

**HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY IN REVIEW OF
THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013 AND THE FUTURE
YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM**

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2012

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m. in room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Nelson, Webb, Udall, Hagan, Begich, Manchin, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, McCain, Inhofe, Chambliss, Wicker, Brown, Portman, Ayotte, Cornyn, and Vitter.

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

Majority staff members present: Jonathan D. Clark, counsel; Gerald J. Leeling, counsel; Peter K. Levine, general counsel; and Jason W. Maroney, counsel.

Minority staff members present: Ann E. Sauer, minority staff director; Paul C. Hutton IV, professional staff member; Daniel A. Lerner, professional staff member; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; and Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Jennifer R. Knowles, Mariah K. McNamara, and Brian F. Sebold.

Committee members' assistants present: Vance Serchuk, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Akaka; Ryan Ehly, assistant to Senator Nelson; Gordon Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Brittany Keates, assistant to Senator Begich; Patrick Hayes, assistant to Senator Manchin; Kevin Fink, assistant to Senator Gillibrand; Ethan Saxon, assistant to Senator Blumenthal; Anthony Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Lenwood Landrum, assistant to Senator Sessions; Clyde Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Joseph Lai, assistant to Senator Wicker; Charles Prosch, assistant to Senator Brown; Brent Bombach, assistant to Senator Portman; Brad Bowman, assistant to Senator Ayotte; and Charles Brittingham, assistant to Senator Vitter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. The committee meets today to welcome Secretary of the Army John McHugh and Chief of Staff of the Army General Ray Odierno for our hearing on the Army's 2013 budget request and current posture.

Secretary McHugh, thank you for your continued outstanding service as the Army's civilian leader. Although General Odierno is well known to the committee, this hearing I believe marks your first appearance, General, before us as the Army's 38th Chief of Staff. As always, General, we thank you for your remarkable service and we look forward to hearing your assessment and plan to meet the challenges facing the Army.

Over the last 10 years, the Army has learned from the hard lessons of continuous combat. It has grown and adapted its organization and operations. It has rapidly developed and fielded new weapons and technologies. It has acted with great compassion to meet its responsibilities for easing the often-painful human cost of war for our troops and their families. After 10 years, the Army is combat-tested and proven. For all of this, the Nation is proud and deeply grateful.

Two recent changes make the defense budget situation challenging for the Army. I should have said probably at least two recent changes, but here are the two: One, the Budget Control Act passed by Congress last summer, with the limitations that it places on funding for our national security. The Department of Defense fiscal year 2013 budget request meets the requirements of the Budget Control Act.

Second, adapting to its changing role in the new strategic guidance announced by the President last January. This request that they've made in the budget appears to reflect the Department's year-long comprehensive strategic assessment and a corresponding new strategic guidance oriented on reshaping our defense establishment for the challenges of the future.

The essential features of this new strategic guidance maintains focus on success in the current conflict in Afghanistan, but also re-orientes the Department of Defense on other strategic challenges around the world and developing the forces most relevant to those challenges. The new guidance deemphasizes ground forces for stability and counterinsurgency operations and increases emphasis on air and sea forces for global power projection. Under this strategic guidance, Army and Marine ground forces are reduced, with the corresponding risk mitigated by greater reliance on the readiness and availability of the Reserve components and preservation of an ability to regenerate active forces.

The Army's fiscal year 2013 budget request reflects these changes, but questions naturally arise about the Army's plans to adapt and manage risks in its size, structure, readiness, and modernization while at the same time preserving the quality of life for our soldiers and their families, which is so important to sustaining an All-Volunteer Force.

For example, the new Department of Defense strategic guidance includes an increased emphasis on our interests in the Asia Pacific, for which the Department is taking steps to reshape U.S. forces relative to the air and maritime demands of that region. We'd be in-

terested to hear from our witnesses about the broad purpose of land power and the role of ground forces in an Asia Pacific-oriented strategy.

The new Department of Defense strategic guidance expressly states that the Nation will avoid large-scale stability operations requiring significant ground forces. Accordingly, the Army's size and force structure can be reduced, the strategic guidance suggests, and that would save money and still meet acceptable levels of strategic risk. Over the next 5 years, the Active Army will cut its end strength by approximately 72,000 soldiers, ending with a force of 490,000 by the end of fiscal year 2017, and would still be approximately 10,000 soldiers above its pre-Iraq War size.

We'd be interested to hear from our witnesses the Army's plans to implement these reductions and to manage risk to its mission and to the health of the All-Volunteer Force. We're particularly concerned about the manner in which the Army will draw down and the plan for providing transition assistance and support for soldiers and their families. We simply cannot forget that for every 10,000 soldiers in the Army today there are approximately 16,000 family members as well. The added stress of troop reductions on an Army still at war will be significant and we expect the Army to manage this very carefully.

The new strategic guidance also reduces the Army's force structure by eight combat brigades, with two of these brigades de-activating out of Germany. We'd be interested to hear from our witnesses their plans for reorganization of the Army to meet this requirement and whether other force changes will require further reductions in the total number of combat brigades. Also we're interested to hear from our witnesses their assessment of the Army's global posture and where savings might be realized by moving foreign-based units back to the United States.

The Army continues to meet the demand for trained and ready forces in support of operations in Afghanistan. Hard fighting will continue even as we and our allies continue to build the Afghan security forces so that they may take more and more responsibility for their own security. We know that our troops deploying to Afghanistan have the highest priority for resources to ensure that they are trained and ready before they go and to make sure that they have what they need when they get there. However, reductions in the size and structure of the Army, if not well managed, increase the risk of allowing the non-deployed force to become hollow, that is too many units with too few soldiers to accomplish the units' missions.

This increases the risk for the Nation that those non-deployed forces may be hollow and unprepared to deploy or accomplish their missions if needed for an unforeseen contingency. We'd be interested to hear from our witnesses how the Army will manage the complexity of providing trained and ready forces for operations in Afghanistan, reduce and strengthen force structure, and at the same time avoid hollowing the nondeployed force.

Army equipment modernization has struggled over the last 10 years, but recent efforts by senior Army leadership have been aimed at rationalizing and stabilizing an achievable and affordable strategy. In general, the fiscal year 2013 budget request protects

the Army's priorities for development and fielding of a Tactical Communications and Data Network, development of a new Ground Combat Vehicle and Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, as well as upgrading and expanding its helicopter force.

But the Army has restructured, slowed, cut, or cancelled most of its ground vehicle programs, with significant risk implications for the health of the military vehicle industrial base. We'd be interested to hear from our witnesses their assessment of the current and future risks to the Army's combat and tactical vehicle industrial base and how they intend to manage that risk.

The Army continues to work on reducing the cost and size of its operational energy footprint at home and when deployed. We'd be interested to hear an update on Army operational energy innovations that reduce the demand for energy as well as reduce the cost and size of the energy sources. More importantly, how are these innovative technologies being used by our deployed forces around the world?

Finally, the Army has shown a great determination to deal effectively with the human cost to soldiers and their families of the pressures and consequences of continuous combat for 10 years. Over these years, the Army has created many new programs and budgeted billions of dollars to improve the care of our wounded soldiers, to prevent suicides, to support families before, during, and after the deployment of their loved ones. The American people are grateful for all that care and concern. The committee is interested to hear Secretary McHugh's and General Odierno's updates and assessments of the Army's efforts in these areas and their thoughts on how these programs will evolve in the foreseeable future.

The Nation could not be more proud of our Army, its soldiers, and their families. We will with confidence depend on the leadership of Secretary McHugh and General Odierno through the tough times ahead to ensure that the Nation will always have the Army that it needs.

Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join you in welcoming our witnesses.

Secretary McHugh and General Odierno, I commend you both for your distinguished careers and your leadership of an Army in the midst of organizational change. And of course, on behalf of all of us, we would like to express our deep gratitude for the service and sacrifice of our soldiers who are today risking themselves on our behalf.

I believe that your mission is more challenging today than it has been since the late 1970s. 23 Army brigades are currently conducting combat and training operations in Afghanistan. Thousands more soldiers are deployed around the globe. At home the Army is beginning to execute a plan to decrease end strength, realign force structure to meet new threats, sustain recently developed capabilities, and regenerate skill sets that have been necessarily idle since the invasion of Iraq.

Your job is to do all these things simultaneously and with fewer resources. Against that backdrop, the Army must find ways to op-

erate more efficiently and effectively. To respond to current requirements in Afghanistan, the Army is modifying brigades to create and deploy specialized training teams. To address future challenges, the Army has proposed aligning brigades with the combatant commands. The committee will be interested to know the Army's plans for both.

When we look across the globe today at the various challenges we are confronting, what is most clear is that the world continues to surprise us. Al Qaeda has become increasingly decentralized, but no less deadly, with affiliates seeking safe haven in places like Yemen, the Horn of Africa, and the trans-Sahel. In Afghanistan, despite the progress that our troops are making, we are at an impasse with President Karzai on the negotiation of a strategic partnership agreement.

Our relationship with Pakistan remains fraught by a series of setbacks arising from their continued support of the Haqqani network. In Iraq, Prime Minister Maliki continues to centralize power, while the threat posed by al Qaeda appears to be growing. The Iranian regime continues working to subvert Iraq and other countries in the region. Its threat to regional stability would expand exponentially if the Iranian regime were to acquire nuclear weapons capability.

Finally, in Syria, after a year of bloodshed, the crisis has reached a decisive moment. Bashar Al-Assad appears to be accelerating his fight and doing so with the full support of Russia, China, and Iran.

In view of instability in these strategically important regions and admitting our historically poor track record of forecasting the need for large conventional force, I reiterate my concerns about the scope and speed of our end strength drawdown. Limiting our strategic flexibility is unwise, especially in the current environment.

General Odierno, I look forward to hearing your views on the strategic implications of drawing down to an Active-Duty Force of 490,000 and your vision for an Army that does not become merely a smaller version of its previous self, but reorganizes for future threats.

Secretary McHugh, inside the DC Beltway we sometimes lose sight of the reality that how we fight may be more important than what we fight with. It's vital that the Army maximize its operations and maintenance funding to support training, especially now that more soldiers are returning to the garrison environment. The hollow force that followed past conflicts can only be avoided if training is fully resourced in conjunction with the personnel and equipment accounts.

In the area of acquisition management, we are all aware of the Army's past challenges. As you finalize equipping and modernization strategies, I urge you to look carefully at recent history. Over the last decade, the Army embarked on a series of developmental programs that, because of unrealistic requirements, unanticipated costs, or poor contracting strategy, had to be de-scoped, re-baselined, or cancelled outright. Our estimates are that around \$300 billion were spent that never became operational equipment.

Mr. Secretary, implementing the recommendations of your recent Army-wide acquisition review is a good start to addressing these issues. We're interested to learn what further actions you'll take to

improve the Army's procurement track record and requirement process.

The committee will also be attentive to large programs still in the earliest phases of development to ensure they conform to the Weapons Systems Acquisition Reform Act and avoid mistakes of the past.

Despite the challenges of budget constraints and the ongoing contingency operations that stress the force, our soldiers continue to perform magnificently around the globe. They and their families are a credit to our Nation. I thank the witnesses and look forward to their testimony.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.
Secretary McHugh.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN M. MCHUGH, SECRETARY OF THE
ARMY**

Secretary MCHUGH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, distinguished ranking member Senator McCain, and members of this very august body and very important committee.

Let me begin by saying how honored I am to be here again today. And I'm particularly honored and, frankly, relieved to be joined by the 38th Chief of Staff of the Army, the gentleman on my left, General Ray Odierno. As you said, Mr. Chairman, many of us have had the opportunity to watch this gentleman in action on the front, making such a difference in places like Iraq. The opportunity to serve next to him for me is very, very exciting. He is clearly the right man for the right times.

Most importantly, I want to thank all of you. You've both been, Mr. Ranking Member and Mr. Chairman, very gracious in your comments about the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform, and certainly they deserve all of that. But clearly this committee has been so responsible for much of the good that we have been able to help those 1.1 million soldiers, those 270,000 civilians, and their families achieve, particularly over the last 10 years. They would want me to tell you how much we recognize that and how important it is to us.

As all of you know, today perhaps more than quite some time our demanding fiscal environment requires an even stronger partnership with Congress, with this committee, to make sure that we have the right resources to defeat our enemies, support our allies, and protect our homeland, and do so responsibly, decisively, and, yes, affordably.

We believe this budget that's been placed before you supports these goals by laying the foundation for a gradual reduction of our military and civilian end strength, while at the same time supporting the vital modernization, training, soldier programs, and family support initiatives so necessary for the Army, an Army, though smaller, that will remain the strongest and most capable land force in the world as it is today.

As we implement what I think can be fairly described as a bold new security strategy, I want to be very clear. The Army's combat expertise, adaptability and strategic reach will be more vital than ever before. Over the last year, over the last decade, the Army has continued to be the decisive hand of American foreign policy and

the helping hand of Americans facing the devastation of natural disasters.

With soldiers deployed in six of seven continents and in more than 150 nations around the world, your Army has become the face of American concern and the fist of military might. In the Pacific, we continued our long-term presence in the region with some 75,000 Army civilian and uniformed personnel participating in over 160 exercises, engagements, and operations in support of our allies in that vital region. In Korea, our soldiers provided a strong deterrent to North Korean aggression. In Japan and in the Philippines, we maintained our decades-old security relationships, training and supporting those allied armies.

At the same time, in Europe our soldiers fulfilled vital training, stability, and peacekeeping roles in Bosnia and Kosovo. Then on in Africa, your Army supported counterterrorism operations throughout the Horn and beyond.

But foreign threats and operations were not all that we faced. As so many of you know so painfully firsthand, in 2011 this Nation experienced some of the worst national disasters in our history. From responding to wildfires and floods to hurricanes and tornadoes, our soldiers and civilians from all components were there to help, there to rescue, and there to rebuild.

Simply put, our soldiers, civilians, and their families have once again proven why the United States Army is the most capable, versatile, and successful land force on Earth. And it is this ability to adapt to a myriad of unpredictable threats both at home and abroad that we will maintain as we move forward in this new security and fiscal environment.

This budget portrays an Army fully embracing change by making the hard decisions now to lay the right foundation for the future. First, we are implementing a sweeping new defense strategy which emphasizes even greater engagement in the Asia Pacific region and the development of smaller, more agile land forces. Under this new framework, which was developed collaboratively with the top military and civilian officials in our Department, the Army clearly remains the decisive arm of the U.S. combat power. Our balanced and transformed force will continue to be the most capable and effective land force in the world. That is our standard. That is what the strategy requires and that is what this budget supports.

Second, we are implementing this new paradigm under the significant cuts, as you noted, Mr. Chairman, directed by the Budget Control Act, and in so doing we made many tough decisions, but we were always guided by certain key principles: First, we will fully support the current fight by providing operational commanders in Afghanistan and other theaters with the best trained and ready land forces in the world. This is today and will remain our top priority.

Second, we will not sacrifice readiness for force structure. We must responsibly reduce our end strength in a manner, as the distinguished ranking member noted, that fully supports the new strategy, but also provides sufficient time and resources to properly balance our training, equipment, infrastructure, and soldier and family support programs within our mission requirements.

Third, we will be able to build force structure and capabilities to handle unforeseen changes to global security. The Army must be able to hedge risks through an efficient and effective force generation process and access to a strong operationalized Reserve component.

Fourth, we will maintain and enhance the Army's extensive commitments in the Pacific.

Lastly, we will not let the Budget Control Act cuts be taken on the backs of our soldiers or their families. Although we have and will continue to examine where appropriate and realign where necessary all of our programs, we will fully fund those support systems that work, with special emphasis on wounded warrior, suicide prevention, behavioral health, and sexual assault programs.

