

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF
GENERAL JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR., USMC, TO BE
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

Thursday, July 9, 2015

Washington, D.C.

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY
1155 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 200
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036
(202) 289-2260

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF
GENERAL JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR., USMC, TO BE
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

Thursday, July 9, 2015

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:33 a.m. in Room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. John McCain, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Committee Members Present: Senators McCain [presiding], Inhofe, Sessions, Wicker, Ayotte, Fischer, Cotton, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Lee, Graham, Cruz, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Manchin, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, and Heinrich.

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN McCAIN, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM ARIZONA

3 Chairman McCain: Well, good morning.

4 The Senate Armed Services Committee meets today to
5 consider the nomination of General Joseph Dunford to be the
6 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

7 General Dunford is certainly no stranger to the members
8 of this committee. We have known him as Commandant of the
9 Marine Corps and our commander in Afghanistan and many posts
10 before that. He is a warrior and a leader of the highest
11 quality, and we are grateful for his 38 years of
12 distinguished service.

13 We are also thankful for the sacrifices General
14 Dunford's family has made over the years and their
15 willingness to lend him to the Nation in service once again.
16 As is our tradition, at the beginning of your testimony, we
17 welcome you, General Dunford, to introduce the members of
18 your family joining you this morning. I would, however,
19 like to take this moment to express our special thanks to
20 your wife Ellyn. We know how much of your husband's service
21 and his future absence will rest on you and we honor the
22 sacrifices you are making through your continued support to
23 our Nation, not to mention the downgrade in your residence
24 that will be part of this.

25 [Laughter.]

1 Chairman McCain: The next Chairman will have to
2 prepare our military to confront the most diverse and
3 complex array of global crises since the end of World War
4 II.

5 In Iraq and Syria, ISIL's terrorist army has continued
6 to succeed on the battlefield, including taking Ramadi and
7 other key terrain in Iraq, capturing over half the territory
8 in Syria, and controlling every border post between Iraq and
9 Syria. The lack of a coherent strategy has resulted in the
10 spread of ISIL around the world to Libya, Egypt, Nigeria,
11 and even to Afghanistan where I visited last weekend.

12 There, our troops are supporting our Afghan partners in
13 sustaining a stable and democratic future. But even as ISIL
14 and the Taliban threaten this future, the President remains
15 committed to a drastic reduction in U.S. presence at the end
16 of 2016 before the Afghan government and security forces are
17 fully capable of operating effectively without our support.
18 This would create a security vacuum, and we have seen what
19 fills similar kinds of vacuums in Syria and Iraq. Given
20 your experience in Afghanistan, General Dunford, we will be
21 interested to hear your thoughts about the appropriate U.S.
22 and coalition presence going forward.

23 Meanwhile, Iran continues to threaten peace and
24 stability across the Middle East through its support of
25 terrorist proxies, pursuit of nuclear weapons, and

1 development of missiles needed to deliver them to targets
2 far beyond its shores.

3 In Europe, Vladimir Putin's Russia continues its
4 onslaught in Ukraine. But even as Russian troops and
5 equipment execute this neo-imperial campaign to undermine
6 Ukraine's government and independence, the United States has
7 refused Ukraine the weapons it needs and deserves for its
8 defense.

9 In the Asia-Pacific, China is continuing a pattern of
10 destabilizing behavior, its reclamation and militarization
11 of vast land features in the South China Sea, its continued
12 military buildup designed to counter U.S. military
13 strengths, and its blatant and undeterred cyber attacks
14 against the United States. While our rebalance to the Asia-
15 Pacific has shown some successes, especially in deepening of
16 our alliances, this policy has not deterred China from its
17 increasingly assertive course.

18 And yet, while worldwide challenges like these grow,
19 the Defense Department has grown larger but less capable,
20 more complex but less innovative, more proficient at
21 defeating low-tech adversaries but more vulnerable to high-
22 tech ones. And worse, the self-inflicted wounds of the
23 Budget Control Act and sequestration-level defense spending
24 have made all of these problems worse.

25 Army and Marine Corps end strength is dropping

1 dangerously low. The Air Force is the oldest and the
2 smallest that it has ever been. The Navy's fleet is
3 shrinking to pre-World War I levels. With the present
4 operational tempo and drastic reductions to defense
5 spending, we will continue the downward spiral of military
6 capacity and readiness that will compromise each service's
7 ability to execute our Defense Strategic Guidance at a time
8 of accumulating danger to our national security.

9 Budget cuts have also slowed critical modernization
10 priorities, imperiling our Nation's ability to preserve its
11 military technological advantage. This is not just about
12 the weapons systems we hear the most about, fighter
13 aircraft, submarines, or armored vehicles. These are
14 important, but budget cuts also threaten our ability to
15 seize the future and make vital investments in cyber, space,
16 and breakthrough technologies such as directed energy,
17 autonomous vehicles, and data analytics.

18 The current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has
19 stated that even if the Defense Department receives the
20 additional \$38 billion above the budget caps that the
21 President's defense budget requests, our military would
22 still, quote, "remain at the lower ragged edge of manageable
23 risk in our ability to execute the defense strategy." More
24 worrisome, every one of our military service chiefs,
25 yourself included, has testified that continued

1 sequestration-level defense spending puts American lives at
2 greater risk. Unless we change course, eliminate
3 sequestration, and return to strategy-driven defense
4 budgets, I fear our military will confront depleted
5 readiness, chronic modernization problems, and deteriorating
6 morale.

7 No matter how many dollars we spend, we will not be
8 able to provide our military the equipment they need with a
9 broken defense acquisition system that takes too long and
10 costs too much. With this year's National Defense
11 Authorization Act, this committee has embarked on a major
12 effort to reform this system, including ways to empower our
13 service leaders to manage their own programs in exchange for
14 greater accountability. General Dunford, we are very
15 interested in hearing your views about improving the defense
16 acquisition system based on your years of service.

17 Finally, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is
18 the principal military advisor to the President. More than
19 ever, we need an honest and forthright leader that offers
20 his best and unvarnished military advice. The President
21 will not always take your advice, but it is my hope that he
22 will always have an appreciation of the military dimensions
23 of the difficult problems our Nation confronts with you at
24 his side.

25 Thank you for your willingness to serve once more. We

1 look forward to your testimony.

2 Senator Reed?

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

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

3 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.
4 Let me join you in welcoming General Dunford and to take
5 this opportunity to thank him for his extraordinary service
6 to the Nation. During his 38 years of military service,
7 General Dunford has served with courage and distinction, and
8 I am confident he will continue to do so as the next
9 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

10 Finally, let me also recognize and thank his family.
11 Ellyn, thank you. Patrick, thank you for being here today.
12 I know Joe and Kathleen wanted to be here, but they are
13 serving elsewhere. But thank you very much for what you
14 have done to serve the Nation and the Marine Corps.

15 Last week, the current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of
16 Staff, General Dempsey, released the 2015 National Military
17 Strategy. In his forward, General Dempsey stated that the
18 current "global security environment is the most
19 unpredictable" he has seen during his military service and
20 that "global disorder has significantly increased while some
21 of our comparative military advantage has begun to erode."

22 Without question, the United States faces a wide range
23 of challenges around the world. If confirmed as the
24 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, you will be advising
25 the President and the Secretary of Defense on these complex

1 international issues facing our national interests.

2 Possibly the gravest and most complex issue for the
3 next Chairman will be countering the security threat from
4 ISIL in Iraq and Syria and its spread beyond the Middle East
5 region. As the President said earlier this week, our
6 counter-ISIL campaign will be long-term and employ all
7 elements of American power, including military,
8 intelligence, diplomatic, and economic.

9 And if confirmed, General Dunford, you will be
10 responsible for advising on the U.S. military's role in
11 supporting our broader counter-ISIL campaign, including
12 denying ISIL safe havens and building the capacity of local
13 forces to counter ISIL, with training, assistance, and air
14 support from the international coalition. The success of
15 these efforts will ultimately depend on a broader,
16 complementary effort to address the conditions that gave
17 rise to ISIL and allowed it to thrive. I look forward to
18 hearing your views on the situation in Iraq and Syria and
19 your thinking on the most effective role the military can
20 play in supporting efforts on the diplomatic front.

21 Regarding Iran, while there remains no clear outcome to
22 the P5 Plus 1 negotiations over Iran's nuclear program, no
23 matter what happens, the Department of Defense will play a
24 key role in reaffirming our shared priorities with our
25 partners in the region, confronting common threats, and

1 working to deescalate or, where possible, resolve these
2 threats.

3 General Dunford, if confirmed, you will also bring
4 invaluable experience to oversight of the Department's
5 missions in Afghanistan where you have led the U.S. and
6 coalition forces with distinction. While the Afghan
7 Security Forces have fought courageously against Taliban
8 attacks, more needs to be done to build the Afghan forces'
9 capabilities and deny any safe haven for extremists. The
10 next Chairman will play a critical role in the President's
11 review later this year of the size and footprint of U.S.
12 forces in Afghanistan for 2016 and beyond.

13 Another security challenge going forward will be
14 deterring additional Russian aggression toward Ukraine and
15 its European neighbors and reinforcing the Minsk ceasefire
16 accords. Congress has made clear its support of military
17 assistance to Ukraine, including defensive weapons, to help
18 the Ukrainian people defend their sovereignty and
19 territorial integrity. We will be interested in your views
20 of the security situation in Ukraine and what additional
21 steps you would recommend for assisting Russia's neighbors
22 in protecting themselves from the kinds of hybrid warfare
23 tactics employed in Crimea and eastern Ukraine.

24 Our men and women in uniform remain the committee's top
25 concern, and I know they are your top concern also. Our

1 armed forces are nothing without its people, and the
2 Department continues to juggle the twin goals of providing a
3 high quality of life through fair pay and compensation and
4 exceptional service through adequate levels of training and
5 equipping. In my view, it is incumbent on Congress and the
6 Nation to provide a sufficiently sized, trained, and
7 equipped military of the necessary quality of character and
8 talent to meet national defense requirements. Sometimes
9 that means making hard choices, especially in the budget
10 constrained environment we find ourselves.

11 To that end, as you well know from your time as
12 Commandant, the Department and Congress have for several
13 years considered various proposals for changes in
14 compensation and health care to slow the growth of personnel
15 costs so that those savings can be redirected to buy back
16 readiness and modernization benefits. I would be
17 particularly interested in your views on such proposals and
18 the impact if such changes are not enacted.

19 Now, during consideration of the fiscal year 2016
20 National Defense Authorization Act, this committee had a
21 robust debate on how best to fund defense programs. And I
22 have repeatedly stated that sequestration is not the
23 approach that we need to address our Nation's fiscal
24 challenges, and more pointedly, it undermines our national
25 military readiness. Defense budgets should be based on our

1 long-term military strategy -- that is the point the
2 chairman made very eloquently -- not sequestration-level
3 budget caps. Even a 1-year increase in OCO spending does
4 not provide DOD with the certainty and stability it needs
5 when building its 5-year budget. As a consequence, this
6 instability undermines the morale of our troops and their
7 families who want to know that their futures are planned for
8 more than 1 year at a time and the confidence of our defense
9 industry partners we rely on to provide the best
10 technologies available to our troops. I hope you will share
11 your thoughts on this topic with the committee today.

12 General Dunford, thank you again for your willingness
13 to serve our Nation. I look forward to discussing these
14 issues.

15 Chairman McCain: General, before your statement, there
16 are standard questions that the committee always asks of
17 military nominees. So we have always done that, and so I
18 would like to proceed with that before your testimony.

19 In order to exercise its legislative and oversight
20 responsibilities, it is important that this committee and
21 other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to
22 receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of
23 information. Have you adhered to applicable laws and
24 regulations governing conflicts of interest?

25 General Dunford: I have, Chairman.

1 Chairman McCain: Do you agree, when asked, to give
2 your personal views, even if these views differ from the
3 administration in power?

4 General Dunford: I do, Chairman.

5 Chairman McCain: Have you assumed any duties or
6 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the
7 outcome of the confirmation process?

8 General Dunford: I have not.

9 Chairman McCain: Will you ensure your staff complies
10 with deadlines established for requested communications,
11 including questions for the record in hearings?

12 General Dunford: I will, Chairman.

13 Chairman McCain: Will you cooperate in providing
14 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional
15 requests?

16 General Dunford: I will, Chairman.

17 Chairman McCain: Will those witnesses be protected
18 from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

19 General Dunford: They will.

20 Chairman McCain: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear
21 and testify, upon request, before this committee?

22 General Dunford: I do, Chairman.

23 Chairman McCain: Do you agree to provide documents,
24 including copies of electronic forms of communications, in a
25 timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee

1 or consult with the committee regarding the basis for any
2 good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

3 General Dunford: Yes, Chairman.

4 Chairman McCain: Thank you very much for complying
5 with that formality. Thank you. Please proceed with your
6 testimony.

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR., USMC, TO
2 BE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

3 General Dunford: Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed,
4 distinguished members of the committee, good morning and
5 thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I
6 am truly honored to be nominated as the Chairman of the
7 Joint Chiefs of Staff. I want to thank the President and
8 the Secretary of Defense for their confidence me, and I want
9 to recognize General Dempsey and his wife Deanie for their
10 extraordinary to our Nation, our men and women in uniform
11 and our military families.

12 Joining me today is my wife Ellyn and our son Patrick.
13 Our son Joe and Kathleen were not able to be here. Ellyn
14 has been a great mother to our children and has served as a
15 tireless advocate for military families. I refer to her as
16 the MVP in the family. Her sense of humor, flexibility, and
17 endurance have been tested in over 30 years as a military
18 spouse, and I would not be here today without her love and
19 support.

20 I would like to begin by thanking the committee for
21 your commitment to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and
22 marines. Due to your support, they comprise the most well
23 trained, well equipped, and capable military force in the
24 world.

25 As I appear before you this morning, I am mindful of

1 the complexity and volatility of the current security
2 environment. Chairman, you mentioned that. This committee
3 is also well aware of the pressing challenges we face in
4 Europe, the Pacific, the Middle East, Africa, space, and
5 cyberspace. While dealing with these and other issues, we
6 also face the need to restore readiness and modernize the
7 joint force in the context of fiscal challenges and budget
8 uncertainty.

9 If confirmed, I will provide the Secretary of Defense
10 and the President with my best military advice in a full
11 range of military options for addressing the current and
12 future challenges to our national security.

13 When asked, I will provide the Congress with my best
14 military advice. And when delivering best military advice,
15 I will do so with candor.

16 I will also work with the Joint Chiefs, our civilian
17 leaders, and members of the committee to maintain a joint
18 force that is capable of securing our national interest
19 today and tomorrow.

20 Most importantly, if confirmed, I will dedicate myself
21 to properly leading, representing, and keeping faith with
22 the men and women in uniform and our civilian workforce who
23 volunteer to serve our Nation.

24 Thank you again for allowing me to appear this morning,
25 and I am prepared for your questions.

1 [The prepared statement of General Dunford follows:]
2 [COMMITTEE INSERT]
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

1 Chairman McCain: Thank you very much, General.

2 The day before yesterday, we received testimony that so
3 far with \$500 million committed, there have been 60
4 individuals who have been trained to go into Syria and fight
5 against ISIS. What do you know about that particular
6 situation?

