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Before the

COMMITTEE ON

ARMED SERVICES

## **UNITED STATES SENATE**

To receive testimony on global challenges and U.S. national security strategy

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

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HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON  
GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

U.S. Senate  
Committee on Armed Services  
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Senator Kelly Ayotte presiding.

Committee Members Present: Senators Ayotte [presiding], Sessions, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Graham, Reed, Nelson, Manchin, Shaheen, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King, and Heinrich.

1           OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. KELLY AYOTTE, U.S. SENATOR  
2 FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE

3           Chairman Ayotte: The Senate Armed Services Committee  
4 meets today for its second hearing in a series on Global  
5 Challenges and U.S. National Security.

6           Chairman McCain was invited to join the American  
7 Delegation to the funeral of the King of Saudi Arabia, and  
8 he asked that I chair this hearing in his absence. I know  
9 he regrets not being able to join all of us today.

10          I request unanimous consent that Chairman McCain's  
11 opening statement be entered into the record.

12          Senator Reed: Without objection.

13          Senator Ayotte: Thank you. Without objection.

14          [The prepared statement of Chairman McCain follows:]

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1           Senator Ayotte: I am pleased to welcome three of  
2 America's most distinguished military leaders: General Jim  
3 Mattis, General Jack Keane, and Admiral William Fallon. I  
4 welcome each of you today, and I thank you for your  
5 willingness to testify before us. Even more so, I thank  
6 you, on behalf of this committee and the American people,  
7 for your decades of brave and honorable service to our  
8 country. It is because of leaders like you and the men and  
9 women you've commanded and you continue to serve in uniform  
10 that Americans enjoy unprecedented freedom, security, and  
11 prosperity. Each of you commanded at all levels and  
12 ultimately served in positions that required not only a deep  
13 knowledge of tactical, operational, and strategic levels of  
14 military operations, but also an understanding of national  
15 security decisionmaking at the highest levels. It is that  
16 experience at the nexus of military operations and military  
17 -- and strategic national security decisionmaking that is  
18 particularly relevant to our hearing today.

19           There is a broad consensus among national security  
20 experts that the threats to the United States and our allies  
21 confronted -- that we are confronting, are growing both in  
22 complexity and severity:

23           In Ukraine, we have witnessed blatant Russian  
24 aggression that has forced the administration to undertake a  
25 belated reassessment of the nature of the Putin regime and

1 question long-held assumptions regarding the security  
2 situation in Europe.

3 In Iraq and Syria, ISIS has established a safe haven  
4 and training ground in the heart of the Middle East that it  
5 is using to destabilize the region and threaten the core  
6 national security interests of the United States and our  
7 allies.

8 Meanwhile, the regime in Tehran seeks to use  
9 negotiations to achieve sanctions relief while avoiding a  
10 permanent and verifiable end to its nuclear weapons program.

11 Simultaneously, Iran continues to oppress its own  
12 people, threaten key allies, like Israel, and support  
13 terrorist groups, like Hezbollah.

14 Across the Middle East and into North Africa,  
15 emboldened al-Qaeda affiliates plot attacks against the  
16 United States and our allies. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian  
17 Peninsula uses the horrible security situation in Yemen, a  
18 country the President cited as recently as September as a  
19 counterterrorism success story, to plot and carry out  
20 terrorist attacks around the world.

21 In the Asia-Pacific, China is using historic economic  
22 growth to build military power that is too often -- it is  
23 using to bully its neighbors and test international laws  
24 that are essential to the United States, our -- and our  
25 partners' international security and prosperity in the free

1 waters in that region.

2           While each of these threats and challenges are unique,  
3 with each of them there is a consistent and concerning gap  
4 between the strategies our national security interests  
5 require and the strategies that this administration is  
6 pursuing. Likewise, with defense sequestration set to  
7 return next year and the threats to our country growing,  
8 there is also an increasing gap between the military  
9 capabilities we have and the military capabilities that we  
10 will need to address these threats.

11           The key question for this panel and for all of us  
12 remains: What is the best path forward to address these  
13 national security challenges? Few in our country have as  
14 much national security wisdom and real-world experience as  
15 the members of this panel. Between the three of you, you  
16 have more than 115 years of military experience, much of it  
17 at the most senior levels of our military. We look forward  
18 to hearing your best advice on how the Federal Government  
19 can fulfill its most important responsibility to the  
20 American people, and that is protecting the security of the  
21 United States of America.

22           Thank you very much.

23           And I would like to turn it over to Senator Reed.

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1           STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE  
2 ISLAND

3           Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Ayotte.

4           Let me join you in welcoming our witnesses,  
5 extraordinary individuals who have served the Nation with  
6 great distinction and great courage, never broke faith with  
7 the men and women they led, which is the highest tribute  
8 that anyone can make to a soldier, sailor, and marine.  
9 Thank you very much.

10          Let me also thank Chairman McCain for pulling together  
11 this series of hearings and briefings to examine the U.S.  
12 global strategy. These discussions will help us inform our  
13 consideration of the administration's budget request, which  
14 will be coming to us in a few days.

15          Last week, two of the most prominent U.S. strategic  
16 thinkers, Dr. Brent Scowcroft -- General Brent Scowcroft and  
17 Dr. Zbig Brzezinski, discussed a number of issues with the  
18 committee. Among these was the need to give multilateral  
19 negotiation on Iran's nuclear program sufficient time to  
20 reach a conclusion. They urged this body not to press  
21 forward with additional sanctions even if they are  
22 prospective in nature. This matter is being discussed at  
23 this very moment in the Banking Committee, only a few floors  
24 above us, and, indeed, I have to leave here and go there,  
25 because I'm a senior member of that committee also. And my

1 colleagues will be taking up the slack, particularly Senator  
2 King. I want to thank him. I will return, I hope, to ask  
3 questions of the panelists.

4 Much of last week's discussion revolved around the  
5 administration's strategy in Iraq and Syria for confronting  
6 the regional and global terror threat posed by the so-called  
7 Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or ISIL. General  
8 Scowcroft and Dr. Brzezinski stressed that efforts to take  
9 on ISIL require a comprehensive approach, which includes  
10 both political and military elements.

11 We also received testimony last week from the  
12 Department of Defense on the administration's program to  
13 train and equip the vetted opposition in Syria. This is  
14 just one aspect of the administration's approach to the ISIL  
15 threat in Iraq and Syria which is built upon an  
16 international coalition, including regional Arab and Muslim  
17 states using economic tools to go after ISIL's financing and  
18 a sustained campaign of airstrikes against ISIL leadership  
19 and facilities.

20 This morning's hearing provides an opportunity, in  
21 particular, to examine the military respects of our strategy  
22 of addressing the ISIL threat. All three of you have been  
23 thoughtful and outspoken in your recommendations to that  
24 strategy, some of the aspects of which are reflected in the  
25 actions the administration has taken to date. As of

1 January, U.S. and coalition aircraft have flown 16,000  
2 sorties over Iraq and Syria, of which 5,866 have involved  
3 kinetic strikes against targets. President Obama has  
4 authorized the deployment of over 3,000 military personnel  
5 to Iraq to advise and assist Iraq and Kurdish security  
6 forces.

7 At the administration's request, the Fiscal Year 2015  
8 National Defense Authorization Act included \$5.6 billion in  
9 overseas contingency operations funding for DOD activities  
10 in Iraq and Syria, including 1.6 billion for the Iraq train-  
11 and-equip program.

12 Also in their testimony last week, General Scowcroft  
13 and Dr. Brzezinski emphasized the need to work with and  
14 through regional partners in the international community to  
15 address the ISIL threat so that the United States does, in  
16 their words, end up owning the problem itself. So, I hope  
17 that our witnesses can bring their perspectives on this very  
18 challenging issue of strategy, as Senator Ayotte said, in  
19 both Syria, Iraq, and in the region. And again, I think  
20 it's appropriate to focus on not only just the military  
21 aspect, but political and diplomatic initiatives, as well as  
22 economic initiatives.

23 I want to, again, thank the witnesses. And I  
24 particularly want to thank Admiral Fallon, who made a  
25 tremendous effort to rearrange his schedule to join us.

1 Thank you, sir, for your efforts.

2 And, with that, Madam Chairwoman, thank you.

3 Senator Ayotte: Thank you so much, Senator Reed.

4 I would like to start with General Mattis. General  
5 Mattis served 42 years in the Marine Corps, including time  
6 as Commander of Central Command. We're very glad that  
7 you're here today. Thank you so much for being here.

8 General Mattis.

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1           STATEMENT OF GENERAL JAMES N. MATTIS, USMC (RET.),  
2           FORMER COMMANDER, UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND

3           General Mattis: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, Ranking  
4           Member Reed, distinguished Senators of the committee.

5           I have submitted a statement, and request it be  
6           accepted for the record.

7           Senator Ayotte: It will be.

8           General Mattis: During my Active Duty years, I  
9           testified many times before this committee and gained the  
10          highest regard for the manner in which you carried out your  
11          duties. Through good times and bad, I remain grateful for  
12          the support you've provided our military.

13          I commend the committee for holding these hearings. As  
14          former Secretary of State George Schultz has commented, the  
15          world is awash in change. The international order, so  
16          painstakingly put together by the Greatest Generation coming  
17          home from mankind's bloodiest conflict, that international  
18          order is under increasing stress. It was created with  
19          elements we take for granted today: the United Nations,  
20          NATO, the Marshall Plan, Bretton Woods, and more. The  
21          constructed order reflected the wisdom of those World War II  
22          veterans who recognized: no nation lived as an island, and  
23          we needed new ways to deal with challenges that, for better  
24          or worse, impacted all nations. Like it or not, today we  
25          are part of this larger world, and we must carry out our

1 part. We cannot wait for problems to arrive here, or it  
2 will be too late.

3 The international order, built on the state system, is  
4 not self-sustaining. It demands tending by an America that  
5 leads wisely, standing unapologetically for the freedoms  
6 each of us in this room have enjoyed. The hearing today  
7 addresses the need for America to adapt to changing  
8 circumstances, to come out now from our reactive crouch and  
9 take a firm strategic stance in defense of our values.  
10 While we recognize that we owe future generations the same  
11 freedoms that we enjoy, the challenge lies in how to carry  
12 out that responsibility.

13 To do so, America needs a refreshed national strategy.  
14 The Congress can play a key role in crafting a coherent  
15 strategy with bipartisan support. Doing so requires us to  
16 look beyond the events that are currently consuming the  
17 executive branch. There's an urgent need to stop reacting  
18 to each immediate vexing issue in isolation. Such response  
19 often creates unanticipated second-order effects and even  
20 more problems for us.

21 The Senate Armed Services Committee is uniquely placed  
22 in our system of government to guide, oversee, and ensure  
23 that we act strategically and morally using America's  
24 ability to inspire, as well as its ability to intimidate, to  
25 ensure freedom for future generations. I suggest the best

1 way to get to the essence of these issues and to help you  
2 crafting America's response to a rapidly changing security  
3 environment is simply to ask the right questions. If I were  
4 in your shoes, these are some of the questions I would ask:

5       What are the key threats to our vital interests? The  
6 intelligence community should delineate and provide an  
7 initial prioritization of these threats for your  
8 consideration. By rigorously defining the problems we face,  
9 you will enable a more intelligent and focused use of the  
10 resources allocated for national defense.

11       Is our intelligence community fit for the -- for its  
12 expanding purpose? Today, ladies and gentlemen, we have  
13 less military shock absorber in our smaller military, so  
14 less ability to take surprise in stride and fewer forward-  
15 deployed forces overseas to act as sentinels. Accordingly,  
16 we need more early warning. Working with the intel  
17 community, you should question if we are adequately funding  
18 the intel agencies to reduce the chance of our defenses  
19 being caught flatfooted. We know that the foreseeable is  
20 not foreseeable.

21       Incorporating the broadest issues into your  
22 assessments, you should consider what we must do if the  
23 national debt is assessed to be the biggest national  
24 security threat we face. As President Eisenhower noted, the  
25 foundation of military strength is our economic strength.

1 In a few short years, however, we will be paying interest on  
2 our debt, and it will be a bigger bill than what we pay  
3 today for defense. Much of that interest money is destined  
4 to leave America for overseas. If we refuse to reduce our  
5 debt or pay down our deficit, what is the impact on the  
6 national security for future generations, who will inherit  
7 this irresponsible debt and the taxes to service it? No  
8 nation in history has maintained its military power if it  
9 failed to keep its fiscal house in order.

10 How do you urgently halt the damage caused by  
11 sequestration? No foe in the field can wreak such havoc on  
12 our security that mindless sequestration is achieving today.  
13 Congress passed it because it was viewed as so injurious  
14 that it would force wise choices. It has failed in that  
15 regard, and today we use arithmetic, vice sound thinking, to  
16 run our government, despite the emerging enemy threats.  
17 This committee must lead the effort to repeal sequestration  
18 that is costing military readiness and long-term capability  
19 while sapping our troops' morale. Without predictability in  
20 budget matters, no strategy can be implemented by your  
21 military leaders.

22 In our approach to the world, we must be willing to ask  
23 strategic questions. In the Middle East, where our  
24 influence is at its lowest point in four decades, we see a  
25 region erupting in crisis. We need a new security

1 architecture for the Mideast, built on sound policy, one  
2 that permits us to take our own side in this fight.

3 Crafting such a policy starts with asking a fundamental  
4 question, and then the follow-on questions.

5       The fundamental question, I believe: Is political  
6 Islam in our best interest? If not, What is our policy to  
7 authoritatively support the countervailing forces? Violent  
8 jihadist terrorists cannot be permitted to take refuge  
9 behind false religious garb and leave us unwilling to define  
10 this threat with the clarity it deserves. We have many  
11 potential allies around the world and in the Middle East who  
12 will rally to us, but we have not been clear about where we  
13 stand in defining or dealing with the growing violent  
14 jihadist terrorist threat.

15       Iran is a special case that must be dealt with as a  
16 threat to regional stability, nuclear and otherwise. I  
17 believe that you should question the value of Congress  
18 adding new sanctions while international negotiations are  
19 ongoing, vice having them ready, should the negotiations for  
20 preventing their nuclear weapons capability and implementing  
21 stringent monitoring break down.

22       Further question now, if we have the right policies in  
23 place, when Iran creates more mischief in Lebanon, Iraq,  
24 Bahrain, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere in the region,  
25 recognizing that regional counterweights, like Egypt, Saudi

1 Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the rest of the Gulf  
2 Cooperation Council can reinforce us if they understand our  
3 policy.

4 In Afghanistan, we need to consider if we're asking for  
5 the same outcome there as we saw last summer in Iraq, should  
6 we pull out all our troops on the administration's proposed  
7 timeline. Echoing the same military advice given on this  
8 same issue about Iraq when we pulled the troops out, the  
9 gains achieved at great cost against our enemy in  
10 Afghanistan are reversible. We should recognize that we may  
11 not want this fight, but the barbarity of an enemy that  
12 kills women and children and has refused to break with al-  
13 Qaeda needs to be fought.

14 More broadly, Is the U.S. military being developed to  
15 fight across the spectrum of combat? Knowing that enemies  
16 always will move against our perceived weakness, our forces  
17 must be capable of missions from nuclear deterrence to  
18 counterinsurgency and everything in between, now including  
19 the pervasive cyber domain. While surprise is always a  
20 factor, this committee can ensure that we have the fewest  
21 big regrets when the next surprise occurs. While we don't  
22 want or need a military that is at the same time dominant  
23 and irrelevant, you must sort this out and deny funding for  
24 bases or capabilities no longer needed.

25 The nuclear stockpile must be tended to, and

1 fundamental questions must be asked and answered. We must  
2 clearly establish the role of our nuclear weapons. Do they  
3 serve solely to deter nuclear war? If so, we should say so.  
4 And the resulting clarity will help to determine the number  
5 we need.

6 I think, too, you should ask, Is it time to reduce the  
7 Triad to a Diad, removing the land-based missiles? This  
8 would also reduce the false-alarm danger.

9 Could we reenergize the arms-control effort by only  
10 counting warheads, vice launchers? Was the Russian test  
11 violating the INF Treaty simply a blunder on their part, or  
12 a change in policy? And what is our appropriate response?

13 The reduced size of our military drives the need to ask  
14 different questions. Our military is uniquely capable and  
15 the envy of the world, but are we resourcing it to ensure we  
16 have the highest-quality troops, the best equipment, and the  
17 toughest training?

18 With a smaller military comes the need for troops kept  
19 at the top of their game. When we next put them in harm's  
20 way, it must be the enemy's longest day and worst day.  
21 Tiered readiness with a smaller force must be closely  
22 scrutinized to ensure we aren't merely hollowing out the  
23 military.

24 While sequestration is the nearest threat to this  
25 national treasure that is the U.S. military, sustaining it

1 as the world's best when it's smaller will need your  
2 critical oversight.

3 Are the Navy and our expeditionary forces receiving the  
4 support they need in a world where America's naval role is  
5 more pronounced because we have fewer forces posted  
6 overseas? With the cutbacks to the Army and Air Force and  
7 fewer forces around the world, military aspects of our  
8 strategy will inevitably become more naval in character.  
9 This will provide the decision time for political leaders  
10 considering employment of additional forms of military  
11 power. Your resourcing of our naval and expeditionary  
12 forces will need to take this development into account.

13 Today, I question if our shipbuilding budget is  
14 sufficient, especially in light of the situation in the  
15 South China Sea. While our efforts in the Pacific to keep  
16 positive relations with China are well and good, these  
17 efforts must be paralleled by a policy to build the  
18 counterbalance if China continues to expand its bullying  
19 role in the South China Sea and elsewhere. That  
20 counterbalance must deny China veto power over territorial,  
21 security, and economic conditions in the Pacific, building  
22 support for our diplomatic efforts to maintain stability and  
23 economic prosperity so critical to our economy.

24 In light of the worldwide challenges to the  
25 international order, we are, nonetheless, shrinking our

1 military. We have to then ask, Are we adjusting our  
2 strategy and taking into account a reduced role for that  
3 shrunken military? Strategy connects ends, ways, and means.  
4 With less military available, we must reduce our appetite  
5 for using it. Prioritization is needed if we are to remain  
6 capable of the most critical mission for which we have a  
7 military, to fight on short notice and defend the country.

8 We have to ask, Does our strategy and associated  
9 military planning, as Senator Reed pointed out, take into  
10 account our Nation's increased need for allies? The need  
11 for stronger alliances comes more sharply into focus as we  
12 shrink the military. No nation can on its own do all that  
13 is necessary for its own security. Further, history reminds  
14 us that countries with allies generally defeat those without  
15 allies. As Churchill intimated, however, the only thing  
16 harder than fighting with allies is fighting without them.  
17 This committee should track closely an increased military  
18 capability to work with allies, the NATO Alliance being  
19 foremost, but not our only focus.

20 In reference to NATO, and in light of the Russian  
21 violations of international borders, we must ask if the NATO  
22 Alliance efforts have adjusted to the unfortunate and  
23 dangerous mode the Russian leadership has slipped into.

24 With regard to tightening the bond between our smaller  
25 military and those other militaries we may need at our side

1 in future fights, the convoluted foreign military sales  
2 system needs your challenge. Hopefully, it can be put in  
3 order before we drive more potential partners to equip  
4 themselves with foreign equipment, a move that makes it  
5 harder to achieve needed interoperability with our allies  
6 and undercuts America's industrial base. Currently, the  
7 system fails to reach its potential.

8 As we attempt to restore stability to the state system  
9 and international order, a critical question will be, Is  
10 America good for its word? When we make clear a position or  
11 give our word about something, our friends, and even our  
12 enemies, must recognize that we are good for it. Otherwise,  
13 dangerous miscalculations can occur.

14 When the decision is made to employ our forces in  
15 combat by the Commander in Chief, the committee should still  
16 ask, Is the military being employed with the proper  
17 authority? For example, are the political objectives  
18 clearly defined and achievable? Murky or quixotic political  
19 end states condemn us to entering wars we don't know how to  
20 end. Notifying the enemy in advance of our withdrawal dates  
21 or reassuring the enemy that we will not use certain  
22 capabilities, like our ground forces, should be avoided.  
23 Such announcements do not take the place of mature, well-  
24 defined end states, nor do they contribute to ending wars as  
25 rapidly as possible on favorable terms.

1           You should ask, Is the theater of war, itself,  
2           sufficient for effective prosecution? We have witnessed  
3           safe havens prolonging war. If the defined theater is  
4           insufficient, the plan itself needs to be challenged.