Based on these principles, we believe our budget minimizes end strength reductions in '13 and '14 to support the current fight in the most responsible way. We believe as well the budget emphasizes continued investments in vital modernization programs, such as the network, the Ground Combat Vehicle, and the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, while at the same time delaying or eliminating programs which no longer meet urgent needs in support of our new strategy or transforming force. And yes, we defer certain military construction programs.

The Army at its core is not programs and systems; it is people. Each time I appear before you I'm honored not to come just as the Secretary, but as a representative of our soldiers, civilians, and their families. These brave men and women, as this committee knows so very well, who have endured so much over the past decade, depend upon a variety of programs, policies, and facilities to cope with the stress, injuries, and family separation caused by war.

Sadly, tragically, our suicide and substance abuse rates remain unacceptably high and we're aggressively pursuing multiple avenues to provide our personnel with the best medical and behavioral health support available. We must never forget that both our success in Iraq and Afghanistan come at a heavy price to our Army family. Providing the means and resources for whatever challenges they now face is in my opinion the very least we can, we must, do.

As a final note regarding our Army family, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the devastating impact that sequestration would have, not just on the Army's programs, systems, and readiness, but also on our soldiers, civilians, and their families. Sadly, they too would bear the cost of that inaction.

To use an ax to cut an additional half trillion dollars from defense spending would be perilous enough. But to do so without providing the Department with any means of managing those reductions would be beyond risky.

In conclusion, on behalf of the men and women of your Army, let me thank you again for your thoughtful oversight, unwavering support, and proud partnership. Today your Army has succeeded in Iraq, is making progress in Afghanistan, and, as this budget demonstrates, is poised to transform into a new, smaller, more balanced force, ready to meet the needs of the Nation.

Thank you for your great support and leadership, and I look forward to your questions.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Secretary McHugh.

General Odierno.

**STATEMENT OF GEN RAYMOND T. ODIERNO, USA, CHIEF OF
STAFF OF THE ARMY**

General ODIERNO. Thank you, Chairman Levin, Ranking Member McCain, and other distinguished members of the committee. I want to thank you first off for your steadfast commitment to all our soldiers and their families, especially over the last 10 years. The partnership that we formed in supporting them and ensuring they have what they need has been part of our great success and I thank you all for that.

I appreciate the vote of confidence from Secretary McHugh. I believe in the Army today we have a great military-civilian team that will help the Army navigate these very difficult times that we have in the future, and it's an honor to work with Secretary McHugh with his complete sense of support to our soldiers and our families, as well as understanding where our Army needs to go. I promise you that we'll work very closely as we challenge many of these very, very difficult issues.

Together, it's a true honor to be here today representing 1.1 million soldiers, 278,000 Department of the Army civilians, and 1.4 million family members. I'm extremely proud of the commitment, professionalism, and resiliency of our soldiers and also their sacrifices and accomplishments. Today they're in over 150 countries around the world. We are truly today and will continue to be a globally engaged Army, with over 95,000 soldiers deployed and another 96,000 soldiers forward stationed, conducting a broad range of missions and meeting our national security requirements.

But our Army's primary purpose is steadfast and resolution to fight and win our Nation's wars. As the Army continues its transition, we will ensure the President's 2012 defense strategic priorities are implemented, by first meeting our current commitments in Afghanistan and elsewhere, by ensuring a highly trained, properly equipped, and well manned force.

Now that operations in Iraq are complete and we continue surge recovery in Afghanistan, we will begin to shape the regional environments in support of the combatant commanders as well as the overall strategic environment. In the Asia Pacific, which is home to 7 out of the 10 largest armies in the world, we will provide an array of tools through rotational forces, multilateral exercises, and other innovative engagements with our allies and new partners. We currently have some 66,000 soldiers and almost 10,000 civilians in this region.

During a time of great uncertainty in the Middle East, we remain committed and prepared to ensuring security and stability across the spectrum of conflict through our rotational presence and working with our close partners. In Europe, as we inactivate two brigade combat teams, one in 2013 and one in 2014, we will compensate through a series of engagement tools to build and sustain our strong relationships with our European and NATO allies and partners. I believe that this will serve as a model of how I see us doing things in the future, a combination of forward stationed and rotational forces, using a tailorable approach by regionally aligned forces and prepositioned stocks.

As we move forward, we will build on the competency and experience that has been gained over the past 10 years by our National Guard and Army Reserves in Iraq and Afghanistan, through the resourcing of a progressive readiness model.

As we look forward—and the Secretary already touched on this a bit—there are several focus areas that will help us, guide us for the way ahead. Foremost, we will remain committed to our 67,000 warfighters currently in Afghanistan and continue to provide trained, equipped, and ready soldiers to secure success in that fight.

Next, as the Army becomes leaner we must continue to build on the key characteristics of the future force—adaptability, innovation, flexibility, agility, versatility, and lethality. We have to prioritize our efforts as we integrate and synchronize our activities as part of a larger joint inter-agency, intergovernmental, and multinational force effort.

By the end of fiscal year 2017, we will decrease our end strength in the active component from 570,000 to 490,000, from 358,000 to 353,500 in the National Guard, and from 206,000 to 205,000 in the Army Reserves. It is imperative for us to sustain a gradual ramp over the next 6 years, to include this year. That will allow us to take care of our soldiers and our families, continue to provide forces for Afghanistan and facilitate reversibility if necessary.

End strength above 490,000 is funded strictly through OCO and must be sustained to help mitigate the risk as we continue current operations in Afghanistan and simultaneously reset for the future. We will reduce our end strength by a minimum of eight brigade combat teams. This drawdown, based on the national strategic objectives, will be done with deliberate consideration to the impacts of combatant commander requirements, as well as considerations on local communities and infrastructure.

We are also looking at reorganizing our brigade combat teams. The Secretary and I have not yet made a decision on that, but we are reviewing that now to see if we can get more capability out of a brigade combat team. That might cause us to reduce some more brigade combat teams, but sustain more combat battalions in the force over time.

Finally, we will be responsible government stewards through energy cost savings and institutional and acquisition reform. We are now taking a fundamentally different approach to how we do business with acquisition reform. I credit Secretary McHugh for his diligent efforts with this. We have really made some tremendous progress here. Through a new affordable and incremental equipping strategy, we are making better business deals and better contracts, emphasizing competition and saving even more money as governmental stewards. Our expansion of multi-year contracts, firm fixed price contracts, and cost plus incentive fee contracts have proven substantive cost savings already.

By more closely linking the development of requirements with the acquisition cycle, we are building the flexibility to integrate new technologies incrementally. Additionally, we are looking to develop more efficient testing and evaluating strategies by eliminating redundancies in our testing programs.

We will continue our equipment reset program to restore unit equipment to a level of capability that's commensurate with their future missions. There have been over 1.8 million pieces of equipment reset to date, which equates to approximately 31 brigade equivalents annually.

Much of what the Army needs to do and much of what we hope to do will be relying upon sustained OCO funding through our withdrawal in Afghanistan and for 2 to 3 years afterwards.

As we continue to transform our modernization practices through a holistic, bottom-up approach, we have several priorities. First is the network. It's critical to our ability to manage information and command our forces at all levels, both home and abroad. We have made significant progress on this critical program due to the series of network integration evaluation exercises that field tested equipment and integrated the system using our soldiers.

Second, the Ground Combat Vehicle, a replacement for our Infantry Fighting Vehicle that can accommodate an infantry squad, balance mobility and survivability, and provide unmatched lethality on the battlefield against current and future threats. We have paid close attention to risk reduction in this developmental program by maximizing competition to stimulate innovation, support cost containment and schedule requirements, ensuring industry identifies potential price and schedule versus performance tradeoffs, and requiring industry to provide cost targets throughout the Ground Combat Vehicle's life cycle.

Our third modernization priority is the more mobile, survivable Network-Integrated Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, which both myself and General Amos agree is necessary given the last 10 years of fighting and what future operations may entail. We carefully revised our acquisition strategy to reduce the schedule for the next developmental phase from 48 to 33 months, while reducing the projected cost of the program by \$400 million.

Next is lightening the soldier's load. There must be continued efforts to give our squads superiority on the battlefield with advanced soldier systems and weapons, communications and protection. There has been tremendous progress in the advancements to help lighten the load of our individual soldiers. So now we must turn to look at how the squad can carry the load smarter. We will continue to look at decreasing the weight of our body armor while increasing protection. But we can make more progress by studying how to better distribute the load across the squad.

The budget request for aviation modernization will continue to ensure our lift and close combat attack capabilities remain effective. These aircraft provide critical support to our joint ground forces, our special operations community, and our international partners.

Finally, I'd like to point out that in order to achieve these priorities within our strategy we will need the help of this committee to ensure timely appropriations to reduce production scheduling delays.

The Secretary and I will continue to assess and make adjustments to the strategy, while addressing any potential risks incurred as we adjust our force posture.

I'd like to leave you with one last thought. Sequestration is not in the best interests of our national security. The Army's share of the cut could be almost \$134 billion. Actually, it's a minimum of \$134 billion through 2017. The impact to the Army could cause up to 100,000 in cuts to end strength, on top of the 87,000 we've already planned to reduce. This would result in severe reductions in the National Guard, the Army Reserve, and additional reductions in the active component, and will significantly decrease what the Army can do for our joint force. In my estimation, sequestration would require us to fundamentally relook at how we provide national security.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to speak here today. This committee enables our all-volunteer Army to be the most decisive land force in the world, and we could not do it without the support of Congress. It's an honor to serve this great Nation and stand beside the dedicated professionals of our Army. The strength of our Nation is our Army. The strength of our Army is our soldiers, and the strength of our soldiers is our families.

Thank you very much for allowing us to be here and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared joint statement of Secretary McHugh and General Odierno follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. General, thank you so much.

Let's have a 7-minute first round.

General, first let me ask you about the 2013 budget. Does that budget reflect the administration's recently revised strategic guidance for the Army?

General ODIERNO. It does, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Does it provide the Army what it needs to meet its missions and do you support this budget request?

General ODIERNO. It does and I do, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. On troop levels in Afghanistan, General, let me just quickly ask you a question on a subject you and I have talked about many times. Do you continue to support the decision relative to the reduction and withdrawal of the surge force by the end of September?

General ODIERNO. I do.

Chairman LEVIN. And does the recent violence relating to the Koran-burning incident affect what your recommendation is or might be relative to the pace of reductions?

General ODIERNO. I would say that we have to consider the entire environment. However, I would argue that the overall continued progress in Afghanistan continues along a solid path, and putting the Afghan security forces out front.

Chairman LEVIN. Mr. Secretary, there's recently been a very important report about females serving in the Armed Forces and the issue of women in combat and being collocated with certain ground combat units. According to the report, these changes are going to result in over 14,000 positions being opened to women that were previously denied. That's a small step in the right direction, but there's still a long way to go.

Secretary, I think we all want to ensure that women who serve in the military have the maximum opportunity to succeed. Will you

commit to continue to look for more ways to remove the barriers to service by women, including an assessment of how all the restrictions may some day be removed?

Secretary MCHUGH. I certainly do, and in fact that's ongoing as we speak. The Department has provided the Army the opportunity to run a pilot program that would open additional MOS's to women in theater, that would produce, if totally implemented, more than 60,000 new opportunities. So that's something we continue to pursue.

I might add, based on my conversations with every theater commander I've talked to personally, it's something they fully support.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Secretary, the Seattle Times reported this morning that 285 soldiers who had been diagnosed as having PTSD by their health care providers had those diagnoses reversed by officials at the Madigan Medical Center at Fort Lewis, Washington, and this has got, obviously, some significant consequences for these soldiers and their families because they would be entitled to a medical retirement based on their PTSD.

Would you give us a report on this incident, for the record if you're not able to report on it right now?

Secretary MCHUGH. If you'd allow me, I'd like to do both. First of all, I think the Surgeon General of the Army, General Patty Horoho, has really taken this challenge on very aggressively. When the first I believe 14 soldiers who were found to have those same kinds of change of diagnosis came forward, she ordered a complete reexamination of all the treatment and diagnostic profiles of soldiers treated at Madigan. That's where those additional nearly 300 cases came from.

The article focuses upon those. She went further than that, though, and I think appropriately so. She's asked the Army Inspector General to reexamine all similar cases across the Army to determine if there is a need to reassess and reopen other cases as well. She's also put out an ALARACT, an all points message, to every soldier who feels that they may have had their diagnosis inappropriately changed to come forward, and we'd put them into that process as well.

So this is going to take some time, but it's absolutely essential, and I think, at least for the moment, we're getting on top of what for us is a very challenging and a very troubling situation.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, it is important that you be on top of it. This committee's had a very deep interest in this, the issue of PTSD and the diagnoses. So if you would keep us informed on a regular basis as to what that review shows.

Now, you and I spoke, I guess the two of you and I spoke, in the office about the energy use by the Army. In the budget request for fiscal year 2013, you're demonstrating a trend towards increasing the use of rechargeable batteries for greater resiliency and lesser weight over the non-rechargeable batteries, which not only weigh more up front in many cases, but also, obviously, you need more of those.

So I'm wondering—and you indicated you already are making some really good progress in this area and that you were going to bring with you some demonstration. Really, I think we all really

very much appreciate this. We know what the price is of energy. Every American family knows the price of energy. But what they're not as familiar with is the cost of energy to our military, to our budget, and to the safety of our troops that has to carry a lot of weight on their backs, but also has to carry a lot of energy that needs to be protected. We've had a lot of lost service personnel because they're protecting energy sources.

I'm wondering, Mr. Secretary or General, if you could kind of give us—I see you brought the equipment you thought you might be able to bring in time. So do you want to take a minute or 2 and tell us about what we're looking at?

Secretary MCHUGH. Absolutely. Mr. Chairman, I was struck when I found a data point that said for the average platoon to go on a 72-hour patrol in Afghanistan they have to take with them 400 pounds of batteries, which underscores the very points that you made.

This small black box to my immediate right is called the Modular Universal Battery Charger. It weighs six pounds. The four larger units you see at the far end of the table weigh 85 pounds and collectively they do the work of this one six-pound generator.

The other unique difference is those four combined weight 85 pound rechargers are really limited in their application. Obviously, you wouldn't put those on your back and hump them up a mountainside. But they're also limited in their power sources. You've got to plug them into a wall. Otherwise they don't work. This little 6-pound recharger is able to work off just about any available source of energy.

What you see arrayed across the front of the table is a solar blanket. It folds up much like a bath towel would, weighs about the same. If you unfurl that and plug this charger into it, from the sun it can recharge those batteries. This little six-pound unit can run off vehicle power. It can use other batteries' residual power to charge itself so it could charge the other batteries. In short, from a battery perspective that one six-pound unit makes a patrol limitations unlimited.

So these are the kinds of things that provide operational flexibility. But as you noted, Mr. Chairman, more importantly, it takes enormous weight off the backs of our soldiers, provides them greater operational flexibility. When we are able to reduce such things as convoys bringing in fuel, where every 44th convoy results in a casualty, these are important things for soldier safety as well.

So we're always trying to do better and I have no doubt there are other things we can do, but we appreciate the opportunity to show you one very important development.

Chairman LEVIN. We thank you very much for your initiatives in the Army here. It really resonates with all of us. It's kind of like a four-point success story. You've got the safety of our troops, you've got the weight off their backs, you've got the cost issue, and you've got the energy security issue as well. There are so many plusses in what you're doing. I just want to commend the Army for this initiative and for your request in the budget to continue it.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I'm certainly glad to see this success story, Mr. Secretary.

General Odierno, you spent a significant portion of your leadership role in the Army in Iraq and I'd like to get your views, because we are hearing disturbing reports of a resurgence of Al-Qaeda, increasing violence, and again attempted consolidation or consolidation of power on the part of Prime Minister Maliki.

I'm curious about your assessment of the situation in Iraq. I know you still pay very close attention to it.

