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Before the

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

**UNITED STATES SENATE**

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON UNITED STATES  
SOUTHERN COMMAND AND UNITED STATES NORTHERN  
COMMAND

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Washington, D.C.

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HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON  
UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND AND  
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Thursday, April 6, 2017

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 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, Graham, Sasse, Reed, 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.

4           Since there is going to be a vote starting at 11:00, I  
5 believe we will try to expedite the process here, and I will  
6 forgo my opening statement except to welcome the witnesses  
7 and ask Senator Reed if he has an opening statement so we  
8 could get right through the witnesses after he completes  
9 that.

10          Senator Reed: I am tempted to say yes, but smart  
11 enough to say no.

12          Would you please include my opening statement in the  
13 record, Mr. Chairman?

14          Chairman McCain: Both moving and important opening  
15 statements will be made part of the record.

16          [The prepared statements of Chairman McCain and Senator  
17 Reed follows:]

18                 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman McCain: Welcome to the witnesses, Admiral  
2 Tidd and General Robinson. Please proceed, General  
3 Robinson.  
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1           STATEMENT OF GENERAL LORI J. ROBINSON, USAF,  
2           COMMANDER, U.S. NORTHERN COMMAND AND COMMANDER, NORTH  
3           AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

4           General Robinson: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking  
5           Member Reed, distinguished members of the committee. I  
6           certainly am honored to be here today, pleased to testify  
7           with my very, very good friend, Admiral Kurt Tidd.

8           North American Aerospace Defense Command and United  
9           States Northern Command are two distinct commands, but they  
10          are unified in a common purpose. Every day, the men and  
11          women of NORAD and USNORTHCOM, soldiers, sailors, airmen,  
12          marines, coast guardsmen, and civilians, Americans and  
13          Canadians, stand ready to defend two great countries, the  
14          United States and Canada.

15          Today our adversaries are seeking ways to extend their  
16          operational reach into North America and to hold us at risk.  
17          The men and women of NORAD and U.S. Northern Command stand  
18          watch, ready to defend against these adversaries. Today we  
19          have a competitive advantage against them.

20          This advantage will not continue in the future,  
21          however, if we continue to operate under continuing  
22          resolutions. I echo the Secretary, the Chairman, the  
23          service chiefs in saying that developing the joint force we  
24          need in the future requires an actual budget this year.  
25          Continuing resolutions do not enable continuity of effort.

1 We need an appropriations bill unrestricted by sequestration  
2 to upgrade our warfighting capabilities against threats to  
3 us here in the homeland.

4 These adversaries include North Korea, where Kim Jung-  
5 un continues his provocative behavior. He has conducted  
6 nearly three times as many ballistic missile tests as his  
7 father and grandfather did combined. North Korea uses what  
8 they learn from each test to make improvements to their  
9 missile capabilities. We are watching them very closely.

10 And we are also watching Iran as it develops a space  
11 program with potential dual-use technology.

12 NORTHCOM is prepared to counter ballistic missiles  
13 should North Korea attempt to launch an attack on the United  
14 States. While I am confident in our ability to defend the  
15 homeland today, we must keep improving. We are working in  
16 close partnership with the Missile Defense Agency to improve  
17 our sensors and the reliability of our ground-based  
18 interceptors.

19 Also today, Russian cruise missiles can reach us from  
20 greater ranges than ever before. No longer do they have to  
21 come close to North American airspace to hold us at risk.  
22 But I am also confident in NORAD's layered approach to  
23 cruise missile defense. But again, we must evolve and we  
24 are doing so as our adversaries' capabilities increase.

25 Senator McCain, at my confirmation hearing, you asked

1 if I had ever visited the southwest border. 1 year later, I  
2 can tell you that I visited our southwest border on foot, by  
3 boat, by air, in a tunnel, and yes, sir, even on horseback.  
4 I have gained an appreciation for the incredible variety of  
5 terrain along the southwest border and how transnational  
6 criminal organizations and their networks can exploit that  
7 terrain.

8 I have also stood with my great friend, Kurt, on the  
9 Guatemalan soil looking north to see firsthand the network  
10 challenges that SEDENA and SEMAR face and what they are  
11 going to strengthen Mexico's southern border.

12 To counter these threat networks, NORTHCOM partners  
13 with law enforcement agencies, SOUTHCOM, other combatant  
14 commands, the intelligence community, military partners such  
15 as SEDENA and SEMAR, all the while supporting Secretary  
16 Kelly's requests. The men and women of NORTHCOM stand  
17 united in a common purpose, ready to face the threats of the  
18 United States and Canada today, and we are evolving to face  
19 the threats of tomorrow. Sir, we have the watch.

20 Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to speak,  
21 and I look forward to your questions.

22 [The prepared statement of General Robinson follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

2 Admiral Tidd?

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1           STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL KURT W. TIDD, USN, COMMANDER,  
2           U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND

3           Admiral Tidd: Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed,  
4           members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to  
5           address you today.

6           I am pleased to be here with my NORTHCOM teammate,  
7           General Lori Robinson. Although we focus on distinctly  
8           different mission sets, our teams work together to keep our  
9           Nation safe from a range of challenges. While General  
10          Robinson and her team are directly responsible for defending  
11          our homeland, SOUTHCOM extends that defense well beyond our  
12          borders throughout our southern approaches.

13          Now, I want to do something a little bit different  
14          today with my opening remarks. I want to tell you a story.  
15          Picture this. We gain information on a group of individuals  
16          who are planning to make their way to the United States.  
17          They are carrying a weapon that will kill dozens of people  
18          and put hundreds more in the hospital. This powerful weapon  
19          will drain millions from our economy in terms of health care  
20          costs, crime, and lost productivity. It is neither high-  
21          tech nor new. We know exactly how dangerous it is. And  
22          this weapon passes freely through our defenses as do  
23          hundreds more just like it.

24          Chairman, members, I tell you this true story to point  
25          out an uncomfortable fact. Those people are members of a

1 threat network, and the weapon that they move today is  
2 drugs. On average, 1 metric ton of cocaine will kill 10  
3 Americans every year and harm hundreds more. Last year, we  
4 watched almost 450 tons pass freely towards our country.  
5 What made it through translates into American lives lost and  
6 illicit profit that fuels instability and violence.

7 Now, I tell you this story focused on drugs today  
8 because it is the scenario on which we have the best  
9 information, but these adaptive threat networks can move  
10 anything. What keeps me up at night is the potential for  
11 even more deadly cargo moving through these networks and  
12 directly into our cities. ISIS has encouraged its followers  
13 to exploit the vulnerability of the pathways leading  
14 directly into the United States in order to move weapons of  
15 mass destruction.

16 To address this challenge, we are changing our approach  
17 to better understand and disrupt the immediate threats. We  
18 are working with our partners to reduce the vulnerabilities  
19 that allow these networks to exist in the first place, and  
20 we are expanding information sharing and building the  
21 capacity of our partners so that they can better secure  
22 their territory against these challenges.

23 Now, today I also look forward to talking to you about  
24 other issues that we are addressing. Extremist networks  
25 like ISIS are radicalizing and recruiting individuals, and

1 they are encouraging them to conduct attacks on U.S. and  
2 partner interests in our region. Russia, China, and Iran  
3 are actively engaging in Latin America. While most of their  
4 activities are not military threats yet, some do warrant  
5 examination.

6 Even seemingly benign activities can build malign  
7 influence. With the peace accord now final in Colombia, a  
8 firm anchor for regional stability and one of our most  
9 trusted partners, Colombia still faces a challenging road  
10 ahead. We continue to stand together in defense of our  
11 shared interests.

12 And lastly, detention operations at Joint Task Force  
13 Guantanamo remain a sensitive and a demanding mission that  
14 our men and women continue to execute with discipline and  
15 professionalism. Now it is time to address the  
16 infrastructure requirements that we have been putting off.  
17 The safety and the security of our troops depend on it.

18 Finally, I would like to thank this committee for its  
19 unwavering support to the men and women both in uniform and  
20 out who serve our country. And I look forward to answering  
21 your questions. Thank you.

22 [The prepared statement of Admiral Tidd follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you very much, Admiral.

2 General Robinson, North Korea tested another medium-  
3 range ballistic missile this week. Kim Jung-un, known to  
4 some as the crazy, fat kid, has stated his intention to test  
5 an ICBM. How confident are you that you can intercept a  
6 North Korean ICBM targeting the homeland?

7 General Robinson: Senator McCain, I am extremely  
8 confident of our capability to defend the United States of  
9 America and be able to intercept an ICBM should it reach our  
10 homeland. Right now, as you know, he cannot reach our  
11 homeland, but I am confident, should he do that.

12 Chairman McCain: Admiral Tidd, your predecessor once  
13 testified before the Homeland Security Committee that he  
14 watches drug trafficking take place, particularly in the  
15 Caribbean, but does not have the equipment and funding  
16 necessary to intercept some of that drug trafficking. What  
17 is your assessment of your ability to intercept and stop  
18 drug trafficking that you can see but do not have the  
19 capability to address?

20 Admiral Tidd: Senator, we continue to have those  
21 shortfalls. We continue to be able to see a significant  
22 amount of traffic heading towards the Central American  
23 peninsula. Unfortunately, we only have the resources to be  
24 able to intercept about 25 percent.

25 Chairman McCain: Would you supply for the record what

1 you need in order to be able to intercept 100 percent?

2 Admiral Tidd: Simply put, more ships, more aircraft.

3 Chairman McCain: Again, would you be a little more  
4 specific?

5 Admiral Tidd: Yes, sir. For the record, we will  
6 provide the exact calculations.

7 [The information follows:]

8 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman McCain: I think we all know that there is an  
2 epidemic of fatalities due to some of these drugs being used  
3 by more and more Americans such as oxycontin, et cetera. So  
4 I think it is even more important now for us to have the  
5 ability to intercept these drug shipments.

6 Are you seeing an increase or decrease or the same?

7 Admiral Tidd: Senator, we are seeing the volume  
8 continuing to go up. We are seeing some significant  
9 improvement on the part of some of our partner nations in  
10 their ability to be able to conduct intercepts. But we  
11 still watch far more go by than we can actually act on.

12 Chairman McCain: The volume of what drugs have you  
13 seen?

14 Admiral Tidd: We are focusing on cocaine. That is  
15 what we principally see because it departs the SOUTHCOM  
16 region and heads north, but we are also aware that these  
17 threat networks that I spoke of previously are also actively  
18 engaged in the movement of precursor chemicals that produce  
19 the other drugs that you mentioned.

