

Stenographic Transcript  
Before the

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

## **UNITED STATES SENATE**

TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON UNITED STATES SPECIAL  
OPERATIONS COMMAND AND UNITED STATES CYBER  
COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION  
REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022 AND THE FUTURE YEARS  
DEFENSE PROGRAM.

Thursday, March 25, 2021

Washington, D.C.

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1 TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS  
2 COMMAND AND UNITED STATES CYBER COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE  
3 DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022 AND THE  
4 FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

5  
6 Thursday, March 25, 2021

7  
8 U.S. Senate  
9 Committee on Armed Services  
10 Washington, D.C.  
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12 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in  
13 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed,  
14 chairman of the committee, presiding.

15 Committee members present: Senators Reed [presiding],  
16 Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Kaine, King, Peters,  
17 Manchin, Duckworth, Rosen, Kelly, Inhofe, Wicker, Fischer,  
18 Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Scott, Blackburn,  
19 Hawley, and Tuberville.  
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1           OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM  
2 RHODE ISLAND

3           Chairman Reed: Let me call the hearing to order. Just  
4 to make everyone aware, we have four votes scheduled to  
5 begin at 10:45, so we will have to be, yeah, we will be very  
6 flexible.

7           But let me make my opening remarks, and then recognize  
8 Senator Inhofe, and then recognize our panel.

9           Good morning. Today, the committee meets to receive an  
10 update on the readiness and posture of both, the U.S.  
11 Special Operations Command and the Cyber Command.

12           Our witnesses are Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense  
13 for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict,  
14 Christopher Maier; Commander of U.S. Special Operations  
15 Command, General Richard Clarke; and Commander of U.S. Cyber  
16 Command, National Security Agency Director, and Chief of the  
17 Central Security Service, General Paul Nakasone.

18           Both Special Operations Command, or SOCOM, and Cyber  
19 Command, are at the forefront of addressing the asymmetric  
20 information and technical challenges that transcend the  
21 boundaries of the geographic combat commands. I hope our  
22 witnesses will convey our appreciation to the men and women  
23 you represent and their families, for their dedication and  
24 sacrifice in carrying out many of our nation's most  
25 difficult and complex missions.

1           In 1986, when Congress created SOCOM, to ensure the  
2   readiness of Special Operations Forces, or SOF, it also  
3   established the position of the Assistant Secretary of  
4   Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict,  
5   or ASD/SOLIC, to be the service-like secretary tasked with  
6   day-to-day advocacy and oversight of SOF.

7           In recent years, Congress has sought to further empower  
8   the ASD/SOLIC and optimize the partnership with the  
9   commander of SOCOM through the annual National Defense  
10  Authorization Act. Unfortunately, the Department has not  
11  made sufficient progress in implementing these reforms,  
12  particularly with respect to hiring appropriate personnel  
13  and establishing a strong role for the ASD/SOLIC and all  
14  decisions relating to the organization, training, equipping,  
15  and readiness of SOF.

16          We are pleased Mr. Maier is joining us today as the  
17  acting ASD/SOLIC and look forward to receiving a nominee so  
18  the Department can have a fully empowered, Senate-confirmed  
19  civilian in this important position.

20          Mr. Maier and General Clarke, I hope you will provide  
21  your assessment of how this committee can help to ensure  
22  that the SOLIC reforms are both, fully implemented and  
23  effective, in their ultimate goal of supporting the SOF  
24  enterprise.

25          In recent years, there have been several incidents and

1 allegations of misconduct involving special operators that,  
2 as General Clarke has noted, jeopardized the trust placed in  
3 SOF. I applaud SOCOM for taking a hard look in the mirror  
4 by completing a comprehensive review of SOF culture and  
5 ethics last year.

6 Among other things, the review concluded that SOCOM  
7 disproportionately focused on SOF employment and mission  
8 accomplishment at the expense of training and development of  
9 our force. In some cases, this imbalance has set conditions  
10 for unacceptable conduct to occur due to a lack of  
11 leadership, discipline, and accountability.

12 General Clarke, I am interested in hearing more about  
13 the specific actions you have taken to address the findings  
14 of the comprehensive review and what more must be done.