General ODIERNO. Senator, obviously I do watch it closely. There is some concern as we watch what's going on in Iraq. The key to Iraq will be, as we have said all along, is ensuring that all of the entities inside of Iraq continue to participate and be part of the decision process within the government.

Senator MCCAIN. Is that happening?

General ODIERNO. There's been some challenges to that in most people's estimations, based on the prime minister's attempt to consolidate a bit more power. I think with the uncertainty in Syria, it's adding a difficult piece because of al Qaeda and other groups who will try to exploit the room that they see in this area. So I think that's some concern in the rise in violence.

Senator MCCAIN. Has there been an increase in al Qaeda activity?

General ODIERNO. There's reports that there's been some increase, especially in Anbar Province, of al Qaeda and also in Baghdad. I'm still, though—I would say, though, Senator, I'm still very confident that the Iraqi security forces can handle the violence. The issue becomes that we need the people of Iraq to continue to reject al Qaeda and not allow them to get back in and form groups. I think that's the most important piece now.

Senator MCCAIN. Isn't it also a very important piece the polarization and possible view on the part of the Sunni that they are excluded from the government? The vice president, who is Sunni, is now residing in Irbil, with a warrant out for his arrest. It's not exactly, I think, the model that we had in mind for the Iraqi democracy.

General ODIERNO. Senator, these are the type of seams that I'm concerned about, because these are the type of seams that other groups will attempt to exploit as we move forward. It's important that we continue to work very closely with the Iraqi Government, and they understand that, so they can close some of these seams that are starting to develop.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, General.

In the last few days—General Burgess, Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, testified last month that the Assad regime and its military remain “a viable, cohesive, and effective force.” In the same hearing, James Clapper, Director of National Intelligence, testified that, absent some kind of external intervention, Assad will “hang in there and continue to do as he's done.” Of course, a recent news report that there's been ethnic cleansing in Homs, a scene of devastation and slaughter.

Do you agree with General Burgess and Director Clapper's assessments?

General ODIERNO. I agree that the Syrian Government and their military has significant capabilities that could be used against the population.

Senator MCCAIN. Could be or is being?

General ODIERNO. We're seeing parts of it used against the population.

Senator MCCAIN. Does it believe that if the current—do you believe that if the current conditions persist, do you think Assad can remain in power nearly indefinitely?

General ODIERNO. It's unclear. You never know how the population will ultimately react once a leader uses force on the population. But he certainly is attempting to stay in power by using force.

Senator MCCAIN. But you don't have any estimate as to how long he could remain in power?

General ODIERNO. I think that he could remain in power for some time.

Senator MCCAIN. The Washington Post reported recently there's been a "spike in Iran's support for the Assad regime." Do you know much about the nature of this support? I'm sure that some of this is classified. Please.

General ODIERNO. I'll just, I will say I don't know specifically the type of support. But as we have seen in and around the Middle East, the use of the Quds Force, whether it be in Iraq, whether it be in Lebanon, whether it be in Bahrain and other places, they are very active when they're supporting their own agenda, and they clearly have an agenda in Syria. So I know that they're active in Syria.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you agree with General Mattis and General Dempsey's assessment that if Assad fell it would be the greatest blow to Iran in the last 25 years?

General ODIERNO. I think it would have a great impact on Iran if Assad fell in Syria.

Senator MCCAIN. And your concern about the Iranian development of nuclear weapons? Have you seen any deviation or effect of the sanctions on Iranian actions towards developing nuclear weapons?

General ODIERNO. My personal assessment is that sanctions are having an impact inside of Iran.

Senator MCCAIN. But have they changed any of the activities?

General ODIERNO. No indications.

Senator MCCAIN. No indication of that.

I want to congratulate you and Secretary McHugh on some of the acquisition changes that you've made. I noted that there was a report that had some 70-some recommendations and you have implemented a large number of them, 50-some. I think the committee would like to hear from you those changes in the acquisition that need to be made as a result of—by Congress, as a result of the recommendations that you're making. Are there some of those, Secretary McHugh?

Secretary MCHUGH. There certainly are, Senator. When this body passed the acquisition reform amendments, the major weapons procurement reforms, I was proud to have a little piece of that when I was still on this side of the Hill. Frankly, it was, I can tell you now from the other side of the Potomac River, something that caused the Army to take a cold, hard look at itself.

One of the reasons General Casey and I asked for this top to bottom review of our acquisition processes were the challenges resulting from the legislation that you and others had so much impact upon. And it provided us a blueprint that, frankly, as you read it, is just common sense. If you had to write a primer on what not to do in major acquisition programs, you'd probably go to some of the Army initiatives in recent years. That's not because people were uncaring or untracked, but rather because we didn't know how to contain our requirements spirals. We didn't understand that you have to have reliance upon mature technologies, that sometimes good enough is good enough.

As we implement those programs, the chief outlined, for example, the Ground Combat Vehicle, that I think is a case study in trying to do better, in learning that you need a fixed cost price plus incentive program, instead of just tying people to percentage increases regardless of what they spend, and in fact the more they spend the more they make.

We retracted the first RFP that had over 900 must-have requirements appended to the GCV and re-issued it with about 163, with all of those other nice-to-haves tradable against cost.

The other big lesson we've taken from this is that competition is good, and we will have at least two competitive prototypes to compare. We're going to look at existing nondevelopmental platforms as well.

So we really learned a top-to-bottom lesson. I'm not suggesting we don't have some ways to go. We hope to implement all of the remaining suggestions of the Decker- Wagner report by the end of this summer. But one of the big challenges and another thing this Congress has directed us to do is to grow the acquisition community within the Army. These are like O5s and O6s. They just don't pop up overnight. We are reversing a trend of some number of years whereby the acquisition workforce was diminished, and now we want to bring those professionals in so we don't go back to our bad habits.

Senator McCAIN. Thank you.

Very briefly, General Odierno, how important is the strategic partnership agreement between the United States and Afghanistan in the grand scheme of things?

General ODIERNO. I think as we look to the future and what we're trying to accomplish it's key that we have a strategic partnership agreement, I think similar to the one we developed in Iraq. I think it's important for us to understand our bilateral agreement and how we will continue to work with each other as we move forward, in order to build on the success that I expect to happen here and continue over the next 2 years in Afghanistan.

Senator McCAIN. Thank you.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to both of you for your service and your leadership.

General Odierno, let me just ask you a few questions about Iraq following on Senator McCain's questions. Just for the record, at this point how many U.S. Army personnel are there in Iraq?

General ODIERNO. We have—it's somewhere between, because we're changing it every day because we're increasing, about 180 to 250 that are working in the embassy in support of our actions.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. Really, it's down that low now. And am I right that a certain number of the troops that were in Iraq have been repositioned to neighboring countries, particularly Kuwait, and the numbers there?

General ODIERNO. We have a brigade combat team that came out of Iraq and is now inside of Kuwait. We have some aviation elements that are also inside of Kuwait. Because we have other—we have people in Kuwait that also support Afghanistan—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General ODIERNO.—the current number is somewhere between 12 and 15,000. It will come down over time, probably to something less than 10,000 in Kuwait.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Was One of the understandings or foundations of that decision to leave some number of troops, our troops, nearby Iraq in case of crisis to go back in?

General ODIERNO. I think I would say it's first to sustain some capability close by in the region. I would suggest General Mattis could probably answer that question better than I, but I think it's for us to sustain capacity in the region that allows us to react with ground forces if necessary and if it was in our best national interests.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. Let me ask you to step back, because of all you contributed to our effort in Iraq, and ask you the question people ask me. Looking back, was it worth it?

General ODIERNO. Well, first off, I always start out that there's no longer a brutal dictator overseeing the Government of Iraq. I think we forget about that sometimes, as we continue to uncover the atrocities that were conducted under that regime. I don't think we should ever, ever forget that.

But I still believe that Iraq still has—we have bought them the time and space to work through a democracy, to improve an economy that I believe in the long term could add stability to the region. I still believe that. We're going through a rough time now, as Senator McCain pointed out, inside the Iraqi government. But I still have confidence that we can work our way through this.

What gives me confidence is we still have the parliament working together, represented by Kurds, Sunni, Shia, trying to solve problems inside Iraq. I think that's a positive development and will continue to be. I think there's a lot of opportunity for them to continue to develop economically as they continue to increase their oil exports. So I think they can have an impact on the region. I think they can be a stabilizing factor in the long term. But we have to work, continue to work very closely with them, treat them as a partner, continue to help them and help them understand the importance their role can play in the region.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, thank you. I agree with that.

That's a transition, if I can, to the budget. I do want to say first that when you think about what's happening in the Middle East just in the last couple of weeks and what we're looking forward to, possibilities we're looking forward to, I question the notion of the rebalancing of our forces from the Middle East to Asia Pacific. I

don't think we're going to—I understand why we'd want to focus on the Asia Pacific because it's critically important, but I think we're going to be engaged really in ways that we can't exactly foresee in the Middle East.

Of course, we still have a presence there. Maybe I'll first ask you to comment on that, and then I'll transition to my concerns about the reductions in end strength as it affects our ability to be involved in both theaters.

General ODIERNO. I don't see us necessarily rebalancing from the Middle East to Asia Pacific. Based on the priorities we have established, Asia Pacific's first, closely followed behind by the Middle East. But I don't think that is causing us to have less attention and capability available to use in the Middle East.

I do think in some other parts of the world we are diminishing our potential to influence, but it is not in the Middle East. So I have confidence that we will be able to do what we need to do if necessary in the Middle East even though we have now provided some focus into the Pacific region.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Are those other parts of the world where you think we may be diminishing our influence too much?

General ODIERNO. No, I think it's right on target, in Europe and other places.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes, I agree.

On the budget, I'm concerned, as I said when Secretary Panetta and General Dempsey were here, that this budget takes on an unacceptable degree of risk for our national security. I say quickly that I understand that this is the budget that we forced you, the Pentagon, to give to us through the Budget Control Act.

But I hope that in this authorization process that our committee is going through now and in the appropriations process that we will take a second look at the implications of the cuts that we are forcing on you, including the 80,000 cut over the next 5 years in the number of personnel in the Army.

Let me ask you first, because I don't believe we've heard any details about the speed and depth of the reductions in the ground force end strength that you're going to be compelled to carry out: Can you provide any further details on the expected drawdown ramp?

General ODIERNO. Yes, I can. First, it's again—we're actually starting in 2012. We started to reduce in 2012, so it's actually over a 6-year period. We have developed this ramp, which we believe can be accomplished mostly through attrition. And with the rate that we're reducing the ramp, we believe that we can continue to meet our commitments in Afghanistan and our other deployable commitments with rotational forces.

So we feel confident that if it remains over a 5- or 6-year period it will mitigate the risk associated with the downsizing of our force. If we are forced to do it much quicker than that, then the risk goes up exponentially in my mind, because first of all it could have an impact on the soldiers and families of our Army and also an impact on our ability to respond with rotational forces if needed over the next several years, specifically since we still have a large commitment in Afghanistan.

If I could just talk, Senator, a little bit about the risk. The risk that we're accepting is that we will not get into long-term operations, simultaneous operations, again. So if we—

Senator LIEBERMAN. As in Iraq and Afghanistan.

General ODIERNO. As in Iraq and Afghanistan.

—over a 10-year period.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General ODIERNO. Or a 7-year period, or a 6-year period, with large—with forces of 100,000 in one theater, 150 or '60 in another. That's where we are taking risk.

But we believe we mitigated that risk with our ability over the next few years because of the ramp to reverse active component reductions if necessary, but also by utilizing our Reserve component, which has gained, as everyone knows here, great experience and capability. So we'd have to rely on them in order to buy us time then to reverse the active component. We think that's how we mitigate that risk.

I would also say that we do have the capability to conduct 2 operations simultaneously at 490,000. Again, where the risk comes in is if they get extended over a very long period of time.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Okay, my time is up. I would like to talk to you at some point about the reversibility, because obviously we just went through, you just went through, the Army went through, a period of time where we tried to—we had to reverse previous end strength reduction that left us, I think, unprepared for what we had to face. But really, we got prepared by putting tremendous stress on our forces, with a very high boots on the ground to dwell time ratio. And that's something I know you want to avoid ever again having to put our people through.

Anyway, the time's up. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I have the highest respect for both of you. I consider you to be personal friends, as well as certainly great career guys in carrying out your mission. But I think it's important to maybe approach this budget thing a little bit differently. We all know that you guys receive a budget and the budget comes from the Commander in Chief, and you're going to have to carry it out and you're two both very, very competent to do that.

However, the variable, as Senator Lieberman says, in this is risk. You know, I look at what's happening now. In this administration's four budgets, we've got \$5.3 trillion of deficit, more than all the deficits of every president in history. In the fiscal year we're talking about now, \$1.3 trillion. And the only real hits are defense. You know, you could zero out the defense budget and the OCO and that adds up to about \$614 billion, and still have a half trillion dollar deficit.

So I look at that and I think, where is the money going? Because it's not going to defense. But let me just kind of put this into perspective that I think is significant. At our peak—that would have been 2008 and 2009—we had approximately 188,000 troops deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. There also were over 100,000

servicemembers deployed within the CENTCOM AOR in a supporting role.

During those years, the Secretary and the Chief of the Army—at that time that would have been Pete Garen and General Casey, I guess—they repeatedly briefed Army, us, right here in this room, about an Army out of balance, that the demand for ground forces exceeded the supply, that we needed to continue with the 15-month rotations, and that constant conflict since September 11 had stretched and stressed all of our volunteer force.

The 2010 QDR, which was the timeframe that we're talking about now that I just read about, said, and I'm quoting now: "In the mid- to long-range term, U.S. military forces must plan to prepare and prevail in a broad range of operations that may occur in multiple theaters, in overlapping timeframes. This includes maintaining the ability to prevail against two capable nation-state aggressors."

Now, the new strategic policy, which I can actually read out of here, talks about the objectives in one region by conducting a combined arms campaign.

Well, the first thing before I ask you were they wrong is to go back and remember when you and I, Mr. Secretary, sat next to each other in the House Armed Services Committee, and I remember so well the last year before I came to the Senate we had someone testifying that in 10 years we'd no longer need ground forces. And you remember that, too. We talked about it at the time.

So what I'm saying is we don't know what we do today is going to reflect where we're going to be in the future. So the two statements that I read there, do you think that Casey and Garen were wrong at that time? Has something changed to change the level of hostility out there?

Secretary MCHUGH. I don't think they were wrong. But things have changed. First of all, when they appeared before both Houses of Congress they were in two simultaneous wars. I don't think they had really, on the ground had the opportunity to totally get the upper hand, and the pace of deployments was such growing to try to sustain those two theaters.

Today, as you know, Senator, we're out of Iraq. We've already begun to draw down forces in Afghanistan. And as I understand the agreement amongst the allied nations' coalition in Afghanistan, the plan is to transition all control of combat operations to the Afghans by the end of '14, which presumably will allow us to draw down even more.

We've restored, even as we come down, nearly to 1.2, just a few tens of a percentage below it on average, our BOG-dwell times.

I can tell you, if the Military Services had to write their own budgets, I'm not sure any of us would have picked these particular figures. But as you noted, that's not how it works. We had the Budget Control Act, passed by both houses and signed by the President, within which we had to do the best we could.

Senator INHOFE. Exactly, and I understand that. And I know that the situation has changed since that time. I still look at this and look at the stress. We're the ones up here, and you used to be in this position, where you'd be talking to your Reserve components back home and you saw as their OPTEMPO went up. So I would

probably have a hard time, even though we are drawing down right now, not knowing what's in the future, that the type of—that we can't consider the OPTEMPO for our Guard and our Reserve to maintain the same thing.