20 Chairman McCain: In the NDAA, we called for greater  
21 cooperation with our military assets with our Border Patrol  
22 and other civilian agencies of government. Have we seen any  
23 progress in that area, General Robinson?

24 General Robinson: Sir, I would say we actually have.  
25 In fact, last summer when I went down on the southwest

1 border, I saw Marine Corps ground sensor platoons providing  
2 information to Border Patrol folks. I saw UASs on the  
3 border.

4 Chairman McCain: Drones?

5 General Robinson: Drones on the border providing  
6 intelligence capability, and I watched Army reconnaissance  
7 units --

8 Chairman McCain: Are you satisfied with the level of  
9 the use and cooperative effort, understanding we have posse  
10 comitatus and we do not put our military in direct contact,  
11 but we are utilizing the assets of the military as well as  
12 we could?

13 General Robinson: Sir, we are looking at ways, how can  
14 we continue to maximize our capability and capacity. I am  
15 working very closely with Army North Commander, Jeff  
16 Buchanan, specifically with Fort Huachuca and the drone  
17 capability and capacity there.

18 Chairman McCain: Finally -- and both of you may  
19 answer-- if we continue sequestration, what does that do to  
20 your ability to carry out these responsibilities? I am  
21 specifically speaking about this flood of Mexican  
22 manufactured heroin, opioids, and others that are creating  
23 havoc in some parts of our society. Whichever one. Admiral  
24 Tidd?

25 Admiral Tidd: In our case, anything that restricts the

1 ability of the services to provide forces --

2 Chairman McCain: Yes, but I am talking about  
3 sequestration specifically.

4 Admiral Tidd: Sequestration will further limit the  
5 ability of the services to provide any resources to us.

6 Chairman McCain: General?

7 General Robinson: And, sir, I totally work closely  
8 with the interagency, and so anything that takes away  
9 from --

10 Chairman McCain: I am talking about sequestration  
11 specifically.

12 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

13 Chairman McCain: What are the effects of it on your  
14 ability to carry out your mission?

15 General Robinson: Sir, the President nominated me and  
16 you confirmed me to defend the homeland. If I looked at  
17 what the United States Air Force talks about in their  
18 ability to provide pilot capability, trained, ready pilots  
19 to defend the United States of America and in a year or so,  
20 they will be down 1,000 pilots, will I be able to have the  
21 aircraft availability that I need to.

22 If I look at ballistic missile defense and our ability  
23 to look at long-range discriminating radar and the  
24 capabilities as we move forward, I get concerned that that  
25 will have an effect on that.

1           Those would be two things that I would say to you  
2 specifically.

3           Chairman McCain: Thank you.

4           Senator Reed?

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

6           And thank you, Admiral Tidd and General Robinson, for  
7 your service. And please thank the men and women who every  
8 day support you and support us.

9           Your commands depend significantly on other federal  
10 agencies. You both brought up the issue of drugs  
11 infiltration to the United States. That involves the  
12 Treasury Department in terms of going after the financial  
13 backers that are involved. Obviously, Homeland Security,  
14 the Coast Guard. Those are the ships I think you are  
15 talking about, Admiral, in terms of the more ships you need.  
16 They are not Navy ships. They are Coast Guard ships and  
17 aircraft.

18           We have to reduce the demand. That means health care  
19 in the United States so that someone who has a problem does  
20 not go to the street and get drugs. They go to a health  
21 clinic and get rehabilitation, one hopes.

22           So the point I would ask both Admiral Tidd and General  
23 Robinson is just the essential need to adequately fund and  
24 resources for other agencies that you work with. Is that  
25 essential to your mission? I.e., even if we gave you

1 everything you asked for, if you did not have those other  
2 components, you could not accomplish your mission.

3 Admiral Tidd: Senator, that is correct. Particularly  
4 in the SOUTHCOM region, it is a team effort, and that team  
5 requires significant contributions to be made by the State  
6 Department, by the intelligence community, by our federal  
7 law enforcement agencies. The Department of Homeland  
8 Security is probably our staunchest ally in the work that we  
9 do. As I point out frequently, because of the commitment of  
10 Navy ships to other regions around the world, my Navy in the  
11 SOUTHCOM region all has white hulls and orange stripes. We  
12 could not do our job without the U.S. Coast Guard.

13 Senator Reed: Thank you.

14 And, General Robinson, your comments?

15 General Robinson: Yes, sir. If you go back to Admiral  
16 Tidd's conversation about the networks and understanding  
17 about the commodity on the network, I want to understand  
18 what the commodity is on the network because everything I do  
19 to illuminate it, the disruption part of it comes to other  
20 lead federal agencies, whether it is DHS or CBP or whomever.  
21 And so any cuts that any of those folks take does not allow  
22 that disruption and end game of what happens to the  
23 information that I provide to them. So it is incredibly  
24 important as a team that we bring this together.

25 Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

1           Admiral Tidd, one of the interesting things in your  
2 testimony and in our discussions is the presence of China  
3 and Russia. It is interesting that Russia has built an  
4 international police training facility in Nicaragua so that  
5 they are actively training Nicaraguans. That is a surprise  
6 to me because that used to be sort of a no-go zone. The  
7 only trainers were the United States.

8           But the point is that it comes down to matching and  
9 exceeding that with our IMET program, which is a State  
10 Department program. Is that a fair judgment?

11           Admiral Tidd: Senator, programs like IMET that you  
12 mentioned are critical to our ability to build the  
13 partnerships with the countries throughout the region to  
14 ensure that they have the trained individuals. It also  
15 creates partners who have a profound understanding of the  
16 United States because they come and they spend time in our  
17 schools. It pays enormous dividends. It is an investment  
18 often that does not pay off for 10 or 20 or sometimes 30  
19 years, but it is an incredible investment in future  
20 relationships for our countries.

21           We do watch closely what Russia and China and Iran are  
22 up to. They are countries that are countries of global  
23 concern, and it is important that we pay attention to what  
24 they do here in this theater.

25           Senator Reed: Just a final question, Admiral Tidd, if

1 I could. Venezuela is under huge pressure because of  
2 economics, politics, everything. Can you give us sort of a  
3 sense of the outlook?

4 Admiral Tidd: Senator, the entire region is watching  
5 closely what happens in Venezuela. As you are well aware,  
6 when I mention the word "Venezuela," tomorrow in the  
7 newspapers of Caracas will be stories that USSOUTHCOM is  
8 engaged in operations against Venezuela. Nothing could be  
9 further from the truth, but the reality is that the enormous  
10 economic instability that is taking place in Venezuela  
11 affects the entire region. And the OAS is watching that  
12 very closely and taking very, I think, important action.

13 Senator Reed: And just quickly. Are there Chinese,  
14 Russian interests in Venezuela? Would they take advantage  
15 of that type of disruption?

16 Admiral Tidd: Both countries have significant economic  
17 involvement in Venezuela, and it would be difficult to  
18 imagine that they would not look to take advantage of  
19 further instability in that country.

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

21 Chairman McCain: Senator Inhofe?

22 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 General Robinson, first of all, I am sure that you  
24 developed your horse skills during your tenure as the wing  
25 commander at Tinker Air Force Base. It has obviously come

1 in handy.

2 As I mentioned to you when you were in my office, I  
3 wanted to lay the groundwork for a question that I think is  
4 significant. Before this committee, General David Mann had  
5 said, and this is his quote. He said that there are nearly  
6 30 countries that possess ballistic missile capability.  
7 Together these countries have approximately 50 different  
8 variants of ballistic missiles. Additionally, there are  
9 currently 13 new intermediate-range and 8 intercontinental  
10 ballistic missile variants under development.

11 Now, in 2009, the administration cut the missile  
12 defense budget by \$1.4 billion, and then ultimately  
13 terminated the system that had been set up in both the Czech  
14 Republic and Poland for a ground-based interceptor. They  
15 terminated the multiple-kill vehicle and decreased the  
16 number of ground-based interceptors from 44 to 30.

17 Now, you testified that the MDA is really doing four  
18 things right now. One would be to increase the interceptors  
19 back to 44 from 30; secondly, upgrading the ground system  
20 hardware and software; number three, continuing development  
21 efforts on the re-designed kill vehicle; and number four, to  
22 deploy the long-range radar.

23 Now, my question would be, do you think that these  
24 actions are sufficient to overcome the problems that you and  
25 I talked about and that you mentioned in your opening

1 statement, if you do these things like additional improved  
2 sensors, additional improved ground-based interceptors?  
3 What else needs to be done, or is this enough?

4 General Robinson: Well, sir, first of all, Happy Quail  
5 Breakfast Day. I apologize for not being there.

6 Senator Inhofe: It is our 55th consecutive year I  
7 might add.

8 General Robinson: Yes, sir, I know that, and it is a  
9 wonderful event.

10 I believe the MDA strategy as they have laid out,  
11 improving the sensors for better discrimination, improving  
12 the reliability of the kill vehicle, and then looking at the  
13 number of ground-based interceptors is exactly the strategy  
14 that we should go based on what we see today.

15 Senator Inhofe: And I appreciate that.

16 Admiral Tidd, I think it is safe to say that the under-  
17 resourced commands would be your command and AFRICOM. That  
18 is my opinion. Do you agree with that?

19 Admiral Tidd: I do.

20 Senator Inhofe: If you look at some of the programs --  
21 and Senator Reed mentioned the IMET program. And I often  
22 look at these programs in the under-resourced area of  
23 AFRICOM such as the IMET program, which I have always  
24 thought is great. Once you develop a relationship at that  
25 stage of the careers of individuals, you got them. The

1 obvious point is if we do not do it, China will.

2           Secondly, the foreign military sales and foreign  
3 military financing. Is that something that should be  
4 expanded?

5           So on those two programs, what do you think can be  
6 expanded, and are there any barriers to you from being able  
7 to expand those programs?

8           Admiral Tidd: Senator, I think that the IMET program,  
9 as you describe, is probably one of the single most  
10 important, long-term investments that we can make in  
11 establishing positive, constructive relationships based on  
12 trust with our partners. There is nothing like an officer  
13 coming or a senior enlisted coming and studying in our  
14 schools and living in the United States and experiencing for  
15 themselves all that this country represents to be able to  
16 counteract the sometimes negative messages that they might  
17 see in the international press. And so when we have those  
18 opportunities, they are absolutely priceless. They pay off  
19 because we see time after time after time, particularly  
20 throughout our region, the senior military leaders of many  
21 of the services in the countries have trained in the United  
22 States. They have lived in our country. They know who we  
23 are. And frankly, I think our country and our culture sells  
24 itself. So I cannot place enough value on a program like  
25 IMET. We could always use more.

