-added activities that stood in the way of our people and their incentive to innovate. Finally, we continually stress that everyone in the organization, regardless of job, rank, seniority, was a valued member of the team, and that her or his work was absolutely essential to success. If confirmed, this is the leadership approach I intend to bring to NNSA.

I, again, thank you for inviting me to appear before this committee today. It truly is an honor. I stand ready to answer any questions you may have now and, if confirmed, to address any questions you or your terrific staffs may have in the future in a very open and candid way.

[The prepared statement of General Klotz follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, General Klotz.

Mr. Lettre.

**STATEMENT OF MARCEL J. LETTRE II, NOMINEE TO BE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE**

Mr. LETTRE. Chairman Levin, Senator Inhofe, members of the committee, I'm honored to be with you here this morning as you consider my nomination as Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence.

Let me introduce to the committee, Mr. Chairman, my guests here with me today, to my left and just behind me: my wife, Simmons; my daughters, McKinley, age 11, and Amelia, age 9; my mother, Mary Lettre, a proud Army wife and teacher; and my father, Marcel Lettre, Senior, who is a retired Army colonel, airborne ranger, and Vietnam combat veteran, who, I might add, successfully and quite proudly avoided a Pentagon tour during his 26 years of service. Any opportunities I've had in life are because of this family, this team, and I'm grateful you all could be here today.

I also want to thank several tireless public servants who have served as mentors and colleagues over many years: Senator Harry Reid, Congresswoman Jane Harman, Deputy Secretary Ash Carter, former Under Secretary Michele Flournoy, and Under Secretary Jim Miller, and my good friend, Assistant Secretary of Defense Liz King.

And I'm also pleased that a number of other friends and colleagues are in attendance today. Those that I saw include Lieuten-

ant Colonel Ethan Griffin, Dave Mulbaum, Jason Forrester, Stuart Irvin, and some others that I probably didn't get a chance to say hello to. Thank you for being here.

I'm deeply humbled that President Obama has nominated me as Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence. Since 2009, I've been honored and privileged to serve three Secretaries of Defense: Chuck Hagel, Leon Panetta, and Bob Gates. If confirmed, I'll be proud to serve Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Under Secretary Mike Vickers as they lead the Department of Defense and the Defense intelligence community through a critical period of challenge and opportunity. But, most of all, I'll be proud to serve and support the men and women of the United States military. Their interests will be my interests, if confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, I believe we're facing the most consequential period for defense intelligence in perhaps a generation. The choices we make now as we draw down from 10 years of war and reshape our enterprise to meet new strategic and budgetary challenges will set us on a multi-decade trajectory for our defense intelligence capabilities. If confirmed, I will keep in mind three major priorities as I support Secretary Hagel, Under Secretary Vickers, and the defense intelligence community:

First, provide the best intelligence possible to those who are fighting in current operations, operations we're in today and possible contingencies in the near future. The defense intelligence community must maintain its focus on the needs of our deployed men and women, conducting an incredible range of intelligence-driven, precision operations, and the needs of the President and the senior national security team, for the best intelligence possible to address today's threats.

Second, prepare for a challenging period of budget uncertainty. This will require us to become leaner, to trim overhead, reduce duplication, and shed underperforming activities. It will not be painless or pretty, but we must make tough choices and become stronger and better even as we become smaller.

Third, push vigorously to innovate and invest. Even as resources fall, we must sharpen the impressive capabilities that keep America's superior technological edge and protect its advantages over its adversaries. That means strengthening capabilities in counterterrorism, cyber security, and countering weapons of mass destruction. We must ensure we maintain global reach and global understanding. These priorities will require a close partnership and strong and regular dialogue between defense intelligence leaders and this committee. I look forward to contributing to that partnership.

We must implement our priorities in defense intelligence while also being ever vigilant about the need for vigorous protection of the principles, rights, and freedoms from which America gains its strength. And those of us privileged to serve in these positions of responsibility recognize that we owe our citizens and our families our full focus and our full energy on keeping the Nation safe and secure.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lettre follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Lettre.

Mr. Ohlson.

**STATEMENT OF KEVIN A. OHLSON, NOMINEE TO BE A JUDGE  
OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE  
ARMED SERVICES**

Mr. OHLSON. Mr. Chairman, it's a great privilege to appear before this committee as a nominee to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces. I would like to thank you and the members of this committee for considering me for this important post.

I would also like to thank the President for nominating me for this position. If confirmed, I will do my level best to vindicate his trust.

And, of course, I would like to thank my wife, Carolyn, who is here today, behind me to my left, as well as our two children, Matthew and Katherine, who are in school. I would not be sitting here today if it were not for their enduring love and support.

Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed for a position on the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, I pledge to this committee that I will bring to bear on every case I handle all of my military and criminal justice experiences so that I may be the best judge that I can possibly be. For example, I will be mindful of when I stood shoulder-to-shoulder with some of the finest people I've ever known and rappelled out of helicopters, parachuted out of airplanes, deployed to four foreign countries, and served in the Persian Gulf War. Those experiences taught me indispensable lessons about the men, women, mission, and ethos of our exceptional Armed Forces.

Further, I will be mindful of my service as a trial counsel prosecuting cases at Fort Bragg, as the Article 32 investigating officer in a case involving a serial rapist and murderer who was ultimately sentenced to death, as a Federal prosecutor for many years here in the Nation's capital, and now as the head of the office that punishes prosecutors who have engaged in professional misconduct. These experiences have taught me about the vital importance of the strength, fairness, and integrity of our criminal justice system.

And finally, if I am confirmed, I will be mindful of the men and women in uniform who so proudly and effectively serve our Nation today, such as my nephew, who just returned from a tour of duty as an infantryman in Afghanistan, as well as the many commanders I have known over the years. These experiences have taught me of the importance of striking the right balance between the need to ensure good order and discipline and the need to protect the rights of individual members of our Armed Forces.

In sum, if I am confirmed, I pledge that I will be mindful of all these factors and that I will approach every case with an open mind, guided solely by the facts and the law and by the interests of our United States Armed Forces and all those who serve in it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ohlson follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you all.

We'll have a 7-minute first round. And we've got timers in front of us in this room.

Let me ask you, Mr. Lettre, first—we've had the adequacy of our security clearance procedures raised, with tragic impact, in recent days. And, in your new position, if you're confirmed, there's going to be some real responsibility for the DOD facility clearances in your job.

The National Defense Authorization Act that is—we approved in committee a few months ago for fiscal year 2014, requires the Secretary of Defense and the Director of the National—Director of National Intelligence to reform the personnel security clearance investigation, adjudication, and transfer processes to improve security as well as to reduce cost. And I'm wondering whether you are familiar with the language in that bill.

Mr. LETTRE. Senator, I'm generally familiar with it. I haven't had a chance to study it or give it deep thought yet.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Well, do you have any views on the need for improved security process reform, greater cost transparency—in this area?

Mr. LETTRE. I do, Senator. There have been a number of episodes over the last several years that have pointed to a need to take a hard look at our security clearance and security processes. Just this week, as we all know, 12 families are grieving and dealing with a tragedy that occurred at the Washington Navy Yard. And, as you know, Secretary Hagel directed, yesterday, that Deputy Secretary Carter would undertake an immediate review of both facility security, as well as security clearances, as well as standing up an independent panel to look at those issues, as well. And I strongly support both of those.

It would be my view, going into the position, if confirmed, Senator, that I would want to take a strong role in doing what I can to be of support to those reviews while also taking into account the direction of the committee to look at those issues as part of the bill. And I look forward to doing so.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Well, obviously, we thought it was extremely important, even before these recent events, so I think you can take that as a challenge and a charge.

Secretary Wright, you have served in the military for 35 years before retiring as a major general in the Pennsylvania National Guard. And I think you're familiar with the major effort which we're making to end sexual assault and sexual harassment, and the provisions that are in our bill as they come to the floor, and the kind of added emphasis that we are placing on ending this scourge. One of the issues that we did not agree upon was the question of transferring responsibility to a prosecutor outside of the chain of command to determine whether or not allegations of sexual assault should be prosecuted. And I'm wondering whether you have a view on the role of commanders in changing the military culture in which sexual assaults take place, and also whether those—whether we should remove those commanders from the decisionmaking process as to whether or not to charge someone with an offense that would go to a general court-martial.

Ms. WRIGHT. Sir, I do have an opinion. And clearly, the Department has an opinion. And that is to hold the commander—

Chairman LEVIN. You give us your personal opinion, though.

Ms. WRIGHT. My opinion is that the command needs to be clearly involved, and the disposition of the sexual assault needs to stay within the command, which is exactly the same position as the Department's.

Chairman LEVIN. What is the reason for your opinion?

Ms. WRIGHT. Sir, I'm—I have served as a commander, and I have also served in the position here as an Acting, and I have worked diligently for the—to expunge sexual assault from our organization. And Secretary Hagel has also—this is a top priority of the Department.

The reason I believe it should stay in the command is because the command does have the responsibility for the discipline and the accountability and the management of their command. Saying that, the commanders also have to be held accountable for what happens in their command.

Secretary Hagel has put a multitude of changes in place that will increase the commanders' accountability. The one thing he has done is, he has raised the disposition authority to a colonel. The second thing he has done is, when a sexual assault occurs and a victim comes forward—and they don't ever—it's not a high probability that a victim comes to the commander. The victim normally comes to the sexually assault—sexual assault coordinator, the medic, the chaplain, and then they take it from there, based upon the restricted or unrestricted report.

But, another thing that he has done is, if there is a sexual assault filing within a command, the first general officer in that chain of command must be aware or told that this is happening and to have oversight of what is going on with the case.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Now, Ms. James, you mentioned that you have been on the advisory board for the Defense Department's Advisory

Committee on Women in the Services, DACOWITS. I'm wondering if you, there in that position, but also as an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs in the 1990s, whether you have a view on that question, about whether we should remove the—whether we should take away from the chain of command that decision as to whether or not to prosecute a sexual assault offense or other offenses.

Ms. JAMES. I do have a view, Senator. And my personal view is identical to that of Secretary Wright. So, I concur that it is extremely important to keep that authority with the commanders, but equally important to hold those commanders accountable for the climate and what goes on in their units. Command is an honor and a privilege in this country; it's not an entitlement. And those who do not live up to our values simply need to be removed from that command.

It has also been my observation, just as someone who has watched the military for my entire professional life—and part of it, at times, as a civilian—is that the military has been extraordinarily effective through the chain of command when there is persistent and constant focus, unrelenting focus. I give you the examples of racial integration and drug use in the Vietnam era. When "Don't ask, don't tell" was repealed, and the implementation of the new rules and expectations, the military chain of command was



very, very effective. And I think the reason why it hasn't been as effective on this particular matter over the decades is because that consistency of focus has been lacking.