5           Ask, Is the authority for detaining prisoners of war  
6           appropriate for the enemy and type war we are fighting? We  
7           have observed the perplexing lack of detainee policy that  
8           has resulted in the return of released prisoners to the  
9           battlefield. We should not engage in another fight without  
10          resolving this issue up front, treating hostile forces, in  
11          fact, as hostile.

12          We have to also ask, Are America's diplomatic,  
13          economic, and other assets aligned for the war aims? We  
14          have experienced the military, alone, trying to achieve  
15          tasks outside its expertise. When we take the serious  
16          decision to fight, we must bring to bear all our Nation's  
17          resources. And you should question how the diplomatic and  
18          development efforts will be employed to build momentum for  
19          victory. And our Nation's strategy demands that  
20          comprehensive approach.

21          Finally, the culture of our military and its rules are  
22          designed to bring about battlefield success in the most  
23          atavistic environment on Earth. No matter how laudable, in  
24          terms of our progressive country's instincts, this committee  
25          needs to consider carefully any proposed changes to military

1 rules, traditions, and standards that bring noncombat  
2 emphasis to combat units. There is a great difference  
3 between military service in dangerous circumstances and  
4 serving in a combat unit whose role is to search out, close  
5 with, and kill the enemy at close quarters. This committee  
6 has a responsibility for imposing reason over impulse when  
7 proposed changes could reduce the combat capability of our  
8 forces at the point of contact with the enemy.

9       Ultimately, we need the foresight of this committee,  
10 acting in its sentinel and oversight role, to draw us out of  
11 our reactive stance that we've fallen into and chart a  
12 strategic way ahead. Our national security strategy needs  
13 your bipartisan direction. In some cases, you may need to  
14 change our processes for developing integrated national  
15 strategy, because mixing capable people with their good  
16 ideas and bad processes results in the bad processes  
17 defeating good people's ideas 9 times out of 10. This is an  
18 urgent matter, because, in an interconnected age, when  
19 opportunistic adversaries can work in tandem to destroy  
20 stability and prosperity, our country needs to regain its  
21 strategic footing. We need to bring the clarity to our  
22 efforts before we lose the confidence of the American people  
23 and the support of potential allies. This committee, I  
24 believe, can play in a central strategic role in this  
25 regard.

1 Thank you, Madam.

2 [The prepared statement of General Mattis follows:]

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1           Senator Ayotte: Thank you, General Mattis.

2           Next, I would like to introduce General Keane. General  
3 Keane is a Vietnam combat veteran, the former Vice Chief of  
4 Staff of the Army, one of the architects of the successful  
5 surge in Iraq, and the current chairman of the Institute for  
6 the Study of War.

7           General Keane?

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1           STATEMENT OF GENERAL JOHN M. KEANE, USA (RET.), FORMER  
2 VICE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY

3           General Keane: Madam Chairman, Senator Ayotte, and  
4 Ranking Minority, Senator Reed, members of this  
5 distinguished committee, thank you for inviting me to  
6 testify on such a critical issue as America's global  
7 security challenges.

8           It's always a privilege to be with this committee --  
9 been 15-plus-years in association for me -- and whose  
10 reputation for tackling tough issues has always been  
11 appreciated. I'm honored to be here with General Jim Mattis  
12 and Admiral "Fox" Fallon, both highly respected military  
13 leaders who I have known for years.

14          Listen, I don't know what the criteria for panel  
15 selection was, but obviously we have something in common:  
16 we're all getting older and we're four-stars, retired. But,  
17 the thing that we also have in common, we are very direct,  
18 we are very straightforward, and we sure as hell are  
19 opinionated. So, I'm usually sitting next to somebody's  
20 who's nuanced, circumspect, et cetera. You're not going to  
21 get that from the three of us today. We don't always agree,  
22 but you're going to know what we're thinking.

23          Please accept my written testimony for the record, and  
24 I will briefly outline those remarks. I put some extra in  
25 there, because -- congratulation to the new members who have

1 joined this committee. There's some background information  
2 in there that you may feel helpful to you.

3 And I appreciate Senator McCain giving us a little  
4 extra time this morning on such a complex subject.

5 You know, the United States is confronting emerging  
6 security challenges on a scale not seen since the rise of  
7 the Soviet Union to superpower status following World War  
8 II, with radical Islam morphing into a global jihad, Iran  
9 seeking regional hegemony and revisionist powers, Russia and  
10 China capable of employing varying degrees of  
11 sophistication, disruptive methods of war that will severely  
12 test the United States military's traditional methods of  
13 projecting and sustaining power abroad. Given U.S. defense  
14 budget projections, the United States will have to confront  
15 these challenges without its longstanding decided advantage  
16 in the scale of resources it is able to devote to the  
17 competition. Indeed, the Budget Control Act, or  
18 sequestration, is not only irresponsible in the face of  
19 these emerging challenges, it is downright reckless.

20 Let me briefly outline the major security challenges  
21 and what we can do about them:

22 Radical Islam. As much as Naziism and Communism --  
23 both geopolitical movements, ideologically driven -- were  
24 the major security challenges of the 20th century, radical  
25 Islam is the major security challenge of our generation.

1 Radical Islam, as I'm defining it for today's discussion,  
2 consists of three distinct movements who share a radical  
3 fundamentalist ideology, use jihad or terror to achieve  
4 objectives, yet compete with each other for influence and  
5 power. I've provided some maps at -- behind my testimony,  
6 that you can use, and there's also the -- some display maps,  
7 here in the committee room, which you may be challenged to  
8 be able to see.

9 First, the Shi'a-based Iranian-sponsored radical  
10 Islamic movement that began in 1979 with the formation of  
11 the Islamic of Iran. In 1980, Iran declared the United  
12 States as a strategic enemy, and its goal is to drive the  
13 United States out of the region, achieve regional hegemony  
14 and destroy the state of Israel. It uses proxies primarily  
15 as the world's number-one state sponsoring terrorism.  
16 Thirty-plus years, Iran has used these proxies to attack the  
17 United States. To date, the result is, U.S. troops left  
18 Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq, while Iran has direct  
19 influence and some control over Beirut, Lebanon, Gaza,  
20 Damascus, Syria, Baghdad, Iraq, and now Sana'a, Yemen, as  
21 you can see on the map. Is there any doubt that Iran is on  
22 the march and is systematically moving toward their regional  
23 hegemonic objective? Iran has been a -- Iran has been on a  
24 20-year journey to acquire nuclear weapons, simply because  
25 they know it guarantees preservation of the regime and makes

1 them, along with their partners, the dominant power in the  
2 region, thereby capable of expanding their control and  
3 influence. Add to this their ballistic missile delivery  
4 system and Iran is not only a threat to the region, but to  
5 Europe, as well, and, as they increase missile range,  
6 eventually a threat to the United States. And as we know, a  
7 nuclear arms race, because of their nuclear ambition, is on  
8 the horizon for the Middle East.

9 Second, the al-Qaeda Sunni-based movement declared war  
10 on the United States in the early '90s, desires to drive the  
11 United States out of the region, dominate all Muslim lands  
12 and, as the most ambitious radical Islamic movement,  
13 eventually achieve world domination. As you can see on the  
14 map, al-Qaeda and its affiliates exceeds Iran in beginning  
15 to dominate multiple country. In fact, al-Qaeda has grown  
16 fourfold in the last 5 years.

17 Third, the Islamic state of Iraq and al-Sham, ISIS, is  
18 an outgrowth from al-Qaeda in Iraq, which was defeated in  
19 Iraq by 2009. After U.S. troops pulled out of Iraq in 2011,  
20 ISIS reemerged as a terrorist organization in Iraq, moved  
21 into Syria in 2012, and began seizing towns and villages  
22 from the Syria-Iraq border all the way to the western Syria,  
23 from Aleppo to Damascus. After many terrorist attacks and  
24 assassinations in Mosul and Anbar Province in 2013, to set  
25 the conditions for follow-on operations, ISIS launched a

1 conventional attack back into Iraq, beginning in 2014, with  
2 the seizure of Fallujah and culminating in the seizure of  
3 Mosul and many other towns and villages.

4 Is it possible to look at that map in front of you and  
5 claim that the United States policy and strategy is working  
6 or that al-Qaeda is on the run? It is unmistakable that our  
7 policies have failed. And the unequivocal explanation is,  
8 U.S. policy has focused on disengaging from the Middle East,  
9 while our stated policy is pivoting to the East.

10 U.S. policymakers choose to ignore the very harsh  
11 realities of the rise of radical Islam. In my view, we  
12 became paralyzed by the fear of adverse consequences in the  
13 Middle East after fighting two wars. Moreover, as we sit  
14 here this morning in the face of radical Islam, U.S.  
15 policymakers refuse to accurately name the movement as  
16 radical Islam. We further choose not to define it, nor  
17 explain its ideology. And, most critical, we have no  
18 comprehensive strategy to stop it or defeat it. We are  
19 reduced to a very piecemeal effort, using drones in Yemen  
20 and Pakistan -- a vital tactic, but not a strategy -- and  
21 air power in Iraq and Syria, while insisting an unproven  
22 indigenous ground force. Our partnering program with other  
23 nations is fragmented, with no overall strategy. This  
24 approach almost certainly guarantees we will be  
25 incrementally engaged against one radical group after

1 another, with no end in sight. What can we do?

2 To stop and defeat a global radical Islamic movement  
3 and Iranian regional hegemony requires a broad, long-term,  
4 comprehensive strategic approach with the strategic  
5 objectives, both near and long term, supporting that  
6 strategy. World leaders understood how formidable the --  
7 how formidable Communist ideology and the Soviet threat was  
8 to the world order, and formed political and military  
9 alliances. Forming similar alliances today offers the  
10 opportunity by member nations to develop a comprehensive  
11 strategy to discuss and set goals for necessary political  
12 and social reforms, and to share intelligence, technology,  
13 equipment, and training. The alliance is mostly about  
14 supporting countries in the region, to make internal  
15 changes, and to assist comprehensively encountering radical  
16 Islam.

17 We should rely on some of the thoughtful leaders in and  
18 outside the region to assist in forming this alliance. This  
19 is not about major military intervention by the United  
20 States. It is about assisting alliance members with  
21 training their counterterrorism force and their conventional  
22 military and counterinsurgency, and, yes, conducting  
23 counterterrorism operations, as required. While killing and  
24 capturing terrorists is key, so is the strategy to organize  
25 an alliance-wide effort to undermine the radical Islamist

1 ideology, to counter its narrative, to counter recruiting,  
2 and to target outside financing.

3       On Iran -- excuse me -- on Iraq and Syria, the ISIS  
4 advance is stalled in Iraq, due to effective air power, with  
5 modest gains in retaking lost territory. However, a  
6 successful counteroffensive to retake Mosul and Anbar  
7 Province is a very real challenge. No one knows for certain  
8 how the indigenous force, consisting of the Iraqi Army,  
9 Peshmerga, Sunni tribes, and Shi'a militia, will perform.  
10 The United States should plan now to have U.S./coalition  
11 advisors accompany front-line troops with the added  
12 capability to call in airstrikes. Direct-action special-  
13 operation forces, both ground and air, should assist by  
14 targeting ISIS leaders. U.S. and coalition combat brigades  
15 should be designated for deployment and moved to Kuwait to  
16 be ready for employment if the counteroffensive stalls or is  
17 defeated. The alternative? We wait another couple of years  
18 and try again.

19       The Syria policy is a failure. ISIS is continued to  
20 advance throughout Syria and is gaining ground, taking new  
21 territory. You can see that on the other map. And even  
22 approaching Damascus in attacking south of Damascus. The  
23 plans for training and assisting the Free Syrian Army is not  
24 robust enough -- 5,000 in one year -- I know you received a  
25 classified briefing on it, so you know more about it than I

1 -- and permitting Assad to bomb the FSA faster than new  
2 members are trained makes no sense. The United States  
3 should heed the advice of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan, and  
4 Turkey to establish a no-fly zone and to shut down Assad's  
5 air power, and a buffer zone to protect refugees.

6 On Iran, the long-term goal for any alliance that is  
7 formed should be Iran's regime change or at least a collapse  
8 of the existing government framework, similar to the  
9 collapse of the Soviet Union. And the reason is clear.  
10 Iran's stated regional hegemonic objectives are incongruous  
11 with the peace, prosperity, and stability of the Middle  
12 East. Iran cannot be permitted to acquire a nuclear weapon  
13 or threshold capability allowing rapid nuclear development.  
14 Sadly, we are already about there.

15 Congress should do two things now in reference to Iran:  
16 one, authorize increased sanctions now, with automatic  
17 implementation if talks are extended or fail; and, two,  
18 legislate ratification of any deal by the Senate.

19 On Afghanistan, the political situation in Afghanistan  
20 has improved considerably with the reform leadership of  
21 Ashraf Ghani, but the security situation remains at risk.  
22 While the security situation in the south is relatively  
23 stable, the situation in the east is not. The problem is,  
24 the area generally from Kabul to the Pakistani border is a  
25 domain of the Haqqani Network. Haqqani Network has not been

1 rooted out of their support zones and safe areas in  
2 Afghanistan. This is a serious problem for the ANSF. It  
3 follows that the ANSF needs the funding support to support  
4 as current troop levels of 352,000 and much needed U.S. and  
5 coalition troops to conduct counterterrorism and to advise,  
6 train, and assist the ANSF beyond 2016. We also need to  
7 target the Haqqani Network in its sanctuary in Pakistan, in  
8 the vicinity of Miramshah and the FATA.

9 All we accomplished in Afghanistan will be at risk, as  
10 it was in Iraq, if the troops are pulled out not based on  
11 the conditions on the ground. How can we not learn the  
12 obvious and painful lesson from Iraq?

13 The security challenges posed by revisionist Eurasian  
14 nations, Russia and China. In Europe, Russia's recent  
15 behavior, I think, suggests that its 2008 military campaign  
16 against Georgia was not an aberration, but, rather, an  
17 initial effort to overturn the prevailing regional order.  
18 By seizing the Crimea, supporting trumped-up rebel forces in  
19 eastern Ukraine, and engaging in military deployments that  
20 directly threaten its Baltic neighbors, Moscow has made it  
21 clear that it does not accept the political map of post-  
22 cold-war Europe. I believe we need to realistically  
23 conclude that Moscow is also willing to challenge the very  
24 existence of NATO.

25 What can be done? Given the dramatic drop in oil

1 prices, Russia is beginning to suffer, economically, and is  
2 likely headed toward a recession, if not already there.  
3 Additional tough sanctions should be back on the table to  
4 coerce Russia to stop the Ukraine aggression. It is a  
5 disgrace that, once again, we have refused to assist the  
6 people being oppressed, when all they ask for is the weapons  
7 to fight. We should robustly arm and assist Ukraine.

8         Additionally, NATO military presence in Central Europe  
9 -- excuse me -- NATO military presence from Central Europe  
10 should be significantly shifted to the Baltics and Eastern  
11 Europe, with plans for permanent bases. A clear signal of  
12 Article 5 intent must be sent to Moscow. These action --  
13 will strengthen our diplomatic efforts, which, to date, have  
14 failed.

15         China's continuing economic growth has fueled a major  
16 conventional buildup that is beginning to shift the local  
17 balance of power in its favor. As a result, Beijing has  
18 been emboldened to act more assertively toward its  
19 neighbors, especially in expanding its territorial claims,  
20 which include not only Taiwan, but also most of the South  
21 China Sea islands and Japan's Senkaku islands. China has  
22 embarked on a strategy of regional domination at the expense  
23 of U.S. interests as a Pacific nation and decades of  
24 partnership with allied countries in the region.

25         What can be done? Develop a regional strategy with our

1 allies to counter China's desire for dominant control and  
2 influence. Recognize that China's military strategy to  
3 defeat U.S. reliance on military information networks, which  
4 they believe, alone, may defeat the United States,  
5 militarily, which is quite interesting, and their exploding  
6 precision-strike capability threatens ground and naval  
7 forces, forward staging bases, and air and seaports of  
8 debarkation. The United States no longer enjoys the  
9 commanding position in the precision-strike regime that it  
10 occupied in the two decades following the cold war. We  
11 should stress-test U.S. regional military defense to counter  
12 China's threat and recognize that a change in regional  
13 defense strategy and capabilities is likely.

14       Lastly, sequestration. It must be repealed and  
15 reasonable resources restored to meet the emerging security  
16 challenges. All the services have a need to capitalize  
17 their investment accounts and to maintain readiness, which  
18 is rapidly eroding.

19       In conclusion, given the emerging security challenges  
20 and limited resources, the need for well-crafted regional  
21 defense strategy in an overall integrated national security  
22 and defense strategy posture is clear, more so now than  
23 anytime, I believe, since World War II. Yet, this is not  
24 what we do. What we do is the QDR, every 4 years, which is  
25 largely driven by process and far too focused on the budget.

1 Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.  
2 [The prepared statement of General Keane follows:]  
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1           Senator Ayotte: Thank you so much, General Keane.

2           Admiral Fallon -- thank you, Admiral Fallon, for being  
3 here -- Admiral Fallon is a Vietnam veteran who served 40  
4 years in the Navy, including as Commander of U.S. Central  
5 Command.

6           Thank you for being here today, Admiral Fallon.

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1           STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL WILLIAM J. FALLON, USN (RET.),  
2 FORMER COMMANDER, UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND

3           Admiral Fallon: Thank you, Senator.

4           Madam Chairwoman, Senator Reed, members of the  
5 committee, thank you, first of all, for your essential and  
6 enduring support of our men and women in uniform, certainly  
7 for the many years in which I was honored to serve with  
8 them, and continuing today. And thank you for the  
9 opportunity to address this distinguished body and offer my  
10 perspectives on current threats to national security,  
11 American foreign policy, and national defense topics.

12           There are certainly many areas of concern around the  
13 world. We see them most spectacularly highlighted regularly  
14 by the media, and you've heard a long litany of these things  
15 mentioned already today.

16           First of all, I believe that a coherent national  
17 security strategy requires a long-term focus with well-  
18 thought-out objectives. We should resist reactive responses  
19 and attempts to find near-term fixes to popup issues, which  
20 are going to arise continuously and compete for attention  
21 with what we should determine are the highest-priority  
22 national interests.

23           In surveying the worldscape today, I'd suggest that we  
24 focus on where we, as a nation, want to be in the future.  
25 My vote would be for improving world security and stability,

1 with more people around the world enjoying a better life in  
2 conditions of their choosing, with responsible elected  
3 leaders providing good governance and respect for human  
4 dignity. This scenario, clearly in our better national  
5 interest, is not going to happen without lots of hard work  
6 informed and guided by an effective national security  
7 strategy.

8 The United States Government has provided, and must  
9 continue to provide, leadership, good example, and active  
10 political, economic, and military security assistance in  
11 working towards these desired objectives. The fundamental  
12 prerequisite for any successful U.S. national security  
13 strategy is a sound and strong domestic foundation. Our  
14 credibility in the world is based on the example of our  
15 actions and how people perceive we might act in current and  
16 future situations. It's fair to wonder if people in other  
17 parts of the world take us seriously when they observe  
18 partisan political bickering that precludes agreement on  
19 fundamental issues like a national operating budget or cyber  
20 policies, and seemingly ever-changing policies and  
21 priorities.

22 Our military capability is an essential element of  
23 national power and one of many key tools, which include  
24 diplomatic, development, economic, financial, political, and  
25 certainly moral leadership. We face tough choices today

1 about if, when, and where to employ our military forces. We  
2 also face some tough choices on what to do, how to equip  
3 them, and what capabilities ought to be priorities. We  
4 can't have everything. Some people would propose an endless  
5 list of things that we could never afford. We've got to  
6 make the choices.

7 As we contemplate the myriad challenges to world  
8 stability and U.S. security, we should first acknowledge,  
9 distasteful as it might be, the reality that nuclear weapons  
10 and aspirations for them continue to proliferate. In this  
11 regard, it's discouraging to note that, after more than two  
12 decades of counter- -- of nuclear counterproliferation  
13 progress, fueled in large measure by the Nunn-Lugar  
14 Initiative, Russian-U.S. cooperation appears to have ground  
15 to a halt in the wake of dangerous Russian bad behavior.  
16 U.S. strategy in dealing with the potential use of these  
17 weapons of mass destruction has been heretofore successful  
18 with our national strategic deterrent force. But, the  
19 critical components of this force have been aging, without  
20 significant upgrade. Modernization of the force,  
21 particularly the survivability of the sea-based deterrent,  
22 should be a top-priority consideration for us to remain  
23 credible in deterring the worst-case scenarios. In my view,  
24 one of our most important strategic interests, with huge  
25 implications for national security and the stability of the

1 vast Asia-Pacific region, is our long-term relationship with  
2 China. Mutually beneficial in many respects, it has other  
3 dimensions, noticeably -- notably in the areas of  
4 cybersecurity, military expansion, and regional disputes  
5 with neighboring countries which are a cause for concern and  
6 need to be addressed.