15 Turning to Cyber Command, General Nakasone, you have  
16 been working to mature the cyber force, ensuring their  
17 readiness, and overseeing the development of capabilities to  
18 conduct defensive, offensive, and supporting intelligence  
19 operations. I understand there are positive trends in all  
20 of these areas, but the threat to our cybersecurity may be  
21 advancing at an even faster rate.

22 Indeed, recent disturbing cyber intrusions and attacks,  
23 likely conducted by Russia and China, will command attention  
24 in today's hearings.

25 In the SolarWinds incident, hackers conducted a

1 sophisticated operation that installed a backdoor and a  
2 software update that left approximately 18,000 enterprises  
3 vulnerable to exploitation and attacks, including many  
4 government agencies and companies that provide essential  
5 goods and services. We have recently learned that a Chinese  
6 entity exploited multiple previously unknown vulnerabilities  
7 in the software running Microsoft Exchange email servers and  
8 there are hundreds of thousands of these servers around the  
9 world. After Microsoft announced the breach and issued  
10 methods to protect it, multiple Chinese Government-sponsored  
11 hacking groups rushed to compromise thousands of vulnerable  
12 servers before they could be patched.

13 A third event that merits attention is the reporting  
14 that China attacked the power grid in India during recent  
15 physical clashes the Himalayan border regions.

16 General Nakasone, in the first two events, paid actors  
17 exploited vulnerabilities to steal data. While some may  
18 consider this tolerable and expected behavior from a  
19 competitor nation, others view the scope and scale of these  
20 operations as reckless and a different class that merits a  
21 sharp response, and I am interested in your views in this  
22 matter.

23 In the matter of China's attack on the Indian power  
24 grid, which followed multiple Russian cyberattacks on  
25 Ukraine's power grid, there is a sense of growing

1 willingness of adversaries who attack critical  
2 infrastructure in any serious confrontation; again, I am  
3 interested in your perceptions on this matter and if we need  
4 to be concerned about our nation's critical infrastructure.

5 I, again, want to thank the witnesses for their service  
6 and willingness to be here today, and I look forward to your  
7 testimony.

8 Senator Inhofe, please?

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

3 Senator Inhofe: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.  
4 Great statement. I appreciate that and for calling this  
5 important hearing to examine our posture of the U.S.  
6 Operations Command and the U.S. Cyber Command.

7 I also want to thank our witnesses for being here with  
8 us today. They are the right guys for this hearing.

9 My top priority continues to be ensuring the effective  
10 implementation of the National Defense Strategy. We have  
11 been talking about that at almost every meeting that we  
12 have. It prioritizes competition with China and Russia,  
13 while maintaining pressure on the global terrorist groups  
14 like ISIS, and I will have some specific questions on that  
15 at question time.

16 As I said on the floor on Tuesday, we need to match the  
17 budget with strategy. It takes at least 3 to 5 percent real  
18 growth in a defense budget above inflation. It doesn't look  
19 like it is going to be easy to get to that point. We are  
20 going to have to keep trying.

21 Military advancements and the expanding global  
22 ambitions by China and Russia impose new and increasingly  
23 complex challenges to our national security. In addition to  
24 growing their conventional military capabilities, China and  
25 Russia are expanding their use of irregular warfare tactics,



1 involving cyber disinformation, proxying their forces, and  
2 economic blackmail around the world.

3 They have proven these tactics are effective in places  
4 like Ukraine, in Syria, in the South China Sea, and now they  
5 are exporting them to Africa and to the Western Hemisphere.

6 As we discussed before, this reality makes implementation  
7 of the irregular warfare annex to the NDS critically  
8 important. It also requires that Special Operations Forces  
9 are organized, trained, and equipped to compete in this  
10 domain warfare.

11 At the same time, ISIS and Al Qaeda have proven  
12 resilient and still pose a threat. History has shown us  
13 without sustained pressure, that threat will grow. I think  
14 we all understand that.

