

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

TO CONDUCT A CONFIRMATION HEARING
ON THE EXPECTED NOMINATION OF
MR. JAMES N. MATTIS TO BE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Thursday, January 12, 2017

Washington, D.C.

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Thursday, January 12, 2017

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:31 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John McCain, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Committee Members Present: Senators McCain [presiding], Inhofe, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Perdue, Cruz, Graham, Sasse, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King, Heinrich, Warren, and Peters.

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

3 Chairman McCain: Well, good morning all.

4 For the information of the members, at about 15 minutes
5 before the last question, you will be notified and asked
6 that -- the committee will immediately proceed to
7 consideration of Senate bill 84, which is to provide for an
8 exception to a limitation against appointment of persons as
9 Secretary of Defense within 7 years of relief from active
10 duty as a regular commissioned officer of the armed forces.
11 This bill, when enacted, would authorize retired General
12 James Mattis to be appointed as Secretary of Defense. It is
13 important that we have all members present for the
14 consideration of that bill, and when there is about 15
15 minutes left in the questioning, you will be notified, and I
16 hope people will all come back to vote on this important
17 issue of the waiver.

18 Good morning.

19 And I would like to first recognize two of our
20 distinguished colleagues who are here today, former
21 colleagues. We were all three together during the Coolidge
22 administration.

23 [Laughter.]

24 Chairman McCain: And we are very glad to see you back
25 here again.

1 So I know that in the interest of our friends' time,
2 maybe we could begin with Senator Nunn and Senator Cohen
3 making their introductory remarks. We are honored to have
4 you back before the committee again. Two very
5 distinguished, most distinguished members that I have had
6 the opportunity and honor to serve with. In deference to
7 your age, Senator Nunn, we will begin with you.

8 [Laughter.]

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. SAM NUNN, U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA,
2 RETIRED

3 Senator Nunn: Thank you, Chairman McCain and Senator
4 Reed. It is a great honor to return to the Senate Armed
5 Services Committee with my good friend for many years, as
6 you observed, Mr. Chairman, Bill Cohen, for the purpose of
7 introducing Jim Mattis on his nomination to be Secretary of
8 Defense.

9 Before praising our distinguished nominee -- and I will
10 praise him because I think he deserves it -- I want to
11 commend you, Senator McCain and Senator Reed and the members
12 of this committee, for your excellent work in passing
13 significant reform legislation in the most recent Congress.
14 Your continuous efforts to make our military more efficient
15 and more effective are essential to our Nation's security
16 and we owe you our thanks. I know from experience reform is
17 not easy. Everything you do is tough in that arena, and it
18 does not get the notice that it deserves except for the
19 people who oppose the reform. Those are the ones who notice
20 it. So congratulations on that legislation. And I know
21 there is a lot more to do, but you have made some progress.

22 I also want to commend my good friend and congratulate
23 my good friend, Senator David Perdue, while becoming a
24 member of this committee and continuing a strong Georgia
25 tradition of service on what I believe is the best committee

1 in the Senate.

2 Mr. Chairman, Senator Reed, and members of the
3 committee, in September of 1950, my great uncle, Carl
4 Vinson, as chairman of the House Armed Services Committee,
5 presented to the House of Representatives a strong case for
6 Congress to pass a waiver to allow General George Marshall
7 to assume the position of Secretary of Defense. So there is
8 some history here.

9 Today I urge you to pass the same type of waiver for
10 Jim Mattis who retired from the Marine Corps 3 and a half
11 years ago. I believe that the law requiring a Secretary of
12 Defense to be out of active duty at least 7 years does
13 remain relevant today, but there is also a good reason that
14 there can be, on occasion, case by case, common sense
15 exceptions through congressional actions.

16 The Congressional Research Service has written an
17 excellent paper on the legislative history of the separation
18 from military service requirements. When the original
19 statute was passed in 1947, the Department of Defense had
20 just been created by merging the Department of War and the
21 Department of Navy. There were several very famous generals
22 and admirals emerging from World War II who were highly
23 publicized heroes, including a few five-stars, and Congress
24 did not want one service overpowering the newly created
25 department. So that to me is an important part of the

1 history of this legislation.

2 Mr. Chairman, Senator Reed, and committee members, I
3 believe that exceptions to this restriction should be based
4 on the experience, the skills, and the character of a
5 nominee and our country's need to ask them to serve in this
6 important role.

7 I also believe that your examination of Jim Mattis'
8 credentials, character, and record will convince you that
9 he, like George Marshall, should be granted a waiver and
10 confirmed as Secretary of Defense.

11 Mr. Chairman, I have followed Jim's career for a long
12 time because when I was chairman of this committee, my staff
13 director, Arnold Punaro, who is here today, also a marine,
14 repeatedly told me that a young officer by the name of Jim
15 Mattis was demonstrating strong leadership capabilities and
16 had a very long runway ahead. Mr. Chairman and Senator
17 Reed, and Chris and Liz and members of the staff who know
18 Arnold Punaro will understand my reluctance to ever admit
19 that Arnold was always right, but in the case of Jim Mattis,
20 he was dead on point. Jim Mattis became one of our Nation's
21 most effective and respected military leaders.

22 Jim has the experience and skill to be an excellent
23 Secretary of Defense. He has the deep knowledge about the
24 many challenges we face around the world today. He
25 understands not only the importance of civilian control of

1 the military, but he has also written the book, so to speak,
2 on the relationship of today's voluntary force and civil
3 society, which deserves a great deal of attention.

4 Jim's experience as combatant commander clearly
5 demonstrated his ability to effectively work with diplomats
6 and national leaders.

7 Mr. Chairman, Senator Reed, and members of the
8 committee, over the last 3 years, Jim Mattis has become
9 fully engaged in civilian life from the world of business to
10 the NGO world to the college campus. He has quickly learned
11 what I call the Admiral Crowe Rule that after retirement as
12 a four-star, if you jump into the back seat of your car, you
13 will go nowhere until you move to the driver's seat and turn
14 on the key. He learned that one pretty quickly.

15 Jim Mattis has been a valuable corporate board member
16 and has learned business lessons that will help him make the
17 Department of Defense more efficient. Jim has gone from the
18 Marine Corps spit and polish to the business coat and tie to
19 whatever they wear on campus these days. As a professor, he
20 has developed a rapport with young students by quickly
21 figuring out they are not quite the same as Parris Island
22 recruits.

23 In summary, Mr. Chairman, Jim Mattis is a rare
24 combination of thinker and doer, scholar and strategist. He
25 understands, respects, and loves the men and women in

1 uniform and their families. He also understands the
2 structure and the organization of the Pentagon, and he knows
3 what the building has to do to give the troops the tools
4 they need to do their job of protecting our Nation's
5 security.

6 Jim also knows the awesome powers and responsibility of
7 our military forces and the challenges of our complex and
8 very dangerous world. He understands that our military
9 cannot be our primary tool to meet every challenge, and he
10 strongly supports the important role of diplomacy and has
11 been outspoken in the important need of giving the State
12 Department the resources they need to be fully effective.

13 My bottom line, Mr. Chairman and Senator Reed and
14 members of the committee, is that I believe Jim Mattis is
15 exceptionally well qualified to lead the Department of
16 Defense. I urge this committee and the Senate to pass a
17 statutory waiver to allow him to serve our Nation in this
18 new role and to confirm him as Secretary of Defense.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 [The prepared statement of Senator Nunn follows:]

21 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you, Senator Nunn.
2 Senator Cohen?
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1 STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM COHEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 MAINE, RETIRED

3 Senator Cohen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor
4 to be here this morning to testify on behalf of General
5 Mattis. Senator Nunn, Senator Reed, Senator Inhofe, I think
6 you may be the only three who are still here on the Armed
7 Services Committee when 20 years ago I came before the
8 committee seeking your endorsement for Secretary of Defense.
9 So it has been 20 years, and what a difference a generation
10 makes because at that time, when we first met, you were a
11 young captain in the Navy and took us on a trip Senator Nunn
12 mentioned to China where we met Deng Chou Ping and also did
13 some great work on the way back in Korea.

14 So I thank you for all of the years you devoted to this
15 country. You remain a hero of mine and to millions of
16 people not only in this country but the world over. So it
17 is a real honor for me to be here with you and with Senator
18 Nunn. I served 18 years here in the Senate. He served 24.
19 And I must say that the experience of working with Senator
20 Nunn was one of the true highlights of my political career.
21 So it is a pleasure for me to join with Senator Nunn.

22 I want to associate myself with the remarks of the
23 former Senator from Georgia and simply submit my own written
24 statement, which is quite brief, to the committee and I will
25 try to summarize.

1 Jim Mattis I first met when I went to the Pentagon. He
2 was a young colonel. And as Senator Nunn has pointed out,
3 he had a reputation even then. This is somebody to watch.
4 He is young. He is smart. He does not really belong behind
5 a desk, although he may belong there right now, but at that
6 time, he wanted to get out into the field. He is a warrior
7 by nature.

8 And I want to say that he has the nickname of "Mad
9 Dog." It is a misnomer. It should be "Brave Heart" because
10 what really characterizes Jim Mattis is his courage. And,
11 Mr. Chairman, you have written about this in terms of why
12 courage matters, and you quoted from Churchill who said that
13 courage is the first of human resources because it
14 guarantees all else, all the others. And so we have seen
15 the history of Jim Mattis in terms of being a warrior, a
16 brave heart on the battlefield.

17 But that is really not why we are here. If he were
18 only a great warrior, you would say, well, there are a lot
19 of other warriors as well. He comes because he is a man of
20 thought, as well as action. And sometimes it is said you
21 can judge people by the friends he makes, the company he
22 keeps, but also by the books he reads. General Mattis has
23 some 6,000 books in his library, most of which, if not all
24 of them, he has read, and he can refer to either Alexander
25 the Great, General Grant, Sun Tzu. And I suspect he is

1 probably the only one here at this table who can hear the
2 words "Thucydides Trap" and not have to go to Wikipedia to
3 find out what it means. And so he is a scholar as well and
4 a strategic thinker as well as a great warrior.

5 These hearings are important not only because you get a
6 chance to listen to the views of the nominee in terms of
7 what is his or her -- in this case, his -- experience, what
8 does he see as the world events that we are going to be
9 confronted with, what does he bring to the table in terms of
10 giving you confidence that the person making that judgment--
11 and after all, he is number 2. He is number 2 in the chain
12 of command. It goes from the President through him to the
13 combatant commanders. That is it.

14 That is why it is so important that you have a chance
15 not only to assess his background experience but also his
16 character. That really is what you need to know because no
17 one goes to the Secretary of Defense or any major position
18 and can anticipate everything that is going to come at him.
19 They talk about the tyranny of the inbox. Well, you have
20 tyranny in the inbox in the Pentagon and things come at you
21 with a velocity of a heat-seeking missile. And so you have
22 to then look and say how do I deal with this. Who is it
23 that is making the decision? In that case, I think you
24 should take great confidence in this man who understands
25 what it means to be in battle and he understands what it

1 means not to go into battle.

2 And the love for his troops is returned in a way that I
3 have not seen before. His troops, men and women alike, in
4 all services love this man, and they love him because he
5 loves them and what they do for our country, what they are
6 willing to risk for our country.

7 And so you look at his character. He is a humble man
8 with very little to be humble about. But if you were to go
9 to his hometown and see that he is a devoted son to his 94-
10 year-old mother Lucille in Richland, Washington, if you
11 would look, you would see he is a member of the board of the
12 Tri-City Food Bank, and on any occasion you can see him
13 helping to distribute food to needy families. And you will
14 also see him refuse to exempt himself from jury duty. He
15 was called to serve on a jury involving a gross misdemeanor
16 case. He could have been exempted. But he said, no, I am
17 here to serve. So he is one of six people in that Benton
18 County District Court.

19 Beyond that, what is most impressive to me is that he
20 takes the time without any fanfare to visit the Gold Star
21 families. That is something that is a heavy, heavy
22 responsibility, to go to the families, talk to the people
23 who have lost their sons and daughters, husbands, wives in
24 battle under his command. So that tells me a lot about who
25 Jim Mattis is and why you should take that into account.

1 And finally -- I feel a senatorial speech coming on, so
2 I will try to just sum up right now.

3 [Laughter.]

4 Senator Cohen: One of my other heroes, in addition to
5 Senator McCain, is Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. And he is a
6 hero because he not only was a great Supreme Court Justice,
7 he was also a veteran of the Civil War. And you cannot read
8 any opinion of his without seeing how he reflects back upon
9 his time in battle. And there is a great -- I think it is
10 1894 -- Memorial Day speech you all should read. But in the
11 conclusion of the speech, he says whether a man accepts from
12 fortune her spade and will look downward and dig more from
13 aspiration for axe and cord and will scale the ice, the one
14 and only success which it is his to command is to bring to
15 his work a mighty heart.

16 Members of the committee, this man, Jim Mattis, brings
17 to the job of the Secretary of Defense a great and brave
18 heart. And I hope you will vote to confirm him quickly.
19 Thank you.

20 [The prepared statement of Senator Cohen follows:]

21 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman McCain: I want to thank both Senator Nunn and
2 Senator Cohen. I view as one of the great privileges of my
3 time here in the United States Senate was the honor of
4 serving with both of you. And so I think it means a lot to
5 me personally but also to members of the committee that you
6 would come here today on behalf of this nominee. Thank you
7 for being here.

8 Senator Cohen: And could I pay special recognition to
9 Senator King?

10 Chairman McCain: No.

11 [Laughter.]

12 Senator Cohen: I was going to add from the great State
13 of Maine and someone we used to call Governor and now
14 proudly call Senator. Nice to see you.

15 Chairman McCain: He represents the geriatric part of
16 this committee.

17 [Laughter.]

18 Chairman McCain: I thank both Senator Nunn and Senator
19 Cohen for being here.

20 Obviously, the committee meets today to consider the
21 nomination of General James Mattis to be the Secretary of
22 Defense of the United States.

23 2 years ago, General Mattis, the last time you came
24 before this committee, the idea that we would be meeting
25 again under the present circumstances would have been hard

1 to imagine, most of all by you. But I for one could not be
2 happier.

3 All of us recognize the unique, indeed historic, nature
4 of this nomination. General Mattis enjoyed a long and
5 distinguished career in uniform, but current law would bar
6 him from serving as Secretary of Defense for 3 more years.
7 While I strongly support retaining the law, I also believe
8 that our Nation needs General Mattis' service more than
9 ever. So after this hearing, the committee will meet to
10 consider special legislation to allow General Mattis to
11 serve as Secretary of Defense.

12 If confirmed, General Mattis would have the honor of
13 leading a team of Americans who represent everything that is
14 noble and best in our Nation. Our soldiers, sailors,
15 airmen, and marines do everything we ask of them and more.
16 They make us proud every day. Our many defense civil
17 servants also sacrifice day in and day out for our national
18 security and rarely get the credit they deserve. I am
19 confident that no one appreciates our people and values
20 their sacrifices more than General Mattis.

21 And yet, we meet today at a time of increasing global
22 threat and disorder. For 7 decades, the United States has
23 played a unique role in the world. We have not only put
24 America first, but we have done so by maintaining and
25 advancing a world order that has expanded security,

1 prosperity, and freedom. This has required our alliances,
2 our trade, our diplomacy, our values, but most of all our
3 military for when would-be aggressors aspire to threaten
4 world order, it is the global striking power of America's
5 armed forces that must deter or thwart their ambitions.

6 Too many Americans -- too many Americans -- seem to
7 have forgotten this in recent years. Too many have
8 forgotten that our world order is not self-sustaining. Too
9 many have forgotten that while the threats we face may not
10 have purely military solutions, they all have military
11 dimensions. In short, too many have forgotten that hard
12 power matters, having it, threatening it, leveraging it for
13 diplomacy and, at times, using it. Fairly or not, there is
14 a perception around the world that America is weak and
15 distracted, and that has only emboldened our adversaries to
16 challenge the current world order.

17 The threat posed by violent Islamic extremism continues
18 to metastasize across the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Europe,
19 and but for those who remain vigilant, our homeland. It
20 should now be clear that we will be engaged in a global
21 conflict of varying scope and intensity for the foreseeable
22 future. Believing otherwise is wishful thinking. So if
23 confirmed, General Mattis, you would lead a military at war.
24 You of all people appreciate what that means and what it
25 demands.

1 At the same time, our central challenge in Middle East
2 is not ISIL, as grave a threat as that is. It is a
3 breakdown of regional order in which nearly every state is a
4 battlefield for conflict, a combatant, or both. ISIL is a
5 symptom of this disorder. At the same time, Iran's nuclear
6 weapons ambitions have been postponed but not halted. And
7 it continues to modernize its military, expand its malign
8 influence, and seek to remake the region in its image, from
9 Syria to Iraq to Yemen.

10 In Asia, the rise of China is shifting the balance of
11 power in ways that increasingly challenge longstanding U.S.
12 interests. We see a new assertiveness in China to confront
13 U.S. allies and partners, make vast territorial claims with
14 no basis in international law, carve out spheres of
15 influence, and revise the current order.

16 North Korea is testing nuclear weapons and ballistic
17 missiles at an alarming rate. Our intelligence community
18 publicly assesses that North Korea could soon develop a
19 nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile that is
20 capable of striking the U.S. homeland. This may become a
21 defining crisis for the next President.

22 And then there is Russia. Over the past 8 years under
23 President Vladimir Putin, Russia has invaded Ukraine,
24 annexed Crimea, threatened NATO allies, and intervened
25 militarily in Syria, leaving a trail of death and

1 destruction and broken promises in his wake. Russia's
2 military has targeted Syrian hospitals and first responders
3 with precision weapons. Russia supplied the weapons that
4 shot down a commercial aircraft over Ukraine. Russia's war
5 on Ukraine has killed thousands of Ukrainian soldiers and
6 civilians. And in the most flagrant demonstration of
7 Putin's disdain and disrespect for our Nation, Russia
8 deliberately interfered in our recent election with cyber
9 attacks and a disinformation campaign designed to weaken
10 America and discredit Western values.

11 Each of our last three Presidents has had great
12 expectations of building a partnership with the Russian
13 Government. Each attempt has failed, not for lack of good
14 faith and effort on the U.S. side, but because of a stubborn
15 fact that we must finally recognize: Putin wants to be our
16 enemy. He needs us as his enemy. He will never be our
17 partner, including in fighting ISIL. He believes that
18 strengthening Russia means weakening America. We must
19 proceed realistically on this basis.

20 We must build a position of significant strength vis-a-
21 vis Russia and any other adversary that seeks to undermine
22 our national interests and challenge the world order. We
23 must reestablish deterrence. And that is primarily the job
24 of the Department of Defense.

25 But for too long, the Department of Defense has planned

1 and optimized itself for short-term, episodic contingencies.
2 Whether against great powers or global terrorist movements,
3 we now face a series of long-term strategic competitions
4 with clear military dimensions that often occur below the
5 threshold of armed conflict.

6 What makes all of this worse is that America's military
7 technological advantage is eroding. Our competitors,
8 especially China and Russia, have gone to school on the
9 American way of war, and they are rapidly modernizing their
10 militaries to exploit our vulnerabilities with advanced
11 anti-access and area-denial capabilities. Indeed, the
12 entire model of American military power projection is
13 increasingly being called into question on land, at sea, and
14 in the air, and especially in space and cyberspace. In
15 light of these threats, business as usual is not just
16 misguided, it is dangerous.

