

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE POSTURE OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY IN REVIEW OF THE
DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR
2019 AND THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Washington, D.C.

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U.S. Senate

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Committee on Armed Services

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Washington, D.C.

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12 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:37 a.m. in
13 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James M.
14 Inhofe, presiding.

15

Committee Members Present: Senators Inhofe

16

[presiding], Inhofe, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst,

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Tillis, Sullivan, Perdue, Cruz, Graham, Reed, Nelson,

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McCaskill, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly,

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Hirono, Kaine, King, Heinrich, Warren, and Peters.

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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S.
2 SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

3 Senator Inhofe: Our meeting will come to order. Let
4 me explain what we'll be doing. We have two votes. One
5 vote's taking place right now. Those members who are here
6 now have already voted. We're going to be working right
7 through the second vote so that we won't have to keep you
8 folks any longer than necessary.

9 The committee meets today to receive testimony on the
10 posture of the United States Army and its fiscal year 2019
11 budget request. We welcome Dr. Mark Esper, Secretary of the
12 Army, and General Mark Milley, Chief of Staff of the Army.

13 The National Defense Strategy directs our Nation's
14 military to prepare for the return of great-power
15 competition. This means that we must be prepared to deter
16 and, if necessary, defeat potential near-peer adversaries,
17 both China and Russia. With their alarming speed of
18 modernization of both conventional and nuclear forces, these
19 adversaries now present a credible threat to America and our
20 allies in the regions. It's time for us to take stock and
21 act. Senior Army leadership has said the service is
22 outranged and outgunned. That's a frightening thought. And
23 we've heard it over, over again, and it is a fact.

24 As currently organized and equipped, the future of the
25 Army's readiness and relevance is -- requires modernization

1 now. The Army's modernization program unveiled last fall
2 shows you take this challenge seriously. The solutions for
3 acquisition and program management will help the Army repair
4 identified capability gaps within the force. Any successful
5 modernization strategy must focus on results. Rapid
6 prototyping, and the realistic experimentation will be vital
7 to getting modern, reliable, lethal weapons into the hands
8 of our soldiers, and doing so on time.

9 With the calculation of Crusader and Future Combat
10 Systems, we have fallen woefully behind in our artillery.
11 And that's something that I'm very sensitive to. And we
12 remember how much money both the Crusader and the Future
13 Combat System ended up costing. And really, we got nothing
14 from it. And we're not going to let that happen again. A
15 lot of that's going to be the acquisition that we are
16 working on now.

17 And now we have a system that -- of the -- integral in
18 solving these issues. We have no doubt but the cross-
19 function teams currently operating there -- we're talking
20 about Fort Sill -- will help solve the disparity with our
21 adversaries. We look to you gentlemen to lead the effort
22 for real, sustained modernization. It will be -- require
23 your engagement, leadership. It will require you to make
24 hard choices, set priorities, and accept some risk. And it
25 will require an open and transparent dialogue with Congress

1 along the way. We look forward to working with you to make
2 our shared modernization vision a reality as the Army
3 reinvents itself to become the 21st century fighting force
4 prepared for it.

5 You know, we're waiting now for Senator Reed to get
6 here, and we're going to get his opening statement and start
7 right away, but this is different than anytime that I
8 recall. And I've been on this committee for 24 years, and
9 on the House committee for 8 years prior to that. And to
10 see that we're going to finally have to do something with
11 acquisition. But, we've never been faced with -- several of
12 us just came back from the South China Seas, and we watched
13 what China is doing with the islands they're building out
14 there. It's almost as if they're preparing for World War
15 III. And our allies in that part of the world -- and I've
16 talked to you folks about this before -- realize that this
17 is a -- that they're watching China flex its muscles out
18 there, and they are kind of taking -- deciding who to take
19 sides with. These are our allies. So, this is something
20 that I'd suggest you guys have not had the opportunity to
21 experience prior to the time that we're experiencing today.

22 Let me just see -- yeah, what we're going to do, we're
23 going to start with your opening statements. And Senator
24 Reed is on his way, and what we'll do is interrupt your
25 statements so that he can give his opening statement. Is

1 that all right? Very good.

2 Let's start with you, Secretary Esper.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. MARK T. ESPER, SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

2 Dr. Esper: Well, Senator Inhofe, distinguished members
3 of the committee, good morning, and thank you for the
4 opportunity to appear before you today.

5 Let me say up front that the Army's readiness across
6 its formations is improving, and, if called upon today, I'm
7 confident we would prevail in any conflict. This is due, in
8 part, to the increased funding Congress provided last year.
9 And for this, I would like to say thank you.

10 The Army's mission to defend the Nation has not
11 changed, but the strategic environment has. Following 17
12 years of sustained combat, we now face a future
13 characterized by the reemergence of great-power competition
14 and the continued challenges posed by rogue states and
15 nonstate actors, making the world ever more complex and
16 dangerous. To address these challenges, the Army is
17 changing. We have a comprehensive plan to ensure our long-
18 term dominance. In fact, since my previous testimony before
19 the committee on December 7th of last year, we have released
20 our vision for the Army. Our vision is fully consistent
21 with the National Defense Strategy, and one that General
22 Milley and I believe will ensure our success for years to
23 come.

24 We will achieve this vision through focused and
25 enduring priorities encompassing several major long-term

1 lines of effort. But, a vision alone will not make the Army
2 successful. We must have predictable, adequate, sustained,
3 and timely funding. Fiscal uncertainty has done a great
4 deal to erode our readiness and hamper our ability to
5 modernize. While the Army must be ready to deploy, fight,
6 and win anytime, anywhere, against any adversary, the
7 National Defense Strategy has identified China and Russia as
8 the principal competitors against which we must build
9 sufficient capacity and capabilities.

10 Senator Inhofe: Yes, thank you, Mr. Secretary.

11 Just for a moment -- would you like to give your
12 opening statement?

13 Senator Reed: Well, Mr. Chairman, would it be better
14 for the Secretary and the Chief to finish, and then I'll --

15 Senator Inhofe: That's a good idea.

16 Continue.

17 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir.

18 With regard to Russia and China, both countries are
19 taking a more aggressive role on the world stage, and either
20 possess or are building advanced capabilities that are
21 specifically designed to reverse the tactical overmatch we
22 have enjoyed for decades. In support of the National
23 Defense Strategy, the Army is increasing our lethality along
24 three focus priorities: readiness, modernization, and
25 reform.

1 Readiness is the top priority, because only a ready
2 total Army -- that's regular Army, Guard, and Reserve -- can
3 deter conflict, defeat enemies, and enable the joint force
4 to win decisively. We are refocusing training for our
5 soldiers to be more lethal and more resilient on the high-
6 intensity battlefield of the future. We are also increasing
7 home station training, getting more repetitions for our
8 formations at the company level and below. We are giving
9 training time back to commanders by reducing certain self-
10 imposed mandatory training requirements not tied to
11 increased lethality and by eliminating excess reporting. We
12 have maximized the number of Combat Training Center
13 rotations to 20 per year, four of which are dedicated to the
14 Reserve component. These rotations are focused on the high-
15 end fight, replicating near-peer competitor capabilities,
16 including increased enemy lethality, degraded
17 communications, persistent observation, and a contested
18 environment.

19 And, while the quality, training, and esprit of our
20 soldiers are what make the U.S. Army the most ready and
21 lethal ground combat force in history, our superiority is
22 enabled by the best weapons and equipment we can provide.
23 As such, our second priority is modernization, or future
24 readiness. To ensure our soldiers never enter a fair fight,
25 the Army is now increasing the investments in modernizing

1 the force. Our modernization strategy is focused on one
2 goal: making our soldiers and units far more lethal and
3 effective than any adversary. The establishment of the Army
4 Futures Command this summer is the best example of our
5 commitment to the future lethality of the force. Army
6 Futures Command will address the key shortcomings of the
7 current acquisition system, providing unity of command,
8 effort, and purpose to the modernization process.

9 The Army has also identified its top six modernization
10 priorities for the coming years. Each of these priorities
11 is detailed in my written statement, and each is the purview
12 of a newly established cross-functional team. The purpose
13 of these CFTs is to determine the requirements of needed
14 capabilities to ensure all stakeholders at the table from
15 day one, and to focus Army resources on accelerated
16 experimentation, prototyping, and fielding. In order to
17 ensure battlefield success, our doctrine must reflect the
18 threat environment we face and remain apace with our efforts
19 to modernize our equipment.

20 Our third priority is reform, freeing up time, money,
21 and manpower to enhance readiness, accelerate modernization,
22 and ensure the efficient use of resources provided to us by
23 the American people. Our reform efforts, particularly
24 within the acquisition system, are long overdue. While
25 Futures Command is probably the boldest reform we are

1 pursuing, other reform initiatives owe much to the
2 acquisition authorities delegated to the services in prior
3 NDAAAs. Within these authorities, we are reinvigorating the
4 Army Requirements Oversight Council, moving major defense
5 acquisition programs back to the service, and using other
6 transactional authorities to accelerate fielding in limited
7 situations.

8 Another essential reform effort is development of a
9 modernized personnel system based on the principles and
10 practices of talent management found in the private sector,
11 a system much more open, flexible, and dynamic so that we
12 can better attract, develop, and retain the best and
13 brightest our Nation has to offer.

14 A ready and modernized Army is critical to defend the
15 Nation, but we must not overlook what makes us remarkable.
16 For this, I have outlined three enduring priorities. First,
17 taking care of our soldiers, civilians, and their families.
18 Second, a servicewide recommitment to the Army's values,
19 especially by leaders, to treat everyone with dignity and
20 respect. And finally, strengthening our alliances and
21 partners by building stronger ties through a number of
22 initiatives. I look forward to discussing these with you,
23 as time permits.

24 With that, let me thank you again for this committee's
25 continued support of the Army, and specifically the defense

1 authorizations and funding increases requested in the FY18
2 and '19 budgets. I look forward to your questions and
3 appreciate the opportunity to discuss these important
4 matters with you today.

5 Thank you.

6 [The prepared statement of Dr. Esper follows:]

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1 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Secretary Esper.
2 General Milley.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL MARK. A. MILLEY, USA, CHIEF OF
2 STAFF OF THE ARMY

3 General Milley: Thanks, Senator Inhofe. I appreciate
4 the opportunity. And thanks, Ranking Member Reed and all
5 the distinguished members of the committee, for the
6 opportunity to testify today.

7 And, although he's not here today, I also want to
8 acknowledge and recognize Chairman McCain for his
9 immeasurable support to our Army and his lifetime of
10 incredibly brave and dedicated service to our Nation. And
11 each of us in the Army prays, as you do, for his speedy
12 recovery and return to the Senate.

13 I want to start by thanking Congress for the '18 bill.
14 That was significant. It has tremendous impact on the
15 future readiness and the current readiness of our Army, and
16 impact on morale of the force. And, as you know, this
17 funding is vital, and we will all work diligently to spend
18 these dollars in a responsible manner over the last two
19 quarters of this fiscal year.

20 And thank you, also, for the general increases in the
21 defense caps for '18 and '19. These increases support the
22 new National Defense Strategy and advance the Army's
23 readiness and lethality while allowing our Army to modernize
24 for the future.

25 In short, what these monies have done is stopped a

1 steep decline, it stopped the bleeding of the Army, and we
2 are on the mend. And I can report out to you today that 2
3 and a half years after I became the Chief of Staff of the
4 Army, we are in significantly better shape through the
5 generosity of the American people and this Congress. It's
6 essential, though, that we maintain these increases, as
7 returning to BCA caps will halt our ability to modernize,
8 and it will reverse any recent gain in readiness.

9 The demand for ready, able, and lethal Army continues.
10 Today, we have about 180,000 or so soldiers supporting
11 combatant commands around the globe, including ongoing
12 operations in the Middle East and supporting our posture in
13 order to deter operations -- order adversary operations in
14 Europe and Asia-Pacific. The Army roughly fills about 50
15 percent of annual planned demand by any of the combatant
16 commanders. And, of emergent demand or unplanned demand,
17 the Army fills between 60 and 70 percent of all of those
18 requirements. Our newly created SFABs, for example, are
19 already in high demand from all the combatant commanders.
20 One of them, just yesterday, asked for an SFAB to be
21 assigned to him. The first deployed this past couple of
22 months, and the second has been activated, and we are
23 quickly proceeding with a third, fourth, fifth, and sixth.
24 Your support has allowed the Army to field those units, and
25 has allowed the Army to become significantly more combat

1 ready today than we were just 24 months ago.

2 We have increased the number of Combat Training Center
3 rotations, as Secretary Esper talked about. We've improved
4 our equipment operational readiness rates. We've improved
5 these flow of spare parts. We've replenished our Army pre-
6 positioned stocks in both Asia and Europe. We've improved
7 munitions around the world. And we've significantly
8 improved our manning shortfalls and filled holes inside of
9 our operational and deployable units. In short, we have a
10 better Army today than we had just a short while ago.

11 The bottom line is that the United States Army
12 continues to meet all the missions required of us. And,
13 thanks to your support, we are more ready. But, we cannot
14 be content with simply being ready for today's global
15 demands. Instead, we must focus on readiness both now and
16 in the future. The National Defense Strategy calls for us
17 to build a more lethal force. As noted by Secretary Esper,
18 we face long-term competition with China and Russia, and
19 regional and serious threats from Iran and North Korea, as
20 well as ongoing operations against terrorism.

21 The strategic global environment is increasingly
22 unstable and increasingly dangerous, and there is no time to
23 pause. We know these competitors, these great-power
24 competitors, both China and Russia, have made significant
25 advances in the development of advanced weapons, technology,

1 and the capabilities of their military forces. And I'd be
2 happy to go into great detail in a classified briefing on
3 that.

4 We must maintain our overmatch to achieve victory
5 against any adversary at any time. And the increased
6 lethality on a future battlefield is going to require that.
7 To both stay ready and to build a force of the future,
8 that's going to require predictable, adequate, sustained,
9 and timely funding. The Army's FY19 budget requests our
10 priorities to grow and maintain a highly capable force both
11 today and to modernize and build our future force and to
12 take proper care of our soldiers and family members and Army
13 civilians while being good stewards of the taxpayer dollar.
14 We recognize the American taxpayer entrusts us with a
15 significant amount of money to meet these demands. We will
16 be diligent stewards of our resources, and we will enforce
17 accountability to make effective use of every single dollar.
18 Your support for the FY19 budget will ensure our soldiers
19 remain ready to fight tonight as we prepare for the
20 unforeseen conflicts of tomorrow.

21 Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I look
22 forward to each of your questions.

23 [The prepared statement of General Milley follows:]

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1 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, General Milley.

2 Senator Reed.

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

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

4 And let me join you in welcoming Secretary Esper and
5 General Milley. Thank you, gentlemen, for your service.
6 And please thank the men and women of the Army for their
7 great service. And I look forward to your response to our
8 questions as we move forward.

9 The President's budget request for FY 2019 includes
10 \$182 billion in the funding for the Army. Of that amount,
11 148 billion is for base budget requirements and 34 billion
12 for overseas contingency operations. And, as the committee
13 considers the Army's funding request, we must be mindful, as
14 you've pointed out, of the risks facing our country and our
15 national security challenges.

16 The new National Defense Strategy is focused on the
17 reemergence of long-term strategic competition, which makes
18 the threat posed by China and Russia the primary focus for
19 the Department. This strategic shift will require the Army
20 to train for full-spectrum operations and to field equipment
21 necessary for a high-end fight. The new strategy also
22 assumes risk in our counterterrorism mission, as it is no
23 longer the primary national security concern. And, as you
24 go forward, your comments on views on how the Army is going
25 to balance that shift to the high-end, near-peer fight while

1 seeking more efficient approaches to counterterrorism would
2 be deeply appreciated.