I believe it was Chairman Dempsey who said, before this committee, some months ago at a hearing, that—and I'm paraphrasing—"We took our eye off the ball." I think that means we lost focus. There were wars, there were other things that captured that focus.

And so, if I am fortunate enough to actually get this job and become the Secretary of the Air Force, that will be a top job that I will carry forward, is to keep that focus strong, as it will be for the person who would succeed me. It has to be kept up, and I do believe the chain of command has to be responsible.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would ask General Klotz and Mr. Ohlson—you've heard the comments by Secretary Wright and Ms. James concerning the integrity of the role of the commander. Do you, each one, want to comment on that, or do you agree with them?

General KLOTZ. Senator, I left the military 2 and a half years ago, so my comments are based on those experiences. I think the fundamental responsibility of the commander is to maintain good order and discipline of her or his organization and enforcement of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. And investigating and prosecuting those people who have violated or are suspected of having violated the Uniform Code of Military Justice is one of the paramount duties that any commander must have.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, all right, that's a good answer.

Yes.

Mr. OHLSON. Senator Inhofe, if I were to be confirmed, serving in my role as a judge, it would be my responsibility to apply whatever law all of you come up with. I'm not sure it would be appropriate for me to opine on any specific legislative changes.

Senator INHOFE. Well, you know, that may be true. I—and I have a bias in this area, in having, many, many years ago, served as a court reporter on that—in that system. And it never occurred me, during that time, that the commander would not be supreme in that process. So—

Secretary Wright, first of all, I appreciate the time you spent with our staff and had a chance to visit. When I first saw the Department of Defense sexual assault survey, I had a lot of things going through my mind. You know, those of us who are in elective office are pretty familiar with what surveys are, and the integrity of surveys. And I looked at that, and I—when I saw the 26,000 unwanted sexual contacts—I'm not sure what that is—I also observed—the turnout or those who are responding to a survey, are those the ones that actually represent the thinking of the entire population? I—do you have any comments to make about that? Because I think we need to get—if we're going to do surveys, let's do a better one than we've been—than we've already got behind us. What do you think?

Ms. WRIGHT. First, I will tell you that we do have qualified statisticians that work in the personnel and readiness field that do the

surveys. But, saying that, there are a couple of other things that I would like the committee to know.

One, I think our force is about surveyed out. There are at least 400 surveys, I know, that go out to the field, and I'm convinced that there are some that the Department does that don't go through—

Senator INHOFE. Do you know what the response ratio was of this particular survey? You're—

Ms. WRIGHT. Not—

Senator INHOFE.—saying something I was not aware of, now.

Ms. WRIGHT. No, sir, not off the top of my head. But, I will get—

Senator INHOFE. Yeah, do that.

Ms. WRIGHT.—get back to you what the response was.

[INFORMATION]

Ms. WRIGHT. Also, I believe that the surveys go—I know the surveys go out in an email force portion. So, if you get three surveys that day, and two of them don't apply to you, and one does, and you have a few minutes, you're going to do the one that applies to you.

Senator INHOFE. Okay, that's a good answer. That did answer the question that I have. And I think that does kind of single out individuals.

One of the statements you had made—and this is a quote—is, “the Department's policy to treat all military personnel equally and to make the same benefits available to all qualified members.” That was a quote by you. The memorandum then goes on to authorize the administrative absence of service members, offering a different opportunity for same-sex marriage as other marriage. Do—is that an inconsistency, or where are you on that?

Ms. WRIGHT. I believe, sir, you're referring to the 4 September memo—

Senator INHOFE. Yes.

Ms. WRIGHT.—where I talk about, if you're going to get married, and you are not able to get married with a 100-mile radius, that the command can grant you an administrative absence to a place where you can get married, and that would it—it would apply to both same-sex couples and heterosexual couples.

I will be very honest with you. The times that it would apply to heterosexual couples will be probably few and far between. But, in a meeting that the Secretary called—he was away, he revisited the policy when he was away, he called me, and the next day that he got back, he called a meeting with the service chiefs and with the service secretaries and with the chairman, and we discussed this, and we discussed this at great lengths. He believes—they believe—we developed that policy then, and they believe that the policy is fair and equitable to all. Granted that there is a slimmer possibility for a heterosexual couple to run up against this issue.

Senator INHOFE. That is the perception. And—

Ms. WRIGHT. Yes.

Senator INHOFE.—and I don't want to spend any more time on that issue, because we're running out of time, here.

Ms. James, we—yesterday—and, in fact, I think we should give serious consideration to having a Senate SCMR hearing. I think a

lot came from that, where we're trying to get a hearing from the chiefs as to what is going to be—how the sequestration's going to directly affect them. We might give some consideration to have a similar hearing here in the Senate.

But, Ms. James, General Welsh made this statement yesterday, he said, "The damage will be insidious, but, should we face a high-end threat in the future, the impact of not modernizing will be blatant and deadly. While facing to—failing to achieve national objectives in the next counterinsurgency fight would be distressing, losing a major full-spectrum fight would be catastrophic."

Are you sure you want to get into this? It's—there are some real problems. Having a background and knowing a little bit about flying airplanes and all of that, back on April 9, when they made the decision to ground—what?—16 squadrons, is it your agreement with some I have talked to and who have testified here that the cost savings of that 3—2- or 3-month period were not nearly as—it's going to cost a lot more than the savings that they achieve from that. Have you given any thought to that?

Ms. JAMES. So, my understanding, Senator, is, digging out from under the readiness hole, if you will, actually will cost us more money than—

Senator INHOFE. Yes.

Ms. JAMES.—had we funded it the way it was originally intended to be funded from the beginning. So, yes, I agree with that, and I would like to concur with the spirit of what you're saying. I, too, am troubled by the readiness profile. Of course, hard decisions had to be made. And, as some of you have already pointed out, combat fighter squadrons were not able to fly for a period of time, depot maintenance was deferred, there were many civilians furloughed. So, it—it's very troubling that those actions had to be taken, and I am hopeful, still, though it is sometimes discouraging to wake up and read your morning newspaper, that there can be some agreement reached so that the entirety of our government can get beyond sequestration and that we can get to some figure for spending, albeit a lesser figure—we know we all have to be much more affordable for our taxpayers—but to know what that figure will be so that we can execute and we can plan to a single number and have a certain degree of certainty. So, that is my hope.

Senator INHOFE. Well, I appreciate it.

My time has expired, but I'm going to send a question for the record, General Klotz, concerning the B-61 and the difference in treatment between the House position and our position. I'm inclined to agree more with the House. But, I have some questions I'd like to send for the record to both of you who we didn't get a chance to visit.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Reed.

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

I want to thank all of the nominees, not only for their willingness to serve, but their already distinguished public service. So, thank you all very much.

And, Secretary Wright, one of the areas that is directly under your responsibility is the cost of all the personnel programs, and not just pay and wages, but also, particularly, TRICARE, other benefits. Every year, in the last few years, the Secretary has sent over some suggestions, along with the Chairman. Sometimes we follow them, many times we don't. But, the question still looms out there: As this costs increase as a percentage of your budget going forward, it gets larger and larger each year, cutting back, in terms of operations, training, maintenance, investment in new technologies. So, just a very general question is, one, I presume this is going to be one of your highest priorities, to try to deal with these issues of accelerating costs, and, two, How do you propose to go about setting up a constructive dialogue with all the stakeholders—Active, retirees, beneficiaries, the people that have to, you know, train, plan, and deploy the forces? Can you comment on those two points?

Ms. WRIGHT. In reference to TRICARE, sir?

Senator REED. TRICARE and other issues under the personnel costs. The generic sort of issue of the personnel costs.

Ms. WRIGHT. Oftentimes—and we have done this already three times since I have been in the acting role—the VSOs and the MSOs—the Veteran Service Organizations and the Military Service Organizations—and our family council that we have—is a venue that I use to get the word out about what we're doing in the Department. And so, I have met with the VSOs three times since I have been the acting, and that is a very good venue to relate the changes that we're doing and also the issues that we're facing, and to hear them out about their issues and the things that we want the Department to do.

On the family side of the house, we have a Military Family Readiness Council that is made up of the services, but it's also made up of spouses and members of all components. And so, I use that as another venue.

We also use the Public Affairs—George Little and I work diligently together to get our message out, no matter what the issue is within personnel and readiness, of the change of policy.

Senator REED. Can I just follow up on a quick point? I appreciate those efforts, and they're designed to communicate what you propose to do. But, there's another level, here, and that is trying to build a consensus upon changes that have to be at least accepted or tolerated by many of the different groups. Is—are you in the active consensus-building or simply saying, "This is what we're proposing?"

Ms. WRIGHT. Well, sir, as you know, sometime we have to direct things to happen. But—

Senator REED. I understand that.

Ms. WRIGHT. But, it's much easier to direct something to happen if you have, one, explained why you're doing it and you take their opinions and see if you can mitigate some of the concerns that they have as you are writing the policy. And so, that is what we do.

The meetings with all of these people are not me being dictatorial in nature and flowing one way. I am gathering their opinion, because they're really the boots on the ground out in the population that we serve.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Madam Secretary.

Mr. Lettre, you will be Principal Deputy to the Intelligence Secretary on Defense, and obviously this issue of contracting, with respect to intelligence services, has come up, with huge implications—Mr. Snowden, and now the tragedy at the Washington Navy Yard. The first question is that the concept of contractors is the purest—is that they do things that the military—you know, are not essentially military. And a lot of the intelligence efforts are, really, military. So, is there any thought that you've given and advice you're prepared to give with respect to sort of redefining what roles would be appropriate for intelligence contractors versus what roles will be necessary to be filled by, you know, direct employees—military, civilian, or the government?

Mr. LETTRE. Senator, the role of contractors, particularly in the intelligence community, but also across the Department, is something that the leadership team needs to put a lot of focus on in the next couple of years as we go through budget uncertainty and the budget trajectory that we're looking at.

Within the intelligence community, as you know well, there are jobs performed by Active Duty military, jobs by career civilians, and then by contractors. And I do think there are instances where contractors bring in quite unique capabilities, from a technology and an innovation perspective, that make it hard to see us being able to get that capability through any other way than through a contractor, because of the rapid-changing nature of technology.

And I think in the intelligence community, the—one of the guiding principles we need to look at all of the use of contractors through as we go—work our way through this in the next year or two is exactly that: How can we ensure that anything that is—that can only be uniquely done through a nongovernmental sector or expertise is really driving our use of contractors?—and that as we make tough choices about how to deal with the budget challenges of the next couple of years, we keep that principle in mind.

