HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF:

GENERAL PAUL J. SELVA, USAF,

FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND

REAPPOINTMENT TO BE VICE CHAIRMAN OF

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

Tuesday, July 18, 2017

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

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

Committee Members Present: Senators Inhofe [presiding], Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Cruz, Graham, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King, Heinrich, Warren, and Peters.
OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S. SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

Senator Inhofe: The meeting will come to order.

I think, first of all, we all have on our minds and in our prayers Senator McCain. He is going through some recovery right now and will not be able to come back this week. So that will change the way we are doing business a little bit. But, nonetheless, he will be back with us very soon.

Our committee meets this morning to consider the nomination -- I should say the renomination -- of General Selva for the appointment to be the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

I think since we have already been through this drill on the eight required questions, we are going to forego that. I am assuming you have not changed your mind since the last time we asked the eight questions. Is that correct?

General Selva: I have not changed my mind.

Senator Inhofe: Do you have any family here you would like to introduce?

General Selva: I do, sir. I will do that in my opening statement.

Senator Inhofe: All right. That is good.

General Selva, your record of service to our Nation is
well known to this committee. Your first 2 years at the
Joint Chiefs of Staff have been marked by great challenges
to our national security: the advance of ISIS in the Middle
East; the Russian aggression in Ukraine and actions against
others in that region; North Korea’s pursuit of both nuclear
and long-range missiles capability. Meanwhile, our young
men and women continue to serve on the battlefield in
Afghanistan, ensuring that that country never again serves
as a safe haven for terrorists.

Moving forward, new leadership at the Department of
Defense and military services presents renewed opportunities
for our armed forces. As we work to meet the threats of
today and prepare for the threats of the future, crises
around the world only continue to multiply. Our service
members face the most complex and diverse array of global
threats since the end of World War II.

Leading our military during such challenging times
requires strong leadership, and this committee looks forward
to your testimony about how you plan to guide our men and
women.

Senator Reed?
STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE ISLAND

Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I too want to join you in wishing Senator McCain a speedy recovery and a rapid return to his responsibilities. In fact, this might be one of the few times I can say sincerely “go Navy” because I certainly do. I want to see him back, as we all do.

Senator Inhofe: I might observe, though, it cannot go unnoticed that the first three that were here on time were all three Army.

[Laughter.]

Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to join you in welcoming General Selva. Thank you, sir, for your service. As we consider your reappointment to Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, we recognize and thank you for your many years of service to the Nation and your willingness to continue to serve. Also, I want to recognize your wife Ricki for her many years of support.

The United States faces a wide range of multifaceted and varied challenges around the world. If you are reconfirmed as the Vice Chairman, you will be an integral player in addressing these complex international issues facing our national interest.
Russia’s malign influence and active measures have been aimed at undermining the American people’s faith in our election process, as well as other Western elections. Furthermore, Russia continues to threaten its neighbors and our NATO allies and has failed to end its interference in Ukraine by complying with its commitments under the Minsk cease-fire agreement. Finally, Russia has refused to withdraw its support for the Assad regime.

North Korea’s nuclear missile program is an immediate and grave national security threat, and the United States continues to grapple with the fact that there is no set of quick and certain options. China has not demonstrated its willingness to enforce effective sanctions against North Korea and, in addition, continues to threaten the rules-based order in the Asia-Pacific region by economic coercion of its smaller, more vulnerable neighbors, and by undermining the freedom of navigation.

Iran continues their aggressive weapons development activities, including ballistic missile development efforts, as well as other destabilizing activities in the region. Finally, while we continue to make steady military progress against ISIS, the administration has yet to publicly articulate a broader whole-of-government strategy for addressing the issues that gave rise to ISIS in the
first place.

General Selva, the aforementioned challenges are urgent and pressing, and the committee looks forward to hearing from you on how the Department of Defense plans to address these issues.

In addition, the Vice Chairman is assigned a number of specific responsibilities. For example, the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act strengthened the Vice Chairman’s role on the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, JROC, by making the Vice Chairman the principal adviser to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs on joint planning capabilities and joint performance requirements. Given the important function of the JROC in reviewing requirements for acquisition programs to ensure they are reasonable and necessary, I look forward to your thoughts on the effectiveness of these new authorities and whether you believe additional changes are warranted.

The Vice Chairman is a key player in the interagency process, a role that often requires working closely with senior policymakers within the Department and at the National Security Council on critical national security issues. In light of the strategic challenges I referenced earlier, the committee looks forward to hearing from you on the effectiveness of the current interagency process.

Finally, General Selva, you have been a partner with
Deputy Secretary Work in developing and fostering the Department’s innovation strategy, including the so-called Third Offset, the Strategic Capabilities Office, the Defense Innovation Unit Experimental, or DIUx, and other special projects. If confirmed to a second term as the Vice Chairman, you will provide vital continuity between the last administration and the present administration. It is imperative that the Department of Defense under Secretary Mattis continue this effort to learn how to leverage the most dynamic sectors of our economy to harness new technology and ways of thinking to solve our difficult and diverse global challenges.

Thank you again, General Selva, for your willingness to serve our Nation, and I look forward to the hearing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

You are recognized, General Selva.
STATEMENT OF GENERAL PAUL J. SELVA, USAF, FOR
REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND REAPPOINTMENT TO
BE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

General Selva: Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Before I begin, I would like to also recognize Chairman
McCain’s service to our Nation both in and out of uniform.
On behalf of the Joint Staff, I wish him a complete and
speedy recovery, and I look forward to him being back here
at work soon.

Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, distinguished
members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to
appear before you to be considered for a second term as the
Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I am grateful
to the President and the Secretary of Defense for their
continued trust and faith in my ability to serve.

I would like to make three brief points before I
continue and look forward to your questions.

First, I want to commend those who wear the cloth of
our Nation. During my 2 years as the Vice Chairman, I have
had the opportunity to visit service members and their
families around the globe, and I am continually impressed by
their dedication, their selfless service, and their
exceptional talents. It has been my distinct honor to serve
the men and women of the United States armed forces as the
Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And if
reconfirmed, I will strive to keep faith with them.

Second, as you have already mentioned, Senator Inhofe, it is important to acknowledge the highly complex challenges that face our joint force today. The combination of external challenges presented by adversaries and competitors and internal challenges such as readiness and modernization, amplified by continual budget instability, are all issues with which this committee is very familiar. Please know that I value the dialogue that I and other senior military leaders have with this committee, and I thank the committee for your work on behalf of this Nation’s soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coast guardsmen, particularly the swift passage of this year’s National Defense Authorization Act. I hope through my work and our discussions that I have conveyed to you the seriousness with which I take my responsibilities as the Vice Chairman.

Finally, I would like to recognize my wife Ricki, the love of my life, who is with me today and who has shared my 37-year career and our 37-year marriage. As many of you know, she was a classmate when we attended the United States Air Force Academy. She is not only a lifelong friend and partner, but she provides me with the counsel that only someone in her position can. And for that I will forever be grateful.

Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, members of the
committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before this committee to be considered for a second term as the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Selva follows:]
Senator Inhofe: Thank you, General Selva.

I would like to start off with one that has been foremost on my mind and I think on the minds of most of the members here, as well as the uniforms. And I applaud the uniforms for being straightforward and honest about the threats that we are facing right now, and that would be North Korea.

You know, they successfully tested a ballistic missile on the Fourth of July. The country also completed a successful nuclear test earlier on May 14th. The experts consider North Korea’s missile test on July Fourth to be the most significant advancement toward a nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile.

We have had a lot of witnesses talk about this prior to July Fourth. They were talking about when this happens, what that will mean in terms of a threat to the United States. If you take the projected range of that, that would actually be somewhere around 5,000 miles, which would put parts of the United States into range. So it is a scary thing.

We had an Armed Services Committee hearing on the Asia-Pacific strategy on April 25th. We had a panel of experts, and they were good. They agreed with me that North Korea currently represents the most imminent threat to our national security.
So I would like to have you go ahead and start with three questions concerning that.

One, do you agree with the experts who have come to that conclusion concerning our national security?

And secondly, North Korea is known to export ballistic missile technology to other adversaries like Iran. Do you believe that they are in the process of doing that? They have done that. And then what other countries might pose a threat as a result of what they are receiving from North Korea?

And thirdly, what is your level of confidence in terms of our intelligence community’s ability to monitor what is really going on there? Those three things to start off with.

General Selva: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I do agree in principle with the assessment that the North Koreans are moving quickly to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile capability. I, however, am not saying the test on the Fourth of July demonstrates that they have the capacity to strike the United States with any degree of accuracy or reasonable confidence of success. What the experts tell me is that the North Koreans have yet to demonstrate the capacity to do the guidance and control that would be required --

Senator Inhofe: I was only referring to range.
General Selva: Yes, sir. On range, they clearly have the capability.

Senator Inhofe: You know, if they have the capability in range, the other improvements are perhaps not too far behind.

General Selva: Yes, sir. We will have to watch very carefully with the IC the developments on those particular capabilities.

I do agree with the intelligence community and others that the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea is an arms proliferators. There is no evidence that they have engaged in proliferation of their long-range ballistic missile technology, but they have proliferated every other weapons system that they have ever invented. So it is a pretty clear pathway to the potential proliferation of these kinds of weapons systems.

Senator Inhofe: And the third question was on the capability of our intelligence.

General Selva: I am reasonably confident in the ability of our intelligence community to monitor the testing but not the deployment of these missile systems. Kim Jong-un and his forces are very good at camouflage, concealment, and deception. We have a series of programs that I would be happy to talk about in a classified setting that talk to the ability of our intelligence community both military and
civilian to monitor those activities.

Senator Inhofe: Yes. I think it has been said outside of a classified hearing that the things that he has been doing make him — the nicest thing I can say about Kim Jong-un is he is totally unpredictable and the most unpredictable of anyone I have ever had any kind of experience with or even reading about. And that is what has been scary to most of the people, and I assume you agree with that.