7 General Dunford: Chairman, what I know is that we have
8 got Major General Mike Nagata who has been working that for
9 some months. Those numbers are certainly much less than
10 what he estimated. The feedback I have received is those
11 numbers are largely attributable to the vetting process,
12 that they think they have learned some things during the
13 process of these first 60. They have made some other
14 contacts. But, frankly, Chairman, until I have an
15 opportunity to get on the ground and speak to the
16 commanders, what I really know about that now is secondhand.

17 Chairman McCain: Do you believe that we should be
18 getting a pledge from these recruits that they will only
19 fight against ISIS and not Bashar Assad?

20 General Dunford: Chairman, what I understand right now
21 is that we do not have the authority to take action against
22 Assad's forces. So unless that policy would change, then
23 that pledge would be required.

24 Chairman McCain: Given your experience in the
25 military, do you think it is a good idea to train people and

1 send them into a conflict to be attacked and barrel-bombed
2 by another entity and not defending them?

3 General Dunford: Chairman, I do not. If we train
4 those individuals and they go back into Syria to fight, then
5 I think we need to -- if we expect them to be successful, we
6 need to provide them with enabling capability that will
7 allow them to be successful.

8 Chairman McCain: In other words, prevent them from
9 being barrel-bombed by Bashar Assad, which is routine now?

10 General Dunford: I think, Chairman, we need to provide
11 them with a full range of capability for them to be
12 successful.

13 Chairman McCain: I recently was over in Afghanistan
14 over the Fourth of July, and there is great concern both
15 amongst our military and with Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah and
16 other Afghans about the present proposal to have our force
17 in Afghanistan down to a, quote, embassy-centric force by
18 2017, meaning that we would be giving up or turning over our
19 bases in Bagram, Kandahar, and a force that is only based in
20 the U.S. embassy. A great concern was voiced concerning
21 this plan or articulated, announced plan by the President of
22 the United States.

23 As you know, the Taliban did not respect the non-
24 fighting season. As you know, the Afghan casualties are
25 extremely high, higher than they have ever been. And we now

1 have ISIS getting a hold, and we also have the Iranians
2 providing Taliban with weapons.

3 Is this a wise decision on your part to have a
4 calendar-day withdrawal of American troops rather than a
5 conditions-based withdrawal? Given your background and
6 experience there, I think you are probably pretty well
7 qualified to make that judgment.

8 General Dunford: Chairman, I am aware of the
9 consequences of our mission, the importance of our mission
10 in Afghanistan, and clearly I also have a degree of personal
11 commitment, having spent time there. I can assure you, if I
12 am confirmed, I will provide advice to the President that
13 will allow us to meet our desired end state, and I think
14 that that will be based on the conditions on the ground, as
15 you have articulated.

16 Chairman McCain: Rather than a calendar-based
17 decision.

18 General Dunford: Chairman, my experience has been that
19 sometimes the assumptions that you make do not obtain
20 particularly with regard to time, and that is certainly the
21 case in Afghanistan.

22 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

23 In Ukraine, it is obvious that the Russians continue
24 their military buildup. I was in eastern Ukraine and
25 watched the surveillance video that was made by the

1 Ukrainians showing the gradual buildup of Russian forces
2 inside Ukraine.

3 Do you believe that we should give the Ukrainians with
4 the counter-battery systems with which to defend themselves
5 from mass Russian artillery and rocket strikes, and should
6 we provide them with Javelin or TOW anti-tank missile
7 systems to defeat the Russian T-90 tank parades?

8 General Dunford: Chairman, from a military
9 perspective, I think it is reasonable that we provide that
10 support to the Ukrainians. And frankly, without that kind
11 of support, they are not going to be able to protect
12 themselves against Russian aggression.

13 Chairman McCain: General Dunford, I just would like to
14 repeat again my appreciation for your service, and I am
15 confident that you will serve with distinction. And you are
16 the principal military advisor to the President of the
17 United States, and that is a unique role as designed in the
18 1947 act I believe. So I hope that you will keep in mind
19 your obligation to the President but also to the men and
20 women who are serving who we may have to send into harm's
21 way and make sure they are provided with the best
22 capabilities.

23 And finally, I hope in answer to some of these
24 questions, because I have run over time, you will talk about
25 the devastating effects of sequestration on our ability to

1 defend the Nation. Maybe you will just make a brief comment
2 on that now.

3 General Dunford: Chairman, I have dealt with the issue
4 of sequestration as a service chief, and quite frankly, if
5 we go into sequestration, we will be unable to support the
6 current strategy that we have to protect our Nation. And
7 quite honestly, the readiness of the joint force and
8 modernization of the joint force will suffer, what I will
9 describe and without exaggeration, catastrophic
10 consequences.

11 Chairman McCain: I thank you, General Dunford.

12 Senator Reed?

13 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

14 Once again, thank you, General, for your service and
15 your sacrifice.

16 Following a bit on Senator McCain's final question
17 about sequestration, the administration -- and Secretary
18 Carter made this clear -- has adopted an anti-ISIL campaign
19 with nine lines of effort, two principally controlled by the
20 Department of Defense. Are you comfortable with that
21 overall approach at this point?

22 General Dunford: Senator Reed, I am comfortable with
23 that overall approach.

24 Senator Reed: The other lines of effort are controlled
25 by other elements of the Government, State Department,

1 Homeland Security, et cetera. And apropos of Senator
2 McCain's question about effects of sequestration on the
3 Department of Defense, are you concerned that these partners
4 in this effort could be hamstrung just as much as you would
5 be if the BCA went into effect for them?

6 General Dunford: Senator, very much so. And I would
7 say that not only do we just represent two of the nine lines
8 of effort, but we cannot be successful in either Iraq or
9 Syria or, frankly, in any of our other endeavors with out a
10 whole-of-government approach.

11 Senator Reed: Let me just ask you since you are the
12 expert. You were in Afghanistan. We had a significant
13 military effort, but we also had a significant civilian
14 agency effort, the State Department, FBI, Drug Enforcement
15 Administration, all of these agencies. I would assume you
16 considered them to be integral and essential parts of your
17 effort, and without them or without their ability to provide
18 resources, you could not have accomplished what you did. Is
19 that fair?

20 General Dunford: Sir, I think it is absolutely fair.
21 And although we have challenges remaining, I think we have
22 accomplished quite a bit over the last few years, and from
23 my perspective, that is because we have been able to
24 integrate the capabilities of those organizations that you
25 mentioned. In particular, I think the relationship that we

1 have with the State Department in Afghanistan was absolutely
2 critical to our success.

3 Senator Reed: One of the most difficult issues you
4 face is building the capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces,
5 and this has been an endeavor frankly that we have tried for
6 a long time. Do you have any sort of sense at this juncture
7 of what we can or should be doing differently of how do we
8 do this? We have heard colleagues come before the committee
9 -- your colleagues -- and suggest that there are gaps of
10 leadership at the upper levels. Just your perspectives on a
11 length of time and the efforts we have to undertake to get a
12 credible Iraqi force in the field, which will secure the
13 country.

14 General Dunford: Sir, with the caveat that I have been
15 away 11 months, but certainly, if confirmed, will go back
16 almost immediately, the areas of most concern were
17 intelligence, logistics, special operations capability, and
18 the aviation capability, and then more broadly the
19 ministerial capacity. Frankly, our estimates always were
20 that that was a long-term endeavor. It would take years to
21 grow the kind of capacity that we have in this country, and
22 frankly, what we are not trying to do is develop the
23 capability that we have in this country, something far less
24 than that, but the ability at the ministerial level, at the
25 minister of defense and the minister of the interior to

1 support tactical-level organizations. And so I think
2 continue to stay the course in the plan that General
3 Campbell has and recognizing that is going to require
4 continued resources and patience is the way for us to be
5 successful.

6 Senator Reed: Now, I focus for a moment -- I know your
7 practical experience is Afghanistan and other places, but in
8 Iraq there are the same capability problems. Does your
9 analysis apply there also in terms of the long-term need to
10 build up the Iraqi Security Forces and ministries?

11 General Dunford: Senator, it does. In some ways the
12 situation is the same. There are also some vast
13 differences. I think one of the biggest challenges in Iraq
14 has been when Prime Minister Maliki was there, he eliminated
15 many of the capable quality leaders that were in the Iraqi
16 Security Forces. So I think at the tactical level, it is
17 fair to say today the Afghan forces actually have some
18 pretty solid leaders. We have seen them. We have developed
19 them. They have gone to our schools. I feel pretty good
20 about where we are with the Afghan leaders. I think we have
21 some work to do to rebuild the Iraqi Security Forces,
22 frankly to get them back to perhaps where they were a few
23 years ago.

24 Senator Reed: There is one other aspect -- in fact,
25 there are many aspects of the situation in Iraq, but one is

1 this tension, sectarian and geographic tensions in the
2 country. But our policy is to support a unified government
3 in Baghdad and work with them so that they are able to
4 integrate their ethnic communities. Is that the approach
5 that you think makes much sense?

6 General Dunford: Senator, that is going to be very
7 difficult to do, but at this point I believe that is the
8 best prospects for long-term success is a unified, multi-
9 sectarian government in Iraq. Frankly, if confirmed, if at
10 any point I no longer believe that is possible, then my
11 advice to the President will be adjusted accordingly.

12 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, sir, and again,
13 thank you for your service.

14 Chairman McCain: Senator Inhofe?

15 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 In responding to one of the chairman's questions, you
17 were talking about you did not have the authority to go
18 after Assad. Is that not what you said that you do not have
19 the authority to go after Assad?

20 General Dunford: Senator, my understanding is that we
21 do not have the legal authority at this time to go after the
22 Assad regime, and it is also the policy of the
23 administration not to go after the Assad regime militarily.

24 Senator Inhofe: Okay. Well, I think for the record I
25 would like to have you expand a little bit on that as to

1 whether or not it would be desirable for you to have that
2 authority.

3 [The information follows:]

4 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Senator Inhofe: We have been talking for a long time
2 and with you also at these hearings about the amount of risk
3 that we are at right now. You were quoted as saying our
4 combatant commanders face increasing risk. So we are
5 talking about the risk that is out there. And you know,
6 risk equals lives. We talk about this in all these areas.

7 But how do you define too much risk? Are we there yet?

8 General Dunford: Senator, I believe today we are
9 capable of providing adequate security to protect our
10 national interests. I also believe that we are at the
11 razor's edge, and that has certainly been a subject of
12 testimony several times before this committee is that our
13 readiness level is at the point right now where were we to
14 go below this level, we would have to adjust the ends of our
15 strategy. We would no longer be able to support our
16 strategy.

17 Senator Inhofe: And that is similar to the responses
18 we get, whether it is General Odierno or any of the rest of
19 them. They are very much concerned about the level of risk
20 that we are accepting now that we never had to accept in the
21 past.

22 In the Ukraine -- I am particularly sensitive to that.
23 I happened to be there when they had the election that
24 resulted in, for the first time in 96 years, no communists
25 serving in their parliament.

1 We talked about what they really should be having
2 there. Are there obstacles, if you were to make that
3 determination, as to giving them more to defend themselves,
4 the things that we agree that they should have? Is there an
5 obstacle that we could help with, or do you think you have
6 that authority now?

7 General Dunford: Senator, from a military perspective,
8 additional capability to the Ukrainians would clearly help
9 them to deal with both the separatist and the Russian threat
10 in the Ukraine. There are some policy issues associated
11 with that that do not fall into the DOD and military --

12 Senator Inhofe: Yes, I understand that and I
13 appreciate that answer.

14 Kind of the same thing with the Kurds. Now, they have
15 a need for, I guess, anti-armor, MRAP's, and a lot of these
16 things. I get two conflicting stories, one from some of the
17 top people in charge saying that by sending through Baghdad,
18 you have a problem in getting it up to the fight. And yet,
19 I heard just yesterday from someone who is charge that that
20 problem has been resolved now. Is that really resolved? Do
21 we have a problem getting the equipment that they need up
22 there and those fighters to effectively fight?

23 General Dunford: Senator, I watched carefully the
24 hearing on Tuesday and the exchange that took place on this
25 particular issue. You know, I have been briefed that in

1 fact the issues have been resolved and the support is
2 getting to the Kurds right away. But this would be one of
3 those issues that, if confirmed, again Iraq, Afghanistan,
4 and places where our young men and women are in harm's way
5 would be the first places I would go to visit. This issue,
6 because it is so important, would be one issue that I would
7 look into personally.

8 Senator Inhofe: Good. I appreciate that.

9 In this morning's "The Hill," General Petraeus had a
10 couple quotes in there, and I will just read these. He said
11 we can schedule an end to our role in that -- talking about
12 Afghanistan -- in that nation's conflict, but we cannot
13 schedule an end to the war there or an end to the threat
14 from Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, or other extremist
15 elements of the global jihad. Going to a zero option next
16 year would be playing roulette with Afghanistan's future.

17 Is Petraeus right?

18 General Dunford: Sir, I think he is absolutely right
19 with regard to the war would continue whether or not we are
20 there or not, and I think you can assume that the war would
21 get worse were our presence not to be there. Again, my
22 assessment is that our presence ought to be based on the
23 conditions on the ground, and I will certainly go over there
24 and check those as soon as -- and if confirmed.

25 Senator Inhofe: Very good. Thank you very much.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Chairman McCain: Senator Nelson?

3 Senator Nelson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 General, ISIS with regard to Iraq and Syria. Would you
5 generally ascribe to the fact that in Iraq it is going to
6 require the Iraqis to have the will to fight to meet ISIS in
7 Iraq and be successful?

8 General Dunford: Senator, our current campaign is
9 dependent on the capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces
10 to deal with ISIL.

11 Senator Nelson: Go over to Syria. Now, that is a
12 hodgepodge. How much do you think that the Assad regime
13 staying in power would complicate the issue of us being able
14 to take down ISIS in Syria?

15 General Dunford: Senator, my assessment is it plays a
16 significant role. I think Assad's brutality to his people
17 was certainly the primary factor giving rise to ISIS is at
18 least one of the assessments, and I ascribe to that
19 particular assessment. And I think his remaining in power
20 has certainly continued to inflame people and gives ISIS the
21 recruits and the support that they need to operate inside of
22 Syria.

23 Senator Nelson: I agree with that.

24 And then the question is, when do we really press to
25 have some kind of political settlement for Assad to exit?

1 Do you have any thoughts on that?

2 General Dunford: Senator, I do not. I am not involved
3 in the dialogue today in that regard. The political
4 resolution is one of the lines of effort that is part of our
5 overall strategy. And while I do not know, I would assume
6 that today that issue is being addressed, and certainly if
7 confirmed, I expect to be part of those conversations and
8 know a bit more than I do today.

9 Senator Nelson: And, General, someone of your stature
10 is going to be very comforting to us to have the confidence
11 to know that those very tough decisions that will be made
12 with regard to limiting the effectiveness and ultimately
13 defeating ISIS will be made with you sitting there at the
14 table giving counsel.

15 If you just look at a map of who is in control of Syria
16 in the different geographical areas of Syria, it is a mess.
17 And how you bring order -- thank you. Senator McCaskill has
18 shown this is Syria and the different colors representing
19 the different entities that in fact are in control in that
20 geographic area. So it is comforting to know that you are
21 going to be there giving your wise counsel.