Senator REED. Let me follow up. These incidents have also sort of raised the issue of how we screen these contractors, to speak generally. And it raises a question. One is, Who is responsible for what? Is it a—purely the responsibility of the Department of Defense to ensure the reliability and the stability of the contractor, or are the companies that employ these individuals responsible, contractually or otherwise? And it would seem to me that both cases should apply, but it also seems to me, now, there's some confusion as to who really is the ultimate validator of the reliability, competence, and dependability of these individuals who are—have access to secrets and to facilities. Can you comment briefly—very briefly?

Mr. LETTRE. Senator, I do think it's time to take another look at the accountability of contractors and the executives who lead contracting firms in the private sector with respect to the responsibilities they may have on security clearances. Secretary Hagel's announcement, yesterday, that he's directing Deputy Secretary Carter to take a look at security clearances, as well as establishing an independent panel to look at this issue, I think provides a good opportunity to do that.

Senator REED. Thank you all very much, and, again, thank you for your service to the Nation, and good luck.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Reed.

Senator Wicker.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Mrs. James, we had a great visit last week. Thank you for that. At that meeting, I briefly mentioned my concerns regarding the concept and implementation of the Air Force's Total Force Plan. As I mentioned to Secretary Donley and General Welsh during the Air Force posture hearing earlier this year, I believe that some elements of the TFP were shortsighted and may adversely impact our intra-theater airlift capability at a time when our services are evolving toward more rotational deployment model. As ranking member of the Airland Subcommittee, I am very pleased that your answers to our committee's advance policy questions acknowledge that the decisions made last year regarding the TFP were made without adequate consultation of the various stakeholders who are now feeling the negative impacts of the plan's implementation. Ms. James, this is a very important answer, and I appreciate your acknowledging that fact.

Let me just ask you. There will be a national commission on the structure of the Air Force. It's scheduled to report back to Congress with findings and recommendations next year. Would the Air Force, under your leadership, consider modifications to the TFP based on the commission's findings and recommendations?

Ms. JAMES. Senator, if I may begin by saying, based on my time, both on the committee staff on the House side as well as when I served as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, I'm a deep, deep believer in the value of the total force. So, I would just like to say that up front.

I would also like to say that, in some ways, it's painful to me to see some of the frictions that have been happening between the air components. Back in the 1990s, I used to refer to the air components, with respect to their utilization of the Guard and Reserve, as the superstars of the Guard and Reserve, and I still think that's so. But, clearly, there's—there are fences to be mended, and we need to do some work here.

So, I absolutely welcome the work of the commission. I'm fortunate that I consider myself to be a good friend of some of the commissioners. I know General McCarthy, I know Ms. Connaughton. I know several of them. So, I think we'll have a good working relationship. I look forward to hearing their ideas. And again, if I am confirmed into this job, I would like to think a hallmark of what I will bring to the table will be very close consultations, bringing in all of the components, talking to adjutants generals, talking to Members of Congress, and trying to come up with a go-forward proposal which will basically meet the country's needs as well as the States' needs for the very real desirability of being able to respond when disaster strikes.

With that said, I'm equally sure that we will have to take reductions. We've talked about this budget situation that we're facing, so it won't be easy. But, we need everybody's input and best efforts, and that will certainly be what I will work toward.

Senator WICKER. Thank you. Thank you. And so, should the committee recommend modifications, you would consider those recommendations.

Ms. JAMES. I'm completely openminded and will welcome their report.

Senator WICKER. Thank you. And, if confirmed, will you commit to working with our committee to ensure that future Air Force manning and force-structure decisions are fully considered within the broader national strategic context?

Ms. JAMES. I do give you that commitment.

Senator WICKER. Thank you. And, as we discussed last week, I'm very proud of all of our installations in Mississippi. I particularly would call to your attention Keesler Air Force Base, which won the Air Force Installation Excellence Award, the leading Air Force Base in the entire Air Force.

I'm committed to ensuring that Keesler, which is a training base, maintain a flying mission. If confirmed, will you work with me to ensure that Keesler maintains an enduring flying mission?

Ms. JAMES. So, what I know of Keesler is all topnotch, and I look forward to visiting Keesler—with you, I hope. You said perhaps that we—

Senator WICKER. Very soon, perhaps.

Ms. JAMES.—should do that, could do that, so I welcome that opportunity.

Senator WICKER. Thank you very much.

Now, let me shift, then, Ms. James, to unmanned aerial systems, such as the very successful RQ-4 Global Hawk. These UASs are providing critical support to deployed forces around the world. Combatant commanders continue to stress the importance of ISR, and have identified ISR shortfalls in key areas around the world. Many, if not all, members of the committee view unmanned aerial systems as “the” cost-effective future of airborne ISR.

In Mississippi, we not only have the Global Hawk, but we have the Orion UAS. Orion just completed its first test flight last month at China Lake. It is designed to stay aloft for up to 5 days while carrying a 1,000-pound payload of sensors. If confirmed, I urge you and your team to be briefed on what I consider to be a very promising program in the Air Force.

What is your assessment of the potential for long-endurance unmanned systems to help meet combatant-commander ISR requirements? And, if confirmed, would you provide to this committee, say, within 30 days, a briefing and written report of the Air Force's investment strategy to provide unmanned long-endurance airborne ISR capability to our combatant commanders?

Ms. JAMES. So, first, Senator, I would say yes, I certainly will get back to you in 30 days after confirmation, if I am confirmed, to give you, sort of, my best assessment that I can after that—

Senator WICKER. Thank you.

Ms. JAMES.—30-day period, even if it may be incomplete still at that juncture.

I do recall our discussion about Orion, and I would very much welcome learning more about that in a briefing.

And, as to the overall issue of unmanned systems versus manned systems, I have some familiarity with that. It's an area that I need

to look into and study more deeply to understand the costs and benefits of both. My initial take is that we certainly need both in our force. We need a complement of both, and we need to ensure that we're looking at costs and capability and survivability. Because my understanding is, it's somewhat different, depending on which system you're looking at.

But, it's an important area, and I believe in it, and I will look into it further.

Senator WICKER. Thank you. And let me just ask, real briefly, about the common support helicopter to replace our aging UH-1N fleet. As reflected in our committee-reported text, the 2014 DOD authorization bill, this committee believes that the UH-1N is critical to the nuclear security and continuity-of-government missions, and can be achieved by leveraging existing DOD production capacity.

I would commend to you, Mrs. James, and to you, General Klotz, the American Eurocopter Global Strike aircraft. And, if confirmed, will you provide to this committee and my office, say, within 30 days, a briefing and written answers to the questions of, Why is the Air Force not funding a UH-1N replacement program, when the Air Force states that protection of the U.S. nuclear enterprise is a top priority? And how will the Air Force and the National Security—National Nuclear Security Administration ensure that resource allocations accurately reflect our stated commitment to protect the U.S. nuclear enterprise?

Ms. James?

Ms. JAMES. So, yes, I will absolutely come back to you in 30 days and give you my best answer to that, Senator.

[The information referred to follows:]

[INFORMATION]

Senator WICKER. Thank you.

And General Klotz.

General KLOTZ. And, Senator, I will, as well.

[The information referred to follows:]

[INFORMATION]

Chairman LEVIN. Okay?

Senator WICKER. Thank you very much.

And thanks for your indulgence, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator McCaskill.

Senator McCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One of the distressing things that has occurred in the honest disagreement and debate around how we work on the problem of sexual assault in the military is a narrative that has developed, unfortunately, that somehow this is about whose side you're taking, the victims or the commanders. I want to try to clarify that that is not an accurate description of discussions in the policy changes that are being debated. Rather, this is an honest disagreement over which reforms will better protect the victims and which reforms will result in more prosecutions.

I hope I have time to get back to some of the additional work we want to do. You all are aware of the body of work that Senator Gillibrand and I, together, have accomplished in this bill, along with the help of a lot of others, including the Chairman, that are



going to remove commanders from in any way having authority to change the outcome of a military trial. And you're aware of the fact that all victims, like the Air Force has role-modeled, are going to have their own lawyers. I won't go through all the changes we've done.

The Chairman and I continue to work on ways that we can hold the commanders accountable. And if I get time to get back to that, I would like you to give, now or later, your specific recommendations on how we can hold commanders accountable for this important problem that they have to get after.

And also Article 32 and reforms that I think need to occur within Article 32. It is—become a weird amalgamation of a preliminary hearing, discovery, trial-run trial, which—it's evolved of this just over the last decade, and would like your input on that.

But, I really want to focus now on the two problems that we're all trying to get at, and that's retaliation in reporting. I know you all are aware that all of our allies that have removed commanders entirely from this decision have not seen an increase in reporting. None of them have. And so, we know that is not the key, just doing that, in terms of increasing reporting. And we know that they do not have to report to the commanders now, and they certainly won't over the reforms that are embedded in the NDAA that is going to be debated on the floor.

But, retaliation is one I would like you to address. And any of you—and if you have had experience as a JAG, and, Secretary Wright, as you've had experience as a commander—I'm trying to assess, if a victim is going back into a unit, when is the likelihood of retaliation higher, when a JAG lawyer a half a continent away has signed off on pursuing charges or when the commander of that unit has signed off, in terms of pursuing charges? Which would create an environment that would be more likely for there to be retaliation?

Secretary Wright?

Ms. WRIGHT. Ma'am, honestly, I—at first blush, I couldn't tell you. What I can tell you is, the victim can ask for—if the victim files an unrestricted report, and it is public—even with a restricted report—they can ask for a transfer out of that particular unit. So, that is one right that we have for the victim. We even now can transfer the—if the alleged perpetrator is in that unit, we can transfer the alleged perpetrator out of the unit.

Retaliation is real. I agree with you 100 percent. Maybe not in every case, but it is—if it's in one case, that's one too many. I believe what we need to work at, and I think that our commanders, from Secretary Hagel on down, is working at, is what I call "social courage." And I put it into the aspect that, if you're in combat with someone, and your battle buddy in combat is doing something that will get you killed, you immediately will say something to that person, no matter what. You won't think about it twice.

If you are in a social situation with that same person, and that person is either drinking too much or not acting up to the values that our system wants you to act up to, and looks like something may go sour, if you will, with someone else, that social courage is not there to say to that person, "Let's go home. You're drinking too much, you're being foolish."

And so, I think that our commanders, our people, our lowest grades of enlisted, need to learn that social courage to hold that them, themselves, responsible and also hold their battle buddy responsible.

So, it's prosecution, and it's also holding people responsible for their actions.

Senator MCCASKILL. Is there anything about—and, Ms. James, I know that there have been a number of changes already enacted in the Air Force—is there anything about a lawyer making a decision to go forward that would provide an extra level of protection, as opposed to a commander deciding to go forward?