1           And one of the challenges is it is like most of the  
2 resources allocated based on a regional prioritization, and  
3 SOUTHCOM typically comes in at the bottom of that  
4 prioritization.

5           Senator Inhofe: What about barriers to you improving  
6 these programs?

7           Admiral Tidd: Thus far, we have not run into any other  
8 barriers except that we run out of money.

9           Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10          Chairman McCain: Senator Shaheen?

11          Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12          And thank you both for being here and for your service  
13 to this country.

14          You both mentioned the threats that transnational crime  
15 networks pose to the United States and to global stability  
16 for that matter. And Admiral Tidd, you started out with a  
17 story about drug traffickers, which we have seen very  
18 directly in the State of New Hampshire where the heroin and  
19 opioid epidemic is a huge threat where we have the third  
20 highest overdose rate in the country. And as Senator McCain  
21 pointed out, your predecessor talked about his inability to  
22 be able to intercept some of those traffickers because he  
23 did not have the equipment and the resources to do that.

24          Can you talk about what you are doing currently to work  
25 with authorities in this country to intercept those drug

1 traffickers?

2           Admiral Tidd: I will address the southern most part of  
3 that point, and then I would defer to General Robinson to  
4 address as it comes closer to our border.

5           Because we recognize the shortfall in U.S. platforms  
6 available to conduct the detection and monitoring mission,  
7 that is one of the reasons why we have shifted our focus  
8 from exclusively on the commodity itself to a focus on the  
9 networks that engage in the trafficking, thinking that if we  
10 can focus on those networks and find the areas where the  
11 networks overlap and then working with partner nations so  
12 that their law enforcement or their military or, in some  
13 cases, our U.S. federal law enforcement agencies have the  
14 authorities to be able to engage in that end game, we use  
15 our abilities to build the picture and then to share that  
16 picture in a way that can be used by those with the  
17 authorities to be able to conduct the disruption action.

18           We think that by building a stronger interagency team  
19 that we will be able to apply pressure across the length and  
20 the breadth of the networks, recognizing that we may not  
21 directly touch the networks that are directly responsible  
22 for the movement of the opioids that are wreaking such havoc  
23 in your State but that any pressure that we apply across  
24 these networks will have a beneficial effect across the  
25 length and breadth.

1           General Robinson:  So, ma'am, you heard Admiral Tidd  
2 talk about that.  One thing I think that is incredibly  
3 important for you and this committee to know, that Admiral  
4 Tidd and I meet about every other month to sit down and  
5 discuss what he just talked about.  So the information that  
6 he has and that he is sharing with the lead federal agencies  
7 with his partner nations is the same information that I am  
8 sharing.  So as we stood in Guatemala and the river that  
9 defined the barrier between Guatemala and Mexico, that  
10 information does not stop at that river.

11           And so if you think about it then as a larger network,  
12 the things that he shares with my staff and my folks,  
13 whether it is intel sharing at border points, whether it is  
14 building partnership capacity to help partner nations, or  
15 whether it is direct linkages with Border Patrol and DHS,  
16 that information that he gets, that I get, that I provide  
17 either to lead federal agencies or partner nations so that  
18 they can take care of business at the end game.

19           And so this relationship between the two of us is very  
20 strong, and we have a third partner that we bring into it,  
21 General Tony Thomas of Special Operations Command, to talk  
22 to us what is happening overseas to help inform that larger  
23 network.

24           Senator Shaheen:  The National Guard has a counter-drug  
25 task force that has provided critical support to law

1 enforcement in New Hampshire. Do you all work with that  
2 counter-drug task force with the Guard as well?

3 General Robinson: Ma'am, we work very closely with the  
4 Guard. And so the information that we get that I provide to  
5 lead federal agencies goes out to other agencies throughout  
6 the States.

7 Senator Shaheen: And when you and I met yesterday --  
8 and I appreciated the opportunity to sit down with you --  
9 one of the things we talked about was the northern border  
10 and the fact that what we have seen in New Hampshire is that  
11 there are some drugs going back and forth across our  
12 northern border as well, and I think that is less well  
13 known.

14 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am. And, again, I would  
15 say, as I mentioned yesterday, we have a very close  
16 relationship with the lead federal agencies in Canada as  
17 well with us. So that information not just stops at our  
18 southern border, but also goes to our northern border to  
19 share with our partners there.

20 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

21 Just quickly. I am almost out of time, but I know you  
22 talked yesterday and again today in response to Senator  
23 Inhofe about sensors and kill vehicles and the need to  
24 continue with those programs. Are there any other  
25 improvements that you think we should take in order to

1 address missile defense given North Korea's rising  
2 capabilities?

3 General Robinson: Ma'am, I think we are on a very  
4 good, solid track where we are going and the strategy that  
5 we have today. Again, I would urge for a budget to have  
6 predictability so we can keep on that track.

7 Senator Shaheen: I agree. Thanks very much.

8 Chairman McCain: Senator Rounds?

9 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10 Admiral Tidd and General Robinson, first of all, let me  
11 thank you both for your service to our country.

12 General Robinson, on page 12 of your statement, you say  
13 the increased standoff capability, low altitude, and small  
14 radar signature of cruise missiles make defending against  
15 them a technical and operational challenge. Yet, in the  
16 very next sentence, you say I am confident in a layered  
17 approach provided by our family of systems to conduct cruise  
18 missile defense.

19 What is this layered family of systems that we would be  
20 using in cruise missile defense? And if you could describe  
21 those family members for me, please.

22 General Robinson: Sir, I would tell you it comes on  
23 two approaches. If you look on the northern approach from  
24 Russia over Canada and Alaska, we are doing an analysis of  
25 alternatives to upgrade the radars that are there so that we

1 can be able to detect, track, identify, and if necessary,  
2 engage at ranges to defend Canada and the United States.

3 Senator Rounds: These are land-based radar systems.

4 General Robinson: Sir, right now they are, but what I  
5 have done from a requirements process is defined, hey, I  
6 want to be able to do that at ranges to defend. I do not  
7 want to just say upgrade my radar because then you do not  
8 allow the people that think differently or different ways to  
9 look at that problem. So that is from the northern  
10 approach.

11 Now here in the National Capital Region is the first  
12 part where we have sensors and capability here in the  
13 National Capital Region. If I go back out and then I look  
14 at my F-16's with the AESA radars and the ability to use  
15 them to be able to detect at longer ranges, we can do that.

16 Senator Rounds: These are found in Block 50's?

17 General Robinson: Yes, sir. I think it is Block 50's.  
18 All I have asked for the requirement is to be AESA radars.  
19 So we can be able to detect at ranges but, most importantly,  
20 sir, to be able to identify at ranges to be able to defend  
21 the National Capital Region.

22 And then the last part of the layer for phase one is to  
23 what kind of radar or what kind of capability can I get to  
24 be able to look at longer ranges out over the eastern part  
25 of the United States and the ocean to be able to detect at

1 even longer.

2 So those are some of the layers that I talk about.

3 As we go further, phase two and three is now more part  
4 of the country.

5 Senator Rounds: I understand.

6 You did not mention the F-15C models. Do they play  
7 into the when defending against the cruise missile threat?

8 General Robinson: The F-15's? Yes, sir, they play  
9 into defending where in the United States. Yes, sir.

10 Senator Rounds: My understanding is that there is a  
11 possibility that we will be looking at perhaps reducing the  
12 number of F-15C's due to the increasing costs of maintaining  
13 the structural integrity of that aircraft between now and  
14 the year 2020. Is that figured into your plans?

15 General Robinson: Sir, from the conversations that I  
16 have had with the Air Force, which have been very small, I  
17 know that that is something they are looking at. Obviously,  
18 my voice would come into this to make sure that we have  
19 enough capacity to defend the United States from an air  
20 threat.

21 Senator Rounds: What is the split between the number  
22 of F-15's that you have available versus the current number  
23 of Block 50 or the F-16's that have the appropriate radar in  
24 them today?

25 General Robinson: Sir, I do not have that number. I

1 will take it for the record.

2 Senator Rounds: Would you please?

3 General Robinson: Yes, sir, I will.

4 [The information follows:]

5 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1           Senator Rounds: I am just curious. Is there a plan in  
2 place to begin using F-35A's in the middle of this for this  
3 particular defense system?

4           General Robinson: Sir, I know as the Air Force brings  
5 the F-35's on board, that will be a conversation that we  
6 will have, making sure that I have the right capability and  
7 the right capacity to defend in the air domain.

8           Senator Rounds: The reason that I ask is it appears to  
9 me that this is one of the more serious threats that we have  
10 with air-launched cruise missiles. The second part is you  
11 have currently got F-15's and apparently there is some  
12 concern about their long-term viability. Your F-16's, which  
13 you have right now -- you have got Block 30's, Block 40's  
14 and some Block 50's I understand.

15          General Robinson: Yes, sir.

16          Senator Rounds: The Block 40's which we have in South  
17 Dakota may very well be -- if properly equipped with the  
18 appropriate radar, may very well be stand-in or at least be  
19 capable of handling part of that as the F-15's go on.

20          I guess I am getting back down to is that part of the  
21 discussion that you are having, or are we not that far  
22 along?

23          General Robinson: We are not that far along. The Air  
24 Force I think is just looking into that. And as I can tell  
25 you, sir, I will assure you my voice will be a part of that

1 conversation because of the importance of defending in the  
2 air domain the United States. And those are the  
3 capabilities that I use.

4 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

5 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

6 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 Chairman McCain: Senator Peters?

8 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 And thank you to our witnesses. I appreciate, Admiral  
10 Tidd and General Robinson, your patriotism and your work in  
11 a very difficult job, and you do it with distinction. Thank  
12 you so much.

13 First, Admiral Tidd, I want to have you kind of  
14 elaborate a little more on a point that you brought up to a  
15 question that Senator Reed asked related to the U.S. Coast  
16 Guard. In addition, to serving on this committee, I am the  
17 ranking member of a subcommittee that oversees the Coast  
18 Guard and am very concerned, as I know you have expressed,  
19 with some potential budget cuts for the Coast Guard.