My time's getting low here, so I want to cover two other things real quickly. First of all, on the adjustments in TRICARE, the Obama budget calls for military families and retirees to pay sharply more in their health care. Over 5 years, compared to current fees, the fiscal year budget proposed would increase the enrollment fees by 94 percent and up to 345 percent for some retirees.

There's an article that you probably read by Bill Gertz that was in just last week. He said, and I'm quoting now: "The administration officials told Congress that one goal of the increased fees is to force military retirees to reduce their involvement in TRICARE"—"reduce their involvement in TRICARE and eventually opt out of the program in favor of alternatives established by the 2010 Patient Protection," or in other words the Obamacare.

Got any thoughts about that? Well, first of all, do you think it's an issue of fairness in terms of the increase in the copays that are in this budget?

Secretary MCHUGH. We think it's an action of necessity. The facts are irrefutable. Over the last 10 years the cost of the defense health programs has doubled and, like in the civilian sector, painfully but undeniably, if we don't do something to get that cost growth under control we're going to be in jeopardy of losing the entire program.

We worked on this very meticulously. It was not something we enjoyed doing, not something we wanted to do. But if you look at the increases as proposed, I think at the end of the 5-year period you'll still have an enormously generous benefit that these men and women who served in uniform not only deserve, but in our minds earned. For example—

Senator INHOFE. I think I'm just out of time almost here, Mr. Secretary. And I agree with what you're saying, I agree.

General Odierno, I was one of them back when we were seated next to each other in the House Armed Services Committee when then-President Bush cancelled the Crusader program. And we were very distressed. In fact, one member actually retired—and Secretary McHugh, you remember our good friend from Oklahoma—because of the way that happened. So I'm critical there of a certainly Republican administration.

Then we went through the NLOS cannon. We went through the cancellation of the FCS. Now we're kind of left with the latest version of the old Paladin technology. My concern is the PIM program, I'm very much for it, and we've got to have that capability. I know that both of you understand that and appreciate that.

But is there any way to accelerate that? Right now you're looking at four years out and it would seem to me we ought to be able to get that capability prior to it, maybe in a 2-year period of time. Have you thought about that?

Secretary MCHUGH. We have looked at all different courses of action, Senator. We're trying to balance across they entire modernization program how we do this. We believe in the PIM program. It actually takes some of the technologies out of NLOS and integrates

it into the Paladin. So we're very excited about that. We think it's something that we have to continue to build.

But as we look at the adjustments we've made, it's difficult for us to speed up programs right now as we try to sustain a balanced modernization program across all of our systems.

Senator INHOFE. With the limited resources. And I agree with that, and you've got your Ground Combat Vehicle to consider and all of that. Well, you're doing the very best you can with what you have, with the hand that you're dealt, and we need to deal you a better hand.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Reed.

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

Thank you, gentlemen, for your service to the Army and to the Nation.

General Odierno, you have, and Secretary McHugh, you have a major challenge in reshaping the force structure of the Army. You've talked about eliminating brigades, reorienting the Army for what might be termed more conventional type or a broader spectrum of missions than you've seen. But you also have going forward the responsibility to generate a cadre of advisers who will be embedded, presumably, with Afghani forces going forward, and even in a broader sense a cadre of professionals, mid-rank professionals who can deploy to other forces around the world and provide training, assistance, etcetera, which seems to be something you have to do to complement the downsizing of our, for want of a better term, conventional force.

Can you talk a moment about that challenge and how you propose to meet it, General Odierno?

General ODIERNO. Senator, you know, we're in the process now—in fact, we just finished a training exercise out at the Joint Readiness Training Center on a brigade that's getting ready to send advisers over to Afghanistan as we continue to shift our strategy in Afghanistan. We've made the decision to center it around a brigade combat team because, first of all, they're the ones who have the expertise that we need in order to continue to exponentially improve the capability of the Afghan forces.

So what we're doing is we'll take a brigade, we'll take the leaders out of it, noncommissioned officers, and then we will redistribute the people of the brigades to other units so we can meet that requirement. Then when they come back we will then regenerate the brigade combat team.

The reason we've done this is because again it's about the expertise. It's about having the right officers doing adviser programs. I think we made some mistakes early on in Iraq in our adviser programs because we had people that, frankly, weren't qualified to be advisers, and we don't want to do that again. We think the flexibility of our formations allows us to do this, so we're very focused on doing this. I'm pleased so far with the results. We'll see what happens when they deploy here very shortly.

Senator REED. I want to be sure I understand this. So you have—maybe this term is no longer in vogue—and TO and E brigade. You take out from that brigade the advisory elements you

need, send it into Afghanistan. The remaining brigade, presumably the soldiers and the personnel, the non-advisory personnel, are then—

General ODIERNO. So what happens is you have security elements that go with them as well, which takes some soldiers, and other things that will go in with them. So it's a package that is built out of the brigade. Then of course, on installations we have more than one brigade. So what we've done is we take those soldiers, so they can continue to move forward and train on other missions, into another brigade, and that's how we've decided to do this.

That allows us to not only have the best expertise moving forward, but what we were doing before is robbing other institutions. That causes us to have weaknesses in other institutions. We are now able to do this because of our reduced commitments, for example not having brigades in Iraq now.

Senator REED. One of the points you mentioned was the security of these advisers. Given what's happened over the last several weeks, how are you planning for, training for, or what's your general reaction, to the ability to operate as we thought we could do—as we thought we could do without some of the frictions we've seen lately?

General ODIERNO. It's interesting is, as we were out at the training center we got some feedback from the brigade commander getting ready to go. His assessment is the thing that we have to do is, it's about being even closer, having the ability to really be as close as you can to our allies, build a relationship, so you completely understand the environment you're operating in and you're able to identify the risks associated with it.

That's one of the things we're concentrating on, is that you have to be aware, you have to identify the risks associated with being advisers and understand, more importantly, the personalities that you're working with. So we're focused on that.

We're also focused on developing techniques to recognize potential problems. So I feel comfortable that we are addressing this. It is still a very difficult threat to combat against. But I would just say, Senator, to expand a little bit, is we cannot allow a few to derail what we're doing in Afghanistan. You know, 99.9 percent of the Afghan security forces are working very hard, sacrificing every day to move their country forward, and we have to continue to support them. Even though we have a few, a handful, maybe a few more than that, who are trying to take this mission down, we can't allow that to happen. It's important we remain steadfast in this mission, sir.

Senator REED. Let me ask a final question on this line, is that as we come out of Afghanistan, as you reconstitute the force for a broader spectrum of missions, you'll still have this legacy task. There has to be, and we've seen in the past, where the proper recognition for service there in an advisory capacity is not appreciated, that the incentive structure now is, that's in the rear-view mirror, now you've got to command a brigade, not an advisory brigade but a real brigade—excuse me, an active brigade under division format in the United States, etcetera.

How are you going to ensure that these individuals are given the kind of recognition they need in terms of promotions, in terms of consideration, et cetera?

General ODIERNO. The Secretary and I get to write advice to the board. We certainly will make sure we continue to do that direction to the board.

But it's another reason why—I would argue it's another reason why we're centering it around the brigade combat team, because in reality they will still be brigade commanders who are doing all of these missions. I think it's not only about the quality, but it's also about the recognition of what they're doing.

Senator REED. Secretary McHugh, when last you were here we talked about the study of the profession of arms, which you initiated, which is a way to develop discussion on sort of the spectrum of the Army, including Army families—we talked about that—about the future of the Army. Can you just comment on the perspectives that you've learned and how it's influenced you in terms of these, not just budget deliberations, but all the questions that we've spoken of today?

Secretary MCHUGH. Thank you very much. We're still engaged in that discussion and, frankly, if one thinks about it, you probably should be each and every day you maintain an Army. What we have done upon that realization now is tried to embed into TRADOC, into our schools and classrooms, that kind of discussion, so we have a continuous flow of information and try to keep those lessons learned.

The thing that concerns me is the issue that we're hearing more and more about the lack of discipline within the force. This is particularly true amongst younger officers. They feel as though the professional arms to them means more than just going to combat; it means that you have to have discipline in garrison, you have to have standards, both height and weight, physical standards.

Amongst the cadres that I would have felt were kind of the less interested in those age-old kinds of things that made the Army different, we find the most adherence. So what we have to do, it seems to me, is take those, those messages, and broaden our definition of what the profession of arms means. I don't think that's going to happen overnight, and I think particularly as we transition out of combat and come back, once more we're going to have to take another look at that.

So it's been an exciting intellectual experience, but I can't tell you we're ready to write the book as yet. I know the Chief has been very involved in this as well.

General ODIERNO. If I could—

Senator REED. May I just? There are standards, height, weight, physical fitness. Fortunately, there are waivers for height standards. For both of us, I think.

General ODIERNO. For both of us, that's right, Senator. [Laughter.]

Exactly what the Secretary said. As we grew in the 2000s, there's a thought in the force that we've lowered our standards as we were growing. It's very interesting. They want competition, they want high standards. This also—the profession also in my mind moves towards sexual harassment, drug abuse. It's all of these

things, that in our profession they are unacceptable. Our moral and ethical values and our standards do not accept things like this.

So we are—Bob Cone in TRADOC is institutionalizing a professional program that will start when you're an ROTC cadet, a West Point cadet, and will take us all the way through our institutional training. And we're also now developing training in the operational force to get at this. It's absolutely essential to us as we move forward as an Army and as we reduce the size of our Army, because the development of our leaders will be what causes us to be successful, and that our soldiers understand what they're doing and the profession that they are in is special and requires special traits and characteristics that we expect.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator WICKER.

Senator WICKER. Thank you very much, and I want to thank both of you for your service. I have a great deal of confidence in both of you. I think our committee is well served, our country is well served, and our national security interests are well served by both of you. So thank you very, very much.

I want to talk about helicopters and cargo and then if we have a moment maybe get back to the general budget questions. General Odierno, there is an analysis being performed out there on the options for the Armed Scout Helicopter, options ranging from a new high-speed helicopter to a conventional helicopter to modernization of the existing airframes. We submitted some advance policy questions to you before your confirmation last year and you stated that you agree the Army has an enduring requirement for an armed aerial scout, that this was reaffirmed after the termination of the Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter, ARH program; and that requirement will be validated by an ongoing Armed Aerial Scout analysis of alternatives, whose findings at that time were scheduled for release in the third quarter of fiscal year 2011.

Has that slipped? I understand this analysis may have been delivered to the Army leadership, but that no decision has been reached. I also understand that the acting Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition has not yet been briefed on this recommendation.

So tell us about this? When will this analysis be briefed to the DOD Under Secretary and will this analysis be briefed to us prior to a decision being made on which course of action?

General ODIERNO. Senator, first, we have not yet seen the analysis. It's now due in second quarter of fiscal year 2012.

Senator WICKER. Why has it slipped?

General ODIERNO. I don't know. I'll get back to you on that. I can't answer that question. I think probably some of the companies involved asked us to slip that so they could do more, get a better analysis back to us. But I'll get you a more thorough answer on that.

But we expect to have an answer back on this analysis of alternatives. We will take that analysis, we'll take a look at it, and then we'll decide, is that better than modernizing Kiowa Warriors or going with a new system? And when we get that information the

Secretary and I will be more than happy to provide that to the committee.

Senator WICKER. Do you have any estimate of when we might see that?

General ODIERNO. I think probably it'll be—our determination will probably be made either the end of '12 or beginning of fiscal year 2013, when we finally make a decision on that. And as we move towards that decision we would bring it to you. So it would probably be somewhere in the beginning of fiscal year 2013 or the end of fiscal year 2012.

Senator WICKER. So it could be as early as October, November this year. Okay, thank you very much.

Let's move to cargo then, General. The Air Force has decided to pursue the divestment of all C-27 aircraft in our inventory. C-27s, twin-engine turboprop, can carry up to 44 passengers, more than 23,000 pounds of cargo and fuel, and can land on unimproved fields as short as 3,000 feet in areas such as Afghanistan.

Were you consulted prior to this Air Force decision to divest us of all C-27s?

General ODIERNO. I would say we had a discussion about it as a joint group together once the decision was made, as we looked at the budget and what the results of the cuts would be, as the Air Force recommended the reduction of the C-27.

Senator WICKER. So the decision had already been made before you were brought in?

General ODIERNO. The Air Force made the decision.

Senator WICKER. Well, just tell us. You're part of the team, but, all things being equal, are you disappointed that you're not going to be able to have the benefit of these C-27s?

General ODIERNO. We need a capability that enables us to provide intratheater lift, to provide support to our ground forces, as we've seen in Afghanistan. The Air Force has assured us that they will be able to do that with the current C-130 fleet, and we've developed an MOU that would tell us that they will provide that support to our units. It's their responsibility to provide that intratheater airlift to us. We need it because I think, as you know, Senator, the CH-47 fleet has been used quite heavily there and they cannot bear the whole load. We need help with fixed wing re-supply.

Secretary MCHUGH. Senator, may I just—

Senator WICKER. Yes, sir.

Secretary MCHUGH. Just a little process clarification. The Chief is absolutely right. Each of the services as we went through our budgets made their own decisions. However, on this issue the Chief and I along with the Air Force were provided an opportunity to discuss it, and one of the outcomes of that was the agreement that the Chief just mentioned.

So I didn't want to make it sound as though we weren't given some opportunity to discuss it with them, because that wouldn't be totally accurate.

Senator WICKER. Well, let me just observe that this aircraft has, it seems to me, the capability that we need in Afghanistan—the mountainous terrain we have there, the limited road network, further constrained by the threat of roadside bombs. It just seems to

me the C-27 is equipped to help us, and it makes no sense to me that we've got this new aircraft and we're going to get rid of a brand-new aircraft that provides the capability.

Quickly, Mr. Secretary, you mentioned the Budget Control Act is the law. You might not have put it in place, but you're constrained by it. It's also a fact that sequestration right now is the law and may in fact kick in. There's a discussion around here of trying to handle this during the lame duck. But let me just ask you, Mr. Secretary, what contingency plans do you have for dealing with sequestration? I hope it can be avoided. I desperately hope it can be avoided and believe we should have made the tough decisions with regard to entitlement, the explosion of entitlement spending. We've collectively been unable to do that and now we're faced with the prospect of this being taken out of the hides of the people that provide national defense to us.

What do you think of the prospect of waiting until the lame duck to answer the sequestration, and what would be the consequences if we don't address it sooner?

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, for the Army and all the military services, in fact the Department writ large, the irony is we don't really have to plan a lot because under the law we're not allowed to make certain cuts in some areas and ameliorate cuts in others. Rather, every appropriation line must be cut by an equal amount.

Now, that makes our mathematical challenge pretty easy, but it really highlights the incredibly difficult nature should sequestration go forward. You can't buy 92 percent of a Ground Combat Vehicle or an aircraft carrier. We would have to, I would imagine, declare Nunn-McCurdy breaches on hundreds, if not thousands, of contracts, for example.

But the real challenge, I think, and the aura of uncertainty probably focuses upon those with whom we do business, our manufacturers, our suppliers, that have stockholders, that have to answer to other authorities—

Senator WICKER. That have employees.

Secretary MCHUGH. Employees, exactly.

—have to begin the plan, it seems to me, and that's the discussions we've heard from them, about acting sooner rather than later. So we worry about the industrial base. We worry about those kinds of effects that sometimes we don't think a lot about in government, but would be very real in terms of running the Department of Defense.

Senator WICKER. Well, my time is up, but my hat is off to you for having to deal with a real tough budget in addition to defending our country. I want to work on both sides of the aisle to make your situation a little more doable.

Thank you very much to both of you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me add my appreciation for your service as well, and to the men and women who serve under you in our military.

The new U.S. national strategy, as has been indicated, calls for the increase in our presence and involvement, more involvement in the Asia Pacific region. Of course, the threat there, among others, is an unpredictable nuclear North Korea and China using its mili-

tary capability to reduce the freedom of action of its neighbors. Now, a larger presence is necessary to deter or repel aggression from these threats.