3 Several months ago, the Army created a number of cross-
4 functional teams, as you pointed out, Mr. Secretary, that
5 were designed to break down acquisition stovepipes so new
6 technologies and modernization platforms could be delivered
7 to the force in a more effective manner. I would ask, going
8 forward this morning, that you would share with us what
9 you've learned so far from these efforts, and how these
10 teams will inform your modernization efforts throughout the
11 Army.

12 In addition, given the new emphasis on great-power
13 competition, I hope you will also discuss the necessary
14 investments in modernization that you're emphasizing in this
15 budget, and not this -- just this budget, but budgets that
16 might follow. Modernized military platforms and upgraded
17 equipment are necessary to prevail in great-power
18 competitions, but success against a near-peer adversary also
19 requires the Army to build and maintain readiness levels, as
20 you've pointed out. And this hearing is an opportunity to
21 update in more detail the Army's current efforts to rebuild
22 and sustain readiness.

23 Finally, the budget request seeks an increase of 4,000
24 Active Duty soldiers, as well as increased full-time support
25 for the Reserve component. It's imperative that, as the

1 Army grows, it remains focused on the quality of our
2 soldiers rather than the quantity. The training and
3 readiness of our soldiers is paramount. Enhancing the
4 fighting ability of the force, we must have a situation
5 where we don't allow size to overcome quality.

6 The President's budget also requests an across-the-
7 board pay raise of 2.6 percent for all military personnel,
8 which I think has universal support here. But, the
9 President does not request an increase in civilian pay. In
10 fact, there's a freeze. And that will make it very
11 difficult to recruit the high quality civilians that you
12 need, and reward those that you need to stay with the Army.

13 I hope, again, to get your comments on these and many
14 other issues. Again, thank you very much for your testimony
15 and your service.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

18 Let's start off with -- we talked about the condition
19 that we were in a year ago, in terms of our brigade combat
20 teams, our readiness. We are, you know, understandingly,
21 happy with what happened with our fiscal year '18 and fiscal
22 year '19 budgets. The problem is, that is good only up to
23 fiscal year '20. Now, I think it's a good time to get on
24 record -- let's assume that we, for some reason, had to go
25 back to the BCA spending caps, starting in 2020, and that we

1 were not fortunate enough to keep up the increase that we
2 achieved in 2018 and 2019. I would like to have each of you
3 express what our condition -- the condition of our Army
4 would be if that were to occur and we had to go back to
5 those caps.

6 Secretary Esper.

7 Dr. Esper: Well, thank you for that question, Senator
8 Inhofe. It's clear that what it would mean if we are unable
9 to sustain funding is that we would revert back to where we
10 were a few years ago, that we would reverse the gains that
11 we are currently making with regard to either training
12 readiness, equipment readiness, munitions purchases that are
13 critical for warfights, and the personnel gains that are
14 necessary to ensure that we have sufficient end strength to
15 meet the demands of the combatant commanders and are
16 prepared to execute the National Defense Strategy. So, it
17 would be a lost opportunity as we -- we're really building
18 momentum right now.

19 I think, to address Senator Reed's question, the
20 critical thing is, as we continue to improve our readiness,
21 which is -- which we've seen good growth in -- is making
22 sure that we can sustain it, then, through '20, '21, '22,
23 because, after 9-10 years of warfighting and bad budget
24 challenges, it will take many years to get back to the
25 readiness posture we need to be in.

1 Senator Inhofe: Yeah. Right.

2 General Milley.

3 General Milley: Yes, Senator. We've done extensive
4 analysis over the last couple of years, just in the event
5 that that were to happen. And if we went to sequestration
6 caps, bottom line is, for the ground force, the Army, that
7 we would end up essentially doing individual training and
8 collective training up through squad level and, in some
9 cases, platoon level. Squad and platoon training, an Army
10 does not make. You've got to be able to do company,
11 battalion, brigade, and so on. And training only at those
12 levels, and funded only at those levels, would not work.

13 Flying hours, right now we're coming in at close to 14,
14 14 and a half hours with current budgets. We'll drop back
15 to 10, 11, 12. That's not good for our aviation rotary
16 wing. Home station training will come to a halt. The CTCs
17 will come to a halt.

18 It will not be good if we went back -- backwards. And
19 if the intangibles -- the effect on morale, cohesion,
20 enlistment, reenlistment -- right now, in terms of
21 reenlistment, we've already exceeded our '18 reenlistment.
22 We're working on '19 reenlistment, which is an indicator of
23 morale that's going up. All of those things would take
24 steps backwards. So, I would strongly encourage not to do
25 that.

1 Senator Inhofe: Yeah. I think it's important to get
2 that out in the open now, talk about it now.

3 Now, another area that I'm particularly interested in,
4 of course, is our artillery, the fact that other -- both
5 China and Russia have passed us up, in terms of range, in
6 terms of rapid-fire. And right now we're in a position,
7 we're -- are working the system to correct that, the PIM
8 program. And it -- of course, I -- in my opening statement,
9 I talked a little bit about what's happened in the past with
10 the Crusader, the Future Combat System. But, now we have
11 this program that I think is going to be -- put us in a
12 position where we should be, getting back up in -- ahead of
13 our adversaries. And that's what we want to get done.

14 Secretary Esper, can you articulate what your number-
15 one priority is for modernization to meet the new National
16 Defense Strategy? Let's start with that.

17 Dr. Esper: Yes, Senator. The Army has outlined six
18 modernization priorities, beginning, number one, with long-
19 range precision fires, and the sixth being soldier
20 lethality.

21 With regard to long-range precision fires, we are
22 pursuing technologies at the tactical, operational, and
23 strategic level. So, at the tactical level, as you
24 mentioned, the PIM program is very important. At the
25 operational level, it's the extended-range cannon artillery.

1 And at the strategic level would be hypersonics, the ability
2 to really reach deep and -- in support of the Navy and the
3 Air Force to do that. I will tell you that, as I've
4 traveled the Army, in the 4 and a half months, and spoke to
5 a few combatant commanders, they have also conveyed to me
6 the importance, the criticality of long-range precision
7 fires to their respective warfights.

8 Senator Inhofe: That's good.

9 And, General Milley, I -- just one real quick question
10 as to -- your goal has always been to be up to 66 percent.
11 We actually in -- my information was, we dropped down -- in
12 the -- our BCTs, capability went down as low as, what, 33
13 percent. Now we're -- I understand we've improved
14 dramatically on that. We're going to continue to do it.
15 But, how close are we now to your goal, 66 percent?

16 General Milley: Our readiness goal for the regular
17 Army, the Active Duty Army, is 66 percent of all units, all
18 types of units -- brigade combat teams, logistics units,
19 aviation units, et cetera -- so 66 percent for the regular
20 Army, and 33 percent for the Reserve component, both Guard
21 and Reserve. We are not at those benchmarks right now, but
22 we are working towards them, and we predict, given
23 consistent funding and if the world stays the way it is
24 right this minute, then we should achieve those benchmarks
25 sometime in '21, '22. We have made significant progress.

1 Senator Inhofe: Okay.

2 General Milley: What you're citing as 30 percent or so
3 is from a year or so ago. We're at -- for brigade combat
4 teams, which is only one slice of the total force, we're in
5 the range of the 50-percent mark. So, we have made
6 significant progress in the last 24 months.

7 Senator Inhofe: Yeah, that's good.

8 Senator Reed.

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

10 And my question -- first question will follow at least
11 the theme that the Chairman has set, and that is that he
12 pointed out one area of technological overmatch by our
13 adversaries, but there are several, unfortunately, including
14 command-and-control disruption because of cyber. So, in
15 general, how are you going to -- dealing with this issue of
16 technological overmatch, not just in precision fires, but in
17 a host of other issues?

18 Dr. Esper: Senator, another one of the six
19 modernization priorities is the network. And so, we know
20 that we've learned, from various studies, what we saw the
21 Russians do in Ukraine, that we need a network that is
22 reliable, that is resilient, that is mobile, that can meet
23 our needs in such an environment. We are fairly confident
24 that the future adversaries will certainly strike
25 asymmetrically at our space systems, at our information

1 systems, our networks. So, we need to do everything from
2 looking at the next-generation technology to make sure we
3 have resilient systems, but, at the same time, we need to
4 look at training, make sure soldiers are training now to
5 operate in a environment in which they either have no data
6 or coms, or limited.

7 And I was pleased to see, on my first trip to National
8 Training Center in November, that the 1st Cavalry was
9 actually doing that. The Op4 out there were presenting that
10 type of scenario, and we were training in a -- an
11 environment of limited communications. And that's the
12 guidance we have set out for commanders, as well, to be able
13 to train along that spectrum.

14 Senator Reed: General Milley, are there other areas of
15 overmatch that you want to emphasize?

16 General Milley: The six priorities that we've laid
17 out, which are related to the fundamental functions of an
18 Army to shoot, move, communicate, protect, and sustain -- so
19 long-range precision fires, the upgraded vehicles, rotary
20 wing aircraft, future vertical lift, the network that the
21 Secretary just mentioned, ballistic and air missile defense,
22 and then all the soldier improvements in the soldier
23 lethality -- those are the areas where we want to laser
24 focus, where we think that we can make significant advances.

25 There's two particular technologies that we need to put

1 the pedal to the metal to, both as a country, a Department
2 of Defense, and as an Army: artificial intelligence and
3 robotics. Those are significant. We're in a period of the
4 changing character of war. And those two technologies,
5 perhaps more than others, will have fundamental impact on
6 the character of war coming up. So, we are shifting monies
7 in our R&D and S&T accounts into those technologies, as well
8 as many others.

9 Senator Reed: Do you think there is enough resources
10 going to those accounts, not just in the Army, but DOD-wide
11 and governmentwide?

12 General Milley: I think we should put more, is my
13 personal -- or my professional opinion is, we should add
14 monies into those particular research, development, science,
15 technology accounts.

16 Dr. Esper: And I would add --

17 Senator Reed: Yes, sir.

18 Dr. Esper: -- Senator, that I meet frequently with
19 Secretary Spencer, the SECNAV, and Secretary Wilson. We've
20 had these same discussions about those technologies,
21 hypersonics, and a couple of others, where we really need to
22 pull our efforts together and look at how we can make sure
23 that we're making advances and not duplicating efforts, to
24 get more bang for every dollar we put toward it.

25 Senator Reed: As I mentioned in my opening statement,

1 as I think we've all mentioned, is that the new defense
2 policy has pushed us up into the area of near-peer
3 competition. And there is a tendency of Army's -- based on
4 my experiences, you only can do, really, one thing, and
5 that's what you focus on. You know, when -- '70s and '80s,
6 we got out of counter-guerrilla warfare and we got into the
7 air-land battle. And we did it very, very well. But, we
8 had to reimmerge ourselves into counterinsurgency warfare
9 techniques and equipment and practices in Afghanistan and
10 Iraq.

11 Now we have not just two dimensions, but probably three
12 dimensions. You have conventional warfare, you have hybrid
13 warfare, which is right below that, with a sophisticated
14 enemy with technological advantages and disadvantages, and
15 then you have the counter-guerrilla warfare, like we're
16 practicing in -- or counterinsurgency in Afghanistan. How
17 are you going to keep that balance between these three
18 missions and avoid the danger of we-just-do-and-we-do-it-
19 very-well X?

20 General Milley, you want to start?

21 General Milley: Well, I think you -- you're correct
22 that, post Vietnam, we sort of did away with any kind of
23 skillsets that we had, for the most part, within our
24 inventory, in terms of counter-guerrilla/counterinsurgency
25 warfare. We don't have that luxury. Guerrillas,

1 insurgents, terrorists are going to be around for a long
2 time in various different forms. We have to maintain the
3 skillset. We can't throw the baby out with the bath water.
4 So, we have to keep that going, and we intend to keep that
5 going. That's part of the SFABs. There's a large resident
6 capability within our Special Operations Forces for that.
7 But, our conventional forces also need to have skills in
8 that regard. But, at the same time, we have to recapture
9 our skills at combined-arms maneuver warfare against near-
10 peer competitors in great-power competition, because, you
11 know, frankly, you know, probably the word "peace through
12 strength" is sometimes overused, but it's true. And, in the
13 international environment, you have to maintain the
14 capabilities so that your opponent, your adversary, believes
15 and knows that you have incredible dominating strength and
16 incredible lethality on the battlefield. So, we have to be
17 able to do both capabilities -- as a military, not just as
18 an Army -- in order to deter any potential aggression from
19 any other country. If we don't do that, then you invite
20 aggression, in my view.

21 So, it's incumbent upon us to do that, to invest in
22 those capabilities, to maintain those skills. And that's a
23 very expensive proposition, and we recognize that. But,
24 maintaining the peace is a very expensive proposition. The
25 only thing more expensive than that's fighting a war. And

1 the only thing more than that is losing one.

2 So, it's really important, I think, as we go forward in
3 these budgets, that we continue to sustain predictable
4 funding to be able to do both counterinsurgency,
5 counterterrorist-type operations within our force structure,
6 and higher-end conventional operations against a great-power
7 competitor.

8 Senator Reed: Thank you.

9 Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

10 The second vote has started. And Senator Reed is, I
11 believe, going to go down and vote at the first of it, and
12 I'm going to wait toward the last.

13 Senator Cotton.

14 Senator Cotton: Thank you, gentlemen, for your
15 appearance again. And thank you for your service to our
16 country.

17 General Milley, let me just follow up on what you just
18 said about sustained funding. So, we passed a budget a
19 couple of months ago. Last week -- or last month, we passed
20 spending bill for this fiscal year. I don't think we should
21 spike the football about those things, though. Those were
22 long overdue. We still have to pass a defense
23 appropriations bill for the next fiscal year. So, is the
24 point you're making -- and, Secretary Esper, you made it to
25 Chairman Inhofe -- is that you needed Department of Defense

1 appropriations bills done in a timely and predictable
2 fashion this summer?

3 Dr. Esper: Absolutely, Senator. If -- timeliness is
4 critical to that. If not, what it does is push back our
5 spending authority. If we're -- we are under a CR, as you
6 know, we are not allowed new starts. We are not allowed to
7 in -- spend money greater than the previous-year funding
8 level. We are not able to procure additional munitions. It
9 impacts training, because we have reduced O&M dollars. So,
10 there are a -- any number of reasons why the timeliness is
11 critical to ensuring we are able to maintain the positive
12 glide slope we're on with regard to readiness.

13 Senator Cotton: And that carries us out to the next
14 fiscal year, fiscal year 2019, that is covered by the 2-year
15 budget we just passed. But, we still have fiscal year 2020
16 and 2021 ahead of us, about 16-18 months away, for which the
17 Budget Control Act and sequestration still comes into
18 effect. Is it your judgment that Congress needs to act now
19 to stop that kind of sequestration from even looming over
20 the Army's head, come the summer of 2019?

21 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. For all the services. It's
22 critical to all of us achieving our readiness goals. And
23 with regard to the Army, in particular, as I said earlier,
24 we endured 7, 8, 9 years of falling budgets, a very high
25 operational pace. It's going to take many years to get out

1 of that. And if you step back, we have this goal of
2 achieving our readiness status by around '22. It's that
3 point in time where we want to -- really want to start
4 making significant investments and start fielding --
5 prototyping the next generation of technologies that we've
6 outlined in our modernization priorities.