7         The key focal point of this hearing is conflict in the  
8 Middle East and the spread of violent extremism in the  
9 region, and from it to other places in the world. The  
10 Middle East is an area of high interest for us, for many  
11 reasons, and continue to be buffeted by challenges which  
12 have vexed years of U.S. attempts to improve stability in  
13 the area. Nonetheless, I believe we should continue to  
14 engage in this region, using all aspects of national power,  
15 but with the understanding that we are not likely to be  
16 successful by mandating U.S. solutions. People in the  
17 region are, sooner or later, going to have to step up and  
18 address the issues which torment and divide them. We can  
19 and should assist, but we are not going to resolve their  
20 problems.

21         Some recommendations for addressing the current  
22 challenges from the so-called Dayesh in Iraq and Syria, from  
23 my perspective, include, first, recognition that, in Iraq,  
24 success will rest on the ability of the new government of  
25 Haider al-Abadi to convince the majority of his countrymen

1 and -women, particularly the Sunni minority, that they will  
2 get a fair shake, going forward. Absent this political  
3 foundation, nothing we do is going to be effective in the  
4 long term.

5 Second, getting Islamic leaders, the elites of the Arab  
6 countries, to actively counter the extremist ideology, and  
7 to cut funding for Dayesh and other extremists. On a  
8 positive note, here, I would highlight the recent remarks by  
9 Egyptian leader, Abdel al-Sisi.

10 And third, I think we should continue U.S. military  
11 efforts to work closely with the Iraqi military to enhance  
12 their capabilities, increase their combat effectiveness, and  
13 to support them with training, air power, and SOF, as  
14 required, to defeat Dayesh and to reclaim areas that were  
15 overrun last summer, simultaneously pressing Dayesh in rear  
16 areas to degrade and deny their ability to expand and to  
17 sustain operations in Iraq.

18 No single one of these actions is going to result in  
19 success, but collectively we have a chance to achieve our  
20 general objectives. Combating violent extremism worldwide  
21 is going to be a long-term effort requiring close  
22 cooperation with allies and willing nations, especially in  
23 areas of intelligence-sharing, U.S. military training and  
24 assistance for our less capable colleagues.

25 In summary, strategic coherence and foreign policy and

1 national security would benefit from strong, credible, and  
2 consistent domestic policies and actions to return this  
3 great nation to a position of exemplary leadership that's  
4 earned and kept for many years in the eyes of people around  
5 the world. Building on this position of domestic strength,  
6 a thoughtful, focused, and collaborative strategy  
7 formulation process to agree on a relatively few high-  
8 priority national security goals and objectives should set  
9 us on a fair course.

10 At the international level, active engagement using all  
11 aspects of national power, underpinned with a strong forward  
12 presence by U.S. military forces with credible capabilities,  
13 is our best deterrent and response to security threats  
14 worldwide.

15 Thank you very much, and I'm pleased to address any  
16 specific questions you may have.

17 [The prepared statement of Admiral Fallon follows:]

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1 Senator Ayotte: Thank you so much, Admiral Fallon.

2 I want to thank each of the members of this panel.

3 And I would like to, first of all, start with, General  
4 Keane, a question to you about the fight we face against  
5 radical Islam. You had said, in your testimony, that you  
6 believed that our policy has failed, that essentially al-  
7 Qaeda has grown fourfold in the last 5 years. Can you help  
8 us understand what you think would be the strongest  
9 strategy, in terms of defeating radical Islam? And also,  
10 can you speak to the situation in Yemen and what you believe  
11 our strategy should be there?

12 General Keane: Yes.

13 Well, as you noted, radical Islam is clearly on the  
14 rise. And, as I noted in -- as I said in my testimony, I  
15 think our policy of disengagement from the Middle East has  
16 contributed to that rise. Obviously, this is a very  
17 ambitious movement, and they would be making moves in that  
18 direction regardless of our actions.

19 Now, given the scale of it, which I tried to display on  
20 the map, which goes from northern and western Africa all the  
21 way to South Asia, as you look at all of that red on that  
22 map, al-Qaeda Central does not control all of those  
23 affiliates, but what they have in common, what their  
24 connective tissue is, is that they share a common  
25 geopolitical belief driven by a religious ideology to

1 dominate their host-country governments which they are  
2 conducting an insurgency at. And as al-Qaeda Central, I  
3 indicated in my testimony, has a very ambitious geopolitical  
4 objective, and that is to dominate Muslim lands, initially,  
5 and then world domination. Given that, and given where they  
6 are and the swath of territory and countries that they're  
7 involved in, there's no way that the United States, in of  
8 itself, can deal with the scale of this problem. Nor should  
9 it.

10 So, in my judgment -- that's why I'd look to -- how did  
11 we deal with Communist ideology, which was a very similar  
12 movement -- ambitious geopolitical movement, world  
13 domination? And we dealt with it, I think, in a very wise  
14 fashion. We brought countries together who shared values,  
15 who shared political beliefs, and formed a political and  
16 military alliance.

17 There is no other way, I believe, that you can cope  
18 with this scale of a problem without bringing the countries  
19 involved together, whether they're in the region or have  
20 interests outside of the region, as many do because of the  
21 export of terrorism to their countries, and develop a  
22 strategy to deal with it. This isn't about the United  
23 States driving a strategy. This is about bringing countries  
24 together, because much of what has to be done in the region  
25 where the radical Islamists are growing has to do with those

1 countries themselves, has to do with the conditions that  
2 exist in those countries.

3       The issues simply are -- and what the Arab Spring was  
4 about, if you recall, it was about seeking political reform,  
5 social justice, and economic opportunity. Nobody was  
6 demonstrating in the streets for radical Islam, but the  
7 radical Islamists saw the Arab Spring as an opportunity, and  
8 it became an accelerant for them, because they saw political  
9 and social upheaval, and they could take advantage of it.  
10 So, using that as a backdrop, it drives you -- those issues  
11 are still there -- political reform, social injustice, and  
12 lack of economic opportunity. We have to bring those  
13 countries together to recognize some of those problems.  
14 Those are long-term answers.

15       And then the near-term problems deal with what General  
16 Mattis was pointing out, as well. We have to share  
17 intelligence, we have to share technology, we have to share  
18 training. We can help a lot. We have been fighting this  
19 enemy for 13 years. We have learned a lot, and so have many  
20 of our allies.

21       There's much that we can do if we take a comprehensive,  
22 strategic approach to it, as opposed to what I think is a  
23 fragmented approach now, and it doesn't get at the long-term  
24 problem. You have to see the long-term solution and then  
25 start approaching it with near-term and midterm objectives

1 to accomplish it. That, I think, is the only answer that's  
2 possible, given what we're facing. Otherwise, we're just  
3 going to protract this thing and take these things on --  
4 what, after ISIS? Will there be something after ISIS we'll  
5 have to deal with? You betcha, if we don't take a  
6 comprehensive approach to deal with it.

7 In terms of Yemen, I mean, it's very frustrating to  
8 watch what's happened. We have been working with a host-  
9 country government in Yemen. We've been conducting direct-  
10 action missions with them against an insurgency in their  
11 country. This is AQAP, as we well know. This is the  
12 organization -- given the pressure that the previous  
13 administration and this administration put on al-Qaeda  
14 Central, they knew that they were no -- they no longer had  
15 global reach. And al-Qaeda Central always, always wanted to  
16 take the jihad to Europe and to the United States so they  
17 could drive us out of the region and, most importantly,  
18 drive our ideas out of the region, which are democracy and  
19 capitalism, which is an anathema to them.

20 The fact is, they franchised out to AQAP, and they gave  
21 them some leaders to do it. And this is a force that's not  
22 only conducting an insurgency to overthrow a government, but  
23 put together capabilities to conduct out-of-region attacks  
24 in the United States and, most recently, in Paris, France.

25 I think we've got a big question mark on where we're

1 going forward. This is going to have to play out in front  
2 of us. There's -- there are serious challenges in Yemen,  
3 given what's taken place with the Iranian-imposed overthrow  
4 of the government. They are also opposed to AQAP, but they  
5 are also fundamentally opposed to America and its interests.  
6 So, I think it begs the question whether we're going to be  
7 able to have the kind of cooperation with the new government  
8 in Yemen that we had with the old government.

9 Senator Ayotte: Thank you, General Keane.

10 I would call on Senator Reed right now.

11 Thank you.

12 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman.

13 General Mattis, you've made it very clear that we have  
14 capabilities, particularly with respect to the Middle East,  
15 in terms of military solutions, but you've also, last July  
16 in Aspen, pointed out that there are very high costs there.

17 And if we choose to use military, we have to -- you know,  
18 as you've said out there, if Americans take ownership of  
19 this, referring to Syria, this is going to be a full-  
20 throated, very, very serious war, with large costs. That's  
21 still your view, I assume?

22 General Mattis: Yes, sir, it is.

23 Senator Reed: And can you give us an idea of the scale  
24 of those costs, I mean, in terms of forces and just the top  
25 line? Because, you know, we -- I think your point's very

1 well made, which is, basically, if we're going to go into  
2 something, we've got to go into it with the idea of -- it's  
3 going to be difficult and costly.

4       General Mattis: Senator, what you just quoted was  
5 something I had said in response to a question, as you  
6 recall. I think, in this case, we have to get to a very  
7 detailed level of understanding. What is the political  
8 objective we are out to accomplish? And, frankly, I don't  
9 know what it is right now. Once we define that, I'd say, to  
10 a Jesuit's level of definition, a very strict definition, at  
11 that point we then allocate the means. Those means would be  
12 covert, diplomatic, educational, economic, and military.  
13 And if we orchestrate this correctly, as has been pointed  
14 out by the other members of the panel, with allies, the  
15 clarity and the commitment of the United States can draw in  
16 the full commitment of others. We should not think that a  
17 tentative or halfhearted commitment on our part, or saying  
18 we are willing to go in, but we're not willing to really do  
19 the fighting, would draw a full commitment from others.  
20 They're going to be willing to match us, but, when you live  
21 right next to this terrible threat, they have to assume that  
22 we're in fully, or they're going to have to moderate their  
23 response. Once we show, I think, that level of commitment,  
24 our requirement would actually go down, because others would  
25 be willing to come in full-throated in our support. But, it

1 would be a serious operation, no doubt, Senator.

2 Senator Reed: Thank you.

3 General Keane, do you agree with Admiral Fallon's point  
4 that, unless there's a political cohesion in Iraq, that the  
5 government recognizes and integrates the various sectarian  
6 groups, that military efforts will be probably ineffectual?

7 General Keane: Yeah, absolutely. I think we can -- we  
8 can be a little bit encouraged by Abadi and his movements.  
9 I had some people from the Institute for the Study of War  
10 just return from Baghdad, meeting with government officials  
11 and military officials. Abadi is moving in the right  
12 direction. That's good news.

13 But, look it, let's be honest here, that what --  
14 Maliki's malfeasance and nefarious character and the way he  
15 undermined political inclusion, despite his rhetoric, in  
16 Iraq, particularly after we pulled out of there, was tragic.  
17 The Sunni tribes are key, as Fox pointed out. And right  
18 now, while some of them are fighting against ISIS, most of  
19 them are not. And the harsh reality is, to get them to  
20 move, actually to take ISIS on, they will have to be  
21 convinced that there is reckoning for long-term political  
22 inclusion in this new government. It is a major issue for  
23 us.

24 Anbar Province will be largely Sunni tribes, with some  
25 Iraqi army assisting, to retake that river valley.

1 Peshmerga will not participate. Sunni tribes will also be  
2 needed to participate in a counteroffensive to retake Mosul.  
3 While they will not be the main force, they will be a --  
4 they will need to be a supporting force because of the  
5 tribes that are up in that region.

6 So, yes, it's key. And I think we've known that from  
7 the outset.

8 Senator Reed: So, in effect, the politics will drive  
9 the military operations. I mean, if -- without effective  
10 political reconciliation or signals from Baghdad, our  
11 military efforts, as strenuous as we may mount, are not --  
12 won't be particularly successful. No?

13 General Keane: Yeah, I just --

14 Senator Reed: Let me --

15 General Keane: It would be hard to visualize a  
16 scenario with a successful counteroffensive to retake the  
17 territory that's been lost without significant Sunni tribe  
18 participation in that.

19 Senator Reed: Let me switch gear again to Admiral  
20 Fallon.

21 Thank you once again for making yourself available.  
22 But, you know, one of the points that was raised in the  
23 course of the testimony was the radical Islam. But, one of  
24 the complicating factors is, within this radical Islam, you  
25 have Sunni radicals -- jihadists -- and then you have Shi'a

1 radicals. And they have a mutual animosity, which is --  
2 might be argued, is even greater than their animosity  
3 towards other groups. The Sunni -- Shi'a -- Sunni believe  
4 that Shi'a are apostates, et cetera. How do you reconcile  
5 that, in terms of our operations in the Middle East,  
6 particularly in terms of Iran? Right now, Iranian forces --  
7 or Shi'a militias, let me say, are paralleling our  
8 activities in Iraq, in terms of going after ISIL. How do we  
9 -- you know, that complicates an already complicated  
10 situation. Any comments you have.

11 Admiral Fallon: Piece of cake.

12 Senator Reed: Yeah.

13 Admiral Fallon: So -- we wish.

14 All right, I think the reality here, Senator, is that  
15 these things are really complex. There are a host of issues  
16 and interests in every one of these conflicts. You pick the  
17 country, pick the region. And I think that we might  
18 consider a couple of things. First of all, that in these  
19 really particularly vexing things that have so many aspects,  
20 we probably ought to step back and take a look at, again,  
21 our long-term large interests. So, Iran.

22 Iran has been a problem for us for decades. It's  
23 exacerbated by the fact that we've had no interaction to  
24 speak of until very recently for these many decades. We  
25 find their activities extremely distasteful. We, basically,

1 detest many of the things they've done and continue to do.  
2 They promote a brand of radicalism that has spread well  
3 beyond their borders. And we've been at our wits' end to  
4 try to figure out what to do.

5 And my thought here is that, sooner or later, we're  
6 going to have to seriously sit down, as I think we're trying  
7 to start, and have a dialogue with these guys. We're not  
8 going to -- we could. One option would be to invade Iraq.  
9 That's -- or Iran, rather. That's been proposed before. At  
10 what cost? I mean, anybody here want to push that idea  
11 forward in a meaningful way? I doubt it.

12 So, at some time, we're going to have to figure out how  
13 to come to grips with this. So, how do you do that? You  
14 recognize that everybody's got a dog in the fight, they all  
15 want something. And we ought to, I think, decide what  
16 things that we might accept -- some role for them in the  
17 region, I would think -- but some things we're not going to  
18 accept. We don't want any part of the nuclear weapons  
19 program that they seem to be embarked on.

20 But, their time, I think, is being stressed right now.  
21 Certainly, the economic conditions. There has been a --  
22 apparently, a pretty notable effect of sanctions working  
23 against them. And, of course, the people that usually take  
24 the brunt of this are the common folk, not the leaders.  
25 But, nonetheless, they've had a dramatic impact on that

1 country. I think the price of oil clearly is a detriment to  
2 them. And, frankly, they haven't been particularly  
3 successful of late in other places of -- where their  
4 surrogates are engaged in the region.

5 I think that we can't expect that we're going to have  
6 one solution that's going to solve all these problems. So,  
7 back to the -- first things first. Let's decide what we  
8 want for the long term. Can we accept Iran playing some  
9 kind of role in this region? If so, how do we get from  
10 where we are today to there?

11 At the tactical level, allowing them to get away with  
12 instigations and things like they have done in the past in  
13 Iraq and Afghanistan, other places, we shouldn't permit.  
14 Tactically, I think we act to block those things when we  
15 can.

16 The fact that you've got Sunnis and Shi'as at each  
17 others' throats in many places here, something that we're  
18 not going to go in and say, "Okay, guys, sit down, stop  
19 this" -- we're not going to solve it. But, I think we act  
20 strategically in trying to decide where we want our place to  
21 be in the region, and then we work hard against those things  
22 that -- at the tactical level, that are real problems.

23 So, Iraq today is a real problem. I think to let it  
24 just go isn't going to be acceptable. We're going to have  
25 to continue to do what we're doing to try to take back the

1 territory that they've lost.

2 Senator Reed: Thank you.

3 Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 Senator Ayotte: Senator Ernst.

5 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Madam Chair.

6 Gentlemen, thank you for being here today. I certainly  
7 appreciate your service on this panel today as well as your  
8 many years of service to the United States. We are very  
9 grateful for that.

10 I do agree that we have to have a national security  
11 strategy. And this is very important. What we have seen,  
12 all of you have mentioned, that, with sequestration, our  
13 effects, globally, have been diminished, and we are reacting  
14 in a knee-jerk way to threats as they come visible. So, we  
15 don't have an overarching strategy anywhere today. And I  
16 think that's a great detriment to all of the citizens here  
17 in the United States.

18 But, what I'd like to focus on is, with what we have  
19 seen in Iraq -- I served in Iraq from 2003 to 2004, at a  
20 very low, company level -- but, we invested so much effort  
21 in that region, and we withdrew from that region before many  
22 of our military leaders believed we should withdraw. And I  
23 do believe we are seeing that in Afghanistan now, also.  
24 These are areas, especially when it comes to Afghanistan --  
25 it's not talked about so much in the media anymore. Again,

1 we seem to focus just on one issue at a time rather than  
2 looking at threats globally.

3 With Afghanistan, we see that we have a proposed  
4 timeline for withdrawal. And, General Keane, you stated  
5 that perhaps we won't be ready by 2016 to withdraw our  
6 troops. I just sent, on Saturday -- was at a sendoff  
7 ceremony for the 361st Medical Logistics Company. They're  
8 deploying to Afghanistan, and their mission is to assist in  
9 the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. How long,  
10 General Keane, do you believe that it will take for us,  
11 realistically -- forget the timeline that's proposed right  
12 now -- for the Afghan National Security Forces to fill a  
13 role and be able to sustain and keep open those lines of  
14 communication, to maintain security within Afghanistan? Or  
15 are we repeating what's happening in Iraq?

16 General Keane: Yeah. Well, that's a tough question.

17 Listen, I'm very empathetic to the American people's  
18 frustration and many -- maybe many of you here in the room  
19 today, as well. Look it, we've been at this thing for 13  
20 years. And in 13 years, given the United States, you would  
21 think we'd be able to resolve this on favorable terms for  
22 ourselves and our national interests. Well, it hasn't  
23 happened. The facts are, policy decisions drove the 13-year  
24 war. It was policy that drove us to a war in Iraq and put  
25 Afghanistan on a diet for over 8 years. We never got back

1 to it again until 2009, when the current President made a  
2 decision to increase the forces in Afghanistan.

3 But, the -- here's the problem we've got, Senator.  
4 When we increased those forces in Afghanistan, the so-called  
5 "Afghanistan surge," McChrystal and Petraeus got 25 percent  
6 less than what they needed to do the job. As a result of  
7 that, we were never able to apply the surge forces in the  
8 eastern part of Afghanistan as we did so successfully in the  
9 south. Another policy decision pulled those forces out,  
10 over the objection of then-General Petraeus serving in  
11 Afghanistan, in our judgment, prematurely, and no  
12 application of surge forces whatsoever dealt with the  
13 Haqqani Network in the east. The facts are, the Haqqani  
14 Network is in those safe havens in the east, they're  
15 embedded in there, and the Afghan National Security Forces  
16 -- this is my judgment -- does not have the capability,  
17 currently, to be able to deal with that harsh reality.

18 What makes this so serious strategically inside  
19 Afghanistan is Kabul's presence to the Haqqani Network.  
20 Everything that gets lit up in Kabul is done by the Haqqani  
21 Network, and they are in the environs right now with support  
22 infrastructure surrounding Kabul.

23 The only thing that we can do to change that dimension  
24 is, one, increase the capacity of the Afghan National  
25 Security Forces -- and, by God, we've got to hold them at

1 352-. Anybody coming to you and telling you that we should  
2 put the Afghan National Security Forces on a decline after  
3 2016 is absolutely foolish and irresponsible in that  
4 recommendation. So, we have to hold to that line, and this  
5 Congress has got to fund it. It's got to probably fund it  
6 for at least 4 or 5 more years after we pull out of there.  
7 Otherwise, we really don't have a chance.