15 I understand that President Biden is reviewing the U.S.  
16 counterterrorism policy, and according to media reports, has  
17 issued interim guidance, requiring the White House to sign  
18 off on operation, military decisions that were previously  
19 delegated to the DOD. And let me be clear, I have serious  
20 concerns with the decision to return to the Obama era  
21 policies that tied the hands of our military commanders and  
22 made it harder to keep pressure on ISIS and Al Qaeda. I  
23 expect this committee will be consulted often during the  
24 administration's review. I have talked to the President  
25 about this and I believe that is going to happen.

1 Another critical component of implementing the NDS is  
2 developing robust capabilities to counter growing threats in  
3 cyberspace. The 2018 Cyber Strategy provides a roadmap on  
4 how we are going to do this. Significant efforts have  
5 occurred in recent years across the DOD to implement the  
6 strategy and to build the capabilities of Cyber Command and  
7 the cyber mission forces.

8 Today, I look forward to our witnesses' testimony in  
9 addressing this critical, these problems that are out there,  
10 and we are going to do all that we can to try to solve that.

11 So, I appreciate this hearing and I think we will all  
12 benefit from it.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

15 Mr. Maier, please?  
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1           STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER P. MAIER, ACTING ASSISTANT  
2 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW-  
3 INTENSITY CONFLICT

4           Mr. Maier: So, good morning, Chairman Reed, Ranking  
5 Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of the committee.  
6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on our global  
7 posture for America's Special Operations enterprise.

8           I would also like to thank Congress and especially this  
9 committee for its strong support for the SOF community and  
10 its mission. I am honored to testify alongside General  
11 Clarke and General Nakasone, who have dedicated their  
12 careers to safeguarding our nation from complex and  
13 unconventional threats.

14           I would like to begin by acknowledging the service and  
15 sacrifice of our Special Operations soldiers, sailors,  
16 airmen, Marines, and civilians. Although SOF make up only  
17 about 3 percent of the joint force, over the past few years,  
18 this community that has bore over half of all U.S. combat  
19 casualties. Many more have sustained life-altering injuries  
20 and suffer psychological trauma.

21           As we look forward, Secretary Austin has outlined his  
22 three principle priorities for the Department of Defense.  
23 Those are: defend the nation, take care of our people, and  
24 succeed through teamwork. The SOF community will measure  
25 ourselves against these priorities.

1           Representing just 2 percent of the overall DOD budget,  
2 SOF played an essential role within the joint staff in  
3 advancing multiple strategic priorities for the Department  
4 and the nation. We continue to adapt the unique  
5 capabilities and problem-solving expertise of our special  
6 operators through the challenge of great power competition  
7 with Russia and China, while strengthening the alliances and  
8 partnerships that enhance our ability to compete.

9           As we innovate to compete more effectively below the  
10 level of armed conflict, we recognize that our  
11 counterterrorism operations, while still critical to protect  
12 the Americans from the likes of ISIS and Al Qaeda, must  
13 become even more sustainable and focused on the most  
14 pressing threats to our citizens and interests.

15           Enhancing the readiness and resilience of our SOF  
16 warriors and their families remains a top priority. Despite  
17 the COVID-19 pandemic, SOF have continued to maintain a high  
18 level of operational readiness. We remain focused on and  
19 are making progress in easing the strain of high rates of  
20 overseas deployments.

21           I look forward to working with you and your staff to  
22 collectively continue to build the resiliency and culture of  
23 this community that has given so much in protecting us for  
24 nearly a generation.

25           I also remain concerned about incidents of serious

1 moral and ethical failings within the SOF community, a  
2 concern I know General Clarke shares. I commend him and  
3 Special Operations Command for leading a comprehensive  
4 review of SOF culture and ethics last year.

5 Civilian-military partnership on all of these issues  
6 remains a key priority for me and my team. In response to  
7 Secretary Austin's challenge to us, we are also committed to  
8 enhancing diversity within the SOF community. As we compete  
9 against different and more capable adversaries, a more  
10 diverse force empowers us to draw upon broader perspectives,  
11 different-lived experiences, and new ideas.

12 Finally, we recognize the strong interest in Congress  
13 in empowering civilian leadership in the Department. We  
14 appreciate legislation in the most recent National Defense  
15 Authorization Act to codify and strengthen ASD/SOLIC's role.