7 Senator Cotton: General Milley?

8 General Milley: Absolutely, Senator. I mean, you're
9 not going to dig out of a 10-year trough, 8-year trough, in
10 readiness and modernization -- you're not going to do that
11 in 2 years. It's not one-and-done sort of thing. So, it
12 has to be consistent, it has to be predictable over time.
13 And the sequestration, the BCA caps, they just need to go
14 away. It's an incredibly efficient -- inefficient means of
15 funding, when we're only given part of the year to spend.
16 And, with industry, it's not predictable, so you can't do
17 long-term contracts. And there's a wide variety of reasons
18 why it is not an effective or efficient means of using the
19 taxpayer dollars. It needs to go away.

20 Senator Cotton: Yeah. So, the Budget Control Act was
21 designed to have 8 eight years of potential sequestration
22 cuts if budget caps aren't met. We have now gone through
23 three iterations of 2-year budget cycles. I predict that,
24 if we don't repeal the Budget Control Act, we'll have a
25 fourth iteration in 2020 and 2021 before that law expires.

1 I think Congress should just repeal it outright this summer.

2 General Milley, I want to return to what you said about
3 readiness. So, you predict that, barring some significant
4 increase in the demand for land forces, all Army elements
5 will be -- will meet your readiness goals by 2021-2022?

6 General Milley: That's the glide path I'm currently
7 estimating, that's correct.

8 Senator Cotton: And where are brigade combat teams
9 today?

10 General Milley: I don't want to give specific numbers
11 in open testimony. I'll be happy to do it in classified
12 testimony. But, it's in the range of 50 percent.

13 Senator Cotton: Where were they when you took this
14 job, 3 years ago?

15 General Milley: Significantly less than that. When I
16 came in, 2 and a half years ago, we had two brigades at the
17 highest level of readiness.

18 Senator Cotton: Okay. Good work.

19 Secretary Esper, I'd like to turn to a point about
20 long-range fires. It has a policy implication. So,
21 Department of Defense, Department of State have long
22 recognized and acknowledged publicly that Russia is
23 violating the INF Treaty. If Russia continues to violate
24 the INF Treaty and the United States continues to observe
25 the INF Treaty, doesn't it stand to reason that there's no

1 way the United States can make up the gap in long-range
2 fires in Europe?

3 Dr. Esper: It is. We are looking at hypersonics as a
4 potential way, a promising way to be able to reach beyond
5 the treaty constraints imposed by the INF. So, that's one
6 option. But, clearly, as I've spoken to industry, if that
7 constraint did not exist now, we could certainly do it with
8 missiles.

9 Senator Cotton: It would be the easier way to do it
10 than developing hypersonics that might be compliant --

11 Dr. Esper: Probably easier and quicker, although
12 hypersonics provide -- have some benefits that -- in terms
13 of volume of fire --

14 Senator Cotton: Sure.

15 Dr. Esper: -- and other things that you can do. But,
16 yes.

17 Senator Cotton: General Milley, I'd like to turn to an
18 operational aspect of another one of the six modernization
19 priorities, the network, and, specifically, fighting in a
20 denied environment. Both of you have discussed with me how
21 we're working with our soldiers to make sure that they can
22 go back to the old-fashioned way of fighting, with compass
23 and map and so forth, in the call for fire and navigation
24 and what have you. If that were to happen, if we were -- if
25 our soldiers had to fight in a denied environment, surely

1 the enemy soldiers would also be fighting in a denied
2 environment, as well, right? There's no situation in which,
3 to use the football term, it won't be raining on both sides
4 of the field?

5 General Milley: No, I think that all modern militaries
6 are incredibly reliant on very sophisticated command-control
7 communication systems, reliant on space systems, GPS, you
8 know, precision in navigation and timing capabilities. All
9 modern militaries rely on those. And those are vulnerable
10 for all forces. So, yes, I guarantee that any adversary
11 that takes on the United States will be operating in a
12 significantly degraded environment.

13 Senator Cotton: So, they -- so, if our soldiers are
14 using compasses and hand-and-arm signals, so to speak, to
15 put it in colloquial terms, their soldiers will be using
16 compasses and hand-and-arm signals.

17 General Milley: I would imagine that that is very
18 likely.

19 Senator Cotton: Do you have any doubt that our
20 soldiers fighting on those terms are going to be able to
21 defeat their soldiers?

22 General Milley: Well, as you know, that our Army, like
23 modern armies, we're very reliant on these things for
24 navigation and for precision munitions and for calling in
25 close-air support. And it's important that we have systems

1 that are resilient, that are capable of operating in
2 degraded environments, and that our soldiers are trained to
3 do so. I'm confident that our soldiers' ability to operate
4 in a degraded environment is improving. A couple of years
5 ago, we started doing cyber operations against ourselves,
6 out at the National Training Center. It's a very effective
7 way to increase the training levels and the comfort of our
8 soldiers to operate in those environments.

9 So, it's not going to be a perfect world. Combat's not
10 a perfect environment. It's a very lethal environment. And
11 it is something that we'll have to adapt and overcome the
12 ability of operating in a degraded electronic warfare
13 environment. There's no --

14 Senator Cotton: Thank you --

15 General Milley: -- question about it.

16 Senator Cotton: -- General.

17 And my time is expired.

18 Senator Inhofe: Senator Rounds, presiding.

19 And Senator King.

20 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 I also have to go to vote, so I'm going to be quick
22 with my questions.

23 I think, to follow up on Senator Cotton's questions,
24 Are we training our troops now with compasses and maps, just
25 as at Annapolis, after a 20-year gap, they're now teaching

1 how to celestial navigation? In other words, are we
2 specifically training for the failure of the GPS system?

3 General Milley: Yes.

4 Senator King: That's a very succinct and -- that's the
5 answer I hoped --

6 Dr. Esper: And we are --

7 Senator King: -- I would get.

8 Dr. Esper: -- reinforcing, Senator, the importance of
9 doing that in training scenarios, in training activities,
10 that you have to be prepared to operate without
11 communications, without electronics --

12 Senator King: Good.

13 Dr. Esper: -- across a range of specialties.

14 Senator King: I think one of the most important things
15 that's going on now is the Army Futures Command. I guess my
16 question is, Should that be a four-star in order to give
17 that person sufficient authority to do the kind of
18 coordination and pulling together of authorities to make it
19 work?

20 Secretary?

21 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. We believe so. Not just that,
22 but the Army Futures Command is envisioned to be a peer
23 institution to the other four-star major commands. That's
24 Army Materiel Command, TRADOC, and Forces Command.

25 Senator King: I think that's important, because

1 there's going to be some important turf battles, I think,
2 going on there, and I think it's important that the
3 authorities be equivalent.

4 Secretary Esper, this isn't a hostile question, but
5 it's a challenging question. You talked about acquisition.
6 And the Army doesn't have a very stellar record in the
7 history -- in recent history, in terms of acquisition. You
8 talked about, "We're going to do it better." Why? What --
9 why -- the people that didn't do so well before weren't bad
10 people, and they were doing their best. What are -- what is
11 changing, systematically or structurally, in order to give
12 you the assurance that we're not going to have some of the
13 disasters that we had in the '90s?

14 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir, it's a fair question. Needless
15 to say, we have taken a hard look at what experts have said
16 in the past who have revealed -- reviewed Army programs. We
17 have studied reports, such as the Decker-Wagner report.
18 We've had officers working on this for a couple of years.
19 We know that one of the fundamental problems with the
20 current big-A acquisition system is lack of unity of command
21 and unity of effort. In other words, we have piece-parts of
22 the acquisition system spread across multiple commands and,
23 in some cases, not under a specific command. So, the
24 promise of Army Futures Command, in one aspect, is to pull
25 them under, get -- pull them all together under a single

1 commander, who can manage everything from what he or she
2 believes the future threat environment may look like, to
3 operational concepts, into materiel solutions, all the way
4 through testing and evaluation and procurement. And so,
5 you'd have that single chain of command. That's number one.

6 The other big problem has been a requirements process
7 that has crept along, that has extended the timelines and
8 costs --

9 Senator King: Requirements creep.

10 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. And so, the -- what the cross-
11 functional teams are doing now, have been doing, and
12 successfully, and we will -- this will be imported into Army
13 Futures Command -- is to put all those stakeholders that I
14 just described at the table up front, and to agree on what
15 is a -- what are the reasonable requirements that we know
16 that we can achieve in a date certain that provides us
17 overmatch, that the technology is sufficiently available to
18 do, and move along that type of line. And, as technology
19 matures, we will continue to incrementally approve --
20 improve vehicles or systems, whatever the case may be.

21 Senator King: Well, one way to make sure that happens
22 is to build the initial platform in a modular way that -- so
23 it can be upgraded without having to scrap the whole
24 platform.

25 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. We're doing that right now as we

1 look at deploying a mobile SHORAD, short-range air defenses,
2 in Europe in the next couple of years. We've already
3 decided on a chassis to do that, and we're working on the
4 effectors. But, one of the things, as I've talked to the
5 CFT lead on, is to make sure that you build sufficient size,
6 weight, and power into that vehicle so that, as the
7 technology matures, for example, we could put lasers on it,
8 because lasers provide an unlimited magazine, if you will,
9 at very minimal cost to do that.

10 Senator King: Well, I'd like to follow up with you
11 offline, because, just the number of hearings that we've
12 had, there are lots of lessons. And I think it's so
13 important to try to avoid some of those issues that have
14 plagued us in the past.

15 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir.

16 Senator King: And I appreciate your attention.

17 General Milley, my understanding is that the increases
18 that have taken place in your funding in the last few months
19 are going almost entirely to capital and not to personnel.
20 Is that accurate?

21 General Milley: In terms of the capital -- in terms of
22 modernization and putting it into, you know, remanufacturing
23 of the helicopters or new helicopters, new aircraft -- is
24 that what you're talking about, Senator?

25 Senator King: Well, just that the increase -- the

1 increment of increase --

2 General Milley: Yeah.

3 Senator King: -- is going into capital improvements
4 rather than manpower and other --

5 General Milley: Well, we've taken the additional
6 monies, and we're putting it in modernization.

7 Senator King: That's my point.

8 General Milley: Yeah. Into -- absolutely,
9 modernization, because modernization -- we, the Army, took a
10 modernization holiday in the last 16 years. And we've been
11 fighting a war, we've been consumed with current operations
12 in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere. And our
13 modernization has lagged behind significantly. So, we're
14 trying to redress that and dig ourselves out of that hole.
15 And that's really -- in part, is the reform of AFC, but we
16 are shifting monies --

17 Senator King: But, we have to realize that --

18 General Milley: Yes.

19 Senator King: -- that there are still unaddressed
20 issues on the personnel side.

21 General Milley: There are. But, we are increasing by
22 4,000 -- this budget, '19 and '18, is an increase of 4,000
23 personnel. And we have a steady growth in the military
24 personnel, of 4,000 a year. And we -- we're shooting to get
25 north of 500,000 -- or 500,000 in the regular Army. And

1 we'll cap out at about 343-five in the Guard and at 199 in
2 the Reserve. So, in terms of military end-strength growth,
3 there's a gradual modest growth in order to fill the holes
4 in the existing units, but we think we needed to shift
5 additional monies into modernization. That's the need.

6 Senator King: I understand.

7 Thank you, gentlemen. I want to thank you particularly
8 for the progress that you've made, both of you. It's, I
9 think, quite remarkable, necessary, and I just hope that we
10 can see it maintained. And I look forward -- I'll have some
11 questions for the record, and, Mr. Secretary, talking to you
12 about the acquisition process. We've got to get it right
13 this time.

14 Dr. Esper: Absolutely.

15 Senator King: Thank you.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Senator Rounds [presiding]: On behalf of the Chairman,
18 Senator Graham.

19 Senator Graham: Thank you.

20 I want to echo what Senator King said. Bottom line, I
21 think you all make a heck of a team for the Army. And hats
22 off to you. You've been in a bad spot, and we're trying to
23 dig out. And I appreciate both of your leadership.

24 So, let's talk a little bit about Syria, because it's
25 sort of the hot topic. The President said that Assad is an

1 animal who killed innocent children by using chlorine gas,
2 and maybe some other form of gas, and he is going to pay a
3 big price. Do you agree with that statement, Mr. Secretary,
4 that Assad should pay a big price?

5 Dr. Esper: Senator, it's something that, you know, is
6 a -- my responsibility is for Title 10, making sure the Army
7 is organized, trained, and equipped. It's something that
8 is-- it obviously is playing out in real time. So, I would,
9 at this point, defer to SECDEF.

10 Senator Graham: General Milley, do you agree with that
11 statement?

12 General Milley: Absolutely yes.

13 Senator Graham: Okay. Thank you.

14 General Milley: No question he should.

15 Senator Graham: So, do you agree with the following.
16 If Assad doesn't pay a big price, we will, because we have
17 now challenged him.

18 General Milley: Well, in -- you know, Assad or any
19 others --

20 Senator Graham: Once you challenge somebody --

21 General Milley: -- unanswered aggression leads to more
22 aggression.

23 Senator Graham: I couldn't agree with you more. The
24 only thing worse than war is losing a war. And --

25 General Milley: That's right.

1 Senator Graham: -- you said that.

2 General Milley: That's right.

3 Senator Graham: So, the President, I think, rightly
4 said that, "Enough is enough when it comes to Assad. You're
5 a war criminal, by any definition, and a big price." Do you
6 think a big price should include that he'll have less
7 capability to gas people in the future?

8 General Milley: I think his ability to use chemical
9 munitions on the innocent needs to be significantly
10 degraded.

11 Senator Graham: Do you think he's a legitimate target,
12 given what he's done?

13 General Milley: I'll --

14 Senator Graham: Assad?

15 General Milley: -- not answer that question in public
16 at this point.

17 Senator Graham: Okay, fair enough.

18 I just hope a big price, when it's all said and done,
19 that Kim Jong Un says, "Hey, that was a big price." I hope
20 that the Iranians believe that Assad paid a big price, the
21 Russians believe that he paid a big price. I hope they
22 start paying a price for supporting Assad. Because the
23 President's right to say he's going to pay a big price,
24 given the fact that he's killed 500,000 of his own people,
25 disrupted the entire Mid-East, and is a war criminal, by any

1 measure. The question of whether or not it's a big price is
2 yet to be determined. And I would say this. If, after
3 saying that, he doesn't pay a big price, America will pay a
4 big price.

5 Residual forces. Do you support leaving residual
6 forces in Iraq, if the Iraqis would agree, to make sure ISIS
7 doesn't come back, General Milley?

8 General Milley: I think we need to continue to sustain
9 our level of effort in order to achieve our national
10 security objectives, which have been --

11 Senator Graham: Would it --

12 General Milley: -- clearly stated.

13 Senator Graham: -- include a residual force?

14 General Milley: Well, I think the Iraqis --
15 absolutely, because I think the Iraqis --

16 Senator Graham: Yeah.

17 General Milley: -- need continued support, so you --
18 you don't see --

19 Senator Graham: Sure.

20 General Milley: -- the return of ISIS. That's
21 important. We --

22 Senator Graham: Well --

23 General Milley: -- learned this lesson in 2011. We
24 don't want to learn it again.

25 Senator Graham: Well, that's right. And it's in our

1 national security interest to make sure we don't do this
2 twice.

3 Syria, we have a couple thousand troops training the
4 Syrian Democratic Forces and doing operations against ISIL.
5 Do you think that's in our national security interest, to
6 have that presence?

7 General Milley: I believe it's in our national
8 security interest to destroy ISIS --

9 Senator Graham: Right. And --

10 General Milley: -- absolutely.

11 Senator Graham: -- make sure they --

12 General Milley: That's what --

13 Senator Graham: -- don't come back.

14 General Milley: -- we're doing.

15 Senator Graham: And make sure they don't come back.

16 General Milley: That's correct. And --

17 Senator Graham: Do you think it's in our national
18 security interest to counter the Iranian aggression
19 throughout the Mid-East?