The three large developed democracies in the region—Japan, South Korea, and Australia—collectively have an economy that is 25 percent larger than China's and, of course, incalculably larger than North Korea's. But as a percentage of GDP, they spend less than half what the United States does on defense.

I think all of us are getting concerned about relationships, partnerships and associations with allies and friends, but that our partnership is disproportionately more expensive than theirs. And we ought not to be looking at senior partners-junior partners when it comes to the expenditures or the requirements.

We've always had a large presence in South Korea since the Korean conflict. What can we do to make certain that South Korea, Japan, and others pay a larger proportion of the shared expense because we share the threat? Mr. Secretary?

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, it's something we're always discussing with our allies, and there's no question some are more forthcoming than others. As for the Australians, I have to tell you—and the Chief could speak more directly to this than I could—operationally it's hard to find a better ally.

Senator NELSON. I understand.

Secretary MCHUGH. They are on the front lines with us, and on a population per capita basis have taken tremendous losses. As you know, the Marine Corps is entering into a cooperative agreement where we will have Marines stationed around Darwin, Australia. So they continue to participate.

The Koreans and the Japanese, particularly the Japanese are somewhat limited in what they can do militarily because of their constitution arising out of World War II, as you know so well, but in terms of financial support are very, very supportive. There are ongoing discussions on Japan with respect to relocation on Okinawa and such-and-such, but if all of our allies were as financially supportive as those two nations I think we'd be in a much, much different situation.

So that does not mean we don't always ask them for more. We do. We're engaged in discussions right now. J.D. Thurman, the combatant commander in Korea, is talking about Yongson relocation and tour normalization and all those things, and we're trying to see what kind of support will be afforded there. But it's always something, as I said, we ask for.

Senator NELSON. Well, I hope we ask very aggressively and assertively, because of the importance of appropriate partnerships in terms of who contributes who to the partnership.

The discussion earlier was interesting about trying to compare deficits. The best way to avoid having a large deficit is to have supplementals. We went through a significant period of time where the wars were supported by supplementals as opposed to by the budgeting process. So I think it's always interesting. Sometimes it's not comparing apples and apples, but apples and watermelons, the difference in how the budgets have occurred over the last 10 to 11 years for comparison purposes.

Now, we've had—we've been at war for over a decade. We've learned a lot about the missions for our military and we've learned a lot more about the relationship between the active duty, Guard, and Reserve units for the future. Part of the Department's budget plan is to leverage the operational experience of the National Guard and Reserves and looking at a more agile and smaller force.

Can you, General Odierno, can you give us some idea of how you're looking at the operational Reserve in connection with the future plans as it relates to the budget?

General ODIERNO. Thank you, Senator. I sure can. It is a key part of our strategy as I move forward, as we move forward. A couple things I just remind everybody of is, with the National Guard and Reserve component the limiting factor is not necessarily money; it's time. It's the time that they have available to train and how we trade that time off with them with their employers and other things as we go back to a more steady state. So we're working very closely with the Reserve component to find that sweet spot of the time available.

But there's two things that we're doing. We've moved \$400 million in addition to the training program. We took it from the equipping accounts. The reason we've done that is because the National Guard equipment and Reserve component equipment is 87 percent, the active is 86 right now. At the end of this year they'll both be around 92 percent, and as equipment continues to come out of Iraq and Afghanistan in reset we believe we will solve almost all of our equipping problems in both the Guard and the active component.

So what we're trying to do is increase the amount of money spent in training in order to sustain a higher level of readiness. We are going to develop a progressive readiness model for both the active and Reserve component that we can use—it's a model we have used for Iraq and Afghanistan, but as we come out of Iraq and Afghanistan we will adjust that model in order to sustain a level of readiness in the Guard and Reserve as they rotate through this progressive readiness model. And we'll do the same thing for the active component.

So we're working very closely with the other components to develop this, so we can take advantage and not lose the experiences that have been gained over the last several years.

Senator NELSON. Well, I think that's obviously what you need to do, and I appreciate the fact that you're focused on it.

Mr. Secretary, anything you would like to add?

Secretary MCHUGH. I think actually the Chief said that very well. The challenge at the moment is we've used for the last 10 years the phrase "operationalized Reserve" and when you're in combat, full combat in two theaters, it's pretty easy to know how that works and what it means. The challenge for us now is to retain the incredible skill that this Reserve has, both the Guard and the Reserve, have accrued over the last 10 years and not squander it, and do it in a way that makes them feel a part of the process as well.

We're all working, and I tip my hat to the Chief because he's been very engaged with the Guard and Reserve leadership to make sure we agree on the way forward.

Senator NELSON. Thank you.

The GAO noted that there has been a lack of collaboration and commonality among the services that has led to some duplicate costs for designing and manufacturing ISR systems. Obviously, some level of competition is important, but when it comes to this I think collaboration probably is even more important than competition.

Can you give us some idea of how you might be moving toward more cooperation on the development of ISR capabilities and needs?

General ODIERNO. We work very closely within the Department of Defense and through the JROC process, also through the requirements development process, and also with the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, who plays a large role in the ISR. We're working, all the services, are working very closely in these processes to ensure that we have—first, the most important thing is to ensure we can all download unmanned aerial vehicle capabilities to a ground station that everyone can see, so we get maximum use out of it. We've done that over the years, gotten better.

We're now working through what are the capabilities that we need in the future for intel, what do we need for our ground maneuver components, and we're working our way through that.

One of the things that we are doing, we just—we have put our UAVs in the Army now in our aviation brigades. We just ran our first training rotation at one of our training centers where we actually teamed unmanned and manned aircraft together, and it was incredibly successful. This is the future for the Army, so we're making sure that people understand why we need this capability and get it integrated into the ISR, the DOD ISR process.

So we're very aware of this and we're working very hard to mitigate, to ensure we make the best use of the moneys available in this area.

Senator NELSON. With tight budget times, it's obviously more important. It's always important to do it, but it's even more important right now.

Thank you both. I appreciate it very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Brown.

Senator BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both. It's good to see you again.

General, I appreciated your comments on the Guard and Reserves and the role that they play. I have recognized it as someone who's serving. I see it. I know the commitment for and from the Guard and Reserve units. So I know the Army guy gets it, but I'm a little concerned that the Air Force isn't getting it because of the devastating cuts to the Air Guard. And whereas we get a good value for the dollar with our Guard and Reserve members, I'm hopeful that we can convince the Air Force to reevaluate the I think draconian cuts they have made to the Air Guard in particular.

That being said, Mr. Secretary, I want to thank you for your comments on the role of women in combat. It's something I have been very keen on for quite some time. Having served for 32 years, I have served with many women and recognize—and gosh, the mili-

tary fellow that we had was a Kiowa pilot commander. Both of you know who she is, and she was in Afghanistan and Iraq, leading men in battle.

So that line as far as I'm concerned is really nonexistent, and just taking a lot of the convoys, delivering fuel and supplies, that is the front line. If that isn't, I don't know what is.

So I wrote a letter to the chairman. I asked for a hearing on that very issue. But I'm glad that you're moving along.

You mentioned the pilot program that would open up another 60,000 positions. Would that be in addition to the positions that Secretary Panetta asked all the services to look at?

Secretary MCHUGH. If I believe we're talking about the same thing, we have taken two steps. The first is what you've said. The Secretary has guided all the Services, in the Army's case, to open up 6 more MOSs, which produced 13,000 openings. That's done.

The pilot program which we intend to run approximately from April to August will look at those other MOSs, which produce closer to 66,000 new positions should they all be opened and approved. We have to get that approval.

Senator BROWN. Right, and subject to, obviously, the qualifications of the individual female soldier.

I spoke with Admiral McRaven about this and it's very interesting as to the role they play in special operations and what they're trying to do, and very, very instructive, and I appreciated that frank conversation.

I also have the same concerns as Senator Inhofe regarding TRICARE. I look at the fact that here we are as a Senator and my staff and others, we're not affected. But here we are, the military men and women that have served and are getting that benefit are going to be cut or asked to pay more of a burden. I feel it's a breach of the contract between the soldiers and us, and it's something I know that you're aware of and are going to try to work through. I'd be happy to share my thoughts with you at another time on this.

On end strength, I guess I'll be blunt. Can the Army come down by 80,000 soldiers in 5 or 6 years without telling some of the folks, the 15-year sergeant, E7s, that have done three or four tours and were begged to come back, and all of a sudden say, hey, by the way, we're done, we've got to do a drawdown, you're out?

How do we handle that? Is that something you think we can actually do?

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, we're working as hard as we can to try to manage both our discharges and our accessions in a way so that we don't have to have forced outs. As you noted, they're not something anyone likes to go through. But the reality is at the end of the day we're probably going to have to ask some soldiers who have served honorably and who meet at least minimum criteria to perhaps think about a next challenge in their lives.

We in the Army are faced with an inescapable reality that 48 cents currently of every dollar we spend has to go to personnel. So when we have a budget that is reduced as dictated under the Budget Control Act one of the first places we have to look is our end strength. We think, and one of the things that we felt was responsible, that we had to balance end strength against all of those

other needs—the modernization, the equipping, the family programs, the things that if you don't support them you're on a quick path to a hollow Army.

So we were confined in some ways, but we're trying to manage this as reasonably and as humanely as we can so we avoid the circumstances you spoke of.

Senator BROWN. Sure. Well, I know that you're both on it. I know General Odierno is on it as well, and I appreciate that. I would suggest before we look at personnel we look at all the fraud, waste, and abuse, contracting, procurement, obviously programs, and try to fix that first, instead of looking at the soldiers and their livelihoods first.

General, the new post-September 11 Army total force policy reinforces the need for the operational Reserve that is fully integrated in the Active component. I know we've talked about on this. Can you comment on the planning your staff is doing to make this policy a reality when it comes to putting OCO funding back in the base budget for Guard and Reserve operations?

General ODIERNO. What we are trying to do, first it's putting funding in the base budget to conduct operations as a whole, and then we choose whether it's active and Reserve and National Guard who would accomplish that mission. It's important about identifying steady-state missions that we might have to accomplish, whether it be Bosnia or Kosovo, whether it be the Sinai. There are certain missions that we do think fit the Reserve component better, such as the three I just mentioned. If we believe they will be steady-state operations, we will attempt to get those into the base budget and out of OCO over time, and we'll work with OSD to do that.

Senator BROWN. I know the State partnership, I'm presuming you're supportive?

General ODIERNO. Very supportive of it.

Senator BROWN. It's another way to get boots on the ground at a very, very low cost, and obviously provide valuable training.

General ODIERNO. And we'd like to expand that to the Pacific and we're working very closely with the National Guard to do that.

Senator BROWN. I spoke to, obviously, the head of that entity to make sure that happens. I'm certainly supportive of it. The value for the dollar is really amazing, especially trying to counter a lot of what's happening with the Chinese and other entities coming into those countries. It's a good buffer for short money.

General, as part of the President's strategic guidance the Army plans to enhance its activities in Asia, specifically the Asia Pacific region. What does that mean? And given that 7 of the world's 10 largest armies are located in that region, what level of ground forces do you anticipate will be necessary throughout the PACOM AOR to implement this new strategic guidance? And have you and your Marine counterparts worked through this?

General ODIERNO. We are working through—we are currently working very closely with U.S. Army Pacific and Pacific Command to identify their long-term requirements in the Pacific. We've had several meetings. In fact, in about a week or so the U.S. Army Pacific Command will be coming back here to talk to us about their future requirements.

So the way we see this happening is we have 66,000 soldiers currently assigned in the Pacific region, and we'll then go through, as I talked about, this progressive readiness model of both active and Reserve components. When they become available, we'll then assign them specific missions. Some will be rotational training missions, some will be exercises, some will be other things where we continue to shape and influence these key countries.

One of the things I talk about all the time is 22 out of the 27 countries in the Pacific have chiefs of defense that are army, and the army tends to dominate the political influence in many of these nations. So the more that we can engage, gain access, we'll be more successful. So we're working with PACOM in order to provide us the opportunities where we will rotate forces, both active and Reserve component, to gain access, to build relationships that we will need later on if necessary.

Senator BROWN. I think we saw that relationship in Egypt, when we were able to pick up the phone and say: Hey, stand down and let things develop a little bit. Otherwise it could have been a lot different.

Thank you, sirs.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Brown.

Senator Akaka.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for having this hearing.

I want to welcome Secretary McHugh and General Odierno. Thank you both for your outstanding leadership you provide for our Army. I also want to thank the men and women of the Army, Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilians, as well as their families, for their service and sacrifice.

General, I understand you had the opportunity to visit some of our troops in Hawaii in January. I know these agendas are packed, but I hope you found some time to enjoy our beautiful State. I'm certain you also got a chance to experience firsthand the wonderful bond between the local community and the Army that we have there.

Mr. Secretary, the issue of sexual harassment and assaults in the military is a very important topic and we must do all we can, of course, to prevent it. Can you discuss what the Army is doing at the entry level—that's OCS, basic training, and West Point—to educate soldiers on this very important topic at the beginning of their service, to lay the foundation that the Army has zero tolerance for this?

Secretary MCHUGH. Thank you very much, Senator. It is a highly critical problem and one that, as I've said in the past, could not be more contrary to what the Army values are and what I think every man and woman in this country who puts on any of the service uniforms comes to serve for.

As you noted, we are trying to take a very holistic approach to this, as is required in virtually any program. We've tried to put sufficient funding against it. We've increased in the last 5 years the budget allocated for the entire sexual harassment and assault response program by 500 percent.

One of the key ways in which, as is true in any values program in the military, we have to tackle this is ensure that our emerging

leaders understand both what the rules are and what is expected of them to serve as leaders and imbuing those kinds of values and those kinds of understandings into those who serve under them. So whether it's West Point, where I had a chance to talk to the Superintendent just a few weeks ago about some of the things they're doing to change and to update some of their programs, or into our basic leader—basic officer leader courses, or into our drill sergeant courses, into virtually every level and unit of training, we're adding a component that teaches exactly the expectations for sexual assault and how we will hold soldiers accountable.

So in our view this is not something you can just teach a day or 2. It is a day by day component of all of our instructional activities, and we expect soldiers when they get out of those classrooms to go back and to live the values that we hope we're conveying upon them. So education is important, but we're doing a lot of other things in terms of prosecution, analysis, et cetera, et cetera, as well.

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

General—

General ODIERNO. Senator, would you mind if I added just a little bit to that? You know, I talk a lot about that. First of all, sexual harassment is inconsistent with our values. This is about, as I mentioned earlier, our profession. It's important we foster a climate of trust and respect among all soldiers, because we are—when we go into combat, we must have complete trust in each other, no matter race, color, creed, sex. It doesn't make a difference.

Sexual harassment in my mind challenges this, and that's why we cannot put up with it within our Army. We are doing everything we can to change the culture. We have leaders involved in the institution, as the Secretary just walked you through, at every level of training, and we are now increasing simply our training in our operational force, that this simply cannot be tolerated and that to be part of the Army you have to be part of the Army culture, and being part of the Army culture you must have the right values, and one of the most important ones is trust and respect for your fellow soldiers.

One of the things we're focusing on are the bystanders. It's intolerable to me that there's people that see sexual harassment, don't assist a soldier, don't report it, don't try to help a soldier as they are seeing sexual harassment occur.

So we're focused on this. The entire leadership is, and we are spending a lot of time to ensure everybody understands the importance of this, to include our ability to investigate and prosecute as well.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you so much for that response.

I want to applaud you for your efforts to give our soldiers, and their families for that matter, a new deployment model where they have more stability and predictability. Your new model should increase dwell time in the Army deployment structure.

General, can you discuss how this new model will impact our troops, including the Guard and Reserve?