20 So I would like you to elaborate a little more on what  
21 I think is a very powerful statement that you made that your  
22 Navy has white hulls and orange stripes, as to the impact  
23 that the Coast Guard has. So certainly we need to protect  
24 their resources so they continue to execute that mission.  
25 But I would like you to go a step further as to what

1 additional resources do you think would be necessary for  
2 them to enhance their capabilities to support you.

3         You have talked in your testimony about how this  
4 maritime border is certainly one that we have to pay a great  
5 deal of attention to, and perhaps our discussion should not  
6 be about defending funding for the Coast Guard. It should  
7 be about additional resources they need or could use to  
8 supplement the great work that you are doing now.

9         Admiral Tidd: Well, Senator, obviously, I would defer  
10 to the expertise of the Commandant of the Coast Guard in  
11 terms of building the plan that would be required. But as I  
12 have said before, because of higher priority commitments for  
13 U.S. Navy warships in other parts of the world, the U.S.  
14 Coast Guard has surged additional capacity, almost doubling  
15 the number of cutters devoted to the USSOUTHCOM region. I  
16 know that that is a challenging responsibility that they are  
17 shouldering. And so we are very concerned that we are  
18 already shorthanded in the number of ships that we have  
19 available on the high seas and the Caribbean and in the  
20 eastern Pacific to be able to deal with the known cases of  
21 movement along those pathways. And so my concern is that  
22 the Coast Guard be able to continue to meet the commitments  
23 that they have established.

24         Senator Peters: Well, I appreciate that.

25         In your written testimony, you discussed as well the

1 impact of your Navy ships in the area, and you talk about  
2 exploring nontraditional alternatives to fill these  
3 requirements until more littoral combat ships are in the  
4 fleet.

5       Could you describe some of these nontraditional  
6 alternatives and also explain how they may compare to the  
7 capabilities of the littoral combat ship?

8       Admiral Tidd: Not having yet had the luxury of having  
9 a littoral combat ship down in our region, I cannot tell you  
10 exactly how it would compare. But what we are trying to do  
11 is sensors on other types of platforms that come down there  
12 to be able to share information, working very closely with  
13 our partner nations, ensuring that they have the capability  
14 to be able to be out and to operate in the seas. We have  
15 tremendous support provided by other countries that also  
16 have interest in the region. For instance, France, the  
17 Netherlands, and Canada all periodically provide warships  
18 that contribute to that mission.

19       But I very much look forward to the arrival of the  
20 first littoral combat ships in our theater. I think they  
21 have capabilities that are ideally suited for the theater  
22 that we are talking about.

23       Senator Peters: Very good.

24       And, General Robinson, also talking about Coast Guard  
25 assets but in the area of responsibility that you have,

1 which is the Arctic, and the receding ice and the opening up  
2 of those sea lanes and the very significant Russian presence  
3 that exists up there. Could you speak a little bit about  
4 the importance of the U.S. Coast Guard in the Arctic region  
5 and how assets certainly cannot be reduced? In fact, we  
6 should be thinking about having a larger presence to counter  
7 a growing Russian presence.

8 General Robinson: Sir, I would tell you that the Coast  
9 Guard presence in the Arctic is very important. If you  
10 recall, last summer, the cruise ship, Crystal Serenity, that  
11 went through for the first time having a cruise ship go  
12 through the Arctic, it talks about the need for the Coast  
13 Guard there in the Arctic. So I certainly support the Coast  
14 Guard and all their endeavors to be a part of that.

15 Senator Peters: Great. Thank you very much.

16 Chairman McCain: Senator Ernst?

17 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Admiral. Thank you both for  
18 being here, Admiral Tidd, General Robinson. Thank you so  
19 much for the great work that you are doing on behalf of  
20 NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM.

21 Admiral Tidd, I will start with you and want to thank  
22 you. I see that the great State of Iowa has been able to  
23 provide yet a second sergeant major to SOUTHCOM. We are  
24 pleased that you are both here with us.

25 I did appreciate meeting with you last week -- last

1 month. Excuse me. We had a very good conversation. And  
2 during that conversation, you brought up the fact that you  
3 have seen more activities from the Russians. You mentioned  
4 that just a little bit earlier, as well as some other  
5 countries. You stated that it may not be with a military  
6 bent, but that there were some other activities that they  
7 were engaging in. Can you enlighten us as to the types of  
8 activities you are seeing from the Russians and why that  
9 would be of a national security interest to us?

10 Admiral Tidd: Thank you, Senator.

11 We have seen the deployment of ships, particularly  
12 frequent deployment of intelligence collection ships, that  
13 we know operate frequently on the east coast of the United  
14 States and then spend time down in the Caribbean. We have  
15 seen periodically the deployment of long-range aviation that  
16 comes down and spends a bit of time down in our theater.

17 But probably of greater long-term concern is the very  
18 aggressive arms sales programs where Russia is down and  
19 talking with our traditional partners and attempting to  
20 displace the United States as the partner of choice.

21 And then the part that I think is most troubling is we  
22 see they are engaged in a very aggressive misinformation  
23 campaign, basically peddling the story that the United  
24 States is not a reliable partner in Latin America, that we  
25 are not interested in the region, and that we are

1 withdrawing from the region. It is troubling because of  
2 resource constraints that we have had and the requirement  
3 for the number of forces available in our theater. As that  
4 has declined, that plays directly into that narrative that  
5 Russia has been peddling.

6 So these are relationships that we have with strong  
7 partners, and it is just up to us to be able to prove that  
8 we are the partner of choice.

9 Senator Ernst: So not only do we need to maintain a  
10 presence there, but we also need to reinforce our own  
11 message to those areas.

12 Admiral Tidd: Absolutely.

13 Senator Ernst: Admiral Tidd, in February of 2017, the  
14 Associated Press reported that Trinidad and Tobago has  
15 become the largest per capita source of ISIS recruits in the  
16 western hemisphere. And according to the report, as many as  
17 125 fighters have traveled from the island to ISIS-  
18 controlled areas over the past 4 years.

19 So are you concerned about the rise of ISIS in  
20 SOUTHCOM?

21 Admiral Tidd: Senator, we are very concerned. There  
22 is, I think, a tendency often to think that ISIS is only  
23 present in the Middle East or North Africa, and the reality  
24 is ISIS is present here in the western hemisphere.

25 You cited the case of foreign fighters that have gone

1 over to Iraq and Syria to fight. Obviously, we are very  
2 concerned about the return of those fighters. But what has  
3 become more troubling is an active effort on the part of  
4 ISIS to communicate to radicalized individuals telling them  
5 stay home and conduct attacks in your home countries against  
6 your countries and the United States and our interests in  
7 this region. So you cited Trinidad and Tobago, but that is  
8 not the only country where we know that there is a presence  
9 of radicalized individuals to whom the ISIS message is very  
10 appealing, and I think it is an area that we have to pay  
11 close attention.

12 Our counter-network approach that we are applying  
13 enables us to recognize this presence of ISIS in the  
14 theater when previously, when we focused exclusively on  
15 commodities, oftentimes we focused more on the criminal  
16 networks and did not pay attention to the fact that there  
17 are also terrorist networks as well.

18 Senator Ernst: So those terrorist networks -- they  
19 understand those pathways that are being used by various  
20 cartels and so forth, moving goods into the NORTHCOM area.  
21 Do you think those could be exploited then by those  
22 terrorist organizations?

23 Admiral Tidd: ISIS, in one of the recent issues of  
24 Dabiq magazine, communicates directly in English language to  
25 radicalized individuals to attempt to exploit those pathways

1 into the United States. So we have to assume that they are  
2 going to try.

3 Senator Ernst: Those that are fighting in Iraq and  
4 Syria -- how are they able to reach back into the Caribbean  
5 and radicalize the folks there? What do you think is the  
6 primary means of communication?

7 Admiral Tidd: I think it is Internet. It is by cyber  
8 means.

9 Senator Ernst: And cyber is something that you believe  
10 we should pay attention to then.

11 Admiral Tidd: I think we all recognize that it is a  
12 domain that must bear increasing attention.

13 Senator Ernst: Absolutely. I appreciate that.

14 And then do you think we are doing enough to counter  
15 ISIS's recruiting efforts in the SOUTHCOM region?

16 Admiral Tidd: That is probably one of the areas of  
17 greatest work that we are engaged in. In order to work with  
18 our partner nations and in our discussions with them, they  
19 now recognize that they must pay attention to the  
20 radicalization phenomenon. We all, I think, had a wakeup  
21 call with the attacks that occurred in Paris, in Brussels,  
22 but also in San Bernardino and in Orlando that individuals  
23 can become radicalized and can conduct horrific attacks.  
24 And so it is up to all of us to work together, exchange  
25 information, and attempt to remove the conditions that lead

1 to radicalization.

2 Senator Ernst: Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank  
3 you.

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5 Chairman McCain: Before I call on Senator King, I just  
6 want to make it clear to everyone, Admiral Tidd, if we are  
7 really serious about addressing this issue of flow of drugs  
8 into the United States of America that Senator Shaheen has  
9 described as so dramatically affecting her State, that we  
10 need to provide the assets. It is not something that is a  
11 mystery. Is that right? If we want to be far more  
12 effective, you would need the assets in order to do that.  
13 Is that correct?

14 Admiral Tidd: Senator, that is correct.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator King?

16 Senator King: Thank you for asking my first question,  
17 Mr. Chairman.

18 [Laughter.]

19 Senator King: Admiral Tidd, your opening statement was  
20 very powerful and also disturbing, powerful because you  
21 describe this in terms of an attack, and that is what it is.  
22 It is an attack on our country. And to talk about the  
23 numbers, since we have been sitting here, four people have  
24 died of overdoses in the United States. It is about four an  
25 hour, 37,000 people a year, 1 a day in my State of Maine.

1 It is absolutely unacceptable to know that that is happening  
2 and to couple it with your testimony that you are only able  
3 to interdict 25 percent of the shipments you know of because  
4 of a lack of resources in the Coast Guard. And couple that  
5 with a proposed 15 percent cut in the Coast Guard budget, I  
6 just do not know how we can possibly turn a blind eye to the  
7 implications of this.

8 I just want you to reiterate. Your testimony was that  
9 you are only able to interdict 25 percent of shipments you  
10 know of because of a lack of essentially Coast Guard assets.  
11 Is that correct?

12 Admiral Tidd: Senator, it is due to a lack of any  
13 surface assets, whether it is U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard,  
14 partner nations. I mean, it is a shortfall of platforms  
15 that are capable of conducting intercepts on tracks that we  
16 know are out there.