17 All of these problems are compounded by the self-
18 inflicted wounds of the Budget Control Act. For 5 years,
19 national defense spending has been arbitrarily capped. As
20 global threats have risen, defense spending has often fallen
21 in real terms. Each military service has deferred critical
22 modernization and shed capacity, which has damaged
23 readiness. Worse still, what we do spend is producing less
24 combat power. In constant dollars, we spend nearly exactly
25 the same amount on defense as we did 30 years ago. But we

1 are fielding 35 percent fewer combat brigades, 53 percent
2 fewer ships, and 63 percent fewer combat aircraft squadrons,
3 all this while overhead costs that do not add to combat
4 power have steadily increased. In short, we have done grave
5 harm to our military, as each of our Joint Chiefs of Staff
6 has repeatedly testified to this committee. Meanwhile, our
7 national debt has increased nearly \$4 trillion over the life
8 of the Budget Control Act.

9 The President-elect has said he wants to, quote, fully
10 eliminate the defense sequester and, quote, rebuild our
11 military. If so, he will find many allies on this
12 committee. The Budget Control Act is harming us in ways
13 that our enemies could only dream. We must repeal this
14 legislation and increase the defense top line. This will
15 not be cheap, but it pales in comparison to the cost of
16 failing to deter a war or, worse, losing one.

17 For all these reasons and more, I believe the Nation
18 needs General Mattis. We need to stop deterring ourselves
19 and return to strategy, aligning our ends, ways, and means
20 to address global threats. We need to resize and, more
21 importantly, reshape our military, giving our warfighters
22 the most advanced capabilities so they never find themselves
23 in a fair fight. We must continue to reform the Department
24 of Defense so more of its limited dollars are spent on
25 increasing the lethality of our military, not adding to its

1 bureaucracy. That especially means improving defense
2 acquisition, which still takes too long and costs too much
3 to deliver too little.

4 I would like to conclude by saying a few words about
5 trust and accountability and about the relationship between
6 this committee and the Department of Defense.

7 One of the few benefits of my advanced age is the sense
8 of perspective it affords. In recent years, I have
9 witnessed a steady loss of trust and deterioration of
10 relations between Congress and the Department. It is felt
11 on both sides, and there is plenty of blame to go around.
12 Department leaders have too often treated Members of
13 Congress as afterthoughts to be notified, not partners to be
14 meaningfully consulted. And Congress has too often sought
15 to bend the Department to its will through ever-growing
16 amounts of legislation, trying to manage it from afar rather
17 than oversee it.

18 We cannot afford to go on like this. Our challenges
19 are too grave. The wide margin for error we once enjoyed in
20 the world is gone. We need to take more risk if we are to
21 maintain our strategic and technological advantage. We
22 cannot let fear of failure slow us or stop us from
23 innovating. These are challenges that the Department of
24 Defense and the Congress, especially this committee, must
25 manage together.

1 The only way to restore this trust is to start trusting
2 each other. If confirmed, you would have to trust us to be
3 your partners in major decision-making and in sharing the
4 greater risks that are necessary to win in a more
5 competitive world. In return, if you will be accountable to
6 us -- and you will be -- we must trust you to determine how
7 best to get the results we demand with fewer statutory and
8 regulatory impediments.

9 In short, let us make it our common mission to restore
10 accountability. If we can do that, though the threats we
11 face may be great, I am confident we can succeed.

12 Senator Reed?

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

3 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let
4 me join you in welcoming General Mattis to this morning's
5 hearing. I thank him for his many decades of distinguished
6 service to the country and to the Marine Corps, and I
7 appreciate his willingness to return to public service, this
8 time in a civilian capacity.

9 In addition, let me also recognize and thank Senator
10 Sam Nunn and Senator and Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen for
11 their distinguished service and their very thoughtful and
12 eloquent words this morning. Thank you, gentlemen.

13 General Mattis began his long and distinguished career
14 in the United States Marine Corps as a second lieutenant,
15 commissioned through the ROTC program at Central Washington
16 University. He has served at the highest echelons of the
17 Marine Corps and capped his service as the Commander of the
18 United States Central Command.

19 General Mattis, if you are confirmed as the Secretary
20 of Defense, you will lead the Department during a time when
21 the United States faces many complex and multifaceted
22 challenges that do not offer quick or easy solutions. Some
23 of these challenges involve traditional nation-state
24 tensions, while others cross international boundaries.

25 Also, you will help oversee national security policy

1 for a President who lacks foreign policy and defense
2 experience, and whose temperament is far different from
3 prior Presidents. I think many Americans and many in this
4 body on both sides of the aisle are rightly concerned about
5 how he may respond when he is tested by Russia, Iran, North
6 Korea, and other transnational threats such as cyber.

7 Considering some of these hotspots in the world in
8 detail, I would like to start with Iran, which remains a top
9 concern for this committee. Their behavior with respect to
10 proxy forces across the region has not improved, and Iran's
11 unsafe and unprofessional actions in the maritime arena
12 continue. However, I continue to believe that the Joint
13 Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, is the most
14 effective way to prevent Iran from resuming their nuclear
15 weapons program. General Mattis, while you raised concerns
16 about the JCPOA when it was being negotiated, you stated
17 during a Center for Strategic and International Studies
18 forum in April 2016 that, in your words, there is no going
19 back, absent a real violation. I agree with that
20 assessment. I look forward to hearing your thoughts about
21 how we can build upon the JCPOA to address other Iranian
22 threats, including its malign influence in the region and
23 ballistic missile program.

24 The threat posed by violent extremist groups remains a
25 persistent and likely a generational problem. Our actions

1 to support local partners on the ground in Iraq and Syria
2 have made significant gains in recapturing areas once held
3 by ISIL, including operations directed at Mosul and Raqqa.
4 However, ISIL continues to find new ways to terrorize
5 innocent civilians and recruit new members. In the long
6 term, successful military action against ISIL, Al Qaeda, and
7 other violent extremist groups must be complemented by non-
8 military efforts by the international community to address
9 the circumstances that led to the rise of such groups, again
10 echoing some of the comments that my colleagues mentioned
11 about the complementarity of the State Department and other
12 agencies with respect to national security policy.

13 In North Korea, Kim Jong-un has destabilized the Korean
14 Peninsula, and recent nuclear tests and ballistic missile
15 developments further threaten the region. Regimes as
16 authoritarian and insulated as North Korea's are brittle and
17 prone to collapse, and how we deal with North Korea's
18 missile capabilities and its potential for collapse will be
19 an ongoing debate and challenge for the Department of
20 Defense.

21 Russia has perpetrated aggressive actions against its
22 neighbors, has roundly rejected the post-Cold War
23 international order that is whole, free, and at peace.
24 Furthermore, Russia's employment of hybrid warfare tactics
25 in an effort to undermine democracy and to destabilize

1 neighboring countries cannot be ignored. In light of the
2 intelligence community's recent assessment that President
3 Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign designed to
4 undermine our presidential election, this committee will be
5 interested to hear your views regarding the best posture
6 with regard to Russia going forward, both in the cyber realm
7 and on the ground in Eastern Europe.

8 In addition to these broad strategic challenges, we
9 must also grapple with issues specific to the Department of
10 Defense. For instance, this committee has done its best to
11 allocate extra funding to support full spectrum readiness,
12 including additional home station training, flying hours,
13 steaming days, depot maintenance, and installation
14 sustainment. General Mattis, given your extensive military
15 experience, I would welcome your assessment of current
16 readiness levels and your thoughts on what else can and
17 should be done.

18 Our men and women in uniform remain this committee's
19 top concern. Recruiting and retaining a sufficiently sized,
20 trained, and equipped military, with the necessary character
21 and talent to meet national defense requirements, is a
22 paramount goal. To that end, I strongly support Secretary
23 Carter's decision to develop gender-neutral occupational
24 standards for all military occupations and to open service
25 in all occupations to those who can meet those standards

1 regardless of their gender, to include service in ground
2 combat units. For the first time, highly talented and
3 motivated female marines and soldiers are being assigned to
4 units that were previously closed to them. Successful
5 implementation of this decision requires strong leadership
6 to ensure that individual success of the service member and
7 the collective success of their units and their service.
8 And I expect you to provide that leadership.

9 I remain concerned that too often our service members
10 and their families fall victim to financial problems. This
11 is an issue, I think, of importance. A deployed soldier,
12 sailor, airman, or marine hearing from a spouse back home
13 about unscrupulous financial companies is unacceptable, and
14 so I hope you pay particular attention to the Military
15 Lending Act which I and the chairman have made a very strong
16 priority in this committee.

17 Defense budgets, I think we would all agree, should be
18 based on our long-term military strategy. However, defense
19 spending is subject to the Budget Control Act, as the
20 chairman has pointed out, and the defense investments that
21 have been made to rebuild readiness and modernization
22 platforms and equipment are in jeopardy. In addition, we
23 must be aware that simply adding additional funding to OCO,
24 for example, or increasing defense spending at the expense
25 of other government agencies, creates other problems and is

1 not an effective long-term solution. One of your first
2 tasks of the new administration will be to submit a fiscal
3 year 2018 budget that addresses these issues and goes to the
4 point that the chairman made of repealing the Budget Control
5 Act.

6 General Mattis, if confirmed, you will manage a
7 Department of Defense grappling with many extraordinarily
8 difficult challenges and it will require strong civilian
9 leadership. In order to serve as the Secretary of Defense,
10 Congress must provide an exception to the statutory
11 requirement that currently prohibits individuals from being
12 appointed if they are within 7 years of their military
13 service. Earlier this week, this committee held a hearing
14 on civilian control of the armed forces, which was
15 illuminating and instructive. I hope you will candidly
16 share with the committee this morning the actions you will
17 take to ensure your tenure reflects and protects the
18 principle of civilian control of the military, if you are
19 confirmed.

20 When he assumes office, President Trump will become
21 Commander-in-Chief of our armed forces. I continue to hope
22 that the gravity of the Office of the President and the
23 magnitude of the challenges our country faces would
24 encourage him to be more conscientious and thoughtful with
25 his comments.

1 However, in the 2 months since his election, President-
2 elect Trump has made a number of defense-related policy
3 statements addressing North Korea's ICBM capability, our
4 trade relations with China, and an expansion of U.S. nuclear
5 weapons. Most troubling is the President-elect's repeated
6 praise for the leadership of Vladimir Putin and his seeming
7 indifference to Russia's efforts to influence the
8 presidential election. Many have supported the waiver
9 legislation and your confirmation because they believe you
10 will be, to paraphrase Thomas Jefferson, the saucer that
11 cools the coffee. I look forward to hearing how you intend
12 to manage the relationship of the Department of Defense with
13 the NSC and with the President.

14 Again, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the committee's
15 careful process in considering this nomination, and I look
16 forward to hearing from our nominee.

17 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

18 General Mattis, there are standard questions that we
19 are required to ask, and I would go through those very
20 quickly and point out in order to exercise its legislative
21 and oversight responsibilities, it is important this
22 committee and other appropriate committees of Congress are
23 able to receive testimony, briefings, and other
24 communications of information. Have you adhered to
25 applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of

1 interest?

2 Mr. Mattis: I have.

3 Chairman McCain: Will you ensure that your staff
4 complies with deadlines established for requested
5 communications, including questions for the record in
6 hearings?

7 Mr. Mattis: I will.

8 Chairman McCain: Will you cooperate in providing
9 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional
10 requests?

11 Mr. Mattis: Yes.

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

14 Mr. Mattis: Yes.

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

17 Mr. Mattis: I do.

18 Chairman McCain: Do you agree to provide documents,
19 including copies of electronic forms of communications, in a
20 timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee
21 or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any
22 good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

23 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir.

24 Chairman McCain: Have you assumed any duties or
25 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the

1 outcome of the confirmation process?

2 Mr. Mattis: I have not.

3 Chairman McCain: Welcome before the committee, General
4 Mattis.

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1 STATEMENT OF JAMES N. MATTIS, TO BE SECRETARY OF
2 DEFENSE

3 Mr. Mattis: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member
4 Reed. It is an honor to come before you for this
5 confirmation hearing as the President-elect's nominee for
6 the position of Secretary of Defense.

7 I request my written statement be accepted for the
8 record.

9 Chairman McCain: Without objection.

10 Mr. Mattis: I want to thank all of you on the
11 committee for taking time to see me during my courtesy
12 calls, and I thank you for your willingness to accommodate
13 this hearing and consider my nomination. I have testified
14 previously in front of this committee, and I have always
15 held it in the highest regard. And based on my past years'
16 experience, I do trust this committee and each member of it,
17 and if confirmed, I will demonstrate that trust.

18 I wish to thank former Senator William Cohen for so
19 kindly introducing me this morning, and I am equally
20 grateful to the long-serving former chairman of the
21 committee, Senator Sam Nunn, for his strong support.

22 It is humbling to be considered for this position, and
23 I thank the President-elect for placing trust and confidence
24 in me.

25 When this unanticipated request came, I was enjoying a

1 full life west of the Rockies. I was not involved in the
2 presidential campaign and I was certainly not seeking or
3 envisioning a position in any new administration. That
4 said, it would be the highest honor, if I am confirmed, to
5 lead those who volunteer to support and defend the
6 Constitution and to defend our people. All my remarks today
7 recognize that it is only with the advice and consent of the
8 Senate that I can be confirmed.

9 I know the Senators of this committee are well aware of
10 the many global security challenges we face. We see each
11 day a world awash in change. Our country is still at war in
12 Afghanistan and our troops are fighting against ISIS and
13 other terrorist groups in the Middle East and elsewhere.
14 Russia is raising grave concerns on several fronts, and
15 China is shredding trust along its periphery. Increasingly
16 we see islands of stability in our hemisphere, democracies
17 here, in Europe, and in Asia, under attack by non-state
18 actors and nations that mistakenly see their security in the
19 insecurity of others.

20 Our armed forces in this world must remain the best
21 led, the best equipped, and the most lethal in the world.

22 These demanding times require us to put together a
23 strong national security team here in Washington. If
24 confirmed, I will lead the Department of Defense and be a
25 forthright member of that team. I recognize that I will

1 need to be the strongest possible advocate for military and
2 civilian personnel and their families. I will foster an
3 atmosphere of harmony and trust at the Department with our
4 interagency counterparts and the congressional committees.

5 As swiftly as the President-elect's national security
6 team is confirmed, I will work to make sure our strategy and
7 military calculus are employed to reinforce traditional
8 tools of diplomacy, ensuring our President and our diplomats
9 negotiate from a position of strength.

10 In addition to ensuring collaboration across government
11 and the adoption of an integrated strategy, we must also
12 embrace our international alliances and security
13 partnerships. History is clear: nations with strong allies
14 thrive and those without them wither.

15 If you confirm me, my watchwords will be solvency and
16 security in providing for the protection of our people and
17 the survival of our freedoms. My priorities as Secretary of
18 Defense will be to strengthen military readiness, strengthen
19 our alliances, and bring business reforms to the Department
20 of Defense.

21 Our military is the envy of the world representing
22 America's awesome determination to defend herself. Working
23 with you, I will endeavor to keep our unique all-volunteer
24 force second to none. We open the door to all patriots who
25 are eligible and meet the standards, provide them with the

1 training, equipment, and leadership essential to their
2 success, and ensure all service members are treated with
3 dignity and respect.

4 I recognize my potential civilian role differs in
5 essence from my former role in uniform. Civilian control of
6 the military is a fundamental tenet of the American military
7 tradition. Both the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of
8 Defense must impose an objective strategic calculus in the
9 national security decision-making process and effectively
10 direct its actions. Civilian leaders bear these
11 responsibilities because the esprit de corps of our
12 military, its can-do spirit, and its obedience to civilian
13 leadership reduces the inclination and power of the military
14 to oppose a policy it is ultimately ordered to implement.

15 If the Senate consents and if the full Congress passes
16 an exception to the 7-year requirement, I will provide
17 strong civilian leadership of military plans and decisions
18 in the Department of Defense.

19 I recognize under the Constitution it is the Congress
20 that raises, sustains, and supports our armed forces through
21 annual authorizations and appropriations. For many years, I
22 have watched you in action and testified before you. I look
23 forward to collaborating closely for the defense of our
24 Nation.

25 I am mindful of the extraordinary privilege it is to be

1 nominated for this position. I will hold service members,
2 civilians, and their families foremost in my thoughts and
3 work to give the Department the best chance for victory if
4 you confirm me.

5 Finally, on a personal note, I have worked at the
6 Pentagon twice in my career. But few people may know I am
7 not the first person in my family to do so. When in the
8 wartime spring of 1942 my mother was 20 years old and
9 working in military intelligence, she was part of the first
10 wave of government employees to move into the still-
11 unfinished Pentagon. She had come to America as an infant
12 and lives today on the banks of the Columbia River in the
13 Pacific Northwest. Little could she imagine in her youth
14 that more than 90 years after she immigrated to this country
15 and 75 years after she first walked through the doors of the
16 War Department, one of her sons would be sitting here before
17 you today.

18 Thank you. May I take your questions?

19 [The prepared statement of Mr. Mattis follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: General, I neglected -- would you
2 like to introduce members of your family who are here with
3 us today?

4 Mr. Mattis: Thank you, Senator. They are safely west
5 of the Rockies as well right now.

6 [Laughter.]

7 Chairman McCain: Very quickly. Our uniformed military
8 leaders have testified before this committee that the Budget
9 Control Act has put the men and women serving in uniform at
10 greater risk. Do you agree with that?

11 Mr. Mattis: I do, sir.

12 Chairman McCain: I believe that we are in serious
13 trouble in Afghanistan as the Taliban is able to mount
14 greater and more serious attacks on capitals across that
15 nation. Do you agree with that assessment?

16 Mr. Mattis: They have made advances and eroded some of
17 our successes, Chairman.

18 Chairman McCain: And the ANA is sustaining
19 unsustainable, over a period of time, losses.

20 Mr. Mattis: I need to review the actual casualty
21 figures and the recruitment, sir, but I believe that is
22 correct.

23 Chairman McCain: Do you believe that we have a
24 strategy that will allow us to regain control of Raqqa?

25 Mr. Mattis: I believe we do, sir. However, I believe

1 that strategy needs to be reviewed and perhaps energized on
2 a more aggressive timeline.

3 Chairman McCain: It seems to me that some of the
4 actions we are taking, 50 troops here, 200 there, smacks of
5 mission creep. Do you think that there are some aspects of
6 that?

7 Mr. Mattis: Chairman, I am not current on this issue.
8 If confirmed, I will get current very quickly.

9 Chairman McCain: I just returned from a trip to the
10 Baltics, Georgia, and Ukraine. They are incredibly worried
11 about our commitment to them. And one of the major
12 priorities that the Baltic countries have is a permanent
13 U.S. military presence, not a base, but a permanent military
14 presence in the Baltics. Do you agree with that?