Ms. JAMES. I, personally, don't think so. And I, if I may, wanted to offer up, sort of, the core, I think, of your question is, we have to instill more confidence in members of the force, that if they are victimized, we want them to come forward.

Senator MCCASKILL. Correct.

Ms. JAMES. We want them to report. All reports are good, but unrestricted reports are better, because then followup can occur.

And so, based on my DACOWITS experience—and DACOWITS does installation visits, we do focus groups with men and women—the sampling of people that I have talked to, some of whom have been victims, others of whom know those who have been victims—they tell me they don't come forward for a number of reasons. They feel personally ashamed, they feel that they may be blamed for what has happened. They do fear retaliation, sometimes from chain of command, sometimes from their buddies in the unit, and they just simply don't want people to know, and they're not sure that anything will be done, or at least not enough will be done.

So, I agree with Secretary Wright, to have the option of either transferring the alleged perpetrator or transferring the victim, to be able to go either way with that, I think, is a good thing.

I'd like to offer a specific couple of ideas. And these are ideas that the DACOWITS has recommended. And it goes to the issue of accountability of commanders. I believe, from every job I have ever held, either in government or in the private sector, that aligning a person's incentives and looking at what they are measured on, getting all of that into alignment, is terribly, terribly important.

So, the DACOWITS has recommended that it be put into the performance reviews of commanders how well or poorly they are doing in the area of the climate within their unit, and how well or poorly they are doing with respect to being a leader against sexual harassment. So, to the degree that each and every commander understands that his or her career is on the line to do well in this regard, people pay attention to what they're measured on. So, that's—that is one idea—

Senator MCCASKILL. Well, I thank you for that. I—I'm—I know my time is up, but I would look to all of you, and especially, Mr. Lettre, with your experiences as doing Article 32s and—did you say that you were one of the investigators in—did I hear that in your introductory remarks? Or was that you, Mr. Ohlson?

Mr. OHLSON. Actually, that was me, Senator.

Senator MCCASKILL. Oh, well, you can't—you can't do this, then, because you're—you—thank goodness, though, we have civilian courts of appeals now that will be the sole arbiter of whether or

not due process has been achieved within the UCMJ, instead of having these weird situation where judges could overturn jury verdicts. I'm glad that that is definitely going to get fixed.

But, any specific ideas you have about 32 and how we can make some reforms there.

I would mention, as I close, Mr. Chairman, that we have given victims the choice of expressing that they would prefer the charges to be done in the civilian system. Once again, giving the victim more power, empowering the victims so they do not feel like that they are being swept up in a system that nothing's going to happen and they have no control over. That also is part of our reform that I think is essential.

And I thank you all and look forward to your specific suggestions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Two quick comments on that.

One is, for the first time, retaliation is a crime, if we can get our bill passed, because, in our bill, we would make retaliation a crime, for the first time.

Second, that suggestion of DACOWITS, about the performance review containing a review of a commander who's being reviewed as to the climate in that command, is now, by a number of us, being looked at for inclusion in our bill, when it gets to the floor, as an amendment. There's a number of us who have looked at that recommendation and feel that it's a very important recommendation, and are working on language so that it can be incorporated, hopefully, in our bill when we get to the floor.

Senator Blunt is next.

Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Senator Blunt.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Chairman.

Ms. James, I didn't get a chance to visit with you before today, and that—I'm assuming that's probably my fault, but I look forward to talking to you more as this process goes on. I just have a couple of—I think, basically, they're future asset and equipment questions. And we have Whiteman Air Force Base, in the State that Senator McCaskill and I represent, and clearly important in our overall strategy.

You know, the only new aircraft, I believe, out there is the long-range stealth bomber that's being considered right now. Obviously, that's an important part of our projection, maybe an important platform that other equipment can look to, to be built around. But, are you concerned that, in the decade in front of us, that's the only plane we're talking about right now as a new addition to the Air Force?

Ms. JAMES. Senator Blunt, there's really three top modernization programs that are very, very important to the Air Force. One is the F-35, the other is the new tanker, and the third, as you said, is the new bomber, the new long-range bomber. And, of the three, the new long-range bomber is in the earliest phases—

Senator BLUNT. Right. That's—

Ms. JAMES.—of development.

Senator BLUNT.—what I meant, the one that we're just now—that's the—

Ms. JAMES. Right.

Senator BLUNT.—newest thing we're launching. There's nothing, kind of, that follows that in the line of talking about new—well, go ahead.

Ms. JAMES. So, as far as I know, those are the three top priorities. And, based on what I know about those three top priorities, it seems right to me—based on the strategy that we are pursuing, based on the thrust of the rebalance toward the Pacific. You need longer range, we need more bomber forces. It's important for the triad, and so forth. So, these seem like the correct programs, to me, at this point.

Senator BLUNT. Now, as those are being developed, there's some discussion, of course, of taking some of the workhorse equipment, like the A-10s, and just totally eliminating entire groups of planes as we look at the money available. I think when General Welch was here, before the—at least the—it was the House Armed Services Committee—he said that the Air Force may be forced to eliminate entire fleets that have less relevance in contested airspace, including the A-10. This would be one of the planes—I don't know, until we've got something, really, that fully meets that need, we can make that decision. And that's a decision that eventually would come up to you. Do you have anything to say about that?

Ms. JAMES. So—I do. So, I am not privy to any of the predecisional work, at this point, but, as you point out, I, too, have read accounts that everything essentially is on the table. I don't know specifically about that, but I read it in my morning newspaper, as well, that this was commented upon yesterday by the chief. My understanding is that these are part of the hard decisions that are being looked at as options, but that there are no final decisions.

I do agree with you, though; if we're going to eliminate an entire aircraft which is currently serving a particular mission, we'd better be sure that we've got something else that will serve that mission in the interim until one of the futuristic programs comes online.

So, these are all areas that I will need to delve into much more deeply if I'm confirmed, but I think this points out some of the very difficult challenges that we're going to have to work through together of how to make ends meet with the budget figures that we may be faced with.

Senator BLUNT. All right. Well, it's going to be a big job, and these questions will get to your desk, assuming you're at that desk. And I believe you will be. But, thanks for those answers.

General Klotz, we talked yesterday about the NSSA facility in Kansas City. You mentioned it again today. I think one of the things you're going to have to deal with there is, What do you do with the property that you're leaving that goes back to World War II airplane production? Do you want to get some thoughts on how that move is going to occur, when it'll be finished, and then what happens to the property that you leave behind?

General KLOTZ. Yes, Senator. The move into the new facility is currently underway and will very soon be completed, and it is a— an exciting facility that will—not only reduces the overall footprint of the amount of space it takes to do the work that's been done at the Kansas City plant, but will do it much more efficiently.

And, you're right, there will be a facility that we will be vacating, along with the GSA, in the same location on Bannister Road. The Kansas City plant has been a part of the nuclear weapons enterprise for decades. The NNSA and the people who work in the Kansas City plant consider themselves part of the social fabric of that entire part of the State of Missouri. And, as I committed to you when we met, we will be good stewards in making sure that that facility is turned over as quickly as possible so that it can be re-used by the citizens who live in that particular part of the State.

Senator BLUNT. Yeah. And not to comment on, but just for me to say, I think, at some point, those two pieces of property that really are part of the same complex are going to, for terms of—in order to allow something to happen there, probably one of the two of you needs to become the lead agency and the controlling agency. And I think that'll be an early decision that you may be asked to make, whether you want to be the lead agency or whether you want the GSA to be.

I don't believe you had a chance to comment on Senator Reed's question about contractors. One, are there a lot of contractors? And, two, after these recent incidents that we've seen with contractors—Edward Snowden and now the contractor at the Navy Yard—what are your thoughts about how to deal—the necessary of contractors and how to better deal with this overall issue?

General KLOTZ. Senator, the NNSA relies extensively on contractors, and has for a number of years. There are roughly 1800 Federal employees in the NNSA, but there are nearly 30,000 contractor employees that work in the National Security Laboratories, in the plants, and on various other facilities, doing on it a government-owned contractor-operated basis. So, they are indispensable, integral members of the team, in terms of delivering the product and the capabilities that NNSA has to have.

The security, particularly personal security and cyber security, is an extraordinarily serious concern with respect to the NNSA, given the very sensitive nature of the information it handles, as well as the material and—the intellectual material that it also must deal with.

So, I have said, on several occasions, that security and safety are going to be my top priorities, if confirmed, and we need to take a very close look, given the events of the past few months, whether it's a failure in terms of security of individuals or failures in terms of the—securing facilities, to ensure that we've got the right organization and the right tools to protect against any breaches of security.

Senator BLUNT. Okay, thank you.

Thank you, Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Blunt.

Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank all of you for being here and for your commitment to public service. And I know that your individual commitment to public service means your families, also. So, I want to certainly welcome the families that are behind you today.

I want to follow it up on Senator McCaskill's question on sexual assault, Ms. James. In your response to questions from the com-

mittee regarding sexual assault, you stated that, “Senior military and civilian leaders, beginning with the Secretary and Air staff, must focus on promoting an environment that does not tolerate sexual assault.” Obviously. And we appreciate that. But, I’m also—you are aware that, twice in the past 6 months, uniformed military officials, whose job it was to prevent sexual assault, were arrested for committing sexual assault, themselves, including the hair—the head of the Air Force’s program. So, the screening process in this area is—certainly needs to be discussed.

And, if confirmed, how do you intend to ensure that the best-qualified and appropriately screened individuals are placed in these positions and billets, not only at the top, but within all levels of the Department?

Ms. JAMES. So, with respect to the people who are serving in those very critical positions for the area of sexual assault, I will look forward to reviewing what the current criteria is for selection and training and so forth. So, I have not delved into that particular aspect deeply at this juncture.

Senator HAGAN. Well, obviously, it’s a critical position.

Let me talk about pivoting to the Pacific, as far as the military. In the fall of 2011, the administration outlined a long-term strategy for expanding our role in the Asia-Pacific region. There’s been some speculation that this pivot would require a shift of some military assets from the East to the West Coast.

Ms. James, from your understanding of this—of the President’s initiatives, do you believe that the Air Force will need to physically shift assets to support the strategy? And would such a shift perhaps leave us less ready to respond to contingencies outside of the Asia-Pacific region, or even in parts of the U.S.?

Ms. JAMES. So, on that latter point, I certainly hope not, and it would be part of my job to ensure that that was not the case. That is, in terms of leaving other parts of the world or other parts of the country at greater risk. So, I certainly would not wish to see that happen, and I would be an advocate to not let that happen.