16 It is our collective duty to ensure these reforms meet your  
17 intents and serve the interests of the Department and the  
18 men and women of our SOF community.

19 Mr. Chairman, I would like to conclude by thanking the  
20 committee, again, for its strong support for our Special  
21 Operations team. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.  
22 I look forward to your questions.

23 [The prepared statement of Mr. Maier follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Mr. Maier.  
2 General Clarke, please?

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1           STATEMENT OF GENERAL RICHARD D. CLARKE, USA,  
2           COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

3           General Clarke: Chairman Reed, Senator Inhofe, and  
4           distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the  
5           opportunity, and I am honored to testify with Mr. Chris  
6           Maier and General Paul Nakasone. Also joining me is Chief  
7           Greg Smith, my command senior enlisted leader. Greg marked  
8           his thirty-first year in uniform this month and I am  
9           thankful for his continued counsel and leadership as he  
10          represents the almost 50,000 enlisted operators in our  
11          force.

12          USSOCOM, our structure, our authorities, and our  
13          purpose are the direct outcome of Congress and, in  
14          particular, this committee. We strive to honor Congress'  
15          vision by training and employ the world's finest Special  
16          Operations Force, a team that is inclusive and professional,  
17          supremely competent and trusted, and reflective of American  
18          diversity and values, and most of all, committed to our  
19          constitutional oath.

20          The incredible women and men of this command employ  
21          their unique skills globally, fully integrated with the  
22          joint force, and aligned with national priorities. SOF  
23          continue to detour and disrupt persistent threats by  
24          terrorist and extremist organizations. Twenty years of this  
25          fight have honed our capability and, most importantly, our

1 resolve.

2 We remain oriented on these threats with approaches  
3 that are both, effective and sustainable, to defend the  
4 homeland and our American people; additionally, we are well-  
5 postured within the joint force to compete against maligned  
6 state influence. SOF provide unique value in this critical  
7 endeavor.

8 Below the level of armed conflict, SOF teams support a  
9 wide range of U.S. policy objectives and generate options to  
10 counter China, Russia, and other competitors. Often, our  
11 activities to counter violent extremist organizations have  
12 tangible, derivative value to counter terrorist, extremist  
13 organizations.

14 As SOF forged partnerships and built partner capacity,  
15 we gain access, placement, and influence in contested  
16 regions. Should future conflicts arise, our modernization  
17 priorities will provide interoperable forces that are able  
18 to win as part of the joint war-fighting concept.

19 Your continued support and the vital trust of the  
20 American people allow this command to support the nation now  
21 and prepare for the challenges of tomorrow. Today, as we  
22 sit here, nearly 5,000 special operators stand vigilant in  
23 almost 60 countries. Their commitment to American security  
24 and prosperity is inspirational, and their enthusiasm to  
25 learn, adapt, and serve is infectious.



1           It is my honor to lead them and I look forward to  
2 answering your questions.

3           [The prepared statement of General Clarke follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Clarke.  
2 General Nakasone, please?

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1           STATEMENT OF GENERAL PAUL M. NAKASONE, COMMANDER,  
2 UNITED STATES CYBER COMMAND; DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SECURITY  
3 AGENCY; AND CHIEF, CENTRAL SECURITY SERVICE

4           General Nakasone: Chairman Reed, Ranking Member  
5 Inhofe, and distinguished members of the committee, I am  
6 honored to be here and to testify beside Acting Assistant  
7 Secretary Maier, and my good friend, General Rich Clarke. I  
8 am joined today by CYBERCOM's senior enlisted leader,  
9 Command Sergeant Major Sheryl Lyon.

10           Entering our Army as an Arab linguist, Command Sergeant  
11 Major Lyon's 30-year career with airborne, special mission,  
12 and intelligence and cyber units makes her uniquely  
13 qualified to serve as USCYBERCOM and NSA's senior enlisted  
14 leader.

15           Over the past year, I emphasized the importance of  
16 defending the election against foreign interference. With  
17 did this through the Election Security Group, a combined  
18 team from U.S. Cyber Command and the National Security  
19 Agency. We built on the lessons from earlier operations and  
20 honed partnerships with the Federal Bureau of Investigations  
21 and Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and  
22 Infrastructure Security Agency, sharing information with  
23 those who needed it as fast as possible.