8 Secondly, we have got to step up to what two Presidents  
9 have failed to do, and that is deal with these sanctuaries  
10 in Pakistan from which intelligence, support, and training  
11 for operations inside Afghanistan comes. This is Afghan  
12 Taliban sanctuaries in Pakistan. And specifically, the  
13 Haqqani Network should be targeted just like al-Qaeda. We  
14 will -- in targeting them, we will disrupt it, disrupt their  
15 command and control, and disrupt their operations. Then we  
16 begin to have a chance.

17 Secondly, we cannot pull out our counterterrorism  
18 forces at 2016. These are the guys who chased down high-  
19 value targets. When we did that in Iraq in 2011, it was a  
20 disaster. When al-Qaeda began to rise because we pulled out  
21 the intelligence capability to see it, we didn't have -- we  
22 couldn't see it, and we couldn't hit it. If we do that in  
23 Afghanistan, I think it's a death knell for Afghanistan.

24 Yes, 13 years is a very long time to be there. But, to  
25 squander those gains in the face of what we're dealing with

1 makes no sense to me. I don't know how long we would need  
2 to keep those troops there. Right now, the plan is to pull  
3 them out after 2016. We are talking, likely, a number  
4 around 10,000 troops. Most of them would be in the train,  
5 assist, and advise role, which means they're not in combat.  
6 A very small portion of them would be in combat, and that is  
7 our direct-action forces.

8 I think if we educate and explain to the American  
9 people what this really is, I think they could possibly  
10 support it, and I would hope the Congress of the United  
11 States would support it.

12 What drives their departure should be conditions on the  
13 ground and on the commanders' assessment, as well.

14 Senator Ernst: Thank you. I do agree. And many  
15 sacrifices have been made there, and I think that we are  
16 falling into those same mistakes. I would rather see us  
17 fully engaged and defeat these threats rather than half-  
18 step, which is why we need an all-encompassing national  
19 security.

20 So, thank you, gentlemen, very much.

21 Thank you, Madam Chair.

22 Senator Ayotte: Senator Kaine.

23 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Madam Chair.

24 And thanks, to the witnesses, for the excellent  
25 testimony. I heard a lot I agreed with, a lot I disagreed

1 with; and, as you say, that's why you're here, to provoke  
2 our thinking.

3 It seems that there are two very solid points of  
4 agreement among the three sets of testimony -- first, that  
5 we are taking a fragmented, reactive approach to global  
6 challenges now; and second, that that fragmented approach  
7 may be driven, or at least exacerbated, by budgetary  
8 dysfunction and decision -- indecision here in Washington.  
9 You know, ideally, we would have a strategy, and then we  
10 would build a budget to support the strategy. Secondly,  
11 we would allow budget to drive strategy. But, we've been  
12 letting budgetary indecision drive strategy, which is, by  
13 far, the worst thing to do. So, I appreciate your comments  
14 about both. And I agree with you, I think our approach is a  
15 fragmented one, and I think it's exacerbated by budgetary  
16 indecision.

17 We had a overarching national security strategy,  
18 beginning with President Truman deciding to support Greece  
19 after World War II, the Truman Doctrine, and it explained a  
20 lot of what we did, even things like the creation of the  
21 Peace Corps or the race to the Moon. You might like the  
22 strategy, or not, but it was a unified strategy. When the  
23 Soviet Union collapsed, we went to a reactive, case-by-case.  
24 After 9/11, we had a strategy again, which was the war on  
25 terror. But, over time, that strategy was not a magnanimous

1 enough, big enough strategy for a nation like us, and I  
2 think we've devolved, after 13 years of war and some  
3 fatigue, back into the case-by-case approach that is  
4 reactive and that is hard for our allies and even our  
5 citizens to understand.

6       It seems like, in the world now, if you look at it in  
7 analogy to the post-World War II, it's not a bipolar  
8 competition, it's a tripolar one. There are the democracies  
9 of the world, led by the United States, but other  
10 democracies -- India, where the President is visiting now,  
11 European nations, South American nations -- there are many  
12 democracies, and we're the leader. There are the  
13 authoritarian nations, with Russia and China chief among  
14 them, but North Korea and Iran and other nations in that  
15 category. And then there's the jihadists. And the  
16 jihadists, some are nations, but many are nonstate actors.  
17 And that is a new challenge. So, the competition today is  
18 between democracies, authoritarian regimes, and nonstate  
19 jihadism, and that makes the challenge of forging a strategy  
20 critical. It's difficult, but it's critical. And you've  
21 raised important questions for us to grapple with.

22       One of the things I'd like to ask you is, in tackling  
23 the jihadism threat that we have, each of you have been  
24 active in battling this threat using military means, but I  
25 think we all understand that part of the jihadism accelerant

1 is disaffected young people and the allure of young people  
2 into a -- kind of a nihilistic jihadist element because of  
3 the lack of their own opportunities. What should we be  
4 doing to try to counter the radicalization of young people  
5 in the region? How can we assist regional actors and others  
6 in doing that so that we can shut off the allure and the  
7 foreign fighters that are flocking to groups like ISIL?

8       General Mattis: Senator, I think that what you have to  
9 look at is a definition of the problem that is so rigorous  
10 that some of the solutions start coming forward. For  
11 example, there are two basic brands of jihadist terrorists.  
12 One comes out of Tehran. We know it as Lebanese Hezbollah,  
13 declared war on us back in 1983, blew up our Embassy in  
14 Beirut, blew up the French paratrooper barracks, the marine  
15 barracks, and we've seen them continue to march on basically  
16 unchecked by our counterterrorism efforts. The other brand  
17 comes from the Sunni. We know it as al-Qaeda and associated  
18 movements. And so, as we define these, we don't lump them  
19 together, we don't give them any inadvertent support by  
20 giving them a cloak of legitimacy, and then we determine, if  
21 they're not -- this is not in our best interest, and what is  
22 feeding it is not in our best interests -- political Islam  
23 -- then how do we support the countervailing forces?

24       President al-Sisi's speech on the 1st of January at al  
25 --Azar University, where he said, "This has got to end" --

1 he's talking to his own clerics, now -- "This has -- we've  
2 got to quit doing this to the world with -- and dressing it  
3 up in the guise of Islam." There are people out there --  
4 United Arab Emirates, what we in the military call "little  
5 Sparta," because they always stuck with us through  
6 everything -- Jordan -- there are countervailing people in  
7 the region, leaders in the region, thought leaders in the  
8 region, and we should be full -- fully in support of them,  
9 not -- but, if we don't define this threat, break it out,  
10 identify the countervailing forces and come up with a  
11 strategy that supports exactly what you're talking about,  
12 then we'll continue to be spectators as this mutates and  
13 grows.

14 Senator Kaine: Let me ask you this. I think you all  
15 are on the same page on another item, which is -- Do you all  
16 agree that it is a mistake to use a calendar to determine  
17 the end date of our Afghanistani involvement rather than an  
18 assessment of the conditions on the ground in Afghanistan?  
19 Are you all in the same position on that?

20 General Mattis: Yes, sir.

21 General Keane: Yes, sir.

22 Admiral Fallon: Yeah, I'd like to -- certainly, that's  
23 the case.

24 Senator Kaine: Right.

25 Admiral Fallon: But, I think the -- we need a little

1 clarity and definition again, just like Jim tried to draw,  
2 between the Iranian-inspired revolutionary --

3 Senator Kaine: Versus the Sunni.

4 Admiral Fallon: -- jihadists, versus disaffected  
5 bubbas, here, who -- looking for help.

6 So, we talk about withdrawal from Afghanistan -- and I  
7 saw this, at least from my view -- we got into the same  
8 morass in Iraq a few years ago -- so it was this idea that  
9 we're in or we're out. You know, we're going to withdraw  
10 we're not going to withdraw. I think that the reality is,  
11 our best interests are served, not by withdrawing from many  
12 places in this world, but from continuing engagement.

13 So, what we ought to be talking about is -- what's  
14 already, I believe, put in place -- our major combat  
15 engagements have ceased and are not likely to be reengaged.  
16 However, we ought to be continually engaged with them in  
17 assisting them in training and supporting them and, in some  
18 areas, using Special Forces in areas that we have  
19 capabilities and they do not, when we see things that  
20 challenge our interests. So, I think we -- we just need to  
21 be clear about this. It isn't just "we're in or we're out."  
22 We ought to be in, in my opinion, to do certain things, to  
23 continue to help this government to move along. And those  
24 things are not going to be successful on their own. But, if  
25 taken in concert with economic steps and political steps on

1 the government, we may have a chance to actually see a long-  
2 term good outcome, here.

3 Senator Kaine: Right.

4 Admiral Fallon: But, I think it's this clarity in  
5 talk. Just stop the, you know, "blah, blah, blah."  
6 Everybody gets confused, we get -- end up with nothing. And  
7 the media just fuels this, because they'll pick on a  
8 specific word somewhere, and here you go.

9 Senator Kaine: Thank you.

10 Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

11 Senator Ayotte: Senator Graham.

12 Senator Graham: Well, thank you. I've really enjoyed  
13 this and have gotten a lot out of it, and it's given me a  
14 lot to think about, quite frankly.

15 I just regret -- to our media friends who are here,  
16 thank you for coming. Maybe if we had Tom Brady, we'd fill  
17 up the room. But, that's the world in which we live in.  
18 We're talking about consequential things, and we've got a  
19 couple of reporters here.

20 At the end of the day, let's see what we do agree on.  
21 This is a generational struggle when it comes to radical  
22 Islam, Sunni, and Shi'a. Do you all agree? Somebody will  
23 be dealing with this long after most of us are gone. But,  
24 over time, we win, they lose, right?

25 Admiral Fallon: If we can come up with a strategy for

1 --

2 Senator Graham: Let me tell you why I think they lose.  
3 What they're selling, very few people actually want to buy.  
4 The ace in the hole for all of us, ladies and gentlemen, is  
5 that the radical Islamic view of life is not embraced by  
6 most people in the religion. We just need to provide them  
7 the capacity to fight back over there so we can be protected  
8 here. Does that make sense? Now, how do you do that?

9 Sequestration. Do you all agree that it should be, if  
10 not repealed, replaced?

11 Admiral Fallon: Absolutely.

12 Senator Graham: All agree. If we don't replace  
13 sequestration, our capability to deal with the national  
14 security threats you've described is greatly diminished. Is  
15 that correct?

16 Admiral Fallon: Yes.

17 Senator Graham: The enemy is on the rise, and our  
18 capabilities are going down. Is that a correct assessment?

19 General Mattis: Yes.

20 Senator Graham: Would you agree that our NATO allies  
21 are on a path to reduce their capability, not increase it?

22 General Keane: Yes.

23 Senator Graham: So, we've got two things going on.  
24 We've got the enemy on the rise, we've got America cutting  
25 her budget, and we've got our NATO allies reducing theirs --

1 budgets to help us as partners. Is that a formula for  
2 disaster?

3 Admiral Fallon: Pretty close.

4 Senator Graham: Okay. The 150 account. General  
5 Mattis, you said, if we cut State Department funding in our  
6 developmental accounts under the 150 account, Foreign  
7 Assistance, you'd better -- you'll need more ammunition. Do  
8 you still agree with that?

9 General Mattis: I do, sir. We need a comprehensive  
10 approach.

11 Senator Graham: Do you agree with that, General Keane?

12 General Keane: Yeah.

13 Senator Graham: Admiral Fallon?

14 Admiral Fallon: For sure. Can I give you an example  
15 of something?

16 Senator Graham: Sure, please.

17 Admiral Fallon: Back when I was at CENTCOM, one of my  
18 frustrations was an inability to delegate enough time to  
19 engage in Central Asia. And what I saw, back in those times  
20 there, about a half-dozen years ago, was that we had people  
21 who were looking for something other than what they had --  
22 the Soviet Union. They were concerned about being in a  
23 squeeze between a resurgent Russia and China, and we were  
24 kind of a lifeline. And we had almost no engagement,  
25 because we didn't have the resources, the interest, the time

1 to devote to things like telling people what things are  
2 really like in America. You know, we used to have these --

3 Senator Graham: Yes, sir.

4 Admiral Fallon: -- kind of storefront shops that --

5 Senator Graham: Well, I --

6 Admiral Fallon: -- used diplomatic engagement. That's  
7 all disappeared.

8 Senator Graham: I don't -- I couldn't agree with you  
9 more, but Africa -- we have a very light military footprint  
10 in Africa. Is that correct?

11 Admiral Fallon: Very much so.

12 Senator Graham: It's a continent very much up in the  
13 air, in terms of how it will turn out with the 21st century.

14 I just want the members of the committee to know that I  
15 am the chairman of the Foreign Operations Account. And if  
16 you think sequestration is bad for the military, you ought  
17 to see what it does to our capability to engage the world  
18 peacefully. It absolutely destroys it, which is insane.  
19 We've -- on the verge of eradicating malaria, not -- well,  
20 we're making great progress in AIDS and malaria and polio;  
21 and all this stuff really does matter, in my view.

22 Iraq. General Mattis, how many marines did we have in  
23 the second battle of Fallujah to retake Fallujah, do you  
24 remember?

25 General Mattis: In the second battle, sir, it probably

1 would have been somewhere around -- including the supporting  
2 elements, firing and support, that sort of thing -- probably  
3 around 10,000.

4 Senator Graham: So, we had Army personnel to assist in  
5 there, is that correct?

6 General Mattis: Absolutely. They were significant  
7 Army support.

8 Senator Graham: So, Fallujah is one-tenth the size of  
9 Mosul. Is that right, General Keane? Fallujah is about  
10 one-tenth --

11 How in the world do we go into Fallujah -- excuse me --  
12 Mosul -- if the past is any indication of the future, if we  
13 had 10,000 marines -- and I think it was about 9,000,  
14 actually -- engaged in helping the Iraqi Security Forces  
15 liberate Fallujah from al-Qaeda in Iraq, who I think is  
16 weaker than ISIL -- how in the world do we do this in Mosul  
17 without a larger American component? Can you envision that  
18 being successful without more American help, General Keane?

19 General Keane: I don't know for sure. I mean, as I  
20 said in my remarks, we are advising, training, and assisting  
21 an indigenous force. We made a policy decision not to  
22 commit ground combat force to do that. I basically agree  
23 with that decision.

24 Senator Graham: I'm not saying that we need -- you  
25 said we need brigades in the ready in Kuwait.

1           General Keane:  I believe --

2           Senator Graham:  You said --

3           General Keane:  I --

4           Senator Graham:  Excuse me.

5           General Keane:  If --

6           Senator Graham:  You said we needed people on the front

7 lines, embedded in Iraqi units.  Is that correct?

8           General Keane:  Absolutely.

9           Senator Graham:  What number does that come out to, in

10 your mind?

11          General Keane:  Well, I think we get very close to a

12 number, in train and assist and advising, something close to

13 10,000.

14          Senator Graham:  Okay.

15          General Keane:  And --

16          Senator Graham:  I just --

17          General Keane:  -- not the few hundred that we're

18 currently doing.  I'm talking about front-line advisors with

19 companies and battalions --

20          Senator Graham:  I got you, and I've got 30 seconds

21 left.

22          So, we've got 3,000 on the ground today.  We need

23 10,000, in your view.  I think that's correct.  If we lose

24 in Mosul -- if we take ISIL on and lose, that's a bad day

25 for all of us.  Do you agree?  You've got to take these guys

1 on and win. All of you agree? Don't take them on if you  
2 can't win.

3 Syria. Do you all -- how many of you support a no-fly  
4 zone, a buffer zone to allow the Free Syrian Army --

5 General Keane: I do.

6 Senator Graham: General Mattis, no?

7 General Mattis: Not until we figure out what we want  
8 the end state to look like.

9 Senator Graham: Fair enough.

10 Admiral?

11 Admiral Fallon: No, I've been a part of a 10-year  
12 effort in Iraq that ended up being --

13 Senator Graham: So --

14 Admiral Fallon: -- basically, wasted.

15 Senator Graham: Okay. Let me just ask this simple  
16 question. One of the reasons that ISIL was defeated in  
17 Khobani -- and I want to tip my hat to the Kurds and to our  
18 coalition forces -- is that you had the Kurds fighting ISIL  
19 on the ground, and you had American air power. What happens  
20 if we send the Free Syrian Army, trained up, into Syria to  
21 fight ISIL and we don't neutralize Assad's air power? Do  
22 you not believe that he will engage the Free Syrian Army  
23 through the air? How do they survive if he does that?

24 General Keane: Well, the facts are, he's engaging the  
25 Free Syrian Army right now. The Free Syrian Army today, on

1 the ground --

2       You know what's so frustrating about this? When the  
3 moderate rebels took on Assad's regime, back in 2010 -- do  
4 you remember this? They had the momentum. There were many  
5 predicting that the regime was about to fall. What  
6 happened? What happened? This is what happened. The  
7 Iranians jumped in with 5,000 Hezbollah out of Lebanon.  
8 They jumped in with 3,000 Quds Force, plus they had top  
9 leaders on the ground to assist, and Russian airplanes  
10 flying in with Iranian airplanes with military supplies,  
11 every single day. The Free Syrian Army came to us, the  
12 momentum shifted, and they said, "What?" And many of you  
13 were on their dance card when they came to town here. I --  
14 even I was on it, as probably my two colleagues? What did  
15 they want? They wanted simply this, "We need arms to be  
16 able to stop anti- -- tank systems and antiaircraft systems  
17 to shoot down those airplanes. We don't need your troops,  
18 we don't even need your air power. Let us fight this war  
19 ourselves. We think we can win it." And we said no. We  
20 have never recovered from that decision.

21       That decision was revisited again with strong feelings  
22 by Petraeus, Clinton, Panetta, and Dempsey in 2012. Took it  
23 to the White House, said, "This is what we've got to do."  
24 Petraeus vetted that force as the CIA Director. The  
25 President said no. We have never recovered from that

1 decision.

2 General Mattis: I think we may have missed the  
3 opportunity to work with the Free Syrian Army. They've been  
4 ground down between --

5 Senator Graham: Right.

6 General Mattis: -- al-Nusra and --

7 Senator Graham: Right.

8 General Mattis: -- ISIS, on one side, Assad on the  
9 other. I -- we may -- we're going to have to really look at  
10 what options we have, sir.

11 Admiral Fallon: The only comment I'd make is that we  
12 can sit here and wring our hands and bemoan the past in lots  
13 of situations. We need to deal with the present. So, for  
14 now, forget the past, except for lessons learned for new  
15 strategies, but we need to figure out what it's going to  
16 take right now to move forward.

17 Senator Graham: Well, let me tell you what I think the  
18 presence is -- present -- is that Syria and Iraq are great  
19 platforms to attack the United States. And if we keep  
20 screwing around with this, and these guys get stronger and,  
21 a year from now, they're still in place, we're going to get  
22 hit. It's time to put these guys on the run with a regional  
23 force that we complement.

24 Because let me tell you about the end game, General  
25 Mattis. The end game is, America's going to get attacked if

1 we don't deal with the threat in Iraq and Syria. That -- do  
2 you agree with that?

3 General Mattis: One-hundred percent, sir.

4 Senator Graham: Thank you.

5 Senator Ayotte: Senator Donnelly.

6 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Madam Chair.

7 And I want to thank all of you for your extraordinary  
8 service. We are so much in your debt.

9 And America has already been attacked, in that we have  
10 lost a number of our young people already to ISIL.

11 Tragically, in my home State. And this is -- they've said  
12 they're a caliphate, which means they either grow or they  
13 go. And in Iraq, I would like to get your best ideas.

14 General Keane, you're -- you were really influential in  
15 working with the Sunni community there and in trying to push  
16 back, before. How do we coordinate with them, work with  
17 them, to push ISIS out of Iraq and then to get them in  
18 Syria? And then I'd like to, obviously, hear from General  
19 Mattis and Admiral Fallon, because of your hard work in  
20 this, as well.

21 General Keane: Well, you know, when you think about  
22 the Sunnis, I mean, the Sunni tribes are not a homogeneous  
23 organization, to say the least, and all of us are very  
24 familiar with it at this table.

25 Senator Donnelly: Right.

1           General Keane:  So, we have irreconcilable Sunni tribes  
2  -- many of them are part of the former Saddam Hussein regime  
3  elements -- who are fighting with ISIS, and they will  
4  continue to fight with ISIS.  The rest of them, by and  
5  large, are reconcilable.  And what happened before in Iraq  
6  informs of this.  When they pushed back against al-Qaeda,  
7  beginning in Anbar Province, and moved into Diyala Province  
8  and other places where Sunnis lived -- they know they have  
9  made a bed with strange fellows, here.  They know that it's  
10 not in their interest to support the long-term objective of  
11 ISIS, which -- ISIS wants to govern the populations it  
12 controls, and impose seventh-century Talibanism on it.