22 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Chairman McCain: Senator Sessions?

24 Senator Sessions: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

25 General Dunford, with regard to the Budget Control Act,

1 which includes the sequester, the Budget Committee, the
2 Armed Services Committee, with a bipartisan strong vote, has
3 voted out legislation that will add, I believe, \$23 billion
4 above last year's spending for the Defense Department. I
5 believe the Appropriations Committee has already voted out
6 that same spending level, and it is on the floor.

7 The problem is that the commander in chief, the
8 President of the United States, is insisting on blocking
9 that bill, encouraging Democrats to filibuster it until
10 there is an agreement to spend an equal amount on non-
11 defense. And I just believe that the fact that we have a
12 crisis internationally and we need to spend more on defense
13 does not require that this Nation spend more on non-defense.
14 So that is the difficulty we face. You will be seeing more
15 of that, I guess, as time goes by.

16 General Dunford, with regard to Iraq and this ISIS
17 situation, is it not true that the threat in Iraq is not
18 just a threat to Iraq but it implicates the national
19 security interests of the United States and that we have a
20 national security interest in blocking a takeover of Iraq by
21 this extremist group ISIS that chops off heads and does
22 other extreme things?

23 General Dunford: Senator, I would agree that the issue
24 of ISIS has both regional issues -- it is creating regional
25 instability, but absolutely we have U.S. national interests

1 in a stable Iraq that is not a sanctuary for extremists.

2 Senator Sessions: So I think it is a mistake sometimes
3 to just sit back and say, well, we are going to wait on the
4 Iraqi army to get its act together. We have trained the
5 Iraqi army for over a decade. They have battalions and
6 companies and organizations. They are not well led, and
7 their morale is not good. But they have an army. The
8 question is can we help encourage them to be more effective
9 in fighting back against ISIS. Would you not agree?

10 General Dunford: I do agree with that, Senator. And I
11 would just say, despite the challenges, we have had, as you
12 know, some thousands of men and women from the United States
13 Central Command that have been in Iraq and conducting
14 strikes into Syria over the last year. And despite the
15 challenges in pretty difficult conditions, I think they have
16 had some accomplishments over the past year that we can be
17 proud of. Clearly we are going to do more. I think
18 Secretary Carter made that clear on Tuesday. Clearly we
19 need to do more to assist the Iraqis in moving forward, and
20 I think that is the plan.

21 Senator Sessions: Well, the President's press
22 conference 2 days ago did not encourage me and did not
23 clarify in my mind that we have a good strategy for Iraq.
24 And frankly, I think General Dempsey and Secretary Carter
25 following up on that were not very persuasive either in

1 convincing me or the American people that we have a good
2 plan.

3 Now, based on your experience, is it not a fact that if
4 we had a limited number, just five, special forces embedded
5 with an Iraqi battalion of 600, that that can give
6 confidence to that battalion, help improve their morale, and
7 help them be more effective on the battlefield?

8 Senator Sessions: Senator, it has been my experience
9 that when U.S. forces have accompanied Iraqis -- or for that
10 matter, my experience in Afghanistan -- that those units are
11 more effective.

12 Senator Sessions: Well, General Dempsey said he has
13 not yet recommended that we embed a limited number, a very
14 small number, of such forces in the Iraqi army, but he would
15 do so if he thought it was appropriate. Do you not think it
16 is time for us to maybe move from being in Baghdad in
17 headquarters and actually move out to help provide this kind
18 of confidence, the air cover, the direction of munitions,
19 giving confidence of resupply and American commitment? Is
20 it not time for us to move forward in that direction?

21 General Dunford: Senator, without appearing to be
22 evasive, what I really would like to do, if confirmed, is
23 have the opportunity to get on the ground, speak to the
24 commanders, and frankly provide a more comprehensive
25 recommendation to how we can move the campaign forward in

1 Iraq without focusing on one or another of the factors.

2 Senator Sessions: Well, I hope you will do that
3 quickly.

4 And just one more thing. Senator McCain warned
5 yesterday that we could be facing the same situation that he
6 warned about Iraq in 2011 when we pulled out prematurely.
7 And now we are going to be facing this decision in
8 Afghanistan. And I hope that you will be clear and firm in
9 your recommendation to the President if you believe this
10 plan we have today, date-specific withdrawal, is in error,
11 and I hope you will do that. Will you do so if you think it
12 is in error?

13 General Dunford: I will do that, Senator.

14 Senator Sessions: Thank you.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator McCaskill?

16 Senator McCaskill: Thank you.

17 My good friend and colleague, Senator Sessions, and I
18 have worked together on matters of fiscal accountability and
19 trying to spend less money, but I have a different take than
20 he does on where we are in terms of the military budget.

21 I cannot figure out any reason why we would be putting
22 the \$40 billion increase into the war fund instead of into
23 the base budget. I cannot think of any reason to do that
24 other than one of misleading the American people about
25 whether or not we are balancing something because that is

1 the only place they can put the money and not have to pay
2 for it. So they put it there so it did not have to be paid
3 for and completely short-changed national security for our
4 country in the form of cybersecurity, port security, airport
5 security, FBI, CIA, all of which I know you would
6 acknowledge, General Dunford, is a very important part of
7 the role of keeping America safe. Would you agree with
8 that?

9 General Dunford: Senator, I would absolutely agree
10 that all those organizations play an inextricable role in
11 keeping us safe.

12 Senator McCaskill: And let us make very clear, if in
13 fact we go down this path of pretending we are balancing
14 something by putting it in a fund that we do not have to pay
15 for, will in fact the OCO funds, or the war fund as I like
16 to call them -- will they do anything to avoid the force
17 structure cuts that are looming across our Nation if we do
18 not get off of this path of misleading the American people
19 about what we are balancing?

20 General Dunford: Senator, I think all of the service
21 chiefs that have to balance a budget and certainly me
22 included where I sit right now would much prefer that money
23 to be in the base budget because that provides a degree of
24 predictability that we can get after the two main issues
25 that we have to deal with. One is modernization of force,

1 and the other is to get the readiness back to a level that
2 we are comfortable with.

3 Senator McCaskill: So the cuts that we have seen this
4 week that General Odierno announced -- they are a drop in
5 the bucket as to what is coming if we continue on this
6 bizarre idea of putting all of this money in the war fund as
7 opposed to in the base budget where force strength belongs.
8 Correct?

9 General Dunford: If the budget level goes below what
10 has been requested in the President's budget 2016, there
11 will be significant additional cuts made.

12 Senator McCaskill: Thank you.

13 You know how hard we have all worked on the problem of
14 sexual assault in the military. I am pleased that the
15 incidents are down. I am pleased that reporting is up. I
16 am pleased that the efforts that are being made to measure
17 victim satisfaction with command look good. I think it is
18 too early to declare success, obviously. We have a lot more
19 work to do.

20 But the thorny problem that remains, General, and one
21 that I really want to make sure you have at the top of your
22 list is retaliation. And I know that there have been some
23 initiatives begun, but I would like to see a written plan
24 from you as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs with all of the
25 chiefs signing off on what is your path to getting at this

1 culture. The problem is not, based on the survey, the
2 command. The problem is primarily lower level command, unit
3 command, and peer-to-peer, not that there may not be some
4 outliers there, but that is the bulk of the problem. And
5 that is a culture issue, and that means from the top.

6 I am disappointed that we have not had more
7 prosecutions. Retaliation is a crime. I know it is new. I
8 know people might be very reluctant to bring somebody up on
9 those charges because of what that might mean within their
10 unit. But that is where you guys come in. And I would like
11 a commitment from you today that you would be willing to put
12 a plan in writing that we could follow.

13 General Dunford: Senator, I would make that
14 commitment. I think you have correctly identified peer
15 retaliation as the real issue that we are trying to grapple
16 with in the wake of the RAND report. And I can assure you
17 that the leadership across the Department has been carefully
18 looking at that issue in an effort to set the right command
19 climate where retaliation is unacceptable.

20 Senator McCaskill: I will put a question for the
21 record about the unused building report that SIGAR pointed
22 out in Afghanistan. I know there was an investigation.
23 You, of course, were not found to be a problem in this, but
24 it is a problem the investigation found no problem and in
25 reality there was a huge problem, that somebody signed off

1 on a building for \$36 million that is never going to be used
2 and is sitting empty. And we have got to make sure we avoid
3 that.

4 My final question is -- if you do not have time to do
5 it now -- I am just about out of time. I want to make sure
6 that we get your take on ISIS in Afghanistan. I know they
7 are trying to move everywhere. Obviously, this is a Shia-
8 Sunni issue and that is something that is prevalent
9 throughout the region. And with your experience in
10 Afghanistan, are you comfortable that we have a handle on
11 what ISIS is trying to do in Afghanistan?

12 General Dunford: Senator, what I know from General
13 Campbell's reports and intelligence is that we have seen a
14 number of Taliban rebrand themselves as ISIS. But beyond
15 that, I do not have a good feel at this time for the depth
16 of the problem, but certainly it would be one of the issues
17 I would look into if confirmed.

18 Senator McCaskill: Thank you very much.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Chairman McCain: Senator Wicker?

21 Senator Wicker: General Dunford, I think you are just
22 the man for the job, but let me tell you you have got a lot
23 of crises to preside over. And I would simply ask you,
24 during the course of your term in office, tell us what you
25 need. Come back to us and be honest and tell us what our

1 men and women in uniform need to succeed and get the job
2 done because I do not think we are quite there.

3 I was privileged to lead a bipartisan delegation of
4 House and Senate Members over the past week to Ukraine. We
5 met with President Poroshenko in Kiev, and he is grateful
6 for the \$300 million that this Government provided in
7 military assistance during the past year. He also mentioned
8 the need for Javelin anti-tank missiles. I think your
9 testimony earlier today is that that is a reasonable request
10 on the part of the president of Ukraine, and it will be
11 necessary for him to get those in order for him to defend
12 his country. Was that your testimony?

13 General Dunford: Senator, it was. From a military
14 perspective, those kinds of capabilities in my judgment
15 would be necessary for him to deal with both Russian
16 aggression and the separatism issue that he is dealing with
17 in Ukraine.

18 Senator Wicker: Separatists that are backed by the
19 Russian hierarchy.

20 Would you also agree that it is unacceptable that this
21 month's transfer of 100 armored Humvees to Ukraine took over
22 a year to process due to bureaucratic delays at DOD and
23 State?

24 General Dunford: Senator, if it took a year to do
25 that, it would be unacceptable. I am not personally aware

1 of that issue.

2 Senator Wicker: Okay. Well, look into that for us.

3 I also led the delegation to Helsinki for the OSCE
4 parliamentary assembly. Before the delegation left --
5 before the Russian delegation left en masse because of a
6 dispute over five delegates being on the EU sanctions list
7 -- the head of the delegation, Nikolay Kovalev, said that
8 Russia's neighbors have no reason to be threatened by
9 Russia. Now, of course, Russia has -- under Mr. Putin's
10 leadership, Russia has twice invaded neighbors, Georgia in
11 2008, Ukraine last year. And we see now that there is a
12 Russian official investigating the legality of Mr.

13 Krushev's transfer of Crimea back in the day saying that
14 this perhaps was not an invasion because Crimea was never
15 legally transferred to Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

16 It concerns me that this same official is now
17 investigating whether the transfer of the Baltic States,
18 whether the giving of independence to the Baltic States,
19 Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, was also legal. Perhaps
20 that was not legal at all, this Russian official suggests.

21 And we can get to the issue this way. I just want to
22 ask you this about our NATO commitment. I can envision a
23 situation where there are small jurisdictions within Latvia
24 that have a majority of Russian speakers, small
25 jurisdictions within Estonia that have a majority of Russian

1 speakers. And a pretext of a plebiscite is created at that
2 point. I realize I am posing something to you that is
3 hypothetical, but in light of pronouncements from officials
4 in the Russian Federation, I think it is something to be
5 concerned about.

6 Zbigniew Brzezinski spoke to this committee earlier
7 this year and said we need to create a trip wire in the
8 Baltics and that this trip wire should communicate clearly
9 to Russia that NATO will not tolerate violations of the
10 territorial integrity of our allies.

11 What do you think of this idea and can you highlight to
12 this committee the steps DOD needs to take under leadership
13 to send a credible message that this sort of pretext by the
14 Russian Federation would absolutely not be tolerated by the
15 United States and our NATO allies?

16 General Dunford: Senator, I think our experience in
17 Ukraine and in the other examples that you used highlights
18 the fact that we need to update our deterrence and response
19 model to deal with the kind of threat that we have today,
20 which has been described as a hybrid threat from Russia,
21 which combines political instruments, unconventional
22 warfare, as well as support for separatists in these
23 countries. And quite frankly, that needs to be a priority.
24 You are asking what should the Department do. We frankly
25 need an effective deterrent model for the 21st century to

1 deal with the kind of threats that we are now seeing in
2 Russia because, quite frankly, I think that kind of
3 asymmetric threat is one we will continue to see in the
4 future and certainly we are going to continue to see that in
5 the European context.

6 Senator Wicker: Would an incursion of Russian troops
7 or Russian-back separatist troops in small jurisdictions of
8 Russian-speaking majorities within Latvia and Estonia --
9 would that be completely unacceptable to this Government?

10 General Dunford: From a policy perspective, Senator, I
11 cannot answer that. From a personal perspective, it
12 certainly looks like a violation of sovereignty to me.

13 Senator Wicker: Under article 4 of NATO, in my view it
14 would be absolutely unacceptable. And we need to make it
15 clear. This administration needs to make it clear. This
16 Congress needs to make that we will do what is necessary to
17 prevent this sort of idea from ever being considered in the
18 first place.

19 General Dunford: Senator, I agree with that, and I
20 think this also applies to the cyber threat as well, again,
21 the idea of deterrence in response to a changing threat in
22 the 21st century, and I think we need to update our models
23 for both.

24 Senator Wicker: Thank you, sir.

25 Chairman McCain: Senator Manchin?

1 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 And thank you, General, for your service to our great
3 country, your family's dedication and sacrifice they have
4 made with you I know over the years.

5 And, sir, I am sure you have had the opportunity to
6 form opinions on what our threats have been and what our
7 threats are today. What would you consider the greatest
8 threat to our national security?

9 General Dunford: My assessment today, Senator, is that
10 Russia presents the greatest threat to our national
11 security.

12 Senator Manchin: Would you want to elaborate on that
13 to a certain extent?

14 General Dunford: Well, Senator, in Russia we have a
15 nuclear power. We have one that not only has the capability
16 to violate the sovereignty of our allies and to do things
17 that are inconsistent with our national interests, but they
18 are in the process of doing so. So if you want to talk
19 about a nation that could pose an existential threat to the
20 United States, I would have to point to Russia. And if you
21 look at their behavior, it is nothing short of alarming.

22 Senator Manchin: I have been very much concerned about
23 the same issue. I think we have talked about it briefly
24 before when you visited my office. But I have been told by
25 major scholars that the Cold War is colder today than it was

1 when it was declared because of the lack of communications,
2 the lack of inter-party affiliations. Do you find it to be
3 true, and can you change that course in your new position?