24           We also worked with the National Guard Bureau to create  
25 a mechanism that enabled Guard units to share information

1 about incidents quickly, easily, and uniformly.

2 U.S. Cyber Command conducted more than two dozen  
3 operations to get ahead of foreign threats before they  
4 interfered or influenced our elections in 2020. Three  
5 points stand out to me. First, U.S. Cyber Command must be,  
6 and is, able, ready, and willing to act. Second,  
7 USCYBERCOM's partnership with NSA remains the foundation of  
8 our success. And thirdly, we enable our domestic industry  
9 allies and partners by providing critical-threat information  
10 and insights which improve their ability to act under their  
11 unique authorities.

12 I am proud of the work the Command and the Election  
13 Security Group performed as part of a broader government  
14 effort to deliver a safe and secure 2020 election.

15 CYBERCOM is building on a recent guidance from the  
16 Department seeking to promote readiness, improve training,  
17 and attract and retain high-end talent. Regarding  
18 readiness, CYBERCOM is improving its ability to monitor the  
19 status of forces provided by the services down to the team,  
20 mission element, and even individual levels.

21 CYBERCOM is expanding, enhancing the training that our  
22 personnel receive.

23 As the trailblazer for the Department of Defense's  
24 Cyber Excepted Service, the Command benefits from flexible  
25 hiring authorities to recruit civilian talent. Even with

1 COVID-19 impacts and lengthy security-clearance timelines,  
2 that impact to the entire Department, CYBERCOM has offered  
3 and was able to attract a number of high-end talent to our  
4 force.

5 Diversity is what makes us better. Extremism can tear  
6 us apart. Last week at Cyber Command, we held a Secretary  
7 of Defense-directed stand-down day. Extremism has no place  
8 in the Armed Services and must not be allowed to affect our  
9 cohesion or impact the security of the United States.

10 At CYBERCOM, I have strived to cultivate an environment  
11 where personnel are empowered to report abuses and reject  
12 participation in activities that demean or harass their co-  
13 workers or neighbors. We owe it to ourselves, our  
14 workforce, and our nation to set and be the example.

15 In closing, the cyberspace environment has changed  
16 significantly over the past 10 years. Adversaries are  
17 demonstrating a changed-risk calculus. They are undertaking  
18 maligned activities in cyberspace at greater scope, scale,  
19 and sophistication. They desire to take on the U.S. and  
20 cyberspace below the level of armed conflict.

21 To defend our securities and our interests in this  
22 environment, U.S. Cyber Command must continue to adapt,  
23 innovate, partner, and succeed against such adversaries.  
24 The men and women at Cyber Command are truly grateful for  
25 the support this committee and Congress has given to our

1 command.

2 Again, thank you for your support, and I look forward  
3 to your questions.

4 [The prepared statement of General Nakasone follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Nakasone.

2 Let me make a few points as reminders. Again, at  
3 10:45, we are scheduled to have floor votes and we will  
4 continue the hearing as we go back and forth and vote.

5 There is a closed session after this hearing in SVC-217 and  
6 we will, as soon as we conclude, go to SVC-217.

7 This is a hybrid hearing, so the questions will be by  
8 seniority, not by arrival time, 5-minute standard questions,  
9 and please mute your mics so that we can have no disruption  
10 of the questioning.

11 Mr. Maier, again, what is the status today of the  
12 Department's efforts to empower ASD/SOLIC and what  
13 additional resources or authorities do you believe we need  
14 from the Congress?

15 Mr. Maier: Thank you, Chairman.

16 So, the current status is one that is SOLIC, as a  
17 standalone organization, both its policy components and its  
18 service secretary like our 922 component outside of OSB  
19 policy, Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks are re-  
20 looking that to see if that continues to make sense. I  
21 think one of the potential options is to determine a way to  
22 better integrate the policy components that were removed  
23 from SOLIC towards the end of the last administration, back  
24 more integrated into policy, but under no circumstances, am  
25 I aware of any COAs that are being discussed that would

1 remove the service secretary-like responsibility from  
2 remaining a principal staff assistant and a directory port  
3 up to the Secretary of Defense. So, I think your  
4 legislation has been very clear on that point.