General Selva: Yes, sir. I do agree with that assessment.

Senator Inhofe: Okay.

Now, getting down to our threats, this committee has received the testimony from the uniforms and from the experienced people outside of the uniforms that only a third of our Army brigade combat teams, only a fourth of our combat aviation brigades are ready. We hear about 62 percent of our F-18’s that the marines use do not work. So we recognize when we are going through what we have been going through in the last few years that the first thing to go is maintenance and then, of course, modernization.

So I would like to have your assessment whether or not you do agree with General Wilson, for example, when he testified before this committee, that fewer than 50 percent of the Air Force combat force are sufficiently ready for a highly contested fight against peer adversaries. So he is
going beyond just equipment. We are getting down to our individuals.

And then another Wilson, Secretary Wilson, and General Goldfein have told us that they will be short 1,500 pilots, most of them fighters, by the end of this year.

Do you agree with this assessment? Would you want to elaborate on anything that they have said?

General Selva: Senator, I agree with both assessments. Both speak to the availability of funds and resources to do the high-end training that is required to make our forces ready for what we call high intensity combat against a peer competitor. The budget in 2017 is helpful. The proposed budget for 2018 will move us down the pathway to being able to restore much of that training. But it will be a 2-year process beyond the initial insertion of those resources before you see the readiness improve.

Senator Inhofe: I agree with that.

Senator Reed?

Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, General Selva, again for your service. One of the issues in terms of the Third Offset is creating some different agency. One is the Defense Innovation Unit Experimental, DIUx. And they are working in the public knowledge on sort of very cheap satellites -- inexpensive I should say -- and also exploiting them with
artificial intelligence. It is something that we really need for many places, particularly Korea, for constant dwell.

We are told that they are about to run out of money, and we have not received the reprogramming yet. I would think this would be an urgent need. Can you explain why they are in this distress and what we can do?

General Selva: Yes, sir, I can. We actually put tremendous demands on the defense experimental unit. In the programs that they are working for us, we were notified early last week by Director Raj Shah that they had been cash flowing into two programs. We have a reprogramming proposal that is in staff as we speak that will address the balance of their requirements for this fiscal year, and we will actually begin some of the funding for programs that will extend into next fiscal year. They will be able to do that with year-end money.

Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

One of the areas of concern -- and there are many -- is the situation in Iraq. I was there about 4 weeks ago. They are making progress on the ground. General Townsend is doing a superb job as the commander on the ground, along with, when I was up at Q-West, the 82nd Airborne Division, 2nd Brigade was leading the advisory effort.

But the issue now becomes, as we reduce their
effectiveness -- ISIS -- our long-term presence there. Do you have views on that?

And also, I heard there were claims at least by Revolutionary Guards of Iran that if they are designated a terror group, they will retaliate against our forces. Can you give us any insights there?

General Selva: Sir, on Iraq, the fighting is far from over. ISIS has lost their sanctuary in Mosul but they still have a handful of small towns that they control in and around the province. President Abadi has a plan with the Iraqi Security Forces to begin a campaign, with Steve Townsend’s help and consent, to clear those towns and move into Anbar Province to secure their border with Syria, all important work as that will deny ISIS sanctuary on both sides of the Syrian-Iraqi border.

I share you concern. I read in this morning’s papers about the Iranian Republican Guard’s Quds Force making a statement that if they are declared an international terrorist organization, that they will retaliate against our forces in Iraq. We will have to posture ourselves to be ready for that, but I do not think we should take that threat and keep it from taking action against the Quds Force.

Senator Reed: Thank you.

In another area in your advance policy questions, you
indicated, which is something that has been seconded by so
many, that our adversaries in anti-access and area denial
technologies have eroded what used to be a tremendous
overmatch by the United States. And the question is, what
are we doing to get back way ahead not just a few inches
ahead, metaphorically?

General Selva: Thank you, Senator. You alluded to the
work that we have been doing over the past couple years in
the advanced concepts development arena, as well as working
what Deputy Secretary Work called the Third Offset strategy.
Those are concepts that would allow us to contest what we
call the anti-access/area denial strategies that many of our
adversaries have attempted to impose upon us by making our
basing and our forces more resilient and able to survive
under the kinds of attacks that are associated with the area
denial strategies, particularly that China and North Korea
are attempting to impose upon us. It allows us to project
force into areas that otherwise would be presumed denied.

Senator Reed: Thank you.

Just finally and quickly, we have been working for
several different Congresses on acquisition reform. We have
passed legislation. We still have a long way to go. I
think we both recognize that, honestly. And as Chairman of
JROC, you have been given additional responsibility both
actual and also kind of referential or symbolic. But can
you tell us what you are doing to kind of help the service
chiefs jump start acquisition and get it so we can deliver
systems. The Army is commendable for many things, their
timeliness, et cetera. But they have had a tough record in
getting systems from the drawing board into the field. So
can you comment?

General Selva: Yes, sir. We are implementing the
guidance that we received in last year’s NDAA. Two specific
things that give the Vice Chairman’s office a little bit
more flexibility. One is the direct requirement to be the
advisor to the Chairman for readiness and the deployment of
systems that support readiness.

The second is a building relationship with the service
chiefs and the service secretaries in their acquisition
authority roles. So the JROC is now providing requirements
directly to the service acquisition authorities not only for
the basic design and integration capabilities that would go
into systems but actual performance along the line of buying
systems. One really striking example of that capability was
a piece of work that we did to move counter-unmanned systems
technologies into Iraq from idea to fruition, measured in
months, from delivery to deployment, measured in weeks, and
those are numbers that are actually quite useful.

Senator Reed: Thank you.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Ernst?
Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much, General Selva. Mrs. Selva, thank you for your support and service to our Nation as well.

General Selva, in your answers to advance policy questions regarding Southeast Asia, you suggest that short-term stressors can be managed within the alliance construct. And a few weeks ago referring to the Philippines specifically, Secretary Mattis testified that in 2014 we canceled our named counterterror operation with a premature view of success, causing us to lose funding lines that we would have otherwise been able to offer.

Do you agree with me and Secretary Mattis that reestablishing a named operation is something we should consider as part of our alliance obligations in order to make sure that those short-term stressors do not turn into a prolonged or long-term catastrophe?

General Selva: Yes, ma’am. In every case where we see the resurgence of terror networks, particularly in the fragile areas of the southern Philippines, I think it is worth considering whether or not we reinstate a named operation not only to provide for the resources that are required but to give the Pacific Command commander and the field commanders in the Philippines the kinds of authorities they need to work with indigenous Philippine forces to actually help them be successful in that battle space.
Senator Ernst: Excellent. I hope that we can work with Secretary Mattis on this issue.

Moving on to another topic, you have been openly critical of Congress about the budget process. And I agree that it is long past time for us to break the cycle of these continuing resolutions. We are not doing ourselves any favor. However, budgets are also a two-way street. And the DOD has not been able to conduct or pass a clean audit for a very, very long time. And so that is not helping our cause either.

What specifically will you do in your next 2 years to achieve a clean audit that you have not maybe been able to accomplish in the last 2 years?

General Selva: I have found over the last several years that achieving the clean audit goal is a really vexing journey. In particular, the discussions over the valuation of real property are an obstacle in the way of getting that work done, the debates over what we own and what it is actually worth. I will share with you that in advance of his confirmation, I spent several hours with the new Deputy Secretary of Defense, Patrick Shanahan, discussing how we might get at this issue of valuing capital property so that we can, in fact, clear a clean audit. We will commit to working that together through the Defense Management Action Group to try and come to resolution.
Senator Ernst: I appreciate that. And I hope that we can move forward on that, especially when it comes to the real property. We have to own this, and we absolutely must get his done to know how the dollars are being spent so that we can reassure our taxpayers that we as Congress and you as the DOD are doing the right thing. So thank you for that. I hope we are successful.

You also support providing lethal defensive assistance to Ukraine, something I have been pushing for a number of years as well. Other than being actively engaged with the interagency on this issue, what specific steps are underway in DOD in order to make this happen?

General Selva: So we are working very closely between the Joint Staff and U.S. European Command to actually put requirements on the table for an inventory of what that lethal defensive aid might look like. It will be more than just a military recommendation. This will be a policy choice on whether or not we are going to give the Ukrainian Government the tools they need to defend themselves against what we believe to be a Russian-supported insurgency movement in the Donbas.

Senator Ernst: I think it is really important.

And in light of Russia’s recently thwarted attempt to deny Montenegro’s accession to NATO, what steps should we be taking to reaffirm our commitment to nations like Ukraine
and Kosovo and other candidates just in reassuring them that we will assist them should they wish to become NATO members?

General Selva: Ma’am, I think one of the tools that we can bring to bear as the Joint Staff and as the military team is our mil-to-mil contacts with the chiefs of defense and the leaders of their militaries to make sure that all those countries, in spite of what is going on internally with or without the interference of the Russian Government, actually are able to make the military reforms that are necessary so that they can move towards a path to membership in NATO.

Senator Ernst: I appreciate that. We have got a lot of State partnership programs out there and those countries need our reassurance. So thank you, General Selva, again.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Gillibrand?

Senator Gillibrand: Hello, General. Thank you for being here. Thank you for your service. I welcome your family.

I want to talk to you a little bit about where we are on trying to combat military sexual assault. In 2013, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, said a majority of the Senate of the United States expressed a lack of confidence in our ability to solve this ourselves. We are currently on the clock, if you will. The
President of the United States said to us in December, you know what? You have got a year to review this thing and show me you can make a difference. We understand that just because Senator Gillibrand’s vote was defeated yesterday does not mean that a year from now it may not be reintroduced, and if we have not been able to demonstrate we are making a difference, you know, then we deserve to be held to the scrutiny and standard.