15 Mr. Mattis: Chairman, once the new national security
16 team is confirmed, I want to sit down with them and come up
17 with a coherent, integrated strategy that uses diplomacy,
18 military --

19 Chairman McCain: I am specifically speaking of the
20 Baltics.

21 Mr. Mattis: I do, sir.

22 Chairman McCain: On that trip that I took with Senator
23 Graham and Senator Klobuchar, we went to Mariupol, close to
24 the front lines, with the President of Ukraine where we took
25 part in various ceremonies and meetings with these brave

1 Ukrainians, 10,000 of whom have been slaughtered by Vladimir
2 Putin and his invasion of Crimea and Ukraine. I know you
3 can appreciate the fact that there was a ceremony where the
4 President of Ukraine gave their highest award to the mother
5 of a young man who had just been killed by a Russian sniper
6 a couple of days before. It is always very moving. And it
7 brings home graphically what the Russians have done in
8 Ukraine and Crimea, Crimea in blatant violation of the
9 Budapest Agreement, for which they recognized Crimea as part
10 of Ukraine in return for Ukraine giving up its nuclear
11 inventory.

12 What do you think we ought to do about Russia, General
13 Mattis? Do you think we ought to maybe have sanctions
14 against Russia or basically sit by, as we have for the last
15 couple years, and watch their aggression, by the way,
16 including their precision-guided weapons against hospitals
17 in Aleppo? The list goes on and on of the atrocities that
18 have been committed by Vladimir Putin while we again try a
19 reset. I have watched three Presidents commit themselves to
20 a new relationship with Vladimir Putin. All three have been
21 an abysmal failure. Should we ignore the lessons of history
22 in our relationship with Vladimir Putin, and what should we
23 be doing?

24 Mr. Mattis: Chairman, history is not a straitjacket,
25 but I have never found a better guide for the way ahead than

1 studying the history. Since Yalta, we have a long list of
2 times that we have tried to engage positively with Russia.
3 We have a relatively short list of successes in that regard,
4 and I think right now the most important thing is that we
5 recognize the reality of what we deal with with Mr. Putin
6 and we recognize that he is trying to break the North
7 Atlantic Alliance and that we take the integrated steps,
8 diplomatic, economic, military, and the alliance steps
9 working with our allies to defend ourselves where we must.

10 Chairman McCain: You are a distinguished student of
11 history, and as we are all aware, that following World War
12 II a world order was established which has held for
13 basically the last 70 years. Do you believe that that world
14 order is now under more strain than it has ever been?

15 Mr. Mattis: I think it is under the biggest attack
16 since World War II, sir, and that is from Russia, from
17 terrorist groups, and with what China is doing in the South
18 China Sea.

19 Chairman McCain: And that would argue for us making
20 sure we are adequately prepared to meet these challenges.

21 Mr. Mattis: I think deterrence is critical right now,
22 sir. Absolutely. And that requires the strongest military.

23 Chairman McCain: Do you think we have a strong enough
24 military today in order to achieve that goal?

25 Mr. Mattis: No, sir.

1 Chairman McCain: I thank you.

2 Senator Reed?

3 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

4 And thank you, General, for your testimony and again
5 for your service.

6 As I mentioned in my opening statement, your comments
7 at CSIS indicated that despite misgivings about JCPOA, in
8 your words, there is no going back. And short of a clear
9 and present violation, that was enough to stimulate the
10 European actions as well that we have to essentially stay
11 the course. Is that still your view?

12 Mr. Mattis: Sir, I think it is an imperfect arms
13 control agreement. It is not a friendship treaty. But when
14 America gives her word, we have to live up to it and work
15 with our allies.

16 Senator Reed: There also are, as I pointed out and as
17 you recognized and have pointed out much more eloquently,
18 challenges arising from the non-nuclear aspects of Iranian
19 proxy support, the interference with shipping. In fact,
20 there was an incident this week of provocation. How do you
21 apply appropriate pressure to the Iranians to contain their
22 behavior in these areas without jeopardizing the solidarity
23 of the European and world community and the durability of
24 the JCPOA?

25 Mr. Mattis: Chairman, once the new national security

1 team is confirmed, we will work together. But I think to
2 publicly display what Iran is up to with their surrogates
3 and proxies, their terrorist units that they support, to
4 recognize the ballistic missile threat, to deal with their
5 maritime threat, and to publicly make clear to everyone what
6 they are doing in the cyber realm all helps to constrain
7 Iran.

8 Senator Reed: Thank you.

9 General, if you are to become the Secretary of Defense,
10 you will be a critical component of the intelligence
11 community. You produce intelligence through the Defense
12 Intelligence Agency. You can consume intelligence because
13 it is the basis of most every recommendation or decision
14 that you would make. And we are in a very unique situation
15 where we have the President-elect disparaging the
16 intelligence community, questioning its conclusions, and
17 questioning its motivations, suggesting perhaps that there
18 would be some actions taken, perhaps bordering on
19 retribution, for intelligence analysis that is being done,
20 we presume -- I certainly presume -- based on the tradecraft
21 and allegiance to the facts and the best judgment that they
22 can make.

23 Do you believe if you observe behavior such as that,
24 disrupting the intelligence community, disparaging it,
25 undermining it, ignoring it -- again, I could go on. Do you

1 feel you have an obligation to the country and the
2 Constitution to inform the committee of those actions?

3 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I can tell you that in my many
4 years of involvement in the military, I had a close
5 relationship with the intelligence community. I could
6 evaluate their effectiveness at times on a daily basis, and
7 I have a very, very high degree of confidence in our
8 intelligence community.

9 Senator Reed: And if you see that community being
10 undercut, not debated about their conclusions, but undercut
11 or somehow ignored or selectively being listened to or
12 ignored, again, do you feel you have an obligation to make
13 us aware of this so that we can exercise our
14 responsibilities?

15 Mr. Mattis: I will be completely transparent with this
16 committee, sir, but I would not have taken this job if I did
17 not believe the President-elect would also be open to my
18 input on this or any other matter.

19 Senator Reed: You have talked about the situation with
20 respect to Russia. One aspect of that is operations in
21 Syria. There has been some discussion on and off during the
22 campaign of cooperating with the Russians in Syria. Do you
23 think there is a possibility of that, a likelihood of that,
24 or would that be a good approach?

25 Mr. Mattis: Senator, Russia, to quote the chairman's

1 opening statement, has chosen to be a strategic competitor.
2 They are an adversary in key areas, and while we should
3 always engage and look for areas of cooperation -- even in
4 the worst years of the Cold War, President Reagan and
5 Secretary Shultz were able to work with Russia, the Soviet
6 Union at that time, and reduce the nuclear weapons. So I am
7 all for engagement, but we also have to recognize reality
8 and what Russia is up to. And there is a decreasing number
9 areas where we can engage cooperatively and an increasing
10 number of areas where we are going to have to confront
11 Russia.

12 Senator Reed: Thank you.

13 Chairman McCain: Senator Inhofe?

14 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 I am not going to take all of my time here because
16 every question I was going to ask the chairman has already
17 asked, and I liked the answers.

18 I also have been honored to have known you for 30
19 years, and that is not normally the case. And so I am so
20 excited that you are willing to do this.

21 The two things that we are concerned with are readiness
22 and -- what I am concerned with is readiness and the U.S.
23 influence. A year ago, you stated our influence in the
24 Middle East is at its lowest point in 4 decades, and I agree
25 with that. We had also confirmation testimony last November

1 by General Goldfein that said continuous combat operations
2 and reduced overall budgets have driven readiness to
3 historically low levels.

4 And I look and I see Senator Cohen and Senator Nunn. I
5 spent time with both of them and I admire them so much.

6 But this is not like it used to be. I mean, right now
7 we have one-third of the Army brigade combat teams are ready
8 to fight in all types of warfare. The current Air Force is
9 the smallest and oldest in the Air Force history. Yet, only
10 half of its fighter squadrons are ready to fight in
11 intensity combat. And General Mattis, in your Marines, the
12 aircraft -- their combat and marine aviators are at
13 historical lows right now in terms of flight time. The same
14 thing with the Navy. We have the requirements for 308
15 ships, and we only have 274. So this is not like it used to
16 be.

17 And I would only say this, that I really believe that
18 we will have to relook at the priorities that we have in
19 this country. And I enjoy quoting President Reagan when he
20 first came in. He said, quote, starting by considering what
21 must be done to maintain peace and review all the possible
22 threats against our security, then a strategy for
23 strengthening peace and defending against those threats
24 which must be agreed upon, and finally our defense
25 establishment must be evaluated to see what is necessary to

1 project against any and all of the potential threats, the
2 cost of achieving these ends is totaled up and the result is
3 the budget for national defense. Do you think he was right
4 at that time?

5 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir, I do.

6 Senator Inhofe: I look forward to that. Thank you for
7 being willing to do this.

8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 Chairman McCain: Senator McCaskill?

10 Senator McCaskill: Thank you.

11 Thank you, General Mattis, for also being willing to do
12 this. You and I have had a chance to work together in the
13 past, and we also have had a chance to visit.

14 I would like to first briefly talk about the overseas
15 contingency operating fund and the joke, the cruel joke,
16 that is being played on the American public that we have not
17 been able to come together in an honest way and confront the
18 needs of our military and confront the needs of our domestic
19 national security in a bipartisan compromise to allow us to
20 quit putting base military funding in a fund that does not
21 have to be paid for. And it has gotten worse every year.
22 And it is such a hypocrisy. It is one of the reasons
23 everybody in America is so disgusted with us that we cannot
24 be honest with the American people about the needs of our
25 country and come together in a bipartisan way to meet them

1 in a way that is responsible in terms of the way that we
2 budget and spend money.

3 Tell me how you intend on addressing this important
4 issue going forward.

5 Mr. Mattis: Senator, the need for our country to
6 maintain a safe and secure nuclear deterrent, a decisive
7 conventional force while maintaining an irregular capability
8 is completely understood, and I know it is by this
9 committee. But how do you then translate that into
10 budgetary discipline and managerial integrity of the budget?
11 And as you know, we will bring forward from Defense what we
12 think we need for overseas contingencies, for the base
13 budget, this sort of thing. But I believe -- my desired end
14 state would be everything is in the base budget except for
15 something that legitimately pops up that could not be
16 anticipated.

17 But at the same time, we are not in a position there to
18 dictate that, and the bottom line, we will come to you with
19 what is necessary and then support this committee and the
20 Congress in justifying it and making certain we have your
21 confidence we are spending every dollar for what we should
22 be spending it on, something we cannot do right now I am
23 aware of. But that is my goal in this effort.

24 And I do not have a solution for what the chairman
25 described as a self-inflicted wound of the Budget Control

1 Act. I do not know how to get around this in a way that
2 puts the Congress really back into its oversight role rather
3 than salami slices of cuts where you do not actually
4 exercise your judgment. I am much more comfortable with you
5 doing that than some arithmetic. So I think I am with you.
6 I share 100 percent of your frustration and your goal,
7 ma'am. I cannot tell you I know how to get there other than
8 giving you my best military advice.

9 Senator McCaskill: Thank you.

10 I also want to briefly touch on women serving in every
11 military occupational specialty. And you and I had a chance
12 to visit about this at length.

13 I am particularly proud of the work that has been done
14 on this in my State. Since 1999, the Sapper leader course
15 at Fort Leonard Wood has been impressively maintaining
16 completely general-neutral standards determining who and who
17 does not graduate with that prestigious tab. It is a
18 rigorous physical requirement of the Sapper tab. Despite
19 those rigorous physical demands, over the course of the
20 graduation rates since 1999, the graduation rates for women
21 and men have both been at about 50 percent.

22 So understanding that none of us want any standards
23 diminished and that we have got to maintain the highest
24 physical standards for the specialties in which men and
25 women are going to serve, can you address for this committee

1 how committed you are going forward to having both men and
2 women serve alongside each other when they are capable of
3 doing the work for our country?

4 Mr. Mattis: Yes, Senator, I can. I think you hit on
5 the point that no standards are changed. The standards are
6 the standards, and when people meet the standards, then that
7 is the end of the discussion on that.

8 I would also add that what we are talking about here is
9 somewhere north of 15 percent of our force is made up of
10 women, and the reason we are able to maintain an all-
11 volunteer force with very, very high recruiting standards is
12 because we go to males and females. And that same
13 application of that human capital has got to show that where
14 they can best serve, that is where they go.

15 Senator McCaskill: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman McCain: Senator Wicker?

17 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 General Mattis, let us talk about Israel for a few
19 moments. Would you agree that the United States shares
20 common values and strategic interests with Israel?

21 Mr. Mattis: Israel is a fellow democracy, and I think
22 Israel's security is very, very important to the United
23 States.

24 Senator Wicker: Are there any other democracies in the
25 Middle East?

1 Mr. Mattis: No, sir.

2 Senator Wicker: Would you agree that the threat of
3 Iran's regional belligerence and nuclear ambitions are a
4 shared threat both to the United States and to Israel?

5 Mr. Mattis: And I agree, and I would add also to our
6 Arab partners in the region.

7 Senator Wicker: And I think you said that we are going
8 to have to live with what the administration has done with
9 regard to the energy agreement with Iran. Are you confident
10 that we can monitor the situation with regard to possible
11 violations? Do we have that capability?

12 Mr. Mattis: I will have to get in and look at the
13 classified data, if you confirm me, Senator. I believe we
14 can have it. I just cannot respond authoritatively right
15 now if we have got those processes in place.

16 Senator Wicker: In your opinion, what did the United
17 States' failure last month to veto the U.N. resolution with
18 regard to Israel do to our bilateral relationship with
19 Israel?

20 Mr. Mattis: Sir, I would have to get back and look at
21 that. I say that because I have read what is in the
22 newspaper and what is going on in both Tel Aviv and
23 Washington and New York, but I do not have a very
24 authoritative view of that right now. I think we have got
25 to restore a better relationship with Israel and with our

1 Arab allies. I think there is a sense on their part that we
2 are indifferent to the situation they face, the security
3 situation that they face.

4 Senator Wicker: And we certainly do not need to send
5 the signal that we are indifferent to their situation. Do
6 we?

7 Mr. Mattis: The greatest generation came home from
8 World War II recognizing, whether we like it or not, we are
9 part of this world, sir. We are going to have to remember
10 that lesson.

11 Senator Wicker: And I realize this was a foreign
12 policy question, but you are going to be part of the
13 national security and foreign policy team. And let me say
14 that one of my greatest concerns with regard to our failure
15 to veto this resolution and therefore to let it be adopted
16 by the U.N. Security Council is that people will argue this
17 establishes international law. And somehow this Congress
18 and this new administration are going to have to send the
19 signal that we do not recognize that with regard to the
20 Israeli presence in certain sections of Jerusalem, that we
21 do not recognize that resolution as international law. And
22 we are in a tough position there.

23 If you would like to comment on that, I would be glad
24 to hear your thoughts, sir.

25 Mr. Mattis: Sir, I think ultimately we are going to

1 have to promote peace between the Palestinian and the
2 Israeli authorities there, and that is going to take time to
3 build that kind of trust. And we should be a partner in
4 trying to build that resolution between those peoples.

5 Senator Wicker: When one speaks of Israel maintaining
6 its qualitative military edge over neighbors in the region,
7 what does that mean to you, General?

8 Mr. Mattis: Sir, it has to do with the technology of
9 the military equipment provided. I would only add that we
10 also have improving relations between Israel and some of
11 those neighbors, and where we can work in terms of
12 partnership with both Israel and the Arab neighbors, we can
13 strengthen everyone's security and stability in the Middle
14 East.

15 Senator Wicker: Do you believe their qualitative
16 military edge needs to be revitalized?

17 Mr. Mattis: I am not aware that it is not vital now,
18 that it is not fully formed right now.

19 Senator Wicker: And with regard to the Thucydides
20 Trap, of course, Secretary Cohen has insulted every member
21 of this committee by suggesting that we do not readily
22 understand that. But with regard to that, as I understand
23 it, this occurs when a rising power tries to meet the power
24 of an already existing and established power. Do you think
25 that is a risk when it comes to our relationship with China,

1 particularly in the Asia-Pacific region?

2 Mr. Mattis: Sir, I believe that we are going to have
3 to manage that competition between us and China. There is
4 another piece of wisdom from antiquity that says, fear,
5 honor, and interest always seem to be the root causes of why
6 a nation chooses to go to hostilities. And I would just say
7 that what we have got to do is engage diplomatically, engage
8 in terms of alliances, engage economically, and maintain a
9 very strong military so our diplomats are always engaging
10 from a position of strength when we deal with a rising
11 power.

12 Senator Wicker: Thank you very much. Good luck to
13 you, sir.

14 Mr. Mattis: Thanks.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator Shaheen?

16 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 And welcome, General Mattis, and thank you for your
18 willingness to continue to serve this country.

19 I have read that in 2005, as Commander of the Marine
20 Corps Combat Development Command, that you asked researchers
21 to, quote, unleash us from the tether of fuel and explore
22 ways to improve the efficiency of military vehicles in order
23 to reduce the strain that energy put on supply lines because
24 you not only when you commanded the 1st Marine Division
25 during the 2003 invasion, but you had also seen what happens

1 when our troops outran their fuel supplies.

2 So can you speak to why you think this is important?

3 And will you as Secretary of Defense continue to support the
4 military's effort to pursue alternative and more efficient
5 sources of energy to reduce our reliance on conventional
6 fuel supplies?

7 Mr. Mattis: Yes, Senator. We will take advantage of
8 every advance in terms of extending our legs, extending our
9 energy efforts. And certainly there is a lot of progress
10 that has been made. I have been living in Silicon Valley
11 for the last several years. So you can understand my
12 interest in what they are doing out there in the private
13 sector.

14 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. I think our
15 military is way ahead of much of much of the rest of
16 government and much of the private sector. And those are
17 lessons that can be shared that will benefit the private
18 sector as well.

19 Chairman McCain talked about the threat that Russia
20 poses, and listening to your responses, it sounded to me
21 like you also believe that Russia poses a threat to the
22 United States and to, I think you said, the trans-Atlantic
23 alliance.

24 Today for the first time since the fall of communism,
25 American troops arrived in Poland as part of the European

1 Reassurance Initiative. How important is it for us to
2 continue these initiatives to reassure our European allies
3 that we will continue to support them? And how concerned
4 are you that some of President-elect Trump's statements with
5 respect to continuing to support NATO, to support our allies
6 in Europe has undermined our ability to continue this
7 initiative? And will you support the ERI continuing as
8 Secretary of Defense?

9 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I do support ERI. NATO, from my
10 perspective, having served once as a NATO Supreme Allied
11 Commander, is the most successful military alliance probably
12 in modern world history and maybe ever. It was put
13 together, as you know, by the greatest generation coming
14 home from a war to defend Europe against Soviet incursion by
15 their military. Yet, the first time it went to war was when
16 this town and New York City were attacked. That is the
17 first time NATO went into combat. So my view is that
18 nations with allies thrive and nations without allies do
19 not. And so I would see us maintaining the strongest
20 possible relationship with NATO.

21 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

22 And are you concerned about some of the statements that
23 President-elect Trump has made with respect to our historic
24 European allies and to NATO, and have you had a chance to
25 have discussions with him? And how confident are you that

1 he recognizes what you have just said about the importance
2 of those relationships?

3 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I have had discussions with him
4 on this issue. He has shown himself open even to the point
5 of asking more questions, going deeper into the issue about
6 why I feel so strongly. And he understands where I stand,
7 and I will work with the other members of the national
8 security team, once the Senate confirms them, to carry these
9 views forward.

10 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

11 I think Senator Inhofe raised the issue of readiness
12 for our troops. And when you and I met, we also talked a
13 little bit about the National Guard and the importance of
14 the Guard as being part of the one force that we depend on.