17 Senator King: And so a cut in the Coast Guard budget,  
18 which would further constrain the provision of those assets,  
19 would not be in the national interest. Would it?

20 Admiral Tidd: Senator, all I will say is I am  
21 absolutely dependent on the Coast Guard to conduct the  
22 operations that we are able to conduct.

23 Senator King: And there are not sufficient assets  
24 today. Is that correct?

25 Admiral Tidd: That is correct.

1           Senator King: Thank you. Your answer was very  
2 diplomatic.

3           General Robinson, let us go to missile defense. You  
4 testified you have confidence in the missile defense  
5 structure that we have today, but we do not live in a static  
6 world. The North Koreans just in the last few months have  
7 gone from liquid fuel to solid fuel, which drastically cuts  
8 our warning time. Are we continuing to develop our  
9 capability, and what are the gaps? Where should we be  
10 focusing in order to strengthen our nuclear defense system?

11           General Robinson: Sir, thank you for that.

12           As you so rightly said, our lack of indications of  
13 warning is increasing. And so as we look to the future how  
14 do we ensure not just that but then when something launches  
15 to make sure that we have the right radar in the right  
16 place.

17           Senator King: And discrimination in radar is also --

18           General Robinson: You took the words right out of my  
19 mouth. I was going to talk about the ability to ensure that  
20 we have discrimination as we move to the future. So when  
21 you talk about our radars, it is to ensure that we have  
22 discrimination and ensure that we have an architecture that  
23 today is terrestrial, but tomorrow or maybe even more in the  
24 future will move to space. And so those are the things that  
25 we need to continue looking as we move to the future is

1 ensuring we have got the right radar at the right place at  
2 the right capability and with reliable kill vehicles.

3 Senator King: So if you were granted a billion dollars  
4 to spend in this area, do you I take it that radar and  
5 particularly the discrimination radar would be where you  
6 would go first?

7 General Robinson: That is where I would go first, sir.

8 Senator King: Thank you.

9 General, do you have any idea offhand an approximate  
10 number of Russian icebreakers that they have available in  
11 the Arctic region?

12 General Robinson: No, sir, I do not. But I know they  
13 have more than we do.

14 Senator King: If I said it was a low of 17 and a high  
15 of 40, would that sound reasonable?

16 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

17 Senator King: And how many icebreakers do we have  
18 available?

19 General Robinson: I believe it is one.

20 Senator King: One and a half.

21 General Robinson: Okay, 1.5.

22 Senator King: But the one that we have actually  
23 transits between Antarctica and the Arctic. Is that not  
24 correct?

25 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

1           Senator King: So the icebreakers, the essential  
2 infrastructure of the Arctic region, is the road builder in  
3 effect.

4           General Robinson: Yes, sir.

5           Senator King: And this is a place where we really are  
6 in a serious deficit situation. And the prior  
7 administration proposed the additional building of one  
8 icebreaker, but that is still a long way off.

9           But do you see this as an important priority even  
10 though this would not be a naval asset but probably be a  
11 Coast Guard asset? But it is one that is crucial to our  
12 future in the Arctic. Is it not?

13          General Robinson: Sir, I absolutely support the Coast  
14 Guard's endeavors to bring more icebreakers to the Arctic.  
15 As you suggested, it is a pathway for them.

16          Senator King: And one of the things that you are  
17 seeing in your command is a significant Russian buildup of  
18 military assets along their shore of the Arctic.

19          General Robinson: Sir, I have seen their buildup.  
20 What I have also seen is Russian long-range aviation that  
21 comes east of the Urals that often does out-of-area flights  
22 that are in my AOR.

23          Senator King: And that is another threat. We talked  
24 prior about the North Korean threat, but that is another  
25 threat that is -- particularly that is the NORAD mission.

1 Is it not?

2 General Robinson: Yes, sir. You are exactly correct,  
3 defending the airspace both for the United States and Canada  
4 from the air domain.

5 Senator King: And a final short question. We have a  
6 seamless cooperation and agreement, arrangement, and working  
7 relationship with the Canadians in terms of NORAD?

8 General Robinson: Absolutely, sir. It is a bi-  
9 national command.

10 Senator King: Thank you.

11 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

12 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman McCain: Senator Perdue?

14 Senator Perdue: Thank you, Chairman. And I really  
15 appreciate you bringing both these combatant commanders  
16 together.

17 I have a particular concern about what Russia is doing  
18 in our hemisphere. I have a quick question for both of you.

19 When you look at Russia -- how they bracketed Europe  
20 with their facilities in Murmansk, Kaliningrad, Crimea, now  
21 Tortus and Latakia, I see them attempting to do the same  
22 thing here. So the Arctic, which was just mentioned -- it  
23 looks like to me they have opened up a new Arctic command.  
24 They have got four Arctic BCTs they have now assigned up  
25 there. They have got 16 deep water ports north of the

1 Arctic, 40 icebreakers, plus 11 more on order, and we are  
2 down to one and a half icebreakers. I would like to know  
3 what your assessment -- first of all, do you agree with that  
4 assessment, General? And what is our -- that you can talk  
5 about here -- what is our tactical response to that buildup  
6 in the Arctic?

7 General Robinson: So, sir, I would agree with your  
8 assessment. What I would tell you about response -- I will  
9 parse it in a couple of different bins.

10 First, as we watch the Russians come east of the Urals  
11 in the air domain, I ensure on my NORAD side that I have the  
12 right capability and capacity with adequate indications and  
13 warnings to make sure that we can defend Canada and the  
14 United States, specifically Alaska. So in the air domain, I  
15 do that.

16 From a policy perspective, at the end of 2016, the  
17 Department policy put out an Arctic strategy, and that  
18 Arctic strategy talked about ensuring security, promoting  
19 safety, and promoting defense cooperation.

20 Senator Perdue: I am sorry. Do we have an Arctic  
21 command today?

22 General Robinson: No, sir. My job as the Commander of  
23 Northern Command is to provide -- I am the advocate for  
24 Arctic capabilities. That is what I do. But I am in the  
25 process of writing a strategic estimate for the Arctic where

1 I will be able to talk about theater security cooperation,  
2 talk about capabilities, and then kind of put my role out  
3 there with --

4 Senator Perdue: Will you share that with the  
5 committee?

6 General Robinson: I will when we are done. In fact,  
7 we should probably be done this fall, and I would be happy  
8 to share that estimate with you.

9 Senator Perdue: Thank you.

10 Admiral, in the Southern Command likewise -- and this  
11 is not a recent development. And it looks to me it is very  
12 obvious what Russia is trying to do here. They are  
13 bracketing us. They are already playing in our elections  
14 the same way they are playing in cyber warfare in Eastern  
15 Europe.

16 In Latin America between 2001 and 2013, Russia sold  
17 Latin America \$15 billion worth of arms. That is about 40  
18 percent of what was sold in the region. When I look at what  
19 they are doing with Nicaragua particularly -- oh, and  
20 between 2008 and 2011 -- I did not know this. If you look  
21 at what Russia sold, they have sold more than 3,000 surface-  
22 to-air missiles to the region, just in that 3-year period.

23 In the last couple of years, particularly since 2014,  
24 in Nicaragua alone 50 combat tanks, an established ground  
25 station for a Russian satellite network, and they are

1 talking about Russian-made fighter jets now to add to their  
2 fleet. And as was reported last week in TASS, they are  
3 announcing joint military drills together in Nicaragua. I  
4 find this to be very destabilizing.

5 Do you agree with that assessment? And if so, what is  
6 our response to Russia specifically in Nicaragua and  
7 Venezuela relative to the fact that we have got troubled  
8 governments there anyway? How do we manage the diplomatic  
9 development and defense efforts in that area specifically  
10 relating to what Russia is doing?

11 Admiral Tidd: Well, Senator, I think the first  
12 responsibility we have is to pay attention to it and not to  
13 ignore it and to ensure that if we are concerned about what  
14 Russia is engaged in in Eastern Europe, that we pay at least  
15 as much attention to what they are engaged in in our own  
16 hemisphere.

17 As you point out, they have got historic relationships  
18 going back to the era of the Soviet Union with Nicaragua and  
19 with Cuba. They have developed them with Venezuela. They  
20 are one of the largest suppliers of high capability arms to  
21 Venezuela. So it is very troubling that as they establish  
22 themselves and become I suppose both the arms supplier but  
23 also having greater influence in those two countries right  
24 close to our own Nation, that ought to be a matter of some  
25 concern. We have to continue to pay attention to it.

1           Our relationships with the countries in Latin America  
2 is strong, but they are relationships that must be tended  
3 to. We must continue to engage and we must continue to  
4 demonstrate not just by words but also by our action, our  
5 engagement, that we are reliable partners.

6           Senator Perdue: Thank you both.

7           Chairman, General Milley this week said that the lack  
8 of a budget and the potential danger of going to a CR  
9 bordered on professional malpractice. And I want you two  
10 combatant commanders to know that at least one Senator here  
11 agrees with that 100 percent.

12           I do not fully understand what a CR does to tie your  
13 hands in terms of moving money back and forth, but I take  
14 you at your word that it totally limits you from doing that.  
15 That to me is more dangerous than the total number. And so  
16 for one, I am standing firm with the chairman here that this  
17 is the most dangerous thing that we are facing right now.

18           General Mattis said earlier this year that the debt was  
19 the greatest threat in the national security. Well, here is  
20 where the rubber meets the road. And I want to pledge to  
21 both of you guys my personal full support to do whatever we  
22 can to make sure that we avoid that debacle.

23           Thank you, Chairman.

24           Chairman McCain: Senator Warren?

25           Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1           And thank you, Admiral Tidd and General Robinson for  
2 being here and for your leadership.

3           I just want to quickly underline a point that was  
4 raised by Senator King and Senator Reed, and that is about  
5 the importance of our non-military foreign assistance and  
6 other civilian instruments of our national power to your  
7 missions.

8           So is it accurate to say that you work with the State  
9 Department, the Department of Homeland Security, and other  
10 civilian agencies in efforts to maintain security and  
11 stability in your regional areas of responsibility? General  
12 Robinson?

13           General Robinson: Yes, ma'am.

14           Senator Warren: Thank you.

15           And Admiral Tidd?

16           Admiral Tidd: Absolutely.

17           Senator Warren: You know, the budget proposal put out  
18 by the Trump administration calls for about a 29 percent cut  
19 to the State Department and significant cuts to FEMA and  
20 other domestic agencies. I just want to ask in general,  
21 would funding cuts to agencies that conduct diplomacy,  
22 provide disaster relief, and perform other civilian  
23 functions make your job easier or make your job more  
24 difficult? General Robinson?