13           Right now in Mosul -- this is what life is like -- all  
14 universities and school systems are shut down.  The only  
15 schools that are operating are the madrassas, indoctrinating  
16 radical Islamists, ISIS believes, and a medical school that  
17 they -- they're forcing students into to become doctors to  
18 take care of their wounded.

19           Second, they do not run government services very well.  
20 Garbage is on the streets.  Other government services  
21 aren't provided.  The people in Mosul are not recreating at  
22 all, they're not even socializing with extended family  
23 members who don't live in their immediate vicinity.  Life as  
24 they knew it -- teeming marketplaces, traffic jams, a  
25 thriving community -- is gone.

1 Senator Donnelly: So, how would you push them --

2 General Keane: So, what we know --

3 Senator Donnelly: And I apologize if you already  
4 answered --

5 General Keane: We know that that exists. We know that  
6 ISIS and reconcilable Sunnis are on a collision course.  
7 What we have to do is incentivize them more than what we are  
8 doing now, to get at your question.

9 One of the things we can do. Obviously, Abadi is key  
10 to this, as Admiral Fallon laid out. And I strongly support  
11 that.

12 Secondly, where -- we need to go into Anbar Province --  
13 and we have some plans for this -- to train and arm the  
14 Sunni tribes. But, we've got to take another step with  
15 that. We've got to be willing to be on the ground with them  
16 when they take the fight to ISIS. We need advisors with  
17 them. We need people to help coordinate fire support and  
18 close air support with them. That will incentivize them.  
19 We need to help to accelerate that timetable for them.

20 The thing that we have working for us -- again, to  
21 emphasize this -- is ISIS itself. But, here's the problem  
22 we have. The political leadership in Iraq does not want to  
23 wait, because the pressure they have on them from the people  
24 in Mosul -- and the conditions that I am describing to you  
25 are very real, and they are accountable to those conditions

1 -- they want to go faster. The United States is pulling  
2 back and saying we're not ready. The military in Iraq wants  
3 to go faster, because it's answering to its national  
4 leadership. We're not ready to do this yet. I'm not  
5 certain we're going to be ready to do it by the summer. And  
6 --

7 Senator Donnelly: Well --

8 General Keane: -- the reason is, we're not applying  
9 enough resources to it, Senator.

10 Senator Donnelly: I was just going to ask you. Are we  
11 not ready because we don't have the ability to do it or  
12 because we don't have the plan to do what's necessary?

13 General Keane: Well, mostly, I believe -- listen, we  
14 can craft a counteroffensive plan to take back Mosul and  
15 also to take back Anbar Province. We know how to do that.  
16 That's tacking up the two great biblical river valleys.  
17 Most of this is about resources and dealing with what most  
18 of us believe is a relatively weak indigenous hand on the  
19 ground that we're playing. If you've got a weak hand, then  
20 we should be strengthening that hand, not with the minimum  
21 amount of resources, but with all the resources it takes to  
22 strengthen that hand. And we're not doing that.

23 Senator Donnelly: Well, here's my fear, is that this  
24 is a hotbed. This is where they are communicating with  
25 people in our country to attack us, in Syria and in Iraq and

1 with ISIS. And if we have resources, they ought to be used  
2 in this area, it seems to me, that we either eliminate them  
3 or there's going to be a catastrophe in our own country.

4 I would like to hear what you think about how we start  
5 to go on the move in Syria, as well.

6 General Mattis?

7 General Mattis: Senator, the first thing -- we don't  
8 lack military capability. It's been -- sequestration has  
9 stressed it. What we lack is the political will and the  
10 definition of the political end state. If we get -- if we  
11 figure out whose side we're on, here, then when you look at  
12 what Maliki did to break trust with those tribes, I think  
13 the new Prime Minister has probably got a 50-50 chance of  
14 restoring that trust. It's hard. Putting in the Sunni  
15 Minister of Defense was a great step, I think. But, we're  
16 going to have to decide if -- what the end state is, and  
17 then we're going to have to commit resources that we've not  
18 committed yet.

19 Senator Donnelly: I am out of time, but I just want to  
20 thank all of you for coming here today, for continuing your  
21 service, because the people of our country continue to need  
22 your help. Thank you very much.

23 Senator Ayotte: Senator Sullivan.

24 Senator Sullivan: I, also, want to thank you,  
25 gentlemen, for your -- for being here today, your great

1 service, tremendous service to our country.

2 So, I think there's broad agreement that seems,  
3 certainly among the three of you, I think among all the  
4 panelists here, on the importance of a comprehensive  
5 strategy that integrates all elements of American power, all  
6 of our resources. And we've talked about economic, we've  
7 talked about diplomatic, we've talked about finance.  
8 Certainly, we are focused on military.

9 One instrument of American power, though, that we  
10 haven't really discussed, hasn't really come up in the  
11 conversations yet -- and maybe it's because, 10 years ago,  
12 it didn't exist as an instrument of power -- is American  
13 energy. As you know, we are once again on the verge, if we  
14 haven't already gotten there, on being the world's energy  
15 superpower, a position that we used to occupy, several  
16 decades ago. And now we're back. Oil, gas, renewables.

17 And, from the perspective of dealing with long-term  
18 national security threats, whether it's Iran, whether it's  
19 Russia, whether it's China, whether it's ISIS -- I just want  
20 to start with two questions for you, General Keane. How  
21 critical and beneficial do you think it is, in dealing with  
22 these longer-term threats, that we now have a tremendous  
23 resource in America, which is energy, that -- not only for  
24 our own citizens, but that we can be exporting to our  
25 allies? And do you think it undermines America's security

1 when we undertake policies, as the current administration  
2 does on a regular basis -- this weekend is another example  
3 -- where we undermine policies that enable us to responsibly  
4 develop our own energy resources that can benefit us as a  
5 nation and our national security?

6 General Keane: Well, certainly, energy independence  
7 for the United States and the rapid growth that's taken  
8 place, you know, most recently, is certainly an added  
9 measure of our national security. And I'm delighted to see  
10 it. And my own view of it -- I'm not an energy expert -- is  
11 that certainly we should do whatever we can to ensure that  
12 independence -- and I'm convinced we can still protect the  
13 environment while we're doing it.

14 Its relationship to the world is significant. I mean,  
15 you hit on it. Europeans are tied like an umbilical cord to  
16 Putin and Russia because of the energy dependence. We can  
17 help with that if we changed our policies, in terms of  
18 particularly exporting natural gas, as you know.

19 But, also we have to be realistic. Radical Islam and  
20 what is taking place in these countries, laid out on this  
21 map, is a fundamental geopolitical movement, and they're  
22 operating in countries where there are not democracies and  
23 where there are significant conditions that have --  
24 providing a groundswell for this kind of activity. They  
25 would be doing that, regardless of Saudi oil, or not. That

1 -- we've got to understand that. So, if we pull the plug of  
2 any dependence in the Middle East on oil, which we're on the  
3 way to doing, it doesn't change the harsh reality of Iran's  
4 march to regional domination and radical Islamist march to  
5 geopolitical control of Muslim countries. That's still  
6 there, and that threat to Europe and to the United States as  
7 a result of it would exist, regardless.

8 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

9 I'd like to move from the strategic to the tactical.  
10 I've had the honor, the last 18 months, as serving as a  
11 commanding officer of 6 ANGLICO in the Marine Corps Forces  
12 Reserves. In fact, I was just out with some of my ANGLICO  
13 marines, Fort Lewis, Washington, this past weekend.

14 General Mattis, the marines of 6 ANGLICO send their  
15 greetings.

16 As you know, that mission is -- of the ANGLICO units is  
17 to deploying small forces with foreign armies, calling  
18 airstrikes, other supporting arms.

19 General Mattis, this question is for you. To make  
20 progress on the ground against ISIL, is there any scenario  
21 that you could see that would not include integrated  
22 supporting arms firepower? And are there foreign forces  
23 that can do that, or is that something that is an area that  
24 is pretty much needed to have American troops, whether  
25 ANGLICO units or Special Forces units, doing that kind of

1 mission?

2           General Mattis: Senator, there are other forces -- the  
3 Australians, Canadians, British, French -- that can do the  
4 close-air coordination integration, but no one has the  
5 capacity or probably the frequency of training that permits  
6 us to do it best. I would only suggest that, as you look at  
7 this and the kind of forces that can work with allies, this  
8 committee should prioritize them, whether they be the Army  
9 Green Berets, the Marines ANGLICO, and even to the point of  
10 looking at our Army brigades today, our Marine battalions,  
11 differently than we looked at them as just conventional  
12 warfighters 10 years ago. They have capabilities to do much  
13 of this and to give a -- kind of steel the spine of the  
14 allied forces if we have the political will to put them in.

15           Senator Sullivan: Great. Thank you very much.

16           Senator Ayotte: Senator Hirono.

17           Senator Hirono: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

18           And I want to thank all three of you for your very  
19 substantive and provocative testimony.

20           General Keane, you described life in Mosul, where  
21 schools are just set up to radicalize the population, where  
22 just everyday life has changed. And one wonders how long  
23 ISIL can so-called "govern" in this way. So, you're  
24 indicating that we need to be -- "we," the United States --  
25 should have people on the ground, not in -- boots on the

1 ground, when the people in Iraq finally get to the point  
2 where they want to fight ISIL. Now, the question becomes,  
3 then, When is that time? And would you say that that is  
4 perhaps a major role for our intelligence community, to  
5 inform us as to when that critical point is that we need to  
6 be there to help the people fight back?

7 And I'd also like to ask that question of General  
8 Keane, because, General Keane, you noted the importance of  
9 our intelligence community in establishing priorities.

10 General Keane: Yeah, the -- listen, that's a very  
11 tough question, Senator. The only thing I can -- in helping  
12 you with that, is just look back a little bit.

13 We had an insurgency begin in Iraq in the spring and  
14 summer of 2003. The al-Qaeda -- led by Saddam Hussein and  
15 his people -- the al-Qaeda fell in on that very quickly.  
16 And then in 2006, some 2 and a half, 3 years later, Sunni  
17 tribes began to -- who were aligned with them initially --  
18 began to push back. And much of it was literally driven by  
19 women, frankly, because the women were putting pressure on  
20 the tribal leaders, that they did not want their children  
21 and their grandchildren to live like this for generations to  
22 come, with seventh-century Talibanism, under the foot of  
23 what al-Qaeda was doing, controlling every aspect of their  
24 life, from diet to costume, behavior, Shari'ah law, et  
25 cetera.

1           That frustration is already there. I do believe that,  
2 given the fact that, particularly in Anbar Province, this  
3 has existed before, the accelerant will be faster and not  
4 take 3 years.

5           I'm going to make an assumption that our intelligence  
6 community, with the use of informants and others, are  
7 monitoring what is taking place, and we have some sense of  
8 what the conditions are, and, more importantly, what the  
9 attitude and behavior are of the people, themselves.

10           But, let's also be honest, that there's just so much  
11 those people in Mosul will be able to do against a well-  
12 armed and well-equipped force, as ISIS is, in Mosul and in  
13 its suburbs. To eject them out of there will take a  
14 conventional military force to do that, supported by air  
15 power and some pretty good intelligence on where people are.

16           The attitude and support of the people will be a  
17 factor, but I don't believe, in of itself, it will be  
18 decisive. What will be decisive is the use of military  
19 force to defeat that military organization that's there.

20           Senator Hirono: And the conventional military force  
21 should be the Iraqi military, themselves, with --

22           General Keane: Yes.

23           Senator Hirono: -- possible air support from --

24           General Keane: Yes --

25           Senator Hirono: -- from allies.

1           General Keane:  -- very much so.  Well, it's --  
2   Peshmerga, as you know, who is the militia from Kurdistan,  
3   who have the will to fight, and the skill -- they don't have  
4   all the weapons they need -- Iraqi Army -- and, by the way,  
5   the Iraqi Army probably is in a little bit better shape,  
6   based on some recent reports I just got this weekend from  
7   people who returned, than many of the media reports are  
8   suggesting.  But, secondly -- and thirdly would be the Sunni  
9   tribes.

10           Now, the Shi'a militia are a part of this, and they  
11   have strengthened the Iraqi Army very considerably.  The  
12   best fighters in the Shi'a militia are Iranian-backed Shi'a  
13   militia.

14           Senator Hirono:  General, I'm sorry to cut you off.

15           General Keane:  Go ahead, I'll stop.

16           Senator Hirono:  I have a couple of other questions,  
17   particularly with reference to the rebalance to the Asia-  
18   Pacific.

19           And, General Mattis, I think you indicated in your  
20   testimony the importance of the Navy.  And clearly, Admiral  
21   Fallon, you have a familiarity with what's going on in the  
22   Asia-Pacific area, because of your previous position.

23           So, the Navy is intending to put 60 percent of our  
24   ships in the Asia-Pacific area.  So, for the two of you, I'd  
25   like to know, How is this viewed by China?  How is it -- how

1 is this kind of resource placement, due to our rebalance,  
2 seen by our allies and by our enemies? Just very briefly,  
3 if -- please comment.

4 General Mattis: Senator, I think, very briefly -- this  
5 is a little bit speculative, now -- I think 60 percent of  
6 too few is probably still too few. But, I think that  
7 anything we can do to reassure our ally that their economic,  
8 territorial future is not going to be under the veto of the  
9 Chinese would be welcome out in the Pacific.

10 Senator Hirono: Admiral Fallon?

11 Admiral Fallon: Aloha, Senator.

12 Senator Hirono: Aloha.

13 Admiral Fallon: I think this whole discussion of the  
14 pivot has been distorted and not handled particularly well  
15 at all. So, just a couple of facts:

16 So, 60 percent versus 50 percent, which is what we in  
17 the Navy -- and we'll just stick to the Navy now -- the Navy  
18 was pretty well split 50-50 during the cold war. As soon as  
19 the cold war ended, internal Navy leadership started to  
20 press to rebalance, way before this became a recent  
21 political slogan, and -- because it made sense, because of  
22 the vast size of the Pacific, and so forth. But, that 10  
23 percent, if you just take one denomination -- aircraft  
24 carriers -- that's one aircraft carrier, based on today's  
25 fleet. And, by the way, that carrier is already in the

1 Pacific. So, much of this is just chatter, pretty mindless.  
2 Again, take another measure, the entire fleet, at 280 ships,  
3 10 percent of that's 28. So, what are we really talking  
4 about? Not a whole lot.

5 But, the perceptions are all over the place. And,  
6 depending on who you are and in what country you are in Asia  
7 -- if you're Chinese, you use this as a great example of,  
8 "See? We knew that you guys are coming to, you know,  
9 encircle us. It's yet another blah, blah, blah," and a  
10 justification, in some respects, for them to push to  
11 increase their military capabilities.

12 So, I think it's a -- it's overblown. The reality is,  
13 we need to be engaged in the Far East, in the Asia-Pacific.  
14 And, given the size and scope of the place, it makes all the  
15 sense in the world to have our fleet tilted that way, given  
16 the realities in the world. We need to work very closely  
17 with our long-term allies out there -- the Japanese, the  
18 Australians, and others, and those who support us. But, at  
19 the same time, we have got to work this difficult task of  
20 trying to figure out how we collaborate, in ways that make  
21 sense, with the Chinese for the long term. It's a huge  
22 country, huge impact, blah, blah, blah. You know the impact  
23 economically in this country.

24 And so, we don't need to have another cold war. We  
25 don't need to have another road to conflict with these guys.

1 We have very interesting, deep relationships in every  
2 aspect, except the military-to-military. That's where the  
3 emphasis needs to be. I think our leadership, particularly  
4 the military leadership in our country, is working this  
5 right now, and we need to continue it.

6 Senator Hirono: Thank you very much.

7 My time is up.

8 Senator Ayotte: Senator Tillis.

9 Senator Tillis: Gentlemen, thank you for your  
10 leadership and your extraordinary record of service.

11 General Mattis, you made a comment that we seem to be  
12 at about a low point with our Middle East policy or  
13 effectiveness over the last four decades. Can you point to  
14 anything, say, over the last 6 or 8 years, that you think is  
15 something positive that we've done that we should build on,  
16 and in the context of the number of things that you've said  
17 that are not working?

18 General Mattis: Yes, sir, I can. We've been somewhat  
19 in a strategy-free environment for quite some time. It  
20 didn't start with this administration. And so, we've been  
21 wandering. We have policies that go on and come off. But,  
22 I think if you were to look at the fact that Maliki was  
23 pushed out of office, with our full support there inside  
24 Baghdad, I think that was a positive step. We cannot get  
25 Iraq to fight this enemy when they have a Prime Minister

1 who's basically declared Kurds and Sunni persona non grata  
2 in their own country. I think the engagement -- the  
3 President going to Saudi Arabia as we speak is certainly a  
4 positive point.

5 You know, I'd have to think more, Senator, but I'll  
6 take it for the record. If I think of something more, I'll  
7 get back to you. We've disappointed a lot of friends out  
8 there, from Tel Aviv to Riyadh, from Abu Dhabi to Cairo.

9 Senator Tillis: General Keane, you mentioned the need  
10 to equate, I think, radical Islamists to Nazis and  
11 Communists of the past. Why do you think it's important to  
12 use those words? And why do you think it's dangerous not  
13 to?

14 General Keane: Well, I use it because it's something  
15 we coped with in the past rather successfully, and they were  
16 ideologies, themselves, you know, that another generation  
17 had to deal with. We built -- we beat Naziism with brute  
18 force. And I think Communist ideology that expresses  
19 simplistically -- it's only more sophisticated than that --  
20 but, simplistically, I think we beat it with better ideas.  
21 I think it's a combination of both of those that we need, to  
22 deal with radical Islam. We obviously need to use force.  
23 But, that alone will not solve this problem.

24 And it -- the ideology also has to be dealt with.  
25 After all, what they are running from and why they do not

1 want the United States in the region, it's not because --  
2 just because of our guns. It's because of our ideas. It's  
3 democracy and capitalism that is an anathema to them, and  
4 they don't want our ideas polluting those governments that  
5 they're attempting to overthrow so that they move in a  
6 direction of those ideas.

7 So, that's why I used that, because we want to run from  
8 the ideological aspect of this thing, and you have to face  
9 it, and you have to explain it, and you have to undermine  
10 it, and you have to counter it.

11 Senator Tillis: Admiral Fallon?

12 Admiral Fallon: Senator, I think that one of the  
13 problems today with this radical jihadist stuff is that we  
14 give it unmerited credibility. I don't view this problem in  
15 the same context as I view, for example, the need to make  
16 sure this country is fundamentally sound in its political,  
17 economic, and other aspects going forward for our future,  
18 nor do I think that it's in the same relative merit as our  
19 long-term relationship with China.

20 And the extent to which we hype everything that seems  
21 to happen with these characters, I think, is one of the  
22 reasons why they're attractive to the disenfranchised and  
23 the folks who are struggling in other countries that see  
24 this as a chance to gain glory and go help out the crusade.

25 So, I think we'd be well served to try to tamp this

1 stuff down. This army, if you would, in Iraq and Syria is  
2 certainly not the 82nd Airborne or the 1st Marine Division,  
3 by any means. It's a pickup band of jihadists that share  
4 blah, blah, blah -- we've gone through that. They are not  
5 in the same league with our capabilities. And I think the  
6 extent to which we continue to hype them is really  
7 counterproductive to what we're doing, or what we should be  
8 doing.

9 Senator Tillis: Thank you.

10 You know, there's been a lot of discussion in the  
11 Middle East. Some of you touched, in your opening  
12 statements, on Russia's incursions. What more attention  
13 should we focus on, and what should we expect, if you had a  
14 crystal ball, to see in the Ukraine and other areas in that  
15 region if we don't act? What specific steps should we be  
16 taking, beyond what we've done, to send the message -- we  
17 talked about economic actions, but other actions -- to send  
18 the message to the Russians that what they're doing is  
19 unacceptable and that we're better positioned to react to  
20 them?

21 General Keane: Well, I said -- mentioned some of those  
22 in my remarks. I think we have to admit that -- to  
23 ourselves, that our diplomatic efforts, using sanctions as  
24 the mainstream, have certainly not dissuaded Putin from what  
25 he's attempting to achieve, what I think is a new political

1 order in Eastern Europe, post-cold war. You know, whether  
2 he's a strategic thinker or a tactical thinker and he's  
3 impulsive and he reacts to sort of current events, I think,  
4 is beside the point. I don't think we should waste a lot of  
5 time about that. I mean, the fact of the matter is, he is  
6 acting, and he is taking advantage of the situation. It is  
7 a huge opportunity for him. He senses that Europe has  
8 feckless leadership and is probably not going to respond.  
9 And he also puts the United States in that category. And  
10 he's advantaging himself as a result of it.