15 Readiness is, obviously, a concern for the National
16 Guard as well. And in New Hampshire, for example, our
17 National Guard has experienced a 32 percent decline in force
18 structure since 2007, much more than many States that are
19 smaller than we are. And they have had trouble with
20 training rotations, resources, equipment, other aspects of
21 readiness. Can you commit to us, in addition to trying to
22 address readiness with our active duty forces, that you will
23 also look at the Guard and Reserve and try and ensure that
24 they also have access to what they need to be ready for
25 deployment?

1 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I share the chairman's view that
2 we have shrunk our military capability. And one of the
3 things that that forces on is is the awareness. It is not
4 just a strategic reserve anymore in National Guard. It is
5 also an operational reserve. That means they have to be
6 ready to go on very short notice. That is just a reality
7 when we have shrunk our military to the point we have, yet
8 not reduced our strategic obligations.

9 So we are going to have to keep the National Guard and
10 the Reserves of all the armed forces at the top of their
11 game. We cannot deploy them without having them at a high
12 state of readiness, mostly in equipment and training. There
13 are some things, obviously, they do not do because they are
14 not on duty 365 days a year, but as an operational reserve
15 and strategic reserve, they will be critical

16 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, General.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator Fischer?

18 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Thank you, General Mattis, for your past service to
20 this country and thank you again for your willingness to
21 step forward in service once again.

22 I was happy to see your responses to the advance policy
23 questions affirm the importance of nuclear weapons, which
24 you describe as fundamental to our Nation's security, and
25 your statement that, quote, we must continue with the

1 current nuclear modernization plans for all three legs of
2 the triad. End quote.

3 When we talked in my office about the triad in our
4 meeting last week, you brought up, I believe, a very
5 important point that bears repeating relating to the ICBM
6 force. And there is a broad recognition that the legs of
7 the triad have different strengths. The bombers are
8 visible, and therefore they have what I call signaling
9 value. The submarines are highly survivable, and the ICBMs
10 are the most responsive leg and they can be launched at a
11 moment's notice.

12 You mentioned what you called the targeting challenge
13 of our ICBM force and what that targeting challenge poses
14 for our adversaries. Could you explain that further?

15 Mr. Mattis: Ma'am, in my review of the triad that you
16 brought up here, Senator, I looked at each one of those
17 legs. Is it necessary? And I have not had access to all
18 the classified data, but I had a fair amount of background
19 on this, and some of the aspects of why we have a triad have
20 not changed.

21 So in looking at each leg of it with the ICBM force, it
22 is clear that they are so buried out in the central U.S.
23 that any enemy that wants to take us on is going to have to
24 commit two, three, four weapons to make certain they take
25 each one out. In other words, the ICBM force provides a

1 cost-imposing strategy on an adversary. And again, what we
2 are trying to do is set such a stance with our triad that
3 these weapons must never be used ever again. And so the
4 deterrent value of the ICBM force is that an enemy would
5 have to basically use three or four times as many weapons to
6 take out each individual one. So that is the targeting
7 challenge the enemy faces against the ICBM force.

8 Senator Fischer: Thank you.

9 And in your answers to this committee's advance
10 questions about whether we are deterring hostile activity in
11 cyberspace, you say no. And you continue on to state,
12 quote, to be deterred, our adversaries must know they will
13 suffer consequences from cyber attacks that outweigh any
14 gains they hope to achieve. If they choose to act as
15 adversaries, we will treat them as such. End quote. I
16 completely agree and believe that more cost must be imposed
17 on those who are responsible for cyber attacks.

18 So this gets to the issue we have discussed in great
19 detail on this committee, which is the lack of an overall
20 policy to respond to cyber attacks.

21 When we discussed this in our recent meeting, you made
22 a point that I believe is also very important, which is that
23 the lack of a policy is potentially destabilizing because
24 adversaries, unaware of our boundaries, may take a
25 provocative action that forces the United States to act

1 militarily. I believe you characterized it as, quote,
2 stumbling into a conflict.

3 Essentially we do not want to find out what constitutes
4 an act of war in cyberspace the hard way. Can you elaborate
5 on that point for us?

6 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I believe a lot of crises and
7 even wars have started from miscalculation. So while it is
8 important we make clear what we stand for, I think in an
9 area such as you are bringing up here, cyber, it is also
10 important that our adversaries know what we absolutely will
11 not tolerate. And by making that clear, you are less apt to
12 have somebody stumble into a situation where now we are
13 forced to take action.

14 That said, putting together a policy like this is not
15 something the Department of Defense can do alone. We
16 certainly have a key role, a fundamental role. But at the
17 same time, from our Treasury Department to our Commerce
18 Department to our Homeland Security, we need to get a lot of
19 people in the room and put this policy together. I realize
20 it is a new domain, but that does not give us an excuse not
21 to address it on an urgent basis.

22 Senator Fischer: Thank you, sir. I look forward to
23 working with you on that. This committee has been focused
24 on cyber. We are looking for a policy, and I look forward
25 to developing one with you.

1 And I invite you to come to Nebraska and visit Offutt
2 and would love to be there when you are there. Thank you.

3 Mr. Mattis: Thanks, Senator.

4 Chairman McCain: Not required.

5 Senator Gillibrand?

6 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 I want to continue some of the line of questioning
8 started by Senator McCaskill.

9 Do you plan on rolling back the opening of infantry
10 positions to women based on your previous statements?

11 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I have never come into any job
12 with an agenda, a preformed agenda, of changing anything. I
13 come in assuming the people before me deserve respect for
14 the job they did and the decisions they made.

15 Senator Gillibrand: I ask specifically because in
16 previous speeches, one from the Marines Memorial Club in San
17 Francisco on April 16th, 2015, you were asked specifically
18 about whether we should open infantry positions and special
19 forces combat jobs to women. And you said you did not think
20 it was a good idea. You said, when you mix -- you know that
21 when you mix EROS, when you mix affection for one another,
22 that could be manifested sexually. I do not care -- if you
23 go anywhere in history, you will not find where this has
24 work. Never has it worked.

25 And then in a previous speech on April 23rd, 2014, you

1 said the idea of putting women in there is not setting them
2 up for success. Could we find a woman who could run fast
3 enough? Of course, we could. Could we find a few who could
4 do the pull-ups? Of course, we could. That is not the
5 point. That is not the point at all. It is whether or not
6 you want to mix EROS.

7 And so in both of these question and answer sessions,
8 you said you do not think you could do it. Have you changed
9 your view on this issue?

10 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I was not in a position to go
11 back into government when I made those statements. There
12 are many policies that have been enacted over many years,
13 including the years since I have been on active duty. I am
14 coming in with the understanding that I lead the Department
15 of Defense, and if someone brings me a problem, then I will
16 look at it, but I am not coming in looking for problems. I
17 am looking for ways to get the Department so it is at the
18 most lethal stance. And in that regard, it is all about
19 military readiness. I am looking for military readiness and
20 what we can do in that regard.

21 Senator Gillibrand: Do you plan to oppose women
22 serving in these combat roles?

23 Mr. Mattis: I have no plan to oppose women in any
24 aspect of our military. In 2003, I had hundreds of marines
25 who happened to be women serving in my 23,000-person Marine

1 division. And this is 10 years before I retired, and I put
2 them right into the front lines alongside everyone else.

3 Senator Gillibrand: So you no longer believe that EROS
4 is a problem when men and women are serving together.

5 Mr. Mattis: I believe that if we are going to execute
6 policies like this, we had better train our leaders so they
7 can handle all things that come from a policy that is
8 decided in this town. That is our responsibility to train
9 our young leaders who are going to be dealing with factors
10 that perhaps their fathers did not have to deal with.

11 Senator Gillibrand: In your book, "Warriors and
12 Citizens," and the interviews that you did afterwards, you
13 were talking about the disconnect between civilians and the
14 civilian elites' view of the military and the military's
15 view of itself. And you cite various policy debates that
16 you think there is a disconnect. And two that you cite, you
17 said, in recent policy debates such as those about allowing
18 homosexuals to serve openly, retaining a residual force in
19 Iraq and Afghanistan, cutting military spending, assigning
20 women to combat units, and other items. You believe that
21 the American public is not nearly as concerned as it should
22 be that the changes to military policies are accruing risk
23 to our forces. We fear that an uninformed public is
24 permitting political leaders to impose an accretion of
25 social conventions that are diminishing the combat power of

1 our military, disregarding our warfighting practitioners'
2 advice.

3 Do you believe that openly serving homosexuals, along
4 with women in combat units, is undermining our force?

5 Mr. Mattis: Senator, my belief is that we have to stay
6 focused on a military that is so lethal that on the
7 battlefield, it will be the enemy's longest day and their
8 worst day when they run into that force. I believe that
9 military service is a touchstone for patriots of whatever
10 stripe. I mean, it is simply the way that they demonstrate
11 their commitment. And I believe that right now the policies
12 that are in effect, unless a service chief brings something
13 to me where there has been a problem that has been proven,
14 then I am not going in with an idea that I am going to
15 review these and right away start rolling something back.

16 Senator Gillibrand: Do you believe that allowing LGBT
17 Americans to serve in the military or women in combat is
18 undermining our lethality?

19 Mr. Mattis: Frankly, Senator, I have never cared much
20 about two consenting adults and who they go to bed with.

21 Senator Gillibrand: So the answer is no?

22 Mr. Mattis: Senator, my concern is on the readiness of
23 the force to fight and to make certain that it is at the top
24 of its game so when we go up against an enemy, the criteria
25 for everything we do in the military up until that point

1 when we put our young men and women across the line of
2 departure, is they will be at their most lethal stance.
3 That is my obligation. As I move into this job, that is how
4 I will look at the --

5 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

6 And for the record, I would like in writing whether you
7 believe gender --

8 Chairman McCain: The Senator's time has expired.

9 Senator Gillibrand: Understood, sir. Just for the
10 record --

11 Chairman McCain: The Senator's time has expired.

12 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

13 Chairman McCain: Please adhere to the rules of the
14 Senate.

15 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman McCain: Senator Cotton?

17 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

18 General Mattis, welcome to the committee. Thank you
19 for your many decades of service, and thank you for your
20 willingness to answer the call to serve once again.

21 In his speech on our defense in Philadelphia,
22 President-elect Trump committed to a 540,000-man Army, a
23 36-battalion Marine Corps, a 350-ship Navy, and an Air Force
24 with at least 1,200 fighter aircraft. Do you agree that
25 these numbers are the correct targets for which we should

1 aim for our armed forces?

2 Mr. Mattis: Sir, in my discussion with the President-
3 elect, he wants to strengthen the military. I will have to
4 look at those numbers in particular. I would tell you that
5 he takes the issue seriously, as you can see from what he
6 has proposed there, and I believe that that is the right
7 direction. The timing, the phasing of that, and making
8 certain that whatever you have already bought for us is
9 fully maintained -- these are challenges that we will have
10 to look at for current readiness and future readiness of the
11 force. But I believe the direction he has outlined is
12 accurate.

13 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

14 Do you have a perspective on what is a more urgent
15 priority: current end strength or the aging equipment of
16 our armed forces?

17 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I think that we have a reset
18 problem in several of our armed forces coming out of many
19 years of hard use. That reset has not been achieved. We
20 also have a current maintenance problem where our ships are
21 at sea long because the ships that are supposed to relieve
22 them are not prepared. And then we have got to look at the
23 future force to make certain -- like in my case, every time
24 I went to fight, somebody had done something 20 years before
25 that put me in a dominant position. So we are going to have

1 to balance all that. And I look forward to working with
2 this committee in figuring this out, trying to get the right
3 balance for that.

4 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

5 I want to return to the nuclear triad discussion you
6 had with Senator Fischer in which you expressed your support
7 for it. When we look at the triad we have today, though, it
8 is getting somewhat long in the tooth. I think every leg of
9 that triad may be older than I am. We are undertaking a
10 significant modernization program today. Are you committed
11 to the continuation of the Columbia class submarine?

12 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir, I am.

13 Senator Cotton: The B-21 bomber?

14 Mr. Mattis: A manned bomber? Yes, I am, sir.

15 Senator Cotton: The ground-based strategic deterrent?

16 Mr. Mattis: I am, sir.

17 Senator Cotton: Long-range standoff cruise missile?

18 Mr. Mattis: I need to look at that one, sir. My
19 going-in position would be it makes sense, but I need to
20 look at in terms of its deterrent capability.

21 Senator Cotton: Secretary Bob Gates for whom we both
22 served, me at many, many, many levels lower than did you,
23 wrote in his books that a common misunderstanding in
24 Washington is the Deputy Secretary of any department manages
25 the department. He said that only the Secretary of Defense

1 can truly run the Department and really run major critical
2 programs. He cited as some examples the mine-resistant
3 ambush-protected vehicle, unmanned aerial ISR assets in
4 theater, and the so-called "golden hour" of getting combat
5 care to troops who are wounded on the battlefield. Just
6 three examples that he had to prioritize and invest his time
7 and influence and prestige to accomplish within the
8 Department's bureaucracy.

9 As you look forward to serving as Secretary of Defense,
10 what are the two or three priorities you think that are most
11 urgent and most intractable in which you will need to
12 personally invest your time and influence and prestige?

13 Mr. Mattis: In strengthening the military, sir, there
14 are times when the Secretary himself has to overrun any kind
15 of obstacles, but you want to set up a department that by
16 and large can do that as a matter of its core processes.
17 And in this case, what Senator McCaskill brought up earlier
18 where I cannot come before you and tell you that we have an
19 ironclad audit to show you where we are spending money means
20 that we are going to have to get some people -- I do not
21 know if it is the Deputy or the Chief Management Officer --
22 who are focused 24/7 on getting these business practices
23 down to a point that I can win your confidence when I come
24 up here and ask for money.

25 At the same time, I think that the decisions on the use

1 of force, the active oversight of operations overseas, and
2 the engagement with our allies are things that I am going to
3 have to spend a lot of time on based on some of the
4 questions and comments that have been given here today.

5 Senator Cotton: Thank you again for your willingness
6 to serve our country once again.

7 Chairman McCain: Senator Blumenthal?

8 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

9 I want to join the rest of my colleagues in thanking
10 you for your service and your willingness to serve again.

11 You and I have discussed the issue of civilian control
12 over the military, and I am extremely concerned by the
13 precedent that your assuming this office would set. And I
14 think you, in some respects, share that concern because
15 civilian control over the military is a bedrock principle
16 that goes to the very founding of our republic. And I am
17 not going to elaborate on my reasons for feeling so strongly
18 about it. I would like to place in the statement to that
19 regard, if there is no objection, Mr. Chairman.

20 Chairman McCain: Without objection.

21 [The prepared statement of Senator Blumenthal follows:]

22 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

23

24

25

1 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

2 But let me say very bluntly if there were ever a case
3 for a waiver of that principle, it is you at this moment in
4 our history. Senator Cohen made reference to your heart and
5 your caring for your troops and their caring for you, and I
6 believe that your appreciation for the costs of war in
7 blood, treasure, and lives and the impact on veterans
8 afterward will enable you to be a check on rash and
9 potentially ill-considered use of military force by a
10 President-elect who perhaps lacks that same appreciation.
11 And so I think you will have a critical role as Secretary of
12 Defense in providing a check on that kind of action.

13 And in that regard, I want to focus on one of the costs
14 of war, which is post-traumatic stress disorder. I call it
15 post-traumatic stress, an invisible wound of war. The
16 chairman and I worked together to support a measure called
17 the Clay Hunt Veterans Suicide Prevention Act, and I thank
18 him again for his leadership on that issue, which focuses on
19 the difficulties that veterans have and the impact in
20 causing suicide among veterans, again an invisible and often
21 disregarded cost of war. 20 veterans every day still commit
22 suicide in the greatest country in the history of the world.

23 I would like a commitment from you that you will
24 address the issues of post-traumatic stress and veterans and
25 work with the VA on attempting to fight this scourge of

1 suicide in our military.

2 Mr. Mattis: Senator, this cuts to the very heart of
3 any of us here who have ordered troops into harm's way, and
4 how could they come home to this great country carrying
5 something that puts them into that sort of despair? I am
6 guided largely by Dr. Jonathan Shay from Boston, from
7 Cambridge and what he has done in his study of this issue.
8 And you have my full commitment on this.

9 Senator Blumenthal: And you and I have also discussed
10 veterans of past wars who may have been discharged with less
11 than honorable status because of PTS that was undiagnosed at
12 the time partly because it was not even regarded as a
13 condition or a diagnosable condition. And I think you
14 expressed your interest in addressing that issue as well.

15 Mr. Mattis: There are appeal processes, but I need to
16 look at those processes and whether or not the framing
17 guidance to those appeal boards takes this into account.
18 And I do not know that right now, but I will look at it.

19 Senator Blumenthal: General, you expressed your
20 commitment in response to previous questions to the Columbia
21 class Ohio replacement program, and I welcome that
22 commitment. I think it is essential as part of our nuclear
23 triad.

24 You and I have also discussed the Virginia attack class
25 submarine program, the construction of two a year. I assume

1 you will remain committed to that program because it is so
2 vital to our undersea strategic superiority. It is one of
3 the areas where we have an asymmetric advantage.

4 Mr. Mattis: Absolutely, Senator.

5 Senator Blumenthal: And I think you agree too, because
6 you mentioned our support for Israel, that the F-35 Joint
7 Strike Fighter program is important to our strategic edge in
8 the world and to our allies like Israel and others around
9 the world, including in NATO, that will depend on it.

10 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir. Many of our allies have got
11 their air superiority on the F-35 program, and it bonds us
12 tightly together with them.

13 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you very much.

14 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator Rounds?

16 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 General, first of all, thank you for your service.

18 Thank you for taking the time to visit with us personally
19 prior to in our office.

20 As I think back, I thought perhaps one of the biggest
21 challenges that you may face is differentiating between that
22 of a military leader versus a civilian leader coming into
23 the Department of Defense. Could you perhaps just share
24 very briefly your philosophy on the difference in how you
25 would perhaps share the difference and address any questions

1 anybody on this committee may have concerning how you would
2 respond militarily versus that as the civilian leader?

3 Mr. Mattis: Senator, the military is under civilian
4 control in this country, and the result is that once they
5 have had their say, they have given their input, the
6 military leaders stand back and then carry out the decision
7 to the best of their ability. In changing roles here, I
8 have to make certain that I am carrying out that
9 responsibility principally to advise the elected Commander-
10 in-Chief on the use of force in a way that takes into
11 account all of America's basically different strengths,
12 economic, diplomatic, military. Generally speaking, we
13 would use military as a deterrent role, as a reassurance to
14 our allies, and certainly in most cases as a last resort.
15 So the role of the Secretary of Defense is a broader
16 portfolio than that of a military officer.

17 Further, it is a position of civilian control that
18 works with the Congress to maintain civilian control of the
19 military. This is not just up to the executive branch.
20 Civilian control of the military is also a responsibility
21 that is shared with this committee in particular and with
22 the broader Congress.

23 And I still remember my first day in 1969 standing at
24 the newly discovered position of attention in a barber shop,
25 and on the wall was the picture of the President of the

1 United States wearing a suit, the Secretary of Defense in a
2 suit, the Secretary of the Navy in a suit. And below that
3 were photos of the commanders, my Marine commanders. On its
4 first day in the military, it was a graphic display of
5 civilian control of the military there in the executive
6 branch, but I have learned the role of the Congress over
7 many years of testimony.