20 General Milley: I do.

21 Senator Graham: Okay.

22 As to all these things that we're asking you to do, do
23 you think it's in our national security interest to maintain
24 troops in Afghanistan?

25 General Milley: I do.

1 Senator Graham: All right.

2 So, the bottom line is, Russia is on the prowl, China's
3 making it difficult for us in their part of the world, and
4 only God knows what's going to happen in North Korea.
5 Bottom line is, the budget we just passed, how much of help
6 has it been to the Army?

7 General Milley: In my view, it's enormous help --
8 enormously helpful. And again, what I mentioned earlier, it
9 can't be one-and-done, though. It -- you can't dig yourself
10 out of a -- an 8- or 10-year trough in readiness and
11 modernization, which was getting consumed with current
12 operating -- we can't do that in just two budgets.

13 Senator Graham: Do you agree --

14 General Milley: This has got to be --

15 Senator Graham: -- with that --

16 General Milley: -- sustained --

17 Senator Graham: -- Mr. Secretary?

18 General Milley: -- over time.

19 Senator Graham: Do you agree with that?

20 Dr. Esper: Absolutely. The -- what we're getting n
21 '18 and what we'll see in '19 is tremendous. We thank the
22 Congress. But, it will take many years to get to the
23 readiness level and then get to the next generation of
24 technologies we need for the future fight.

25 Senator Graham: Yeah, I couldn't agree with you more.

1 In 2011, CBO projected that military spending in 2018
2 would be 801 billion. It's 700 billion. In 2010,
3 nondefense spending was 611, today it's 589. So, these are
4 just facts. Sequestration's cost us a lot.

5 So, is it fair to say that the Congress needs to
6 understand that we're making progress, but we're a long way-
7 - long away -- long's way away from actually fixing the
8 problem caused by sequestration? Is that true, General
9 Milley?

10 General Milley: In my view, I think that's accurate.
11 In terms of the readiness and modernization of the United
12 States Army, I think that's true.

13 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir.

14 Senator Graham: Thank you.

15 Thank you both for your service.

16 Senator Rounds: On behalf of the Chairman, Senator
17 McCaskill.

18 Senator McCaskill: Thank you very much.

19 Thank you both for your service. And we are glad that
20 you are there.

21 I -- as you both probably are aware, I've spent a lot
22 of time on this committee talking about contracting. And I
23 want to really drill down on some contracting issues in my
24 time here this morning.

25 I began some oversight on the Legacy Program, beginning

1 way back in October of 2012. And, as you all know, the
2 Legacy Program is a very expensive American effort to build
3 the intelligence capacity of Afghanistan and Iraq.

4 We are now very engaged in an investigation into parts
5 of this contract. I have sent a lengthy letter, in August
6 of last year, to Secretary Mattis requesting a lot of
7 information that we -- through both SIGAR and Robert Portman
8 and I, we have all been asking for more oversight on this.
9 And we learned that, in August of 2017, that there was a
10 nonpublic DCAA audit of the subcontractor, New Century
11 Consulting. And this audit, we know, includes questioned
12 costs amounting to over \$50 million, including Bentleys,
13 Alfa-Romeos, assistant salaries of \$420,000. It is -- you
14 know, it's so discouraging to me, after all the work we've
15 spent on contracting, after all -- after the War Contracting
16 Commission and all the reforms we've done in contracting,
17 that we have not yet figured out how to get at these abuses,
18 close in time and close to the source. And I don't even
19 think leadership finds out about this until it's way too
20 late. And we're always engaged in the clawback process.

21 So, I have been on this for awhile, and I would like a
22 couple of things that we're not getting right now, and I'd
23 like to bring them to your attention.

24 One of the things that we would like is a full list of
25 contracts and subcontracts in which New Century Consulting

1 is still engaged in. We would also like the NCC performance
2 assessments. Now, we're being told we can't get the audit
3 because the audit agency is worried that, if they publicly
4 disclose some of the audits, that that would discourage
5 contractors in the future because their financial
6 information would become public. I think we can get around
7 that, and I think we've got to figure out a way to get all
8 this information out. Because if I just don't embarrass the
9 hell out of you guys, I don't know how we're ever going to
10 stop this stuff. And, ultimately, what -- I'm not going to
11 issue this investigative report until I figure out who was
12 seeing this stuff and not saying anything, who on the
13 ground.

14 Which brings me -- Secretary, when you were here on
15 your confirmation, you know I talked to you about the IG
16 report, the DOD IG report, in terms of top management
17 challenges. And, ironically, the DOD IG, no surprise, had
18 overseen contracting officers' representatives was one of
19 the biggest challenges, and assessing and reporting on
20 contractor performance was one of management's biggest
21 challenges.

22 Can you give me some good news, Secretary, as to
23 whether or not you've now digested this report and whether
24 or not you, along with General Milley, are actually
25 strategizing how we can -- I mean, we've made progress on

1 CORs, because when I went to Iraq in the beginning, it was
2 clear that a guy was just getting a clipboard. I mean, all
3 that stuff with LOGCAP and all of the abuses with the cost-
4 plus, that was really sitting at the feet of a very
5 ineffective CORs training and assessment program. And when
6 those -- the contracting representatives that are right
7 there on the ground that see what's going on.

8 So, give me some good news about how you view this
9 problem. And please tell me that a Senator 20 years from
10 now is not going to be sitting here and going, "How in the
11 world are taxpayers paying for Alfa-Romeos and Bentleys?"

12 Dr. Esper: Yes, ma'am. You're correct. You know,
13 after you raised the issue with regard to the contracting,
14 with regard to aviation, I think it was 2,000 separate
15 contracts amongst hundreds of contractors for hundreds of
16 millions of dollars, and, in many cases, for the same parts
17 at different prices, I went back and went through that
18 report. I've discussed it with folks internally. I will
19 tell you, in the 4 months I've been on the job, I have met
20 with Contracting Command twice, as recently as 3 weeks ago.
21 I've had a conversation with my senior acquisition
22 executive. It's something that General Milley and I
23 recognize is a challenge. The head of Army Materiel Command
24 is all this week. We recognize that, as the -- as that
25 report outlined, is, we need to have clear metrics and hold

1 leaders accountable for meeting those metrics with regard to
2 accounting -- contracting, I'm sorry.

3 One of the reform initiatives we're pursuing right now
4 is to -- is aimed to reduce the number of contracts, reduce
5 that process. We're looking at savings of possibly over a
6 billion dollars over a multiyear period. But, there's a lot
7 more work we need to do with regard to this. And it's -- we
8 just don't have -- we have to be good stewards of the
9 taxpayers' dollars, and that means reform includes,
10 certainly, contracting.

11 Senator McCaskill: Well, I'd -- I look forward -- I
12 know what you -- we need to have a meeting. And you've been
13 kind and --

14 Dr. Esper: Sure.

15 Senator McCaskill: -- tried to reach out to my office,
16 have a meeting. When we have that meeting, let's talk about
17 these contracting representatives --

18 Dr. Esper: Yes, ma'am.

19 Senator McCaskill: -- on the ground, and what next
20 step we need to take to augment their ability to be the eyes
21 and ears. I won't regale you now, because I'm out of time,
22 with all of the time and energy that has been spent on this.

23 And, General, if you could help get this information
24 that I've asked for, I would really appreciate it. I think--
25 -

1 General Milley: We will get you the information.

2 [The information referred to follows:]

3 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator McCaskill: Thank you so much.

2 General Milley: And what you're describing is
3 unacceptable, smacks of corruption and criminal activity.
4 It's unacceptable, and the people are going to be held
5 accountable.

6 Senator McCaskill: And, by the way, we keep doing
7 business with them. This goes all the way back to the
8 alcohol --

9 General Milley: I got it.

10 Senator McCaskill: -- at a party.

11 General Milley: We owe you answers.

12 Senator McCaskill: All right.

13 General Milley: Yeah.

14 Dr. Esper: I would just add briefly, I had a good
15 meeting with the head of GAO a couple of weeks ago to talk
16 about a number of issues, past reports, along the same lines
17 you raised. And we made a commitment to work together to --
18 you know, for them to help us look at issues and solve them.
19 So.

20 Senator McCaskill: Thank you very much.

21 Senator Inhofe [presiding]: Senator Rounds.

22 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 General Milley, I commend the Army for already reaching
24 full operational capability on the fielding of Cyber Force
25 ahead of the October 2018 requirement. Can you share the

1 lessons learned on that process and from the Army's
2 experimentation with placing offensive and defensive cyber
3 capabilities down to the brigade combat team level? And
4 also, would you share your perspective on integrating
5 artificial intelligence to enable both superior performance
6 and security of Army networks?

7 General Milley: It -- I'd say, really, two or three
8 things, here, on the cyber piece of it. First of all, we
9 have a lot -- even though we've achieved FOC -- we have --
10 on our objectives that we stated, in terms of our
11 organizations and our capabilities, the cyber protection
12 teams and the offensive teams, there's still more growth.
13 And that's a big growth industry. Cyber is an area, a
14 domain of warfare that is going to require us to continue to
15 grow in the out years. So, we're not really done, even
16 though we've achieved FOC for the stated objectives that
17 you're referring to.

18 Some of the key lessons learned. I think one of the
19 biggest lessons learned is to empower the youth. You and I
20 and probably most in this room are essentially digital
21 immigrants into a world in which we are really semi-familiar
22 with a lot of the digital technologies that are out there,
23 but these young soldiers and sailors and airmen and marines
24 that are coming into the force, they're digital natives, and
25 this is all second nature to them. So, it's best to arm

1 them, equip them, and listen to them as they create the
2 capabilities and the forces that are going to be required in
3 this new domain of war. That's probably the biggest lesson.
4 We've embedded them into the units, the tactical and
5 operational units, and we also have ones at operational and
6 strategic level, as well. But, the tactical-unit ones are
7 doing tremendous work. We're learning a lot more about the
8 vulnerabilities of our systems and how to make them more
9 resilient. But, I think the biggest single lesson learned
10 is, listen to the young, on this one. This is one where
11 they have far more wisdom than the rest of us.

12 Senator Rounds: These young people are vital to the
13 long-term security defense --

14 General Milley: No question.

15 Senator Rounds: -- in our Nation.

16 General Milley: That's right.

17 Senator Rounds: We want them to stay in the Army. We
18 want them to feel like this is a good profession for them
19 and that there is a place for them, long term. Fair enough?

20 General Milley: Absolutely.

21 Senator Rounds: And part of that -- I'm going to ask
22 your personal opinion now, and part of it's because I think
23 you do listen to these young people coming in -- what's the
24 scuttlebutt on TRICARE?

25 General Milley: TRICARE is a very large capability --

1 insurance capability that takes care of our soldiers. And I
2 am, as well as my family, recipients of that, and have been
3 for years. There are -- like there are with any large
4 system, there are bureaucratic issues sometimes with it. I
5 will tell you that, on balance, TRICARE is an effective
6 system for our soldiers. There are areas, though, of
7 improvement that we need, in terms of its responsiveness to
8 people. But, on balance, it's not a bad system at all.

9 Senator Rounds: Part of the challenge is, is making
10 sure the claims get paid on time.

11 General Milley: That's right.

12 Senator Rounds: Are they getting paid on time?

13 General Milley: I'd have to look at the exact
14 statistics, but I have not heard -- I don't have any
15 evidence that there's any wide disparity of being paid on
16 time.

17 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

18 You know, one of the other items that I think a lot of
19 these young people appreciate is the fact that they don't
20 get paid a whole lot of money, and they want to make that
21 money go as far as it possibly can. We provide, on bases,
22 the commissary.

23 General Milley: Right.

24 Senator Rounds: And do you think those commissaries
25 are valuable to the young people that are coming in?

1 General Milley: My professional opinion is yes,
2 because the commissary -- you know, food is one of your big-
3 - bigger household item expenditures -- housing, food,
4 medical, education, those sorts of things, but food is a big
5 one. So, a family of four -- our demographic is, the
6 majority of our soldiers, well over 50 percent, are in the
7 E4-E5 range, they're in the 26-27-28-year-old range, and
8 they are -- about 60 percent are married, and, of those that
9 are married, on average, there's two children. So, you --
10 on average, you know, the bulk of the Army is about a family
11 of four. A family of four, on average, their monthly food
12 bill is several hundreds of dollars. The commissary -- use
13 of the commissary knocks off a significant portion of that,
14 in lieu of having to go to some commercial entity to buy
15 food every month. So, the commissary is a big benefit and
16 advantage to the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines out
17 there, in my view.

18 Senator Rounds: Do you think that those young people
19 coming in, the ones that we want to keep in -- do you think
20 they feel that the commissary system is working to their
21 benefit today?

22 General Milley: I think so, yes. I think the -- I --
23 you know, commissary is one of those areas where you almost
24 universally get positive comments, in terms of the cost,
25 performance, the quality and diversity of goods that are

1 sold there. Commissary gets pretty high marks.

2 Senator Rounds: Very good. Thank you.

3 Thank you both for your service to our country.

4 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

6 Senator Warren.

7 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 And thank you, to our witnesses, for being here.

9 I'd like to follow up on an issue that really hits a
10 nerve in my home State. Secretary Esper, during your
11 confirmation hearing, you may remember that I asked you to
12 look into complaints from National Guard officers about
13 delays in Federal recognition of their promotions.
14 According to the National Guard Association, many Guard
15 officers are waiting 200 days or more. And this can have a
16 really negative effect on their pay, on their benefits, on
17 their command opportunities.

18 So, Mr. Secretary, what have you found, and what
19 actions is the Army taking to address this issue?

20 Dr. Esper: Yes, Senator, thank you for that question.

21 And, after we did have that during -- that exchange
22 during the hearing, I spoke to the TAG of the Massachusetts
23 Guard, and then, about 4 weeks ago, met with all 54 TAGs at
24 the Army National Guard headquarters, and this issue came up
25 again. I took it back and had a meeting with my Manpower

1 and Reserve Affairs personnel. And, you're right, the
2 numbers are too long, and it's unacceptable. And, frankly,
3 I endured -- my time in the Guard, I had a similar type of
4 action, you know, happen to me.

5 So, what we're doing is, we're digging through it right
6 now. Part of the challenge is, there are multiple steps.
7 The process begins at the State TAG level, goes through NGB-
8 -

9 Senator Warren: Yeah.

10 Dr. Esper: -- the G1, all the way through, and, in
11 some cases, the Senate, if it's a colonel, above. There are
12 things we need to do to improve the process. We have added
13 additional manpower. We're looking at greater automation.
14 I think there are ways we can reduce the time. There's
15 about -- anywhere from 30 to 45 days added on to determine
16 if they have exhibited exemplary behavior. And then there
17 are other things out there that may require congressional
18 action. For example, part of the process, as I understand
19 it, is the scrolling, which is an antiquated pen-and-paper
20 process that also adds time to it. So --

21 Senator Warren: Okay.

22 Dr. Esper: -- we're trying to attack it on a number of
23 fronts, but we need to -- it needs to be much, much more
24 timely.

25 Senator Warren: Okay. Well, I really do appreciate

1 your working on this. I'm going to keep pushing on this.

2 You know, I understand the need to thoroughly vet our
3 officer corps, but this has become a morale issue for the
4 Guard. And I don't think it's right to make our junior
5 officers pay the price for bureaucratic delays and
6 antiquated systems, regardless of where those delays
7 originate.