This is now 4 years later. And we do not see a change in the overall numbers. We do not see a change in the rate of prosecution. We do not see a change in the rate of conviction. And we do not see a change in the rate of retaliation. So I am really worried that in these measurables where commanders are entirely responsible for outcomes, they have not met the level of scrutiny and oversight that is really necessary to really tackle this problem effectively.

So do you agree that more needs to be done to create environments where victims and bystanders can report and not be retaliated against?

General Selva: Senator, I believe that survivors of sexual assault and bystanders should be given an environment where they can report the events that have happened, and we can provide an unbiased investigation and potential prosecution of the wrongdoers who perpetrated the crime.
Senator Gillibrand: And do you agree that despite the Department’s efforts, we have not achieved enough progress?

General Selva: I do not agree that we have not achieved enough progress, but perfection is the only standard that can be allowed in this space. Sexual assault is contrary to the notion that we treat all soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines with the dignity and respect they deserve because they wear the uniform of this Nation.

Senator Gillibrand: I do not think we are going for perfection. I think we are going for a climate where men and women can serve without being sexually assaulted, a climate where they can report their crimes and know that they will be prosecuted, that they can report their crimes and know that they will not be retaliated. And so we are not even close. I mean, the estimate of last year was 15,000 sexual assaults, unwanted sexual contact, and rape. That is nowhere where we need to be. We still have almost a 60 percent retaliation rate, and our rate of conviction has not moved in 5 years.

So I do not think we are achieving enough progress. I think we have done a lot of good things in terms of getting better evidentiary records, getting better evidentiary standards, making sure there is special counsel for the individuals who do report. But our rate of unrestricted reports, the ones where you are willing to put your name and
make it public, is going down. Our rate of restricted
reports percentage is going up. So the confidence in the
system just is not there.

So I really hope that you will commit to me to do a
full look at this issue, look for new solutions, look for
untried solutions because what we are doing today is not
working. And we have done every small ball recommended
reform we could possibly do by every committee that has
offered them.

General Selva: Ma’am, I will commit to working with
the services and the service secretaries to take a deep dive
into all of the programs that they have implemented and to
take a look at whether or not they will be effective in
supporting the survivors of sexual assault and in making
sure that we get to unbiased investigations and
prosecutions.

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

I would now like to talk a bit about our transgender
service members. I have been pleased by the advances the
Department of Defense policies had made to be more inclusive
to transgender service members who are twice as likely to
serve, according to one study, than the general population.
But I am concerned that the recent 6-month delay the
Department has approved before letting transgender people
enlist in the services will have some unintended
What have you learned so far in your review of this issue, and how is the implementation going so far?

General Selva: Thank you, Senator. I am an advocate of every qualified person who can meet the physical standards to serve in our uniformed services to be able to do so.

Our decision to delay the accessions of transgender individuals into the services was largely based on a disagreement on the science of how mental health care and hormone therapy for transgender individuals would help solve the medical issues that are associated with gender dysphoria. There are a host of other issues that involve the potential physical standards that the service chiefs asked for additional time to assess so that they can make the necessary changes to infrastructure, as well as training curricula, for our basic trainees who come in transgender status, particularly those who have not undergone gender reassignment surgery and, while they present as their target gender, are physiologically still in their birth gender. And those issues will have to be dealt with before we can actually begin to assess those individuals into active service.

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Gillibrand.

Senator Cotton?

Senator Cotton: General Selva, welcome back.

Congratulations on your reappointment.

I would like to discuss the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, a treaty between the United States and the then Soviet Union, now Russia, that prohibits land-based cruise missiles or ballistic missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometers. Russia, it has been widely known, is cheating on this treaty. The State Department found that 3 years ago.

You testified at the House Armed Services Committee that to your knowledge, Russia does not intend to return to compliance with the INF Treaty. Do you remain of the same opinion today?

General Selva: I do, sir, and there is no new intelligence that says that the Russians are either inclined to return or to abrogate the treaty. So they are still trying to walk the middle line.

Senator Cotton: I have to say I agree that as long as Vladimir Putin gets to eat his cake and have it too, why would he change? I assume that he is somewhat ambivalent about the treaty. On the one hand, he benefits much more from the prohibition on intermediate-range missiles in Europe since the one country that could rapidly produce
those missiles and deploy them, the United States, is restrained from making those missiles and deploying them.

On the other hand, I assume that he does not like the fact that countries on his periphery, in particular, China, can produce and deploy them. So the way to square that circle is simply to cheat, and as long as we let him get away with it, then there is no reason not to keep cheating.

Is there anything in your mind that we could do to put pressure on Russia to bring them back into compliance to change their current mindset?

General Selva: The diplomatic tools that exist inside of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty allow us to put a modicum of pressure on the Russians through the bilateral consultative committee to try and get them to return to compliance.

The other tools that exist in the treaty include beginning research and development efforts to field but not test intermediate-range ballistic and cruise missiles within the boundaries of the treaty. It is our assessment that the Russians have gone beyond that provision in the treaty and have actually fielded an intermediate-range cruise missile that could be either nuclear or conventional capable. So we do have some options inside the treaty to put pressure on the Russians not only diplomatically but also inside the military realm.
Senator Cotton: I am glad that you raised that because my legislation, the INF Treaty Preservation Act, would authorize money for just that and, in fact, with the House and the Senate passed versions of the NDAA, it would start a program of record. The administration put out a statement of administration policy last week that had some issue with that provision and another, but I suspect we will work it out in the end since we all want to see Russia come back into compliance with this treaty.

Putting aside its impact on our relationship with Russia, though, I want to bring your attention to Admiral Harris’ testimony. He stated a few months ago in this committee that over 90 percent of China’s land-based missile forces fall between the range of 500 and 5,000 kilometers. Of course, China is not in violation of the treaty because China is not a signatory to the treaty. Only the United States and Russia are.

We do not have any matching offensive capability due to our treaty obligations. Do you interpret this as a possible offensive imbalance in the Asia-Pacific?

General Selva: Senator, it would be easy to interpret that as an offensive imbalance but for that fact that we are not restricted from fielding ballistic missile or cruise missile systems that could be launched from ships or airplanes under the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty. It
is specific to land-based missiles. And so with respect to
whether or not we use the INF Treaty as a reason to say
targets inside of China might not be held at risk I think is
a bridge too far. I believe we can assert that the
deployment of missile systems on aircraft and ships would
allow us to hold those targets at risk.

Senator Cotton: They do, although the obvious
disadvantage of ships and aircraft is that they are
relatively small compared to land, which is why China has 90
percent of their missile forces in that range from land. We
are limited to what we can do based on our ships and our
aircraft.

Do you think that we should consider extending
offensive capabilities to allies in the Asia-Pacific who are
also not bound by this treaty to help counterbalance China’s
offensive capabilities?

General Selva: I think those are options we should
look at as people who provide sound military advice to
political leaders, but that would be a policy choice on
whether or not to use that leverage against the Chinese.

Senator Cotton: Thank you.

One final question about this area. Both General
Milley and General McMaster in his previous job have
testified the Army is outranged and outgunned. When they
say that, that the Army is outranged and outgunned, they are
speaking about missile systems that have this prohibited range. Correct? The 500 to 5,500 kilometer range?

General Selva: Senator, that is part of their argument but it is not all of their argument. Many of our multiple launch rocket systems are outranged by the Russians within the ranges that are stipulated --

Senator Cotton: Below the 500 kilometers.

General Selva: Yes, sir.

Senator Cotton: So it is both below the 500 kilometer, which is a bad thing and we should address, but also that we cannot get beyond the 500 kilometer range.

General Selva: Yes, sir.

Senator Cotton: Thank you very much, and thank you again for your service.

General Selva: Thank you, sir.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Cotton.

Senator King?

Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to join everyone today who has mentioned our hopes and prayers for Senator McCain to get back so he can harass the witnesses, as he is accustomed to do.

General Selva, I know that you are interested in innovation, and that is an important part of acquisition and how we get where we are. I am concerned. We have had testimony before this committee that small companies in
Silicon Valley, for example, will not even bid, will not even interact with the Pentagon because the process is so cumbersome and lengthy and burdensome. And now we are at a point where some significant majority of the Defense Department funds go to four or five major contractors. How do we deal with the system itself, the structure, the infrastructure of acquisition so that we can open up to greater innovation coming very frequently from smaller companies?

General Selva: Senator, for large programs, our small companies in Silicon Valley are likely not going to be the competitors we are looking for. However, that said, two very innovative programs are actually underway as we speak. The first is a venture capital incubator at National Defense University that helps our acquisition professionals learn the ins and outs of the venture capital business. And venture capital is what runs Silicon Valley. It is the willingness to take risks on new programs, on new technologies, on rapid prototyping that might or might not deliver at relatively small amounts of money. And that is the reason we established in part the Defense Innovation Unit Experimental in Silicon Valley not only to have a point of presence to interact with these new technology companies but to actually have a funding vehicle where we can essentially engage in rapid prototyping and
venture capital-like activities with those companies.

Senator King: Is that far enough along to determine whether it is working?

General Selva: Sir, I think it is far enough along to determine that it is working. In fact, we have expanded the concept to technology centers in Boston and Austin, Texas as well because we are finding the kinds of companies that can bring us the innovative ideas that can then be scaled into major programs.

Senator King: Let me talk about the Third Offset. The first two were focused largely on the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union. Talk about the Third Offset as it would relate to the multiplicity and diversity of threats that we face today.

General Selva: Thank you, Senator.

The threats we face today are largely based on mimicking our command and control philosophies but adding to them long-range precision strike munitions that can deny us access to the areas that we previously had free access to. The projection of power is fundamental to our ability to fight wars. And so as we look at the Third Offset, the principal things we were examining and continue to examine are artificial intelligence and the ability to team humans with machines to speed our understanding of the complex battle space that is represented by these new adversaries.
and competitors and then react inside of that battle space faster than they can respond to our actions.