8 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

9 2 years ago, you advised us that this committee must
10 lead the effort to repeal the sequestration that is costing
11 military readiness and long-term capability while sapping
12 troop morale. Likewise, the President-elect has called the
13 rescinding of the threat of sequestration. So did the
14 unanimous report of the bipartisan National Defense Panel,
15 which was cited by the President-elect.

16 Sometimes I think we misunderstand in this country that
17 the number one priority that we should be looking at is the
18 defense of our country because if we are not free, nothing
19 else really matters. When you talk about sequestration, we
20 seem to have a misunderstanding that somehow expenditures
21 for defense should be equalized with the expenditures for
22 non-defense discretionary spending.

23 Would you care to state your opinion in how you would
24 advise the President with regard to sequestration and the
25 elimination of those caps and what it means to the United

1 States military?

2 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I understand the need for
3 solvency and security because no nation in history has
4 maintained its military power if it did not maintain its
5 fiscal house in good order. At the same time, I believe
6 that this country has got to be prepared to defend itself.
7 The idea of a government of the people, by the people, for
8 the people remains a radical thought in many people's minds
9 in this world, and we are going to have to be able to fight
10 for it. So as a result of that, I believe that we can
11 afford survival.

12 I do not believe in mathematical calculus that
13 basically makes the Congress spectators as salami sliced
14 cuts come in and you do not have control over that. If I
15 cannot make the argument for you for why we need a military
16 program, then I am willing to lose it. But if I can make
17 that argument, should you confirm me, I do not want the
18 Congress in a role where sequestration is making decisions
19 for you and you are not able to influence this.

20 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

21 Mr. Chairman, I have a series of questions under cyber,
22 but I would like to ask if I could submit those for the
23 record.

24 Chairman McCain: Without objection.

25 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

1 Thank you, sir. I appreciate your service and look
2 forward to supporting you in this nomination.

3 Chairman McCain: Senator Hirono?

4 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 And thank you, General Mattis.

6 I hope that you can provide me with a yes or no answer
7 to this question, and then I will move on to other
8 questions.

9 Is there something innate in being a woman or LGBT that
10 would cause you to believe that they could not be part of a
11 lethal force?

12 Mr. Mattis: No.

13 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

14 We have strategic interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific
15 AOR, and I believe the Obama administration's concept of a
16 strategic rebalance should be continued. I know that you
17 are well aware of the armies in this part of the world, what
18 is happening with China and North Korea. Will you continue
19 our commitment to strengthening our presence in the Indo-
20 Asia-Pacific AOR, recognizing the strategic importance of
21 this part of the world to our national defense and our
22 national security?

23 Mr. Mattis: Senator, the Pacific theater remains a
24 priority in my mind.

25 Senator Hirono: So you will continue that commitment

1 to strengthen our presence.

2 Mr. Mattis: At which commitment, ma'am?

3 Senator Hirono: A commitment to this part of the
4 world, the Indo-Asia-Pacific part of the world, in terms of
5 military resources, in terms of our presence, in terms of
6 strengthening our allies in this part of the world.

7 Mr. Mattis: Yes. We have worldwide responsibilities,
8 and certainly the Pacific looms large in that.

9 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

10 The President-elect has taken to Twitter tweeting
11 defense companies on program costs and expectations.
12 Understandably the companies have responded. These tweets
13 have impacted markets, created instability and some
14 uncertainty within the industry. And while we all agree
15 that we need to ensure that our contractors deliver the
16 systems our warfighters require on time and within costs, I
17 do not think that this is the best way to get that point
18 across, especially if you are the President of the United
19 States.

20 So my question is, should you be confirmed, how would
21 you deal with industry and their concerns and the President-
22 elect, if he continues to use Twitter to express his views
23 and opinions about major defense acquisition programs, which
24 has legally binding contracts already in place?

25 Mr. Mattis: Senator, it is not my role to comment on

1 the President-elect's statements other than to say I believe
2 it shows he is serious about getting the best bang for the
3 dollar when it comes to defense dollars. And that is where
4 I find common ground with him. I want to be able to come to
5 you and say here is the money you gave us and here is what
6 we did with it. And I see his statements about the cost of
7 certain defense programs as showing his serious side about
8 keeping these costs under control.

9 Senator Hirono: Well, we on this committee have spent
10 a lot of time, particularly under Chairman McCain's
11 leadership, looking at the costs and the time frames for
12 delivery of various systems. So certainly we share that.
13 It is a matter of how best to go forward as we ask these
14 questions. And in my view using Twitter as a means is not
15 the most efficacious way to do that.

16 Turning to our allies, once again in the Asia-Pacific
17 area, you have indicated that you believe we are stronger
18 with our allies and partners in Asia. And President-elect
19 Trump has made some statements regarding some key allies in
20 the region, Japan and Korea, suggesting at one point that we
21 would not defend them if necessary.

22 Do you consider these kinds of statements damaging?
23 And what would you do to strengthen these alliances, should
24 you be confirmed?

25 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I think that we have a long

1 history in this city with Presidents, Secretaries of Defense
2 asking allies to carry their fair share of any kind of
3 defense burden when they share in the benefits. And I have
4 lived through these kind of discussions in NATO and
5 elsewhere. So what I would do, to answer your question, is
6 I would find common ground with our allies, but I would not
7 just take traditional allies. I would be looking for new
8 allies and make certain that we are creating as many allies
9 as we can as we try to keep peace and stability.

10 Senator Hirono: I agree with you.

11 In response to a question from Senator Shaheen, you
12 said that you support the ERI. Do you believe that we need
13 to have a parallel effort in the Indo-Asia-Pacific area?

14 Mr. Mattis: Each region has its own unique
15 characteristics, Senator. I believe that we have a fair
16 number of similar troop deployments in the Pacific already
17 that send the kind of message that ERI sends to Europe.

18 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman McCain: Senator Ernst?

20 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair, very much.

21 General Mattis, thank you for appearing in front of our
22 committee today.

23 I will start with some basic yes or no questions, sir.

24 Can I get your confirmation that you will make cutting
25 wasteful spending a priority?

1 Mr. Mattis: Yes.

2 Senator Ernst: Do you commit to working with me to
3 combat and prevent military sexual assault and retaliation?

4 Mr. Mattis: Absolutely.

5 Senator Ernst: Do you commit to leveraging the unique
6 capabilities of our Guard and Reserve forces to enhance our
7 national security missions?

8 Mr. Mattis: Yes.

9 Senator Ernst: Will you provide me with advance notice
10 should you decide to make any changes to the gender
11 integration policies that are in place?

12 Mr. Mattis: I will always keep this committee
13 informed, ma'am.

14 Senator Ernst: I appreciate your commitment.

15 And I want to thank Senator McCaskill for bringing up
16 the Sapper course. We have had discussions about this in
17 the past. When I graduated my engineer officer basic course
18 in 1993, I and the 11 other women that attended that course
19 were not afforded the opportunity to even compete for the
20 Sapper course. So I am glad that we have rectified that in
21 the years since.

22 Flash forward 10 years. 2003, Operation Iraqi Freedom
23 One. I was a transportation company commander serving in
24 Kuwait and Iraq. I had an assigned weapon, an M-9, 9
25 millimeter pistol, but I also had assigned to me an M-16

1 rifle because the joke that we had in the military was that
2 sometimes the most effective use of an M-9 is to simply
3 throw it at your adversary.

4 So when I met with you last week, you emphasized that
5 you are committed to making our military more lethal. To do
6 this, I think one place you need to start is with our
7 military small arms. Russia continues to upgrade its
8 service rifle, all while we continue to modify our M-4's.
9 Many of our troops still carry M-16's. The Army cannot even
10 figure out how to replace the M-9 pistol first issued in
11 1982. Take a look at their 350-page micromanaging
12 requirements document if you want to know why it is taking
13 so long to get this accomplished. Our military's current
14 service rifle shoots a bullet that, as you noted, is illegal
15 for shooting small deer in nearly all States due to its lack
16 of killing power.

17 Do you agree that we cannot grow a more lethal force
18 while using outdated small arms and ammunition?

19 Mr. Mattis: I do agree with that approach, ma'am. I
20 have been away for several years, and as you know, the Army
21 and the special forces and the Marines have all been working
22 on creating a more lethal round for the M-16, M-4. So I am
23 not current on it right now what they have done with the
24 actual ammunition to perhaps increase the lethality. So I
25 would have to get current on that. But I am in 100 percent

1 agreement with the approach you are taking.

2 Senator Ernst: Certainly. Lethality is very, very
3 important, and we do need to relook that because I do think
4 that we need to be on par with any of our adversaries.

5 I am well aware of your experience in CENTCOM, and I
6 thank you for your great service. That region will
7 inevitably and rightfully remain a major focal point when
8 talking about Islamic extremism. However, I do believe we
9 need to look at other regions around the globe, and we
10 cannot turn a blind eye to ISIS in regions outside of the
11 Middle East such as in Southeast Asia. There are many news
12 reports that have showed those areas are very active. In
13 reports from last year, I noted over 57 Philippine
14 Government forces have been killed in battles linked with
15 ISIS groups. There was also an attempted U.S. embassy
16 bombing in Manila and many other ISIS-claimed attacks
17 throughout that region.

18 Secretary Carter did agree with my assessment on ISIS
19 in Southeast Asia. And President Obama was made well aware
20 of my concerns. However, we have yet to develop a strategy
21 to combat ISIS especially in those regions where we are not
22 focusing.

23 How should our new administration address the rising
24 threat of ISIS in Southeast Asia, and will you commit to
25 working with me on this, sir?

1 Mr. Mattis: Absolutely, Senator. The way we do this,
2 I think we have to deliver a very hard blow against ISIS in
3 the Middle East so that there is no sense of invulnerability
4 or invincibility there. There has got to be a military
5 defeat of them there. But it must, as you point out, be a
6 much broader approach. This requires an integrated strategy
7 so you do not squeeze them in one place and then they
8 develop in another and we really are right back to square
9 one. We have got to have an integrated strategy on this,
10 and it has got to be one that goes after the recruiting and
11 their fundraising, as well as delivering a military blow
12 against them in the Middle East. And that way you slow down
13 this growth and start rolling it back by, with, and through
14 allies.

15 Senator Ernst: I appreciate it.

16 God bless you, General. Thank you.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator Heinrich?

18 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, Chairman.

19 General Mattis, in your 44 years of service, you have
20 built a distinguished resume and demonstrated an unwavering
21 commitment to this country. Having said that, we need to
22 weigh your qualifications today against the need to change
23 an important law that seeks to preserve the ultimate
24 civilian control of the military.

25 But in doing so, I believe we also need to consider

1 another factor, which is the temperament of the incoming
2 White House team. Something you said earlier struck me. It
3 was crises and wars start by miscalculation. I want to go
4 back and remind folks about something that could have
5 happened a number of years ago.

6 During the Cuban missile crisis, Air Force General
7 Curtis LeMay and other military commanders urged President
8 Kennedy to launch a preemptive raid on Cuba. Many people
9 believe that would have provoked a Soviet nuclear response.
10 In the end, we averted a nuclear exchange and were fortunate
11 enough to have individuals in the White House who showed a
12 great deal of both restraint and calm during a very intense
13 crisis. We hope it is not so, but the next administration
14 could well encounter a similar situation.

15 Granted, every situation is unique. What assurances
16 can you provide that, if confirmed, you will approach a time
17 of crisis with the same temperament that you have shown us
18 today -- and I would point out that is not always consistent
19 with your nickname -- and provide sound policy and guidance
20 to the President-elect particularly as it relates to
21 something as serious as the use of nuclear weapons?

22 Mr. Mattis: Senator, first, I assure you that that
23 nickname was given me by the press, and some of you may have
24 experienced similar occasions with the press where perhaps
25 they did not get it quite right.

1 Senator Heinrich: Touche.

2 Mr. Mattis: But I would just say, Senator, that what
3 you must always have is have a team of people together. It
4 may not be a pretty process, but you look at all options.
5 You do not default to one -- and I want to point out default
6 particularly to the military one -- prematurely, that you
7 have your diplomats, you have everyone in the room as we
8 look for every possible solution. And in that regard, what
9 the military can do by being strong is you provide the
10 strongest deterrent and thus you provide the strongest
11 support for our diplomats to try to find a non-military
12 option. It is the peace through strength idea. It goes
13 back all the way to George Washington. So that is my
14 overarching approach, sir, if that addresses your question.

15 Senator Heinrich: It does.

16 In a related question, I am fortunate enough to
17 represent the men and women who work at our national labs,
18 people who work every day to ensure that our nuclear weapons
19 are safe, secure, and reliable. How important do you
20 believe that deterrent is in terms of priority within your
21 mission set? And will you continue to support the civilian
22 control both in authority and administration of that
23 deterrent?

24 Mr. Mattis: I consider the deterrent to be critical,
25 Senator, because we do not ever want those weapons used.

1 And so either a deterrent safe and secure, it is compelling,
2 or we actually open the door for something worse, whether it
3 be an accident, technical accident, or a political accident.
4 So to me it is an absolute priority.

5 Senator Heinrich: And the issue of civilian control?

6 Mr. Mattis: No reservations, sir.

7 Senator Heinrich: You testified before this committee
8 back in January 2015. You probably remember that. And you
9 suggested that if you were in our shoes at the time, one of
10 the things you would ask the Obama administration is the
11 following questions. What are the key threats to our vital
12 interests and in what priority level? Now, as the potential
13 Secretary of Defense in a new administration, how would you
14 answer that question?

15 Mr. Mattis: Sir, I would consider the principal
16 threats, to start with, Russia. And it would certainly
17 include any nations that are looking to intimidate nations
18 around their periphery, regional nations nearby them,
19 whether it be with weapons of mass destruction or, I would
20 call it, unusual, unorthodox means of intimidating them,
21 that sort of thing. And at the same time, as the chairman
22 has pointed out, we face now an era where we are going to be
23 fighting the terrorist threat. I mean, that is simply a
24 reality. We are going to have to address that one.

25 Senator Heinrich: Thank you for the candidness of your

1 answers. I think I am out of time. I appreciate it.

2 Chairman McCain: Senator Tillis?

3 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 General Mattis, welcome. Thank you for the generous
5 amount of time you spent with me in my office. I am going
6 to go back to a couple of the things that we discussed, but
7 I just wanted to tell that I think Secretary Cohen's
8 characterization of brave heart could not more perfectly put
9 your personality and your legacy in proper perspective.

10 Now, I want to talk about this. Fortunately for me --
11 I think Chair McCain has brought it up once or twice. It is
12 the actually the only instance in 2 years that I was able to
13 correct him on something and I know that I was right. He
14 said it was a 200-page RFP for the next generation handgun.
15 It is almost 700 pages.

16 I want to talk a little bit about why I think this is
17 making our men and women on the battlefield less lethal,
18 less prepared, less capable than they should be. When you
19 start a program in the Air Force in 2008, then you decide
20 with DOD that it should be the next generation handgun, then
21 you let from 2008 to 2017 transpire, you create a nearly
22 700-page RFP, and we have not even down-selected the
23 suppliers yet and we are supposed to replace the last
24 generation handguns by 2020. Frankly, I think we should be
25 replacing them sooner than that if it makes our soldiers

1 safer and more lethal on the battlefield.

2 This is a great testament to what is wrong with defense
3 acquisition. And this is not about counting beans. This is
4 about saving lives, and this is about killing the enemy.
5 This is what we have got to fix. So I am not going to get
6 you into the details except to say here is a mentality in
7 the DOD that has got to get fixed too.

8 I wanted the exact number. So I had my staff tell me
9 what the exact page count is. It is 680 pages. Now,
10 interestingly enough, they will probably come back and say,
11 well, it is only 340 because you print it out on a single
12 page, not double-sided because they already came back and
13 said that there are only 39 pages of technical specs. Well,
14 if there are 39 pages of technical specs, what is all this
15 other garbage in this document? Because that is the stuff
16 that is preventing us from getting a more lethal, more
17 reliable, more effective weapon on the battlefield.

18 I am going to keep on pounding on this thing. I could
19 not possibly imagine the capabilities you bring in terms of
20 recommending to us how we need to fight wars and take the
21 fight to the enemy on the battlefield. But I do know
22 business, and I do know that the business of the DOD has to
23 change and it needs to start with this kind of stuff.

24 You gave me a good answer in the committee. I just
25 want to keep on pounding this. I am going to bring my prop

1 here so that we all get it right. 680 pages, 9 years, and
2 we are not even in down-selection. So it is 10 years plus.
3 A decade, for a pistol? I can break down and put together
4 my 40 caliber pistol pretty easily with a blindfold on. In
5 other words, they are relatively simple devices. I know
6 that we have special applications for special operations, et
7 cetera. That can be dealt with. But this one-size-fits-
8 all, it is okay to go 9 or 10 years to get a new lethal
9 weapon has to stop.

10 Now, so all I want from you -- I know that you are
11 going to do a great job of leading our armed services. I
12 have no doubt about that. Would not even question it, would
13 never presume to know how to take on the enemy and eliminate
14 them. You know how to do that, and I look forward to
15 supporting your nomination and the waiver later today. I
16 need your commitment that we are going to get away from the
17 words that I heard in the last administration to fixing
18 defense acquisition and we start operating, and that when
19 you come before this committee, you can almost invariably
20 assume -- you and your deputies -- it is going to be about
21 what progress have you made so that we end this cycle that
22 is costing us money and making a more dangerous place for
23 our soldiers that are out there taking the fight to the
24 enemy.

25 Do I have you commitment?

1 Mr. Mattis: You do, Senator. And I cannot defend
2 this. I will say that at times there have been regulations
3 that required us to do things --

4 Senator Tillis: That is going to be my last question.
5 I am going to true to time, General. And you are one of the
6 last people that would be before this dais that I want to
7 interrupt, but I want to get this point in and get finished
8 in my 36 minutes.

9 Here is the other thing that we need to do. If
10 somebody goes back and reviews this over the last 9 years,
11 they are going to find out Congress is responsible for some
12 number of these pages. And we need, as I told you in our
13 office, to put a mirror down at that witness table from time
14 to time and say it is this long because somebody got a
15 provision in the NDAA or somebody got a provision in an
16 appropriations bill that caused us to be less efficient.
17 And I hope that I have your commitment to come in here and
18 say it is this way in part because of muscle memory in the
19 DOD and it is this way in large part because you guys are
20 forcing inefficient processes that are making my women and
21 men on the battlefield less safe and less capable. And I
22 would welcome that feedback from you as Secretary.

23 Mr. Mattis: I will bring it to you, sir. Obviously,
24 it requires collaboration with this committee, and I am
25 eager to do that.

1 Senator Tillis: Thank you.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3 Chairman McCain: Excellent questions.

4 Senator Warren, welcome to the committee.

5 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is an honor
6 to be here.

7 And thank you, General Mattis, and thank you for
8 meeting with me last week and being so generous with your
9 time.

10 I am hoping I can just follow up on a couple of the
11 conversations we had, and I am hoping you can give me yes or
12 no answers so we can cover as much ground as possible.

13 We all learned at last week's cybersecurity hearing
14 technological threats to our Nation are evolving and growing
15 in number. And to face those threats, we are going to need
16 our best and our brightest.