4 General Dunford: Senator, certainly the relationship
5 of Russia a few years ago, if you recall -- we actually were
6 including them in NATO meetings and so forth, and those
7 kinds of exchanges have stopped. From my perspective, my
8 role would be even as the relationship is challenged and
9 even with the difficulties that we face right now, I think
10 it is important that we attempt to maintain a military-to-
11 military relationship, an effective military-to-military
12 relationship, with our Russian counterparts to the extent
13 possible to mitigate the risk of miscalculation and begin to
14 turn the trend in the other direction in terms of trust.

15 Senator Manchin: Thank you, General.

16 And also, going back to Iraq -- it has been spoken
17 previously, but could you find yourself at some time
18 recommending to the President for a three-state solution in
19 Iraq versus staying the course of a united Iraqi government?

20 General Dunford: Well, Senator, from my perspective, I
21 can imagine two states in Iraq. I have difficulty imagining
22 a third separate state given the lack of resources that
23 would be available to the Sunni. And frankly, I think if it
24 was in thirds without a federal government, I think we would
25 have some difficulty, the same difficulty that we have today

1 exacerbated by the fact that there is not a central
2 government.

3 Senator Manchin: Basically you are acknowledging that
4 the Kurds are strong, prepared, ready to go if they were
5 given that opportunity?

6 General Dunford: Senator, you know, again it is
7 probably out of my lane to talk about what the organization
8 of Iraq might be in the future. But I think from just a
9 pure economic resources and governance perspective, the Shia
10 and the Kurds are certainly much more equipped to set up a
11 separate state than the Sunni would be at this time.

12 Senator Manchin: I know it has been spoken about also,
13 the mistake of us leaving Iraq, pulling our troops out when
14 we did. Did we have an option to stay?

15 General Dunford: Senator, I was not involved in the
16 discussion at that time. The assessment of the
17 administration at that time was we did not have an option to
18 stay.

19 Senator Manchin: So basically those of us who believe
20 that maybe there could have been some forces left there or
21 basically the evaluation Maliki was not doing his job, once
22 we went down the path of democracy democratizing that
23 country, we did not have the option to go back and stay
24 there.

25 General Dunford: Given what we were demanding of the

1 Iraqis, they were not meeting our demands. I am not sure I
2 would say that meant we had no option to stay.

3 Senator Manchin: I have spoken many times about the
4 lack of an audit. The only agency in the Federal Government
5 that we do not audit is the Pentagon. Defense. And the
6 Marines have made an effort. I will say they have made more
7 of an effort than any other branch of the military to do an
8 audit, but it has not been fulfilled.

9 What would your commitment be, sir, for us to have an
10 audit, especially for us to know about our contractors, how
11 much money we spend on contractors, how many contract forces
12 that we have doing the job that I believe maybe our military
13 and definitely our National Guard could be supporting in
14 that effort that we are not doing today?

15 General Dunford: Senator, we cannot be effective as a
16 warfighting organization and we certainly cannot be
17 efficient with the taxpayers' dollars if we do not have an
18 effective audit. As you alluded to, we worked that pretty
19 hard in the Marine Corps. I worked it both as an Assistant
20 Commandant and then over the last year as the Commandant.
21 We did make a significant amount of progress. We were able
22 to get to the point where we could internally audit all of
23 the resources that were directly under the cognizance of the
24 Marine Corps with some database challenges outside. But I
25 can assure you that, if confirmed, you will have my

1 commitment to continue to press hard in that direction and
2 to support the efforts across the Department to make sure
3 that we can come to you with a clean audit.

4 Senator Manchin: General, I again want to thank you.
5 You do have my support and I think the confidence of the
6 American people, definitely the West Virginians. Thank you,
7 sir.

8 Chairman McCain: Senator Ayotte?

9 Senator Ayotte: General, I just want to thank you for
10 all that you have done for the country, and I think that you
11 will do a tremendous job as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of
12 Staff. And I want to thank Ellyn and your family for what
13 they have done for the country and continue to do. We
14 appreciate it.

15 I wanted to also add my support to what Senator
16 McCaskill said about the issue of retaliation. I think this
17 is a very important issue as we focus on the work that we
18 have done in this committee to eliminate and to work to
19 prevent sexual assault in the military and to support
20 victims and to hold the perpetrators accountable. So I
21 think that is excellent. I look forward to seeing that
22 proposal from you.

23 I wanted to ask about the situation, as we look at Iran
24 and their support for regional terrorism. How would you
25 assess Iran's current activities and where are they engaging

1 in support either directly or through proxies for efforts
2 that are undermining security in the region?

3 General Dunford: Senator, Iran is clearly a malign
4 influence in the most destabilizing element in the Middle
5 East today. They are providing support to the Huthis down
6 in Yemen. They obviously provide support. Hezbollah is a
7 clear malign influence in Lebanon. There are indications
8 they are involved in Syria, and certainly they are involved
9 and trying to expand their influence into Iraq. And they
10 are creating I think -- they are exacerbating at least the
11 Sunni-Shia sectarianism across the region.

12 Senator Ayotte: I want to follow up more on that, but
13 I also want to ask you. I saw reports that they were also
14 engaged in supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan more now.
15 Is there anything you can share with us on that?

16 General Dunford: Senator, I have seen those same
17 reports, and from my perspective, what I have seen in the
18 reports is that they have provided some support to the
19 Taliban in an effort to counter ISIL.

20 Senator Ayotte: Do you believe, as we think about your
21 experience -- I know you commanded troops in Iraq. But
22 certainly Iran has the blood of American soldiers on its
23 hands for the explosive materials that they provided to the
24 Shia militias in Iraq that killed many of our men and women
25 in uniform. So do you think, as we look at the situation in

1 Iraq and what is happening with the Shia militias you
2 referred to, how could they be a malign influence in the
3 longer-term solution in Iraq?

4 General Dunford: Senator, they clearly could be a
5 malign influence, which is why I believe we should not
6 provide any support to those forces unless they are directly
7 under the Iraqi Government and not provided support by the
8 Iranians.

9 Senator Ayotte: Thank you.

10 I wanted to also ask you about the situation on cyber
11 because the FBI Director -- we have received briefings on
12 the OPM breach, but the FBI Director has said that he
13 believes this is an enormous breach. Millions and millions
14 of individuals who provided background information have been
15 breached. And Director Clapper has said that they believe
16 it is the Chinese who have done this breach.

17 When we look at the threats facing our Nation, how
18 grave do you think the cyber threat is? And also, how would
19 you assess our current posture with the Chinese and how we
20 should be addressing the situation?

21 General Dunford: Senator, I would agree with you. The
22 cyber threat is clearly very significant. Frankly, every
23 week we learn a bit more about the OPM breach. My number
24 one concern, obviously, as a service chief is for the data
25 and the wellbeing of the men and women whose data that is

1 having been compromised.

2 One of the challenges is, of course, attribution. But
3 from my perspective, if confirmed, my role will be to
4 provide the President with a full range of options to deal
5 with these cyber attacks, which is what the OPM breach was.

6 Senator Ayotte: So I know that Senator Manchin had
7 asked you what you believe our gravest national security
8 threat was, and you identified Russia. And certainly we
9 have seen this aggression by Putin in Russia certainly
10 invading other countries essentially.

11 But what is it -- as you look at the national security
12 situation, you think about immediate threats to the country,
13 what keeps you up at night the most?

14 General Dunford: Senator, what keeps me up at night
15 the most is our ability to respond to the uncertain. I am
16 very confident -- very confident -- in the joint force today
17 and our capabilities and capacities to deal with the
18 challenges that we have today, albeit we need improvement in
19 cyber, other capabilities, but on balance, the force that we
20 have today is able to deal with the challenges that we know.
21 There is very little residual capacity. And this is the
22 issue that has been discussed many times before this
23 committee and that you have had some personal engagement on.
24 It is the readiness to respond to the uncertain, frankly,
25 that keeps me up at night as a service chief and certainly

1 one that would keep me up at night were I to be confirmed as
2 the Chairman.

3 Senator Ayotte: Thank you.

4 Chairman McCain: Senator Gillibrand?

5 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
6 Ranking Member. I appreciate this hearing.

7 Thank you, General Dunford, for your service. I am
8 grateful for your wife and children being here with you. We
9 all know you serve together.

10 I want to continue along the line that Senator Ayotte
11 started with with Iran. We are expecting a potential
12 nuclear agreement between P5 Plus 1 as early as today. Are
13 you concerned that lifting sanctions on Iran might allow
14 that country to invest more money in terrorist activities in
15 the Middle East, and what can we do to address those
16 concerns?

17 General Dunford: Senator, there is no question that
18 signing an agreement will change the dynamic in the Middle
19 East. And the first thing I guess I would say is that, if
20 confirmed, I know I would have the responsibility to develop
21 options for the President to deal with the changing dynamic.

22 With regard to increased resources for malign activity,
23 I think it is reasonable to assume that if sanctions are
24 lifted, the Iranians would have more money available for
25 malign activities. But I would probably say that regardless

1 of whether there is an agreement or not, my expectation is
2 that Iran will continue the malign activity across the
3 Middle East that we have seen over the past several years.

4 Senator Gillibrand: I also want to continue the line
5 started by Senator McCaskill about retaliation. Senator
6 McCaskill was correct when she said this is something we are
7 all very concerned about, and she said it is not just peer-
8 to-peer. She mentioned unit commanders. And I want to be
9 specific about this issue so you know the problem you are
10 dealing with.

11 So 53 percent was peer-to-peer retaliation, but 35
12 percent was adverse administrative action. 32 percent was
13 professional retaliation, and 11 percent was punishment for
14 an infraction. So you have to recognize some of this
15 retaliation is being perceived by survivors to be done by
16 unit commanders or someone within the chain of command
17 because administrative retaliation or perceived
18 administrative retaliation or professional retaliation is
19 serious. So there is still a climate issue that the chain
20 of command is responsible for, particularly unit commanders
21 and lower level commanders, that is not getting the right
22 message.

23 In fact, the recent RAND survey said that 60 percent of
24 women who said they experienced sexual discrimination or
25 some kind of negative behavior came from their commanders,

1 their unit commanders. So you have to recognize there is a
2 climate issue that is not being adequately addressed. So
3 when you do your report for this committee, I would like you
4 to look at that issue as well.

5 You also have the challenge that in the reported cases,
6 1 in 7 of the perpetrators who were alleged have committed
7 rape, sexual assault, or unwanted sexual contact was also in
8 the chain of command. So you have a challenge with lower
9 level commanders that is not yet being addressed that I
10 would like your report to cover as well.

11 And somewhat related, I want to talk about combat
12 integration. I strongly believe that we should have
13 standards that meet the needs of each position and then
14 allow anyone in who meets those standards to compete. You
15 have not been very vocal on this issue, but if confirmed,
16 you will be one of those individuals who are advising the
17 Secretary of Defense about whether the services should
18 receive any exceptions to policy.

19 Do you expect the services, especially the Marines, who
20 I assume you have been tracking most closely, to ask for
21 exceptions?

22 General Dunford: Senator, I am not able to answer that
23 question right now, and I can just explain the process in
24 the Marine Corps. We have looked at this issue pretty hard.
25 As you know, we put together a task force that is just

1 completing. In fact, they will stand down this week. I
2 expect the data that we have collected over the past 18
3 months in a very deliberate, responsible way to be available
4 to me in the August-September time frame. And we will meet
5 the timeline established by Secretary Panetta and General
6 Dempsey in a letter from 2012.

7 Senator Gillibrand: Okay.

8 Will you be looking across the services to see if one
9 asks for exception in a position whose equivalent another
10 service does not request an exception for? Will you be
11 doing a comparison between services?

12 General Dunford: Senator, my understanding of the way
13 it will work now, again, if I am confirmed, sitting as the
14 Chairman, is that I will have a responsibility to look at
15 each one of the requests on its own merits and make a
16 recommendation to the Secretary of Defense.

17 Senator Gillibrand: Okay.

18 And then with my remaining 30 seconds, I want to
19 address cyber. We are constantly being confronted by our
20 need for a capable cyber force. CYBERCOM and the services
21 have been building out those capabilities, but there is
22 still work to be done. How do you envision the force, and
23 what do you see the role as the reserve component?

24 General Dunford: Senator, I envision the force, as you
25 mentioned -- it is certainly going to grow, and I would

1 support the plans that Admiral Rodgers -- and I think he has
2 testified here before the committee. I think he is setting
3 the right path in terms of growing the capacity of the cyber
4 force.

5 The reserve component is going to be very important.
6 In fact, in many cases and certainly as a service chief who
7 looked at this, some of the skill sets that are unique to
8 cyber are available to us in the reserve force. And we need
9 to figure out a way to maximize and leverage those
10 capabilities.

11 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

12 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman McCain: Senator Fischer?

14 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 And thank you, General Dunford, for your many years of
16 service to this country and to the men and women under your
17 command. I would like to also thank your family, your wife,
18 your son who is present today, and your niece who is here as
19 well. So thank you, sir.

20 I was pleased to see that you listed modernizing the
21 nuclear enterprise among the top challenges that you do
22 expect to face in your response to the committee's advance
23 questions. And you also described our nuclear deterrent as
24 the Nation's top military priority.

25 Do you believe it is critical that we maintain the full

1 triad of our delivery vehicles?

2 General Dunford: Senator, given the nature of the
3 threat today, I do believe that.

4 Senator Fischer: And do you support a bomber leg of
5 the triad that is armed with both the gravity bombs and the
6 cruise missiles?

7 General Dunford: I do, Senator.

8 Senator Fischer: And the gravity bombs, as you know,
9 and the cruise missiles -- they are entirely different
10 capabilities. And so one does not make the other redundant.
11 Is that correct?

12 General Dunford: It is, Senator, and my understanding
13 of the issue is it adds a degree of complexity for the
14 threat and gives us a greater assurance of being able to
15 deliver, should that be required.

16 Senator Fischer: Great. Thank you.

17 And as you know, modernization has been delayed and
18 deferred for some time, and we are now at a point where the
19 life of the delivery systems cannot be extended any further.
20 As Deputy Secretary Work put it recently, the choice right
21 now is modernizing a losing deterrent capability in the
22 2020's and the 2030's.

23 Some have argued that these bills are simply too large
24 and we cannot afford to retain our nuclear deterrent. But
25 according to the Department's calculation, at its peak the

1 nuclear mission would be about 7 percent of the nuclear
2 budget. I think it is a little confusing when we hear about
3 our deterrent described as unaffordable, and to me the
4 alternative, letting that deterrent age out -- that has the
5 unaffordable cost to us.

6 Do you have any thoughts on that?

7 General Dunford: Senator, I would say I would pose the
8 question -- you know, some people would ask whether we can
9 afford it. I would probably flip that around and say I
10 think we need to think about how we will fund it. It is a
11 capability that is required. Again, we have identified that
12 as the number one capability that we need to have to protect
13 the Nation, and nuclear weapons certainly create an
14 existential threat. So for me, it is a question more of how
15 do we work together moving forward to fund this as opposed
16 to whether or not we can afford to do it.

17 Senator Fischer: That is 7 percent of the budget at
18 its peak, though, and being the number one priority, should
19 that not be what we fund first?