It also involves building around our bases and our forces a degree of resiliency through camouflage, concealment, deception, as well as distributed operations that prevent our opponents from being able to hold the whole force at risk using their ballistic and cruise missile systems. That is a snapshot of what the Third Offset would bring us.

Senator King: And I assume part of this is resiliency as a defense against cyber. One would assume that if a conflict was to begin, the first phase would be cyber to take out communications systems and those kind of things. Is that part of the thinking?

General Selva: Yes, sir. In fact, implicit in the Third Offset thinking is the partnership between humans and machines, and in that space, machine-to-machine defense of cyber networks is actually an absolute requirement. It is not an implied task. It is an explicit task. If we cannot defend our networks at machine speed, we are giving our opponents maneuvering space in that domain to defeat us in detail.

Senator King: A final question. There really is not time for an answer, and perhaps you could take it for the record. I recently finished General McMaster’s book about
Vietnam, “Dereliction of Duty.” And it is very critical, as you know, both the political decision-making structure and the Joint Chiefs. I would like your thoughts not now but in writing on what the role of the Joint Chiefs are in a situation where the political leadership is either not listening or taking a position that you feel is contrary to the country’s interests in terms of its military capabilities. General McMaster does a masterful job of outlining the problem, but I am interested in some thinking about what is the solution to the problem that he illuminates so brilliantly in that book.

General Selva: In short, Senator, I would say our obligation is to provide blunt, honest, best military advice. And in the absence of a rule that forces our policymakers to actually follow that advice, we continue to give it loud and long.

Senator King: Thank you. Appreciate it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator King.

Senator Warren?

Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And like my colleagues, I want to say for the record how much we miss Senator McCain and wish him a speedy recovery.

I also note that Senator Reed and Senator King talked about DIUX. So I will not go back through this. But I do
want to express my very strong support for the work you are
doing there and how much more we can do with DIUx.

What I wanted to focus on, General Selva, I have heard
you publicly describe the main global threats that we face
as challenges: Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and
violent extremism. I want to ask you about another global
threat, and that is climate change.

A Defense Department report from 2 years ago observed
-- and I am going to quote it here -- global climate change
will have wide-ranging implications for U.S. national
security interests over the foreseeable future because it
will aggravate existing problems such as poverty, social
tensions, environmental degradation, ineffectual leadership,
and weak political institutions. In short, this DOD report
described climate change as a threat multiplier.

So, General Selva, what impact do you believe that the
change in climate will have on the military services? And
what do you believe the Department of Defense should be
doing now to prepare for this impact?

General Selva: Thank you, ma’am.

The dynamics that are happening in our climate will
drive uncertainty and will drive conflict. And I will just
provide one example of how that can happen, and this is a
manmade problem. The dams along the Nile River control the
flow of water into what was the Fertile Crescent of Egypt.
And any change to that water flow causes the Egyptians to become more hostile to their neighbors who are putting dams upstream of the Egyptian stretch of the Nile River. I could build that argument in a variety of countries around the world, and those are manmade problems not directly related to climate change but related to how we as humans change our environment.

If you extend that argument to the kinds of things that might happen if we see tidal rises, if we see increasing weather patterns of drought and flood and forest fires and other natural events that happen inside of our environment, then we are going to have to be prepared for what that means in terms of the potential for instability in regions of the country where those impacts happen, particularly today places where there is massive food instability.

The Sahel in Africa is a classic example where a small drought over a limited period of time can decimate the crops and cause instability and make that an area fertile for recruitment of extremists because they see no other way.

Similarly, you could look at the decimation of the fisheries off Somalia that contributed to piracy because the fishermen could not make their livelihood by doing what they do best, which is fishing on the fishing grounds off of Somalia.

So I think we need to be prepared for those. It will
cause us to have to address questions like humanitarian
disaster relief. It will also cause us to have to focus on
places where climate instability might cause actual
political instability in regions of the world we had not
previously had to pay attention to.

Senator Warren: So as climate change is an ongoing
phenomenon, one that right now is worsening, the climate
change is going to have a profound impact directly on our
military and on our military infrastructure and on how the
military is able to carry out its mission. So I really
hope, in addition to all the other global challenges that
you have in front of you -- and I know they are many and I
know they are serious -- we need you to lead today on this
challenge, General. Tomorrow may be too late.

So I want to follow up in just the little bit of time I
have remaining on Senator King’s question about the Third
Offset. And I know you have made this a priority all during
your first term, and I assume you will do the same if you
are there for a second term.

But what I am concerned about is that we do not appear
to be moving very fast. Many of the technologies that we
are talking about here are still in the development phase.
Meanwhile, our near-peer competitors are continuing to
improve their capabilities. It can take years, sometimes
decades from the time we first sign a contract for a new
technology to actually make it out into the field.

So let me just ask you if you can say something very briefly because we are really over time. And you can take this for the record. What can we do about this to speed up our response time here?

General Selva: I would make two quick points.

Senator Warren: Okay, and let us make them quick.

General Selva: First is rapid prototyping. We have to be willing to invest and fail in systems that might not work.

The second is we cannot be bashful about bringing new software into our architectures. And so we have worked very closely with some of the companies in Silicon Valley to do rapid prototyping, testing, and deployment of software that helps with things like automatic target recognition and change detection.

I think those are two things that we could do right now and be quite successful.

Senator Warren: Good. I know you share my concern about being outpaced by technology and how much you make this a priority. You will have, I think, everyone's support here as you make that a priority. Thank you.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

Senator Rounds?

Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
General Selva, first of all, let me begin by just thanking you for your service to our country.

Your previous work before you took your current position -- you were the Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command. And I know that in your statement for the record, you stated that our military strategy is predicated on our ability to deploy and sustain forces. Based upon your previous position, you understand the need to be able to get to where the fight is at.

I understand that you appreciate the reliance that we have on commercial air carriers in order to do that within our current plans. As you already know, right now DOD has no means to extend the cyber protection to these critical commercial carriers. I have talked about this at a few hearings, including just last week.

My question for you is that if you were an adversary nation, how would you exploit this? And how would that impede the ability of the United States to deploy forces? I realize that you may be limited in what you can say about this in an open session, but I think it would be really good for this committee and the American people to hear a few general comments on the issue because unless we continue to focus and gain public support for what I think we need to do with regard to cyber protection, it is going to be very difficult to where we have to be. And we have to have the
commercial air carriers available in times of an airlift. Could you comment about what that means and how our adversaries might exploit the current situation?

General Selva: Senator, I am cautious other than echoing what you said about the potential vulnerabilities of commercial networks in an open session. But I will add the following.

It is not just our air carriers that make us successful at projecting force overseas. It is our air carriers, our over ocean merchant marine, as well as the rail and trucking industry in this country. And all three together, land, sea, and air, are the capability that we bring to be able to deploy force around the world. All of those capabilities I just described are dependent on the quality and veracity of the data that they use to move our forces. And so that data, those networks are just as important as the trucks, trains, ships, and planes that move our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

Senator Rounds: Thank you, sir.

I think solving this public-private cybersecurity vulnerability would give us insights and experience to really build the framework to use on the countless other cyber seams between organizations in and outside of government.

Can you give me an update at least in general terms on
how the security gap is being addressed today? Clearly, it is not a case of where we are just planning for the future. We have things in place today. Can you give us some reassurances?

General Selva: Again, this is based on my experience in my prior job. The TRANSCOM J-6 Director of Communications is given the authorities and responsibilities of protecting not only the TRANSCOM network but extending through contract vehicles to our civilian providers those data standards and network standards that allow them to subscribe to many of the protections that are afforded to the TRANSCOM network. That may be a model upon which we could build a continuing public-private partnership into critical infrastructure in other sectors of the economy.

Senator Rounds: Thank you, sir.

Just in the minute or so I have remaining, in your experience is 2 years enough time to maximize the Vice Chief’s potential to provide optimal strategic guidance, as well as maintain continuity for your large portfolio?

General Selva: No, sir, it is not, and that is why I am so encouraged to see the work that was done in the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act that actually makes the Chairman and the Vice Chairman positions 4-year tours with only one potential renomination for a 2-year extension. That 4-year term will allow the Chairman and the Vice
Chairman to have the strategic impact that you expect of
uniformed members in those positions.

Senator Rounds: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

Senator Peters?

Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Selva, it is great to have you here before us
again. I certainly appreciate the opportunities to have
some discussions with you both here, as well as in my
office. And I want to thank you for your focus on advanced
technologies and the understanding of how we need to be at
the forefront of that to continue to keep our competitive
edge.

I just want to say, before I ask you a question, we
have heard a lot about Silicon Valley and other places like
Boston when it comes to advanced technology, but we have all
of that in Michigan as well. In fact, when the U.S. Patent
Office opened their first field office outside of
Washington, D.C., they did it in Detroit, Michigan because
more patents are filed there than anywhere in the country.
And given the fact that we have more engineers per capita
than any other area, it leads to that. So I certainly hope
as you are looking at innovative technology, you continue to
focus on a wide geographic space and understand that we have
incredible capabilities throughout our country.

I recently met with General Dyass, the acting Director of the Army’s Capabilities Integration Center, as well as Dr. Thomas Russell from the Army’s Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology, to discuss the Army’s robotics and autonomous systems strategy. During that meeting, we discussed the challenges of fielding these capabilities within troop formations and the efficacy of employing autonomous and semi-autonomous systems in future conflicts.

And I know the Army’s strategy calls for the investment in specific technology areas over the next 5 years in autonomy, robotics, artificial intelligence, as well as common control.

I would just like to hear your assessment and analysis as to the status of each of the services and the Department in researching and utilizing particularly autonomy and robotics.