17 Massachusetts leads the Nation in innovative defense
18 work and scientific research that helps protect our service
19 members. The Natick Soldier Systems Center developed
20 cutting-edge equipment for our service members in areas like
21 nutrition and protective gear. MIT's Lincoln Laboratory
22 conducts advanced research and development to strengthen our
23 air and missile defense, cybersecurity, and other
24 capabilities. Cambridge is one of only three places in the
25 country with the Defense Innovation Unit Experimental, DIUx,

1 which leverages the expertise of entrepreneurs and tech
2 firms to accelerate the delivery of advanced products into
3 the hands of our service members.

4 So, General, do you agree that it is critical for DOD
5 to invest in innovation to enhance our national defense?

6 Mr. Mattis: Absolutely.

7 Senator Warren: Good.

8 Do you believe that DOD should strongly weigh the
9 intellectual resources of a region when evaluating where to
10 locate facilities such as DIUx and other research-based
11 commands, especially in situations where the military is
12 partnering with academic and technical organizations?

13 Mr. Mattis: We should embrace any area where we have
14 that sort of opportunity.

15 Senator Warren: Thank you.

16 Next, I want to ask about something else. You recently
17 edited a book on civilian-military relations, and in one of
18 the book's essays, Mackubin Thomas Owens, another Marine
19 Corps veteran, wrote that good civilian-military relations
20 are not the same as constant agreement and that this
21 misperception may be -- and I will quote him -- the result
22 of promoting yes men who are politically safe and who will
23 not readily fulfill their obligations to provide the best
24 military advice as forcefully as possible.

25 Owens also wrote that effective policy requires that,

1 quote, we insist that soldiers present their views frankly
2 and forcefully throughout the strategy-making and
3 implementation process and that this is key to healthy
4 civil-military relations.

5 So let me start. Do you agree with these statements?

6 Mr. Mattis: I do, Senator.

7 Senator Warren: Good.

8 Defense Secretary is a civilian job, but does your
9 belief in the importance of frank advice extend to the
10 relationship between the Defense Secretary and the
11 President's other national security advisors?

12 Mr. Mattis: Absolutely, Senator, and I would not have
13 taken this nomination if I did not have that belief.

14 Senator Warren: Good.

15 And what about the President himself? Under what
16 circumstances will you advocate for your views forcefully
17 and frankly?

18 Mr. Mattis: On every circumstance, Senator.

19 Senator Warren: I am very glad to hear that. Thank
20 you.

21 You know, in public remarks at a think tank in May
22 2015, you said that Russia wants to promote its own
23 security, quote, through instability and is, quote, trying
24 to create a sphere of unstable states along its periphery
25 intimidated. I assume you stand by this assessment today?

1 Mr. Mattis: I do, Senator.

2 Senator Warren: Good.

3 As Defense Secretary, when it comes to advising the
4 President on the threats posed by Russia, will you advocate
5 for your views frankly and forcefully to the President to
6 speak about these threats and the need to take them
7 seriously?

8 Mr. Mattis: I will, Senator Warren.

9 Senator Warren: Thank you very much. I hope that that
10 is right because if you end up in this job, our national
11 security may well depend in part on your willingness to
12 voice your opinions even when others disagree, even when you
13 are under pressure to remain silent. We are counting on
14 you.

15 I see that I am about out of time. I have some other
16 questions I would like to ask about women serving in the
17 military and LGBTQ in the military, but I will submit those
18 as questions for the record.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan?

21 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 And, General, welcome. Good to see you again, and
23 thank you for your exceptional service to our Nation which
24 is continuing.

25 You co-wrote last August in an article where you were

1 stated as saying, quote, the international system, as we
2 know it and as we created it, is under assault from the
3 forces of entropy that fill vacuums and corrode order when
4 the United States is not actively engaged. Unquote.

5 In the Arctic, Russia has filled a vacuum left by the
6 U.S., and as you know, General, just in the past few years,
7 the buildup in the Arctic by the Russians has been quite
8 dramatic, a new Arctic command, four new Arctic brigades, 14
9 operational airfields, 16 deepwater ports, 40 icebreakers
10 with 13 more on the way, 3 nuclear-powered, huge new land
11 claims in the Arctic for massive oil and gas reserves, the
12 most long-range air patrols with Bear bombers since the Cold
13 War, a SNAP military exercise in 2015 that included 45,000
14 troops, 3,400 military vehicles, 41 ships, 15 submarines,
15 and 110 aircraft.

16 What is the effect on the United States not being
17 actively engaged in the Arctic, as you mentioned in your
18 article?

19 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I think America has global
20 responsibilities, and it is not to our advantage to leave
21 any of those areas of the world absent from our efforts.

22 Senator Sullivan: What do you think Russia is trying
23 to achieve in the Arctic with that massive military buildup?

24 Mr. Mattis: I do not know. I believe, however, that
25 we are going to have to figure it out and make certain that

1 we are not seeing an expansion of these efforts to dominate
2 what has been up until now part of the international
3 commons.

4 Senator Sullivan: What role would you see of increased
5 U.S. presence and involvement with regard to our role in the
6 Arctic versus what the Russians are doing?

7 Mr. Mattis: Senator, with the new sea routes of
8 communication that are opening up, as the sea ice retreats,
9 I think we are going to have to recognize this is an active
10 area, whether it be for search and rescue, for patrolling,
11 maintain sovereignty up along our Alaska coastline, that
12 sort of thing.

13 Senator Sullivan: So, General, as you probably know,
14 the sentries of America's Arctic are in Alaska. Can I get
15 your commitment to come to Alaska, see our outstanding
16 military in the State that the chairman knows Billy Mitchell
17 called the most strategic place in the world?

18 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir. I will get there, sir.

19 Senator Sullivan: Excellent. We need to get the
20 chairman up there as well soon.

21 I want to turn to China. China's leaders have stated
22 that they are not militarizing the South China Sea. Do you
23 agree with them?

24 Mr. Mattis: No, I do not.

25 Senator Sullivan: Yesterday in his confirmation

1 hearing, Rex Tillerson commented that we should prohibit
2 access to the islands in the South China Sea, prohibit
3 access to the Chinese. What in your view should our
4 response to China's militarization of the South China Sea
5 be?

6 Mr. Mattis: Sir, we are going to have to put together
7 a policy that is put together by the State Department, by
8 Treasury, by DOD. We are going to have to integrate this so
9 that we are not dealing with an incomplete or incoherent
10 strategy. But the bottom line is, sir, the international
11 waters are international waters, and we have got to figure
12 out how do we deal with holding onto the kind of rules that
13 we have made over many years that led to the prosperity for
14 many nations, not just for ours. This has been part of why
15 many nations have got more prosperous because of this
16 freedom of commerce.

17 Senator Sullivan: You have emphasized, I think
18 rightfully so, our allies as a key strategic element of U.S.
19 national security. What role should they be playing with
20 regard to our response in the South China Sea?

21 Mr. Mattis: Sir, my view is you always want more
22 allies with you than fewer. I have never gone into any
23 fight in an all-American formation. I have always fought
24 alongside allies. But also, I believe allies contribute
25 greatly to deterrence and modifying the behavior or

1 misbehavior of those who would disrupt the global order.

2 Senator Sullivan: Let me begin by just mentioning
3 there is a number of us who believe that over the last
4 several years the U.S. has lost credibility internationally
5 where our adversaries no longer fear us and our allies do
6 not trust us. Perhaps the most glaring example of that is
7 Iranian actions in the Persian Gulf harassing U.S. naval
8 ships, taking sailors hostage.

9 I just want to finish with one question. How do we
10 regain our credibility internationally? And you are a
11 historian. Do you believe that the new administration will
12 have its credibility challenged early in its tenure?

13 Mr. Mattis: If confirmed, Senator, I have to assume
14 that our credibility will be challenged as simply part of
15 the responsibility that I carry. I think the way you
16 maintain credibility is when you give your word on
17 something, you live up to it and you put together policies,
18 even though it is more difficult, by, with, and through
19 allies so that they are at the table as we put the policies
20 together so they are with us when the policies come under
21 pressure.

22 Senator Sullivan: Is it a dangerous period when you
23 are trying to regain credibility?

24 Mr. Mattis: It is, sir.

25 Chairman McCain: The Senator's time has expired.

1 Maybe you can stop by while refueling. It is a good
2 place for refueling.

3 [Laughter.]

4 Chairman McCain: Senator Peters?

5 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 And thank you, General Mattis. I will join my
7 colleagues in thanking you for your service. You have spent
8 your entire life in service of the country keeping us safe,
9 and we all know the most important function of the Federal
10 Government is to keep its citizens safe at all times. And
11 you have done that with honor and with integrity. So thank
12 you on behalf of a grateful Nation.

13 Many of my colleagues have quoted from your book that
14 you edited, "Warriors and Citizens," and I am going to
15 follow suit because I would just like you to elaborate on a
16 passage that I thought was interesting and I think is
17 worthwhile for us to know more about as how you will
18 approach this job as a strategic thinker, providing
19 strategic advice to the President, as well as to the
20 Congress. So I am going to ask you to comment on this.

21 This quote is because the American public holds its
22 military in such high regard, we are putting it at greater
23 risk. We have allowed our strategic thinking to atrophy,
24 allowing our policymaking to become flabby because our
25 military's high level of performance has lulled our

1 sensibilities. This is both a political failure and a moral
2 one.

3 If you could elaborate on what you meant by political
4 failures, moral failures, and how those of us who are
5 involved in policymaking have become flabby.

6 Mr. Mattis: Well, it certainly was not meant in any
7 personal sense.

8 Senator Peters: Well, I understand that, although I do
9 have to have my Fitbit. That is true.

10 [Laughter.]

11 Mr. Mattis: Senator, it goes back to a belief I have
12 that America has two fundamental powers. One is the power
13 of intimidation. I was part of it. And America will defend
14 herself and our idea, this experiment that we call America--
15 that is all it is -- is an experiment in democracy. But the
16 other power I think that perhaps we have used less in the
17 recent years, the last 20 years maybe, is the power of
18 inspiration. And I think that the power of inspiration of
19 America at times has got to be employed just as strongly,
20 and because the U.S. military is devoted to being the top in
21 its game in a competition where second place is last place,
22 we should not simply be turning to the military because it
23 is a very capable military, because it is well led. It is
24 now a national treasure. I am the first to admit that. But
25 it does not mean we should be turning to the military to

1 answer all of our concerns in our relations with the world.
2 And that is the source of where I was coming from for that
3 statement.

4 Senator Peters: Very good.

5 In terms of strategic thinking, which you will be
6 intimately involved in for us, and as a student of history,
7 you know as well as anyone else that we cannot fight the
8 last war, and throughout history that seems to have repeated
9 itself all too many times. And we need to be thinking
10 forward.

11 In our meeting together, I was struck by a statement
12 that you made where you said that as a commander in the
13 field, you benefited from decisions that were made 10 to 15
14 years before you put on the uniform and were in command.

15 We are facing an unprecedented time of change. When we
16 look at technology and how it is transforming our world, we
17 are probably in one of the most exciting times to live. And
18 the world that we see today is going to be radically
19 different in 10 years. That means weapon systems are likely
20 to be considerably different. We can see how cyber has
21 changed political warfare, has given leverage to political
22 warfare in an unprecedented way as has been evidenced by the
23 Russian attacks on our political system here and their
24 interference in our political system. In the biotech area,
25 we are seeing dual-use technologies like CRISPR that will

1 give enemies a low-cost yet very high-impact weapon and also
2 the areas in artificial intelligence. Recently a study came
3 out that said that artificial intelligence may be one of our
4 most important weapons to maintain a unique, asymmetric
5 advantage over our adversaries.

6 How do you plan to be thinking about where we need to
7 be 10 to 15 years and to utilize these strategies and
8 understanding the threat is much different?

9 Mr. Mattis: Senator, we have to make certain we are
10 not dominant and irrelevant at the same time, dominant in a
11 past form of warfare that is no longer relevant. And I
12 believe the way you do this is you get your strategy right,
13 and that starts with getting our policies right. So you
14 match your strategy, economic, diplomatic, military, covert,
15 education, all of this. You map that to ensuring that you
16 are going to be relevant for the future. Once you do that,
17 you also adopt it. In the paradox of war, the enemy always
18 moves against your perceived weakness. So you cannot opt
19 out of certain things. Bottom line, you get to a point
20 where you have the fewest big regrets when the crisis
21 strikes. You will never have no regrets because we are
22 dealing with something that is fundamentally unpredictable.

23 But it also means we are going to have to enlist the
24 civilian communities that are leaders in some of these areas
25 that you and Senator Warren have both talked about,

1 artificial intelligence and what the labs are doing, and
2 make certain we are harvesting those lessons learned and the
3 advances they have, but more importantly that we are
4 integrating them. It does no good to be the best in just
5 the lab and you do not mainstream what you have learned from
6 it.

7 So it is a matter of how do you maintain current
8 readiness if we fight tomorrow, the young men and women have
9 got to be at the top of their game. But at the same time,
10 we have got to be looking out so, like me, somebody who is
11 not even in the military yet 10 years from now looks back
12 and says what we did today wrote the headlines that we want
13 to read 10 years from now.

14 Senator Peters: Thank you.

15 Senator Reed [presiding]: On behalf of Chairman
16 McCain, let me recognize Senator Perdue.

17 Senator Perdue: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 General, thank you for your extraordinary lifetime of
19 dedication and commitment and service to our country and
20 your willingness to serve again. I was very impressed in
21 our conversation this week with your humility and with your
22 acuity of the global situation today.

23 Several past Secretaries of State have actually said in
24 recent years that the greatest threat to national security
25 is our own federal debt. Do you agree with that, sir?

1 Mr. Mattis: I do, sir.

2 Senator Perdue: Today we see a situation in 2017. We
3 have the smallest Army since World War II, the smallest Navy
4 since World War I, and the oldest and smallest Air Force
5 ever. Sir, do you think we can meet the missions of what we
6 are talking about with the Four Plus One challenge mission
7 we have today with Russia and China, the symmetric threats,
8 the traditional symmetric threats, but growing, the
9 asymmetric threats of ISIS and other terrorists around the
10 world, with rogue nations developing nuclear capabilities
11 like Iran and North Korea and then this new hybrid warfare
12 that we are seeing in Eastern Europe and around the world
13 and even here at home, cyber warfare, and now the arms race
14 in space? Sir, do you believe that that is a tenable
15 situation that we can meet the missions that we are looking
16 at asking our military to do today?

17 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I believe we have to strengthen
18 our military due to the situation as you describe it. I
19 think it is accurate what you are describing.

20 Senator Perdue: Sir, in the last 30 years, we have
21 disinvested in our military in the 1970s. We recapped it in
22 the 1980s. We disinvested it in the 1990s. We recapped it
23 in 2000, and now in the last few years, we have disinvested
24 again such that today -- and you know this, but I have a
25 question for you because we need your leadership in this.

1 You are going to be straddling the civilian advice world and
2 also the military world when you are Secretary of Defense.

3 Today we are spending about 100 basis points less than
4 our 30-year average. That is about \$200 billion less than
5 our 30-year average. That is not the most important number,
6 though.

7 The most important number is the last time we had a
8 Secretary of Defense actually do a bottom-up mission
9 requirement request for funds was Secretary Bob Gates in
10 2011 did a 5-year plan. And for 2016, he requested a number
11 that in today's dollars was \$100 billion greater than what
12 we allocated in 2016. And that is before ISIS, before
13 Crimea, before Syria.

14 Sir, you cannot speak to the specific number, but I
15 would like to know how you plan to address your goal of
16 solvency and security in an environment where today every
17 dime we spend on our military, every dime we spend on our VA
18 and veterans, and every dime we spend on most of our
19 domestic programs frankly is borrowed. Given that in the
20 last 8 years, we borrowed 35 percent of what we spent as a
21 Federal Government, and today the baseline budget for the
22 next 10 years says that we will do the same thing, that
23 means that every dime that we spend on the U.S. military,
24 every dime you are going to be concerned with as Secretary
25 of Defense is fundamentally borrowed.

1 In that situation, General, how will you approach,
2 being Secretary of Defense, addressing the needs of the
3 military with us in that environment?

4 Mr. Mattis: Senator, as has been mentioned by several
5 of the members of this committee, one of the most important
6 things we do as a government -- the most important thing --
7 is maintain the independence and the freedom of this
8 country. So to me that is a priority.

9 At the same time, we have got to try to figure out --
10 and you have seen the waxing and waning of our military size
11 and our strength. As we try to adapt that military to the
12 realities, we do not want a military that just breaks the
13 bank, but at the same time, we cannot solve this debt
14 problem on the backs of our military alone. This is why I
15 think I need to support strongly the congressional leaders
16 who are trying to repeal sequestration and the Budget
17 Control Act to ensure that we put the Congress back into a
18 position to prioritize where this money is being spent. And
19 we are going to have to make hard calls, but I consider it
20 an abrogation of our generation's responsibility to transfer
21 a debt of this size to our children.

22 Senator Perdue: General, thank you so much for your
23 perspective, your willingness to serve, your history, and
24 for what you are going to do for our country in the next
25 decade. God bless you. Thank you.

1 Senator Reed: On behalf of Chairman McCain, let me
2 recognize Senator Kaine.

3 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 And thank you, General. It is great to be back with
5 you.

6 I associate myself with the comments of Senator
7 Blumenthal that the traditional restriction to Secretary of
8 Defense that requires some period in civilian life before
9 serving is a very important one. And I also agree with him
10 that features of the times, features of, frankly, my
11 concerns about the incoming administration, and features in
12 your background I think make this an opportune moment to
13 make an exception. And in particular, the fact that you are
14 somebody who writes a lot and has a lot of things in your
15 background you can write about but that you chose to work
16 with others to write this book, "Warriors and Citizens,"
17 about the very issue that is at issue in the waiver, the
18 connection between civilian and military life, the
19 similarities and the differences, trying to understand the
20 different cultures and find strategies to better enable each
21 to understand -- the fact that you chose that is something
22 that I think speaks particularly to your suitability for a
23 waiver in this exceptional circumstance.

24 General Mattis, you have testified before us often, and
25 you have also written. A long-term interest of mine is the

1 belief that we should not be at war without a vote of
2 Congress. You authored a piece entitled "Using Military
3 Force Against ISIS" in March of 2015 in which you said a
4 strong authorization to use military force, supported by a
5 majority of both parties in both houses of Congress, will
6 send an essential message of American steadfastness to our
7 people and to the global audience. Its passage will
8 demonstrate our country's fundamental unity and enable a
9 broader commitment to deal firmly with the real and growing
10 menace.

11 Is that still your opinion?

12 Mr. Mattis: Yes, Senator, it is.

13 Senator Kaine: And is it not the case that
14 congressional engagement around an authorization of use of
15 military force is part of what civilian control is? We
16 exercise civilian control of the military through
17 appropriate congressional oversight and through taking our
18 responsibilities like the Article 1 war powers
19 responsibilities seriously.

20 Mr. Mattis: I think congressional oversight and
21 appropriations, authorizations are a critical part of
22 civilian control of the military.

23 Senator Kaine: General Mattis, you spoke -- and I was
24 very glad you did -- about the complex situation in the
25 Middle East, and one of the items that should be on our

1 table, as difficult as it is, is trying to do what we can
2 appropriately do to find a peace between Palestine and
3 Israel. It is difficult, just like finding a peace in
4 Ireland was difficult, but we should not give up. We played
5 a pivotal role in that important Good Friday Accord in the
6 1990s, and I think it is important that we continue to play
7 it. And I am happy that you mentioned that.