5 As to progress to date, we continue to make progress, I  
6 think, on building the capability, in many cases, in the  
7 form of expertise and people, on the components in that  
8 administrative chain of command. So, the SSO, or  
9 Secretariat for Special Operations, that was explicitly  
10 directed in the 2021 NDAA is something we built to about 40  
11 people at this point and it includes a cross-section of  
12 experts from the budgeting world, the legislative world, the  
13 acquisitions world, really, the, if you will, the nascent or  
14 core group of people that will perform that service  
15 secretary-like function.

16 But we are not at the point, Chairman, of irreversible  
17 momentum at this point and we are not at the point of having  
18 something that is probably sufficient to do the roles that  
19 have been described in multiple NDAA's at this point.

20 The last thing I will say is, I do think the  
21 relationship with Special Operations Command is very strong.  
22 One of the things that General Clarke and I benefit from of  
23 having worked together on multiple occasions in the past,  
24 and I think that leadership connection helps to ensure our  
25 staffs are proceeding in that direction of collaboration,



1 partnership, and civilian-military relationships.

2 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much.

3 General Clarke, let me, again, commend you from  
4 conducting the review of culture and ethics. These are  
5 issues that every organization and, particularly, military  
6 organizations have to confront. Sixteen recommendations  
7 were generated by the panel. Without going into detail on  
8 every recommendation, can you highlight the key ones and the  
9 overall status of those recommendations, implementation-  
10 wise.

11 General Clarke: Yes, sir, I can, if I can get the mike  
12 working. Sir, the primary finding, as you pointed out, was,  
13 in fact, that the focus on overemployment and mission  
14 accomplishment led to the detriment in leadership  
15 accountability and discipline. To that end, with those 16  
16 recommendations and the findings from that, our focus,  
17 first, was to the overall employment and how many forces  
18 were deployed as we looked at, and we conduct our own zero-  
19 baseline review of forces employed. And through that, have  
20 reduced the approximate SOF employment by about 20 percent.

21 But we also, probably most importantly, is reduced the  
22 amount of headquarters that were forward that put leadership  
23 forward, therefore, you didn't have the leadership that was  
24 back during the force generation so that the leadership was  
25 not engaged and present.

1           The other specific aspects that we have looked at is  
2 the training of our forces as they go through the various  
3 pipelines, but also our assessments to improve those. But  
4 at the end of the day, Senator, it's about engaged  
5 leadership to reduce the amount of incidents that SOF has  
6 had in the past.

7           Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General.

8           General Nakasone, SolarWinds, the Microsoft hack, they  
9 don't appear to be the garden-variety type of back-and-forth  
10 that we have seen from nation states.

11           Are we into a new era in which our adversaries are  
12 conducting more and more aggressive attacks that are  
13 designed to be just short of a redline that would trigger  
14 some type of conventional response? Are we in new terrain?

15           General Nakasone: Chairman, I think that, as you point  
16 out, what we have seen from both, the SolarWinds and the  
17 Microsoft intrusions, is an increasing level of  
18 sophistication. This is a scope, a scale, a level of  
19 sophistication that we hadn't seen previously. This isn't,  
20 simply, you know, email phishing attempts; this is the use  
21 of supply chain or this is the use of vulnerabilities we  
22 hadn't seen before.

23           In terms of this changing risk calculus for our  
24 adversaries, their intent, obviously, we continue to  
25 monitor, but for us, I think it is the Clarion call for us

1 to look at this differently. How do we ensure we have, as a  
2 nation, both the resiliency and the ability to act against  
3 these types of adversaries?

4 Chairman Reed: And we have structurally a gap between  
5 our civilian authorities and our military authorities that  
6 is being exploited by our adversaries?

7 General Nakasone: Chairman, for both of the  
8 intrusions, what we have seen, I think I would point out  
9 would be two critical areas that we need to address as a  
10 nation. First of all, as you point out, it is not the fact  
11 that we can't connect the dots; we can't see all of the  
12 dots. So, my authorities and my responsibilities, both as  
13 the commander of U.S. Cyber Command and as the director of  
14 the National Security Agency, are rightly outside of the  
15 country.