8 So, let me ask you another question on this. Would you
9 support providing back pay to the guardsmen whose promotion
10 sits idle for months while they're waiting for Federal
11 recognition and actually doing the next-level job?

12 Dr. Esper: Senator, I think that's a fair approach to
13 it. I -- as I discussed with you, I would want to make sure
14 I talk to National Guard, make sure it's fair to them, we
15 all understand what the implications are. But, I think, in
16 principle, that's fair.

17 Senator Warren: Good. I'm glad to hear that. You
18 know, these young men and women who volunteer to serve their
19 country don't get paid all that much, and I think it's just
20 plain wrong when National Guard officers earn their
21 promotions, serve at a higher level of responsibility for
22 months, and then don't get that rank's pay while they're
23 waiting for Federal recognition of that. We've got to find
24 a way to speed this up and -- or else I worry that it really
25 is going to do a lot of damage to morale.

1 Dr. Esper: I do, too, Senator. The National Guard has
2 become integral to our operational readiness. They're
3 serving around the world now in support of real-world
4 activities. I was with the Guard in both Poland and in
5 Ukraine in January, doing a fantastic job. So, we need to
6 fix these things. And not just -- we have similar problems
7 in Reserves and the Active side, as well. It's just -- to
8 get the bureaucracy out of the way and --

9 Senator Warren: Good.

10 Dr. Esper: -- and make the system much more efficient.

11 Senator Warren: Good. I'm really glad to hear that.

12 And, with my remaining time, what I'd like to do is
13 follow up on Senator King's question. The Army has
14 announced plans to establish a new Futures and Modernization
15 Command. The idea is to bring people who need new
16 technology and the people who acquire that technology
17 together under one roof so they can get the technology into
18 the hands of our soldiers faster. But, today a lot of the
19 cutting-edge technology is not developed within the
20 Pentagon, but in the commercial sector or in laboratories at
21 our colleges and universities.

22 Secretary Esper, how important is it to capitalize on
23 commercial and academic developments in advanced technology?
24 And here's the key. As the Army establishes this new
25 command, what steps are you taking to make sure it is

1 closely tied to outside innovators?

2 Dr. Esper: Yes, Senator, you're right, Army Futures
3 Command, it's critical that we have access to talent, to
4 talent, not just on the material side, particularly with the
5 hard sciences, but also talent that can help us think about
6 the future strategic environment, thinking in the 2030s-
7 2040s, because that will inform, in many ways, the steps we
8 take with regard to materiel.

9 So, we are looking at a number of locations. I think
10 we started out with around 150. We've winnowed it down to
11 around 30. And I think the next step, in a week or so, will
12 be to get it down to 10, 11, 12. But, each time we go
13 through this, we look at different filters, whether it's
14 talent, it's then specific areas of talent, it's the
15 proximity to innovation, it's proximity to academia. And
16 then, there are other issues, of course, that we have to
17 look at -- quality of life, cost of living, all these
18 things. So, we're really trying to be smart about it. We
19 want to make sure we can attract the top talent, we can --
20 we have access to an ecosystem of talent, where we put it.
21 And that's why we're really trying to get into a -- into an
22 area that really offers much of that.

23 Senator Warren: Well, I'm really glad to hear that the
24 Army is focused on taking advantage of existing talent and
25 where technological innovation is occurring. Of course,

1 General Milley and I both come from a State where a lot of
2 that is going on. I know you've lived there, Secretary
3 Esper. And anytime you want to come to Massachusetts and
4 look around, you're welcome.

5 Dr. Esper: Thank you, ma'am.

6 Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

7 Senator Peters.

8 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 And, gentlemen, thank you for being here. Thank you
10 for your service to our country, as well. We appreciate
11 having you before the committee.

12 Secretary Esper and General Milley, I'd like to ask
13 about the Army's plans for production of the Stryker
14 vehicle. I understand that the Army intends to produce
15 Stryker A-1s, which include both improved protection of the
16 double-V hull and improved mobility and the power provided
17 by engineering change proposal number 1. But, I'm concerned
18 that the current budget request for fiscal year '19 doesn't
19 seem to provide for converting the Army Stryker brigade
20 combat teams to modern Stryker A-1s quick enough. Getting
21 them out in the field seems to be important, particularly
22 with new threats emerging around the world. Could you
23 please give me an update on the Army's plans for production
24 of the Stryker vehicle?

25 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. We are looking at, like you

1 said, improving the survivability by adding the double-V
2 hull. We're looking at improving lethality by adding the
3 30-millimeter gun and some antitank weapons. I had the
4 privilege of actually seeing a Stryker when I was in
5 Grafenwoehr, Germany, in January, walked around a vehicle,
6 spent some time with the soldiers. They are very impressed
7 with what they're doing. It will go through operational
8 testing now for several months, and I think that we will
9 make an assessment with regard to its performance. And all
10 the feedback now is good.

11 I would note, in terms of procurement, we've increased
12 about -- over 18 percent over the FY18. So, it's something
13 that General Milley and I are watching closely, but, you
14 know, the commitment is to make sure we improve the
15 survivability and lethality of all these vehicles as we look
16 at, you know, this great-power competition that we're in
17 now.

18 General Milley: And, as you're aware, Senator, the --
19 you know, we are putting money against it, but we're also --
20 it's a balance right now. So, for the Bradley, the Abrams,
21 and the Stryker, these systems were designed and came online
22 many, many years ago. Now, they've had various upgrades and
23 improvements over the years, but they are products of
24 technologies and ideas that come out of the '60s and '70s,
25 vice today's world. So, the next-generation combat vehicle,

1 ground combat vehicle that we're working on, it's in the A&D
2 and S&T phases, and the prototyping, et cetera. That will
3 eventually replace the entire family of vehicles that we
4 have.

5 The Abrams, Bradley, and Strykers, realistically their
6 lifespan is probably 10, maybe 15 years. So, we are putting
7 improvements in double-V hull, lethality, and some other
8 things, but what we really need to do now is to make the
9 shift, in money and investments, to a next-generation combat
10 vehicle. And that's what we're doing with our modernization
11 accounts.

12 Senator Peters: Well, speaking of the -- or the next
13 combat vehicle, could you please talk a little bit about --
14 or at least give us an update on the prototyping effort,
15 which is something different that seems to make some sense?

16 General Milley: Yeah, the philosophy or the
17 methodology, we've shifted in -- and we're incorporating
18 much more prototyping, which will crunch down the amount of
19 time it takes. There's a long lead time to the Army
20 acquisition process. It's very linear. It's step-by-step.
21 It's left-right or left-right or left-right or left, down
22 the line. So, what we want to do is accelerate that by
23 bringing in prototypes.

24 And, in terms of the next-generation combat vehicle,
25 one of the things that we're accentuating in it, it must be

1 optimized for urban operations, which our current families
2 of vehicles are not. It must be optimized so that it can be
3 both manned and either autonomous or semi-autonomous,
4 robotic, depending on what the commander chooses to do at
5 the time in the situation in the battlefield. Those are
6 significant radical changes to the current system or family
7 of vehicles.

8 So, there are companies, there are corporation
9 industries out there, that are already producing robotic
10 vehicles. We're -- they're just getting modified. And we
11 are prototyping them. We have several experimental
12 prototypes going on right this minute that are showing some
13 promise. We're not there for down-selecting or picking
14 vendors or anything, but we are experimenting with the
15 various technologies. And we think that, by 2028, we should
16 be able to begin fielding a next-generation combat vehicle
17 that's optimized for urban operations, that's both -- either
18 manned or unmanned for ground operations, that has
19 lethality, power, speed, weight, that's optimized for the
20 next generation of a battlefield that we perceive. And we
21 think we'll have that fielded inside of 10 years, which,
22 under current Army practices, would take 15 or more.

23 Senator Peters: Yeah, and as mentioned in a previous
24 question, a great deal of this work is being done on the
25 civilian side. Obviously, I'm very involved in self-driving

1 vehicles, from Michigan --

2 General Milley: Yes.

3 Senator Peters: -- and what's happening in the auto
4 industry. A lot of work is being done in Michigan, in
5 TARDEC, and other places.

6 General Milley: Absolutely.

7 Senator Peters: You mentioned the next-generation
8 vehicle with the autonomy features. Do you see having two
9 different variants, or will all of these capabilities be --

10 General Milley: There will be multiple variants.
11 There will be a tank-like variant, there will be a infantry
12 carrier-type variant, there will be logistics and medical
13 variants. I mean, it's a family of vehicles. It's not a
14 single vehicle, but they'll be based off of common chassis
15 and common engines and power packs and so on.

16 Senator Peters: Well, my question related to those
17 variants. Will they all have autonomous capabilities --

18 General Milley: Yes.

19 Senator Peters: -- or will some --

20 General Milley: Every ground and rotary wing vehicle
21 that the United States Army produces from now on, the next
22 generation, after Bradley, after Abrams, every single one of
23 them has to have the base requirement. It has to be either
24 manned or unmanned, robotic -- either fully autonomous or
25 semi-autonomous, built into its very basic requirement. It

1 has to be able to have that option so that the commander on
2 the battlefield of the future has the option, based on
3 mission and enemy and terrain and time and troops available,
4 to pick whether he wants this objective to be seized with
5 manned vehicles, or not. And it depends. It depends on the
6 situation sort of thing at the moment in time. But, we want
7 that option to be available to company commanders, battalion
8 commanders, brigade commanders in the future. So, the
9 requirement for all vehicles, in the air or on the ground,
10 is both manned and unmanned.

11 Dr. Esper: And, Senator, to be clear, we're looking
12 expansively. It's -- it is beyond combat vehicles, as the
13 Chief just alluded to. So, for example, within this year,
14 the 101st will be experimenting with an unmanned squad
15 support vehicle. I'm talking to our senior acquisition
16 executive about unmanned trucks so we can transport, you
17 know, supplies. And we hope to accelerate that, as well, so
18 we could be experimenting in the next couple of years with
19 regard to, you know, unmanned sustainment, logistics
20 support.

21 Senator Inhofe: Senator Tillis.

22 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Gentlemen, thank you for being here, and for your
24 service.

25 General Milley, thank you. Actually, for the 3 years

1 that I've had the opportunity to get to know you, the only
2 thing I don't like about you is, you're a Patriots fan.
3 But, I thank you for your generous time in the office the --
4 yesterday.

5 Just a quick update. You and I talked. I think it
6 bears repeating. Talk a little bit about what it means to
7 become a more lethal force, and, you know, in, hopefully, a
8 limited amount of time. I've got one, two other questions.
9 But, I think running through that's very important.

10 General Milley: Well, just briefly. I mean, the way I
11 look at it is, you evaluate an organization, both based on
12 its individuals, but also on its collective capability, and
13 we look at the training, the equipping, the manning, and the
14 leadership.

15 So, for training, we want to make sure that a lethal
16 force collective entity -- a squad, platoon, company, et
17 cetera -- has got many, many reps at their basic mission-
18 essential tasks. Not one or two reps, but hundreds of reps,
19 if not thousands of reps. That's what makes the Patriots a
20 great football team, is because they do it thousands of
21 times before they win, except against the Eagles. So, the -
22 - but, reps matter. Reps matter. So, one of the things,
23 the initiatives we're doing, is a synthetic training
24 environment, which will give leaders and collective units
25 thousands of reps, relatively cost-free, without going out

1 into the field. So, training's important, lots of reps.
2 That applies to the individual, as well.

3 In terms of equipping, to make sure that, not only do
4 you have the right amount of equipment on hand, but that
5 equipment works, so spare parts and the maintenance of that
6 equipment so it's fully operational. And we want to make
7 sure that that organization has the most modern equipment
8 that is available, really, that money can buy.

9 And then, in terms of your manning levels, we don't
10 want units going out to training at home station or at the
11 Combat Training Center at 75 or 80 percent fill. We want
12 them going out into the field to train at 90, 95, or 100
13 percent, or even more, to train, because they get the full
14 benefit of the collective training experience.

15 And then, the leadership is key. We want leaders who
16 can operate in intense environments, middle of the night,
17 smoke's going on, bombs are going off, people are screaming
18 and bleeding right next to you, and yet you can still make
19 incredibly complex and difficult decisions under intense
20 pressure. They can be morally correct decisions, ethically
21 correct decisions, and tactically correct decisions. And
22 you can do that in unbelievable pressure. That's what it
23 takes in a modern environment, but that's the same type of
24 leaders that it took in World War II, at Normandy, or Iwo
25 Jima and the Korean War and Vietnam, and so on.

1 So, that's what -- increased lethality. It's the
2 combination of training, equipping, manning, and having
3 excellent leaders that are up to the task, units that are
4 fit, they're able to shoot, move, communicate, protect
5 themselves, and sustain themselves.

6 Senator Tillis: Do either of y'all think that
7 sequestration's going to be helpful to achieving that
8 increased lethality?

9 General Milley: No, it'll kill it.

10 Senator Tillis: The -- I want to talk briefly about
11 Futures Command. I believe that the Army Futures Command
12 that Senator Warren made a -- may have brought it up. I
13 look forward to seeing you all go through the process in
14 assessing the various States that may be the most hospitable
15 to house that command. I know that you're going to start
16 proceeding through the process over the next week or two.
17 And it's like I've said a number of times before, I will
18 never fight for a dollar in North Carolina that can be
19 better spent somewhere else. I look forward to that
20 selection process being a level playing field, absent
21 political pressure to go one place or another because of the
22 jobs or economic impact. When we're constantly trying to
23 fight to get you all more money, the last thing we can
24 possibly do is satisfy the political pressure of any one
25 person or any one delegation, when you know in your heart of

1 hearts there's a better or more optimal place to put it.
2 And the States that are under consideration, the cities that
3 are under consideration, have the onus on presenting the
4 best possible case. And your onus is to make sure that
5 whoever doesn't get it, should it be North Carolina,
6 Massachusetts, any other State that you may be considering,
7 that you've got a well-articulated reason for why whatever
8 choice you had, based on the numbers, based on the empirical
9 data, was the best place. And I will heartily support that
10 decision, regardless of where it goes. I obviously would
11 like for it to be in North Carolina, but only because it's
12 the best and highest use of the limited dollars that you
13 have.

14 General Milley: I can assure you, Senator, that
15 Secretary Esper has laid out a rigorous process, it's
16 totally apolitical, it's totally based on data and analysis,
17 and that we are very rigorously and deliberately going
18 through that and evaluating each location based solely on
19 its own merits, with no political interference whatsoever.

20 Senator Tillis: Thank you all very much for your
21 service. We may submit a few questions for the record.

22 General Milley: Thank you, Senator.

23 Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

24 Senator Heinrich.

25 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, Chairman.

1 Secretary Esper, I understand you'll be visiting White
2 Sands Missile Range next week.

3 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir.

4 Senator Heinrich: So, I want to thank you for taking
5 the time to visit that facility. I think you'll be
6 incredibly impressed at the -- just the scale of the range,
7 in part, which is very unique.

8 I want to ask, if you're able, if you might take a few
9 minutes and quickly visit what used to be the old 2nd
10 Engineering Battalion facilities. It's about \$170 million
11 worth of brand-new facilities at White Sands that is
12 currently sitting vacant. At the very least, drive through
13 that footprint. I think it'll give you a better
14 understanding of the potential for hosting a security force
15 assistance brigade at that site. So, if you would, I'd ask
16 you to fit that into your schedule.

17 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir.

18 Senator Heinrich: Super. I very much appreciate that.

19 As you know, the full New Mexico delegation and local
20 communities support the addition of that mission. And I
21 think one of the things you'll find at White Sands is that
22 it's an incredibly safe community, with good-quality family
23 housing, and, for that matter, one of the best schools in
24 the State. So, it's a very attractive place for folks to
25 serve.