11         What do we have to do? We have to convince him that  
12 we're serious, that NATO really matters to us, that Eastern  
13 Europe does really matter to us. Otherwise, I think he  
14 keeps coming. And certainly, we want to avoid a military  
15 conflict with them. And I think there are steps that we can  
16 prudently take to do that. One is what was discussed before  
17 about helping with energy and removing some of the energy  
18 dependence that the Europeans have on them. But, secondly,  
19 listen, the threat has shifted. So, we have a threat in  
20 Eastern Europe, on NATO's eastern flank. Let's shift NATO  
21 forces to that area, not just temporarily in and out, but  
22 let's put some permanent bases there and demonstrate to him  
23 that Article 5 really does matter.

24         I'm absolutely convinced, in his conference room, he  
25 has people sitting around the table with him saying, "Do we

1 really believe that Anglo-America will respond to a threat  
2 that we impose with disguised soldiers in Estonia?" And  
3 they're answering that question. But, we don't want that  
4 question on the table. We want to take that question off  
5 the table. And I think we can do that.

6 Now, whether we put the missile defense back into where  
7 we took it out at the beginning of this administration, I  
8 think that needs to be relooked. I'm not confident that  
9 that was all right, to begin with, dealing with what that  
10 threat was. It was the Iranian ballistic missile threat.  
11 So, I think that needs to be relooked, in terms of where we  
12 place it.

13 But, certainly, it is a disgrace that we haven't been  
14 able to provide arms to the Ukrainians, who want to push  
15 back and have a history of courageous military interaction  
16 to protect their own people. They're not asking for  
17 anything else. They're not asking for our troops, they're  
18 not asking for air power. All they wanted was some weapons.  
19 And we've stiffed them on it. Makes no sense to me  
20 whatsoever. What a message that sends to Putin. It's not  
21 surprising he's on the move again in eastern Ukraine.

22 The -- our diplomatic efforts have not worked, because  
23 they don't have anything behind it. We need to put some  
24 things on the table that will strengthen our diplomatic  
25 efforts, and we haven't been doing that.

1 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Madam Chair.

2 Senator Ayotte: Senator Manchin.

3 Senator Manchin: Thank you very much.

4 Let me thank all three of you for your service, but,  
5 more importantly, for the testimonies you've given today.  
6 You've been very frank and direct.

7 I think that what General Fallon said -- Admiral Fallon  
8 said, basically, is, we have to deal with the future in what  
9 we're doing today and what we're going to do in the future.

10 But, hindsight being 20-20, you know, you look at the All-  
11 Volunteer military that we have today -- I run into an awful  
12 lot of people in our little State of West Virginia who have  
13 served because they were drafted or because they enlisted,  
14 but they were serving. Today, that's less likely, with the  
15 volunteer, and they all believe that if we had had some  
16 intermingling of a volunteer versus draft, that we wouldn't  
17 have had a 13-year war, we've had better decisions, better  
18 direction, if you will, because the people would have  
19 demanded it.

20 Hindsight being 20-20 -- I get this question asked a  
21 lot -- we took out Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Should we have  
22 ever entered Iraq? Should we have declared war on Iraq?  
23 And we went in and took him out. Is Iraq better, safer than  
24 it was before? Qadhafi, we took Qadhafi out. Is Libya in  
25 better shape than it was before? And now we're in this

1 thrones of Syria. What do we do in Syria? Do we take out  
2 Assad? And what would that leave in Syria?

3 Also, we're going to be dealing the fact -- do we sign  
4 on with the sanctions of Iran, double down? Do we give the  
5 President the ability to negotiate up to March 24th, then  
6 double down?

7 And you all have been forthright with some of your  
8 comments, and I'd love to know what you think about the --  
9 first of all, Iraq. Should we, or should we have not?  
10 Should we in Syria? And how much effect do you think we'll  
11 have trying to find people that'll fight. ISIL will then  
12 turn and fight Assad. And our commitment -- as I'm  
13 understanding it, the Saudis and the Turks and everybody  
14 else want us to commit to fighting and taking out Assad if  
15 they're going to help us fight and take out ISIL.

16 So, with that, I'll open the door and see where you all  
17 go with it. And we'll just start down the row -- down the  
18 aisle -- we'll start with you, Admiral Fallon, first.

19 Admiral Fallon: Well, Senator, I would not go back and  
20 speculate on the merits of how good or how bad each of those  
21 decisions were, based on where we are, except to say that --

22 Senator Manchin: Well, the reason I've asked that,  
23 sir, is because we have to make a decision of -- Syria is  
24 close to making that same decision. Do you learn from  
25 whatever we've done?

1 Admiral Fallon: So --

2 Senator Manchin: Okay.

3 Admiral Fallon: So, I think the lesson I would take  
4 is, okay, we made a decision, and where are we now?

5 Senator Manchin: Gotcha.

6 Admiral Fallon: And, you know, what are the chances  
7 that we're going to be in a different place if we take a  
8 similar decision, whatever.

9 But, I'd like to go back, if I could, to your opening  
10 comment, because I think it's the most important thing, to  
11 me, that -- maybe not the most important -- the thing that  
12 concerns me the most for the long term as I look at our  
13 country and our ability to address national security issues  
14 and the future health of this nation. And that is the very,  
15 very small percentage of this population that is in any way,  
16 shape, or form actively engaged with the uniformed services.  
17 So, we got a lot of rhetoric in the last, you know, half-  
18 dozen years or so about this, but, as we go forward, what I  
19 see that really concerns me is that there's a growing gap  
20 between the few that are actively engaged in this -- and I  
21 get the feeling that a lot of people kind of think, "That's  
22 just -- it's a job. You know, this is their job. They're  
23 going to go fight this thing." So, is that what we really  
24 want to have in this country? And are -- do you think we're  
25 going to make better decisions if we have that view, that we

1 have this paid professional army that goes off and takes  
2 care of business while everybody else does their own thing?  
3 I think that's a huge problem, and we ignore it at our  
4 peril.

5 Thank you, sir.

6 Senator Manchin: General Keane?

7 General Keane: Yeah. Starting with the All-Volunteer  
8 Force, I served, as Jim and Fox did also, in a draft  
9 military, and transitioned to our Volunteer Force, post-  
10 Vietnam. And, as a result of that, I think, by anybody's  
11 judgment, that force is probably the best this country has  
12 ever put together, and there's nothing quite like it  
13 anyplace else in the world. I attribute that to a couple of  
14 reasons. One, the force looks like America in its  
15 diversity, ethnicity, et cetera. And, two, they want to be  
16 there, and they want to accept the burden and the  
17 responsibility that goes with it.

18 In that draft military, we had so many there that  
19 didn't want to be there, it was frustrating to deal with  
20 them. We did a lot of social rehabilitation for people. I  
21 don't believe that's what a global power is about, frankly.  
22 I think the skills that are needed of the military today,  
23 it's a prerequisite that we have the kind of people in the  
24 organization that are willing to make the sacrifice.

25 I accept what Fox is saying. I have similar concerns.

1 One percent are involved, and, you know, we've grown apart  
2 from the American people as a result of a Volunteer Force.  
3 But, nonetheless, I don't think going back to revisit the  
4 draft and conscription is the answer to that.

5 Secondly, on Iraq and Syria, Iraq itself -- I was a  
6 four-star at the time. I didn't think we should -- I was  
7 shocked that, in the first week in December of 2001, we had  
8 made the decision to go to war in Iraq. Just after we  
9 toppled the Taliban, I was asking the question, "Why?" and  
10 "When?" -- et cetera. I could see the need for it, at some  
11 point, certainly, because of the WMD issue, but I -- my view  
12 at that time was to stay on top of the al-Qaeda, which was  
13 the reason we were in Afghanistan, and run these guys into  
14 every hole that they're in until we get rid of them. That's  
15 kind of where I was. And if that meant dealing with  
16 Pakistan and their resistance, so what? But, after what  
17 took place here, that was my motivation.

18 In Syria, listen, Syria is as complex a thing as we've  
19 had on our plate. And you can be on any side of this issue  
20 and make reasonable sense. The only thing that concerns me  
21 about this -- and I respect Jim when he says, "I want to  
22 know what the political end state is." I think what we try  
23 to achieve in Syria is, Assad goes, some form of that  
24 government stays, in partnership with moderate forces, to  
25 help run that country. So, you're looking towards a

1 political solution.

2 But, I just know that we're on a collision course that  
3 -- right now in Syria, with ISIS expanding control and  
4 dominance inside the country at the same time we're trying  
5 to push back on them with our ground forces that's being  
6 pounded by the Assad regime. And if we continue to let that  
7 happen, the Free Syrian Army and the force that we're trying  
8 to support is going to go away. And that's the reality of  
9 it. Do you do something about that? Do you try to make  
10 some attempts to do that, dealing with all of the  
11 geopolitical complications that that entails? My answer to  
12 that is yes. I think we should try.

13 And listen, it is hard. I'm not suggesting it's not.  
14 But, like most human endeavors, it's not hopeless, either.

15 Senator Manchin: Madam Chair, may I just indulge and  
16 ask the -- General Mattis if he would --

17 General Mattis: Thank you, Senator.

18 Senator Manchin: -- on the volunteer versus the --

19 General Mattis: Yes, sir. Sir, I think the Volunteer  
20 Force has been good for the military. I think it's been bad  
21 for the country.

22 I would only add, on the decision to invade a country,  
23 to go into a -- I don't know what our policy is on Syria, I  
24 don't know what the political end state is that people want  
25 to accomplish. And if you wander into a war without knowing

1 that, you're probably going to get lost on your way to  
2 somewhere.

3 I would just tell you that the -- we should never go  
4 into these countries unless we have a reasonable chance of a  
5 better outcome. And war is fundamentally unpredictable, so  
6 that means a long-term commitment with a clear political end  
7 state and a fully resourced, sound strategy to get there.  
8 And otherwise, don't go in and then look at Libya in your  
9 rearview mirrors, anywhere else, and wonder what you've  
10 done.

11 Senator Manchin: Thanks, Madam Chair.

12 Admiral Fallon: Senator, could -- I don't want to  
13 leave this with the impression that I endorse a return to  
14 conscription. I don't, at all. But, I think that we ought  
15 to be seriously considering how we motivate people for  
16 service in this country, not just in the military, but in a  
17 range of things. But, the way we're headed right now causes  
18 me a lot of concern.

19 Senator Manchin: I keep thinking it can be a blend  
20 between the volunteer that we have now, with a pool of --  
21 draft, if you will -- or --

22 Admiral Fallon: If we had a -- an atmosphere in which  
23 we encouraged service in this country, I think we'd have no  
24 difficulty filling the ranks of the Armed Forces with people  
25 that would volunteer. If that were the mindset of the

1 majority of the people in this country.

2 Senator Manchin: Well, people have just said that,  
3 basically, if we had -- if we showed the volunteer -- if we  
4 had an All-Volunteer Army during Vietnam, we'd still be in  
5 Vietnam.

6 Senator Ayotte: Senator King.

7 Senator King: Thank you, Madam Chair.

8 Somebody asked me, up in Maine recently, what my job  
9 consisted of. And I thought for a minute, and I said, "It's  
10 applied history with a minor in communications." And your  
11 testimony today has been ample evidence that this is really  
12 all about history. And I've got a lot of favorite quotes  
13 from Mark Twain, but my alltime favorite is that, "History  
14 doesn't always repeat itself, but it usually rhymes." And  
15 that's what we're talking about here today.

16 Talking about history. Would you all agree -- and I  
17 don't need lengthy answers -- that leaving Afghanistan  
18 prematurely would be a major strategic mistake for this  
19 country?

20 General Mattis: Yes, sir.

21 General Keane: Yes.

22 Senator King: Admiral Fallon? You agree?

23 Admiral Fallon: Yes.

24 Senator King: I -- to me, it's -- given all the  
25 progress -- and I don't think the American people realize

1 the amount of progress that's been made in Afghanistan, in  
2 terms of the lives of the people. It's fumbling the ball on  
3 the 5 yardline. And a modest additional commitment, in  
4 terms of people and treasure, would maintain those benefits.

5 And I think -- General Keane, you testified -- without  
6 that, it's lost.

7 Admiral Fallon: I think one of our problems -- the  
8 legacy in Afghanistan is that we've already done this twice,  
9 been there and bailed out. And there's a lot of concern  
10 that we could do it again.

11 Senator King: Well, particularly when we finally have  
12 a leader in the country that we can work with and has some  
13 hope of real political leadership in the country.

14 Second question. I couldn't help but hear echos --  
15 General Keane, particularly in your testimony -- we're  
16 talking about ISIS, we're talking about radical Islam, and  
17 the -- all the language could be applied to the Communists  
18 in the '40s and '50s -- a radical ideology that was bent on  
19 world domination, putting America out of business, all of  
20 those kinds of things. The strategy then was essentially  
21 containment. We never invaded Russia. We didn't have  
22 direct military confrontation. But, the -- George Kennan's  
23 famous strategy was containment until eventually it imploded  
24 because of -- its ideas weren't as good as ours. Isn't that  
25 a guide, anyway, for a strategy with regard to this threat

1 that we're facing today?

2 General Keane: Well, I definitely agree with the --  
3 what a broad strategy and the political and military  
4 alliances that we form to deal with it. But, the facts are,  
5 this movement has attacked us, and it's crushing our  
6 interests in the region, as well, by physical means. So,  
7 that has changed the dimension of it quite a bit.

8 Senator King: General Mattis?

9 General Mattis: Senator, I think that, in a globalized  
10 world today, where there -- we're perhaps one airline seat  
11 away from somebody exporting this right into Paris or  
12 wherever else -- we have to be very, very careful thinking  
13 that we can contain this without having ramifications on our  
14 economy, on our friends. For example, we may be energy  
15 independent in North America, or will be very soon, but the  
16 global price of oil on a globally traded commodity will be  
17 set out of the Middle East. The world's economy would --  
18 and it would immediately impact from Maine to California if  
19 it got, you know, the oil cut off there. The fact that we  
20 are oil independent, energy independent, would not change.  
21 So, the idea we could contain this in that region and let  
22 all hell break loose there, you know, I don't think that  
23 would work in this case, even though you -- I do agree with  
24 you that the internal contradictions inside Communism and  
25 the internal contradictions inside Islamic -- political

1 Islamic jihadist thinking will rot them from the inside out,  
2 just like with the Communists.

3 Senator King: But, I -- I think you're right, the --  
4 where the historic parallel breaks down is the nonstate-  
5 actor piece of this, and also communications and -- I think  
6 you mentioned seventh-century. I don't know which century  
7 it is, but the danger we're in now is that we're dealing  
8 with people with seventh-century ethics and 21st-century  
9 weapons. It strikes me that intelligence is absolutely one  
10 of the key elements in this battle, perhaps more so than  
11 ever.

12 Let me conclude with a couple of questions about Iran.  
13 What are -- what do you -- we're engaged in this negotiation  
14 that's going to come to some kind of conclusion, we believe,  
15 in the next 2 or 3 months. I don't think there's much  
16 likelihood of an additional extension. What if those  
17 negotiations fail? What are our next steps if we end up  
18 with either no deal or a deal that is just not acceptable,  
19 in terms of containing Iran's ambitions?

20 General Mattis: Senator, we have to limit their  
21 ability to enrich fuel. That's critical. And we have to  
22 have an -- a rigorous inspection regime that ensures that we  
23 have confidence in it, knowing the denial and deceit they've  
24 used to hide this weapons program in the past.

25 If it fails, I think we would have to reenergize and

1 elevate the economic sanctions, perhaps even to the point of  
2 a blockade, to -- and then we should move strongly against  
3 the situation with Lebanese Hezbollah and Syria. I think  
4 that a defeat of Iranian interests in that area could  
5 reverberate right back into Tehran, and the Iranian people  
6 would be in a position, like with the Green Revolution,  
7 perhaps to come out in the streets. But, the oppressive  
8 powers are strong, and the alternative to the economic and  
9 some of these peripheral efforts working would be -- would  
10 probably end up being war.

11           Senator King: It was interesting -- I was just in the  
12 Middle East last weekend, and -- in talking with people in  
13 the Gulf states -- it was interesting to me -- again, in  
14 history -- we know that we're dealing, in some ways, with a  
15 -- an ancient civil war between Sunnis and Shi'ites, but it  
16 -- in -- the Gulf states are very worried about Iran's  
17 expansionism, even outside of the nuclear area. And we're  
18 now talking about an ancient civil war between Persians and  
19 Arabs. I think many people don't realize that Iranians are  
20 not Arabs and that this is -- this goes back to Darius. I  
21 mean, you've got -- in some ways, you've got people trying  
22 to recreate the Ottoman Empire, and other people trying to  
23 create the Persian Empire. And here we are, trying to wend  
24 our way through 2,000-year-old disputes.

25           That's not really a question, but, General Keane, your

1 thoughts.

2           General Keane: Well, I think our behavior with Iran  
3 through the years has been pretty atrocious. Frankly, you  
4 know, they bombed our marine barracks, as Jim mentioned,  
5 using proxies. They took down our Embassy in Lebanon. They  
6 took down the Annex. They took down the Kuwait Embassy.  
7 They took down Air Force barracks in Khobar Towers. General  
8 Lloyd Austin, who commands CENTCOM, believes that Iranian-  
9 trained militia by battalion commanders in -- from  
10 Hezbollah, who did it at two training bases in Iran -- we  
11 knew where those bases were -- are responsible for killing  
12 close to 2,000 of the 4400 Americans killed in Iraq, because  
13 they developed an IED exclusively to be used only against  
14 Americans, not against Iraqi military and not against the  
15 Iraqi people.

16           These are the things that we have already accepted.  
17 Not a single --

18           Senator King: Through a whole series of --

19           General Keane: -- Republican or Democratic President  
20 has ever counted any of that.

21           Senator King: Yeah, I was going to make the point that  
22 it's a nonpartisan nonresponse. A bipartisan nonresponse.

23           General Keane: It is a bipartisan nonresponse.

24           So, here we go into negotiations by a regime that --  
25 whose stated objective is to dominate the region. They are

1 beginning to do that. And they want nuclear weapons to  
2 guarantee their preservation and also to help in their  
3 geopolitical objectives. The beginning of these  
4 negotiations -- we've already given up too much. We're  
5 permitting the highly enriched uranium and thousands and  
6 thousands of centrifuges as the going-in deal. We're  
7 already behind. The only negotiation that should have been  
8 done was, "Dismantle the program and we'll take off the  
9 sanctions." But, that's not where we are.

10 So, I believe, if it fails, we go back to tough,  
11 crippling economic sanctions, bring in the National Security  
12 Agency, have the Director there lay down in front of them  
13 what they could do to get after Iran to change its behavior.  
14 We're on a collision course with them. I don't agree with  
15 Fox, that we can sit down and have more dialogue with these  
16 guys and somehow we'll work towards mutual interests in the  
17 region, when their stated interests are truly regional  
18 domination and we have already given up too much to them as  
19 we speak.

20 Thank you.

21 Senator King: I want to thank these gentlemen, Madam  
22 Chair. This has been one of the most informative,  
23 provocative, and, I think, helpful hearings that I've  
24 participated in since I've been here.

25 Thank you so much for your direct and honest testimony.

1 Thank you, Madam Chair.

2 Senator Ayotte: I couldn't agree more with what  
3 Senator King just said. And appreciate all of you. I think  
4 we've got a couple of second-round questions, and appreciate  
5 all of you staying here.

6 I wanted to follow up, General Mattis, on testimony  
7 that you gave about our detention policy. You had said,  
8 "We've observed the perplexing lack of detention -- detainee  
9 policy that has resulted in the return of released prisoners  
10 to the battlefield. We should not engage in another fight  
11 without resolving this issue up front, treating hostile  
12 forces, in fact, as hostile."

13 Could you let -- help us understand, What are the  
14 consequences of a lack of detention policy, in terms of our  
15 national security? And, as I count it, we know we've  
16 confirmed at least 107 terrorists, that were formerly  
17 detained at Guantanamo, have now been confirmed to have  
18 reengaged in terrorist activity, and an additional 77 are  
19 suspected of doing so. So, what are the implications of  
20 this lack of detention policy? Why does it matter to us?  
21 And also, what does it impact us, in terms of gathering  
22 intelligence, as it relates to interrogation policy?