General ODIERNO. As we walk through this model—first of all, we've moved to nine-month rotations, and we will continue that as

we develop this new model. So you'll be through a reset phase, you'll go through a training phase, you'll go through an available phase, and then you'll be able to go back again and start and reset.

So it's very predictable. People will understand when they're gone, when they're not. In the Reserve component it'll be done over a longer period of time. We're still negotiating over that. I think it'll probably be like a 60-month period, which is more consistent with our deployment rates we expect out of the Reserve component. But they would still have a reset phase, a training phase, and an available phase. So it would become very predictable for our Reserve component soldiers and, just as important, their employers as they continue to become our great citizen soldiers.

So we are designing that now. We're really studying this. I've given our Forces Command the lead in developing this capability, and we expect to have some solution here in the next several months that we'll be able to bring forward in detail.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you. Thank you very much for your responses.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

Senator PORTMAN.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To you two leaders, I think we're very fortunate to have you at a challenging time for our Army. General Odierno, through your distinction in combat you have a special connection with our troops at a time we need that. To my former colleague and top Republican on the House Armed Services Committee, whose got a lot of respect on the Hill, we're going to need that as we work through some of these challenges, the biggest one being sequestration.

It's been talked about a little bit this morning. I think sometimes we don't focus enough on the big changes you're going to have to make even prior to year end, when the sequestration actually hits. Could you give me a better sense of the date upon which the U.S. Army would have to make some of these painful adjustments between now and the end of the year?

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, we would have to take guidance from OMB. As a former budget chair, you know about those kinds of things. But clearly by the end of the summer, according to what I've heard from the Secretary of Defense and others, we're going to have to start putting pencil to paper. There are some things that just normally in a time of difficult challenges we would probably look toward. But in reality I can't imagine what we would do in any way that could adequately prepare us to deal with this.

If it were to come to pass, it would I think inescapable require an entire reworking of our national defense strategy. So for us to go in prior to having the time to do that and to make substantial changes I think would jeopardize any of the decision choices we might be able to forge from that.

But I think the core of your question, Senator, is a critical one. This would touch virtually every aspect of our Army. We would probably have to reduce the Army by another 100,000, probably 50-50 between the active and the Reserve component. We would probably have to come down an additional four to six brigades. Whether you're talking about contracting, whether you're talking

about pays, whether you're talking about incentives, under the Budget Control Act we're not given authority to control those. We have to take across-the-board cuts, which, as I've mentioned earlier, makes it a relatively easy mathematical change, but it makes it an administrative nightmare.

I would imagine as well we'd have several hundred, if not several thousand, Nunn-McCurdy breaches simply because of our inability to meet contract requirements. So it would be devastating.

Senator PORTMAN. And again, you just laid out some of the enormous changes that would have to be made, and painful to our personnel and to procurement and to, as you say, across the board, all aspects of your budget. When do you actually have to start making changes? In other words, when do you have to start notifying some of our personnel, given that under law this is scheduled to occur on January 1, 2013? Do you have to start making those changes in the summer, when you said you were going to put pencil to paper? Do you have to start making them in September? How much time do we have here in Congress to adjust this and to come up with a common sense approach?

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, I would have to defer to the guidance from OPM and also OMB, but clearly we are bound by law for certain notifications. We can't just slam people out on day one. So it would take some time to bring us to those particular levels.

As I mentioned, the current plan as I understand it from OMB is to, if required, if there's not been some kind of agreement prior to that, begin to make, start to make those decisions probably by the end of the summer, some time mid to late August.

Senator PORTMAN. Well, I think it would be helpful for the committee to know even with more specificity. I've heard September as kind of a deadline. I think there needs to be a wakeup call up here that we need to act and act soon in order to avoid that.

Both Secretary—both Senator Wicker and Senator Brown talked about the next issue I wanted to touch on and, General Odierno, I'd like to get your thoughts on it. Senator Wicker talked about the C-27 and Senator Brown talked about the Air Guard. I know that Air Force has made a decision here to cancel the C-27 and divest of this aircraft, including ones that are already deployed in Afghanistan.

I had the opportunity yesterday to meet with the commander, who was just back from Afghanistan, of the C-27 crews. My understanding is you met with him in Afghanistan and thank you for doing that. Our Ohio National Guard is there, as you know. We're really proud of them.

Your soldiers are the ones that get impacted by this Air Force decision. My understanding is the relationship between your soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan and these Air National Guard is terrific and that they are providing a necessary service for you. Can you talk a little about that? What are your thoughts about the performance of the C-27 and about this very special relationship, not unique but special relationship, between the Air National Guard and your soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan?

General ODIERNO. Well, Senator, as you said I went to see them in December. I had a chance to spend some time with the crews and the supporting elements. Also, I was with the 82nd Airborne

Division, who were providing the majority of the support to the RC-South and the 82nd Airborne Division. The relationship that was built and the delivery of capability has made a difference. The OR rates were extremely high. The relationships built were very, very good, and it impacted very positively on their ability to accomplish their mission.

So that's very clear. So that's why I would say it's important for us to sustain the capability to be able to have air assets dedicated to ground forces. That's the most important point I make.

The Air Force has made the decision they think they can do that with C-130s. If we get that same support, that's what we need, is that support. I would say that, though, it has been provided very successfully by the C-27 over this last deployment. I think they have just gone through a change and now there's a new group on the ground as well now providing that same support with C-27s.

Senator PORTMAN. Yes, 179th Airlift Wing is very proud to provide that support. Again, as you say, the ratings have been very impressive and the relationship seems to be working, that you're getting what you need and you're getting it in a timely fashion.

I would just ask, since your service originated the requirement that led to the procurement of the C-27, which is a new plane, do you feel that that requirement is still valid? Do you think the requirement still exists?

General ODIERNO. I do, Senator. Again, we need it because we cannot conduct all of those type of missions with rotary wing aircraft. Again, we do have that mission and, as I said, the Air Force has decided they can deliver that mission with the C-130.

Senator PORTMAN. The C-27 does it for 2100 bucks an hour. The CH-47 you talked about earlier does it at \$11,000 an hour; the C-130 between 5100 and 7100 bucks an hour. So from a taxpayer perspective C-27 is not only able to land on small airstrips and providing unique performance, but it's saving the taxpayer money.

So I would hope that you would continue to make your points internally, General and Mr. Secretary, to be sure that we're not pulling a capacity out of theater that meets an urgent requirement. I've never seen the military do this before, and I look forward to working with you with regard to the I think need that currently exists and to be sure that, if the memorandum of agreement is something that we're going to have to live with, that it does include the ability to provide that important capability.

Thank you, gentlemen.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Portman.

Senator WEBB.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, Mr. Secretary, welcome. Obviously, we have a lot of work to do on this committee with you and the other departments in terms of having to shape the authorization bill this year.

I'd like to spend a little bit of time today talking about TRICARE. I chair the subcommittee where we're going to have pretty extensive hearings on the proposal to increase the payments. I just want to make sure that we're all proceeding from the right premises here. It's going to be a difficult tradeoff or the proposal is a difficult tradeoff. I've heard it characterized, have heard ques-

tions asked of other witnesses as to whether TRICARE fees are in fact eating away from hard programs that are needed in the operational environment.

I think we really have to start—and I say this as someone who grew up in a military family, spent 5 years in the Pentagon, in addition to the time I was privileged to serve as a Marine—that we have, all of us have, a lifetime of stewardship. We owe people who have served in the military a lifetime of stewardship in exchange for their decades of service. General, I assume you would not disagree with that?

General ODIERNO. I do not disagree with that, Senator.

Senator WEBB. I think when you were talking in your opening statement how the Army boils down to the soldier, the soldier boils down to the family, all of this boils down to what a soldier or a Marine or a sailor or someone in the Air Force can see about what happened to the people who went before them, how they were treated after they left the uniform.

You know, I grew up in the Marine Corps tradition and no Marine is ever left behind. A great model of that was at Chosin Reservoir, when the First Marine Division brought out not only its wounded, but it strapped its dead onto the trucks. We will not leave a Marine behind.

I feel just as strongly about the commitment that we have made to lifetime medical care to the people who have served. They have relied on this. I know there's no written contract, but they have relied on it as a moral contract. I have lived that, I have observed it.

We know we have a problem with medical care. It's a national problem. It's a huge challenge. We've been trying different ways to get our arms around it. It's not simply a DOD problem. I for one—I'm going to be very specific about this—I do not believe that we should allow ourselves to characterize the commitment that we have made as something that's a throw-away matter as we try to balance out these other issues. How we take care of these people is one of the great litmus tests, I think, that people who are serving right now are going to be looking at.

So as a starting point—and we're going to have more time to discuss this in the subcommittee hearings. But as a starting point, I think people need to understand, I think my colleagues need to understand, I think the American people need to understand, what this looks like from the experiences of someone who has spent a career in the military. I have a chart that I asked my staff to put together. This is notional, but I think it's important.

If you were serving in the military today—we're talking about these proposed fees on TRICARE as just a little bump from people who don't have to pay that much. If you are—what we did on this chart, obviously people know there's different kinds of TRICARE: TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Standard, TRICARE Extra, TRICARE For Life once you hit age 65. But let's just say you are a service member and a spouse. This is the line that you are seeing right now before we make any changes.

When you're on active duty, your medical care is completely taken care of. When you retire and up to the age of 65—and we just picked TRICARE Standard here; there are other options—it's

about \$300 a year. When you hit 65, you go on Medicare B. You have no choice. If you want TRICARE for Life, you go on Medicare B and we're going to put a fee on top of that. Medicare B is something everybody in this country gets. If they're going to pay into it, it's something you have to get if you want to keep your TRICARE. It's not simply something that was given to you because of your service.

What is Medicare B? It's broken down in fees based on your income, but let's say if you're a retired E7 with a spouse you're going to go to almost \$2,400 a year before we even start talking about these other TRICARE fees. And if you are someone who is in the income level of people who are up here or considerably less, you're going to go to 7,600 a year in your Medicare B before we even start talking about these fees.

So let's understand what's really happening. I think there's a great misperception up here about what happens to people at the time when their income is probably at the lowest in their career, in the retirement years, and when their physical medical vulnerabilities are probably at the highest.

We'll have more discussions on that as we move forward, but let's all make sure we're talking off the same data.

General, I have one other question that I would like to raise with you, and it goes to a number of incidents—and Secretary McHugh is aware of these incidents—the Wynott incident, another incident with a family, the Sharrot family, they are constituents of ours, but also to the aftermath of the Pat Tillman situation—where the command accountability in the Army came under question.

I'm not going to go through the nit by pick on these three incidents. But in all three cases there were people, sometimes family members who actually, loyal career—in one case, loyal career Army O6 whose son had been killed, who became so frustrated with an inability to get answers that they had to come over to us. That puts me—obviously I'm going to help anybody who comes over here, but I don't think we should be doing that. I think the Army should be doing that.

So the question in all three of these, in many cases, boiled around whether proper accountability was being put into place for people who had taken certain actions during the incidents. Can you just tell us, are you—do you think those incidents are unusual? Do you think there's something you need to be doing? Or what's going on here?

General ODIERNO. First of all, Senator, I'm in agreement with you that accountability is critical. One of the things that I profess is empowering our subordinates, and as you empower your subordinates to conduct actions, part of that is also being accountable for the actions that we provide you in terms of the command authority or other authorities we give you. So it's absolutely critical to have accountability for actions.

What makes it difficult—and I know you're aware of this as a Marine, ex-Marine or Marine; always a Marine—is that the—

Senator WEBB. Lee Harvey Oswald is the only ex-Marine.

General ODIERNO. But as you know, what makes it difficult for us is in a very complex tactical environment sometimes it takes time to figure out exactly what did happen. Not all the time, but

sometimes. So what we want to make sure is we do it right and we find out what happened, and then once we do that it's imperative that we hold those accountable.

One of the things I talk about all the time is ensuring that we do this. We are having leadership discussions about this as we continue to change our leader development programs, of the importance of this. So I agonize with the families, I agonize with anyone who's involved with this.

But as I've experienced personally the chaos that is sometimes down there at a very level when you're in the middle of a significant fire fight or combat, it's very hard to figure out exactly what happened. So we just need the time to do that. I know it's very, very frustrating for families who've lost a loved one. So we owe ourselves to do a detailed investigation and provide them the right answers. And if there is misconduct or negligence, then we hold those people accountable who've done that, and that's key for us as we move forward, sir.

Senator WEBB. I appreciate you saying that. Clearly, my starting point on these types of situations is the experience that I had as a rifle platoon company commander, and the first question that I always raise is follow the war. I am very reluctant to second-guess a lot of these findings, but when they conflict or when you have revelations later, for instance with the Pat Tillman situation, that people knew that this was an accidental, non-combat—not non-combat, but was a friendly fire incident, and the family wasn't noticed, and there was considerable embarrassment. In the Wynott situation, you had what we believe was a thorough investigation by CENTCOM, signed off on by General Petraeus, that when it came back into the Army was countermanded.

Those send very confusing signals out to people who have suffered a lot with individual losses. At the same time, I want to be very clear that when somebody steps forward to serve and their put in this type of situation that any judgments that are placed on them should be very carefully done.

But it's something that's out there, and if nothing else I'm glad to hear that you're putting this into your training packages, the lessons learned and the discussions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Webb.

Senator Ayotte.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank Secretary McHugh and General Odierno for being before the committee and for your distinguished service.

I wanted to just start with a question, General Odierno. You made a statement about Afghanistan and how we can't allow the actions of a few to derail what we are doing in Afghanistan, and that we still had to make sure that we were committed there. Can you just help everyone understand why that's so important and what our interests are there, and why it's so important that we follow through and have success and stability there?

General ODIERNO. First, Senator, as you know, Afghanistan for a long time has been a place of uncertainty, been a place of lack of leadership, where many elements have tried to take over and use that as a launching pad to conduct terrorist operations around

the world. We want to make sure Afghanistan never goes back that way again.

The way to do that is to ensure that we have a viable government and military that's able to protect the people of Afghanistan. What I've seen in my most recent visits and as I talk to others as they come back, there is true progress being made in Afghanistan. Noticeable differences on the street, noticeable differences in the capabilities of the security forces. So we are on our way to, I believe—what's important to us is you have a government in place and a governmental capability that will allow the Afghan people to live, without allowing others to come in and use Afghanistan as a point to conduct terrorist operations around the world.

So I think we're all committed to that, and it's important that we continue on this path.

Senator AYOTTE. And as important as you described in terms of our own national security interests?

General ODIERNO. I absolutely believe it is.

Senator AYOTTE. Let me ask you, with the strategic partnership agreement in Afghanistan one of the issues that President Karzai has raised, which in my view is an issue that's not a reasonable request of us, given what we need to accomplish in Afghanistan, is to stop night raids. I know that's one of the issues that need to be resolved with us and the Afghan government.

Can you tell us why it's important that we certainly not concede this issue of night raids and why night raids are so important to our operations there?

General ODIERNO. Well, first off, it's about being able to go after those who are attempting to derail the progress that's been made in Afghanistan. You do not want to—it's almost like having a different type of safe haven if you're not able to do night operations. You want to be able to ensure that people understand that, no matter what time of day it is or what day it is—

Senator AYOTTE. Right, so we'd be basically saying that at night you're completely free, no matter what type of nefarious activities you engage in and how harmful your actions are. So if people think about it that way, it's like half the day is off limits, and at a time when we can obviously conduct much more stealth operations.

General ODIERNO. That's correct.

Senator AYOTTE. I appreciate that. Obviously, I think that's an incredibly important issue to us. I hope that President Karzai understands that's not an issue that we will waver on, nor can we afford to waver on, if we're going to succeed there. You would agree with that?