20 General Dunford: Senator, frankly, it is more
21 complicated to me than that, and I have some experience with
22 that inside the Department of the Navy. When I looked at
23 the Ohio class replacement, as an example, and what that
24 would do to pressurize the shipbuilding account, we would
25 have to make some very difficult decisions inside the

1 Department from a capability perspective. And so while it
2 is clear that that is the priority, it is not an issue of
3 exclusivity. And so balanced capabilities is what the joint
4 force needs, and so I think we need to approach it from that
5 perspective.

6 Senator Fischer: Fair enough.

7 I also appreciate the connection that you made between
8 the modernization and the reductions to the hedge of our
9 non-deployed weapons. I think that this linkage is often
10 overlooked, and I think it is based on simple logic. If you
11 have a modern stockpile and you have a responsive
12 infrastructure, you do not keep as many spares. And I think
13 you are more insulated as well from what is happening in the
14 world. You are more insulated from those surprises and also
15 from technical failure.

16 But to be clear, do you believe that it would be
17 premature to make any significant changes to the hedge
18 before we have a modern stockpile and before we have a
19 responsive infrastructure?

20 General Dunford: Senator, my understanding at this
21 time from the briefings I received is that would be the most
22 prudent course for us to take.

23 Senator Fischer: Thank you, sir.

24 With respect to further nuclear arms reductions, do you
25 believe that any reductions below the New START force levels

1 must be achieved through a negotiated treaty and also be
2 verifiable?

3 General Dunford: Senator, I do. I do not believe we
4 ought to take unilateral action in that regard.

5 Senator Fischer: Should non-strategic nuclear weapons
6 be included as well?

7 General Dunford: Senator, I would like to take that
8 particular question for the record.

9 [The information follows:]

10 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Senator Fischer: Thank you.

2 And do you agree that any arms control negotiations
3 must take into account Russia's current behavior, especially
4 its compliant record. You mentioned at the beginning that
5 you feel that Russia is our greatest threat.

6 General Dunford: I do, Senator.

7 Senator Fischer: Thank you, sir.

8 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly?

9 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10 And I want to also thank General Dempsey and his family
11 for everything they have done for the country.

12 General Dunford, you and your family -- thank you very,
13 very much for stepping up to the plate. We are really in
14 your debt.

15 As you know and we have discussed in the past, I
16 believe one of the greatest threats to our troops is when
17 they find themselves in a personal place where they start to
18 think about something like suicide. We lost over 400 young
19 men and women in the past year. And I know you have worked
20 very hard in this area. You have done a lot of rigorous
21 screening in the Marine Corps.

22 Will you have that same screening used across the
23 branches when you look at recruits and early on in their
24 careers?

25 General Dunford: Senator, one of the thoughts I had as

1 a service chief was to ensure that once we identified a
2 better way to screen, as you said, and identified people at
3 risk and take appropriate action, that we would share that
4 as best practices across the services. And I would
5 certainly look to facilitate that if confirmed.

6 Senator Donnelly: And then the other question I wanted
7 to ask you in this area is a lot of times, in talking to the
8 parents, there has been a stigma for the young men and women
9 to seek help. I know that you are committed to removing
10 that stigma. Are we going to make sure that everybody
11 knows, look, it is a sign of strength to try to get some
12 help, to talk to somebody, as opposed to any weakness?

13 General Dunford: Senator, absolutely. You know, this
14 is one of those areas where you are never complacent, you
15 are never satisfied with where you are. But I would tell
16 you this. I really believe this. Over the past probably 5
17 or 7 years, the issue of stigma as it associates with
18 suicide has changed dramatically. Even the way we deal with
19 families in the wake of suicide, if you think about where we
20 were a decade ago, is completely different. And I do think
21 the command climate is much more receptive to somebody today
22 seeking help than it was in the past and making sure that
23 help is accessible and, where appropriate, anonymous. But,
24 again, I am not suggesting that we are satisfied with where
25 we are, but I do believe we have made a lot of progress in

1 that particular regard.

2 Senator Donnelly: Thank you.

3 Last week, I was on a trip led by Senator Kaine. We
4 went to Iraq and met with a number of our forces there, some
5 of the leadership. And one of the greatest concerns was the
6 Iraqi troops, and when you look at the number of ISIS
7 fighters in Ramadi compared to the Iraqi troops, it was a
8 very sparse number of ISIS fighters, but they won the day
9 anyhow because the Iraqi troops turned and left.

10 I know that that has to be a focus of the leadership of
11 the Iraqi forces. Are we going to send the message that the
12 only way through Ramadi is through Ramadi, that there is no
13 back door anymore in these kind of efforts?

14 General Dunford: Senator, again, you have been on the
15 ground more recently than me now, and I know you have talked
16 to the commanders there. I did have an opportunity to
17 listen to General Austin the other day, and I have seen
18 General Terry's plan, and I think they have made it very
19 clear to the Iraqi Security Forces how important Ramadi is.
20 In fact, they have been working hard over the last couple
21 months to set the conditions for the Iraqis to be successful
22 in Ramadi. It probably is one of those issues where it is a
23 tactical action to go back in Ramadi, but there is no
24 question in my mind that from an information operations
25 perspective and frankly from a perception of the campaign,

1 it is a strategic action. I think the Iraqis understand
2 that.

3 Senator Donnelly: One of the other groups we met with
4 -- and I know the marines have shed so much blood and
5 treasure in Anbar Province over the past years. We met with
6 a lot of the Sunni tribal leaders, and they said, look, we
7 are still united with you but we need to know that you are
8 in this, that you care, that you will be there. And I
9 mentioned this the other day to Secretary Carter and General
10 Dempsey. One of the council members from Haditha said, we
11 have got people eating grass in our town now. These are
12 people who worked with the United States. They are now
13 eating grass. There is no milk for our children. We need
14 you to help in this humanitarian crisis.

15 And so I think we not only have to win the battles, we
16 have to reacquire the hearts and minds of the people there.
17 And they said, if you do, we will move these folks out. And
18 I just wanted to get your views on that.

19 General Dunford: Senator, I agree, and I think with
20 regard to Anbar, I have got both a personal and a
21 professional stake, having lived in the province for a year
22 and developed relationships with some of the people in the
23 Anbar Province. And I could not agree with you more that
24 their confidence in our commitment, their trust in our
25 commitment will absolutely have an impact on the success of

1 our campaign not only from the military perspective, but
2 from the perspective of the people's willingness to support
3 us.

4 Senator Donnelly: The last thing I wanted to mention
5 is Syria. It appears that the plan we have right now is
6 really no plan. You know, we have talked about buffer zones
7 when we were in Saudi Arabia -- Chairman McCain with a group
8 of us. And we talked about creating no-fly zones there.
9 And so we seem to be in search of a plan. And my fear is
10 that Assad is going to fall, and we are hearing that from a
11 lot of folks in the area that he is on very shaky ground
12 right now. And do we then look up the next day and see a
13 race between ISIS and al-Nusra to take over the rest of the
14 country, which is a nightmare scenario at that point? And
15 so you are stepping into a real challenging position, but I
16 think one of the very, very front on the lens is Syria is
17 going to change. It is going to change quickly, and we had
18 best be prepared for that change and be ahead of it or else
19 we are going to look up and an entire country is going to be
20 gone.

21 Thank you.

22 General Dunford: Thanks, Senator.

23 Chairman McCain: Senator Cotton?

24 Senator Cotton: General Dunford, thank you for being
25 here today. Thank you for your years of service. Mrs.

1 Dunford, thank you for your years of service.

2 General Dunford, you said earlier that you believe
3 Russia is the gravest threat that the United States faces.
4 I take it that is because, in large part, Russia is the only
5 country with a nuclear capability to destroy the United
6 States and our way of life?

7 General Dunford: That is one of the reasons, Senator,
8 and of course, that is combined with their recent behavior.

9 Senator Cotton: Given that Russia, according to the
10 administration, is currently in ongoing violation of the
11 Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, do you believe the
12 United States should consider withdrawing from that treaty?

13 General Dunford: Senator, I would like to take that
14 for the record.

15 [The information follows:]

16 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Senator Cotton: Okay. We would like to hear a
2 response to that for the record because as it currently
3 stands, Russia and the United States are the only parties to
4 the treaty, and Russia is violating it. It means that the
5 United States is the only country in the world prohibited
6 from developing missiles with a range of 500 to 5,000
7 kilometers.

8 The President currently has a proposal to preposition
9 some equipment in our eastern NATO allies' countries as a
10 response not just to the capability that Russia has but also
11 the intention they have displayed to put stresses on our
12 alliance. I find that proposal somewhat underwhelming,
13 although a step in the right direction. Are there barriers
14 to stationing troops in those countries up to the battalion
15 or even brigade level?

16 General Dunford: Senator, I think that proposal is
17 part of a wide range of activities. One is to have
18 infrastructure that we can support deployments. The other
19 is to preposition equipment so we can rapidly move forces
20 into Europe. And then the other piece of it is actually
21 rotational forces, as you are suggesting. So I think
22 rotational forces are envisioned as part of the whole
23 package that Secretary Carter announced at the defense
24 ministerial in NATO a month ago.

25 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

1 I would like to move now to Iran. As far as I know,
2 there has still not been an announced nuclear agreement with
3 Iran. But under any such agreement, Iran will probably get
4 a signing bonus of billions and billions of dollars. How do
5 you expect Iran will use that signing bonus?

6 General Dunford: Senator, again, from the outside
7 looking in, there are two challenges they have. One is
8 their economy internally and the disaffection of the Iranian
9 people as a result of that economy, and the other is that
10 they use resources that they have available to support their
11 malign activity across the region.

12 Senator Cotton: So you believe that at least part of
13 that money can go to terrorist organizations they support
14 like Hezbollah, as well as to destabilize governments in the
15 Middle East like support for the Huthis in Yemen or Shiite
16 militias in Iraq.

17 General Dunford: Senator, I think it is reasonable to
18 assume that.

19 Senator Cotton: Does the United States have the
20 military capability to destroy Iran's nuclear program?

21 General Dunford: My understanding is that we do,
22 Senator.

23 Senator Cotton: You have served in Iraq and
24 Afghanistan. Do you know how many soldiers, marines
25 underneath your command were killed by Iranian activities?

1 General Dunford: Senator, I know the total number of
2 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines that were killed by
3 Iranian activities, and the number has been recently
4 reported as about 500. We were not always able to attribute
5 the casualties that we had to Iranian activity, although
6 many times we suspected it was Iranian activity, even though
7 we did not necessarily have the forensics to support that.

8 Senator Cotton: So about 500 confirmed, but many more
9 suspected killed in action and even more wounded in action.

10 You have a reputation for being particularly thoughtful
11 when you deal with the families of fallen service members.
12 What would you say to family members of a soldier, sailor,
13 airman, or marine that was killed by Iranian activity if we
14 make a nuclear agreement with Iran before they change their
15 behavior in the region?

16 General Dunford: Well, Senator, what I would say is
17 that my expectation is that regardless of there being an
18 agreement or not, Iran will continue to be a malign force
19 and influence across the region. And then if confirmed as
20 the Chairman, I will make sure that our leadership has a
21 full range of military options to deal with Iranian
22 activity.

23 Senator Cotton: It has been reported that your
24 nickname is "Fighting Joe." Is that correct?

25 General Dunford: Senator, actually it is not one I

1 use.

2 Senator Cotton: But it is one that has been given to
3 you. Correct?

4 General Dunford: Senator, perhaps by my wife.

5 [Laughter.]

6 Senator Cotton: Do you care to tell us the origin of
7 that nickname given to you that you choose not to use?

8 General Dunford: Senator, I would prefer to talk about
9 that in private, if you do not mind.

10 Senator Cotton: So I have heard it reported that it
11 was because of your activities as a commander in the early
12 days of the Iraq war as an infantry officer.

13 Given whatever budget agreement we reach, it will
14 probably be inadequate to meet the forces that we face and
15 the long-term modernization needs that we have, whether it
16 is the long-range strike bomber or the F-35, the Ohio class
17 replacement submarine. Are you worried about the next
18 generation of infantrymen in the Marine Corps and the Army,
19 that we are going to be taking money from our ground troops
20 to put in major capital investments, which are clearly
21 needed?

22 General Dunford: Senator, I am concerned, and I think
23 it is broader than just the infantry piece. I mean, I think
24 experience tells us we need a balanced inventory of
25 capabilities and capacities in the joint force to be

1 successful.

2 And when I answered the question of Senator Ayotte
3 earlier when she asked me what kept me up at night, I talked
4 about the need to respond to the uncertain. And what
5 concerns me are people who actually think they know what the
6 future is going to look like because our experience tells us
7 we do not. And so having a full range of capabilities that
8 includes effective marines and soldiers from my perspective
9 is the prudent thing to do.

10 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

11 In your long and distinguished career, I think we put
12 ground forces at a minimum into Grenada, Panama, Iraq,
13 Somalia, the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq again, and there is
14 no doubt that we may be called upon again in the future. So
15 I hope in your tenure that even if you do not want to be
16 called "Fighting Joe," that you will be on the lookout for
17 all the Fighting Joes in the Marine Corps and the Army so
18 the country will have them ready to serve once again.

19 General Dunford: I will do that, Senator. Thank you.

20 Chairman McCain: The committee will not review how the
21 Senator from Arkansas got his nicknames here in the Senate.

22 [Laughter.]

23 Chairman McCain: Senator Kaine?

24 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 And thank you, General Dunford, to you and your family.

1 General Dunford, with the President's recent
2 announcement about 500 more advisors going into the anti-
3 ISIL mission in Iraq and Syria and in the region, we are now
4 up to 3,500 troops that are serving abroad in that battle
5 serving as advisors, as trainers, special forces
6 coordinating air campaigns, conducting ground strikes. The
7 war passed its 11-month anniversary yesterday. 2 days ago,
8 General Dempsey was here and testified that he believed in a
9 mission of this complexity, it was likely to be a multiyear
10 effort that would require a sustained commitment by the
11 United States to defeat ISIL.

12 Do you think it would be received positively by the
13 troops who we are asking to deploy far from home and risk
14 their lives if Congress were to have a debate and authorize
15 and affirm the U.S. mission against ISIL?

16 General Dunford: Senator, I do think it would be
17 positive from a couple perspectives. One, the reason you
18 mentioned is -- I think what our young men and women need --
19 and it is really all they need to do what we ask them to do
20 -- is a sense that what they are doing has purpose, has
21 meaning, and has the support of the American people. So
22 that is the first reason.

23 But I also think that there is a second benefit from
24 such a debate, and that is to send a clear and unmistakable
25 message to our adversaries and to our allies that we are

1 committed to this endeavor.

2 Senator Kaine: Thank you, General.

3 With respect to the anti-ISIL effort, I want to pick up
4 on something Senator Reed was talking about earlier. The
5 whole-of-government approach, as you referred to it, has
6 sort of nine lines of effort, and just for the record -- I
7 think we know these, but for everybody there -- supporting
8 effective governance in Iraq, denying ISIL safe haven,
9 building partner capacity, enhancing intelligence collection
10 on ISIL, disrupting ISIL finances, exposing ISIL's true
11 nature, disrupting the flow of foreign fighters, protecting
12 the homeland, and humanitarian support. Those nine lines --
13 two are purely DOD, denying ISIL safe haven and building
14 partner capacity. The DOD has a piece of some of the
15 others, but the others are generally non-DOD.