1 General Milley, I was really glad to see the Army place
2 a high priority on modernization, and the short-range air
3 and missile defense, in particular, and was particularly
4 impressed to see that General McIntire and the Army's new
5 cross-functional team have accelerated some systems by up to
6 5 years. I think that's good news to all of us here who
7 recognize, as you've said, that we've sort of taken a break
8 from modernization for far too long. Do you believe that
9 CFTs will be able to shorten the prototype development and
10 fielding timelines for your modernization objectives? And
11 how are you seeing that come together?

12 General Milley: I do. I think they're -- it's coming
13 together tremendous. And I think that the process that
14 we've put in place, the organization that we've put in
15 place, and the governance or oversight we've put in place is
16 very effective. And I have no doubt that it's going to
17 shorten the procurement and acquisition timelines. You
18 know, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Jim
19 McConville, and the Under Secretary of the Army, Ryan
20 McCarthy, are driving this. And these guys are driving it
21 hard. And they're sitting on top of the six cross-
22 functional teams -- there's actually eight, but two of them
23 are embedded under two others, so there's six total teams
24 that are working -- each of those six modernization
25 priorities -- long-range precision fires, next-generation --

1 Senator Heinrich: Yeah.

2 General Milley: -- future vertical left, and so on.

3 With respect to air missile defense and McIntire, he's
4 doing a great job in driving that. You're correct, we, the
5 Army, have been blessed by having the greatest Air Force
6 ever known throughout the history of mankind, in that we,
7 the Army, have not come under enemy fixed-wing air attack --

8 Senator Heinrich: Right.

9 General Milley: -- since the beaches of Normandy. If
10 we get into a conflict with a great power, those days'll be
11 gone. We will likely be under attack from enemy fixed wing.
12 Our Air Force would again do a tremendous job, but we, the
13 Army, must protect ourselves. So, air and missile defense
14 is a critical capability to protect our unit formations, and
15 it's a critical vulnerability right now. So, we want to
16 speed that up as fast as we can. We're doing that. And
17 McIntire is leading the way, under the supervision of
18 McCarthy and McConville. So, the three "Macs" are bringing
19 it home.

20 Senator Heinrich: Are you comfortable with how much
21 the Army is budgeting towards RDT&E funding to meet those
22 modernization and testing goals?

23 General Milley: Well, from my perspective, I would
24 always like more to put in there, but it's a balanced
25 portfolio --

1 Senator Heinrich: Sure, I get that.

2 General Milley: -- and we think -- the Secretary and I
3 think that we have balanced it for the FY- -- for this
4 proposed budget, '19, we think we have about the right
5 amount. We've increased it -- I think it's 8 percent or so,
6 in terms of our R&D and S&T capabilities. So, we think it's
7 balanced. It's not optimized, but --

8 Senator Heinrich: Right.

9 General Milley: -- it's balanced.

10 Dr. Esper: I would --

11 Senator Heinrich: I very much appreciate that
12 approach.

13 During the AUSA Global Force Symposium, General
14 McIntire said that the first prototype platoon of Strykers
15 equipped with directed energy weapon systems will be fielded
16 by 2023, but that he'd like to move that timeline further to
17 the left. What can we do? Is it just a matter of funding,
18 or are there other things that we can do to assist with
19 that? Because I think that's a very important development.

20 Dr. Esper: I think, Senator, it's -- I'd have to look
21 at whether it's the funding challenge, but there is a
22 technology challenge, as well. That's why we're trying to
23 work with the other services on that. And he's talking
24 about fielding. We are trying to push hard to move left as
25 much as we -- as quickly as we can. It does get to the

1 bigger issue about sustained funding beyond '19 to make sure
2 we can make those big procurement bets at that point in
3 time. But --

4 Senator Heinrich: You know, Secretary, if anything, I
5 finally see that we're turning a corner on recognizing just
6 how far the technology has moved. And now it's more a
7 matter of getting all of these technologies through the
8 various processes --

9 Dr. Esper: Right.

10 Senator Heinrich: -- working out how they're going to
11 be used in the field. It's not so much a limitation, in my
12 view, on the technology anymore, it's a limitation in how
13 quickly we can --

14 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir.

15 Senator Heinrich: -- work out the details of how they
16 will operate in the field.

17 Dr. Esper: Right. And our view is, don't make the
18 perfect the enemy of the better. So, even if --

19 Senator Heinrich: Right.

20 Dr. Esper: -- we get limited power at a limited range,
21 we'll start there, and then we'll continue to upgrade as the
22 technologies mature, and build upon it.

23 Senator Heinrich: Look forward to working with you on
24 that, Secretary.

25 Thank you both.

1 Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

2 Senator Cruz.

3 Senator Cruz: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Mr. Secretary, General, welcome. Thank you for your
5 service.

6 Secretary Esper, the capability gap separating the
7 United States and its competitors, Russia and China, has
8 reached a troubling inflection point. Over the past two
9 decades, for a whole lot of reasons, the U.S. military
10 hasn't been able to match the rapid pace of Russian and
11 Chinese military modernization. Both nations are reaching
12 parity in some areas once dominated by the United States,
13 such as field artillery, reactive armor, air defense
14 artillery, electronic warfare, and antitank guided
15 munitions. Furthermore, the training and professionalism of
16 the Russian and Chinese militaries have seen steady
17 improvements, as well. That's why the recently released
18 National Defense Strategy explicitly directs the U.S.
19 military to prioritize the threats emanating from Russia and
20 China. The NDS will have far-reaching implications for how
21 the U.S. military trains, equips, and postures its forces.
22 Each of the services will play a significant role in the
23 implementation of the NDS, which requires new and innovative
24 ways of conducting joint operations.

25 In light of the NDS, what does the Army see today as

1 its primary mission?

2 Dr. Esper: Our primary mission is to deploy, fight,
3 and win the Nation's wars, Senator. And, as the National
4 Defense Strategy has outlined in this era of great-power
5 competition, our focus is on high-intensity, near-peer
6 threats, possibly Russia and China -- or namely Russia and
7 China. So, that is our core focus.

8 Now, in addition to that, the NDS outlines the need to,
9 of course, protect the homeland, the need to preserve
10 irregular warfare as a core competency. But, those two
11 strategic competitors are our primary focus.

12 Senator Cruz: How is the Army prioritizing threats
13 posed by Russia and China, but -- both in the context of
14 weapons procurement, but also transitioning the mindset of
15 our soldiers from a global war on terror to a more
16 expeditionary posture?

17 Dr. Esper: So, we have moved to focus on high-
18 intensity conflict in our home-station training and our
19 national -- our training centers, particularly the National
20 Training Center. When I was there in November visiting and
21 the 1st Calvary was going through the training, they were
22 actually facing scenarios that the Ukrainians saw in eastern
23 Ukraine against the Russians -- high-intensity use of
24 drones, et cetera. So, training is one.

25 With regard to materiel, as we've outlined today, there

1 are six modernization priorities that we think, if fully
2 exploited, will ensure our overmatch in the out years. So,
3 that's the second part of it. And again, we must, as the
4 Chief spoke eloquently on earlier, continue to develop our
5 leaders to make sure that they are prepared for the future
6 battlefield, and train the soldiers, as well, so that they
7 can fight along the entire spectrum of conflict, which well
8 may -- which well may mean that they don't have access to
9 communications, electronics, et cetera.

10 Senator Cruz: I'm also concerned about the
11 modernization of our armored brigade combat teams, such as
12 those at Fort Hood and Fort Bliss in Texas. Technology such
13 as active protection systems and reactive armor have failed
14 to keep pace with where Russia is currently. I understand
15 the Army has started fielding systems like Trophy before
16 deploying to Europe. What is the status incorporating APS
17 systems like Trophy on our armored vehicles such as the
18 Bradley or the Stryker?

19 Dr. Esper: Senator, you're correct, we are looking to-
20 - we are outfitting some armored brigades with anti-
21 protection systems -- active protection systems. We're
22 looking at the same with regard to Bradleys and Strykers.
23 But, there are other things going on, as well. We're
24 upgrading the Abrams tanks. We -- this -- the budget we see
25 in '18 and '19 will allow us to accelerate the upgrade of

1 five ABCTs from 10 years to 5 years. And, of course, we are
2 pursuing other ways to improve the survivability and
3 lethality of these systems.

4 Senator Cruz: Additionally, how are you working to
5 ensure that our armored formations incorporate technology
6 such as APS, FLIR, and other off-the-shelf technologies to
7 keep pace with the threats that exist today?

8 Dr. Esper: I would say -- and I would defer to the
9 Chief here, as well -- and this is one of the areas where
10 the schoolhouses are looking at requirements for the future
11 fight, certainly cross-functional teams, to make sure that
12 we are incorporating whatever technologies are available to
13 do that. Certainly with regard to communications with -- we
14 have pivoted now to looking a lot more at commercial off-
15 the-shelf technology that we could ruggedize. I've seen
16 that already with regard to how we are outfitting the
17 Stryker and infantry brigade combat teams. And it's the
18 only way we're actually going to be able to keep up with
19 what's -- the changing pace of technology in the
20 communications sphere.

21 Senator Cruz: General, anything to add on that?

22 General Milley: Yeah, in the seconds remaining, I
23 would just tell you that we are actively upgrading our
24 Bradley and Abrams formations. But, as I mentioned earlier
25 to a previous question, the Bradley and the Abrams came into

1 service when I was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant. They
2 have served the Nation extraordinarily well, but they are
3 fundamentally at the end of their lifespan. We'll probably
4 get, max, another 10, maybe 15 years out of these vehicles.
5 We have maxed out their weight, the technological upgrades
6 that we can do. So, hence, the modernization program of a
7 next-generation combat vehicle.

8 But, we are aggressively upgrading Abrams and Bradley
9 and Stryker in all of our formations throughout the Army.
10 And I'm very confident that those weapon systems will
11 continue to serve us well, even against a Russia or a China
12 in the near term. Because, you know, armies don't go to
13 war, nations go to war. And armies don't win wars, nations
14 win wars. And we go as part of a joint force. So, it's not
15 just the Army. It's the Army with the Marines, the Navy,
16 the Air Force, the CIA, and so on and so forth. And it's
17 the synergistic effect of all that combat power in time and
18 space against the opponent, whether it's China, Russia, no
19 matter what the country, that's what brings victory or
20 defeat.

21 We do know that decision in war happens on the ground.
22 We know that, because that's -- war is part of politics,
23 people live on the ground, and so on. So, it's important.
24 The Army's contribution to that piece is critically
25 important, that we have a decisive conventional capability

1 that can conduct campaigns over extended periods of time to
2 do combined arms maneuver and defeat the armies of the
3 opponent, and then to take control of the land mass from the
4 enemy army. That's the fundamental task of any army, and
5 that's our task, as well. We're confident in our current
6 capabilities, we're confident in our current systems,
7 relative to Russia, China, or anyone else, for that matter.
8 But, we are keenly aware of the modernization programs of
9 both Russia and China right now, and we are keenly aware
10 that we need to shift gears rapidly into the modernization
11 in order to make sure that we don't have parity or that they
12 don't close the gap or cross the gap.

13 We want a military, across the board, to be
14 unbelievably lethal and unbelievably dominant so that no
15 nation will ever challenge the United States militarily.
16 That's what we want.

17 Senator Inhofe: Good --

18 Senator Cruz: Thank you, gentlemen.

19 Senator Inhofe: Good statement.

20 Senator Hirono.

21 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 This is for both Secretary Esper and General Milley.
23 And Senator Cruz has touched upon the National Defense
24 Strategy and how ready we are, but I want to focus on the
25 Asia-Pacific area. And China, of course, is a significant

1 rival in the Pacific. And it's important for the U.S. to
2 project strength, reassure our allies, and build
3 partnerships in Asia-Pacific, particularly in light of the
4 actions of China and North Korea.

5 So, I have a series of questions for both of you. How
6 are you resourced for mil-to-mil exercises in the Asia-
7 Pacific region? How are you resourced to cover Army
8 requirements in the region? Is the Army's force laydown
9 appropriate to meet current threats? And does the Army
10 envision directing additional assets to the Asia-Pacific
11 area of operations?

12 Let's start with you, Mr. Secretary.

13 Dr. Esper: Senator, I'll take a shot at the first
14 question. I'd -- one of the most important programs we have
15 out there for improving interoperability and addressing
16 training in the Pacific is the Pacific Pathways Program.
17 The U.S. Army Pacific Commander has requested \$61.8 million
18 for that program in FY19, and the Army fully funded it. So,
19 I think we will continue to sustain that level of training
20 and readiness as we look ahead.

21 With regard to disposition of forces, there are
22 currently no plans to put more forces in the Pacific, that
23 I'm aware of. I'll defer to the Chief if there is something
24 else. But, really what we're focusing now is to make sure
25 that we -- the troops prepare, both at home station and

1 through our training centers, for the high-end conflict,
2 whether it occurs in Europe, Asia, or elsewhere.

3 Senator Hirono: Chief?

4 General Milley: I would echo that, Senator, that our -
5 - we have a very wide variety of exercises in the Pacific
6 that you're very familiar with. Pathways is one of those.
7 And we think we have adequate funding in the '17-'18 series
8 of bills, and we're requesting adequate funding in the '19
9 series of bills. And those are really important that the
10 United States Army remain continually engaged, because
11 China, Asia-Pacific -- Indo-Pacific, really -- is the
12 priority in the National Security Strategy and in the
13 National Defense Strategy that Secretary Mattis has laid out
14 for us. We think we have adequate funding and resources to
15 do that. And we have a considerable amount of Army forces,
16 not only in your State of Hawaii, but up in Alaska, on the
17 West Coast, in Washington, and forward in Guam, Japan, and
18 Korea. So, we've got a good array of forces throughout the
19 Pacific region.

20 Senator Hirono: Well, there is a concern about the
21 fact that the service deputies testified in the Readiness
22 Subcommittee in February, and they all stated that nearly 70
23 percent of young people in the U.S. today are not qualified
24 to join the military. And your fiscal year 2019 request
25 calls for an increase in end strength of 487,500 regular

1 Army soldiers. And will you be able to continue increasing
2 end strength without lowering standards, giving the small
3 pool of people who meet the current standards?

4 General Milley: The short answer is yes. I believe --
5 we've done a lot of modeling and estimates on that -- that
6 we can increase our force by 4,000 or so each year that
7 we've been shooting for. And we've been meeting that, to
8 date. And I think we'll meet it in the future within
9 lowering any standards. So, the key is standards. It's a
10 standards-based Army. We're not going to lower those. And
11 I think we can meet the end strength.

12 As far as, you know, 70 -- and what the vices all said,
13 70 percent, that's a statistic that's been out there for a -
14 -

15 Senator Hirono: Yes.

16 General Milley: -- considerable length of time.
17 That's well known. And -- but, we focus on those that do
18 meet the standards, and we're not going to move the
19 standards.

20 Dr. Esper: I --

21 Senator Hirono: If you have nothing to --

22 Dr. Esper: I completely occur, and I would say,
23 actually, in many ways, though, you know, we all face that
24 same problem -- we, being the services -- in terms of how we
25 attract youth. We are putting more money into recruiting

1 and into other ways in which we can attract youth. The
2 National Guard is doing the same. And so, it's a challenge,
3 but we will not lower standards to bring a young man or
4 woman into the service. And, in fact, if anything, we are
5 raising standards and we are looking at -- you know, for
6 example, how can we extend either basic training or one
7 station unit training to make sure that the product we put
8 through is ready to go, that young man or woman, when they
9 arrive at their first unit.