General Selva: Thank you, Senator.

All of the services are actually quite engaged in a campaign to understand where advanced artificial intelligence and autonomy can be inserted into current concepts of operations and how they might be used in new and imaginative concepts of operations to help defeat adversaries across the spectrum of potential conflicts that we might find ourselves in.
I am very careful in public settings about the discussion of the very specifics of some of those autonomy initiatives, particularly as they relate to advanced air defense and the projection of force into denied areas because they will actually expose some of the vulnerabilities we believe our opponents have and they will actually expose some of the tools that we think we can bring to bear.

But if you allow me to use shorthand, it is very compelling when one looks at the capabilities that artificial intelligence can bring to the speed and accuracy of command and control and the capabilities that advanced robotics might bring to a complex battle space, particularly machine-to-machine interaction in space and cyberspace where speed is of the essence. And I will stop there at the risk of exposing things that we are actually doing.

Senator Peters: No. I fully understand, General.

The DOD directive 3000.09 governs the Department’s approach to autonomous weapons systems and is due to be renewed this year, as you know. And this directive specifically assigns responsibilities for the development and use of autonomous and semi-autonomous functions and weapons systems, including both manned as well as unmanned platforms. And in doing so, the Department has stated that it will not allow any robot or machine to take lethal action.
without a human operator in the decision-making loop. And I know you are well aware of the moral and ethical issues associated with that.

However, our adversaries often do not consider the same moral and ethical issues that we consider each and every day. In fact, a recent article in “Defense One” highlights Russia’s ambition to employ AI-directed weapons equipped with a neural network capable of identifying and engaging targets and even suggesting that Russian weapon makers see robotics and AI as a key for their future sales for adversaries of ours around the world.

So given that DOD directive is due to expire later this year, can you provide us some update on the process to update and renew the process and your thoughts regarding what seems to be Russian developments in AI targeting?

General Selva: Yes, sir, I will.

First of all, there will be a raucous debate in the Department about whether or not we take humans out of the decision to take lethal action. I will tell you in this forum that I am an advocate for keeping that restriction. Because we take our values to war and because many of the things that we must do in war are governed by the laws of war, which say we must take proportional and discriminate action against an enemy to achieve our objectives, I do not think it is reasonable for us to put robots in charge of
whether or not we take a human life. That does not mean
that we do not have to address the development of those
kinds of technologies and potentially find their
vulnerabilities and exploit those vulnerabilities to our own
defense. But publicly I think we should all be advocates
for keeping the ethical rules of war in place, lest we
unleash on humanity a set of robots that we do not know how
to control. And that is way off in the future, but it is
something we need to deal with right now.

Senator Peters: Thank you, General.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Fischer?

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Good morning, General.

General, when do you expect the NPR and the BMDR to be
complete?

General Selva: My expectation is it will take several
more months to complete the Nuclear Posture Review, and the
Ballistic Missile Defense Review will follow it because the
second review is actually informed by many of the strategic
choices that will be made in the Nuclear Posture Review.

Senator Fischer: And you testified earlier this year
that the NPR would be examining response options to Russia’s
violation of the INF Treaty. Is that correct?

General Selva: Yes, ma’am.

Senator Fischer: And by that, do you mean that the NPR
will describe potential response options, or will it contain a decision that we pursue a particular course of action?

General Selva: The design of the NPR is to provide the President with options. So we will provide him with a set of options that might be reasonable responses to the Russian activity with respect to the INF.

Senator Fischer: With no decision on those, just options?

General Selva: Yes, ma’am.

Senator Fischer: And I know that we have conferred with the Russians about their violation, and what has their response been?

General Selva: They have been mute on how they intend to respond.

Senator Fischer: Have you seen any indication that they intend to come back into compliance with this treaty?

General Selva: No, ma’am.

Senator Fischer: As you provide options to the President, will you be including the Russian response or non-response in those options that you give him?

General Selva: Yes, ma’am. The Russian activities are a part of the strategic environment within which we will present options to the President.

Senator Fischer: If they would, all of a sudden, step forward and begin a dialogue with us, would that change then
the options that you present to the President?

General Selva: It would likely change those options, but if the Russians step forward and said they were willing to return to compliance with the INF, we would have to have a method of actually verifying that compliance, which would require inspections of the weapons systems they have deployed.

Senator Fischer: So you would anticipate the options still would contain that they have not responded.

General Selva: Yes, ma’am.

Senator Fischer: And there has been some suggestion that Russia does not really get any kind of military advantage from the deployment of their ground launched cruise missile. Do you agree with that view?

General Selva: Given the location of the specific missile and the deployment, they do not gain any advantage in Europe, and that is as close as I will get to agreeing with that view, ma’am.

Senator Fischer: Beyond the direct military implications, do you believe there are broader strategic implications when it comes to confronting violations of an arms control agreement and that failing to respond could have a negative consequence on those broader implications when it comes to nonproliferation?

General Selva: I think, ma’am, with respect to any
given treaty on nonproliferation, the inability to enforce
the standards to which parties have agreed, whether
bilaterally or multilaterally, renders all other agreements
less compelling.

Senator Fischer: Can you tell us your opinion on where
we go from here?

General Selva: I think we should use all of the tools
that exist within the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty to
negotiate with and try to compel the Russians to return to
compliance. I am not saying that they will. We should also
take a look inside of the treaty, as we present options to
the President, at those research and development programs
that are available to us to actually increase pressure on
the Russians.

Senator Fischer: Thank you.

As you know, Russia maintains far more tactical nuclear
weapons than the United States, and they are deploying more
nuclear-capable sea, air, and now ground launched cruise
missiles. Do you believe that the line between strategic
nuclear weapons and tactical nuclear weapons is eroding, and
what implications does this have for any future arms control
talks?

General Selva: I think as we discuss nuclear
deterrence with the Russians and now the Chinese and likely
in the future other countries, we need to make very clear
that there is no firebreak between strategic nuclear weapons and, quote, non-strategic nuclear weapons, that the use of nuclear weapons in war crosses a threshold that will require a response.

Senator Fischer: Is this advice that the present administration has received?

General Selva: It is the standing advice we have given every President that I know of in recent history.

Senator Fischer: And do you believe that future agreements must include limitations on those tactical nuclear weapons?

General Selva: I think it would be a useful diplomatic exercise and useful initiative to attempt to negotiate with all holders of tactical nuclear weapons, their reduction and potential elimination to avoid the potential for miscalculation in the future.

Senator Fischer: Should it be more than just an exercise? Should it be part of the goals that we are trying to attain in any treaty?

General Selva: Yes, ma’am. Let me be clear with my terms. I did not mean that as an exercise as an intellectual exercise. I meant it as an act of force of diplomacy to actually get that work done.

Senator Fischer: Thank you very much, General.

Thank you, Senator Inhofe.
Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Fischer.

Senator Heinrich?

Senator Heinrich: Welcome back, General.

I want to follow up on the questions on the Third Offset that Senator King and Senator Warren raised, and specifically I want to talk a little bit about directed energy.

As the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, you have unique insight into the Joint Requirements Oversight Council which identifies capability gaps for the military and generates the requirements to fill those gaps. For the purposes of things like base protection, counter-rocket, counter-artillery, counter-mortar, counter-UAS, directed energy weapons systems have significant advantages but seem to be unable to enter the requirements setting process largely because alternative kinetic options already exist.

What do you think is preventing the transition of these technologies to the warfighter? Is it simply the pursuit of perfection over fielding something today or are directed energy weapons being held to a different standard?

General Selva: Thank you for the question, Senator. I do not believe they are being held to a different standard. The introduction of directed energy weapons into particularly defensive capabilities has proven a difficult task in order to produce the power and the concentration of
energy on targets to destroy them, particularly artillery and ballistic missiles. We have had significant progress in the counter unmanned aircraft systems area in bringing directed energy weapons into either defeating the sensors or defeating the actual aircraft themselves.

I think the promise is there for directed energy. It is going to be a matter of the concentration of that energy to have lethal effect. And so back to your original point, I do not believe we are holding the directed energy technology to a different standard, but we need to continue to investigate whether or not it does give us the advantages that the technology advocates promise specifically with respect to the necessity to kill an incoming kinetic vehicle.

Senator Heinrich: You know, I have been following this for a long time. As you know, I started out my career at Air Force research labs, and I would just encourage you to take a close look at where these are today both in terms of high-energy lasers and high-powered microwaves. You know, once you see artillery shells shot out of the sky, unmanned aerial vehicles, I think we are at a point today where this is ready for prime time as opposed to continuing to chase perfection. And I think the solutions that it offers avoid many of the collateral damage issues that inherently plague kinetic munitions and missiles. So I would just urge you to
sort of stay at the cutting edge of what we can offer right
now within this technology.

I want to shift a little bit to the issue of Russia.
And you and I have talked before about that. But to me and
to many of my colleagues, I think the pattern of behavior
from Russia is painfully obvious, that they will do what it
takes to achieve their objectives with very little
limitations. Whether it is interfering in U.S. elections,
interfering with European elections, formulating an
assassination plot like in Montenegro, Russia is treating
the West right now like it is the wild, wild West with no
norms, no laws, no consequences.

Should there be consequences for the kind of hostile
actions that we have seen from Russia both directed at the
United States and at our allies in Europe?

General Selva: Senator, I believe there should be
consequences. The Russians have adopted a philosophy of
operating below what they believe what is the West’s
threshold to respond.

Senator Heinrich: Exactly.

General Selva: We need to understand what that
strategy means and how to counter it and impose the kinds of
consequences that are necessary to prevent them from being
successful or to deter them from the activity in the first
place. Part and parcel of that is understanding how they
are doing what they are doing.

Senator Heinrich: Absolutely.

Do you have thoughts on what those consequences should look like if we want Russia to change their current pattern of behavior?