16 You have testified that you think the effect of
17 sequester on the DOD mission could be catastrophic. But
18 given the fact that seven of these line items are non-DOD,
19 would you agree that the allowance of sequester cuts to come
20 back full force October 1 would also significantly hurt the
21 other seven lines of effort, which are critical to defeating
22 ISIL?

23 General Dunford: Senator, I do. And if you just do
24 not mind, I would just like to talk about the relationship
25 between the two lines of effort in the DOD and the other

1 seven because I think it highlights the issue.

2 Senator Kaine: Please.

3 General Dunford: From my perspective, the two lines of
4 effort that we have right now -- one, deny sanctuary and to
5 build partnership capacity in both Iraq and Syria -- really
6 are buying time and space for those other seven lines of
7 effort to work. But to be quite honest, you know, I do not
8 see how we can have an enduring success unless those other
9 seven lines of effort are addressed, and they are, in the
10 final analysis, more important.

11 I think the military lines of effort will set the
12 conditions for those other seven lines of effort to be put
13 into effect, but I certainly cannot see us being successful
14 without all of them being properly resourced. When you talk
15 about threat finance, when you talk about moving foreign
16 fighters, and as importantly, when you talk about the State
17 Department's efforts to negotiate to develop effective
18 governance in both Iraq and Syria, those are going to be
19 very important actions to be taken for us, again, to have
20 enduring stability in the region so we can actually deal
21 with this issue once and for all.

22 Senator Kaine: I think there has been some suggestion
23 that if we fix sequester for defense, that is all that we
24 need to do. But even for important defense priorities like
25 defeating ISIL, the testimony you have just given about the

1 connection between non-defense investments and defense
2 investments in defeating ISIL is really important. And I
3 will just note, by my count, 95 of 100 Senators are now on
4 record either by voting in the budget or voting in the NDAA
5 or in their public statements for supporting the notion that
6 sequester should be fixed both for defense and non-defense
7 accounts. And it is my hope that we will do that.

8 With respect to training and equipping opposition in
9 the anti-ISIL battle, just two items. Senator McCain first
10 raised in September in a hearing -- I think it was in this
11 room -- the question of if we train folks to fight ISIL in
12 Syria and they get attacked by the Assad regime, will we
13 protect them? And he still has not gotten an answer to it.
14 He asked it again yesterday. So by my count, September to
15 now, that is 9 months without a clear answer.

16 We were told in theater last week that the current
17 rules of engagement still would prohibit U.S. effort to
18 support U.S.-trained anti-ISIL fighters in Syria if they
19 come under attack by the Assad regime. I have asked
20 questions for the record to get that clarified, and I would
21 like to know if that is in fact the policy, if DOD intends
22 to change the policy, when they will change the policy, and
23 if not, what do we need to do to change the policy because I
24 do not believe we should be sending U.S.-trained folks into
25 a theater of war without giving them a guarantee that they

1 will be protected. Those questions will be record questions
2 from the hearing 2 days ago, but I just want to let you know
3 that those are coming and we view that as a very important
4 matter.

5 General Dunford: Thank you, Senator.

6 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan?

8 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 And General and Ms. Dunford, I want to thank you for
10 your service to the country taking on this new
11 responsibility. I certainly know that marines all over the
12 country, whether on active duty or retired, take great pride
13 in the fact that you are only the second marine ever
14 nominated for this post. And I know your career has
15 exemplified the values of honor, courage, and commitment
16 that are the values of the Marine Corps. And I certainly
17 plan on voting for you with enthusiasm and encourage my
18 colleagues to do so as well. So we look forward to seeing
19 you tomorrow night at the parade.

20 I wanted to ask a few questions about the military
21 relationship with the Congress, even though your role is
22 going to be principal advisor to the President.

23 First, in the area of force posture, this committee
24 occasionally weighs in through the NDAA and other means on
25 key force posture issues, number of ships, basing of troops,

1 aircraft like the A-10. When this happens, how important is
2 it that the military follow the defense guidance of the
3 Senate or the Congress?

4 General Dunford: Senator, I think it is very
5 important, given how explicit it is in the Constitution what
6 the responsibilities of the Congress are in that regard.

7 Senator Sullivan: So let me provide a couple examples.
8 So let us say there was an amendment from the chairman and
9 it was about the number of aircraft carriers, passed
10 unanimously through the committee, votes on the Senate
11 floor. Do you think the CNO should say, well, the chairman
12 does not know that much about the Navy anymore, we are going
13 to blow that advice in the NDAA off? Is that an appropriate
14 role for the military?

15 General Dunford: If Congress passes a law, Senator, it
16 would not be appropriate to ignore it.

17 Senator Sullivan: So how about an NDAA amendment that
18 says it is the sense of Congress, in support of the
19 President's rebalance in the Asia-Pacific strategy, to
20 increase forces in the PACOM AOR? Is it appropriate to
21 ignore that or even significantly decrease forces? What do
22 you think our response to that should be if that is
23 happening?

24 General Dunford: Senator, first, obviously, the sense
25 of Congress ought to inform all the actions --

1 Senator Sullivan: There is a recent amendment that
2 says exactly that.

3 General Dunford: Right.

4 Senator Sullivan: Let me provide a second area that we
5 have talked about a little bit in terms of emerging threats.
6 You know, sometimes the Department of Defense civilian and
7 military officials, because there are so many threats out
8 there, miss certain threats. And let me provide an example
9 of one that everybody seems to be focused on with the
10 exception of the Department of Defense.

11 You may have seen "Newsweek" this week had a cover
12 story on the Arctic and what they called "In the Race to
13 Control the Arctic, the U.S. Lags Behind." It is a very
14 long article. It talks about how this is the world's newest
15 great game, Kipling's term for the struggle between major
16 powers to dominate the earth's remote but very strategic
17 places. It talks about how the Russians are very, very
18 aggressively moving military forces into the Arctic, serious
19 military exercises, and how, whether it is the Coast Guard
20 or the Secretary of Defense saying this new kind of
21 geopolitical cold war the U.S. is in danger of losing. We
22 are not even in the same league as the Russians. We are not
23 even playing this game at all. So I think it is safe to say
24 the Department of Defense has been asleep at the switch on
25 this.

1 Congress has been more attuned to this issue. In this
2 year's NDAA, there is a section that requires the Department
3 of Defense to provide Congress with a military strategy,
4 given the new threat levels, and an OPLAN for the Arctic
5 based on the increased interests and threats.

6 Does it make sense to cut any of America's limited
7 number of cold weather-trained warriors in the Arctic before
8 this congressionally mandated strategy is completed?

9 General Dunford: Senator, I guess I am not sure which
10 forces you are alluding to be cut.

11 Senator Sullivan: Well, there are only certain forces
12 in the Arctic right now. They are all in Alaska.

13 General Dunford: Senator, I would like to take that
14 for the record. I am not aware of the full range of
15 decisions that are being made right now and what the
16 implications are.

17 [The information follows:]

18 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Senator Sullivan: General, I mean, I think it is
2 important to recognize, you know, it is hard to figure out
3 appropriate force levels and capabilities in the Arctic
4 without having a plan. And we have mandated the desire and
5 need for a plan, and I think we are getting a little bit of
6 the cart before the horse, cutting forces before we even
7 know what our plan is. But we certainly recognize that
8 there is an increased threat. Congress has, and we hope the
9 DOD will recognize it is as well.

10 General Dunford: Senator, if confirmed -- I know I
11 have had some conversations with both the current Chief of
12 Naval Operations and Commandant of the Coast Guard about the
13 implications for the Arctic. And the commitment I would
14 make to you is that we will, in fact, develop an appropriate
15 role for the military in support of our economic and
16 political interests in the Arctic.

17 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

18 Chairman McCain: Senator Hirono?

19 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and General
20 Dunford and Mrs. Dunford and your family, for your service.

21 I just wanted to pick up very briefly on the issue of
22 sexual trauma in the military and the concerns about
23 retaliation. And I think that you had noted that you would
24 determine the root causes and continue to work to ensure
25 that the culture does not support retaliation.

1 And I would ask you to have a sense of urgency as you
2 respond to this committee on how you are going to address
3 and resolve the issue of retaliation because even as we
4 downsize our military, it is even more important that our
5 troops' morale remain strong and that there is cohesion, and
6 there could not be strong morale or cohesion if some of your
7 troops are encountering sexual assault and harassment and
8 retaliation. I just wanted to make that point.

9 Could you share very briefly your views on the
10 rebalance to the Asia-Pacific?

11 General Dunford: Senator, I can. It is absolutely
12 critical that we do that, given both the demographics in
13 Asia but also our economic future. So there is no question
14 about it. That is going to require us to modernize our
15 alliances, and I think you have seen some progress in that
16 regard, our relationship with South Korea, our relationship
17 with Japan, our relationship with the Philippines, Vietnam,
18 India, Australia have all been adjusted here in recent
19 months. I think we have an unprecedented level of exercises
20 and engagement right now in the Pacific again to assert our
21 influence and to provide a stabilizing presence.

22 The most important thing I think the rebalance to the
23 Pacific does is it provides a security infrastructure within
24 which we could advance our national interests. That is what
25 has existed for the past 7 years, and I think the rebalance

1 to the Pacific, as we know it today, is designed to
2 modernize that security infrastructure and make sure it is
3 in place so that just as we protect our national interests
4 over the past 7 years, we can do that in the indefinite
5 future as well.

6 Senator Hirono: I just got information on the cuts
7 that will happen to PACOM as a result of the budget
8 necessities. And I am glad to know that General Odierno did
9 say that the cuts were with regard to the importance of a
10 rebalance, and therefore, we want to make sure -- and this
11 is something that I know that Senator Sullivan shares with
12 me -- that the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific remains a very
13 strong commitment on our part.

14 You mentioned that Russia is the greatest threat to our
15 national security. Where would ISIL, China, and North Korea
16 fall with regard to our national security dangers?

17 General Dunford: Senator, if I had to rack and stack
18 them today, I would have Russia down as number one. I would
19 have China down as number two.

20 Senator Hirono: And could you explain why briefly?

21 General Dunford: Sure. Russia, of course, because of
22 nuclear capability and their aggression.

23 China because of their military capability, their
24 growing military capability, and their presence in the
25 Pacific and our interests in the Pacific. So it is a

1 relationship between their capabilities and our interests.
2 It does not necessarily mean they are a current threat. It
3 does not mean they view China as an enemy. But, again, as
4 someone in uniform, I get paid to look at both somebody's
5 intent and their capabilities. So when I look at Chinese
6 capabilities relative to our interests in the Pacific, I
7 would have to consider China as an area of concern for
8 security, again as distinct from a threat.

9 Clearly, North Korea with ballistic missile capability
10 and the potential to reach the United States and attack the
11 homeland is high on that list.

12 And then ISIL.

13 But, you know, Senator, I just want to make it clear.
14 As I go down that list and prioritize, I do not view that
15 meaning that we can attack those issues in sequence or that
16 a prioritization of one at the expense of the other is
17 necessarily something we would have to do at this particular
18 time. All four of those security issues are ones that
19 require the Department to look at. They all create a
20 challenge that needs to be addressed.

21 Senator Hirono: And that is why we live in very
22 complicated times.

23 I would like to focus on our distributed laydown in the
24 Pacific. Specific to Japan, I am aware of the concerns of
25 the Okinawan population and of their leadership's desire to

1 halt construction of the Futenma replacement facility. Can
2 you characterize our relationship and the challenges for
3 relocating our forces from and within Japan? Because that
4 is very much a part of the rebalance that we are committed
5 to.

6 General Dunford: Senator, thanks. I recently did
7 visit Japan. I was encouraged by my visit. I met with a
8 number of their senior leaders, to include the minister of
9 defense. I received nothing but their full commitment to
10 continue with the Futenma replacement plan. And so my sense
11 is that the Japanese Government is committed to that. They
12 recognize that that is important for us to continue with the
13 preferred laydown that you alluded to. And so my sense
14 right now is that our relationship with the Japanese and
15 their stated commitment -- we are in a pretty good place
16 with regard to the Futenma replacement facility.

17 Senator Hirono: And do you view the Okinawa situation
18 as mainly a concern that should be dealt with within Japan
19 and their government?

20 General Dunford: Senator, we -- and I specifically now
21 talk about the marines in Okinawa. We need to be good
22 neighbors and set the conditions for a positive relationship
23 with the Okinawan people. So I think we can make a
24 contribution. But at the end of the day, the issue of the
25 Futenma replacement facility from my perspective is in fact

1 an internal Japanese political issue that has to be worked
2 by the Japanese Government.

3 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

4 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Chairman McCain: Senator Heinrich?

6 Senator Heinrich: General Dunford, welcome to you and
7 your family. In your written testimony, you state, as
8 Senator Fischer pointed out, that our nuclear deterrent is
9 the Nation's top military priority. And that leads me to a
10 specific question related to how we plan for that priority
11 over time.

12 The health of our Nation's whole nuclear weapons
13 complex is critical to our nuclear deterrent. And one of
14 the things you wrote in your written testimony is that we
15 must recruit and train our next generation workforce capable
16 of certifying stockpile requirements and to modernize the
17 nuclear weapons infrastructure.

18 Can you share with me your thoughts specifically on
19 LDRD, or laboratory-directed research and development, and
20 the life extension programs that are going on at our
21 national labs and their role in achieving recruitment and
22 retention of that next generation nuclear workforce?

23 General Dunford: Senator, that is an issue that in my
24 current capacity I frankly have not developed any level of
25 expertise, and I would like to take that one for the record.

1 [The information follows:]
2 [COMMITTEE INSERT]
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

1 Senator Heinrich: That would be fine. I look forward
2 to engaging you on that in the future. I think it is going
3 to be really important for us to view some of the
4 particulars of how we manage the labs and particularly the
5 things that bring people into the pipeline at the front end
6 with the greatest amount of expertise and then they stay in
7 those positions, rise up through the labs, and provide the
8 continuity that it is going to take to make sure that we
9 have the kind of modern deterrent that we need.

10 I want to focus my next question on some of the
11 challenges here at home. In my view, defense innovation is
12 moving too slowly, oftentimes in cycles that last years,
13 while commercial innovation can be measured in cycles of
14 months.

15 This committee included a section in this year's NDAA
16 to authorize funding, about half of which would be dedicated
17 for directed energy to accelerate the fielding of a variety
18 of important offset technologies including, in addition to
19 directed energy, things like low-cost, high-speed munitions,
20 cyber capabilities, autonomous systems, undersea warfare,
21 and intelligence data analytics.

22 What role do you think the development of these new
23 technologies like directed energy and robotics will play in
24 our national security posture? And what steps should we
25 take to develop and deliver operationally useful systems

1 more quickly?

2 General Dunford: Senator, in my capacity as the
3 Chairman, if I am confirmed, I view the future of the joint
4 force as being one of my critical responsibilities. And a
5 key piece of that is making sure we keep apace of innovation
6 so that we not only get better at doing what we are doing
7 today, but we find fundamentally different ways to do things
8 in the future that are more effective and they maintain our
9 competitive advantage. And so I think what you are
10 outlining is certainly an area of concern for me. Even as a
11 service chief, I would tell you that over the past decade
12 our efforts at innovation probably were at a lower priority
13 than they ought to be, and we have, over the past year,
14 tried to energize that. And I would certainly bring that
15 same focus and attention if I was confirmed as the Chairman.