25           General Robinson: It would make it more difficult,

1 ma'am.

2 Senator Warren: And Admiral Tidd?

3 Admiral Tidd: More difficult.

4 Senator Warren: Thank you. I agree.

5 Admiral Tidd, I want to turn back, if I can, to  
6 something you said last year. In your posture statement,  
7 you expressed concern about economic conditions and  
8 persistent threats to people's safety that caused the mass  
9 migration of unaccompanied children from El Salvador,  
10 Guatemala, and Honduras back in 2014. Are you still  
11 concerned about these underlying factors?

12 Admiral Tidd: We think that we must continue to pay  
13 attention to the push factors. Insecurity in Central  
14 America is a significant push factor.

15 Senator Warren: But are you worried about the gangs  
16 and other criminal networks that take advantage of these  
17 conditions to be able to recruit and to stay in business?

18 Admiral Tidd: Yes, we are.

19 Senator Warren: And do you think that lack of security  
20 and economic opportunity provide an opening for some of our  
21 adversaries to exert influence in these areas?

22 Admiral Tidd: I think we are seeing that in a number  
23 of countries in Central America.

24 Senator Warren: So let me ask you, Admiral Tidd. What  
25 more should the United States Government be doing to address

1 these underlying conditions?

2 Admiral Tidd: I think the efforts to provide some  
3 limited resources that are available in the case of  
4 Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, for them to develop a  
5 regional solution to a regional problem is very important.  
6 A very high bar condition has been set for them to receive  
7 those resources, but I think we must be realistic and we  
8 must help them achieve those standards because it is  
9 ultimately in all of our interests that they achieve them.

10 Senator Warren: And this is something you are working  
11 on now actively?

12 Admiral Tidd: Senator, it is.

13 Senator Warren: I appreciate it.

14 And I also want to note that in your posture statement  
15 last year, you thanked Congress for funding the State  
16 Department and USAID to implement the U.S. strategy for  
17 engagement in Central America to help address these root  
18 causes of migration.

19 There has been a lot of talk about how to address  
20 unlawful immigration. By itself the tallest wall in the  
21 world will not help us if we choke off funding for non-  
22 military strategies to address the root causes of migration  
23 from Central America. And I think that would be bad for  
24 regional stability and for our security.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman McCain: Senator Wicker?

2 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Admiral Tidd, you state that the southern border should  
4 be the last line of defense not the first. Given the  
5 diminishing Navy presence dedicated to Southern Command, is  
6 the Coast Guard an increasingly valuable partner as a  
7 forward line of defense?

8 Admiral Tidd: Sir, you know, we also talk about there  
9 is a third border, and that is the maritime border up  
10 through the Caribbean. And the Coast Guard right now is the  
11 principal U.S. maritime force that is present in the  
12 Caribbean.

13 Senator Wicker: And I think they do a good job for  
14 you.

15 Your testimony states that SOUTHCOM lacks the forces  
16 necessary to interdict about 75 percent of identified and  
17 validated drug trafficking targets. A successful  
18 interdiction requires two things: an end game asset, a boat  
19 or a helicopter, to stop the trafficker, and law enforcement  
20 authority to make the arrest. Does the Coast Guard's new  
21 national security cutter have these two attributes?

22 Admiral Tidd: Senator, they do. The national security  
23 cutters are a superb platform, very capable, and frankly,  
24 they also have the sea-keeping abilities to operate in the  
25 eastern Pacific further offshore where the vast majority of

1 the trafficking is occurring today. And so they are very  
2 valuable platforms.

3 Senator Wicker: A U.S. national security cutter  
4 recently seized 16 tons of cocaine worth \$400 million. In  
5 fact, the Coast Guard has reportedly seized about 100 metric  
6 tons of cocaine, about \$3 billion worth since its first  
7 operational deployment.

8 Do these national security cutters arguably pay for  
9 themselves in this regard?

10 Admiral Tidd: Senator, I would never turn down an  
11 additional national security cutter operating in the  
12 SOUTHCOM region.

13 Senator Wicker: One other thing. Your testimony  
14 states that Southern Command is dedicated to becoming a  
15 platform for experimentation and innovation, and this  
16 includes unmanned platforms and advanced sensors. So tell  
17 us about that. Expand on that testimony, if you will, sir.

18 Admiral Tidd: Senator, in our efforts to find new and  
19 innovative ways to get after the resourcing problem, we have  
20 aggressively discussed with services and with the research  
21 and development organizations that we would be an ideal  
22 region to come and test out new technologies, perhaps new  
23 technologies that are being developed for a different  
24 theater, for a different problem set, but that we have a  
25 meaningful operational mission. We can provide real

1 feedback and that my commitment as the combatant commander  
2 is to ensure that we eliminate any bureaucratic impediments  
3 to being able to bring them down and operate them, test them  
4 out for a period of time, and provide that feedback.

5 Senator Wicker: Well, thank you very much, Admiral.  
6 And I would like to invite you down to the Gulf Coast to the  
7 Stennis Space Center to see the cutting-edge research being  
8 done at the Naval Research Lab with regard to unmanned  
9 underwater vehicles and also the Navy Meteorological and  
10 Oceanographic Command operating a large fleet of UUVs. You  
11 might want to come down and visit us, and perhaps you could  
12 leverage these installations as you push for new  
13 innovations.

14 Admiral Tidd: Thank you very much, Senator.

15 Senator Wicker: Thank you.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly?

18 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 I want to thank you both for being here today.

20 I appreciate you taking the time to come by my office,  
21 both of you, to talk about the heroin crisis that is  
22 impacting Indiana and so many other States. And we have  
23 heard from other members here today. It may be the single  
24 biggest threat to the safety and security of the people of  
25 my State, and I am convinced we need to everything --

1 everything we can -- to stop it. This is a whole-of-  
2 government effort.

3 We heard the chairman talking about the 75 percent  
4 figure, and we have been talking about that for a while.

5 And as we look at this, in Indiana in 2015, we lost  
6 more people to opioid and heroin deaths than in car crashes,  
7 which forever was the biggest thing. And now this has  
8 changed it. And the heroin is coming in from Mexico and it  
9 is coming in across borders that we actively monitor. It is  
10 not coming through the desert or over hills or over here or  
11 over there. It is coming through our cross points.

12 So as we look at this, Admiral Tidd, we talk about the  
13 25 percent figure, that we catch 25 percent of what is  
14 coming in. The other 75 percent are killing my friends and  
15 neighbors. We have lost so many families, children and  
16 brothers and sisters.

17 And so what I would love to see is, as the chairman was  
18 talking about, a plan. If we had all the resources, how  
19 much resources do you need? How much time will it take?  
20 What will we do? How do we stop it? Can you put that  
21 together for us?

22 Admiral Tidd: Senator, we will be happy to work with  
23 our partners in Northern Command.

24 I think as we discussed in your office, though, the  
25 challenge that we have is we are not going to interdict our

1 way out of this crisis. This is going to be a challenge  
2 that will require a significant amount of work on the demand  
3 reduction side of the problem, as well as on --

4 Chairman McCain: Could I interrupt, Admiral? We are  
5 not asking you to address the demand side. But if you are  
6 capable of stopping some of the flow, let us have that.

7 Sorry, Senator Donnelly.

8 Senator Donnelly: That is okay, sir.

9 Admiral Tidd: Yes, Senator.

10 General Robinson: Sir, if I could add. As we  
11 discussed in your office too, all the support that we give  
12 to Department of Homeland Security on the border is  
13 incredibly important, whether it is intel sharing or  
14 providing detection and monitoring to help them do their  
15 jobs there on the border.

16 Senator Donnelly: And I know you know the real-world  
17 effects. Let me tell you just a couple.

18 I have a small town in southern Indiana, a town of  
19 4,200 people. The opioid crisis has hit it so hard -- and  
20 this was a few years ago -- 174 cases of HIV in a town of  
21 4,200 people.

22 In another small town or small county, rural county, we  
23 had a shipment of heroin come in from Ohio. It was laced  
24 with fentanyl, which is 10 times more powerful than the  
25 heroin. In a 2-hour period in one county, we had 10

1 overdoses and 1 death in a 2-hour period from this.

2 As Senator Shaheen and others have said, this is not  
3 just an Indiana problem. This is a nationwide problem that  
4 is eating us alive. And I always look and I go this might  
5 have been the young person who would have cured cancer, who  
6 would have found the key to ending diabetes.

7 And so if we can stop that other 75 percent -- and we  
8 can, and it is a resource issue. That is why I am so eager  
9 to get the plan of if we gave you the keys to the kingdom,  
10 so to speak, you have the resources, you have everything you  
11 need, so how do we do this because every day as we are  
12 sitting here right now, it is coming through the  
13 checkpoints.

14 General Robinson, I wanted to ask you about Mexico's  
15 ability and willingness to work with us on this in  
16 collaboration. In your written testimony, you indicated  
17 Mexico is growing increasingly capable of helping us. What  
18 is your assessment of the capability and the will of the  
19 Mexican Government and security forces to work with us on  
20 combating this?

21 General Robinson: Sir, I will tell you, having been on  
22 Mexico's southern border talking to their senior leadership  
23 about their strategy on the southern border, in addition to  
24 working very closely on the border with their military, the  
25 willingness of the Mexican military and them to work with us

1 is very, very great. I have been very impressed.

2 Senator Donnelly: The more you can send that message  
3 to them, the stronger and better off we will be because this  
4 really is a national emergency.

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 Chairman McCain: Senator Cotton?

7 Senator Cotton: Thank you, Admiral Tidd and General  
8 Robinson, for your testimony today and for your continuing  
9 service to our country.

10 Admiral Tidd, how different is Russia's activities in  
11 Latin America today from the Soviet Union's activities there  
12 in the Cold War, if different at all?

13 Admiral Tidd: I think that it is certainly not  
14 ideologically motivated like it was during the Cold War. It  
15 is motivated for economic reasons and for the ability to  
16 gain influence with countries in the region.

17 Senator Cotton: To what extent is Russia and, for that  
18 matter, other hostile powers in the old world aiming to tie  
19 down the United States, our attention, and our resources in  
20 the new world so we cannot project power and influence into  
21 the old world?