10 Senator Hirono: Let me get -- ask a question about
11 cyber capacity, because that is an issue of concern
12 throughout these -- all the services. Last month, General
13 Nakasone testified about the success of the Army Cyber
14 Center of Excellence that they -- you are having in
15 developing and training a cyber workforce, including the
16 first class of enlisted cyber operators who graduated from
17 the Army Cyber School last August. And what percentage of
18 soldiers trained at the Army Cyber School come from the
19 Reserve and Guard components? And do you envision growth in
20 these numbers in the future? And, as the Army continues to
21 successfully train cyber operators, how will that affect the
22 Army cyber efforts across the service? And could the model-
23 - Army model employed at the Cyber Center of Excellence be
24 scaled up to train other services or members throughout the
25 government?

1 Dr. Esper: Senator, if I can, I mean, speak broadly,
2 and then I'll get to one of your questions there. I -- one
3 of the things I was most pleased to find when I came into
4 this role, about 4 and a half months ago, was how far the
5 Army had progressed and what it had achieved with regard to
6 cyber. So, we have a Cyber School, a Cyber Command, a cyber
7 MOS, a cyber branch, and are doing really well with regard
8 to bringing people in.

9 The goal was to have 62 cyber mission force teams. We
10 currently have 41 in the regular Army and are building 21 in
11 the Guard and Reserve. I was at the Guard Bureau a couple
12 of weeks ago, and they told me that they are up to, like, 30
13 teams in the States, and building more. So, I think there
14 is -- we continue to grow. I think the Guard, the States
15 provide good opportunities, because there's a lot of talent
16 out there that is familiar with these skills, and they are
17 working in the private sector. So, to bring them in as a
18 guardsman is a great opportunity to capitalize on skills
19 they already have.

20 Senator Hirono: Do you want to add something before --

21 General Milley: It's -- yeah. On the percentage, it's
22 roughly a third. We can get you the exact numbers.

23 [The information referred to follows:]

24 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

25

1 General Milley: You were asking about other RC at the-
2 - that are getting trained.

3 And, in terms of growth, absolutely. The cyber is a
4 domain of warfare -- you know, land, maritime, and air, the
5 normal three traditional ones, but now space and cyber. So,
6 developing capable cyber forces in the joint force, in all
7 of the services, is critical to our warfighting capability
8 in the future. So, this is an area of absolute growth. No
9 question about it. And we're very fortunate -- and you know
10 him well -- General Nakasone has led the way for the Army,
11 and done a great job there. And, of course, he's the
12 nominee who will be taking command of CYBERCOM, here,
13 shortly.

14 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

15 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

17 Senator Perdue.

18 Senator Perdue: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19 And thank you both for your service.

20 General, I just returned from North Korea, and I just
21 want to make a comment to you. I've been around high-
22 performance teams all my life, and I have to tell you,
23 General Brooks and your team over there is absolutely the
24 best of the best. And I want to thank you for the training
25 and the preparation of those young men and women over there.

1 I was really proud to be surrounded by them. So, please
2 pass that message along, both of you.

3 General Milley: Will do, Senator.

4 Senator Perdue: You've got about 24,000 soldiers over
5 there. I think this -- the National Commission on the
6 Future of the Army recommended that the Army consider
7 forward deploying a combat aviation brigade in Korea in
8 order to bolster the aviation readiness on the peninsula.
9 This spring, an Army -- as you mentioned, I believe,
10 earlier-- an Army tank brigade, the 1st Brigade 3rd
11 Division, I think, from Fort Stewart, deployed to South
12 Korea to deter potential aggression over there and to make
13 sure people around the world know we're serious. Can you
14 give us an update on the forward-deployment strategy with
15 regard to Korea, as you can -- as you best can in an open
16 conversation like this?

17 General Milley: Yeah. As you know, we've got 28,500
18 U.S. military personnel. Of those, 24-25,000 or so are U.S.
19 Army.

20 Senator Perdue: Sure.

21 General Milley: And we rotate an armored brigade
22 combat team, as you noted, through there on a regular basis.
23 They go over there for a deployment. That's a heel-to-toe
24 rotation. That's a critical capability that's necessary in
25 order to deter North Korean aggression. In addition to

1 that, we've got the headquarters of the 2nd Division, we've
2 got artillery capabilities, we've got ballistic missile
3 defense, with Patriot and THAAD, forward deployed. We've
4 got appropriate sustainment and intelligence capabilities
5 and a variety of other capabilities built within that 24,000
6 soldiers.

7 And, as you know, the situation on the Korean Peninsula
8 is dynamic right now. We've got a very important strategic-
9 level summit meeting between the President and Kim Jong Un
10 coming up, here, shortly. Right now, the U.S. strategy is
11 to maintain maximum pressure, and if -- and to continue our
12 capability to deter, and we'll see what develops in the
13 diplomatic realm. The main effort is clearly to resolve our
14 issues with North Korea through peaceful diplomatic means,
15 but to retain the capability and -- for the options to be
16 presented to the President if diplomacy does not work.

17 So, that's what we're doing. We're maintaining our
18 maximum pressure. We're maintaining our readiness. And
19 we're keeping those forces, under General Brooks, at a very,
20 very high state of readiness.

21 Senator Perdue: Yes, sir, thank you.

22 Mr. Secretary, you both have spoken to the five
23 domains, and the growing domains of space and cyber in
24 addition to maritime, land, and air. We've been getting
25 these cyber briefings, in the Subcommittee on Cyber, and I

1 have to say it's very sobering. In an open environment like
2 this, though, there are some concerns that we can discuss
3 relative to the integration. I know we have one approach
4 for the government, but when we look at the services -- and
5 this is your responsibility -- talk to us about the
6 integrated efforts between the services so that we don't --
7 so that we have best practices -- we share best practices
8 and we also have a concerted effort that can efficiently
9 compete with the absolute rapid development in both China
10 and Russia.

11 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. This is a -- an area of focus,
12 as well, for all the concerns you outlined. There is
13 certainly a lot of cooperation going on between the
14 services-- and with OSD, I might add -- to make sure that we
15 are protected from the tactical through the strategic level.
16 Certainly, for the Army, we're building a lot of capability
17 at the brigade level and above to deal with the tactical
18 problems that we might face. I can tell you, with regard to
19 the modernization priorities and the cross-functional teams,
20 I've talked to them, and they're committed to making sure
21 that whatever we procure for the future is cyber hardened
22 and cyber resilient. As you think higher and look across
23 the DOD, we're looking at the same thing to make sure we can
24 protect our data. It's recognized that this is a
25 vulnerability. I can't go into too much detail, but there

1 is clear recognition that that's the case, and we need to be
2 able to attract the talent, as the Chief spoke to, the
3 talent from the private sector, to make sure that we are on
4 the cutting edge and are capable of defending ourselves in
5 this -- in what is considered a -- could be an asymmetric
6 vulnerability.

7 Senator Perdue: Thank you both.

8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 Senator Inhofe: Senator Gillibrand.

10 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

11 Dr. Esper and General Milley, thank you for being here,
12 and thank you for your service.

13 On April 3rd, 2018, the American Medical Association
14 wrote a letter to Secretary Mattis decrying the recent
15 policy release by the White House. Echoing concerns raised
16 by the Americans Psychological Association and two former
17 surgeon generals, the American Medical Association said,
18 quote, "We believe there is no medically valid reason,
19 including the diagnosis of gender dysphoria, to exclude
20 transgender individuals from military service." The memo
21 mischaracterizes and rejected the wide body of peer-reviewed
22 research on the effectiveness of transgender medical care.
23 Yet the DOD, quote, "panel of experts," quote, "came out --
24 came to a drastically different conclusion from the
25 preeminent medical organizations in America about gender

1 dysphoria, the effectiveness and impact of gender transition
2 on medical and psychological health, and the ability of
3 transgender servicemembers to meet standards of accession
4 and retention." Who represented the Army on this panel?

5 General Milley: For the Army, it was, I believe, the
6 Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General McConville.

7 Senator Gillibrand: And did the Army include any
8 health professionals on the panel? And if so, who?

9 General Milley: I know there's been a lot of -- I
10 don't know about -- I don't know the specific answer to your
11 question, in terms of "on the panel," but there were --
12 General McConville consulted with lots of internal folks,
13 medical professionals. Absolutely, yes.

14 Senator Gillibrand: Can you submit to the committee
15 who was consulted, specifically?

16 General Milley: Absolutely. Yeah, sure.

17 [The information referred to follows:]

18 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Gillibrand: Do you know whether any health
2 professionals from within the government and outside of it
3 testified before, or consulted with, the panel in written
4 testimony, or was it just verbal?

5 General Milley: With the DOD panel?

6 Senator Gillibrand: Uh-huh.

7 General Milley: I don't know if it was written or
8 verbal, but I can get you the answer.

9 Senator Gillibrand: Whatever you -- whatever was
10 submitted, we'd like to see, please.

11 General Milley: Yeah, yeah. Sure.

12 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

13 General Milley: Sure. Sure.

14 [The information referred to follows:]

15 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Gillibrand: And are you aware of anyone else
2 who contributed to the panel?

3 General Milley: Each of the service vices, I believe,
4 was on it. There were several DOD folks. I think the --
5 I'm pretty sure the panel was led by DOD P&R, if I remember
6 right -- Personnel and Readiness -- the Under Secretary for
7 Personnel and Readiness. We can get you the exact names.

8 Senator Gillibrand: Great. Thank you --

9 General Milley: Sure.

10 Senator Gillibrand: -- so much.

11 General Milley: Yeah.

12 Senator Gillibrand: And any information they
13 submitted.

14 [The information referred to follows:]

15 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 General Milley: Sure.

2 Senator Gillibrand: Dr. Esper and General Milley, in
3 light of the existing injunctions, DOD is currently
4 operating under the previous transgender open service policy
5 put in place by the last administration, yet transgender
6 soldiers have now seen the Department's recommendations and
7 are on notice that, if the policy is implemented, they will
8 get kicked out for seeking care or treatment for their
9 gender dysphoria. I'm worried that this uncertainty will
10 get -- will have a negative impact on these individuals, but
11 also on their units, and that fear of these recommendations
12 will stop these soldiers from seeking care. What are you
13 doing to ensure readiness in light of the pall that has been
14 cast on the future of transgender soldiers?

15 Dr. Esper: Senator, we continue to treat every
16 soldier, transgender or not, with dignity and respect,
17 ensure that they're well trained and well equipped for
18 whatever future fights. With regard to accessions, our
19 accessions folks understand that we are operating under the
20 Carter policy, if you will. We've had some persons already
21 join, transgender persons join, and we will continue to
22 access them and train them and treat them well, in
23 accordance with that policy.

24 Senator Gillibrand: Well, I'm concerned, because the
25 report that was included with the memo claimed that

1 transgender persons serving in our military might hurt unit
2 cohesion. So, that is different than treating everyone with
3 dignity and respect. When asked by reporters, in February,
4 whether soldiers have concerns about serving beside openly
5 transgender individuals, you said it really hasn't come up.
6 Are you aware of any problems with unit cohesion arising
7 since you made that comment? And, if so, can you tell us
8 how they were handled by the unit leadership involved?

9 Dr. Esper: Senator, nothing has percolated up to my
10 level. When I made that comment, I was -- it was a question
11 about, you know, have I met with soldiers and talked about
12 these issues? What do they raise? And, as I said then, the
13 soldiers tend to -- you know, young kids tend to raise the
14 issue in front of them at the day. It could be that they're
15 performing all-night duty or didn't get their paycheck, and
16 this was just not an issue that came up at that moment in
17 time. And, beyond that --

18 Senator Gillibrand: Have you since heard anything, how
19 transgender servicemembers are harming unit cohesion?

20 Dr. Esper: Again, nothing has percolated up to me.

21 Senator Gillibrand: General Milley, have you heard
22 that?

23 General Milley: No, not at all. The -- and we have a
24 finite number. We know who they are, and it is monitored
25 very closely, because, you know, I'm concerned about that,

1 and want to make sure that they are, in fact, treated with
2 dignity and respect. And no, I have received precisely zero
3 reports --

4 Senator Gillibrand: Okay.

5 General Milley: -- of issues of cohesion, discipline,
6 morale, and all those sorts of things. No.

7 Senator Gillibrand: That's good news.

8 I know that the Secretary spoke with transgender
9 soldiers recently. Of all the ones that you have personally
10 spoke with of the Active Duty transgender soldiers, were you
11 concerned by any of them continuing to serve?

12 Dr. Esper: Well, I actually met with them in the first
13 30 days on the job, Senator. And no, nothing came up that
14 would cause me concern. I was, you know, impressed by what
15 I heard.

16 Senator Gillibrand: And have either of you spoken to
17 any transgender servicemembers since this set of
18 recommendations was released by the administration in March?
19 And, if you have, what did you hear?

20 Dr. Esper: No, ma'am.

21 General Milley: I have not. I did before. I have
22 not. But, let -- you know, the case, as you are well aware,
23 is in litigation. It's in four different courts. So, the -
24 - we're limited in, actually, what we should or could say
25 right this minute, because it could, either one way or the

1 other, impact that litigation. But, let me just say that
2 our feeling and -- well, I'll say my feeling, my view is
3 that we have an Army that is standards-based. It has always
4 been standards-based, it will remain standards-based for
5 medical, physical, psychological, conduct, et cetera. And
6 those soldiers or those applicants of people who want to
7 access into the Army that meet those standards -- and
8 they're rigorous standards -- if you meet those standards,
9 then you're on the team. If you don't meet those standards,
10 for whatever reason, then you won't be on the team. It's
11 that simple. And those standards are based upon the rigors
12 of ground combat, and it's important that this 1 percent who
13 wear this uniform and the cloth of our country, we're giving
14 up certain civil rights so the other 99 percent can retain
15 their civil rights. We know that. We do it willingly, and
16 volunteer to do it.

17 So, this is not an issue -- with respect to
18 transgenders, this is not an issue, in our -- my view, it's
19 not a civil rights issue. This is an issue of standards and
20 maintaining the deployability and the combat effectiveness
21 and lethality of the United States Army. And I think I
22 speak for the other services -- service chiefs, as well.

23 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

24 General Milley: Standards-based.

25 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

1 Senator Inhofe: Senator Kaine.

2 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3 And thanks, to the witnesses, for this important
4 hearing.

5 Secretary Esper, I want to ask you about a passion of
6 mine. I've got two bills filed in the Senate now, which I
7 am hoping might be included, ultimately, in the mark for the
8 NDAA. One is a Military Spouse Employment Act. And
9 colleagues on this committee, including Senators Gillibrand
10 and Perdue, are cosponsors. And the second is the Childcare
11 for Military Families Act. Senator Rounds on this committee
12 is a cosponsor.

13 What I've tried to do in both of these bills is take a
14 significant amount of feedback from spouses all across the
15 country to address major factors leading to an unacceptably
16 high unemployment rate among military spouses. And, as I've
17 worked with spouses on this issue, we've identified a whole
18 series of challenges and causes: lack of direct employment
19 opportunities with other Federal agencies, lack of
20 childcare, lack of or underutilization of education and
21 training resources, lack of counseling, frequent moves.
22 Additionally, the first bill tries to encourage more
23 public/private partnerships for the DOD and more
24 opportunities for entrepreneurship on military bases for
25 military spouses.

1 These bills, the two, address each of these issues. I
2 don't think there's a silver bullet that's going to drop the
3 unemployment rate of military spouses from three to five
4 times the national average to the national average, but I
5 think these bills offer a great start in beginning this
6 conversation and moving us in the right direction.