16 Senator Heinrich: I appreciate that.

17 One other challenge at home here is that the Air
18 Force's remotely piloted aircraft career field is under
19 really severe strain, largely through increased combatant
20 commander requirements, insufficient personnel policy
21 actions to improve manning levels, and just the basic
22 reality that the Air Force is losing more remotely piloted
23 aircraft pilots than it is training. We have heard from
24 Secretary James and General Welch. They have assured this
25 committee that they are dedicated to resolving the

1 shortfall, but I also want to get your commitment to helping
2 resolve this issue. So if confirmed, I would just ask that
3 you make that a priority.

4 General Dunford: Senator, I would maybe just comment
5 quickly that those men and women that are in that field
6 represent a core capability in the joint force, and their
7 effectiveness, their morale, their willingness to continue
8 to serve is absolutely important. I have spoken to General
9 Welch about this particular issue, but I will certainly
10 reinforce the efforts of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force
11 and the Secretary of the Air Force to make sure that those
12 individuals are appreciated and that they have a climate
13 within which they want to remain airmen.

14 Senator Heinrich: I appreciate that deeply. I think
15 it is an area where we are seeing some severe strains and
16 where folks really need our support. So thank you.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator Tillis?

18 Senator Tillis: Good morning, General Dunford. Thank
19 you for your service and for your family's longtime serving
20 our Nation.

21 I leaned over to Senator Sullivan during some of your
22 comments, and I also thoroughly appreciate your precise
23 answer to questions. It is refreshing to get that in the
24 committee.

25 I would like to go back to a question or build on a

1 question that Senator Sessions asked of you, and it had to
2 do with the plus-up of spending and the use of OCO as a way.
3 But we all know that that is not the best way to do what you
4 need to do, primarily for the purposes that you pointed out,
5 the certainty. It still does not give you long-term
6 certainty.

7 But my question to you is have you given thought to how
8 you could potentially use this funding, although it is not a
9 long-term commitment, to take the edge off of sequestration
10 and any ideas on precisely how you would?

11 General Dunford: Senator, we started to look at that,
12 and it would really require a change in the rules for using
13 OCO for us to be able to do that. Right now, if you gave us
14 OCO, given the current rules, we would not be able to use it
15 in the places where we most need it. Much of the money that
16 we requested, in addition to the BCA level in the
17 President's budget for 2016, was really focused on
18 modernization. That is the thing that has suffered the most
19 over the last 2 years, in addition to readiness. So we have
20 looked at it, but there are some very practical limitations
21 in our ability to apply OCO to some of the areas that we
22 need it applied to.

23 Senator Tillis: Will you be making specific
24 recommendations for things that we need to look at to make
25 sure you get the most productivity you can out of it?

1 General Dunford: Senator, I will certainly do that
2 through the Secretary of Defense as he works this issue.

3 Senator Tillis: Thank you.

4 I wanted to go back to also questions that were asked
5 about Afghanistan and Iraq. I visited both countries and
6 spoke with a number of people while we were there. And it
7 seems like in Afghanistan we have got the right mix. We
8 have got them in the right roles and the Afghans have
9 proven that they can fight successfully.

10 In Iraq, I understand what you said about some of the
11 political decisions of the past administration have caused a
12 problem. And those structural issues have to be addressed.

13 But have you given any thought to, assuming that you
14 get to the point to where you have the right command
15 infrastructure among the Iraqis, what we may need to
16 actually create a credible, trained, effective fighting
17 force for the Iraqis beyond the 3,000 currently present
18 troops?

19 General Dunford: Senator, you know, I can address that
20 conceptually in terms of their ability to develop combined
21 arms and in terms of their ability to develop institutional
22 training and in terms of their ability to develop the
23 capacity at the ministerial level to support tactical-level
24 forces. But frankly, it has been a few years since I have
25 been on the ground in Iraq, and what I would like to do is

1 take the opportunity, if I am confirmed, to visit Iraq, talk
2 to the commanders on the ground and again develop a
3 comprehensive recommendation that would help us to move the
4 campaign forward.

5 Senator Tillis: On the flip side, I know the Afghanis
6 have made a lot of progress, but I think they still rely on
7 us heavily for our train, advise, and assist role and our
8 ISR capabilities in the region. I know that I have heard
9 you say we cannot have a calendar-based approach towards
10 reduction in forces. But the sense that I got when I was in
11 Kabul was that those who are very much in touch with the
12 situation on the ground now think that it would be a very
13 bad idea to substantially reduce our current presence over
14 the near term. Now, I assume that that is because they are
15 looking ahead to 12 months, 18 months from now and saying we
16 are still not going to at a place where the Afghanis can be
17 completely independent. Do you share that view?

18 General Dunford: Senator, what I can tell you is the
19 assumptions that we made in the recommendation that was
20 delivered in December of 2013. So it is now some 19 months
21 ago. And some of the assumptions affected the timeline.
22 And we certainly did not expect there to be as much of a
23 delay in the elections process of 2014, and there was. And
24 that was a great distracter in our efforts to develop
25 ministerial capacity. When I was on the ground, it was very

1 difficult to get my counterparts to focus on some of the
2 practical side of growing ministerial capacity when they
3 were involved in a very real challenge of providing security
4 for the election. So it delayed our efforts in growing
5 ministerial capacity.

6 And there have been other areas where we made some
7 assumptions about things that could be done within a certain
8 period of time that we actually did not in the event get
9 done during that window of time.

10 So from a distance now -- and again, another area where
11 I would go over and talk to General Campbell and General
12 Austin down at Central Command, if confirmed, immediately.
13 From a distance, it certainly makes sense to me that the
14 timeline that we originally identified in 2013 as being
15 possible has probably been affected by the political events
16 inside of Afghanistan and other events associated with the
17 enemy.

18 Senator Tillis: Thank you, General Dunford. I look
19 forward to supporting your confirmation.

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 Chairman McCain: Senator Blumenthal?

22 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

23 Thank you for your service, General, and thank you to
24 your family who are here today for their service as well.

25 I want to begin with what you assessed as the primary

1 threats from Russia and China and talk about a weapons
2 platform or system that has not been raised today, our
3 submarine force. I recognize that is not immediately part
4 of your background, but obviously a grave responsibility, if
5 you are confirmed. And I certainly am going to strongly
6 support your confirmation as the next Chairman of the Joint
7 Chiefs of Staff.

8 The Ohio replacement program is critical to our nuclear
9 deterrence, and the cost of that program has been estimated
10 in the range of \$100 billion. The Navy has said that it
11 cannot pay for it out of its Navy budget. I am wondering
12 whether you will consider and whether you will support
13 looking at the Defense Department budget as a whole to fund
14 the Ohio replacement program, which I am assuming you agree
15 is critical to our nuclear deterrence.

16 General Dunford: Senator, thanks.

17 First, I do agree it is critical. It is the most
18 survivable part of the triad and a critical capability for
19 us to modernize.

20 I am very familiar with the budgetary implications of
21 the Ohio class replacement on the Department of the Navy's
22 long-range shipbuilding plan. And what I can tell you with
23 a degree of surety is that were we to fund the Ohio class
24 replacement out of the Department of the Navy, it would have
25 a pretty adverse effect on the rest of the shipbuilding

1 plan, and the estimates are somewhere between two and a half
2 and three ships a year. And again, we are not anywhere near
3 where we need to be right now. And so the 30-year
4 shipbuilding plan was intended to get us where we need to
5 be.

6 So I do think a broader mechanism for the Ohio class
7 replacement makes sense. Otherwise, we are going to have
8 some pretty adverse effects on the Navy. And as I mentioned
9 a couple times in testimony today, one of my perspectives
10 coming into this role would be, if confirmed, is that we
11 need to have some balance, and that includes a balanced
12 Navy. So as important as the Ohio class replacement is, the
13 United States Navy, in terms of the forward presence they
14 provide, in terms of their warfighting capability, has many
15 other capabilities that are critical to our Nation as well.
16 And it would be difficult to balance those were the Ohio
17 class replacement to be paid for within the current
18 Department of the Navy's projected resources.

19 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you for that answer,
20 General. I am hoping that you would agree with equal surety
21 that the continuing program to build two subs a year, two
22 Virginia class subs a year, should continue as planned right
23 now.

24 General Dunford: Senator, here is where I defer to my
25 partner, the Chief of Naval Operations. But that is

1 certainly his plan, and I trust his judgment in that regard.

2 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

3 Going to another area that I do not think has been
4 raised yet, I know of your very passionate and admirable
5 commitment to the men and women who are our greatest asset
6 in the United States armed forces, their wellbeing and their
7 welfare. And I hope that you can commit that you will
8 continue the effort to coordinate better with the Veterans
9 Administration for men and women who are leaving active duty
10 on everything from transfer of medical records to drug
11 formularies to a range of issues. I do not need to expound
12 on them for you, but I hope that you will focus and continue
13 those efforts.

14 General Dunford: Senator, absolutely. Just so you
15 know, I view keeping faith with our men and women in uniform
16 as one of the primary responsibilities of leadership, and
17 that is both when they are in uniform and when they are out
18 of uniform. And we have an expression, you know, certainly
19 in the Marine Corps that once a marine, always a marine.
20 And from my perspective, once you have served our country,
21 the service and support that you should get in return as
22 part of that bargain that we make with young men and women
23 who enlist is something that is pretty sacred. And I
24 absolutely will continue to support the efforts to make sure
25 that the health care transition that our young men and women

1 make when they are in uniform to the Veterans Administration
2 is as seamless as possible. I think we owe them that.

3 Senator Blumenthal: One last question, General. Your
4 predecessor, General Dempsey, has stated repeatedly -- and I
5 am quoting -- we have the capability to use a military
6 option if the Iranians choose to stray off the diplomatic
7 path. End quote.

8 My question to you is are you satisfied that our Nation
9 has done enough to prepare militarily for the option -- and
10 the President has said that all options should be on the
11 table -- if necessary, to use a military option there, as
12 much as we all may wish that the negotiations should
13 succeed?

14 General Dunford: Senator, my understanding today is
15 that we have both the plans in place and the capability in
16 place to deal with a wide range of eventualities in Iran.

17 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you. Thanks very much.

18 Chairman McCain: Senator Cruz?

19 Senator Cruz: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 General Dunford, congratulations on your nomination and
21 thank you for your 38 years of distinguished service and
22 your leadership as Commandant of the Marine Corps. Our
23 Nation is fortunate to have a military leader such as you
24 serving at a time of great peril.

25 I want to ask a question of you that is the same

1 question I asked your predecessor, General Dempsey. If the
2 objective were to destroy ISIS, not to weaken them, not to
3 degrade them, but to utterly destroy them within 90 days,
4 what would be required militarily to accomplish that
5 objective?

6 General Dunford: Senator, my assessment is that it
7 would not be possible to destroy ISIL within 90 days, and I
8 also do not believe that we can develop an enduring solution
9 simply with military force against ISIL although I do think
10 the military aspect of the campaign is critical.

11 Senator Cruz: Well, if the time frame I have suggested
12 is not feasible, let me ask you a follow-up question which
13 is what would be required to destroy ISIS and what time
14 frame is necessary. Specifically if that were the
15 objective, what would be required to accomplish it
16 militarily?

17 General Dunford: Senator, if I am confirmed, I will
18 continue to look at this issue, but my perspective today is
19 that this is a long-term endeavor. This is on the order of
20 years not months in order to defeat, destroy in your words,
21 ISIL.

22 Senator Cruz: And what would be required to do that in
23 whatever time period is necessary?

24 General Dunford: From a military perspective, the two
25 things that we are doing I think we would need to continue

1 to do, and that is, to take action to deny ISIL sanctuary
2 wherever it may take root both in Iraq and Syria and
3 elsewhere. That would require us to build local forces,
4 build partnership capacity, if you will, of the local forces
5 that would be the real defeat mechanism for ISIL in the
6 respective countries, given the way that it is spread right
7 now. You would have to have effective governance so that
8 you had the conditions set for long-term stability where
9 ISIS could not then get traction again in the future. It
10 would have to address the foreign financing of ISIS, where
11 they get their money, as well as their economic assets
12 within each one of those countries. You would have to
13 address the movement of foreign fighters back and forth.
14 And probably as importantly, the one thing we need to do,
15 Senator, is we need to undermine the narrative of ISIL and
16 discredit the narrative of ISIL.

17 Senator Cruz: In your personal judgment, are you
18 concerned about the rules of engagement for our current use
19 of airpower, that it is overly constraining the
20 effectiveness?

21 General Dunford: Senator, I am not. And one of the
22 reasons is when we go to war, we go to war with our values,
23 and we conduct proportionality in the planning and
24 discrimination in execution. And the thing that we are
25 doing now is ensuring that we do not have civilian

1 casualties. And I think that, frankly, supports our
2 narrative and gives us the credibility we need to be
3 successful long term in this campaign.

4 Senator Cruz: In recent days, the administration has
5 informed Congress that we are arming the Kurds. This is
6 something I have called for for a long time. I spoke this
7 week with a senior Kurdish leader who reported that the
8 commanders on the ground of the Peshmerga are not confirming
9 that. What can you tell this committee about the extent to
10 which we are providing serious arms to the Kurds and it is
11 actually getting to them rather than being bogged down in
12 Baghdad?

13 General Dunford: Senator, first, I would agree with
14 you. The most effective ground forces both in Syria and
15 Iraq today are in fact the Kurds.

16 My understanding is that the issues associated with
17 supporting the Kurds have been addressed, and they are now
18 getting the material support that they need, as well as the
19 training that they need. And if I am confirmed, I will
20 certainly, as a matter of priority, go over there, visit,
21 and make sure that I am able to make my own personal
22 assessment based on the facts on the ground.

23 Senator Cruz: Will you commit to providing this
24 committee with specific details in terms of what is being
25 done to arm the Kurds?

1 General Dunford: I will do that, Senator.

2 Senator Cruz: Let me ask concerning Iran. If Iran
3 were to acquire nuclear weapons, what is the national
4 security risk in your judgment to the United States of that
5 occurrence?

6 General Dunford: Senator, I think it is significant,
7 particularly if accompanying that is intercontinental
8 ballistic missile technology. It is a significant threat to
9 our Nation. It is also a destabilizing action in the Middle
10 East. And I think we can expect a proliferation of nuclear
11 arms as a result of Iranian possession of nuclear weapons.

12 Senator Cruz: So, General, my final question. I am
13 concerned about morale in the military. We have discussed
14 in this hearing how the world is getting more and more
15 dangerous, and yet at the same time, I think we are
16 dramatically undermining our readiness, our ability to
17 defend this Nation. The "Military Times" did a survey where
18 in 2009 they asked soldiers whether overall the quality of
19 life is good or excellent. 91 percent said yes. In 2014,
20 that number had dropped from 91 percent to 56 percent.
21 Likewise, they asked whether the senior military leadership
22 has my best interest at heart. In 2009, 53 percent agreed.
23 In 2014, that had dropped in half to roughly 27 percent.

24 Do you share the concerns about declining morale in the
25 military, and if so, what do you see as the causes of it and

1 the proper approach to fix it?