In terms of the overall strategy of rebalance to the Pacific—of course, we’re military witnesses, we talk about a great deal about the military programs, but it really is a more comprehensive—it’s economic, it’s diplomatic, it’s military, it’s all of that, that our government would be focused on for that rebalance. And I think that’s a recognition of the importance of the Pacific, economically and from a threat perspective, and so forth.

So, we’ll have to be looking at all of that, and I certainly will do that, on behalf of the Air Force, if confirmed.

Senator HAGAN. This committee’s markup of the fiscal year ’14 NDAA prohibits authorization of a future Base Realignment and Closure round until, at the very least, that DOD completes and submits to Congress a formal review of the overseas military facilities structure. And the committee is signaling, and I firmly believe, that the Department does need to prioritize domestic military bases over foreign bases, especially when you look at the fiscally constrained environment that we’re in.

And, once again, Ms. James, and the last question for you, what are your thoughts on this issue? And do you agree that we should

continue to take a hard look at our overseas military facilities before considering looking at similar actions back home?

Ms. JAMES. So, I do agree we need to take a very strong look at the overseas bases, and I believe that that review is ongoing. So, I'll have to look into the due date of that review, but that is happening.

With respect to the overall base-closure issue, I will say that I have been briefed and I do believe that there is excess capacity in all of the military services. I believe the Air Force has put that excess capacity at about 20 to 24 percent. And so, over time, I do think—

Senator HAGAN. Does that include overseas, or are you talking now just specifically on U.S.—

Ms. JAMES. I believe—

Senator HAGAN.—soil?

Ms. JAMES.—that is the entirety, U.S. Air Force bases worldwide. And so, as you point out, the overseas piece is important, and that part is getting a very big scrub at this point.

But, I do believe it's part and parcel of our being able to reduce overhead functions, consolidate facilities, free up money so that we can plow that money back into other resources over time. So, I do think it is something that we need, and we need to reduce infrastructure as best as possible across the board.

Senator HAGAN. And tell me that number one more time. You said 24 percent?

Ms. JAMES. I believe it's between 20 and 24 percent excess capacity that the Air Force has talked about.

Senator HAGAN. Oh.

Mr.—let's see, where we—Secretary Wright, sorry—the Department of Defense and the defense industry are facing challenges seeking new graduates with advanced degrees in scientific and technical fields to help develop the complex military systems. Some of these challenges include a lack of interest in traditional defense secretaries by—sectors—by our new graduates: Federal hiring issues, budget pressure, the length that typical defense programs take to execute, and then, obviously, the competition for talent with other, not only government agencies, but the corporate sector, too. If confirmed, what would you do to ensure that the Department of Defense has access to the best and the brightest future scientific and technical talent? And how would you measure the effectiveness of these efforts?

Ms. WRIGHT. Ma'am, part of the issue that we're dealing right now is, as you know, with the budgetary constraints that we're under, we are under a hiring freeze. There are, in the Department, ability to waive some of those very important positions, and some of them would fall in the categories that you just talked about.

It is our responsibility to screen the applicants, and it's our responsibility to kind of market the positions that we have to make sure that we get the best applicants to apply.

The STEM program starts from the bottom up and works from the bottom up for people to realize how important science, technology, engineering, and math is. And that's a program that I think is worth its weight in gold as we continue to move people through

the system, through graduate degrees and applications in to the Department of Defense.

Senator HAGAN. Well, I think we can all understand that we're not doing enough in the STEM fields in our public education schools around the country now, and I think we've got to have a greater emphasis, especially beginning in middle school. It seems we lose many of the young girls in middle school.

But, this is a critical problem, and, I think, from corporate America to the National security issues, that the individuals that we must have in DOD, that we really take a very keen and strong interest to be sure that—I mean, we are competing worldwide for this talent. And I know how important it is, from the National security aspect, that we do get the best and the brightest, and that we keep them. So, I think that's an issue that I know will—you'll be giving it a lot of study and action.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Senator AYOTTE.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank all of you for being here, for your—and your families—for your service to our country, and for the important positions you're about to take on.

I wanted to, first—Ms. James, you and I had a chance to meet the other day and talk in person, and I want to—first of all, want to reiterate what I told you, which is, I look forward to working with you on the basing of the KC-46A tanker at Pease. We're very proud of the work done by our 157 refueling unit. And so, I look forward to being a partner with you on that. And, as we mentioned in our meeting, Senator Shaheen and I would love to have you up to New Hampshire to see that unit and also to see what is a great association between an Active Duty and a Guard unit so—I think, as a model for the country. So, thank you, and I look forward to working with you on that.

I wanted to also follow up in the discussion we had—I know that Senator Blunt had asked you about the A-10s, and you said that there had not yet been a decision on A-10s. Well, one of the concerns that I have is that—I was given a slide, I believe, that came from Air Combat Command, that actually says that the A-10 fleet would be divested by fiscal year- 15, on this slide. And so, what that makes me concerned is that there already has been a decision made on the A-10. And, as you and I talked about in our meeting, the A-10 has a very important function, in terms of close air support. And, in fact, most recently in July, 60 soldiers were saved in Afghanistan because of the important close air support provided by the A-10.

So, I'm going to submit this article for the record. I hope that you will look at that.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator AYOTTE. And I will ask you again: To your knowledge, has there been any decision made to divest the A- 10? Because I'm not sure why these types of slides would be put out there by Air Combat Command if this decision hadn't already been made.



Ms. JAMES. So, Senator, first of all, I, too, look forward to visiting Pease and working with you on the base, the K-46, and all of the other important issues that you and I talked about.

To the best of my knowledge, there is no decision on divesting A-10s or anything else, for that matter, because all of this is predecisional. However, it is my belief that planners and people who are looking at budget and possible scenarios are looking at options, and everything, including complete divestitures of aircraft fleet, these things are possibilities, they are on the table.

Senator AYOTTE. Well, one of the issues that you and I talked about which I think is very important—I'm certainly a strong supporter of the F-35 and our fifth-generation fighter, but, until the F-35 is operational, we can't be giving up our capacity, particularly important capacity that protects our troops. So, what I would ask for you, as a nominee of this important position, Will you agree to come and speak to Congress and brief us when the decisions are made, if there is a decision made to divest from the A-10 or any other airframe, so that we can weigh in on this important decision? And then we'll have the opportunity, of course, to ask you questions and for us to have a very important dialogue about this on all of the airframes.

Ms. JAMES. Yes, I will.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, I appreciate that.

I also wanted to follow up—I appreciated the meeting that we had, Mr. Klotz, in terms of the important positions that you've held for our country. And one of the issues that is very important to me is the modernization of our nuclear deterrent. And certainly as part of the New START Treaty, many of the individuals—I wasn't here at the time—who agreed to endorse that Treaty were very concerned about modernizing our nuclear deterrent.

In your position, when you're confirmed, will you be an advocate for making sure that we modernize our nuclear deterrent? And how important do you believe that is, to make sure that we have a strong triad?

General KLOTZ. Senator, I think it's absolutely essential that we modernize and extend the life and maintain the nuclear weapons that are currently in our arsenal for a triad of forces. This is the oldest—we currently have the oldest stockpile, in terms of average age, that we've ever had as a Nation, and there is—there needs to be scientific work and an awful lot of touch labor to ensure that those nuclear weapons that we retain are still fully safe, fully secure, and fully effective.

So, I will be an ardent champion for getting the resources, whether that's funding or people or facilities in our laboratories and in our plants, in order to carry out that most important mission, and hopefully will be persuasive with the administration and with the committees of Congress.

Senator AYOTTE. Well, I appreciate that very much.

And I also wanted to follow up—you—based on your prior experience in the important positions that you've held in the past that are so critical to our nuclear deterrent, you and I talked about—there's been some discussion of the potential for further reducing our nuclear deterrent. Certainly, the President has given some

speeches that suggest that that may be a possibility. Would you recommend that we do that unilaterally?

General KLOTZ. Senator, my view has always been, throughout my military career, that the best way to pursue any sort of arms control agreement is part of a negotiated treaty.

Senator AYOTTE. A treaty that would come before the Congress so that Congress could weigh in on this important issue?

General KLOTZ. Yes, Senator, a treaty that would come before the Senate for consent to ratification.

Senator AYOTTE. Absolutely. Well, I appreciate that, and I think that's important, that we weigh in on it, but also that, if there's going to be any further efforts to reduce our nuclear arsenal, that certainly it not be done unilaterally, particularly with what we see happening right now around the world with some of the individuals and rogue actors who are also seeking to have their own nuclear capability. So, I appreciate that. And you're taking on a very important position for the Nation. And thank you for your prior experience in this area, as well.

So, I want to thank all of you for being here.

And let me just reiterate, Mr. Lettre, that I very much look forward to the important work that I know that you are going to do in reviewing the security clearances. All of us on this committee are very troubled by what appears to be some significant lapses, in terms of a contractor getting access who had a fairly significant history of misconduct and other flags that worry us, in terms of the security clearances of our contractors and the safety of our personnel. So, I look forward to working with you on that, and this is a very important review that I know that you'll be a big part of. So, thank you.

Mr. LETTRE. Thank you, Senator. I look forward to working with the committee on that.

Senator AYOTTE. Great.

Thank you all.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Ayotte.

Senator Donnelly.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to give my sympathies, and that of everyone in Indiana, to the families and victims of those killed and injured at the Navy Yard. We owe a debt of gratitude to these patriots for their work on behalf of the United States and for sacrificing their lives in the service of our country.

And, to all the members of our panel, we want to thank you for the sacrifice you have made, and to your families for everything you have done for this Nation.

Secretary Wright, I thank you for taking the time for visiting with me earlier in this week to discuss the importance identifying servicemembers and veterans in need of mental health care. As you know, I have introduced the Jacob Saxton Military Suicide Prevention Act, and it seeks to improve identification of servicemembers at risk, and creates a career-long mental health history to help professionals provide the best possible care.

I just want to make sure of your commitment to work forward on this legislation, and to really dig deep in this area to make sure that we can end this scourge.

Ms. WRIGHT. Sir, you have my full commitment. It is not only the Department's job, but to work hand-in-glove with the Congress and, truly, everyone. It's everyone's responsibility to work towards solving the suicide problem.

Senator DONNELLY. And you've heard questions from my colleagues about the A-10s and about the Reserve Force. In fiscal year-13, the Air Force submitted a budget in which 17 percent of the cuts came from the active component, despite the fact that 67 percent of Air Force personnel is the active component. We went through, in Indiana, as many of my colleagues have, a situation where we were providing services at 28 cents on the dollar, and were notified that there was going to be an effort to try to remove all of those services from what we were doing.