General ODIERNO. I think it's an important issue for us to work with him. There's many ways to do night raids, Afghans conducting them and us assisting them, and I think there's many ways for us. I think that's the way we're moving forward. So I think there's lots of room to talk about this with them, to ensure we can continue to do these types of operations.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you.

I want to ask about—first of all, I want to ascribe myself to the comments of Senator Webb. I am concerned about what we're saying to our active duty and veterans in the proposed increases in health care, particularly when you look at the President's budget

and there's no concurrent increases in those who are Federal civilian employees, including Members of Congress. So it's a difficult message to send, and I think it's something we have to have some very hard hearings on, given what we owe to our active duty and to our veterans in my view. So I look forward to those hearings.

I also wanted to ask about in terms of end strength reductions. I share Senator Lieberman's concerns about where we are, and I wanted to ask General Odierno about a comment that you had made actually in response to—just so people understand how important it is in terms of our strength. You were asked a question last month about Iran and you said: What I'm worried about is if we get too small people miscalculate; it's a very uncertain area and that concerns me.

Given your years of extraordinary service in Iraq, few if any military leaders know more about the Middle East than you do. Can you please tell me, how does the strength of our force relate to how we are perceived and the strength also we need to carry out operations?

General ODIERNO. What I talk about in terms of, I call it preventing conflict, and the way we prevent conflict is through a series of three things. One is capacity, one is capabilities, readiness, and the other is our modernization, so we sustain our overmatch.

So it's important for us to make sure that we understand where that fine line is between having the capacity, the modernization, and readiness, so people do not miscalculate. What I worry about is miscalculations by others that we do not have the capability to respond.

Now, I will say that I believe at the 490,000 level, I still think we have the right capacity in order to respond to those who might miscalculate.

Senator AYOTTE. But let's not mistake this for it's still going to be very difficult with the reductions you're undertaking, is it not?

General ODIERNO. It is. And thank you for saying that. This is not easy. These are very difficult choices that we have to make.

Senator AYOTTE. And these are choices that we are certainly, we know from even Secretary Panetta's testimony, taking on some risk with. Thank you.

So let's talk briefly about sequestration. Senator Portman asked you about sequestration. Secretary Panetta, Chairman Dempsey have said that sequestration will hollow out our force. General Odierno, what does it mean? Help people understand what it means when we have a hollowed-out force, and what risks? What risks are we asking our men and women to take if we send them with a hollow force to battle?

General ODIERNO. We just talked about one of them, and it has to do with our ability to prevent and deter. If we have to go through sequestration, the reduction that we'd have to further take in the Army specifically I'll talk, I think could give the impression to some that maybe we no longer have the capacity to respond if necessary.

Or it's also the fact that there's a potential that our readiness levels will not be funded appropriately, so the forces we have will not be able to be trained properly, and that we would take more risk in their capabilities. We would not be able to continue to pro-

vide enough money to modernize, and in such a way it would have to either be extended or eliminated in some cases, so we now lose our ability to sustain overmatch in some of our key capabilities.

So it's a combination of all three of those that cause great concern.

Senator AYOTTE. My time is up, but I do want to make one point. One thing you didn't touch upon, but when we think about a hollowed-out force don't we also put our soldiers at more risk when we send them into conflict?

General ODIERNO. Ultimately—thank you, Senator. Ultimately, when we have to deploy them—and we've seen this in the Korean War and other examples—what it costs is American lives.

Senator AYOTTE. Lives, people's lives.

I would add this. Secretary McHugh, you were asked difficult questions in terms of planning for sequestration. I would hope that on a bipartisan basis we would take actions right away in this Congress so that you don't have to have this hanging over your head all year. I don't think we can afford to wait until December to put the Department of Defense and our men and women who have served in uniform and continue to serve in uniform in this position, because think about it. I can't imagine anyone on this committee would ever stand for hollowing out our force. So why put you in that position, because planning for this, as you know, will cause you to have to tell people, and I can't imagine what that also does for morale in our military.

So I hope that we act immediately on this on a bipartisan basis. And I'm sure you share those concerns.

Secretary MCHUGH. Absolutely, Senator. Thank you.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Ayotte.

Senator Manchin.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks, both of you for your service.

I know there's a lot of questions been asked today. I wanted to more direct my questions towards contracting and, Secretary, I think to you. Over the next 5 years, I think they're talking about cutting 80,000 soldiers out of our Army. With that being said, I know right now we have about 130,000 contractors in Afghanistan and Iraq, compared to about 90,000 men and women in uniform.

I have a hard time, especially in West Virginia we have a hard time, understanding why we would be cutting back the military men and women in uniform and not cutting back the contractors, and why we would be in a position to where we're attracting some of our best out of the military because of the higher pay, let's say three times the military pay, and attract them over and hire them right back to do the same job.

Then they still use, sir, the same services. They get the eating, the medical. Everything's the same. I can't figure that out. To me, I know that Secretary—I mean—Senator Ayotte just talked about none of us want to hollow out. But I believe that we could cut back drastically, even if sequestration kicked in, from the contracting services and still strengthen our military and give it the support it needs.

I'd like to hear your rationale on that.

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, contracting in theater is by and large under Central Command, so it's not something the Army directly controls. But I can tell you the intent in contracting in combat theaters is to free up soldiers so that they can be at the fight. For all of us that have been to either Iraq and now Afghanistan, you can see contracting in security, but by and large you have contracting in support of logistics, contracting in support of dining halls, etcetera, et cetera.

I think—

Senator MANCHIN. If I may interrupt you. I'm so sorry, but if I may interrupt on this, I talk—I see them in the airports, the contractors, and they're going to fight on the front line. I ask each one of them when I see them—I do this an innumerable amount of times: Have you been military? Yes, we're military. If it had not been for the large pay that attracted you to leave the military, would you still be in the military? Unequivocally, yes.

So something's not jibing here with me.

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, again I have no authority as to who is sent to the front line in combatant command areas. But let me speak to contracting with respect to the Army and the Army budget. I fully agree with you. In fact, I think Secretary Panetta were he here would fully agree as well. One of the major initiatives we have is to diminish significantly the number of contractors that we employ and bring, where it's absolutely essential, those kinds of positions into Army payrolls and into the Army personnel lines.

I don't think we'll ever be able to totally rid ourselves of contractors. They provide a useful service and, where required, it probably wouldn't make a lot of financial sense for us to do that. But in terms of our taking essential military activities and contracting out for them, I don't support that. We're trying to work that, and this budget is a big step in ensuring that our in-sourcing of those continue.

Senator MANCHIN. I just know that you have a pretty strong voice and you could be a stronger voice as far as the direction we may be going. And I'm just concerned about people talking about weakening the defense of this Nation when we could be strengthening the men and women in uniform and taking a different mission that I think is much more costly. But I just have a very, very tough position on that, and I'm having a hard time getting a grasp of it.

No one can really tell me how many contractors. I've not gotten an answer yet. I've been here a year and a half.

Secretary MCHUGH. I'll do my best to get you an answer, although it's not an Army—

Senator MANCHIN. I've asked everybody, so I'm down to you now, sir.

Secretary MCHUGH. You've come a long way down. I'll do my best.

Senator MANCHIN. General, if I may ask you on this, as we know, we have 80,000 that'll be leaving and we have many of our veterans that are unemployed right now. Senator Kirk and I put a caucus together, a bipartisan caucus, which is Hire a Vet. We wanted to practice that and we want to practice what we preach in our own offices, and I'm pleased to have veterans in my office.

But with that being said, is there any way we can tie up with you through this caucus that will help, in a simplistic way, knowing when people are getting out or are going to be leaving, that we can start matching them up with the private sector who wants to and have a web site or a portal that we could use to start networking?

General ODIERNO. Several things we're trying to do, and certainly we're more than willing to work with you on this, Senator. It's a very important topic to us, as I know it is to you.

Several things we're doing. We are in fact trying to establish a single portal that links up jobs. I meet with CEOs and others who are trying to develop thousands, as you know, thousands and thousands of jobs for our veterans, that will link up those jobs with us, our soldiers who are getting ready to leave the Army or have already left the Army. So we're working that right now, to set up this portal.

We're also developing—we are increasing our emphasis on how we prepare soldiers to leave the Army. One of the major things is how do you translate what you do into a resume that civilians can understand? Do you understand the benefits that are available to you? Do you understand all of the outlets you can go to to find jobs?

So we're working this very hard at every one of our installations. So I'd be happy to work with you very closely on this, because it's a very important issue to us.

Senator MANCHIN. We really want to, because what we're doing is we're getting all of these different private citizens and private companies from around the country, and they're always saying, we're having a hard time finding qualified people and the best people. You have the best people, I believe. They're trained properly, they're disciplined, they've got good skill sets. And some of them want to go to the Midwest, some of them come back to West Virginia hopefully or wherever. We want to make sure they can go one-stop shopping. You want to go back into the work force in the private sector? We've got a place for you. That's what we're trying.

So if we can work with you to develop it, we'll tie in the private sector, I think.

General ODIERNO. Will do.

Senator MANCHIN. Okay.

If I may, I've got one more here, I think, Mr. Secretary, from yours, the thing that we have from my constituents about the slow disability rating system. That's in both Department of Defense and the VA. I'm sure you've heard this. The system puts the future plans on hold, creates unnecessary stress, and most likely contributes to the high unemployment rates that we're talking about.

We've been told that there are almost 20,000 soldiers in the system and it takes an average of 400 days to get one through the system to be evaluated.

Secretary MCHUGH. That's correct.

Senator MANCHIN. What can we do?

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, it's one of the most frustrating things I have experienced since I walked into the Pentagon about 2½ years ago. And I can only imagine what the soldiers and their families experience as well.

I want to give credit to both Secretary Shinseki at the VA and Secretary Panetta, who have really moved this to the top of both Departments' priorities. We have a pilot program called IDES, which is an effort to try to get the two disability systems more in sync, to make sure that we're using where at all possible common systems of evaluation, so a soldier doesn't have to go through 27 different physical exams.

Trying to do that sounds relatively easy. It certainly does to me. But actually getting those two disparate systems to come together in a rational way has been more difficult than I think any of us would have imagined. The fact that, as you noted, Senator, it's still 400-plus average days to get through pretty well underscores the fact that we've got a long ways to go.

Where we do have the pilots, we do see in most cases the numbers starting to come down. But it's been a very slow process.

Senator MANCHIN. Is this a concerted effort throughout the total branch of all of the military?

Secretary MCHUGH. Absolutely.

Senator MANCHIN. Because it's going to get worse, I believe. General, I don't know. Now as we're winding down in certain theaters, it's got to get a lot worse than what we have.

General ODIERNO. It is. Of course, all the services have the problem. Of course, we have the biggest problem.

Senator MANCHIN. Right.

General ODIERNO. Because we have more people involved in this. And we're going to continue to get people throughout this system for years to come. As you know, with both traumatic brain injury and other things they're going to continue to be identified as we go forward. So there's going to be more people coming into the system.

We are working very hard. The problem we have is the balance of making sure that they are getting the right evaluations at the right times so they get the right benefits, with rushing them through a system, although you would argue 400 days isn't rushing anybody through anything. So we've got to—that's why it causes us to take that much time. We're trying to balance to make sure they get taken care of versus trying to speed it up as quickly as possible.

That's what we're trying to work our way through, and we're working very closely with VA on this and trying to really match up.

Senator MANCHIN. Just keep us informed on that.

Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

My understanding is, Mr. Secretary, that that is no longer just a pilot program; it's now a permanent program and is DOD-wide.

Secretary MCHUGH. If I used the word "pilot," you're absolutely right. It is not.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Manchin should hear that as well, that it's no longer a pilot program.

Secretary MCHUGH. It's moved to the full Department, you're absolutely right.

Chairman LEVIN. It's full Department. And one other point on this, if I may, and that is that during this 400-day period—we made a change in the Wounded Warrior legislation, which also integrated these two systems, so that during that period the VA cri-

teria of disability are the ones that are being followed because they are the more generous historically to the veteran or to the soldier.

Secretary MCHUGH. That's correct. We rate disability based on military occurrences only. The VA takes lifetime occurrences.

Chairman LEVIN. So that more generous approach is what is in place now during that period. So we've made some real progress during that Wounded Warrior legislation. Senator Manchin is right, though, in terms of the follow-up that we need, the oversight which we need to do. So we very much would welcome your keeping us informed, as Senator Manchin has suggested.

Thank you.

Senator Cornyn.

Senator CORNYN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary McHugh, General Odierno, thank you for your service. It's good to see you. I just have a couple of areas I want to ask you about.

The OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter, as you know, is combat-proven and has flown the highest operational tempo of any rotary-wing platform in the Army. Previously the Army back in 2004 and then in 2008 looked at replacing the Kiowa helicopter. Both of those, I might add not on your watch, failed dramatically. The Comanche program was terminated in 2004 at a cost of nearly \$7 billion spent on the program, and then the ARH-70 Arapaho program was terminated in 2008.

Referring to the anticipated Armed Aerial Scout contract to look at purchasing a new helicopter and the costs associated with that and the uncertainties associated with that, why wouldn't the Army want to utilize successful modernization—a successful modernization model to update and modernize the Kiowa Warrior, as opposed to replacing it with a new one, in light of this, I think we would all have to agree, disturbing and unsatisfactory history with the Comanche and the Arapaho?

General ODIERNO. Senator, we have not made any decision. In fact, one of the alternatives on the table is to do exactly what you said, is to modernize Kiowa Warrior. So what we're doing is we're going through an analysis of alternatives that will be delivered somewhere on a new Aerial Scout, which will be delivered in fiscal year 2012. We'll then do an assessment and then decide whether, can we get there and how long will it take, how expensive it would be compared to the capability we can add to the Kiowa Warrior. Then that will be a decision that we make.

As you've pointed out, the Kiowa Warrior has been an incredible, valuable capability. But there's ways for us to improve it. They can gain more standoff, a bit more power, and improve the cockpit. So there's things we can do.

So that's a decision that the Secretary and I will make probably some time in the next year, year and a half or so.

Secretary MCHUGH. I should note as well, Senator, the upgrade program that you mention, the CASU program, Cockpit and Sensor Upgrade program, is funded in PB-13. Should we make a decision to go to a different platform, we'd ask that that money be switched over.

But the modernization program as we have been pursuing it for the Kiowa, if brought to completion, would keep that platform in the Army until 2025 under current estimates.

Senator CORNYN. Well, I'm sure, and I'll just ask you for confirmation, that as you reach a decision point you would share with us not only your conclusion, but also the reasons for your conclusion. It strikes me as at a time during budget constraints that the modernization program needs to be vetted thoroughly, and I'm sure you'll do that.

Yesterday we had the Chief of Staff and Secretary Panetta here and I asked them about—we talked about Syria. I don't know if you are aware of the discussion we had, but let me be specific about it. This has to do with Russia's role through its basically official arms-dealing entity known as Rosoboronexport, that is selling nearly a billion dollars worth of arms to Syria, which Assad is using to kill innocent Syrians during the uprising going on now, reportedly as many as 750 people.

So it strikes me that it's pretty clear that Russia has Syrian blood on its hands and is complicit in that effort. And with that predicate, you could understand why I was troubled to read and learn that Rosoboronexport's customer list also included the United States Army. It's my understanding the Army's Non-standard Rotary Wing Aircraft Office out of Huntsville, Alabama, is currently buying at least 21 dual-use MI-17 helicopters for the Afghan military from this same company.

I note that media reports from last year indicate the contract for 375 million comes with an option which could actually raise the size of that total value of the contract to nearly \$1 billion.

With so many alternatives here in the United States that could be where this requirement could be satisfied for the Afghan army, that would actually create jobs here and not in Russia, and which also would not reward or certainly facilitate Russia's actions in Syria, can you first of all tell me, are you aware of that contract, Mr. Secretary, General Odierno? And if you're not, I'm not here to blind-side you. I would like to get any observations you'd care to make and your commitment to get to the bottom of this.