22 General Robinson: So, sir, I would say if you look  
23 specifically, as you mentioned, Russia as they have  
24 increased their capability and capacity, as they continue to  
25 work west of the Urals, the thing that I watch is them

1 coming east of the Urals. And so on occasions, they will  
2 come over and power project or do out-of-area operations.  
3 And so that makes me then, as the Commander of NORAD,  
4 increase my levels of responsiveness and put force structure  
5 in the right place at the right time, should they power  
6 project.

7 Admiral Tidd: And I think if I could add to that,  
8 certainly in Latin America, they do not have vital strategic  
9 interests, and so they see these as opportunities to take  
10 advantage of at least a perception of the United States  
11 being focused in other crises in other parts of the world.

12 Senator Cotton: Speaking of countries without vital  
13 strategic interest in Latin America, let us turn to Iran.  
14 Admiral Tidd, you state on page 9 of your written testimony,  
15 with the easing of economic sanctions, Iran may be seeking  
16 to rebuild its relationships in the region. Tehran uses  
17 cooperative technology, economic and diplomatic interests as  
18 a centerpiece of its regional diplomacy. Although on the  
19 surface, it portrays its actions as innocuous, Iran could  
20 exploit its cultural centers to develop networks, which  
21 could be leveraged to extend its influence and advance its  
22 interests.

23 To your knowledge, are there deep cultural, historical,  
24 religious ties between Latin Americans and Persian Shiites?

25 Admiral Tidd: No, Senator, not longstanding.

1           Senator Cotton: I did not think so.

2           You state earlier in your written testimony on page 4  
3 and 5, Hezbollah members, facilitators, supporters engage in  
4 licit and illicit activities in support of the organization,  
5 moving weapons, cash and other contraband to raise funds and  
6 build Hezbollah's infrastructure in the region. Hezbollah  
7 is the terrorist organization based in Lebanon, a cat's paw  
8 of Iran. To your knowledge, do Arab Shiites have deep  
9 cultural and historical ties with Latin America?

10          Admiral Tidd: What I would observe is that Hezbollah  
11 has been present in this region in small pockets scattered  
12 throughout the region for decades. They have been actively  
13 engaged largely in criminal activities to raise funds to  
14 support the terrorist activities of Hezbollah in other parts  
15 of the world. But we also recognize that Hezbollah was  
16 responsible for the two terrible terrorist attacks on Jewish  
17 sites in an Israeli consular center in Argentina back in the  
18 1990s. So they have been present here and we view them as  
19 probably the most dangerous of the terrorist groups present  
20 in this region.

21          Senator Cotton: I want to zero in on one phrase in  
22 that statement: moving weapons, cash, and other contraband  
23 to raise funds. What kind of other contraband is Hezbollah  
24 moving in Latin America?

25          Admiral Tidd: I think one of the more interesting

1 ones, cars, basically movement of cars to raise money, to  
2 launder money in order to develop the resources to fund  
3 Hezbollah activities in the Middle East.

4 Senator Cotton: What about drugs?

5 Admiral Tidd: Yes, sir, drugs also.

6 Senator Cotton: So Hezbollah, a declared terrorist  
7 organization that operates in the Middle East, is  
8 responsible in part for the drug flow in Latin America that  
9 has had the impact that you have heard Senators on this dais  
10 talk about today, killing Americans in our hometowns.

11 Admiral Tidd: I would say they are one of a number.  
12 They certainly are not the largest, but they play a  
13 contributing role.

14 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

15 Senator Reed [presiding]: On behalf of Chairman  
16 McCain, Senator Kaine.

17 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 And thanks to our witnesses for your testimony.

19 I want to just follow up on a couple of points that  
20 Senator Cotton was making. General Robinson, we talked, had  
21 a good visit in my office yesterday. And you talked about  
22 the flows of drugs on the seam between NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM  
23 as sort of a system of systems. We have to look at it as  
24 networks and systems. And if these distribution networks  
25 can bring drugs here, they could bring human trafficking.

1 They could potentially get people in the United States,  
2 terrorists in the United States. They could bring weapons  
3 of mass destruction, biological agents. And is that how you  
4 both kind of look at this challenge? The interdiction of  
5 drugs is really important, but also it is important to  
6 disrupt these networks because they could also do us harm in  
7 other ways.

8 General Robinson: Yes, sir. As we discussed, it is  
9 the importance of illuminating that network, understanding  
10 what is on it, and then whatever that commodity is, is  
11 making sure that the information for the customer of the  
12 commodity gets it so that can finish whatever activity they  
13 are doing. So your point is exactly right. And that is why  
14 it is incredibly important that Admiral Tidd and I and our  
15 staffs share information because, again, it just does not  
16 stop at the river.

17 Senator Kaine: And let us just focus on the commodity.  
18 There are all kinds of commodities we could worry about, but  
19 just the commodity of the drug trade. Admiral Tidd, you  
20 have talked about this, you know, 25 percent of what you  
21 know you can stop, and if you had more assets, you could  
22 stop more. And I am all for that. So Coast Guard, military  
23 assets to stop more.

24 But let us drill down on this. If you had enough  
25 assets to try to stop everything you knew about but there

1 was still a significant demand for drugs in the United  
2 States, there would still be drugs that would get to the  
3 United States. Correct?

4 Admiral Tidd: Yes, Senator. Unfortunately, I believe  
5 that to be true. And these networks are very adaptive. If  
6 the price is right, they will work very, very hard to work  
7 around the bars that we try and put in their place. So it  
8 is a dynamic problem that we will continuously have to work  
9 at.

10 Senator Kaine: Is there anything you can do within  
11 your military lane that would bring down drug demand, or is  
12 that other parts of our government?

13 Admiral Tidd: I am not aware, at least not in  
14 USSOUTHCOM.

15 Senator Kaine: So it is other parts of our government.  
16 So if we are going to deal with this significant national  
17 security issue, we ought to be funding the interdiction  
18 efforts to the degree that you talk about. But if we do not  
19 do anything on the demand side, we are going to continue to  
20 see the national security problem.

21 And ultimately, this is about the budget. In the  
22 submitted budget, there is not only a proposed cut to the  
23 Coast Guard, there is a \$100 million reduction of funds to  
24 SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services  
25 Administration. There are dramatic cuts to CDBG funds,

1 which are often used by community drug prevention/drug  
2 treatment programs. And so this is an example of how a  
3 defense budget, SOUTHCOM, fits together with the non-defense  
4 budget, Coast Guard, which is under DOT. It is part of non-  
5 defense discretionary. SAMHSA is part of non-defense  
6 discretionary. CDBG's funds are part of non-defense  
7 discretionary.

8 So as we look at the sequester, there are so many  
9 things that are in the non-defense discretionary budget that  
10 are really about our defense. And if we are not wise in  
11 those investments, we are going to continue to have this  
12 challenge of drugs flowing south to north and potentially  
13 creating networks that can move other commodities as well.

14 Do either of you disagree with that?

15 Admiral Tidd: Senator, what I would just observe is if  
16 somehow you could wave your hand and the drugs disappeared  
17 overnight, these same threat networks would engage in other  
18 activities in order to preserve their power and their access  
19 to resources. So that is why we focus on the networks. We  
20 have got to be able to bring pressure to bear on the  
21 networks.

22 Senator Kaine: The chair and ranking on this committee  
23 have been so eloquent really since I got here to the Senate  
24 about the foolishness of the sequester. And I understand  
25 why it was put in place in a vote in the summer of 2011, and

1 then it went active March 1, 2013. But it was put in place  
2 at a time of a political reality where there were  
3 significant Republican majority in one house and then two  
4 but a Democratic President. So it was going to be kind of a  
5 budgetary check.

6 I would just argue the GOP now has all the leverage,  
7 the White House and both houses. These non-defense  
8 expenditures of the kind that we are talking about, Coast  
9 Guard, SAMHSA funding, could help us deal with the drug  
10 problem. They are really important to our national  
11 security.

12 I think the time is just to get rid of the caps, not  
13 just lift the caps on defense and then keep capping non-  
14 defense. Just lift the caps on both and let everybody make  
15 the case for what we need to interdict or make the case for  
16 what we need to bring down the demand on drugs. And  
17 especially with power all in the hands of one party right  
18 now, there is no danger that the Dems would sort of roll the  
19 majority on the budgetary side.

20 But I think lifting the budgetary cap on defense  
21 without doing it on non-defense means we are going to hurt  
22 an awful lot of priorities that are in the non-defense side  
23 that actually directly contribute to some of these national  
24 security challenges that we are talking about.

25 One other quick question. Activity of China in

1 SOUTHCOM, to follow up on Senator Cotton. He asked really  
2 good questions about Russia and Iran. How about activities  
3 of China, military activities?

4 Admiral Tidd: I would say right now that the activity  
5 is largely economic in nature. The military-focused  
6 activities -- they are very aggressively engaged in an IMET-  
7 like program where they will seek to bring senior military  
8 leaders from throughout the region to Beijing for all  
9 expense paid trips. Again, it is an opportunity to  
10 influence the region and to displace the United States as  
11 the partner of choice in Latin America.

12 Senator Kaine: Thank you.

13 Thanks, Mr. Chair.

14 Chairman McCain [presiding]: Senator Sullivan?

15 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 And I appreciate the witnesses' testimony.

17 I think you are seeing this is helpful. I think is as  
18 important to this committee as it is to all of you, some  
19 bipartisan consensus on some key issues. A lot of us, my  
20 State of Alaska, is also dealing with the opioid problem in  
21 a massive way. There is concern about the Coast Guard's  
22 budget. I chair the subcommittee on the Commerce Committee  
23 that oversees the Coast Guard. I can tell you it is clear  
24 to me Secretary Kelly does not agree with cutting the Coast  
25 Guard's budget. So we are all going to work together on

1 that, and I think it is a seam some ways between this  
2 committee and the Commerce Committee because the Coast Guard  
3 is a branch of the U.S. military and it is a very important  
4 branch of the U.S. military. So I think a lot of us are  
5 concerned on that.

6 And then you have seen a lot of concern and interest in  
7 the Arctic, not just coming from the Senator from Alaska,  
8 but a bipartisan group of Senators are concerned about that.

9 So, General Robinson, you are the advocate for the  
10 Arctic in terms of capabilities. There is a lot of talk  
11 about icebreakers. We have really one and a half. The  
12 Russians have 40, building 13 more. Senator Perdue talked a  
13 lot about that.

14 Have you actually been on one of the icebreakers that  
15 we have?

16 General Robinson: No, sir, I have not.

17 Senator Sullivan: So I was this weekend. The Polar  
18 Star, which is the heavy icebreaker, and the Healy, which is  
19 the medium icebreaker.