And what we're looking for is, for want of a better way of putting it, a fair shake, that when a judgment is made, it is made on the numbers, it is made on who can provide the best service at the lowest cost. And, obviously, I'm talking in reference to the Air Guard and others. And I'm wondering what efforts you have undertaken and what you will do to ensure that DOD finds a balance between the active Duty and the Air Guard.

Ms. WRIGHT. Sir, we are in on all the meetings that discuss the force structure as it relates to the budget and the balance and the mission prosecution that we have to do. So, not only my office, but also the office that falls within my purview as in Reserve Affairs.

One of the other things that the Secretary has done is, he has—he meets with the Council of Governors that represents the National Guard and, in turn, represents the Reserve components—the Title 10 Reserve components within their State, and he has assured them that we will be transparent in what we decide to do, and he has personally met with them, and the Deputy has met with them, for the balance of the Reserve components and—as it applies to the force structure and how we structure both the Reserve and the active.

Senator DONNELLY. Ms. James, I'd like to hear your thoughts on this, as well.

Ms. JAMES. So, I certainly concur with what Ms. Wright just explained. I hope I, too, will get to meet with the Council of Governors. I think this kind of crosstalk is important, work with Members of Congress, and, very importantly, pull in the Guard, the Reserve, along with the active, to include some of the adjutants general, so that we can put together a plan—a go-forward plan, which makes sense, both from the standpoint of the National mission that the Air Force has as well as responding when disaster strikes here at home. Both are very important.

Senator DONNELLY. I can tell you that, before, when this happened, it basically was just dropped in our laps and told us, "This is what's going to happen," and, "Good luck with it." And obviously, you know, we were not willing to sit still for that kind of thing.

What I would like to also see, and I know my other colleagues have asked you this, as well, so you're going to have an active travel schedule, but we'd love to have you both come to Indiana and see the quality of the installations that we have so you can—when you make these judgments, that you're not just making it from a

piece of paper, but you're making it from actual knowledge of what you're looking at.

Ms. WRIGHT. I would love to, sir.

Ms. JAMES. Me, too.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you very much.

Mr.—and I apologize, I wasn't here at the start—"LaTray"?

Mr. LETTRE. "Leh'-truh," Senator.

Senator DONNELLY. "Leh'-truh," okay. I didn't know how French you are, so—

[Laughter.]

Senator DONNELLY. Something of very significant concern to me is counterfeit microelectronics. You know, a lot of work in—is done in our State, at Crane, on that. But, I think they're a troubling problem for the military supply chain. And the committee has done a very comprehensive investigation of this, but one of the difficulties we face is in identifying manufacturing facilities or foundries that produce the counterfeit parts and then put them into the DOD supply chain. And I'm wondering what efforts, that you can talk about here, that the intelligence community has taken to gather information on this, because, as you know, one of our fighter planes is only as good as its worst part that is in the plane. And so, I'd be interested in your comments on that.

Mr. LETTRE. Senator, the sourcing of counterfeit microelectronic parts and our intelligence assessments on that is not something I've had a chance to really dig deeply into. If confirmed, I would like to do so. I'm familiar with the committee's work on counterfeit parts over the last couple of years. It's been a serious contribution to shedding light on this important security risk. And what I would like to do is continue the dialogue with the committee to make sure that we are putting the right capabilities to bear within the intelligence community to address this challenge.

Senator DONNELLY. Okay. Any efforts and, you know, emphasis you can put on this, I think, is critical to our National security.

And, Mr. Klotz, I was wondering what efforts you can talk to us about in regards to the partnering, for instance, that's undertaken at Crane between the Air Force and the Navy to reduce recapitalization costs as it modernizes strategic ballistic systems, working to make sure we have a stronger nuclear effort. How important do you think that is to be able to combine efforts, not only cost-saving, but also possibly having a stronger product, a stronger result, at the end of the day?

General KLOTZ. Senator, I think that all options ought to be on the table, particularly as we begin the process of modernizing the warheads which are associated with both the Air Force and the Navy. I am aware that considerable work is already being done under the auspices of the Nuclear Weapons Council, which combines the efforts of both the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy and between the Air Force and the Navy, for look for—looking for ways in which they can achieve greater commonality and, in the process, perhaps make for more efficient use of our facilities and, at the same time, reduce costs of the life extension program.

So, I think this is an area which is ripe for a lot of work.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Just to follow up on the commitment you made, Mr. Lettre, to Senator Donnelly on the counterfeit parts. The law, as we now—as we wrote it, has certain requirements. First of all, it holds the manufacturers—it holds the contractors responsible for replacing parts. It can't be passed along to the government to pay for those replacements. Second, we require that the parts have to be purchased from the original manufacturer. We're talking, here, about these microelectronic parts, but it applies broadly. You've got to buy it from the original manufacturer or their certified suppliers and representatives or trusted vendors.

Now, there's an effort being made to weaken this provision. It has been, before—the provision that Senator Donnelly is referring to that we wrote into the law. And so, we're going to need you to tell us, in the next—within a month after you're confirmed—as to whether or not those provisions in our law to address this issue are being implemented. As part of your response to Senator Donnelly's question for the record, we'd appreciate that.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Lee.

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

And thanks, to all of you, for being here today.

Ms. James, why don't we start with you. Thank you, first of all, for stopping by my office earlier this week. I enjoyed our visit a great deal.

I want to follow up on some of the conversations that we had. First, let's talk about the F-35 for a minute. I think the acquisition of this system, of this aircraft, is really important for the Nation's security and for the Air Force. And I know that I and a lot of other people are looking forward to seeing it roll out. It has, of course, been a project that has been plagued with a lot of cost overruns and schedule delays. These things do happen, especially with a big long-term project, a very complex weapon system like this one. But, I'm really afraid that it could threaten the program, especially during a time like this, where we're dealing with a lot of really thorny budgetary issues. Those things tend to make everything much worse in this kind of economic climate than they might, otherwise.

Can you just give me your assessment of where we are with this program, and what you could do, if confirmed, to sort of make sure that everything proceeds as smoothly as possible within the cost parameters and the timeframes contemplated?

Ms. JAMES. So, Senator, this is, of course, one of the top three most important modernization programs that the U.S. Air Force has today. It's critical that we maintain the air superiority and the capability that we have had for the last 50 years. And this particular program is an integral part of all of that.

So, first of all, one thing I'll do, if confirmed, is, I'll continue to advocate for this program, the importance of it, and be a spokesman for the fact that the threats out there are real and that we need this program to help us counter those threats.

As far as the cost growth, the schedule slips and whatnot, I agree with you, it's been a long time, it's an enormously expensive program, and we owe the taxpayers our very best.

What I know so far about recent times with this program is that things are trending in the right direction. So, that is to say that the program manager, General Bogdan, has reported that the costs are coming down. So, can more be done? I hope so. I don't know yet. But, it's at least trending in the right direction. And we're starting to come up on some important, I'll call it, "developmental decisions," I think, particularly software. There's a software decision that will have to be made soon. Software is critically important. It can make or break a program. So, ensuring that that is done correctly is another important facet.

So, if confirmed, in addition to advocating for this program, I will do my best, from my perspective as the Secretary of the Air Force, to work with the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, Logistics, to work with the program manager of the program, and with the Secretary of Defense, to make sure that we give value back to the taxpayer, that we watch those costs, that we birddog it every single day, have dialogue with industry—that's another important thing that's been happening lately—so that industry takes on its fair share of the risk, going forward—

Senator LEE. I thought I'd get—thank you—I'd—following up on that, with the F-35—we talked a little bit the other day about the F-35 basing decision; specifically, the record of decision pertaining to basing of the F-35 OPS-1. As I mentioned the other day, I was disappointed in the multiple delays in the decision. You know, we—I was told, in January, that we would have a decision by March. Then I was told, a month or two after that, that we would have a decision either sometime this summer or, at the latest, I was told, by October. Recently, there was some indication that it might not happen in October.

I was encouraged to hear General Welsh state, yesterday, that we can still expect a decision sometime this fall. It still makes me a little bit nervous. There's still a fair amount of wiggle room in that.

Can you just tell me, as best you understand of the situation, what the reason is for the multiple delays and when, specifically, you anticipate the record of decision might be announced?

Ms. JAMES. So, I, too, Senator, believe that it is the fall, so that's October-November timeframe, I would say. That's based on my best understanding.

And I don't know why there have been so many delays, other than, of course, it is a complex decision, there's input from a variety of sources, a lot of data has to be reviewed. But, I know it's been a frustration, and I hope it won't be too much longer.

Senator LEE. Okay. Well, thank you. As you know, given your experience both within government and outside of government, this does have all kinds of ramifications, especially for the warfighter community, as a result of the uncertainty all of this creates. And I'm also worried about all of the related decisions, the MILCON actions that have to be taken, all of which turn on the record of decision issuing, with regard to the basing decision.

I've got—my time's running short. Let's turn to General Klotz. Thank you, as well, for coming by my office recently. I enjoyed my visit with you, as well, General.

Congress continues to have some serious concerns with regard to cost growth and delays, as well as planning issues, at the NNSA. And I assume you're familiar with the recent GAO report that said that NNSA has \$16 billion in cost overruns across 10 major projects, and that that could result in a combined 38-year backlog. I assume you don't intend to be in this job for 38 years. But, a Member of Congress should never accuse an agency of doing that, because, by some measures, we're more like 1,000 or 1500 years behind what we need to do in Congress. But, I just want to ask: If confirmed, how will you address some of these issues related to backlog and cost overrun?

General KLOTZ. Senator, I, too, have read a number of different reports that have been written over the past 10–12 years that have taken to task the NNSA for shortcomings in program management, cost estimation, and large capital construction. I've been encouraged, as I have been preparing for the possibility of being confirmed, to learn that some significant steps have been taken in the past year or so, and including, since Secretary Moniz has been confirmed and entered into office as the Secretary of Energy, that are designed to enhance the internal skills of the NNSA to do cost estimation and program management, to include bringing in a lot of people who have had experience in the past with large capital construction, say, in the Navy or with the Corps of Engineers, into its own workforce.

There have also been efforts to work more closely with the Department of Defense, particularly in the area of cost estimation, to share best practices and to get an independent review of what the NNSA is anticipating will be the case with costs and as well as the scope of what the Department of Defense expects, in terms of its own requirements and the requirements of our military.

So, my objective will be to continue this process that has begun, to drill down even further into the processes by which we do cost estimation, project managing, and capital construction, to ensure that all alternatives are laid out and carefully vetted, and that we hold both Federal employees and contractors responsible and ensure that there are clear lines of authority and responsibility for them doing their task.

Senator LEE. Thank you very much. Thanks, to all of you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lee.

Senator KING.

Senator KING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to address a general question to the—I guess it would be the right side of the panel: Ms. Wright, James, and Mr. Klotz.