2 General Dunford: Senator, thanks for the question.

3 First of all, with regard to the morale of our force,
4 it is clearly one of the things that distinguishes us. And
5 I was able to say in my opening statement that we have the
6 most capable military force in the world today, and that
7 clearly is rooted in the men and women that we have in
8 uniform and their willingness to do what we have asked them
9 to do in the last decade. And it is not something I would
10 be complacent about.

11 I do have concerns as a service chief about how hard we
12 have been running our men and women over the last few years.
13 As an example, Senator, we had had a plan where we wanted to
14 have a 1-to-3 deployment-to-dwell ratio. That means our
15 forces would be deployed about 7 months, home for 21 months.
16 That allowed us to get adequate training. It allowed us to
17 take care of families, allowed the marines to kind of be
18 what I describe as a sustained rate of fire. Many of our
19 units now inside the Marine Corps are at or below a 1-to-2
20 deployment-to-dwell rate. So they are home for less than
21 twice as much time. So they will be deployed for 7 months,
22 home less than 14 months, and back out again, and that
23 continues on and certainly has an effect on the families
24 and, again, our ability to train across the range of
25 military operations.

1 If I am confirmed, Senator, this is absolutely going to
2 be one of the areas that I focus on. I think I have a
3 responsibility to lead the young men and women in uniform.
4 I think I have a responsibility to represent them, and when
5 I say represent them, that means to articulate to our
6 leadership, both here on the Hill, as well as the executive
7 branch, what material support, what leadership, what
8 resources they need to remain the finest fighting force in
9 the United States.

10 And it bothers me greatly if our young men and women do
11 not have confidence in their senior leadership, and I can
12 tell you that every day when I wake up, if I am confirmed,
13 that will be an issue of priority for me, that that will be
14 exactly what I seek to do is gain the trust and confidence
15 of our young men and women and let them know that they are
16 in fact properly represented back here Washington, D.C., and
17 that we as leaders recognize that we are asking them to do a
18 lot. They do not ask much more in return than to have the
19 wherewithal to accomplish the mission with minimal loss of
20 life or equipment. And I will commit to you that is exactly
21 what I will do.

22 Senator Cruz: Thank you, General.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Chairman McCain: Has sequestration not bred
25 uncertainty which has contributed to this drop in morale?

1 General Dunford: Chairman, thanks. I should have
2 mentioned that when I talked about how busy the forces are.
3 There is a tremendous amount of angst across the force, and
4 a large part of that is driven by the uncertainty about how
5 big the force will be, what will happen to their particular
6 careers, and will we have the equipment necessary to
7 accomplish the mission. So I do think, Chairman, that
8 sequestration is a factor.

9 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan had one follow-up
10 question, and then we will turn to Senator Shaheen.

11 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 And, General, I just wanted to get back to the issue of
13 the military's role in relationship with Congress. Do you
14 think it is an important role that we have to make sure that
15 our services do not replicate missions and core
16 competencies, particularly in an austere budget environment
17 like we have right now?

18 General Dunford: I do, Senator.

19 Senator Sullivan: Let me just provide a quick example.
20 I believe one of the core competencies that the Army has is
21 large-scale airborne units that can deploy in a moment's
22 notice anywhere in the world. Do you think that is one of
23 their core competencies?

24 General Dunford: I do, Senator.

25 Senator Sullivan: A few months ago, a military general

1 testified in front of one of the subcommittees here about
2 putting troops and helicopters on naval shipping for, quote,
3 expeditionary maneuver throughout the Pacific. What
4 service's core competency would you associate that mission
5 with?

6 General Dunford: I would associate that with the
7 United States Marine Corps, Senator.

8 Senator Sullivan: So if I told you that was an Army
9 general describing the Army's new Pacific Pathways strategy,
10 would that surprise you?

11 General Dunford: It would not, Senator. I have seen
12 that description in the open source.

13 Senator Sullivan: Do you think that costly new Army
14 mission is a redundant mission to the United States Marine
15 Corps' mission, and is that a good use of America's taxpayer
16 and military spending?

17 General Dunford: Senator, given the shortfall of the
18 amphibious lift -- I am speaking now as a service chief -- I
19 think the priority ought to go to the United States Marine
20 Corps.

21 Senator Sullivan: And would be it an appropriate role
22 of this Congress to try to limit such redundancies by making
23 sure military funding goes to core competencies like much-
24 needed Army airborne brigades in the Asia-Pacific and the
25 Arctic as opposed to redundant activities like troops and

1 Army helicopters on naval shipping?

2 General Dunford: Senator, I do agree that the Congress
3 has a critical role in ensuring that we have a proper
4 division of labor within the Department of Defense and that
5 the joint capabilities and capacities that we have are
6 right-sized.

7 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 Chairman McCain: Thank you for that single follow-up
10 question.

11 Senator Shaheen?

12 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I
13 apologize for getting back so late. I was in an
14 Appropriations markup.

15 But, General Dunford, thank you very much to you and
16 your family for your service in the past and for your
17 willingness to continue to serve. And I have to say after
18 watching you before the crowd of New Hampshire business
19 folks and hearing from them, how impressed they were. I
20 look forward to the impression that you are going to make as
21 the new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

22 I wanted to follow up on Senator Wicker's questions
23 about Europe and the concerns in Europe because I recently
24 returned from a visit to Poland and to Latvia where I saw
25 the NATO exercises in Latvia at Adazi Base and heard extreme

1 concern about the potential for Putin to engage, as you
2 pointed out, in an asymmetric instigation in the Baltics and
3 in other eastern European countries. And I am concerned
4 about the failure to date of Europe to commit to the 2
5 percent of their GDP for defense spending and wonder if you
6 have thoughts about what more we might be able to do to
7 encourage them to ante up.

8 General Dunford: Senator, I do think it is important
9 that our NATO partners bear their share of the burden. That
10 is an issue that I know Secretary Carter and his
11 predecessors all addressed. They came out of the Wales
12 conference with a commitment for all those nations to meet
13 that 2 percent.

14 From my perspective, given the shortfall of
15 capabilities and capacities in Europe in areas like
16 intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, defensive cyber
17 capabilities, strategic lift, and so forth, I think it is
18 going to be absolutely critical for our partners to develop
19 those capabilities and capacities.

20 I would also add that I have seen firsthand in my
21 previous assignment in Afghanistan when our NATO partners
22 are properly resourced, they do have capabilities and
23 capacities that can be integrated to great effect. And so I
24 do think the alliance, were it to be properly resourced, can
25 be a very effective force for stability in Europe, as well

1 as for out-of-Europe operations.

2 Senator Shaheen: I agree and hopefully we will see
3 that commitment followed through on because clearly the
4 threat from Putin and from Russia continues, and our eastern
5 European allies are very concerned about that.

6 I want to ask you about -- you talked about the
7 deployment pressures on our military. I wonder if you could
8 give me your perspective on the appropriate active-to-
9 reserve ratio and the importance of the National Guard and
10 Reserve and continuing the military mission that we have in
11 this country.

12 General Dunford: Senator, I can. And, of course, one
13 of the things we have to do when we talk about using the
14 Reserve and the Guard is balance the concerns of employers,
15 concerns of families with the willingness and the desire
16 frankly for the Guard and Reserve to continue to serve in
17 what is more of an operational or strategic sense. And what
18 I mean by that is there was in the past the sense that the
19 Guard and Reserve would be something -- in the case of a
20 major war, we would mobilize the Guard and Reserve. I think
21 we found today, particularly with the size of our U.S.
22 military force and our commitments to the Guard and Reserve,
23 is much more operational in that they are useful and
24 necessary on a day-to-day basis.

25 My sense is as a service chief -- and I will certainly

1 look at the implications across the other services if I am
2 confirmed -- is about once every 4 years is a reasonable
3 time for a major deployment, although in many cases,
4 depending on what their employment is and so forth,
5 individuals can be available on a much more routine basis.
6 But for whole units, probably about 1 to 4 years, 1 year
7 deployment and mobilization and then 4 years back focused on
8 their families and employers, seems to be sustainable. But,
9 again, if I am confirmed, I will certainly consult with the
10 appropriate leadership in the Guard and Reserve to make sure
11 that I have a full appreciation for their challenges, as
12 well as the other service chiefs.

13 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. We have seen in New
14 Hampshire the significant contribution of the Guard and the
15 integration, particularly with the air refueling, of active
16 duty and Guard in providing that mission. So I think it is
17 very important.

18 Let me ask you if you would commit to two things. One
19 is in 2013, the Department announced the elimination of the
20 direct combat exclusion policy and announced plans to fully
21 integrate more women into all occupational fields. I hope
22 that you will continue that effort and see it through. As
23 we know, women are making up a greater percentage of our
24 military these days, and making sure that they have the
25 ability to compete in all areas I think is significant.

1 The other question. I noticed this week that the Navy
2 announced that they have tripled the maternity leave policy
3 for women serving in the Navy, and I would urge you to
4 consider that across all branches of the military. Again,
5 as women are making up more of our troops, I think it is
6 important to address the family issues that they have, and
7 certainly maternity leave is a big part of that. So I hope
8 you will do that.

9 General Dunford: Thank you, Senator. I will look at
10 both of those issues.

11 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

12 Senator Reed [presiding]: Senator Graham?

13 Senator Graham: Thank you.

14 General, I think you are an outstanding choice. The
15 President could not have chosen a better person to be
16 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. So congratulations
17 to you and your family for a lot of great service. The best
18 is yet to come.

19 When it comes to stopping ISIL -- that is the stated
20 goal is to degrade and destroy -- what if we fail in that
21 goal? What can America expect?

22 General Dunford: Senator, if we were to fail in
23 stopping ISIL, I think you will see an expansion of ISIL not
24 only across the Middle East but outside the Middle East.
25 And we have, obviously, seen now elements of ISIL in the

1 Maghreb all the way over to Afghanistan.

2 Senator Graham: So they are an expanding power, as we
3 speak?

4 General Dunford: Well, Senator, I think they are
5 expanded in terms of geographic location. I have not yet
6 concluded that they are expanded in terms of capability.

7 Senator Graham: Got you. But I remember when we were
8 talking in the office, you said if we do not stop these
9 guys, we can expect a tsunami of ISIL and their
10 sympathizers. Is that fair?

11 General Dunford: Senator, I think it is fair. That is
12 exactly what I said, and I stand by that comment.

13 Senator Graham: So at the end of the day, I do not
14 want the tsunami to come, so we are going to have to stop
15 these guys.

16 Is it fair to say that Iraq and Syria need to be viewed
17 as one battle space when it comes to ISIL or to stop them in
18 Iraq if you do not address their presence in Syria?

19 General Dunford: Absolutely, Senator. The enemy does
20 not respect the boundaries that we see on the map.

21 Senator Graham: Can you envision a scenario where you
22 have a regional army made up of Arabs and maybe Turkey that
23 would go into Syria and fight ISIL alone, leaving Assad off
24 the table? Would they join up for such a fight?

25 General Dunford: Senator, it is hard for me, watching

1 the politics from the outside right now, to see that degree
2 of integration, given the divergent interests that those
3 countries have. But I can certainly see where that would be
4 an effective way to deal with this is to have a regional
5 army that would be willing to deal with ISIL.

6 Senator Graham: Right. But my question is if you did
7 not put Assad's removal on the table, it would be hard to
8 get them to join up just to fight ISIL because they are
9 worried about Syria becoming a puppet of Iran.

10 General Dunford: That is right, Senator. Most of the
11 countries that you spoke about all have a shared goal of
12 removing Assad from power.

13 Senator Graham: Would you agree with me that Assad's
14 presence is sort of a magnet for Sunni extremists?

15 General Dunford: I think if not the proximate cause of
16 the ISIL movement, certainly one of the primary drivers of
17 the ISIL movement was the abuses of the Assad regime.

18 Senator Graham: If we go down to a thousand Kabul-
19 centric U.S. forces in 2017 in Afghanistan, do we
20 substantially lose our counterterrorism mission?

21 General Dunford: My assessment is we would have a
22 significant degradation of our counterterrorism mission in
23 Afghanistan, were we to do that.

24 Senator Graham: Would we lose our eyes and ears along
25 the Afghan-Pakistan border that we enjoy today?

1 General Dunford: We would, Senator.

2 Senator Graham: Would in your view that create a lot
3 of risk to the gains we have achieved over the last decade
4 if we did not have those eyes and ears and counterterrorism
5 forces?

6 General Dunford: Senator, there is no question it
7 would create risk.

8 Senator Graham: When it comes to 60 Free Syrian Army
9 troops being trained under the current regime, would you
10 agree with me it is going to be very hard to recruit people
11 to go into Syria if you do not promise them protection from
12 Assad because if they get any capability at all in fighting
13 ISIL, Assad would assume that capability would be turned on
14 him one day and he is not going to sit on the sidelines and
15 watch a force mature and develop without hitting them? Does
16 that make sense to you?

17 General Dunford: I agree with that assessment,
18 Senator.

19 Senator Graham: So the most logical consequence of
20 training a force to go into Syria to fight ISIL alone is
21 that Assad will see them as a threat to his regime and most
22 likely attack.

23 General Dunford: I agree with that, Senator.

24 Senator Graham: And it would be very, I think, immoral
25 to put someone in that position knowing that is coming their

1 way with some capability to defend themselves. Does that
2 make sense to you?

3 General Dunford: Senator, my assessment is that if we
4 train moderate Syrian forces, the new Syrian army, then we
5 ought to also provide them with the wherewithal to be
6 successful.

7 Senator Graham: If this war in Syria continues the way
8 it is going for another year, do you worry about stability
9 in Jordan?

10 General Dunford: I do, Senator.

11 Senator Graham: Do you worry about stability in
12 Lebanon?

13 General Dunford: I do, Senator.

14 Senator Graham: So the consequences of going into
15 Syria with a regional force and all of the problems
16 associated with it have to be balanced against the
17 consequences of ISIL surviving and thriving.

18 General Dunford: I agree with that, Senator.

19 Senator Graham: In your view, over the long haul, is
20 it in America's national security interest to do things
21 necessary to degrade and destroy ISIL?

22 General Dunford: I do believe that is absolutely in
23 our national interest to do that, Senator.

24 Senator Graham: Do you agree with me that whatever
25 regional army we may form, there are certain American

1 capabilities that would be outcome determinative in any
2 fight against ISIL, and it would be in our national security
3 interest to provide those capabilities?

4 General Dunford: I agree with that, Senator,
5 particularly in the case of aviation, intelligence,
6 surveillance, reconnaissance, and probably special
7 operations capabilities.

8 Senator Graham: Finally, if a soldier or a member of
9 our military falls in Iraq or Syria trying to destroy ISIL,
10 would you agree with me that they died protecting their
11 homeland?

12 General Dunford: I would, Senator.

13 Senator Graham: And that is the reason some of them
14 may have to go back.

15 General Dunford: Senator, there is no question in my
16 mind that the young men and women that we have deployed
17 right now, the 3,500 that are inside of Iraq and those that
18 are in the surrounds working through CENTCOM in this
19 campaign, are protecting our Nation.

20 Senator Graham: God bless them. God bless you. Best
21 of luck.

22 General Dunford: Thank you, Senator.

23 Senator Reed: General, on behalf of Chairman McCain,
24 let me thank you for your testimony, thank you for your
25 service and the service of your family.

1 And also on behalf of the chairman, I will now adjourn
2 the hearing.

3 [Whereupon, at 11:53 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25