20 And I want to mention -- and again, I am not sure which  
21 jurisdiction it is in terms of committees, but they are  
22 shameful. Shameful. The Polar Star was built in the 1970s  
23 with technologies from the 1960s. And as Senator King  
24 mentioned, it deploys down to Antarctica. We should never--  
25 never -- allow the men and women who serve in the U.S.

1 military to deploy on such a bucket. This ship is a joke  
2 and it is dangerous. And I encourage you as the advocate  
3 for the Arctic to go out and look at what our men and women  
4 who volunteer deploy on. These guys have to go on eBay to  
5 get parts for this ship. It is shameful. We should not  
6 have the men and women of the Coast Guard deploying on such  
7 an unseaworthy vessel, and we need to do something about it.

8       You mentioned the new strategy on the Arctic. It talks  
9 about FONOPS, which I think it is important. Do you think  
10 we have any remote capability of conducting FONOPS if the  
11 Russians tried to, say, block off sea transportation routes  
12 or block off access to resource development, all of which I  
13 guarantee at some point they are going to try and test us  
14 on? That is why they are building up so much capacity. Do  
15 we have any kind of capacity right now to conduct a FONOP  
16 that would try to push back on Russian aggression buildup in  
17 the Arctic?

18       General Robinson: Sir, we have discussed that briefly,  
19 but I have not taken it to the next level of discussion.

20       Senator Sullivan: I think the answer is no. But that  
21 is my view having been out there. Do you have an answer on  
22 that?

23       General Robinson: Sir, we have discussed it briefly,  
24 but we have not taken it to the next level of discussion. I  
25 do watch where Russian ships are each and every day. I can

1 tell you that.

2           Senator Sullivan: Well, it is one of these things. We  
3 put out a strategy. It is the new DOD strategy. We say we  
4 are going to do this. And my view is we do not have even  
5 the remote capability to do this. And when we have a  
6 strategy that says we are going to do something and we do  
7 not have the capability to actually do it, it undermines  
8 U.S. credibility in the world. And Lord knows, we need to  
9 get credibility back in our foreign policy and national  
10 security.

11           Let me talk about missile defense. Do you agree that  
12 the threat to the homeland is increasing almost daily?

13           General Robinson: I think that Kim Jung-un very much  
14 wants to reach out and touch the homeland.

15           Senator Sullivan: So General Hyten said February 11th  
16 was a real, real important date, a bad date with regard to  
17 the security of the continental United States and Kim Jung-  
18 un's capability because they tested solid fuel rockets.

19           I am not convinced at all. As a matter of fact, I do  
20 not think we have -- I think we need to do a lot more with  
21 regard to missile defense. Do you agree with that?

22           General Robinson: Sir, given the budget where we are  
23 today and today's budget and the strategy that we have of  
24 making our sensors better and making our kill vehicles  
25 better is the right strategy. I think if we have a

1 different budget, then we can have a different strategy.

2 Senator Sullivan: So let me ask you the question  
3 without your reference to the budget. Given the increasing  
4 threat, which everybody sees, given the likelihood -- not  
5 the likelihood, the certainty that within 1, 2, 3, 4 years  
6 Kim Jung-un is going to be able to reach us with an  
7 intercontinental ballistic nuclear missile -- do not worry  
8 about the budget. Just give me your military answer. Do  
9 you think we have done enough? Are you satisfied where we  
10 are on missile defense right now for our Nation?

11 General Robinson: Yes, sir, I am.

12 Senator Sullivan: I am not and we need to do a lot,  
13 lot more given this threat is going to be on our shores. He  
14 is going to have the capability to nuke cities in the Lower  
15 48 at some point in the future. We know that. And I do not  
16 think we have done enough on missile defense. And I think  
17 we need to do a lot more.

18 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman McCain: Senator Graham?

20 Senator Graham: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 General Robinson, if we did a CR, would it  
22 substantially hurt your capability to defend the homeland  
23 from such attacks?

24 General Robinson: Sir, as you know, as a consumer of  
25 the services' capabilities, the U.S. Air Force -- the chief

1 testified yesterday about being down 1,000 pilots. I need  
2 trained and ready and qualified pilots to defend our  
3 airspace. If you look at the things that we are doing to  
4 delay maintenance and AWACS being one of those things to  
5 delay maintenance, I need an E-3 airborne also to help  
6 defend --

7 Senator Graham: So a CR would be hurtful.

8 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

9 Senator Graham: If we went back into sequestration  
10 next year, would that be disastrous?

11 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

12 Senator Graham: The same for you, Admiral.

13 Admiral Tidd: Sir, the services are already challenged  
14 to provide resources for SOUTHCOM, and so anything that  
15 decreased the available resources is only going to make the  
16 matter worse.

17 Senator Graham: That would include a CR and  
18 sequestration.

19 Admiral Tidd: In my understanding, yes, sir.

20 Senator Graham: How many ships do you need to cover  
21 your theater in not a perfect world but in a better world?

22 Admiral Tidd: We have had a longstanding requirement  
23 for a combination of medium and high endurance platforms for  
24 as many as 23 surface combatants and accompanying aircraft.

25 Senator Graham: How many do you have now?

1 Admiral Tidd: On any given day, probably about six.

2 Senator Graham: So do you think at the time they did  
3 the survey for 23, things have gotten better or worse in  
4 terms of the theater?

5 Admiral Tidd: Sir, in that particular regard, they are  
6 worse.

7 Senator Graham: So you got six ships. A long time  
8 ago, you said you needed 23 and things are worse now than  
9 they were when you said you needed 23. Okay.

10 So, General Robinson, let us get back to North Korea.  
11 Do you believe that it is the intention of the regime to  
12 develop an ICBM that can hit the homeland?

13 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

14 Senator Graham: Do you believe it is just a matter of  
15 time until they achieve that capability, unless something  
16 changes?

17 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

18 Senator Graham: Do you believe it is just a matter of  
19 time until they can miniaturize a nuclear to put on top of  
20 the ICBM?

21 General Robinson: In my discussions with General  
22 Hyten, yes, sir.

23 Senator Graham: So I guess there are two ways to deal  
24 with that threat. Never let the missile program mature to  
25 the point it can hit the homeland. That is one. Is that

1 correct?

2 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

3 Senator Graham: The other would be to have a missile  
4 defense system that could knock it down.

5 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

6 Senator Graham: What do you prefer?

7 General Robinson: I prefer both.

8 Senator Graham: I agree. That was like the best  
9 answer anybody could give.

10 Do we have both?

11 General Robinson: Today we have exactly what we need  
12 to defend the United States of America against North Korea.

13 Senator Graham: So if a missile were launched from  
14 North Korea next year, we could knock it down?

15 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

16 Senator Graham: Do you agree with me it is better not  
17 to let them have that missile?

18 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

19 Senator Graham: So in terms of homeland defense, what  
20 is the biggest threat to the homeland, starting with North  
21 Korea and kind of listing threats that you see?

22 General Robinson: Yes, sir. I worry about North  
23 Korea, as we were just discussing, from a ballistic missile  
24 defense perspective when I look at Kim Jung-un and his lack  
25 of indications and warning, as General Hyten talked about

1 the other day, and all of that.

2 I also look at Russia and their long-range aviation and  
3 the capability that they have provided.

4 Right now, I pay attention to Iran because of some of  
5 the technologies that they are using.

6 And I also, obviously, watch China as they continue to  
7 go further and further away from --

8 Senator Graham: So these are nation-state threats.

9 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

10 But I also am very concerned about the homegrown  
11 violent extremists and the things that can happen with them.  
12 This goes back to the conversation that Admiral Tidd and I  
13 had about the networks and what is on the networks.

14 Senator Graham: Speaking of emerging threats, are you  
15 familiar with the increased use of drones by terrorist  
16 organizations?

17 General Robinson: Yes, sir. I read that.

18 Senator Graham: Do we need to up our game when it  
19 comes to dealing with potential drone attacks on the  
20 country?

21 General Robinson: Sir, so as the person responsible  
22 for force protection over installations, I pay attention to  
23 that each and every day. And I know that the Department --  
24 we are working very hard on a policy on what we do with  
25 that.

1           Senator Graham: Do you think we need to change our  
2 laws at all to be able to deal with this threat?

3           General Robinson: I think we need to understand what  
4 it could be and what it could do -- from an installation  
5 perspective, what do we need --

6           Senator Graham: Is it fair to say that in 5 years,  
7 this threat, if not unchecked, is going to get worse and  
8 more lethal?

9           General Robinson: Sir, if you just look at the  
10 proliferation of drones itself and then you add to what you  
11 were just talking about and you mate those two together, I  
12 can only imagine.

13           Senator Graham: Thank you both.

14           Chairman McCain: Admiral Tidd, we would like to have a  
15 letter from you describing what additional assets that you  
16 could use effectively to apprehend all of those drugs,  
17 particularly in the Caribbean. That seems to be an area, as  
18 we tighten the border, of increased trafficking.

19           And, General Robinson, we would like to know from you  
20 also if you could write us a letter how we can fully utilize  
21 the assets of our uniformed military in keeping with the  
22 posse comitatus rule so that we can maximize border  
23 security.

24           And finally, General, would you believe that a  
25 definition of a wall could be electronics, could be towers,

1 could be UAVs, could be anti-tunneling capabilities,  
2 surveillance towers, in other words dramatically increasing  
3 our capabilities through the use of technology?

4 General Robinson: Sir, anything that disturbs,  
5 disrupts, and gets after the flow --

6 Chairman McCain: I am asking would technology -- that  
7 it be more effectively utilized. I am talking about towers.  
8 I am talking about --

9 General Robinson: Yes, sir. Those are helpful as part  
10 of a wall.

11 Chairman McCain: Well, then write us a note, would  
12 you, as to what assets you think could be used and  
13 construction and ways of preventing the flow not only of  
14 drugs, which has been a central theme of this hearing, but  
15 also the possible infiltration of terrorists as we see Mosul  
16 and Raqqa fall. We all know that these individuals are  
17 spreading out throughout the world. So we would appreciate  
18 that information from both of you, and I hope it is not too  
19 tough a task.

20 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

21 Chairman McCain: And I am certainly glad to see this  
22 inter-service cooperation. It is a rare and beautiful  
23 event. Thank you.

24 This hearing is adjourned.

25 [Whereupon, at 11:06 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]