23 General Mattis: Ma'am, the implication, first and  
24 foremost, I believe, is that we go into a fight and we're  
25 not even certain of ourselves enough to hold as prisoners

1 the people that we've taken in the fight. For example, in  
2 1944, we didn't take Rommel's troops, who were in POW camps  
3 in Texas, and let them go back and get another shot at us at  
4 Normandy. We kept them until the war was over. We didn't  
5 start this war. And if an enemy wants to fight or be a  
6 truckdriver, we didn't say his radio operators could be  
7 released because they didn't have a significant role. If  
8 you sign up with this enemy, they should know, "We're coming  
9 after you" if the President, the Commander in Chief, sends  
10 us out there, and, "If taken prisoner, you'll be prisoner  
11 until the war is over." I mean, this is pretty -- this is  
12 not Warfighting 301 or Advanced Warfighting. This is kind  
13 of 101, ma'am.

14 The biggest concern I have, having been in the infantry  
15 for many years -- if our troops find that they are taking  
16 someone prisoner a second time and they have just scraped  
17 one of their buddies off the pavement and zipped him into a  
18 bag, the potential for maintaining the ethical imperative we  
19 expect of our Armed Forces is going to be undercut if, in  
20 fact, the integrity of our war effort does not take those  
21 people off the battlefield permanently if taken prisoner.  
22 In other words, they will take things into their own hands  
23 under the pressures of warfare.

24 So, I think that what we have to do is have a  
25 repeatable detainee policy so that, when we take them, we

1 hold them, and there's no confusion about their future, not  
2 among the enemies' minds, certainly not among our own. I  
3 would go by the Geneva Convention and maintain them, with  
4 Red Cross oversight, until the war was over.

5 Senator Ayotte: Thank you, General.

6 I wanted to follow up. Let me just say, General Keane,  
7 I fully agree with what you have said about providing  
8 defensive arms to Ukraine. I think that it absolutely is a  
9 disgrace, and I can't understand why this administration has  
10 not provided these arms so that they can defend themselves  
11 against Russian aggression. And I think we're sending the  
12 wrong message there.

13 And I think the other consideration for all of us in  
14 this is: In signing the Budapest Memorandum, why would any  
15 nation, again, give up its nuclear weapons when we won't  
16 provide basic defensive arms when they are faced with  
17 aggression on their own territory? And I would like you to  
18 comment on, you know, What are the implications of that, as  
19 we ask, for example, other nations to give up their nuclear  
20 weapons? I don't understand why they would do it, when they  
21 see our behavior here.

22 General Keane: Well, I totally agree. I mean, we went  
23 back on an agreement, we went back on our word. I believe  
24 that's one of the reasons that Putin is looking at NATO,  
25 itself, and he's saying to himself, "Is this still the

1 organization that helped force the collapse of the Soviet  
2 Union back in '91, or is -- has this organization lost its  
3 moral fiber?" So, I think when we break agreements like  
4 that, even though Ukraine was not a member of NATO, clearly  
5 the deal that was made was in their interest as well as the  
6 world's interest, and we foreclosed on it. And shame on us,  
7 you know, for doing that. And I do believe it has  
8 significant implications, not just to the -- to other  
9 countries who we're -- we believe are our friends, but  
10 because it does embolden and encourage Vladimir Putin. I  
11 mean, common sense tells you it does, and his behavior  
12 certainly underscores that.

13 Senator Ayotte: Wanted to follow up on the discussion  
14 on Iran. And looking at their behavior -- I think, General  
15 Keane, you had said that we've already -- we're already  
16 behind on this deal, in terms of what we've agreed to. So,  
17 as we look at this, the negotiations that are going on, what  
18 does a good deal look like? And, given the implications of  
19 this for our national security, I firmly believe that  
20 Congress should have a say in that agreement and what is a  
21 result. But, what does a good deal look like, one that we  
22 can ensure that they can't immediately gear up their nuclear  
23 weapons program again?

24 And finally, I don't see, in any of these negotiations,  
25 any resolution whatsoever to their missile program, their

1 seeking IBM -- ICBM capability that, obviously, can hit our  
2 East Coast, and also their activities as the largest state  
3 sponsor of terrorism.

4 So, can you help us understand, What should we be  
5 looking for? And what about those two other issues that I  
6 think are very important to us, as well, in terms of their  
7 activities?

8 General Keane: Well, as I've said, I don't think there  
9 is a good deal, here, at all, because what we're arguing  
10 over is the technology that will drive the time to develop a  
11 weapon. So, our negotiators are trying to pull out some of  
12 those technologies to extend the amount of time it will take  
13 to develop a weapon.

14 But, we've been in this dance step before with the  
15 Iranians, going back 15 years in these negotiations, and  
16 it's always two steps forwards and one step back. And  
17 that's where we are. I have absolutely no confidence that,  
18 if we made a deal, that the Iranians will not undermine that  
19 and move fast-forward to be able to develop a nuclear weapon  
20 much faster than what we think. And I think history is on  
21 the side of that argument, frankly.

22 So, I am not optimistic at all about this. The -- I  
23 will give the administration credit for well-intentioned  
24 motivations, because -- I don't want to get into that. And  
25 I can't, because you have to get into people's heads. But,

1 the fact of the matter is, we should be very concerned about  
2 a bad deal, here, because I believe we're on the path -- on  
3 a path to it.

4 Let's be honest with ourselves. This regime is -- the  
5 Supreme Leader is not giving up on having a nuclear weapon.  
6 Anybody that thinks that is incredibly delusional and naive.  
7 He is on a path to it. He will achieve it. He has got in  
8 charge now, not Ahmadinejad, you know, who most people had  
9 no respect for, even inside his own country. He has got a  
10 sophisticated leader that is working this very well to  
11 achieve his objectives, geopolitically. And I believe he is  
12 on that path.

13 So, I'm not confident at all. And the only deal that  
14 makes any sense to me is, dismantle the program and verify  
15 it's dismantled, and pull the sanctions. But, we're not  
16 there. We will -- this administration will not do that. We  
17 are already past that.

18 Senator Ayotte: I wanted to -- yes, go ahead.

19 General Mattis: Madam Chair, I think the economic  
20 sanctions that drove them to the negotiating table worked  
21 better than I ever anticipated, and the administration had  
22 to try. It gave us credibility with the international  
23 community. There wasn't a rush to war. It also, I think,  
24 puts us in a position to define what a good deal is, which  
25 goes to the heart of your question. I think it's a rigorous

1 inspection regime that gives us confidence that they will  
2 not have a breakout capability and no ability to enrich  
3 uranium, beyond peaceful purposes, at all. Now, if that  
4 cannot be achieved, then we've got a bad deal.

5 Senator Ayotte: Admiral Fallon?

6 Admiral Fallon: Somebody made the point earlier that  
7 history doesn't exactly repeat itself. But, during the cold  
8 war, we were squared off against a Communist ideology that  
9 was based in the Soviet Union that was diametrically opposed  
10 to everything we believed and the political and economic and  
11 individual freedoms that we held very dear to ourselves.  
12 And yet, we recognized that we had interests to try to  
13 ensure that we didn't get plunged into yet another conflict  
14 with staggering potential consequences in the negative. And  
15 so, we ended up negotiating with the Soviets. We didn't  
16 trust them, they didn't trust us, and -- but, we thought  
17 that there were some longer-term higher objectives that  
18 needed to be achieved.

19 And I think we're not in a dissimilar situation, here.  
20 It's not the Soviet Union. We shouldn't give them that  
21 credibility. But, it's a problem that we just can't keep  
22 ignoring. If we come up with an agreement that the  
23 negotiators feel is reasonable, then the key thing is going  
24 to be an ability to verify the key aspects of that, to the  
25 best of our ability. And I think that's what's really

1 important.

2 Senator Ayotte: Senator Reed.

3 Thank you.

4 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Madam  
5 Chairwoman.

6 And I will echo Senator King's remarks. This has been  
7 extremely useful. And thank you, gentlemen.

8 One of the thoughts I had, listening to Senator King's  
9 question, was that, you know, this -- that history always  
10 sort of drives us. And in the cold war, we had an  
11 existential enemy, the Soviet Union. They were engaged and  
12 doing a lot of provocative activities, sponsoring national  
13 liberation movements here and there, they invaded Hungary in  
14 the '50s, they were attempting to establish offensive  
15 nuclear missiles 90 miles from our shore in the '60s, et  
16 cetera. And yet, we continued to negotiate with them. And  
17 again, I think Admiral Fallon pointed out, we did it with  
18 the same kind of skepticism that we all have towards the  
19 Iranians. So, no one, I think, trusted Khrushchev that much  
20 and trusted his successors, et cetera.

21 But, I think it's important, as has been suggested by  
22 some -- I think all of you -- that we follow through on  
23 these negotiations with the Iranians until we get to a  
24 conclusion. I think General Mattis made a very excellent  
25 point. We've positioned ourselves now where we really are

1 on the high road. You know, we've defined what the good  
2 solution is, we have international support. And if they  
3 cannot make that standard, then we're in a much stronger  
4 position to move, collectively. I think that is important  
5 to note.

6 But, let me ask a question which -- it goes to this  
7 notion of what I think you said, General Mattis, that we've  
8 got to be very clear-eyed of when we start something, you  
9 know, where it's going go, which, since you raised the issue  
10 of escalation, the notion that if we take a step, it's going  
11 to -- it's the solution, we've solved the problem; when, in  
12 fact, many -- in every situation I can think of, the first  
13 step will prompt a counter-response by -- the other side  
14 will respond, counter-response by us, et cetera.

15 So, with respect to the Ukraine, a simple question. If  
16 we were to give defensive weapons to the Ukrainians, which  
17 is something that's being seriously considered, what do you  
18 think Putin would do? Simply pull his troops out and say,  
19 "Okay, you've seen -- you know, I raised you, you saw me, I  
20 -- and I fold"? Or do you think it would be something else?  
21 And again, will we get into an escalatory situation, where  
22 we find ourselves in a much more precarious position?

23 And I'll just ask all, and then I'll yield to Senator  
24 Shaheen.

25 General Mattis: Senator Reed, every action has a

1 reaction. It's a fundamentally unpredictable situation, but  
2 we have to wargame it, look ahead. I think that, in light  
3 of the worsening economic situation, Putin's ability to act  
4 independently with some of the things he's been doing are  
5 going to start becoming circumscribed. But, they can take a  
6 lot more stoic view of this inside Russia, as I understand  
7 it.

8         And so, I would -- I believe that it may very well lead  
9 to a higher level of violence. But, at the same time, I  
10 think that it could become akin to Napoleon's bleeding ulcer  
11 in Spain. The Ukraine could become the -- kind of the -- a  
12 fulcrum on which his foreign policy is now hammered back in  
13 line with the international order of respect for state  
14 boundaries and that sort of thing as he starts having a  
15 higher physical cost, more troops coming home dead from this  
16 sort of thing.

17         But, it's going to be a tragedy, so long as Russia  
18 decides to continue what they're doing. And we're just  
19 asking ourselves, "Are we willing to support the Ukrainian  
20 people, who want to defend themselves?" And on that one,  
21 I'm pretty one-way about it. Of course we support them.

22         Senator Reed: General Keane.

23         General Keane: Yes, I'm -- and I think, you know, the  
24 Putin strategy is quite clever, and maybe even brilliant,  
25 when you think about it. You know, he's using soldiers in

1 disguise as special operations forces. They come in, in  
2 civilian clothes, they create an uprising that's not even  
3 there. And then they appeal for more military assistance,  
4 and he provides people who don't identify them -- in  
5 uniform, but they don't identify themselves as what country  
6 they come from, so-called soldiers in disguise. So, he's  
7 trumped up everything, to include the requirement for a  
8 military response. And he puts the onus then on us, that  
9 it's up to us to escalate, because this is really only this  
10 is -- it's an uprising. And it's an interesting phenomenon,  
11 and I think we're going to continue to see it again and  
12 again.

13         So, one is, we need to deal with this strategy that  
14 he's using, and what should we do about it? And, number  
15 two, I think the harsh reality is that Putin has done all of  
16 the escalation, himself. And he is the one that brought  
17 paramilitary forces in, he is the one that brought  
18 conventional military forces in. Very sophisticated  
19 equipment. He's the one that brought multiple armor and  
20 mechanized divisions and put them on the border, and then  
21 rushed them across the border -- tanks, BMPs, artillery,  
22 antiaircraft. It is his forces that shot down an airliner  
23 -- his weapon systems, at least. So, all of the escalation  
24 has really been done by him.

25         And I believe that providing some assistance to the

1 Ukrainians, as much as that would be material assistance,  
2 because I always believe that conflict is fundamentally a  
3 test of wills -- and Sun Tzu taught us that, the ultimate  
4 objective of war is to break your opponent's will -- I'd  
5 give arms and assistance to the Ukrainians, not just for the  
6 physical capability that a -- it enhances them, but also to  
7 demonstrate that we're behind them, to help them with their  
8 will and their spine. And they have this natural fortitude,  
9 knowing their history, to stand up to it.

10 So, that's where I am on it. And I -- and I'm not  
11 concerned about escalation, because Putin has done all of  
12 that already.

13 Senator Reed: Admiral Fallon, can you comment, please?  
14 My time is running out, but please.

15 Admiral Fallon: Shortly.

16 When we think about Russia, I think it's a great  
17 example of a place where we ought to be thinking a little  
18 more strategically and not be channeling ourselves into, "He  
19 did this, and so we're going to have to do this." Sounds  
20 like the guy is very opportunistic. He took advantage of an  
21 interesting situation. He's aggressive. He's got ego. You  
22 could -- whatever.

23 But, what else might we do to get this guy's attention?  
24 First of all, remember that this country has some very  
25 significant internal problems. Look at birth rates, look at

1 health and longevity, look at the reality that it's a one-  
2 trick economic pony, and right now the trends are not going  
3 in the right direction.

4         So, it was highlighted earlier, we've got a phenomenal  
5 new energy card in our national capabilities, here. What --  
6 how might we think about using that, that might get this  
7 guy's attention and get him to back it off? He thought he  
8 was pretty clever. He went to the Chinese and said, "Well,  
9 let's go make a deal," and the Chinese, "Hey, you know, it's  
10 a way to play off the Americans." So, again, we might  
11 think about coming around and working things with the  
12 Chinese.

13         So, I think there's more than one way to skin the cat,  
14 here. Yes, we stand up for things that we think are  
15 important. But, I don't think that the only solution, here,  
16 is just to go -- to throw troops at it. We may think it's  
17 in our -- decide it's in our best interest to give support  
18 to the Ukrainians. I think we might think very seriously  
19 about support to our other Eastern European NATO allies as a  
20 priority task. But, I think we ought to be thinking a  
21 little bit bigger in dealing with Russia, and a little bit  
22 longer-term.

23         Senator Reed: Thank you.

24         Senator Ayotte: Senator Sessions.

25         Senator Sessions: Well, thank you all. And I was able

1 to hear all of your opening statements. And I think there's  
2 -- a finer group of statements we've had here in a long  
3 time, and it goes to the core of decisions this Congress  
4 needs to make and, really, the administration, our Commander  
5 in Chief, needs to be making. And we are on a path that's  
6 -- it's not going to be successful at the path we're on.  
7 And I want to thank you for your honest and direct  
8 statements about that.

9 I am more hopeful than some, and I think we can make  
10 some progress here. General Keane, I think you acknowledged  
11 that it's important that Iraq get its act together with  
12 regard to the Shi'a and the Sunni and the Kurds, and be more  
13 effective in working together. And that's a critical part  
14 of it. But, I don't take that to be a statement that we  
15 should not seek to be offensive as soon as possible, even  
16 right now. It seems to me that -- you talked about will. I  
17 see a recent article by Major General Scales, who talks  
18 about will and diminishing hope, showing ISIS and ISIL that  
19 they're not going to be successful. What are the prospects  
20 of us, in your opinion, beginning to retake more territory  
21 in Iraq and removing this hope that's out there that seems  
22 to be attracting more soldiers from around the region to the  
23 ISIS cause?

24 General Keane: Well -- I think I understand what  
25 you're saying. I certainly agree with the policy that we

1 should use local ground indigenous forces, as well as  
2 coalition air, to attempt to retake lost territory. There  
3 has been some modest retaking of territory already, but  
4 nowhere near what needs to be done to return the integrity  
5 and sovereignty to Iraq. That will only take place by a  
6 counteroffensive campaign up those two river valleys, one to  
7 the west and one to the north, to retake Mosul and Fallujah  
8 and Anbar Province.

9 All that said, I do think it's prudent to do that with  
10 those indigenous forces, but to be robustly assisted, not in  
11 the way we are planning to do now, with front-line advisors  
12 who will be down where the fighting takes place, which means  
13 they are at risk. They're not in direct combat, but they're  
14 in combat units that will be fighting. And that's a given.

15 Senator Sessions: So, that's what you think has got to  
16 be done.

17 General Keane: Yes. I think that's a prudent measure.  
18 Look it, can we retake Mosul and Anbar Province if we put  
19 combat brigades on the ground with some coalition brigades  
20 now? Can we do that? Yes. Yes, we can do that. But,  
21 here's the problem with that. One is, I have great  
22 difficulty looking U.S. soldiers in the face again to go do  
23 something like that after what happened after 2011 and we  
24 pulled out of there, because policy decisions squandered the  
25 gains. Two, it's not just the issue of retaking Mosul and

1 Fallujah. It's the issue of being able to hold it. ISIS  
2 will not stand down after we drive them out of there. We  
3 have known enough about this war in Iraq and Afghanistan.  
4 You drive an enemy out. That's one thing. And then we have  
5 to make certain we hold it and prevent that enemy from  
6 coming back.

7       And so, that is why I do believe it's the right thing  
8 to try to use these local forces, even though we know that's  
9 not a strong a hand as we would like. Strengthen that hand  
10 to the maximum capability we can without introducing ground  
11 combat forces, and then put emphasis on, once we clear it  
12 out, holding what is there. That will be the challenge,  
13 because ISIS will come back and undermine it.

14       And that's why I don't think combat forces now is the  
15 right answer -- U.S. combat forces. But, if we have any  
16 lack of confidence that we're going to be able to retake  
17 that lost territory, and we still believe it's strategically  
18 important for us in Iraq to do that, then I would have  
19 combat brigades on reserve in Kuwait as a backup to  
20 accomplish the mission if the mission does fail. And that  
21 would be coalition brigades, as well.

22       Senator Sessions: Well, the three of you have  
23 commanded CENTCOM. It just strikes me as -- let's compare  
24 this to Libya -- it strikes me, we've got a -- quite a  
25 different situation. We stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the

1   Iraqis. We lost thousands of American troops in this  
2   effort. And, to me, to say that we won't even embed a few  
3   soldiers, not in the front of the advance, at this point, to  
4   preserve what I think you agree is possible, and to oust  
5   ISIL, would be a colossal mistake.

6           General Mattis, do you feel a special strategic bond  
7   with the Iraqis that we worked with for over a decade?

8           General Mattis: Senator, I do. However, in giving you  
9   strategic advice, I try to divorce myself from it. We have  
10   to be very pragmatic about this. I would tell you that the  
11   military -- the senior military officers, we all explained  
12   that the successes we had achieved by 2010-2011 were -- and  
13   this is a quote -- "reversible," that the democratic  
14   processes and the military capability were too nascent to  
15   pull everyone out at one time. What has happened here was  
16   foreseeable. The intelligence community was actually very  
17   blunt about this potential.

18           And so, what we have to look at now is, we play the  
19   ball where it lies. And right now, I believe we should  
20   embed our forward air controllers and our -- those who can  
21   help plan these operations. We're going to have to put them  
22   together --

23           Senator Sessions: And that could present gains? I  
24   mean, doing that would, in your professional opinion, allow  
25   us to see gains occur from that. It's not a --

1 General Mattis: I would, sir, because you're --

2 Senator Sessions: -- hopeless effort.

3 General Mattis: -- because you're integrating the air  
4 and ground effort right at the point of contact, so you  
5 would see a much faster decision process. So, yes, sir, it  
6 would.

7 Senator Sessions: My time is up, thank you. And I  
8 certainly share the view that it was a colossal error in  
9 2011 to completely withdraw. And this was predictable, as  
10 Senator McCain and others predicted.

11 Senator Ayotte: Senator Blumenthal.

12 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Madam Chairwoman.

13 And I want to join in my thanking Senator McCain for  
14 convening this hearing, which I think has been extremely  
15 valuable. I've been following it while here and then while  
16 in a variety of meetings away. And I think your insights  
17 and experience reflect your -- each of your extraordinary  
18 service to our Nation. And I thank you for what you've done  
19 to make sure that we are strong and that our security is as  
20 robust as possible.

21 And I agree with the point that's been made, I think,  
22 fairly repeatedly, that we should be doing more to assist  
23 Ukraine. The Congress agrees, as well, because we passed,  
24 and the President signed, the Ukraine Freedom Support Act of  
25 2014, which as yet, to my knowledge, really has not been

1 implemented.