General Selva: I think this is going to require that we bring all of the tools of government to bear. The military tool is not going to be enough particularly given the kinds of circumstances where the Russians attempt to operate, as I mentioned earlier, below our threshold to respond.

Senator Heinrich: So a whole-of-government approach that includes things like sanctions, that includes things like the removal of properties that we have seen here in the United States. We should consider all of those things working in concert.

General Selva: All of those, among others, yes, sir.

Senator Heinrich: Thank you.

General Selva: To your question on directed energy, I will commit to having a meeting with the JROC and bring in the technology experts who can bring us up to date to make sure we are not missing something.

Senator Heinrich: I would deeply appreciate that. I think there is a handful of projects that are sort of on the shelf and ready to go right now, that there is a great deal
of interest in moving forward directly to the warfighter.

General Selva: Yes, sir.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

Senator Sullivan?

Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, General, congratulations on your renomination.

I want to talk about readiness here for a minute. From 2010 to 2016, the Department of Defense budget was cut by 24 percent, a quarter of the budget gone. Did you support that drastic cut?

General Selva: Sir, I was not in the position I am in during that period of time. I was the executor of the cuts at the receiving end as both a fielded commander and a combatant commander.

My caution is those cuts hurt. They hurt not only our ability to respond with respect to purchasing new weapons systems and being ready for what we are facing today, but they also caused us to balance readiness and procurement. And because readiness is something you can defer to the future, we deferred a lot of training during that time period in order to make those numbers work.

Senator Sullivan: I agree with that, and I think that these drastic cuts are coming home to roost in terms of readiness. Do you believe that a lack of readiness can be deadly for our military members?
General Selva: A lack of readiness in high-end combat can be deadly. It is important to understand that what we did during that time period was focus on the fight that was right ahead of us. So we made sure our forces were ready to deploy to the places they were going, and we deferred most of the high-end training, the complex maneuver exercises, the joint exercises that make us ready to face peer competitors.

Senator Sullivan: Let me just go into more specifics. There was an article in the "Marine Corps Times" a year and a half ago. It talked about Marine Corps aviation and how the lack of readiness is not only harmful to our national interests but it is actually threatening the safety of our aviators. When they are not able to fly, the article said, more Marine aviation-related deaths are going up.

We had a horrible, horrible accident just 2 weeks ago with the C-130 refueler. 16 brave souls were killed in that.

What are we doing about those kind of training accidents that in my view are undermining the ability of the force to operate and risking the lives of the men and women who volunteer to defend their country? It is outrageous.

General Selva: First of all, Senator, I mourn the loss of the 16 marines last week as well. But it is way too premature to make any conclusions about the cause of that
accident. And in deference to the bravery of those 16 marines, I think we should reserve judgment on whether or not training was an issue in that accident.

It is common among aviators, of which I am one, that training does have value in increasing the safety and efficacy of our force. So during those time periods where we compromise on training, we do assume risk. That is a consequence of having to balance within a budget that we are given to operate. So I think we should be careful about making conclusions about last week’s accident or using a single article to make conclusions about the viability of training for aviators inside the Marine Corps.

Senator Sullivan: Well, in 2015, Marine aviation-related deaths hit a 5-year high. And something needs to change. And to me, it relates to training. Are our aviators in the Marine Corps and Air Force flying less hours right now?

General Selva: Sir, I am not disputing that we need to focus on training and safety within all of our aviation services. Please do not get me wrong. With reference to the specific accident we are talking about --

Senator Sullivan: I am not talking about that. That is an example of what is happening too often, and I think it relates directly to a 25 percent decline in military spending. Nobody talks about this Congress approved that
the previous administration cut a quarter of the defense budget.

General Selva: It is reasonable to draw the conclusion that reductions in training are potentially the cause of an increase in the risk we take to do the work we do.

Senator Sullivan: Let me ask just a follow-up on Chairman Inhofe’s question about North Korea. The testimony in front of this committee has been consistently in an open setting it is no longer a matter of if but when Kim Jong-un is going to have an intercontinental ballistic nuclear missile that can threaten not just Alaska, my State, and Hawaii, Senator Hirono’s State, but the entire Lower 48 continental United States.

Can you describe succinctly what our North Korea strategy is, what the goal is, and how we are trying to achieve it, and how we in the Congress can help you? Is the goal to prevent at all costs Kim Jong-un having that capability? Because, as you know, General, he is rapidly, rapidly getting it. What is the goal. What is the end state? And how can we support it?

General Selva: Senator, I think we have to have two parallel lines of effort. The first is to attempt diplomatically and militarily to prevent him from achieving his goal of having a nuclear weapon on an intercontinental ballistic missile.
Senator Sullivan: And would we preemptively launch military operations?

General Selva: I think we have to entertain that potential option. That would be a policy choice by the President of the United States to execute or not execute that option.

Senator Sullivan: Which would need the authorization of Congress. Do you believe that?

General Selva: We would. And we need to think seriously about what the consequences of that action might be.

A parallel line of effort is to make sure that as he continues along a path to developing weapons that can strike the continental United States, that we have a parallel effort to provide for the defense of the United States with a suitable ballistic missile defense system that can handle the low volume at this point of missiles that he might be able to deploy that could strike us here across all of U.S. territory, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Lower 48.

Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Sullivan.

Senator Hirono?

Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, General, it is good to see you again. Thank you
very much for your continuing service.

As we sit here discussing the threats posed by both Russia and North Korea, they are two very different countries that we try to figure out what is it going to take for us to alter the behavior of both of these countries.

In the case of Russia, it appears as though maintaining sanctions and possibly imposing more sanctions has some kind of salutary effect. Would you agree with that?

General Selva: Yes, ma’am. I think in concert with our NATO allies and other partners, that targeted sanctions on Russia do actually have effect and can affect their behavior.

Senator Hirono: It is a lot harder to figure out what will incentivize North Korea to alter their push to become a nuclear power. So we seem to be placing a lot of emphasis on our hope that China will play a pivotal role in reining in North Korea’s ambitions. Do you think that we are placing too much emphasis on China? And if so, you mentioned diplomatic solutions or diplomatic approaches. I do not know that we even have a confirmed ambassador to South Korea, for example.

What are your thoughts about what more we can do, i.e., to incentivize China to do more with regard to North Korea or for us to pursue some other avenues, long shots as they may be, because Kim Jong-un does not appear to respond to
1 the usual approaches?

2 General Selva: Thank you, ma’am.

3 I think the work that is being done to pressurize the situation with respect to North Korea in terms of economic sanctions and broad trade sanctions is helpful. It is also quite useful to get the Chinese to do whatever they can diplomatically and use whatever leverage they have.

4 A point that is not lost on me and I do not think on any of you is the fact that Kim Jong-un, who has possession of nuclear weapons that can threaten the United States, clearly has possession of weapons that could threaten his relationship with China and fundamentally change the power structure in the region. And that makes a Kim Jong-un armed with nuclear weapons a threat to China as well. I think we should leverage as much of that as we can to try and get the Chinese not only to work on what they believe is maintaining the stability of North Korea, but to put pressure on him not to deploy nuclear weapons should he continue their development. And I think that accrues to our benefit because it avoids open conflict with North Korea, although we need to continue to be prepared in the event that they are not successful.

5 Senator Hirono: So do you think that our best bet with regard to North Korea is to come to a much better understanding with China? Because you say that economic
sanctions has an impact on North Korea, although it is hard to see that as having much of a deterrent effect at all. And we all recognize that, yes, a nuclear-armed North Korea is a threat to China, but it is very hard to tell when China will deem that there has been a tipping point reach with regard to North Korea where some kind of a much more concerted effort will come into play.

Do we have the kind of relationship with China right now that will enable us very quickly to identify what I would deem a tipping point and do something in a concerted way with the U.S. and China?

General Selva: I can only give you an assessment as an observer of the activities of the State Department and our Secretary of State. They are giving a tremendous amount of effort to building that relationship with China. The early indications were that China was willing to put pressure on North Korea, although we have not seen that pressure be successful.

Senator Hirono: Well, I am keeping my fingers crossed. With regard to the Asia-Pacific region, there are some who argue that or observe that we do not have a current overarching strategy to address the challenges in this part of the region, which has some of the largest militaries and four of the five most significant threats to the U.S. are in the Asia-Pacific area. So do you agree that we do not have
an overarching strategy to address the challenges in the
Asia-Pacific arena?

General Selva: I do not agree that we do not have a
strategy. The question is whether the critics of that
strategy believe it is fulsome enough to deal with the
threats of a resurgent North Korea, an emerging China, and a
resurgent Russia, three of the principal threats in the
region, in addition to violent extremism.

Senator Hirono: I am running out of time, General. So
if we do have a strategy, very succinctly what is that
strategy with regard to the Asia-Pacific threats?

General Selva: We manage some of our longest standing
alliances in the Pacific with Japan, Korea, the Philippines,
Thailand, and others. We have relationships with Australia,
New Zealand, and likeminded nations that are putting
pressure on China not to destabilize the region. Those are
not specifically aimed at North Korea, but they could be.
We are a nation that exists on trade and economic
relationships in the region and very strong diplomatic
relationships and alliances across the Pacific. Those are
the sum pieces of the strategy without actually trying to
outline all of it.

Senator Hirono: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Hirono.
Senator Wicker?

Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, General Selva. I appreciate you being here.

There is a lot of bipartisanship on this committee, and I think you know that based on the legislation that we are putting forward. And the senior Senator from Hawaii serves as ranking member of the Seapower Subcommittee, a committee that I have the honor of chairing.

We recommended to the full committee and this committee has reported language which is contained in the SHIPS Act which sets as a policy of the United States of America that we move to a 355-ship fleet. The House of Representatives has also taken this issue up and has put that in their bill, and that bill is further along over there than here.