8 Obviously, this is a peace that would need to be
9 hammered out between Palestine and Israel, Palestinians and
10 Israelis. But should the United States military standing
11 willing to provide security assistance, for example, as it
12 does to provide peacekeeping along the border between Israel
13 and Egypt in the multinational force of observers in your
14 opinion?

15 Mr. Mattis: Senator Kaine, I would have to look at the
16 specific commitment before I came back and answered that
17 question. But I do not have a going-in prohibition to
18 engaging along those lines, but I would have to look at the
19 actual mission.

20 Senator Kaine: If it were to be the desire of the
21 parties, as they are talking about a potential peace, if
22 they saw a valuable role for the United States to play in
23 peacekeeping between the nations, would you think that would
24 be an appropriate use of the American military similar to
25 the peacekeeping we provide on the Egypt-Israel border since

1 the late 1970s?

2 Mr. Mattis: Peace in that area, sir, is in our vital
3 interest, and so if we could contribute, it certainly is
4 something we should look at.

5 Senator Kaine: One last area of questions, General
6 Mattis. I was really intrigued. You talked about in the
7 Middle East Israel and others, Arab nations in the Middle
8 East, feel we are indifferent to their security concerns,
9 and that was the phrase you used, "indifferent." And when I
10 travel, I hear the same thing. And I try to match up two
11 feelings because I will hear that and I think that is an
12 accurate perception of what I hear when I travel. But I
13 also sit here in this body where we approve, for example,
14 10-year memorandums of understanding, spending significant
15 American dollars to provide security assistance to Israel.
16 We are in multiple theaters of war in the Middle East, and
17 we have been there since 2001. It is not like we are not
18 there. And so I try to match our investment of blood,
19 talent, and treasure with the feeling of leaders in these
20 countries of why are you indifferent to us. And the only
21 way I can understand is we are actually present, but we do
22 not communicate a clear strategy. We are kind of here on
23 this issue and that issue, but there is a good deal of
24 uncertainty about what we will do tomorrow and what we will
25 engage in and what we will not.

1 We had testimony before this committee a year or so ago
2 from a military officer, senior officer, he said we have
3 OPLANs but no strategy. A lot of OPLANs for every
4 contingency, but the strategy is unclear. Do you think that
5 contributes to this feeling of indifference or concern among
6 allies in the Middle East and elsewhere?

7 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I think you summed it up. There
8 are tangible and intangible elements to this. Certainly on
9 the tangible, we are tangibly engaged across the board.
10 Intangibly, people do not know where we stand. Too often
11 there is a question. And I believe too that the lack of an
12 integrated strategy at times has had us working against one
13 issue with someone while working for the issue, and it just
14 created confusion, sir.

15 Senator Kaine: Thank you very much, General Mattis.
16 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17 Senator Reed: On behalf of Chairman McCain, let me
18 recognize Senator Cruz.

19 Senator Cruz: Thank you, Senator Reed.

20 General, welcome back to this committee, a committee
21 you spent a lot of time before. And I want to start just by
22 thanking you for your many decades of service, your service
23 risking your life and leading your men into harm's way to
24 protect this country. We are grateful. And you are being
25 called back to service once again to protect this country.

1 I think you are going to be an extraordinary Defense
2 Secretary. I am proud to support your nomination. And I
3 think you are going to be confirmed by a strong bipartisan
4 vote.

5 One of the reasons for that is over decades serving,
6 you have earned a reputation for candor, for strength, for
7 not blowing smoke, which is a rare thing in the town of
8 Washington, D.C., and also as a marines' marine. Indeed,
9 you will remember my chief of staff is a former marine. And
10 when you came by my office to visit, I do not think I have
11 ever seen my chief of staff more excited. Senators do not
12 do anything for him. He is completely unimpressed by any of
13 us. But if Elvis Pressley had walked into the office, he
14 would not have been more thrilled than to see you walk in,
15 General. And so thank you for your willingness to come back
16 once again and help pull this country back from the
17 precipice. I think we are in very perilous times.

18 When you and I talked, you talked about what you call
19 the strategic mismatch between the commitments being placed
20 on our military right now and the capacity that has been
21 provided to meet those commitments. Can you share your
22 views on what is needed to fix that? How do we rebuild the
23 military to ensure we can do everything that is necessary to
24 keep this country safe?

25 Mr. Mattis: Senator Cruz, the first point I would make

1 is the hard-used equipment that we brought back from the
2 wars. If we are going to continue to use it, it has got to
3 be refurbished. It has got to be at the top of its game.

4 The second point is that this committee and this
5 Congress has provided a lot of money for a lot of ships and
6 planes and other equipment, and if we do not maintain that
7 gear, it is worthless. So we are going to have to increase
8 our operations and maintenance funds.

9 Further, as the world situation dictates this, we are
10 going to have to adapt and strengthen the military.

11 The one commitment I would give you, Senator, is that
12 as we are doing this, I am going to be working with our
13 allies to make sure that it is not only the American
14 taxpayer who is carrying this burden. Those nations that
15 share our values, those nations that share perhaps just our
16 security concerns -- we are going to work with them so that
17 we maintain the strongest alliance as possible. So I am not
18 coming to you trying to get the American military to do what
19 is rightly more of an alliance kind of work or coalition or
20 partnership work.

21 Senator Cruz: So one of the areas we discussed was the
22 need to maintain air superiority going forward, and you
23 referenced that need just a minute ago. And I think an
24 important piece of that is the F-35 program, which I believe
25 successful completion of the F-35 program is critical to

1 future mission success, both for us and for key allies like
2 the United Kingdom and Israel. And right now, we have over
3 200 F-35's fielded today, and just this week, the Marine
4 Corps began the first F-35 overseas deployment. Now, all of
5 are concerned about limiting costs, and that needs to be a
6 focus going forward.

7 But can you highlight for this committee what separates
8 the F-35 from legacy aircraft and the advantages it provides
9 to our military in future combat situations?

10 Mr. Mattis: Senator, the F-35 is critical for our own
11 air superiority in the future because of its stealth
12 characteristics and some of its electronics capability that
13 is inherent to the airplane which actually magnifies each
14 individual aircraft's capability. But it is equally
15 important, if not more so, to some of our allies. And I say
16 "more so," because this will be the total fighter strength
17 of their air force. So to them it is an all-in sort of
18 situation.

19 So the F-35 -- the President-elect has talked about the
20 costs of it, but he has in no way shown a lack of support
21 for the program. He just wants the best bang for the buck.

22 Senator Cruz: Sure. And I look forward to working
23 closely with you to strengthen that program.

24 My final question is you have long been a defender of
25 the warrior ethos. And you and I have both been concerned

1 that sometimes a political agenda at the Pentagon has gotten
2 in the way of a warrior ethos. Can you describe for this
3 committee the importance of restoring the warrior ethos and
4 why that matters for our ability to keep this country safe?

5 Mr. Mattis: Senator, the primitive and often even
6 atavistic aspects of the battlefield tests the physical
7 strength, the mental agility of everyone. But most of what
8 it tests is the courage and the spiritual side of the troops
9 we put in harm's way. And oftentimes it is only unit
10 cohesion, leadership, and the belief in themselves and their
11 comrades that allows them to go through what they have to go
12 through and come home as better men and women, not as
13 broken. And so the warrior ethos is not a luxury. It is
14 essential when you have a military.

15 Senator Cruz: And, General, I am confident that is the
16 first time in a Senate hearing the word "atavistic" has been
17 used.

18 Chairman McCain [presiding]: The Senator's time has
19 expired.

20 Senator King?

21 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 First, Mr. Chairman, I bring news from the Intelligence
23 Committee where at the opening of the hearing on the new
24 Director of the CIA, all the power went off and the room
25 went completely dark.

1 Chairman McCain: A clear cyber hack.

2 Senator King: I think either the Almighty or the
3 Architect of the Capitol has a sense of humor.

4 [Laughter.]

5 Senator King: General Mattis, one of the comments you
6 made earlier about fear, honor, and interest are the bases
7 of all wars is now in my telephone. If it ever gets hacked,
8 they will find that quote, along with those of Lincoln and
9 Churchill. So thank you for that thought.

10 General Mattis, you have been a warrior. This job --
11 you need to move from being a warrior to a manager, two very
12 different sets of skills, and particularly the manager of
13 the sprawling bureaucracy that the Defense Department has
14 become. And as you know, we are constrained for resources.
15 Even if we are able to get rid of the Budget Control Act,
16 even if we are able to get rid of sequestration, there are
17 still always going to be limits on resources.

18 I hope that you will examine with a fresh set of eyes
19 the administrative structure of not only the civilian side
20 but the military side of the Defense Department in order to
21 be able to find and free up resources for the modernization,
22 readiness, training, all of those elements. I just think
23 this is going to be a very important part of your job. I
24 would like your thoughts on that.

25 Mr. Mattis: I agree, Senator, 100 percent with this.

1 I think that right now what we face is a time when with
2 technology and with new approaches, we can do some of the
3 things that lie behind what you are asking for there. For
4 example, skip echelon where you do not need something at
5 each echelon. You remove it and you actually expedite
6 processes and this sort of thing. What we do not want to do
7 is continue to have layer upon layer of bureaucracy that is
8 not value-added, but how we go through and remove it is
9 probably going to take collaboration with this committee
10 because in many cases those elements are there as part of
11 our organization set by the Congress. So I will have to
12 come to you and show you what I propose to manage it better
13 and show you what the problem is, and if I can get your
14 agreement there, I think we can move forward on it.

15 Senator King: I think that is very important, and I
16 hope that can be a specific, not just a general commitment
17 but a project, if you will, an identified, specific project
18 to look into those. I did not expect to quote Churchill so
19 soon, but one of his comments that you suggest, the sum
20 total of all committee deliberations is usually no. And
21 that is what makes it so difficult to get things done.

22 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir.

23 Senator King: Nuclear modernization. One of the
24 things that concerns me looking out beyond the budget of
25 this year or next year is what I call the nuclear

1 modernization bulge. The cost of the Ohio class
2 replacement, the B-21, which is moving forward, missiles,
3 also not often mentioned a serious upgrade of the command
4 and control system. The NAOC, the National Airborne
5 Operations Center, as you know, is a plane that is older
6 than many of the people in this room, not you and I, but
7 many of the people in this room. I think how we deal with
8 that is something that has to have some special attention
9 because if we do not find additional funding for that bulge,
10 then all the other acquisition programs will be squeezed
11 out. Do you agree with that assertion?

12 Mr. Mattis: I agree both that the additional funding
13 has got to be found because it will squeeze out everything
14 else if we do not find a way to do it, but also that the
15 command and control, in light of the cyber situation we face
16 right now, sir, has got to be a high priority when we look
17 at the modernization of the triad.

18 Senator King: Another subject. I believe I understand
19 your position on this, but are you supportive of elevating
20 Cyber Command to a full unified combat command?

21 Mr. Mattis: I have got to look at the actual breakout,
22 Senator, so I understand which duties stay in which place
23 because the way they are set up right now, it may not break
24 apart quite as well if we hold that same organization. So
25 we will just have to look at it and, if we go down that

1 road, make certain if they are fit for function at that
2 point. Philosophically I am okay with it.

3 Senator King: And I appreciate the subtlety of your
4 answer because the worse result would be to create a new
5 unified combatant command and leave remnants of the function
6 in other places so that you ended up with duplication. I
7 think that is --

8 Mr. Mattis: You summed up by concern, sir.

9 Senator King: I think that is an apt concern.

10 Well, General Mattis, I am so pleased that you are
11 willing to continue your service to the country to come back
12 to this side of the Rockies, as you suggest, and I
13 appreciate your testimony here today. Thank you very much.

14 Mr. Mattis: Thank you, Senator.

15 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman McCain: Colonel Graham?

17 Senator Graham: Thank you. Appreciate that.

18 General, what if I call you Mr. Mattis? How about Mr.
19 Secretary? Whatever works. Right?

20 Mr. Mattis: I am only a nominee.

21 Senator Graham: Okay, right. Mr. Nominee.

22 What is the capital of Israel?

23 Mr. Mattis: The capital of Israel that I go to, sir,
24 is Tel Aviv because that is where all their government
25 people are.

1 Senator Graham: Do you agree with me that the capital
2 of Israel is Jerusalem?

3 Mr. Mattis: Sir, right now I stick with the U.S.
4 policy.

5 Senator Graham: Do you support moving the U.S. embassy
6 from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem?

7 Mr. Mattis: I would defer to the nominee for Secretary
8 of State on that, sir.

9 Senator Graham: Do you support maintaining qualitative
10 edge for Israel against all potential adversaries in terms
11 of their military capability?

12 Mr. Mattis: I do, sir.

13 Senator Graham: Do you support a two state solution?

14 Mr. Mattis: I do if that brings peace to the Middle
15 East. I am eager to see it work. If there is another
16 solution, I would be happy to hear what it is.

17 Senator Graham: Absolutely.

18 Who is in charge of the Palestinian community?

19 Mr. Mattis: That is a good question, sir. I think
20 there is a number of people who think they are.

21 Senator Graham: It would be hard to have a two state
22 solution if one of the parties really does not have anybody
23 in charge.

24 Mr. Mattis: There is nothing easy about the two state
25 solution.

1 Senator Graham: Do you think Hamas is a terrorist
2 organization?

3 Mr. Mattis: I do, sir.

4 Senator Graham: Do you think they would abide by any
5 agreement that the Palestinian Authority negotiated with
6 Israel, given the state of affairs as we know today?

7 Mr. Mattis: Only if forced to.

8 Senator Graham: Okay. I would like to know how we
9 would force them, but let us move on.

10 North Korea. Did Trump tweet a red line when he said
11 not going to happen?

12 Mr. Mattis: I am not going to characterize the
13 President-elect, sir. I would just tell you that the
14 seriousness that he takes --

15 Senator Graham: How would you characterize that tweet?

16 Mr. Mattis: Pardon, sir?

17 Senator Graham: How would you characterize what he
18 said. He commented on their ICBM ambitions, and he says not
19 going to happen. So to me, I hope it is a red line. I
20 mean, I am not arguing with him. I am not so sure I would
21 have done it that way. But do you think we should have a
22 red line when it comes to the ICBM program in North Korea?

23 Mr. Mattis: Sir, it is a serious threat, and I believe
24 that we have got to do something about it.

25 Senator Graham: Do you believe it is in our national

1 security interest to make sure that North Korea never
2 develops a missile that could hit the American homeland with
3 a nuclear weapon on top of it?

4 Mr. Mattis: Yes, Senator, I do.

5 Senator Graham: Do you believe that necessary force
6 should be on the table?

7 Mr. Mattis: I do not think we should take anything off
8 the table, sir.

9 Senator Graham: When it comes to Iran, you said in
10 terms of the agreement we have, we gave our word. Is that
11 what you said?

12 Mr. Mattis: We did, yes, sir.

13 Senator Graham: I think President-elect Trump gave his
14 word to the American people, I am going to change this deal
15 because it is terrible. Do you expect him to keep his word?

16 Mr. Mattis: Sir, once the national security team is
17 confirmed, once it is confirmed by the Senate, I will work
18 with the other members to come up with the best possible
19 situation we can make for America --

20 Senator Graham: Do you think it is a terrible deal?

21 Mr. Mattis: It is not a deal I would have signed, sir.

22 Senator Graham: How would you make it better?

23 Mr. Mattis: Sir, the first thing is I would ask the
24 Congress to have a joint committee from Banking, Armed
25 Services, and Intel to oversee the implementation of the

1 deal, and should there be any abrogation of it, should there
2 be any cheating, then the Congress would be kept informed on
3 a routine basis of what is going on so that you know what is
4 happening. At the same time, we are going to have to make
5 certain that our intelligence services are fully staffed to
6 watch over them, and that involves working with our allied
7 intelligence services that have unique capabilities to work
8 inside the country. Further, we would put together a
9 combined air missile defense capability for our Gulf allies
10 so that they can work together with us. And every time we
11 catch Iran up to some kind of terrorist activity, we would
12 take that to the United Nations and display it for the world
13 to see.

14 Senator Graham: Well, thank you very much.

15 Do you believe Iran's behavior outside their nuclear
16 program has been destabilizing in the Mid-East?

17 Mr. Mattis: Absolutely.

18 Senator Graham: Do you believe that when they held our
19 sailors hostage, that was an affront to America?

20 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir.

21 Senator Graham: Do you believe they deserve to be
22 sanctioned based on what they have done in the Mid-East,
23 test firing four missiles in violation of U.N. resolutions,
24 that the regime deserves to be sanctioned for their behavior
25 outside their nuclear program?

1 Mr. Mattis: I believe that sanctions will work best if
2 they are international so that they cannot evade them.

3 Senator Graham: Are we going to give the world a veto
4 over what we do?

5 Mr. Mattis: I would never give the world a veto --

6 Senator Graham: Finally, do you support additional
7 sanctions against Russia for all the bad things they have
8 done in the past and likely to do in the future?

9 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I would like to get with the new
10 national security team, craft a strategy to confront Russia
11 for what it has done.

12 Senator Graham: Are you familiar with the sanctions
13 that Senator McCain and I introduced along with Democrats?

14 Mr. Mattis: I have not read them.

15 Senator Graham: I am going to send them to you, and I
16 would like you to respond in writing whether or not you
17 think they will be a deterrent and we should do it.

18 Thank you for your willingness to serve.

19 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir.

20 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly?

21 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 Thank you, General, for stepping to the plate again.

23 You have committed to being unrelenting in addressing
24 military suicide, if confirmed. I appreciate your approach
25 to treating mental health just like physical fitness as a

1 readiness issue, and it is not tied, as you know, to
2 deployments or to combat experience. It is happening across
3 the board. And as we look at this, one of the things we
4 were able to do back in 2014 is this committee and this
5 Senate was able to pass legislation that provided a mental
6 health examination for every service member, Army, Guard,
7 and Reserve, across the board every year. And this is the
8 year coming up that the heads of all the services have said
9 they are going to implement this.

10 If confirmed, do you commit that you will move forward
11 to assure that they keep to that schedule?

12 Mr. Mattis: I will do my best, Senator. I will look
13 at if we have got the assets in place to actually allow the
14 commanders to meet that schedule. It will probably be
15 something where we have got to make certain that we have
16 allowed for that.

17 Senator Donnelly: One of the other things -- you talk
18 about assets. The most recent NDAA included a program to
19 train military physician assistants in psychiatric care, and
20 that would help to fill the gap in terms of being able to
21 provide care and treatment to all who need it.

22 If confirmed, will you ensure that that program is
23 carried out faithfully?

24 Mr. Mattis: That sounds like an excellent program.
25 That would address the one concern I would have that we make

1 a program but there is not enough assets.

2 Senator Donnelly: Right. There is no point in doing
3 something if the back end is not in place. And we will work
4 very hard to make sure the back end is in place so that it
5 can be carried out.

6 My colleague and friend, Senator Blumenthal, was
7 talking about mental health assistance for veterans. You
8 know, obviously, we want to make sure it is in place for
9 service members as well. But we also want to talk about the
10 handoff when you are finished, and when you are finished
11 serving and you become a vet. And General Chirelli, who I
12 am sure you are very familiar with, has extended an
13 incredible amount of time in trying to prevent suicide among
14 veterans. And in talking to him, one of the things he told
15 me was the biggest challenge was when you are done on DOD,
16 on the Department of Defense side and you are handed off to
17 the VA, the drugs and prescriptions you may be receiving as
18 a service member to help with challenges -- that they are
19 not included in the VA schedule. And so you may be
20 receiving treatment with prescription X and it is no longer
21 available, and at one of the most vulnerable times, you look
22 up and the help and care you need is not available.