2           So, my question to each of you, because this Act is  
3 very broad in what it authorizes by way of weaponry and  
4 defensive services and training, using that \$350 million,  
5 what specifically do you think would be most helpful to the  
6 Ukrainians? You know, there's a lot of artillery that's  
7 being used against them. You've made reference to the  
8 Russian troops disguised as civilians. What specifically  
9 can we provide? Is it antitank missiles? Is it more body  
10 armor? Can you be more specific as to what you would advise  
11 the President to provide?

12           General Mattis: Senator, I cannot -- I am not familiar  
13 enough with the specifics on that battlefield. I think that  
14 something that gives them more intelligence about where  
15 they're being fired from -- counterartillery radar, for  
16 example -- might be very helpful. But, I'm not the right  
17 person to answer that, I'm sorry.

18           Senator Blumenthal: General Keane?

19           General Keane: What they have been asking for is, they  
20 want more intelligence than what they currently have. And I  
21 believe we have begun to help them with some of that. They  
22 do want antitank weapons. And those are shoulder-fired  
23 missiles, essentially. And they also want heavy crew-served  
24 weapons.

25           One of the problems we have here is, under the previous

1 regime in Ukraine, because of the significant amount of  
2 corruption that took place in all the agencies of  
3 government, what took place inside the Ukraine military is  
4 outrageous, in terms of the rip-off of funding and the  
5 capabilities that they used to have and no longer have. I  
6 mean, they're a mere shadow of their former self, to be  
7 frank about it.

8 So, while I know some of their desires, I don't know  
9 the entire list of what they want.

10 Admiral Fallon: Nor do I, Senator. I have no idea  
11 what the laundry list is or what really makes sense. I  
12 would just caution that, again, whatever we decide to do,  
13 here, will be effective or not, in large measure based on  
14 what the people in the Ukraine do. And what they do is  
15 going to be based on the confidence they have, and the  
16 leadership. It's been abysmal up to now. I'm not sure  
17 where they are. But, absent that, we could dump stuff in  
18 there all day long, and we're probably not going to be  
19 successful. So, understanding what's really going on in  
20 that country at the political level is really an essential  
21 prerequisite to any of this stuff.

22 Senator Blumenthal: Admiral, I'd like to ask you, on a  
23 different area -- and the premise of my question is that  
24 you've done a fair amount of work on climate change and  
25 environmental issues. But, in light of your experience --

1 and I'd open this question to others, as well -- how big a  
2 threat to our national security is, potentially, what we see  
3 happening in climate disruption, the impacts on the  
4 availability of sea lanes and water resources in the Middle  
5 East, and food resources in Africa? To what extent is  
6 climate disruption a national security threat?

7       Admiral Fallon: I think it's a very, very important  
8 national security issue. It's one that we understand very  
9 little about, in my opinion. Ramifications of the  
10 continuation of the current trends provide all kinds of  
11 interesting scenarios. So -- and one that we've talked  
12 about here, the revanchist Russia and Putin's opportunism  
13 and what the Russians -- what Putin may have in mind for us.  
14 He's going to have some significant options pretty soon.  
15 When the Arctic continues to lose its icepack and become,  
16 basically, accessible 12 months of the year, it gives them  
17 very, very interesting opportunities to move things around  
18 and act in ways that they were significantly inhibited in,  
19 in the past. It may give them some other opportunities,  
20 economically, who knows?

21       The melting of the icecaps, rising sea levels, you pick  
22 your scenario here, but the trends are pretty clear that  
23 water's coming up and land's going to disappear, and the  
24 implications for us in this country -- more importantly,  
25 probably, for those that are really in danger, places like

1 Bangladesh that are marginally above sea level right now --  
2 and the turmoil that that -- because --

3         So, all these problems we deal with, almost every  
4 single one of them, has its roots in instability and  
5 insecurity at a very basic level -- not armies, not ISIS  
6 running around, and pick-me-up trucks with 50-caliber guns.  
7 It's what people feel very close to them. And so, if they  
8 feel threatened in their livelihoods, in their families, in  
9 their ability to -- then things start to get unraveled. And  
10 that's the potential that I think we face.

11         I don't want to, you know, lie awake at night, wringing  
12 my hands over all this stuff. However, are there things we  
13 could be doing, I think, to try to reverse the trends that  
14 appear to be moving on pretty strongly? So, that's probably  
15 another topic for hours' discussion.

16         But, it gets back to one of my points about  
17 credibility, our credibility as a country. As the world  
18 grapples with these things that apply to all of us, I think  
19 that U.S. leadership ought to be paramount, ought to be in  
20 the forefront. And, in fact, sometimes we're not there.  
21 We're not there. We're not voting, we're -- you know,  
22 whether we're denying or avoiding or just defaulting to  
23 somebody else. And, despite the sometimes incessant gnawing  
24 of people, "Well, the U.S. is always trying to get into this  
25 and push" -- on another hand, they really need -- the world

1 needs our leadership and involvement. And this is an area  
2 where we could actually probably do some good if we put our  
3 minds to it.

4 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you very much for that  
5 answer, and to all of you for being here today. Thank you.  
6 Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

7 Senator Ayotte: Senator Shaheen.

8 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Madam Chair.

9 And thank you all very much. I know that you've been  
10 here a long morning. And so, we very much appreciate that.

11 I have just one fundamental question for each of you.  
12 And I had a chance to hear your opening statements, but not  
13 -- was not here for most of the questioning. So, I don't  
14 think anybody has covered this aspect of my question.

15 You all are probably aware that DOD recently released a  
16 study, done by the RAND Corporation, that is titled  
17 "Improving Strategic Competence: Lessons from 13 Years of  
18 War." And there have been a number of fairly high-profile  
19 articles that have addressed this question, as well. And  
20 one of the conclusions from the study, as you all know, is  
21 that the types of war that the U.S. has fought since World  
22 War II have changed. They're no longer conventional combat  
23 wars against state actors, but they're more unconventional,  
24 irregular warfare by joint forces against nonstate actors.

25 And the report -- one of the statements in the report

1 says, and I quote, that, "The joint force and the U.S.  
2 Government as a whole have displayed an ongoing ambivalence  
3 about, and a lack of proficiency in, the noncombat and  
4 unconventional aspects of war and conflict against nonstate  
5 actors." The report goes on to point out seven lessons from  
6 its review, and I won't go through all of them, but the  
7 first two seem particularly relevant, I think, to today's  
8 discussion. One is that the U.S. Government displays a  
9 persistent weakness in formulating national security  
10 strategies, and that this weakness is due, in part, to the  
11 lack of an effective civilian/military process for effective  
12 national security policymaking.

13 So, I wonder if each of you could comment on whether  
14 you agree with this conclusion and whether this is something  
15 that can be addressed by changing personalities, or do we  
16 really need to improve our process for national security  
17 decisionmaking? And if you have thoughts about how to do  
18 that.

19 Admiral Fallon, you want to go first?

20 Admiral Fallon: Sure, I'll throw myself in front of  
21 this train.

22 I agree with it. And I think that -- my observation of  
23 several changes in Washington -- you get to be this old, you  
24 hang around for enough time, you see a lot of transitions --  
25 and one of the weaknesses, I believe, is a belief that an

1 effective national security policy can be created after  
2 things are settled down and people get in their places.  
3 And, you know, it all sounds nice. Let's get a Secretary of  
4 State, let's get a Secretary of Defense, and get it in  
5 there. But, my experience is, it's too late. There's no  
6 way you're going to be able to come up with -- that I've  
7 seen -- to come up with comprehensive, long-term,  
8 thoughtful, effective policies once the gun goes off and  
9 that -- once the inauguration starts, you're off and  
10 running. And the reality is, something happens all the  
11 time, every single day. Look at all these things, in the  
12 communication, blah, blah, blah. So, all these pressures  
13 make it virtually impossible to think strategically, in my  
14 observation, once you get in the game.

15         And so, a prerequisite for this is a very thoughtful  
16 process in advance, using whatever resources are available.

17         A lot of smart people around this country and the world  
18 that can inform some pretty good decisions. Again, can't  
19 solve everything, but pick a few big ones, decide they're  
20 the ones you're going to focus on, would be my advice, and  
21 go for it.

22         Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

23         General Keane?

24         General Keane: Yeah, sure.

25         Well, there's a couple of things that aren't correct.

1 First of all, the most predominant form of warfare since war  
2 started is unconventional warfare. And that's been well  
3 documented. And, interesting enough, the prosecutors of  
4 unconventional warfare usually lose far more than they win.

5 That is best documented, if you want to see the best  
6 reference on it, by Max Boot's sort of history of all of  
7 this. He's out of the Council on Foreign Relations and is a  
8 prolific, articulate, thoughtful writer.

9 In terms of your comment in dealing with the  
10 application of force and also government, dealing with this  
11 kind of experience that we're facing today, I agree that we  
12 have not taken a whole-of-government approach in dealing  
13 with some of the challenges we face. What is -- what I  
14 observed, in countless visits over the 13-year experience,  
15 you know, in Iraq and Afghanistan, that much of the  
16 nonkinetic things that needed to be done in dealing with an  
17 unconventional enemy defaulted, not to other parts of our  
18 government, but largely to the United States military. Even  
19 though they -- while they're intelligent and have enormous  
20 personal attributes and skill sets that they can apply  
21 against anything to be successful, it's not something they  
22 were trained and necessarily had experience in. But, they  
23 became very good at it. And we would always be looking  
24 around, Where is the rest of our government, here, to help  
25 us do some of these things?

1           So, in that regard, I do believe there's much that we  
2 can learn from this 13-year experience, in how to take a  
3 more comprehensive approach and to recognize, while kinetic  
4 actions have a value all of their own, certainly -- and  
5 that's blatantly obvious -- nonkinetic actions do, as well.

6           And we can do much better at that than what we have done.

7           Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

8           General Mattis, I -- my time is up, but do you have  
9 anything you want to add to that?

10          General Mattis: Just very quickly, Senator. I would  
11 just point out that we have to improve the process, assuming  
12 there is a process. I've been unable to identify one  
13 recently. I think it starts with the essential -- we must  
14 develop a sound strategy or we're going to waste lives and  
15 our treasury and our country's future.

16          I think, two, we need to move authority back to the  
17 Senate-confirmed Secretaries of State and Defense, and not  
18 concentrate it in a small, but mushrooming at the same time,  
19 national security staff that does not have the Foreign  
20 Service officers and the trained military officers who can  
21 actually develop what you're looking for, here.

22          I don't think we can adopt one preclusive form of  
23 warfare. And here -- my point is, the enemy will always try  
24 the kind of warfare they think we're less -- least ready  
25 for. One of the reasons you can say -- or the RAND study

1 can say we did not have state-on-state warfare is because we  
2 probably prevented it. That's a pretty great war, from my  
3 point of view, the one that never happened, because we were  
4 ready for it.

5 And last, I would just point out that unconventional  
6 warfare always takes a long time. The U.S. Cavalry against  
7 the American Indian, from 1850 to 1905, was decades long.  
8 And this sense of rushing things -- for example, setting  
9 withdrawal dates and telling the enemy in advance when we're  
10 leaving -- probably contributes to the endless wars that we  
11 get into. And we're engaged in a violent political argument  
12 with political Islam right now, and we need the diplomatic  
13 and developmental tools alongside our military. And for a  
14 country that could put up Voice of America and send the  
15 truth right inside the Iron Curtain, we're not fighting the  
16 war anywhere near as smartly as we did back during the cold  
17 war. I think you're -- you should aggressively go after  
18 these areas that you're bringing up, ma'am.

19 Senator Shaheen: Thank you all very much.

20 Senator Ayotte: Senator Graham.

21 Senator Graham: Thank you.

22 You all have really probably -- we probably have  
23 violated the Geneva Convention, when it comes to the three  
24 of you all. But, you've been terrific. I've really enjoyed  
25 this.

1           Back to Iraq, looking forward. Let's assume that we  
2 can get a more cohesive government, that the new Prime  
3 Minister is better than the old, that we can get a Iraqi-  
4 trained force, the Kurds help us, eventually we take back  
5 Mosul, Anbar Province gets solidified once again. That's a  
6 big "if." If they ask us, in the future, to leave a  
7 residual force, would you recommend that we honor that  
8 request?

9           Admiral Fallon: Yes, sir. Oh, absolutely.

10          General Keane: Absolutely.

11          Admiral Fallon: I mean, they're going to ask, for  
12 sure, Senator. And how could we say no to that, given the  
13 circumstance?

14          Senator Graham: And what I want to tell the American  
15 people, the best I can, it's in our interest for Iraq to  
16 turn out well. Do you all agree with that? Whether we  
17 should -- going in or not is behind us. We're there. And I  
18 guess my theory of all of this is -- a line of defense for  
19 America is best achieved by having allies in the region that  
20 we can work with, that will fight this radical ideology at  
21 its core. And the hardest part of getting this war won, I  
22 believe, is just the patience -- strategic patience that  
23 comes from investing in others. As unreliable as they are  
24 and as frustrating as they are, the alternative is fortress  
25 America, and I just don't believe that works.

1           Now, as we get ready to go into Mosul, I think, General  
2 Keane, you said that the Iraqi timetable is probably  
3 different than ours. Just imagine for a moment, as an  
4 American politician, that there was a town in your State  
5 occupied by a foreign force, and the Federal Government was  
6 telling you, or some outside entity was telling you, that it  
7 may be a year or two before you can go back in. I think the  
8 new Sunni Defense Minister is in a real spot, here. How  
9 long is he going to allow his people in Mosul to suffer  
10 under the hands of a vicious enemy?

11           So, we have to realize, politically, that an Iraqi  
12 politician has a different calculation than an American  
13 political leader, here. But, it is in our advantage, don't  
14 you -- in our interest -- to make sure the Iraqis do this  
15 right. Is that correct?

16           General Keane: Yes.

17           Senator Graham: They're not ready by this spring, are  
18 they?

19           General Keane: I'm not on the ground, but, talking to  
20 people who are, I don't think so. Not even close.

21           Senator Graham: Admiral Fallon, would you be worried  
22 about a spring offensive?

23           Admiral Fallon: I don't know what the timing is,  
24 because I haven't been in dialogue with these guys. But, my  
25 sense is, there are probably things we can do in advance if

1 you accept --

2 Senator Graham: Sure.

3 Admiral Fallon: -- that they're not ready in a large  
4 force.

5 Senator Graham: Right.

6 Admiral Fallon: I think there are some things we can  
7 continue to do. And, just last week, it's -- the sense is  
8 that the -- you know, we're starting to go back and claw  
9 back. When I say "we," our allies over there. So, maybe  
10 they're not ready for the big thing. But, then again, I  
11 have a hard time, frankly, envisioning the kind of activity  
12 that we saw when we had to retake Fallujah for the second  
13 and third times, going in there, street-to-street. I'm not  
14 sure that's what's -- that's a scenario that makes a lot of  
15 sense.

16 Senator Graham: Yeah. I agree. But, somebody's going  
17 to have to take Mosul back, right? And we want it to be  
18 Iraqis.

19 Do you agree with the idea of -- maybe 10,000 is the  
20 right number to have, in terms of support? General Mattis,  
21 does that make sense to you?

22 General Mattis: I'd look more at the capabilities,  
23 sir. But, we've got to have enough forward air controllers,  
24 enough trainers, enough advisors --

25 Senator Graham: Okay.

1 General Mattis: -- to actually make a difference.

2 Senator Graham: Does that make sense to you, Admiral  
3 Fallon, whatever --

4 Admiral Fallon: Yeah, I have --

5 Senator Graham: -- "enough" is?

6 Admiral Fallon: -- no idea what the exact number is,  
7 but you've got have people with the right skill sets to --

8 Senator Graham: So, just -- to the American people,  
9 we're going to have some boots on the ground if we want to  
10 get this right. The hope is that we don't have to have the  
11 82nd Airborne going back in.

12 Real quickly with Syria. I can understand how we get  
13 there in Iraq. I really don't understand how we're going to  
14 get there in Syria, unless we have a regional force to  
15 supplement whatever Free Syrian Army we can muster. Very  
16 quickly, how do we dislodge ISIL from Syria? And, if you  
17 don't, how can you sustain your gains in Iraq?

18 And finally, the end game is a real problematic  
19 situation in Syria. How do you salvage a Syria with Assad  
20 still in power?

21 So, how do you go in and get them out on the ground?  
22 Who does it? And should we leave Assad in power as an end  
23 state? And, if we do, what can we expect from that?

24 General Keane: Well -- I'll try to answer that as --  
25 we've tried to answer it in the past, and -- and this is

1 tough, complicated, and very uncertain. But, here's what I  
2 believe.

3 First of all, the mission that we have right now is not  
4 to destroy ISIS in Syria. It is to degrade it, but to  
5 destroy ISIS in Iraq and retake lost territory. I believe  
6 that is not a very good mission, because I don't think you  
7 separate Syria and Iraq. I think you see them as a whole  
8 cloth, in terms of what you have to do against that enemy.

9 All that said, if you -- if our intent is to destroy  
10 ISIS in Syria, the only way that can be done will be with  
11 ground force supported by air power. And there is no ground  
12 force in sight with the capability to do that. And you know  
13 better than I, because of the briefing you got from General  
14 Nagata, at the pace we're doing that, 5,000 or so a year,  
15 we're not going to get there. We're not even close.

16 So, in my mind, you have to push back on Assad, because  
17 of what he's doing to the -- what exists of the Free Syrian  
18 Army. That brings in the coalition very strongly in support  
19 of what's taking place in Syria. Then you bring Turkey to  
20 the table, you bring UAE to the table, you bring Jordan to  
21 the table, and you bring Saudi Arabia to the table. Now  
22 they're at the table, and you've got their interest. They  
23 have got to be the coalition force that's going to drive  
24 ISIS out of there, with our assistance.

25 Senator Graham: Do the other -- do the two of you

1 agree with that?

2 Admiral Fallon: The question is, How do you convince  
3 these people to actually go do that --

4 Senator Graham: Right, right.

5 Admiral Fallon: -- is going to be the real challenge.

6 Senator Graham: General Mattis, do you agree with that  
7 concept?

8 General Mattis: I do, Senator. But, the devil's in  
9 the details. And we have got to figure out what it looks  
10 like, or what we want it to look like at the end. Is Assad  
11 still there, or not? There are some who say we can't put  
12 Syria back together if Assad's part of it. There's others  
13 who say he's the best of the worst options. We've got to  
14 get this straight in our heads first, and then we can give  
15 you a lot of answers, sir, about how best to accomplish it.

16 Senator Ayotte: Senator King.

17 Senator King: I'm fine, thank you.

18 Senator Ayotte: You're all set? Thank you.

19 Senator Reed.

20 Senator Reed: Well, thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

21 And this has been an extraordinarily useful hearing.

22 I just have one comment to make. And we have  
23 repeatedly talked about the need for residual forces in a  
24 condition-based situation in Afghanistan and other places  
25 when we commit ourselves. And, in looking at 2011 -- we're

1 all looking back -- and I think it's important to note that  
2 the stage was probably set in 2008, when the United States  
3 and the Government of Iraq entered into a formal agreement  
4 to remove all troops by 2011. That was signed by President  
5 Bush and Prime Minister Maliki. And it was signed under the  
6 threat that, if they didn't, our troops would be out even  
7 sooner. I think, December 31st of 2008, our international  
8 protections expired. And it goes to General Mattis' point,  
9 is -- when we sign something formally saying, you know,  
10 "We're out," even though there was an expectation that we  
11 might be able to negotiate, it's awful tough, once you get a  
12 deal between the U.S., our President, their Prime Minister,  
13 signed by -- ratified by their Parliament, to reverse. Also  
14 particularly difficult if we signed in '08 with 100,000  
15 troops on the ground and we're already down to a much  
16 smaller figure by 2011.

17 And I think it's important to put this in context,  
18 because this issue of residual forces with a condition-based  
19 sort of level is something we have to, you know, consider as  
20 we look -- again, as Senator Graham suggested -- going  
21 forward in Iraq, and also going forward in Afghanistan.

22 And I want to thank you. I don't necessarily need a  
23 comment. You can write me -- mail me, email me.

24 I want to thank the Chairwoman for running an excellent  
25 hearing.

1           Senator Ayotte: I want to thank Senator Reed.

2           And I appreciate all three of you being here today. I  
3 think it was evident, your tremendous military experience.  
4 And all of us appreciated a very substantive hearing and  
5 your best advice, and we really appreciate everything that  
6 you've done and continue to do for our country. So, thank  
7 you all. And thank you all -- we're very impressed with  
8 your endurance, as well.

9           [Whereupon, at 12:45 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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