Is the budgetary chaos around here threatening the National security of the United States?

Ms. James?

Ms. JAMES. I think it's a very, very serious concern. And, if I may echo something I said earlier, it is extremely time-consuming and unsettling to be executing the way that we are executing. We're not making as good a judgments as we otherwise could if we had a number—a fixed number to work with and the flexibility to implement. So, that's number one: execution is not what it could or should be.

And then, trying to plan for the future is incredibly difficult and enormously time-consuming when you are planning—or trying to plan for different scenarios.

So, to get beyond this point, to come to an agreement for the entirety of our government, which I would hope could lift sequestration, give each of our Departments a new number—I'll speak for the Air Force; I hope to be able to speak for the Air Force—we would like to know what we are really executing for and planning for, and have a greater degree of certainty than what has been the case.

Senator KING. Ms. Wright?

Ms. WRIGHT. Yes, sir, I will add to what Ms. James has said. Frankly, yesterday, the service chiefs testified, and, really, what they said was that they all voiced their grave concern over the readiness of our force, based upon the sequestration, the potential CR, and the budget, that we—

Senator KING. So, does that make the answer to my question “yes”?

Ms. WRIGHT. I think—yes, sir, it does. We clearly focus on those individuals that we are sending into harm's way. We make sure they're trained, we make sure they're the best-equipped, and that they have what they need. But, we have a very unready force, because of the sequestration that we have just gone through, and because of the potential sequestration and the C.R. in '14.

Senator KING. “An unready force” is a term that should strike fear into everyone that is listening to us today and everyone in this enterprise around here. “An unready force.”

Ms. WRIGHT. Yes, sir. And readiness is just not training; readiness is equipment modernization, readiness is equipment repair, readiness is collective and individual training, readiness is personnel risk reduction—the suicides, the family programs. So, that whole ball of readiness is affected because of the uncertainty of the budget.

Senator KING. And lack of readiness, lack of training, lack of all those things that you just listed, put American lives at risk, do they not?

Ms. WRIGHT. I would agree. Yes, sir.

Senator KING. General Klotz, you've been in this business for a long time. Have you ever seen anything like what we're in right now?

General KLOTZ. No, Senator, I don't believe I have, except perhaps maybe for the immediate years after the end of the Vietnam war, when there was a significant drawdown; there was a lot of pressure.

I would concur with what my two colleagues said. I think there is an important personal dimension to that; and that is, the civilian employees of the Department of Defense, who are stalwart patriots and have given, in many cases, their entire adult lives to serving our Nation through service as civilian employees. So, to the extent that they were adversely affected, both in terms of the number of days they had to take furlough, but, more importantly, the hit that they took in terms of their morale and sense of importance to the mission, I think is something that we ought to bend over backwards never to repeat again, and to continuously remind them of



the extraordinary contribution that they and their families make to the Department of Defense and to our National security.

Senator KING. Would you concur that the current chaos threatens national security?

General KLOTZ. It certainly makes it extraordinarily difficult for those people who are responsible for carrying it out to do the work that they need to do, whether it's operations and maintenance on—day-to-day on a flight line, or whether it's developing the plans and programs that are going to position our services and the National Nuclear Security Administration for contributing to the national security in the future.

Senator KING. And I think, Ms. James, you said something very important, and that is, it's not only the number, it's the uncertainty; it's the not knowing what the number is. I used to be in business. If we know what the rules are, you can manage to those rules. If the rules are unclear or change or uncertain, that's what really creates—that's as much of a problem as the—whatever the number turns out to be.

Ms. JAMES. Absolutely, Senator. And, in direct answer to your question, I think this current uncertainty and, as you said, chaos does threaten our National security, because, again, I will say what I believe about the Air Force. We have the best air force in the world, and I have complete confidence in them that they will step up to the plate and do whatever we ask of them. But, in situations where you have not been able to put the resources into readiness that otherwise should have been put, it means that there's increased risk. It's increased—

Senator KING. I think what's going on around here is an insult to the word "chaos." "Chaos" is too mild a term.

Ms. WRIGHT, one quick—not really a question, but a suggestion. A lot of effort is put into recruiting people into the Armed Services; not as much effort, in my judgment, is put into helping them get out. And we have a huge problem, in Maine and across the country, of veterans who are unable to navigate the system, the kind of out-placement counseling, if you will, that would be equivalent to the recruiting. I hope you'll pay some attention to that. I know that there are programs, but I think that's a place where we can improve, because the system is complex. Young man or young woman leaves the service at the age of 22 or 23, and—how to navigate that and the interplay with the Veterans Administration, I hope is something you'll pay some close attention to.

Ms. WRIGHT. Sir, may I answer?

Senator KING. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. WRIGHT. We have—we've worked diligently on it, and I agree with you, that is something that we really needed to do. We have 206 transition sites across the Nation where servicemembers are required to go through a Transition Assistance Program. As they go through that program, we have married up with the Department of Labor and Department of Veterans Affairs, to the point where we make them fill—we make the servicemembers fill out—it's mandatory that they fill out a financial sheet so we kind of know what their finances will be when they transition, we know if they have an education, we know if they have a job lined up. If they are in that at-risk category of not having those things that

would create a livelihood, the veterans affairs community does a warm handoff.

The example of that is, if they get out at Fort Hood, but they're going back to Maine, we do a warm handoff to the veterans community that is in Maine, so they can get the benefits that they have worked hard for and that they deserve.

So, we have started this program, and we are in the process of making very positive changes, and have, now, some classes that will be effective, 1 October, for them to be involved with, should they need to learn how to resume, should they need to get a job. And again, sir, we're doing it with the Department of Labor and Department of Veterans Affairs.

Senator KING. Excellent, thank you very much.

And I know I'm out of time, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to submit a question for the record to Mr. Lettre involving coordination—better coordination between the military intelligence and the rest of the intelligence community. We're spending \$75 billion in 2012 on intelligence, over 20 in the military, over 50 in the rest of the intelligence community. I would hope that there will be opportunities for working together, cooperation, coordination, and maybe saving a little of that money.

I'll submit the question for the record.

Thank you.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator KING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator King.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank the witnesses.

Ms. James, I share your concern, and that of the other witnesses, about the chaos that my friend and colleague from Maine just pointed out. It makes it a little harder for me to make that argument when the F-35 is now the first trillion-dollar weapon system in history, a consistent series of cost overruns that have made it worse than a disgrace. It's hard for me, when a aircraft carrier, the Gerald R. Ford, is \$2 billion over the estimated cost, and no end in sight.

I keep hearing that we have reduced the F-35, and the next batch we have will be significant controls. It's still one of the great national scandals that we have ever had, as far as the expenditure of taxpayers' dollars are concerned.

So, I hope that you will stay on top of these cost overruns. They're throughout the services, and the—I can tell you, my constituents, when they hear about the fact that the F-35 has consistently, over many years, exceeded any cost estimate that was ever begun, it's a little hard for me to get the kind of support and concern that the Senator from Maine and I share. And it is still not under control.

And, you know—I'm sure you know—we still have not had an audit of this—of the Department of Defense. And yet, we keep—time after time, we mandate it here in our Defense authorizations bills, and yet, that audit is never able to be completed. The Amer-

ican people at least deserve an audit of what the United States military is doing.

Now, I want to say, one of the—your major tasks, as has probably already been mentioned in the hearing—I'm sorry I had to bounce back and forth—is the whole issue of sexual assaults. Now, can this committee have confidence that this is one of your highest priorities and that you can come to this committee and present to all of us a plan and a policy that will put this issue on a sharp decline and lead to a renewed confidence in the American people that young women who join the United States Air Force will have confidence that they will not be subject to a sexual assault?

Ms. JAMES. This will be one of my top priorities. I intend to work on it very, very hard, and I absolutely welcome the opportunity—

Senator MCCAIN. Got any ideas?

Ms. JAMES.—for that.

Senator MCCAIN. Got any ideas?

Ms. JAMES. One I put forth, and Chairman says that you all are actively considering it, and that is to hold commanders more accountable, to include in their performance assessments a measure of the climate within their unit and how well they're doing. Because, as you know, sir, the—being a commander, it's not an entitlement, it's an honor and a privilege; and if they're not living up to the measure, they need to go. And so, that is an idea that the DACOWITS has put forth, and I'm a member of that DACOWITS, so I offered that up as one suggestion.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you. My suggestion is that—there was a time in the military where we had severe racial problems, and we embarked on a very long and exhaustive period of indoctrination of the men and women who were serving in the military. And not only that, that if there was racism exhibited, the punishment was swift and sure. That has got to be part of any program that you will propose in order to cure this terrible situation which dishonors all of us.

Ms. JAMES. I absolutely agree with you.

Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Wright, in 2010, then- Defense Secretary Robert Gates said the Pentagon needed to cut staff sizes. He made this part of his efficiency initiatives. That was in August 9th, 2010. Now—in 2010, the Joint Staff was 1,286 people. That was in 2010. Now we have 4,244 in 2012, a 20-percent increase. Now Secretary Hagel, I understand, is ordering a 20-percent cut in uniform and civilian personnel, officers on military command staffs. Now, where's the credibility, here, Secretary Wright?

Ms. WRIGHT. Sir, I will tell you that Secretary Hagel was very serious about cutting 20 percent of his force.

Senator MCCAIN. What's your plan?

Ms. WRIGHT. What is my personal plan for personnel and readiness?

Senator MCCAIN. What will be your plan—not your personal plan—what will be the plan that will be implemented by the Department of Defense to achieve the 20- percent cut that Secretary Hagel is advocating?

Ms. WRIGHT. Each one in the Department has the responsibility to turn in to the Deputy Secretary, Secretary Carter, an understanding and specific methods of where we are cutting. And the cut

comes from dollars, so we got a dollar account, it will be cut 20 percent, and we will match FTEs, we will match military to that cut, by name, of positions that we will cut that will equal 20 percent. And in our other items, in our travel account, in our other accounts—

Senator MCCAIN. What would be the time target for when these—this 20-percent cut would be completed?

Ms. WRIGHT. Sir, by—I have to give Secretary Carter, by the end of the month, this 20-percent cut. I believe the 20-percent cut will go into effect '15 to '19.

Senator MCCAIN. So, we can plan on this taking until 2019 to enact a 20-percent cut in a increase that is a 230- percent increase between 2010 and 2012.