This 355-ship requirement, General -- and I hope you will take this back to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This 355-ship requirement is not something the shipbuilding industry came up with, although I am sure they are delighted about it. It is not something that we invented as people in States that build ships, although we would like to see the idea of defending our Nation and military manufacturing. This is a requirement that came from the people out in the field looking at the seas and saying what do we need to make America safe at this particular time. And basically they took the requirements, sent them in, and it was way more
than 355. It was about twice that much. And then they said, resource-constrained, what should be the requirement? And so the considered opinion of the best minds in the military came up with the 355.

I just want to emphasize to you before I ask another question that we take that requirement seriously. And we have been in a position this year, both in the House and Senate committees, to give you what you need, and we want to communicate to you that we take this seriously and we want to be your partner there and actually give substance to what has been stated as the requirement. So please know that.

Now, also in the area of bipartisanship, I want to applaud what Senator Heinrich said about Russia. And I think I am quoting him correctly. Russia will do whatever they feel is necessary and they look at the threshold of what we in the West are sort of willing to tolerate and kind of stay under that threshold. That has been a pretty good strategy for President Putin. And I am getting tired of it. And I hope the American people and the Pentagon and this committee are getting tired of it because it threatens international security.

Now, you answered a question to Senator Ernst about providing lethal weapons to Ukraine. And as I understand it, in eastern Ukraine, the Government of Ukraine has troops there, and they are engaged in kinetic activity against
Russian-backed forces. Is that correct, General Selva?

General Selva: Yes, sir, that is correct, along the line of contact between the Donbas and the rest of the Ukraine.

Senator Wicker: And would it be helpful to those Ukrainian troops if they had better lethal weapons in which to defend their country and defend the Government of Ukraine?

General Selva: Sir, that is a policy choice. The kinds of lethal defensive weapons that have been advocated for Ukraine would allow them to defend themselves along the line of contact against those forces supported by the Russians.

Senator Wicker: And so there is a discussion among the Joint Staff about this I understand from your earlier answer. And you are working with the European Command to identify what types of weapons are necessary. So when can we expect a decision about that, and how can we be helpful in exhorting our government to provide the kind of weapons that I think Senator Ernst and I and others are advocating?

General Selva: Sir, those discussions are ongoing. So I think within the coming months you will have an answer to that question. But we have advocated, for example, for lethal means like anti-tank weapons, so not tanks and offensive capability, but defensive capability --
Senator Wicker: We have advocated. Who is the “we” there?

General Selva: We being the European Command and the Joint Staff.

Senator Wicker: Now, months. It could be 11 months. It could be 2 months. Can you give us a little more specific idea of when we might actually be able to make a decision and do something that would help these people defend themselves and stand up to the sort of activity that Senator Heinrich was talking about in his question?

General Selva: Sir, if I can take that back and get you the actual timeline for the discussions. I do not have it with me, but I am happy to do that.

[The information follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]
Senator Wicker: Okay. Well, thank you very much. And please be advised that this Senator for one thinks that it is time for us to give these people what they need to defend their own country. Thank you, sir.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Wicker, let me add that currently the Oklahoma 45th Guard is over there training them, and they are a little bit perplexed on what they are training them with. Excellent question.

Senator Blumenthal?

Senator Blumenthal: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to follow those questions asked by my colleague from Mississippi, and first to overwhelmingly endorse his view -- and I have championed it on this committee -- that this Nation should be providing the kind of lethal defensive weapons, including anti-tank armaments, that are necessary for the Ukrainians to defend their own nation. You would agree with me that they are defending their nation against Russian aggression. Correct?

General Selva: Yes, sir. They are defending their sovereignty.

Senator Blumenthal: And you said I think a moment ago that the question of whether to provide that type of weaponry is a policy choice. But perhaps you can tell us in as graphic terms as possible what the difference it would make if we provide those kinds of weapons to the Ukrainians.
They would be far more effective on the battlefield in defending their country. Correct?

General Selva: Yes, sir. And let me make sure that I am clear on the discussion of the policy question. The policy question is not whether or not to provide lethal defensive assistance but the kinds and quantities of that lethal defensive assistance to the Ukrainians so that they can defend their sovereignty.

Senator Blumenthal: Maybe you can give us some examples of that choice.

General Selva: How advanced would the anti-tank weapons be and in what quantities would they be delivered as an example of that conversation.

Senator Blumenthal: Why not give them the most advanced kind of anti-tank weapons or the most advanced kind that they need to counter -- why give them second rate anti-tank weapons?

General Selva: So I do not want to be argumentative. Some of the weapons that we have have technology controls on them that we do not transfer them to other countries unless we can have assurances that the technology will not be exploited. Even in your question, you actually qualified by saying the lethal capabilities they need versus the best possible available. And that is the policy choice we have to make with respect to the types and amounts of aid that we
Senator Blumenthal: And I would agree with you that we should not transfer technology that could be compromised or that could be captured by our Russian adversaries. And they are our adversaries too. But I just want to join in the expression of impatience, very strong impatience with the delays that we seemed to have encountered.

And I met just last Sunday with a group of Ukrainian Americans who, in effect, said to me, you know, you have been coming to us saying these weapons are going to be provided. Is there some kind of barrier or obstacle? And I am at a loss to give them the kind of answer they deserve. And I think we are at a loss to understand what the barriers or obstacles are. And I am not directing this question or my impatience at you personally because I recognize there are other factors at issue here.

With respect to Russian interference in our elections, you have no reason to question the overwhelming unanimous views of the intelligence community that they interfered in our elections. Do you?

General Selva: I have no reason to question their views, but I have no firsthand knowledge of the information that they are examining.

Senator Blumenthal: And would you agree with me that having some kind of cybersecurity pact with the Russians
seems foolhardy at best?

General Selva: Not having the details of the potential agreement, it is hard for me to say that they would be any more reasonable about a cyber pact than they are about INF or any of the other treaties without some ironclad method of verification and validation of their intentions. So it is worth a conversation. The question is without any detail, we are having a hypothetical discussion about whether or not they would comply.

Senator Blumenthal: Their record in the cyber domain is one of attacking this Nation. Would you agree?

General Selva: Yes, sir.

Senator Blumenthal: So sharing any information with them is just going to give them additional, in effect, keys to our cyber kingdom.

General Selva: If that is the foundation of such an agreement, that would be true.

Senator Blumenthal: Well, any kind of information sharing would be involved in a pact or agreement, and it seems highly foolhardy and dangerous to our national security.

General Selva: Again, without the context of the actual agreement, it is hard to know what information would or would not be shared.

Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.
I want to end where I should have begun by thanking you for your service and congratulations on your reappointment and your new position. Thank you very much, sir.

Senator Inhofe: Senator Graham?

Senator Graham: Thank you.

General, I want to echo that too. You have served well and I look forward to keeping you in the job.

I associate myself with Senator Wicker and Blumenthal and Inhofe about helping the Ukraine.

Do you agree that given the threats we face -- and we have just been talking about a few of them -- the Air Force needs to be bigger and more capable in the out-years?

General Selva: Yes, sir. And I believe that is the proposal that the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and the Secretary brought forward in the last budget.

Senator Graham: Thank you.

Let us talk about three battlefields right quickly.

Iraq. Do you support a residual force once ISIL is defeated in Iraq, if the Iraqis would agree, of U.S. forces?

General Selva: Yes, sir. If the Iraqis will agree, we will likely need to do continued advising and assisting and training of the Iraqi Security Forces.

Senator Graham: Is that true for the Air Force particularly?

General Selva: Yes, sir.
Senator Graham: The Iranians are there in fairly large numbers I hear. Is that correct? Or having influence in fairly substantial ways.

General Selva: As a consequence of a long relationship between Iraqi Shia and the Iranian Government, there are Iranians present in Iraq. That does not mean that they necessarily have to be a controlling influence in Iraq.

Continuing to build our relationship with the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi Security Forces I believe is in our interests.

Senator Graham: Well, offering Iraq something they would want from us not from Iran like helping train the Air Force would probably give us leverage in Iraq.

General Selva: It quite possibly would, yes, sir.

Senator Graham: Afghanistan. What is the state of the Afghan Air Force in terms of the capability to support their forces in the field?

General Selva: They are beginning to be able to support their forces in the field with a modicum of lift and with light attack aircraft, which are very useful in the theater. Their helicopter force is subject to the maintenance woes of old Russian aircraft. So we have a proposal in place to actually replace their aging Russian vintage helicopters with UH-60’s. Those are the helicopters that the Afghan Air Force trains on here in the United
States.

Senator Graham: Until that happens, do you agree that it would be in our interest to provide some air power that is missing to the Afghan Security Forces as they fight international terrorists?

General Selva: Yes, sir, particularly as a bridge to their capability to provide long-term support for their ground force.

Senator Graham: Do you support additional troops going into Afghanistan?

General Selva: I think that would be a determination of what specific tasks those forces would be doing, but as we look at Afghanistan today --

Senator Graham: Counterterrorism would be --

General Selva: Counterterrorism would be one of those missions. Supporting the Afghan National Security Forces with train, advise, and assist would be another one of those missions.

Senator Graham: And have some air power at their disposal they do not have today?

General Selva: Yes, sir.

Senator Graham: Syria. The day we take Raqqa back, we better have a plan post-Raqqa. Right?

General Selva: Yes, sir.

Senator Graham: What role do you think the United
States should play in terms of stabilizing Syria when Raqqa falls?

General Selva: It is actually I think a bigger task than that, Senator. Raqqa is the current center of external planning for ISIS in Syria, but they have already begun a migration towards the middle Euphrates Valley. So until we have worked either by, with, and through partners on the ground or the Syrian Government shows a willingness to actually deny sanctuary to ISIS, they will continue to be a threat to stability in Iraq and in the region. So we will not be done when we are done in Raqqa.