23 I would like your commitment that you will meet with
24 the VA, sit down with them to make sure that there is no gap
25 in what is called the formulary, that there is no gap in the

1 handoff so that we stand up and do what we are supposed to
2 do for our veterans.

3 Mr. Mattis: I will meet with him, sir. I think there
4 are issues like this that are characterizing handoff from
5 medical records to formulary. There is a whole lot of them.
6 And so we have got to come up with some kind of process that
7 addresses what the fundamental problem is, and that is that
8 we are not using the medical records coming out of DOD for a
9 seamless transfer over. And I realize there is some law
10 involved here about disability and all. But we have got to
11 address this.

12 Senator Donnelly: There is a whole bunch of
13 challenges, as you said. This particular one where you look
14 up and one day you are being treated here and the next day
15 the things you are being treated with are no longer
16 available may be the most urgent.

17 I want to follow up on Senator Graham's comments
18 regarding North Korea because, obviously, the ICBM test
19 would be an incredible game-changer. If confirmed, what
20 approach would you recommend to the Commander-in-Chief as a
21 more effective U.S. strategy to send a message to North
22 Korea?

23 Mr. Mattis: Sir, it is going to take an international
24 effort. It is going to have to require nations in the
25 region, as well as us, to work together on this, and that is

1 going to be challenging with at least one or two of the
2 nations. But also, I think we are going to have to look at
3 our negotiation stance and working with the State Department
4 to see if we have the right stance for the way ahead.

5 Senator Donnelly: We look forward to also working
6 together on that because Senator Graham was talking about
7 red lines, and sometimes when you send a message --
8 obviously, in your case it has always been that way. When
9 you send a message, you keep it. You let them know it is
10 coming and do the appropriate thing.

11 The last thing I want to ask you about is nuclear
12 modernization. It is very, very important. We have a lot
13 of it moving forward. One of the things we have worked on
14 is commonality, that we have the Navy, we have the Air
15 Force. And in many cases what the Navy has done or what the
16 Air Force has done, we reinvent the wheel and have the other
17 part of the services redo the same thing. So what I would
18 like to make sure is that the Air Force and the Navy and
19 their respective program managers -- that we enhance the
20 commonality because it can help save us money, but at the
21 same time, it will also make the modernization more
22 effective. Instead of running two parallel lines that do
23 not even match --

24 Chairman McCain: The Senator's time has expired.

25 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman McCain: Senator Sasse?

2 Senator Sasse: Thank you, Chairman.

3 General Mattis, thank you for your past service and for
4 your --

5 Chairman McCain: Could I just -- General Mattis, did
6 you have a response to Senator Donnelly very quickly?

7 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I would like to talk with you or
8 send someone over to talk to your staff about specifics
9 under the commonality so I know what the problem -- you
10 obviously have studied this. So I would just like to get
11 some more data, sir.

12 Senator Donnelly: Thanks, and I look forward to your
13 confirmation.

14 Mr. Mattis: Yes, sir.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator Sasse?

16 Senator Sasse: General, thanks for your past service
17 and for your soon-to-be future service.

18 Could you tell me, do you believe that the U.S.
19 military has a sophisticated, broadly understood cyber
20 doctrine?

21 Mr. Mattis: No. I do not believe so.

22 Senator Sasse: When will we? Can you unpack for us a
23 little bit of the path toward a both offensive and defensive
24 strategy?

25 Mr. Mattis: Because of the cyber domain, Senator, it

1 is not something the military can do in isolation. This is
2 going to require us to work with Homeland Security and a
3 number of other government elements in order to make certain
4 what we do in the military realm is connected to what they
5 are doing in their realm because cyber cuts across
6 everything we do today. And so you cannot do something in
7 isolation, and that slows down the process. Now, I have not
8 been part of it up until now, but I anticipate that is part
9 of the reason why I cannot give you a positive answer right
10 now.

11 Senator Sasse: Thank you, sir. I am one of only about
12 five people in the Senate who has never been a politician
13 before. So I have been here 24 months, and over those 24
14 months, we have consistently heard that we are right around
15 the corner from having a cyber doctrine. Do you think we
16 will in 18 months?

17 Mr. Mattis: Sir, I have got to stoke this problem and
18 figure out what are the issues that have caused us not to
19 have an integrated policy right now. And especially being
20 this is going to take an integrated effort by the executive
21 branch and probably up here on Capitol Hill, there are also
22 perhaps privacy concerns, constitutional concerns as part of
23 this. We are going to have to put all of this together and
24 take it one step at a time and come up with what we think we
25 can do quickly. And I would hope that part of it could be

1 done faster than 18 months from now, but this is a very big
2 issue.

3 Senator Sasse: Thank you.

4 Do you think it is possible that a traditional
5 espionage operation could constitute an act of war? For
6 example, if Russia were to hack and publish U.S. continuity
7 of operation plans, would that be an act of war?

8 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I think I would have to study act
9 of war and the ramifications of making that statement.
10 Generally to me an act of war means we are going to war if
11 it happens. That is a grave decision, and I would not put
12 it on automatic pilot. I would make certain we know where
13 we stand, make certain we know what happened, and then you
14 would have to act appropriately.

15 Senator Sasse: Many of us here are concerned that the
16 public crisis of confidence, the accelerating public
17 distrust is partly related to the perception that
18 governmental responses in the executive branch right now to
19 different foreign hacks are treated differently partly based
20 on the partisan and political assumptions people make about
21 them. If you look back to the OPM hack 18 months ago, we
22 were told that this was a fairly traditional espionage
23 operation, but it seems to me when 22 million, or whatever
24 the exact number is of Americans who have been serving their
25 government, have their information hacked and stolen and

1 potentially leaked, that is not just a traditional espionage
2 operation and certain uses of that data in the future -- we
3 need to countenance what that might mean.

4 Could you tell me, do you believe that the U.S. should
5 be actively deterring these sorts of cyber attacks? And I
6 assume you are going to say yes. Can you tell us a little
7 bit more about what the doctrine of deterrence looks like in
8 the cyber domain?

9 Mr. Mattis: Senator, the answer is yes. And my
10 personal information was part of that leak. So I understand
11 it in rather personal terms.

12 Senator Sasse: Mine too.

13 Mr. Mattis: But I would also tell you that we have got
14 to put together a doctrine that works. I have looked at
15 several different doctrines back when I was on active duty.
16 I looked at nuclear warfare doctrine. Mutual assured
17 destruction will not work, by the way. I came to the
18 conclusion that one was not the right way to go. But we are
19 going to have to come up with the guiding principles for how
20 we are going to deal with this sort of thing, and right now,
21 I cannot give you a good answer.

22 Senator Sasse: I have only a few seconds left. So in
23 closing, could you just tell me a little bit about what you
24 think our human capital pipeline looks like in the
25 cyberspace? Are we prepared for the kinds of battles we are

1 going to be facing going forward?

2 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I think we have to get the best
3 possible people in. This is a complex area that requires
4 technical expertise, and once we get the policy written,
5 that will help us to guide recruiting and organization and
6 that sort of thing. We have got to get the policy right up
7 front.

8 Senator Sasse: Thank you, sir.

9 Chairman McCain: Captain Nelson?

10 Senator Nelson: You take me back a few years, Mr.
11 Chairman.

12 And, Senator Sasse, those were very appropriate and
13 thoughtful questions. And I think this committee is going
14 to have a chance to dig in in depth on a number of those as
15 we explore with the future of Secretary of Defense those
16 questions about cyber.

17 General, I think there are a number of us here that are
18 quite disturbed about the President-elect's attitude toward
19 Vladimir Putin. How do you differ with what the President-
20 elect has expressed about Putin?

21 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I am not sure where it differs.
22 I can tell you that my view of Putin is that he has chosen
23 to be both a strategic competitor, to quote the chairman's
24 opening statement, and an adversary in key areas. I
25 certainly go along with the President-elect saying again he

1 wants to have an engagement there. Even in our worst years
2 of the Cold War, we actually still engaged with the Soviet
3 Union, for example. But I have very modest expectations
4 about areas of cooperation with Mr. Putin.

5 Senator Nelson: What if the President-elect came to
6 some conclusion with Mr. Putin with regard to NATO? Now,
7 you have certainly been involved in that because you were
8 involved in the transitioning of NATO. What would be your
9 advice to the President-elect about the best posture for
10 NATO in the future against the Russians?

11 Mr. Mattis: Senator, if we did not have NATO today, we
12 would need to create it. NATO is vital to our national
13 interest and it is vital to the security of the United
14 States. It is vital to the protection of the freedoms of
15 the democracies that we are allied with.

16 Senator Nelson: I certainly agree. But some comments
17 by the President-elect have said that maybe members of NATO
18 ought to be treated differently if they do not pony up with
19 the money. Does that start to tangle up and disentangle
20 NATO?

21 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I am confident that the
22 President-elect expects us to live up to our word to include
23 NATO in Article 5.

24 Senator Nelson: I hope you are right. And I assume by
25 your answer that you certainly will stand up.

1 Mr. Mattis: 100 percent, Senator.

2 Senator Nelson: Thank you, General.

3 You have commented, General, on the political
4 objectives must be clearly defined to ensure military
5 success in Iraq and Syria. How will your recommendations
6 for pursuing Iraq and Syria differ from the Obama
7 administration?

8 Mr. Mattis: Senator, I think the most important thing
9 is to know, when you go into a shooting war, how you want it
10 to end and by setting up the political conditions that you
11 are out to achieve up front and coming to agreement on that
12 in the national security team and with the Congress. Then
13 you give it full resourcing to get there as rapidly as
14 possible. And I think it is getting there as rapidly as
15 possible is probably where it would differ from the current
16 administration where it would be a more accelerated campaign
17 from what the President-elect has already called for.

18 Senator Nelson: You are a four-star. Do you
19 anticipate any tension with the three-star, General Flynn,
20 in his position?

21 Mr. Mattis: No, sir, I do not.

22 Senator Nelson: Does that mean he will respect your
23 rank?

24 Mr. Mattis: Sir, the national security decision-making
25 process -- as you know, you need different ideas to be

1 strongly argued. You do not want the tyranny of consensus,
2 of group think early. It has been compared in some cabinets
3 to a team of rivals even, and it is actually healthy. It is
4 not tidy. It will be respectful. Of that I am certain.
5 And I do not anticipate that anything but the best ideas
6 will win, sir.

7 Senator Nelson: Thank you, General.

8 Chairman McCain: General Mattis, we are going to move
9 forward right away on the issue of the waiver immediately.
10 We want to thank you for appearing before the committee. I
11 know you eagerly look forward to additional appearances
12 before the committee in the future.

13 [Laughter.]

14 Chairman McCain: So we thank you. Thank you very
15 much, General.

16 This hearing is adjourned.

17 Mr. Mattis: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Ranking
18 Member. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

19 Chairman McCain: And we will in about 1 minute convene
20 the committee on the issue of the Mattis exception
21 legislation. We will just wait just a minute.

22 [Pause.]

23 Chairman McCain: Well, the committee will come to
24 order.

25 And we now proceed to consideration of Senate bill 84--

1 we have a quorum -- to provide for an exception to a
2 limitation against appointment of persons as Secretary of
3 Defense within 7 years of relief from active duty as a
4 regular commissioned officer of the armed forces. The bill,
5 when enacted, will authorize retired General James Mattis to
6 be appointed as Secretary of Defense. A copy of the bill
7 should be before you.

8 Also before you is a copy of section 179 of the
9 recently enacted continuing resolution that provides for
10 expedited consideration of a specifically described bill.
11 S. 84 is the qualifying legislation prescribed in section
12 179 as qualifying legislation. S. 84 is entitled to an
13 expedited procedure that will enable the incoming President
14 to nominate him, for the Senate to give advice and consent
15 for General Mattis to serve as Secretary of Defense,
16 hopefully on the evening of the upcoming inauguration day.

17 I remind our members that this transition of
18 administration takes place once again at a time of war.
19 When President Obama took the oath of office in 2009, he had
20 the distinct advantage to begin his term with Robert Gates
21 as his Secretary of Defense. I believe our next Commander-
22 in-Chief in our Nation will be well served to have James
23 Mattis on duty as Secretary of Defense as early as possible
24 in the new administration.

25 I will invite the ranking member, Senator Reed, to

1 engage in a colloquy to discuss this historic legislation.

2 Nearly 70 years ago, our Nation was also at war and the
3 Congress took the extraordinary action to grant an exception
4 to allow President Truman to appoint General George Marshall
5 as Secretary of Defense. At that time, the Congress stated
6 that granting such an exception should not be repeated.

7 During the hearing Tuesday, we heard from two prominent
8 historians and scholars of civil-military relations, both
9 with significant experience in the Department of Defense.
10 Both of them stated their support for the 7-year cooling off
11 period that is currently in the law, but they also
12 recommended that this committee approve an exception for the
13 second time in 7 decades.

14 Obviously, I support this bill and I ask that all our
15 members approach this extraordinary task with a spirit of
16 bipartisanship that is the hallmark of the Armed Services
17 Committee. I urge you to follow the recommendation of Dr.
18 Hicks on Tuesday, to submit for the record a statement of
19 your views on this extraordinary and historic legislation so
20 that future Senators may understand the context of the
21 action we take today.

22 If there is no objection, I propose that the record of
23 this hearing be left open for member statements for 1 week
24 to allow as many of you as wish to include a statement to do
25 so. Without objection, it is so ordered.

1 I note that we have a hard stop at 3:00 p.m. for all
2 Senators' classified briefing on Russian interference in our
3 election. For that reason, I encourage our members to
4 submit written statements for the record. But as many as
5 would like to speak, an opportunity to do so before we vote
6 on the bill.

7 Finally, I invite the attention of the members to the
8 requirement of section 179 that provides for the expedited
9 consideration of this bill. In order to avail ourselves of
10 the expedited procedure, the bill may not be amended. It is
11 also my preference as chairman to have a full and open
12 consideration of our amendments in committee proceedings,
13 but today I request our members refrain from offering
14 amendments since it is not allowed under the legislation.

15 I do not consider this procedure as establishing a
16 precedent on how this committee will conduct its business.
17 This is an extraordinary time. And I thank all the members
18 for their consideration.

19 Senator Reed?

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

21 I believe our colloquy will be on the floor as we
22 consider the bill.

23 I want to thank you for convening this committee markup
24 to consider S. 84, a bill that would provide a one-time
25 exception from the longstanding law requiring individuals to

1 be at least 7 years relieved from their military service
2 before being appointed Secretary of Defense.

3 I also want to thank you for holding Tuesday's hearing
4 to examine civilian control of the armed forces and the
5 implications waiving the statute would have on civilian-
6 military relations and on the development of defense policy
7 and strategy.

8 I found the testimony from both expert witnesses to be
9 informative, and I believe the hearing helped underscore the
10 gravity of waiving this requirement on civilian control of
11 the military.

12 As we consider this legislation today, we must be
13 extremely careful that we do not irrevocably harm civilian
14 control of the armed forces. As I stated earlier this week,
15 civilian control of the military is enshrined in our
16 Constitution, and we must never take it for granted.

17 I have a number of concerns about changing the
18 statutory requirement, including the possible politicization
19 of our armed forces and the impact with so many recently
20 retired general officers serving at the highest echelons of
21 government will have on the development of national security
22 policy and how that may shape the advice that will be
23 ultimately be provided to the President.

24 Furthermore, I am deeply concerned that providing the
25 waiver to General Mattis, regardless of qualifications and

1 his distinguished military career, will set a dangerous
2 precedent that an exception to the longstanding statute
3 could be construed as an ordinary legislative change to be
4 used frequently for future nominees.

5 Nevertheless, I will support a waiver of General Mattis
6 to serve as the Secretary of Defense based on his testimony
7 this morning, his commitment to civilian leadership, and his
8 military expertise, which I believe will serve him well in
9 addressing the many global challenges we face.

10 However, as history has demonstrated, Congress has
11 enacted an exception one time since the creation of the
12 Department of Defense. Waiving the law should happen no
13 more than once in a generation. Therefore, I will not
14 support a waiver for future nominees, nor will I support any
15 effort to water down or repeal the statute in the future.

16 This requirement has served the Nation well for the
17 past 7 decades. It is up to this committee to ensure that
18 the principle of civilian control of the armed forces, which
19 is the bedrock of civilian-military relations, remains the
20 defining tenet of our democracy.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

23 Any members that would like to make comments at this
24 time, please seek recognition.

25 All right. If there are no further remarks, then I

1 will entertain a motion that the committee report out the
2 bill.

3 Senator Reed: I move.

4 Chairman McCain: Is there a second?

5 Senator Wicker: I second.

6 Chairman McCain: The clerk will call the roll.

7 The Clerk: Mr. Inhofe?

8 Chairman McCain: Aye by proxy.

9 The Clerk: Mr. Sessions?

10 Chairman McCain: Aye by proxy.

11 The Clerk: Mr. Wicker?

12 Senator Wicker: Aye.

13 The Clerk: Mrs. Fischer?

14 Senator Fischer: Aye.

15 The Clerk: Mr. Cotton?

16 Senator Cotton: Aye.

17 The Clerk: Mr. Rounds?

18 Senator Rounds: Aye.

19 The Clerk: Mrs. Ernst?

20 Senator Ernst: Aye.

21 The Clerk: Mr. Tillis?

22 Senator Tillis: Aye.

23 The Clerk: Mr. Sullivan?

24 Senator Sullivan: Aye.

25 The Clerk: Mr. Perdue?

1 Senator Perdue: Aye.
2 The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?
3 Chairman McCain: Aye by proxy.
4 The Clerk: Mr. Graham?
5 Chairman McCain: Aye by proxy.
6 The Clerk: Mr. Sasse?
7 Senator Sasse: Aye.
8 The Clerk: Mr. Reed?
9 Senator Reed: Aye.
10 The Clerk: Mr. Nelson?
11 Senator Nelson: Aye.
12 The Clerk: Mrs. McCaskill?
13 Senator McCaskill: Aye.
14 The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?
15 Senator Reed: Aye by proxy.
16 The Clerk: Mrs. Gillibrand?
17 Senator Gillibrand: No.
18 The Clerk: Mr. Blumenthal?
19 Senator Blumenthal: No.
20 The Clerk: Mr. Donnelly?
21 Senator Donnelly: Aye.
22 The Clerk: Ms. Hirono?
23 Senator Hirono: Aye.
24 The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?
25 Senator Reed: Aye by proxy.

1 The Clerk: Mr. King?

2 Senator King: Aye.

3 The Clerk: Mr. Heinrich?

4 Senator Heinrich: Aye.

5 The Clerk: Mrs. Warren?

6 Senator Warren: No.

7 The Clerk: Mr. Peters?

8 Senator Peters: Aye.

9 The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

10 Chairman McCain: Aye.

11 The Clerk: 24 ayes, 3 nays. The motion is agreed to.

12 Chairman McCain: I thank the members for their
13 cooperation. Hopefully we can get this done before 3
14 o'clock so people who have plans can fulfill those. I want
15 to thank every member for their cooperation.

16 Is there any further business?

17 [No response.]

18 Chairman McCain: If not, this hearing is adjourned.

19 [Whereupon, at 12:42 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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