Secretary MCHUGH. I am aware of it. The newer development, of course, is the alleged activity of Russian arms manufacturers in Syria, and the clarity on that is not what I think most of us would like at this point.

You mention options. I should note, the Army is blessed. It has the opportunity time and time again to act as executive agent on any number of programs. This is one of those. The money is passed through. These are dollars that are given to Army accounts so we can execute contracts, and in this case follow the wishes and the requirements placed out of theater in Central Command. And the options are, frankly, in the Central Command's estimation non-existent. These are the platforms, apparently, that the Afghans are familiar with. They're Russian platforms. Many of the pilots that will be flying them were flying Russian aircraft in their previous professional iterations, and we're told they're absolutely essential to maintain the viability of a still-emergent Afghan force.

I mentioned to another panel about 2 years ago that in my mind I'm a buy-American kind of guy. As you noted, we certainly could

use all the business we can get. But the first need is the operational requirement and we're told it's the MI-17, and as the executive agent we duly execute it.

Rosoboron under Federal law in Russia is the only one who controls the export of those, of those platforms. So we didn't have options there, either, as I understand it.

General ODIERNO. I agree with what the Secretary said. We did the same thing in Iraq, frankly. This is part of our FMS program, and when they wanted to buy rotary wing aircraft we offered at the time UH-60s and other U.S.-made rotary wing aircraft. But for the reasons the Secretary stated—first, it was cheaper; because it's easier to train their pilots—they chose to go with an MI-17 product.

We have gone to—we have been given the executive task to do the non-standard helicopter capability. Of course, this is about trying to get capability to the Iraqis at the time and now the Afghans as quickly as possible. If they had bought an American aircraft, it would have been much more expensive and it would have taken much longer because of the training time for the pilots necessary.

So I'm not saying it's an excuse. I'm saying that's the rationale for the decisions that were made at the time.

Senator CORNYN. My time is limited here, but I would just note and ask you to look at this, Mr. Secretary and General Odierno. Apparently, in 2009 the Navy was able to use an alternative acquisition route through a private broker, and so at least back in 2009 there appeared to be an alternative source for the MI-17 variant helicopters and related toolkits for the Afghan army.

I would conclude on this note. Previously, Rosoboronexport has been sanctioned by the United States Government, and I would just ask you, in the event that there was a sanction is there a plan B for supplying the need for the Afghan army?

Secretary MCHUGH. Again, we don't decide suppliers. We execute contracts. So I would have to defer that question to Central Command and to State Department.

Senator CORNYN. I respect your answer and I just wanted to highlight my concern, and I know I'm not the only one concerned about this. Using U.S. taxpayers' dollars to supply the Afghan military with these Russian helicopters through an arms dealer which is an agent of the Russian government, which is also selling weapons to President Assad to kill innocent Syrians, is a serious concern I know you share with me.

So I hope that, working together, we can get to the bottom of this and see if there's any other alternatives. It strikes me that the 2009 alternative where the same helicopters were purchased through a private broker by the Navy may provide an option. But certainly I know you share my concerns, and I look forward to working with you to find out, certainly get to the bottom of it and to find out what alternatives might exist.

Thank you again.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Cornyn.

Senator Blumenthal.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for your service and for your extraordinary contribution to the defense of this country in the two wars that we have fought.

I want to add my concerns that Senator Cornyn just expressed, which both of us raised yesterday in the hearing with Secretary Panetta and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin, as to the use of the MI-17 and the resort to Russian arms instead of our own. I respect that you are a buy-American guy, as we all are, I think, in general, and I would hope that we could pursue the possibility of using American products, American helicopters, rather than the MI-17. And for all the reasons that we articulated yesterday and Senator Cornyn did today, I have very strong concerns, and that is an understatement, about the use of these Russian arms, sold by the same company that's selling arms to Syria. So I would like to explore that.

Speaking of helicopters, I would like to ask whether there is any possibility that the Blackhawks will be purchased in greater quantity, whether you have a need for a greater quantity than is currently in the budget for 2013?

Secretary MCHUGH. As we went across our entire fleet of both fixed and rotary aircraft, we've tried to disperse our buys, and for the Blackhawk the modernization is the Mike model, in a way that sustains each to their needs as effectively as we can. We are going to continuously reevaluate the decisions we've made in this budget, particularly in procurement, as we go forward.

Chairman Dempsey has repeatedly explained, this PB-13 is not the only step, but the first step. So I don't want to tell you that no adjustments will ever come, but in terms of the budget as it sits before you we think we made the best decisions we could.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I respect that decision. I'm concerned, and my guess is you share that concern, about the reduction from 72 to 59 in fiscal year 2012 going to 2013. I'm glad that you are continuing to evaluate, if I can paraphrase what you just said, that decision.

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, we have shifted some of the procurement lines to the right, but we think it's prudent, and we've used the word "risk" rather frequently here today. It is an acceptable risk.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I want to focus, if I may, on an area that has greatly concerned me, the roadside bombs, IEDs, the flow of material from Pakistan to Afghanistan in ingredients that go into these bombs. As you know, the Pakistanis have been asked to do more and we've had various witnesses testify to us that they see no significant action on the part of the Pakistan government to stop the flow of bomb-making materials from their country to sites where they are principally manufactured, to Afghanistan, where they obviously do grave harm to our troops.

Do you differ with that assessment that the Pakistanis are making no significant effort?

General ODIERNO. We have seen no significant change in the ability to move this material across the border.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, General.

In the JIEDDO budget, I am delighted to see that the JIEDDO fund, as you know, was placed in the base budget, which I think

is a very good step forward. The IED usage by the enemy has increased by 15 percent, I'm told. Do you have information contrary to that number?

General ODIERNO. I don't, and I would just add that I believe that in the future we will continue to face IED threats as we conduct operations. So it's critical that we recognize that and keep it as part of our sustainment programs over time.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I think that, from what I was told on my most recent trip to Afghanistan by General Allen, it seems to be increasingly the weapon of first resort by an enemy that is degraded and finds that the principal way to do damage to us, rather than any direct frontal assault; is that correct?

General ODIERNO. We've seen that both as we've had success in Iraq and now that we have success in Afghanistan, they resort to IEDs and then suicide bombs and things like that as their capability gets diminished.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Overall, I see the funding request for fiscal year 2013 for JIEDDO has been decreased by \$540 million. Would you agree with that cut based on the increase in attacks?

General ODIERNO. Well, some of the things that's happened is that we've also transferred some of the JIEDDO programs to the services. So I think we'd have to do a complete assessment of what was transferred to the services and what remains in JIEDDO. I know that we had several hundred million dollars worth of programs that were transitioned from JIEDDO to the Army, that we've put in the base budget. So I would have to do a full analysis of that to understand if we've really had a degradation of capability or if we've just adjusted the responsibility in some areas, sir.

Secretary MCHUGH. The other thing I think is afoot, Senator, is the judgment that you're out of Iraq, which the gentlemen on my left knows more about than most people who walk this planet, so that active IED threat is gone, but also we are on a path to come down in Afghanistan, and so you can, I think, logically assume the level of threat there.

So the sustained funds, the judgment is, would be sufficient to keep them a viable organization.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Overall, you're satisfied that there are sufficient resources, even though they're not going directly through JIEDDO, to confront this threat?

General ODIERNO. I think that the investment we continue to make is quite significant and I think we continue to develop what's necessary to ensure the safety of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines forward.

Senator—Blumenthal: Thank you.

Overall finally, I want to ask, if I may—I know questions have been asked about the CJ-27. I am concerned—the C-27J, I should say. I am concerned about the increased cost resulting from the potential sacrifice or planned sacrifice of this valuable asset. I think it's been called a valuable asset in Afghanistan. Is there any possibility that this funding could be restored?

General ODIERNO. Based on the discussions we've had, is I believe that the decision has been made that the funding will not be restored.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Were you involved in that decision?

General ODIERNO. We were involved in the decision. We were involved in the discussion. We were able to make the points we thought were appropriate, and the decision was made to reduce the program.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Without putting you on the spot, could you express to us your view?

General ODIERNO. Well, what I've said before, Senator, is there's a requirement that we have as a ground force. The requirement of the ground force is that we need intratheater lift in order to help support our soldiers. That requirement has not changed. We need that. Now, whether you choose to do it by an agreement to ensure we have C-130s or we do it by C-27, I will leave that decision up to the Air Force.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you. Thank you very much for your testimony here today. My time has expired. Thank you very much for being so helpful and informative.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

Senator Gillibrand.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to both of you for your testimony and your service. It's an honor to be here today.

As you know, New York represents many important Army installations. We have Fort Drum, we have West Point. I am also pleased to let you know that I have an Army fellow serving in my office this year, Captain Aaron Schwengler has been doing extraordinary work. So I want to thank you for supporting that program.

So first I want to talk about Fort Drum, then West Point, and then some women in combat issues and some hazing issues. So big agenda, short time.

Fort Drum. Secretary McHugh, you and I have talked about how do we strengthen Fort Drum. Obviously, as we have BRAC coming up and we have various decisions that have to be made in the budget, I want to make sure that the missions that we do there continue and that if we can add to those missions that would be very important. I think Fort Drum is known to do extraordinary training in terms of terrain and climate. We also have significant unrestricted air space, so that's—excuse me—restricted air space, which helps us often in training.

One mission that I thought might be worth considering is allowing Fort Drum to be a UAS test range, and we could increase the UAV training mission there. I just wanted to get your thoughts if that might be something that's interesting, or just increasing the amount of troops we train there?

Secretary MCHUGH. Well, anywhere where we train troops we like to be able to train more platforms rather than fewer. As you know, the National Guard units down in Syracuse as a result of a previous BRAC were scheduled at one point to receive some UAV platforms, and the thoughts were to utilize training ranges at Fort Drum. So I would say to any maneuver base when asked, if you can expand your opportunities for training across the broad spectrum of our operational activities, that's a plus.

As to the actual capability of Fort Drum doing that and the FAA and those kinds of points, that's way above my rung on the ladder.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Well, thank you for considering it.

In terms of West Point, I just had a wonderful visit to West Point with Holly Petraeus. As you know, Holly is working for the Consumer Protection Agency to make sure our troops aren't targeted by fraud and other criminals trying to harm them. I was very impressed by the cadets. They were extraordinarily articulate and had perfectly on-point questions for our forum.

One of the things that I am most excited about is the possibility of increased training in cyber for the cadets at West Point. I know that they've begun some. I wanted to know your impressions if that is on track, if that's something we can continue to amplify. I think that would be a fantastic opportunity for the military.

Secretary MCHUGH. I'm going to pass to the old West Point grad because he's been there.

Senator GILLIBRAND. He knows.

General ODIERNO. Senator, we want to continue to use West Point as our leader development launching point. Part of that is to continue to develop the capabilities to train on what we believe to be important issues of our future. That includes cyber, it includes the Terrorism Center we have there, and other things. So we will continue to do that. It's key for us to have that as a center to help our leaders of the future learn about what challenges they'll face.

So we are very supportive of keeping them on the leading edge of moving forward with whatever we're trying to do and important to our Department of Defense and specifically the Army.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Well, thank you very much.

Now, I know that we've done some very important work with regard to women in combat and women serving and the military. And I know that the DOD reported just recently that the Department of Defense is committed to removing all barriers that prevent service members from rising to the highest levels of responsibility that their talents and capabilities warrant.

But I also know that a similar report from the Military Leadership Diversity Commission did conclude that combat exclusion policies either prohibit or discourage women from serving in the career fields that provide the great opportunities to reach leadership ranks in the officer corps. Now, I know that you testified earlier today that there's now 6,000 new openings, which I think is fantastic. I think that's a great step in the right direction. But I'd like to get your thoughts on what is the step to reduce all impediments and actually, similar to what we do with the U.S. Coast Guard, all positions are available to women there, are there steps that we can take to really ultimately remove all those barriers?

General ODIERNO. Senator, this is a very important issue to me personally, but also to the Army. I always qualify it by saying it's about managing our best talent and making sure we take advantage of the best talent available, which includes obviously females, which provide an incredible capability.

So the first step is that we are now getting ready—we are doing this pilot, and we suspect by the end of the year we will remove any impediments of putting females into combat battalion headquarters, which they have not been able to go to before, in current MOSs that they operate in. I think that's a first step towards then

conducting studies and continuing to move forward, how we potentially look to integrate them into every MOS.

So I think our first thought is let's get them down to battalion level in combat infantry and armor units, which they're not allowed to go to today. We want to do that very quickly, and then we will begin to study how we open up all MOSs. And I think that will help us to gain data for us to move forward with that as we go on.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you.

One issue that I want you to consider also is, you know, obviously a lot of these women have been attached to battalions but not assigned to them. So in your consideration would there be any way to give some kind of retroactive recognition that they performed these missions and were subjected to those risks?

General ODIERNO. We'll take a look at it.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you very much.

Okay, last question. Do I have time, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman LEVIN. You do.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Okay.

Chairman LEVIN. Just take your time. If you go over, that's fine.

Senator GILLIBRAND. So this is an issue that has really affected New York. We had some horrible examples of hazing where New Yorkers who were serving committed suicide. It's something that obviously we all worry about. We also worry about violence against women in the military. We want to protect all our troops.

In both examples, a lot of the personal stories I have heard are how there's no way to report something being done to you if your command structure is either part of it or ignoring it. So whether it's violence against a woman or whether it's a hazing operation, I guess I'd like your guidance on how can we make it easier in these instances for reporting to take place when your command structure does not allow it, for either the reason of they're part of it or they have allowed it or ignored it?

General ODIERNO. There's two things. And you're right, there's a fundamental problem when they believe that the leadership that's above them is part of the problem. There's two things that we have. First is the IG. Anybody can call the IG at any time, especially when there's a problem with their chain of command, and they will be—and then go to the highest level possible to do that.

Second, they can go to a higher level of chain of command. Now, part of the problem here is us making sure that soldiers understand that they can do this, that it's okay, and they know how to do this if they're facing some difficult problem, such as sexual harassment or hazing of some sort, that they're able to report this. It's incumbent on us, to our newer soldiers especially, that they understand that there are ways for them to raise complaints outside of their own chain of command. So we'll continue to work very hard to emphasize that.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Because especially in the circumstances I read, where they're serving in remote areas, you know, serving in Iraq on a special mission, they have no one to turn to.

Then, just related, I know that hazing's more difficult because it's not its own offense enumerated under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Whether you can change the regulations to make it easier for people to understand that it's not acceptable might be

one route. I don't know if there are similar measures that can be made with regard to violence against women. I don't know if training is the problem. But I would just urge you to look at all courses of action.

General ODIERNO. I will just tell you, it's about—we get people from a lot of different backgrounds. So it's first about them understanding, awareness, but also understanding it's not part of our culture and we will not accept it as part of the Army culture, as part of our ethical, moral behavior. So it's important for us to emphasize that from the time they come in the Army, as soon as they come in the Army, and throughout their time in the Army. And we will continue to do as much as we can to ensure that they constantly are hearing this from their leadership.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Well—go ahead.

Secretary MCHUGH. I was going to say, Senator: And as you know, based on the case of Private Danny Chen, a tragic instance, there are things we can do under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and we intend to follow those. I think that that will serve as a very powerful reminder to others that this is unacceptable.

The Sergeant Major of the Army, the Chief, and I not shortly after that terrible case wrote to all command levels and told them: This is your responsibility. And much like sexual assault, sexual abuse, it is so contrary to who we'd like to think we are, we know we are, and we're not going to tolerate those who don't share that value in our ranks.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you for your leadership. Thank you both for your service.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Gillibrand, and we thank you both. It's a very, very helpful hearing and we appreciate what you do for our country, for our troops, their families.

And we will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:41 p.m., the committee adjourned.]