Ms. WRIGHT. Sir, I would like to get back to you on the specific timeline. I don't want to say something that is incorrect, so I will make sure—

Senator MCCAIN. You're waiting 'til 2019 before completing a 20-percent cut. That is totally unsatisfactory, Madam Secretary. So, what I would like to hear from you is a plan and a date certain for when these—when this plan would be executed. And if there's skepticism on the part of members of this committee, it goes back to 2010, when the Secretary of Defense said that there would be a 20-percent cut; in fact, we have had a dramatic increase. The Joint Staff is just one small example. I can show you—AFRICOM, 15-percent increase; CENTCOM, 19-percent increase; OSD, 9.5. Not a single decrease has taken place in any of the major commands. And one of the great charades, of course, was when the Joint Forces Command in Norfolk was closed; they just shifted everybody over to another command. That wasn't reduction in staffs, that was a movement in staffs.

So, I would appreciate you submit to this committee a plan that we can count on that doesn't take until 2019 to implement.

Ms. WRIGHT. Yes, sir, I understand.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator VITTER.

Senator VITTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thanks, to all of the nominees, for your commitment to service.

Ms. James, I had a question for you. A lot of us are very concerned about what, in our opinion, is political correctness run amuck on steroids, quashing legitimate exercise and expression of religion in the military. Things like—not quashing active proselytizing, but telling somebody they can't have a Bible on their desk; that's a documented case. Telling a Christian chaplain he can't end a prayer, "In Jesus' name": that's a documented case.

Do you think these sort of issues are a problem? And, if so, what would you do about it?

Ms. JAMES. So, Senator, actually, Senator Lee talked to me about this, as well.

Senator VITTER. I apologize. I wasn't here.

Ms. JAMES. No, no, I mean in the office—

Senator VITTER. Yeah.

Ms. JAMES.—call. So, I've heard about this in the—

Senator VITTER. Yeah.

Ms. JAMES.—in the last few days. So, here's what I know. I have actually read the policy of the Department of Defense, and I know what that policy says. It says that the open ability to worship, there shall be freedom of all religions, as long as within good order and discipline. And I know that the chaplains, the whole point that they put forth is that there shall be dignity and respect for everyone in the force.

So, I'm not—he mentioned the same point that you mentioned—I'm not familiar with those cases. Of course, it's a question of—you have a policy, the policy seems good, to me, but then you have some people who don't follow the policy. So, these individual cases, we'll have to look into.

Senator VITTER. Well, to take my two examples, let's say they're hypotheticals, not specific cases. Do you think those actions should be barred in the military?

Ms. JAMES. So, having a Bible on your desk? That doesn't seem like it should be barred, to me, no.

Senator VITTER. And a Christian chaplain ending a prayer, "In Christ's name"?

Ms. JAMES. It does not seem bad, to me, and I'll have to—if you'll allow me to consult with the Chaplaincy Corps to find out if there is some reason I'm not thinking about—but, no, it certainly does not trouble me.

Senator VITTER. Okay. Well, we're going to give you about 42 specific examples as a followup, and I'd really urge you to look into these, because many of us, a majority on this committee, according to a vote we had recently, think this is a real issue. Thank you.

And, Mr. Klotz, I just have a couple of questions for you. I appreciate your experience with Global Strike Command, and I think that's very valuable. I am concerned that Defense may be weighing some major realignment and the possible restructuring of smaller commands, like Global Strike. Have you seen anything to indicate that current or future threats would not require the benefits of a strong Global Strike Command?

General KLOTZ. Senator, I have to admit a fair degree of bias on this issue, as the—one of the individuals who helped stand up that command, and had the great privilege and honor of being the first commander. The reason we stood up the command in the first place was, at the end of the cold war, we had divested responsibility for the Air Force's nuclear delivery systems between two different commands, commands who had an extraordinary workload and were not able to provide the dedicated, focused attention to the nuclear enterprise. And, as a result of that, we lost focus.

So, I think, as we go forward, as I indicated earlier, we're going to have nuclear weapons for a very long time. They must be safe, secure, and effective, and it requires focused, dedicated leadership to ensuring that is being done. And that is the role of Air Force Global Strike Command.

Senator VITTER. Great, thank you.

And also, as you know, as part of the discussions about the New START Treaty, the President made a very specific commitment to modernize or replace our strategic triad, and a specific dollar commitment. Unfortunately, that dollar commitment has not come

close to being met, where he, in his proposals, is at least a third short. Is that a problem for our nuclear structure?

General KLOTZ. Well, if confirmed, Senator, my role will be to be the principal advocate for taking those steps that are necessary to ensure that the stockpile that we have is, as I said, safe, secure, and effective. And we're taking all the steps, in terms of modernizing and extending the life of the nuclear weapons that we currently have.

So, I will certainly be a champion for every dollar, every person, every capability with a facility to make that happen, and hopefully, as I said earlier, will be persuasive with the administration, other aspects of the administration as well as with committees of Congress, in making that case.

Senator VITTER. Great. Well, again, just for the record, I want to underscore—this was a clear commitment made as part of the New START Treaty confirmation—passage through the Senate discussions, and it just hasn't been kept. And there are no big surprises. Everybody who was part of that discussion knew the budget climate. That isn't something that came up in the last 6 months; everybody knew it was a tough budget climate. But, the commitment was made for these dollars for modernization, which is essential to keep the nuclear arms we do retain safe and effective as a deterrent. And we're 34 percent short of that. That really, really concerns me. And so, I urge you to help rectify that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Vitter.

The—okay, just on one of the questions which Senator Vitter raised about the allegation that somebody was not allowed to have a Bible on their desk, we've tried to get that information, and it's important that it be found so that it can be corrected if it's accurate. And so, Ms. James, as part of your commitment to Senator Vitter, I hope that, on that one, in particular, you would see if you can identify the event and see what action was taken to correct it, because we've had difficulty confirming it. That doesn't mean it didn't happen; we just haven't been able—our staff has been unable to get that done.

And, in terms of the reference to, in a prayer, I think, depending on where a prayer is made—if it's made to a general audience, it could be a different responsibility on a chaplain than if it's made to an audience of his own religion, for instance. But, this is a very sensitive area, because we want to protect freedom of religion for—

Ms. JAMES. Right.

Chairman LEVIN.—chaplains and for our troops, but we also want to protect the freedom of religion for people who are listening to chaplains. And so, it's a very serious subject which has been raised, and it's deserving of all of our attentions. It's gotten a lot of attention from some of us. And hopefully you'll look into the issue that Senator Vitter has raised in his—I think he said there'll be—what?—40 examples or 42 examples. And if you'll get back to the full committee on what you find in that regard, we would appreciate it.

Ms. JAMES. I absolutely will, Senator.

And, Senator Vitter, if you have a specific example, please, give it to me, and I will ask the Air Force, as well, for information.

And with respect to the other point, Senator, I totally agree with you that something that may or may not be troubling to me, personally, may be to others, and the idea of dignity and respect for all religions, to include those who have no religion at all, it's all equally important. So, I agree with you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Now, you've been asked about force structure of the Air Force and the problem which occurred here when there was just a proposal that was dropped on us and the rest of the country on the structuring—on the restructuring and on force changes—force structure changes. We've been hearing the Air Force from time to time, or at least members, say that this was a, quote, "messaging problem," and that a better rollout strategy would have avoided the problems that they had in presenting or selling their proposals.

Now, this was not a problem of messaging, it was a problem with the substance of the Air Force decision in addition to the problem with the process, the decisionmaking process, where most of the stakeholders are just left out of the decisionmaking process.

You've indicated that you're going to take steps to restore confidence within Congress about the quality of Air Force decisions and decisionmaking process. And I just want to add my voice to that issue, because it had a huge effect, I think, on almost all of our States, the way it was done and the substance of what was done.

Now, there's a national commission on the structure of the Air Force. A report is due in February of 2014. And would you let us know, as soon as you're confirmed, which we hope will be prompt for you and all of our nominees today, whether or not, in your judgment, that date is going to be met? I don't—I'm not asking for you now; I'm saying, after you're confirmed, if you would let us know that.

The—what is—do you have a question, Senator Vitter? Senator King?

Secretary Wright, just a question on the Integrated Disability Evaluation System and the transition of wounded warriors. We, in our Wounded Warrior legislation, really took some major steps to integrate the DOD and the VA disability systems. And the processing time under the integrated program was established in order to reduce the processing time, but also to get the right standard applied, which would be the more liberal standard from the perspective of the veteran, in our judgment. And that was the VA standard. So, we wanted that to be uniform between the DOD and the VA.

There were some additional encouraging reports about processing time, but now our servicemembers and our veterans are mired in long VA disability rating and case disposition wait times, and the VA's portion of the system now appears to be overloaded.

Have you gotten into this, as Acting Secretary? And what are you going to do to ensure that the collaboration between the DOD and the VA takes place to achieve the objective of providing a timely transition of wounded, ill, and injured servicemembers? And, not only that, but also the most favorable standard to our vets.

Ms. WRIGHT. Yes, sir, absolutely, I have gotten into it. We have about 33,000 members within the entire IDES system, presently. And, as you know, the Army is our biggest customer. The Army had a large group of individuals going through IDES that they worked diligently to make sure that they got the benefit they deserved and also the medical treatment that they deserved. And they processed them through the system of the Medical Evaluation Board and the Physical Evaluation Board. So, the next step after that is the VA, and the way the VA is set up, all Army records go to a Seattle site, where they are processed in the VA section of the IDES.

So, yes, there is a backlog within the VA, and I'm—I will tell you, the VA is working diligently to work through this backlog. But, one of the things that we, DOD, has done to help the VA is, we have sent soldiers, at their request, up to the Seattle VA site. Now, the soldiers cannot process the disability claims, but they can work to do the administrative work that, if the claim adjusters were not doing the disability claims, they had to do all of the administrative work, too. So, what we have done is take that burden, if you will, off of the claim adjusters so they can focus in on the disability claims that the Army is sending to the Seattle site.

In addition, the VA has recognized that the Seattle site is overwhelmed and cannot necessarily handle all of them in a timely manner, so they are now sending these claims out to other sites that can adjudicate the claims on a quicker, faster timeframe for the individual that is getting out of the system.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay, thank you.

Senator King.

Senator KING. Just one quick fact you might pass on to the VA, in terms of their backlog. Eisenhower retook Europe in 9 months. I don't see any reason that this shouldn't be cleared up in 9 months.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator King.

Now, Senator Gillibrand was here for a long time, but she had to leave. She's going to be submitting her questions for the record. A number of us will be submitting questions for the record. And whoever takes that opportunity, I think we should express the hope that they would get questions for the record in by, let's say, next Monday—close of business, Monday. And if that doesn't work for somebody, let our staff know.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. And if there are no further questions, we want to thank our witnesses. We hope that the committee can take up your nominations very promptly and that you would all be promptly confirmed. That's always a chairman's dream. And let's hope it takes place.

Thanks, to you, your families, your friends who are all here today, and those who aren't here because they had to go to school.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN. We'll stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the committee adjourned.]