7 I want to ask if you've had a chance to review the
8 legislation. And is this an effort that the Army would be
9 supportive of?

10 Dr. Esper: Senator, I looked over the legislation.
11 I'm impressed by what you put in there. I think -- as I
12 shared with you before, I think these are some of the most
13 important challenges, if not the most important challenges,
14 facing our spouses -- Army spouses. I know my wife
15 experienced the same challenges when I was on Active Duty.

16 Everywhere I go, if there's a family readiness group,
17 spouses, I meet with them, and this issue comes up over and
18 over and over again. And they are intricately linked. The
19 fact that it takes, on average, 140 days to hire someone is
20 hurting the Army, it's hurting our readiness, and it's
21 certainly hurting spouses. And, as a result, it hurts
22 retention.

23 And the direct link here, as I think I shared with you,
24 is, if you can -- we have daycare centers that go unfilled
25 with supervisors because it takes months to hire them. And

1 the supply is there to tap into, but the -- it's cluttered
2 up in everything from things that we are doing within the
3 building all the way up to, you know, how OPM handles it.

4 So, I've talked to staff, I've talked to members about
5 the need to fix this problem, because it's -- there's
6 nothing but good if we can.

7 Senator Kaine: I have a son in the military who signed
8 up and then did -- for a first 4, and then a second 3, as a
9 single individual, and now is married. And, as he gets to
10 the 7-year point and he has to make another decision, it's
11 fundamentally a very different decision.

12 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. Well, we like to say you recruit
13 soldiers and retain families.

14 Senator Kaine: And it's very true. And so, you know,
15 the ability of spouses to feel like, with the sacrifice that
16 they bear, there is going to be an opportunity for them to
17 put their talents to use is a really important part of
18 retention. I appreciate your answer to this.

19 I have one other question. We had a Readiness
20 Subcommittee hearing -- Chair Inhofe is the chair of our
21 Readiness Subcommittee -- in February, had the service vices
22 in. And I asked about how the services are balancing
23 reconstitution efforts against the COCOM force requests.
24 And so, focusing specifically on the Army, to each of you,
25 General McConville answered, that day, and he said,

1 basically, "We need more people and fewer missions." The
2 funding that we just did in the budget, I think, is going to
3 be really helpful over the next 18 months on the first part
4 of this, the funding for the additional people, but how
5 about the second part, the fewer missions? Is there an
6 opportunity to reconstitute, since we now have fewer troops
7 in Iraq and Afghanistan, or are the additional necessary
8 missions that we're engaged in around the world sort of
9 immediately taking up whatever slack there was from that
10 drawdown in Iraq and Afghanistan?

11 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. This is a supply-and-demand
12 issue, and I think, with the '18 and '19 bills, we can grow
13 end strength. It helps us create more supply, fully flesh
14 out our units, et cetera. But, there is the demand side of
15 the equation. It's something that we've had discussions
16 with internally, we've discussed it with OSD to look at, you
17 know, the range of demands placed on the Army. Can we do
18 some of it differently? Can we -- we look at lower-value
19 exercises or training, and, you know, if not limit them,
20 reduce them, make them at least more productive to preserve
21 readiness?

22 What we really have to do is get the soldier deployment
23 rate, the bog-to-dwell, as we call it, up to the 1-year to
24 2-year standard. And right now, we're well below that.
25 We're somewhere just north of 1. And that has an impact on

1 the force, both in terms of readiness, retention, you know,
2 across -- it has a range of impacts that we need to address
3 with regard to that.

4 Senator Kaine: Thank you very much.

5 Appreciate it, Mr. Chair.

6 Senator Inhofe: Senator Donnelly.

7 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 And thank you, to both of the witnesses.

9 I know the Army's committed to addressing military
10 suicide. I'm sure both of you know that suicide risk among
11 servicemembers often isn't tied to deployments or combat
12 experiences. And we can't be restricting our most rigorous
13 mental health assessments to the deployment cycle. This
14 committee helped pass legislation in 2014 to ensure every
15 servicemember -- Active, Guard, or Reserve -- receives a
16 thorough in-person mental health assessment every year. It
17 was named after a brave Hoosier soldier, Jacob Sexton, who
18 was lost to suicide in 2009. It's my understanding that the
19 Army is now fully implementing the Sexton Act requirement
20 for a robust annual mental health assessment. Is that
21 correct?

22 Dr. Esper: Correct.

23 Senator Donnelly: Thank you.

24 General Milley: That's correct.

25 Senator Donnelly: What are your top priorities,

1 looking forward, for combating military suicide, the best
2 tools you think you have in improving mental health services
3 for our soldiers this year and in the years ahead? What do
4 you think are some of the areas where, when you look at
5 general -- that you look, and you go, you know, "Here's one
6 of the causes of some of this, and the best way to try to
7 reduce it"?

8 Dr. Esper: Well, Senator, thank you for raising this
9 issue. It's -- it is very troubling. I sign too many
10 condolence letters associated with, you know, the scourge of
11 suicide. And the rates that I see across the Army are not
12 heading in the right direction. I mean, we need to get
13 them, rather than flat, heading the right direction. And
14 the challenge is, you know, particularly troubling in the
15 Guard and Reserve, where you -- where units only come
16 together every 30 days and break back up.

17 And, you're right, it's not related to -- necessarily,
18 to deployments. It's -- the experts will tell you it's hard
19 to pin it down. But, we do know the most vulnerable
20 population are these young soldiers, 17 to 22 or so. It
21 often is -- the cause is a relationship issue, you know, a
22 breakup, whatever the case may be.

23 As I've looked at this problem, I've asked our folks to
24 come back with, you know, new thinking with regard to
25 strategies that we can deal with this. We already put

1 behavioral health experts in the units. We provide a lot
2 more access. As I've talked with some of the committee
3 staff, we need to make sure the commanders and the officers
4 in the units have greater access to that type of information
5 so they know how to deal with soldiers. But, I also think
6 it's critical that we make sure that the chain of command is
7 responsible and in charge. And, in some cases, we've moved
8 away from that. So, making sure that we implement programs
9 like Not in My Squad, that we put NCOs, junior officers,
10 back in charge of teaching their soldiers resiliency. All
11 that is important.

12 Senator Donnelly: General?

13 General Milley: Yeah, I think the key, Senator, is two
14 things in order for -- for prevention. And we have a lot of
15 resources, and we appreciate the support of Congress in
16 helping us do that. But, I think the key -- and the
17 resources have to be focused in two particular areas. One
18 is situational awareness of the soldiers in a squad, in a
19 platoon, in a company, of the early warning indicators and
20 signs of potential suicide, the stressors that are on an
21 individual soldier. And the second key is -- first is,
22 recognize the early warning signs -- the second key is, know
23 that you can intervene, that we are, in fact, our brother
24 and sister's keeper, that being silent is not okay -- to
25 intervene, to take action, and to get that soldier help.

1 They are reaching out, they are crying out for help. Get
2 them help. So, situational awareness, and it's okay to
3 intervene.

4 Senator Donnelly: Great. Thank you.

5 To both of you, I just wanted to mention that, in
6 Indiana, we have a training center, Muscatatuck. It's used
7 for all types of training. It's a national asset. It's a
8 venue that can help prepare our forces for current, future
9 threats. And I just wanted to make both of you aware of it.
10 Hope you both have a chance, at some point soon, to go
11 there.

12 Dr. Esper: Yes, sir. It's on my visit list. I think-
13 -

14 Senator Donnelly: Great.

15 Dr. Esper: -- in the next 4 or 5 months, I plan on
16 coming out there.

17 Senator Donnelly: Terrific.

18 General, what does stability look like in Afghanistan?
19 When you look at that, and you look and go, "This is an
20 acceptable state to move forward with," how do you see that?

21 General Milley: A couple of things, Senator, that
22 we've defined in the strategy. One is that Afghanistan --
23 and this has been the objective since 2001 -- that
24 Afghanistan no longer is a platform for terrorists to
25 conduct strikes on the continental United States, or in the

1 United States. That's key. That's why we're there, and
2 that's why we're still there.

3 Secondly, how do you achieve that? You achieve it
4 through a stable Afghanistan. So, what does that look like?
5 It means that the armed opposition -- the Taliban, the
6 Haqqani Network, al Qaeda, ISIS-K, and all these other
7 groups -- are reduced, in terms of capability, that they no
8 longer present an existential threat to the regime in Kabul,
9 and that the Afghan National Security Forces, writ large --
10 their army, their police, their intelligence forces -- can
11 handle the violent threat against the regime at a level that
12 is something akin to crime or banditry, and they are no
13 longer capable of -- the enemy is no longer capable of
14 actually presenting a downfall to the regime.

15 Senator Donnelly: The last thing I want to ask, real
16 quick, is just --

17 General Milley: Yes.

18 Senator Donnelly: -- can we do that without the real
19 cooperation of Pakistan and --

20 General Milley: Well, that's --

21 Senator Donnelly: -- ISI?

22 General Milley: -- so, that's --

23 Senator Donnelly: Sorry, I didn't mean to cut you off.

24 General Milley: -- that's the end state of

25 Afghanistan, is reduce the threat to something that can be

1 handled on a routine basis by the internal security forces.
2 In order to do that, you have to essentially do several
3 things. You mentioned Pakistan. That is key. It's
4 important that Pakistan is part of the solution. It's a
5 regional solution. Part of our strategy is a regional
6 strategy. That involves -- very much involves Pakistan.
7 It's very, very difficult to eliminate any insurgency if
8 that insurgency has safe haven in another country. Right
9 now, the Taliban, Haqqani, and other organizations do, in
10 fact, enjoy some safe haven in the border regions on the
11 Pakistani side of the border. Pakistan's got to be part of
12 the solution.

13 And lastly is reconciliation. At the end of the day,
14 the Afghan government has got -- is on the path right now to
15 establishing some sort of political reconciliation with the
16 various opponent groups. We're in support of that effort.

17 So, it's important that we realign the forces, that we
18 reinforce the capabilities that we're already doing, and
19 that we regionalize the problem, including Pakistan, and
20 that there's some sort of reconciliation process. At the
21 end of the day, that's how that ends, and it ends
22 successfully. And I believe that's achievable.

23 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, General.

24 Thank you.

25 Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

1 Senator Blumenthal.

2 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

3 I join my colleagues in thanking you for your service,
4 and thank you for being here today.

5 I want to focus on Ukraine. I know, Mr. Secretary, you
6 visited with some Ukrainian soldiers recently. You have
7 been to Europe and various Army posts there, and discussed
8 this issue with them. Operation Atlantic Resolve, as you
9 know, is an Army-led operation designed to reassure our NATO
10 allies and partners of America's dedication in the region
11 after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and its
12 continued aggression -- I might say, overt defiant military
13 aggression in Ukraine. Since April of 2014, the Army has
14 conducted continuous multinational and security cooperation
15 training through European Deterrence -- the European
16 Deterrence Initiative. As someone watching from the
17 outside, my conclusion would be that whatever we're doing
18 there has had no impact, no effect whatsoever on Russian
19 aggression, either to deter it or defeat it. Maybe you can
20 dissuade me.

21 Dr. Esper: Senator, I did visit Europe in January. I
22 went to Belgium, Poland, Germany, and Ukraine, with
23 different focus on each. My takeaway was that, at least
24 with regard to Atlantic Resolve when I met with the Poles,
25 both the military and on the Ministry of Defense side, that

1 they were very happy with our presence there, that they felt
2 it provided not just a reassurance role, but also a
3 deterrence role. And it was not just because of U.S.
4 troops, but you had NATO troops in all the Baltic states and
5 Poland. They were very eager to continue to improve that
6 relationship, to increase the number of forces. When I was
7 in Germany, for example, with regard to exercises, a Polish
8 brigade was training in Germany with American, Italian,
9 British units underneath it. So, a lot of great training
10 happening. But, my sense -- and I recently met with a
11 Lithuanian Vice Defense Minister -- again, very happy with
12 our presence there, and very reassured in the helpfulness of
13 what the EDI funding has provided. So --

14 Senator Blumenthal: I apologize. I probably was less
15 than fully clear in my question. Focusing on Ukraine.

16 Dr. Esper: Oh, I -- well, Ukraine, I was very
17 impressed by the -- you know, the New York National Guard at
18 the time was training, and they -- the training was going
19 exceedingly well. What's interesting is the degree to which
20 Ukraine is really adapting to NATO doctrine, NATO standards,
21 really building a -- quite a capability. And what's
22 interesting is, they're using it -- the facility that we're
23 training at in western Ukraine not just to bring in new
24 recruits, but to bring -- they're taking soldiers off the
25 front lines in eastern Ukraine, in Donbass, and coming back

1 to the training site and incorporating those lessons
2 learned. And --

3 Senator Blumenthal: Is it having an effect on the
4 battlefield?

5 Dr. Esper: I -- yes, sir. I think what the leaders --
6 what the Ukrainian officers told me was, it was having an
7 effect, in terms of their performance. The soldiers felt
8 reassured. But, that was my takeaway. I don't --

9 General Milley: Yes, Senator, it has. The violence
10 along the Ukrainian in the -- along the line of contact is
11 at a 3-year low right now. That's significant.

12 Senator Blumenthal: The level of violence is at a 3-
13 year low.

14 General Milley: That's correct. And --

15 Senator Blumenthal: But, have we -- have they pushed -
16 -

17 General Milley: There is --

18 Senator Blumenthal: -- back?

19 General Milley: Well, there is cause and effect as to
20 why it's low. It's, in part, because the Ukrainian
21 capability has increased since we have begun an advisory
22 effort in our support efforts, and because they're fighting
23 against the various separatist groups in eastern Donbass.
24 So, the Ukrainian military's performance has increased, the
25 enemy's performance has met that and is reduced, and they

1 recognize what they're up against, therefore the violence
2 has subsided. It's not done. There's still violence.
3 Don't get me wrong. But, that --

4 Senator Blumenthal: Well, I apologize --

5 General Milley: -- has reduced --

6 Senator Blumenthal: -- for interrupting, General.

7 General Milley: Yeah. Sorry.

8 Senator Blumenthal: And --

9 General Milley: I'm sorry.

10 Senator Blumenthal: -- I'm doing so only because --

11 General Milley: Go ahead.

12 Senator Blumenthal: -- my time is limited.

13 General Milley: Sure.

14 Senator Blumenthal: The other way of interpreting the
15 situation -- and I say it with all due respect -- is, the
16 Russians have gotten what they want, for now, and they and
17 their proxies -- and I mean the Russians -- are staying put,
18 maybe because they sense a little bit more strength from the
19 Ukrainians; but, in terms of their ill-gotten gains, they
20 are satisfied they've divided the country.

21 General Milley: That is a way of looking at it, that's
22 correct.

23 Senator Blumenthal: Is there a Ukrainian determination
24 to push back --

25 General Milley: Oh, I --

1 Senator Blumenthal: -- and to recover --

2 General Milley: From my visit there and, I think,
3 Secretary Esper's visit there, the Ukrainians have
4 determined that Ukraine is a sovereign nation and that they
5 intend to remain a sovereign nation. And they do not accept
6 annexation of eastern Donbass. That's what the Ukrainians
7 told me, and I believe that's what they told you, and I
8 believe that's their stated policy position.

9 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

10 I really appreciate both of --

11 General Milley: Yes, sir.

12 Senator Blumenthal: -- your candor and your very
13 informed presentation today.

14 Thank you.

15 Senator Inhofe: I want to say thank you to our
16 witnesses. It's been -- I appreciate your patience and your
17 responses. They've been excellent.

18 We're adjourned.

19 [Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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