Senator Graham: A very good point.

Air power is being deployed in Syria against ISIL today. Right? American air power?

General Selva: American and coalition air power from 69 nations are being used in Iraq and Syria today, as well as a very small number of ground forces that are providing advice and assistance to those elements that are willing to fight ISIS in Syria.

Senator Graham: Would you be open to adding more air power into Afghanistan? I was shocked to hear the number of F-16’s we have was pretty small.

General Selva: I would have to look at the numbers, to be honest with you, Senator. The capacity of those airplanes to range most of Afghanistan and to service the
targets in Afghanistan with the help of tankers and bombers from the Gulf is actually a pretty compelling amount of air power in the region, as we speak.

Senator Graham: Well, when I left, I was shocked at the few that we had given the task that we face in Afghanistan.

So from the American military point of view, a lot of hard fighting yet to be done in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan?

General Selva: Yes, sir.

Senator Graham: Can you see a scenario where American air power is not absolutely essential to deciding the outcome of these battles?

General Selva: No, sir.

Senator Graham: Thank you very much. And to all those who serve in the Air Force, thank them.

General Selva: Thank you, sir.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Graham.

Senator Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will say at the outset that our thoughts and prayers are with Chairman McCain as he recovers from his surgery, and we look forward to his being back at the committee very soon.

General, thank you for your service.

I want to talk to you about several different topics,
but I want to start with the Iran certification.

Yesterday, the administration certified to Congress that Iran is in compliance with the nuclear deal. I have very significant concerns with that certification. I want to ask you in your judgment do you believe Iran is in compliance with the deal?

General Selva: Based on the evidence that has been presented by the intelligence community, it appears that Iran is in compliance with the rules that were laid out in the JCPOA.

Senator Cruz: Are they testing ballistic missiles?

General Selva: They are testing ballistic missiles, but those were not covered under the agreement.

Senator Cruz: How serious do you assess the threat of Iran developing nuclear weapons?

General Selva: I think without the controls of the JCPOA, Iran has the technical expertise to be able to continue down the path to development of nuclear weapons.

Senator Cruz: As you know, a similar deal was negotiated with North Korea in the Clinton administration, and it resulted in North Korea acquiring a substantial number of nuclear weapons. What do you believe makes this deal likely to result in any outcome different from what happened in North Korea?

General Selva: I think there are two substantial
differences at the outset. That does not mean that will not be setbacks in the agreement. The first is the inspection regime that went into the agreement that allows for international inspectors to inspect all of the areas that the Iranians used in their development and storage of enriched uranium and potentially the development of nuclear weapons. The second is --

Senator Cruz: How much advance notice does Iran get before those notifications?

General Selva: I do not have the details of how much advance notice they get, but we are reasonably confident that the inspectors are able to randomly inspect. And they have installed technical measures that allow for constant surveillance of those same sites.

The second is the provisions that allow for sanctions outside of the agreement to continue to be in place on those areas of the Iranian economy, as well as leadership that engage in activities that are not governed by the treaty -- or by the agreement. It is not a treaty.

Senator Cruz: So last week we also discovered that Iran had sentenced an American citizen and a Princeton graduate student to 10 years in prison. Does it concern you that we are certifying they are in compliance with the deal in the wake of their imprisoning yet another American?

General Selva: It concerns me whenever an American
citizen is imprisoned overseas, particularly in a regime
that is not transparent with their judiciary system. But
again, the specifics of the agreement are directed
explicitly at the development of and storage of nuclear
weapons.

Senator Cruz: Well, we will continue this
collection, but I will say that I think the Iran deal is
wholly inadequate. The inspection regime is designed to
facilitate cheating. It requires effectively 3 weeks
advance notice, and for the most sensitive sites, the
Iranians self-inspect. And the American people received
numerous assurances that North Korea would abide by an
agreement very, very similar to this, and North Korea, Kim
Jong-il, happily took the billions of dollars the Clinton
administration sent to them and used it to develop nuclear
weapons. I believe the Ayatollah Khamenei intends to do the
exact same thing.

And I think the certification yesterday was unfortunate
and is dangerous. There is another certification that is
due in October I believe, and there is also an upcoming
deadline for waiving sanctions. And let me say I would urge
the administration there is no greater threat on the face of
the earth to the United States than the threat of a nuclear
Iran. And I think the certification yesterday was very hard
to justify with the facts on the ground.
Let me shift to another topic. There is right now a disagreement going on between the Department of Defense and the House Armed Services Committee concerning whether a separate military branch should be created for space. I would be interested in your thoughts on that question.

General Selva: Thank you, Senator.

I do not believe now is the right time to have a discussion about developing a space force with all of the leadership and infrastructure that would go with it. It would also complicate the command and control of the space constellation which is critical to our military operations. So I believe the time is not right for a conversation about a separate space corps or space force.

Senator Cruz: So how do we do a better job defending ourselves in space, given the vulnerabilities and our dependence on satellite technology for virtually every aspect of our military?

General Selva: Senator, I think there are three things that we need to do. Actually two are in progress. One is in work.

The first was the consolidation of our national military defense of space in a single command and control center in Colorado Springs that allowed us to operate the entire constellation as opposed to satellites in the aegis. The National Defense Space Center I believe it is called is
functioning at Schriever Air Force Base in Colorado as we speak.

The second is to vest the Commander of Air Force Space Command with the components and responsibilities to manage the entire constellation vice trying to manage it through subcomponents of his own headquarters. USSTRATCOM, under General John Hyten’s leadership, has implemented that change in the command and control arrangements just in the last few months. It is time to let that play out and see if we can get some efficiencies out of it.

And the third is to continue to vest in the Secretary of the Air Force the acquisition authority for satellite constellations that are critical to military defense.

Senator Cruz: Thank you, General.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Cruz.

Senator Nelson?

Senator Nelson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the outset, I want to say on behalf of so many of us that have not had a chance to register our wishes that Chairman McCain have a speedy recovery and return as quickly as possible.

You know, you have had, General, an extraordinary career, very distinguished. I suspect that there is not a problem in the world with you continuing that service, and I thank you for your willingness to be able to do it.
Because of that experience, do you want to comment on the fact that Russia has a history of meddling in other people’s elections going way back, as far back as what we saw and what they did in Georgia, what obviously we have seen that they have done in Ukraine and using cyber? I am asking this for your perspective because I think Putin understands he cannot beat us on land. He cannot beat us in the air. He cannot beat us on the sea or under the sea, and he cannot beat us in space. But he thinks he can beat us in cyber. And he has had a number of successes going back to Georgia, Ukraine, now in the European elections, several European countries.

So do you want to comment about how serious this cyber attack problem from Russia is, including our own country and the attacks that we have seen here?

General Selva: Thank you, Senator.

I indicated earlier that I do not have any firsthand knowledge of the Russian activity that is alleged in our elections from the intelligence community. However, as a person who has spent a lot of time thinking about the security of the data that represents our electoral system, I think we ought to think very carefully about how we protect that data and how we use that data to facilitate the democratic process in our United States.

An example that I have used publicly and, if you will
forgive me, I will use now is it is much easier to tamper
with registration data than it is to tamper with voting
data. So if I wanted to complicate an American election or
I wanted to complicate an election anywhere in the world, I
would simply make it more difficult for people to vote as
opposed to trying to get in after the fact and change the
record of their votes. And so as we look at our system,
which is distributed across 50 States and every precinct and
municipality in those 50 States, we need to be really
careful that we do not make the assertion that that
inherently distributed system is protected because of its
diversity and distribution.

So I think we as a Nation ought to think carefully
about the value of the data on all of us, our voting records
in terms of how we register and where we register, and how
protecting that matters for future elections. And that way
no one, not Russia, not China, not anybody else who wants to
intervene in an election will have the capacity to change
our willingness and ability vote and our willingness and
ability to vote our conscience for those democratically
elected leaders of our country.

Senator Nelson: So, for example, it could be something
as simple as going into the registration records and
deleting registrations. So a person shows up and they say,
Mr. Jones, I am sorry you are not registered. Show up on
election day or something as easy as going in and changing
dresses so that it fouls up the registration system of
what precinct that you are in. It could be something as
simple as this, and it would hugely complicate, especially
in a place like Florida that has had tremendous
complications with its voting, which has produced long lines
that are sometimes as long as 7 hours. And that is recent
history, by the way. You can imagine with people trying to
contest the fact that they show up on election day and they
say they are not registered and they know they are and they
are trying to prove that they are and how that would foul up
all of the other voters standing in line. It is an
extraordinary and scary thought.

And since I am the last one here seeking recognition, I
just want to ask you another question. What is your
experience? Would you share with the committee your
experience where your own privacy has been invaded on your
personal accounts? Is that something that you feel
comfortable in sharing? I think it would be very helpful
for the committee to either know that publicly or privately.

General Selva: Yes, sir. I would share this small
amount of information publicly.

Immediately following the OPM breach, where significant
amounts of personal identifying information were made
available through a loss of data, about 48 hours later I was
I locked out of one of my bank and investment accounts as a consequence of a third party attempting to enter that account using information that was likely garnered from that personally identifying information that was the consequence of the OPM breach. I subsequently received a letter from OPM that notified me that my personal data was, in fact, part of the breach. And so that is an example.

I can guarantee you for that hour and a half to 2 hours it took for me to work with my bank and brokerage company to make sure my data and my investments were secure that my attention was not entirely devoted to the task at hand, which was being the Commander of the United States Transportation Command.

Senator Nelson: And are you aware that that has happened to other high-ranking United States military officers?

General Selva: Yes, sir.

Senator Nelson: I think that states it, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Reed, did you want to add anything?

Senator Reed: No.

Senator Inhofe: Well, let me say, General Selva, you have been an excellent witness. We appreciate very much your straightforward answers, and we thank you for your
And we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:22 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]