16 But in terms of internal to our nation, our adversaries  
17 understand our policies and our laws and the timing to be  
18 able to use our infrastructure to achieve access to these  
19 companies and have an impact.

20 Thank you very much, General.

21 Senator Inhofe?

22 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 I am going to go back to a couple of things that I  
24 referred to in my opening statement, and I know that, Mr.  
25 Maier, in your opening statement, you addressed this. I

1 would like to have a little more detail and maybe aim this  
2 at both General Clarke and at you.

3 We all understand what history has taught us, that if  
4 we take our pressure off of the terrorist groups, they are  
5 going to rebuild and threaten and all that, so things have  
6 to be done at the same time. And the two things that I am  
7 concerned with still, and specifically getting into  
8 resources and capabilities, trying to balance the NDS, and  
9 of course we know what we are supposed to be doing there,  
10 the requirements to modernize our forces to compete with  
11 China and Russia, that is on one hand, but against the need  
12 to maintain the pressure on ISIS and Al Qaeda, especially in  
13 places like Africa.

14 So, do you really think that you have the resources  
15 necessary to accomplish both of these?

16 And this is a place where you would want to come to,  
17 because if you don't, we need to know about it. Would you  
18 respond to that in some detail.

19 Mr. Maier: Ranking member, yes, I very much agree with  
20 the idea that we have got to be able to do both and as I  
21 think General Clarke referred to, in some cases, we can do  
22 both with the same forces, but in a lot of cases, we can't.

23 I mean, in the case of Somalia, there were, as you  
24 know, a lot of changes made over the last few months,  
25 including moving forces out and there is a policy-review

1 underway now, looking at not only that decision, but how we  
2 ultimately posture our forces to ensure we have the right  
3 capabilities there and in other places.

4 And I think one of the benefits of the beginning of a  
5 new administration is, there are a number of posture reviews  
6 and a lot of assumptions are underway. And one of the key  
7 elements of that is just as you described, how do we weigh  
8 the need to continue to protect the American public,  
9 citizens, our interests against the Al Qaedas, and ISIS, and  
10 their affiliates that are still out there, even as we look  
11 to, in some cases, change our capabilities or our posture or  
12 our focus towards the peer competitors that we face.

13 So, this is something that I think I would be happy to  
14 drill down in more specifics as we go issue by issue or  
15 place by place, but I think my take on this is the  
16 counterterrorism fight is not over. The NDS says that, and  
17 I think that has been reinforced in the early reviews coming  
18 out of these policy reviews.

19 Senator Inhofe: Okay. Now, General Clarke, do you  
20 essentially agree with this?

21 General Clarke: Senator, I --

22 Senator Inhofe: Okay. Well, I think we have a mike  
23 problem there.

24 But let me go back. You brought up Somalia. Now, this  
25 taking some of our resources out of Somalia, going into

1 Kenya and some other areas, that was actually a policy of  
2 the previous administration and I disagreed with it at that  
3 time.

4 Now that we have already done this, Mr. Maier, what is  
5 your feeling now, was that the right move or was that not  
6 the right move? What kind of results are we getting now?

7 Mr. Maier: So, Ranking Member, I think we have a  
8 review underway right now that is weighing all of this. I  
9 think from my perspective, there is probably significant  
10 downsides to the pull-out from the perspective of cost and  
11 effectiveness, but that is my initial look, and this will  
12 have to be an interagency look, but that is something that  
13 is being looked at both, from the counterterrorism  
14 perspective and the broader, regional objectives we have in  
15 the Horn of Africa.

16 Senator Inhofe: Well, I would like to be in on that  
17 because I was pretty outspoken when that decision was made  
18 and I would like to see how we are doing on that.

19 This was brought up already by the chairman, addressing  
20 SolarWinds cyberattack, did the Chinese hack into Microsoft,  
21 and all that. We know those problems are there.

22 DOD began building a total of 133 CMF teams in 2012 and  
23 reached full operational capacity with over 6,200 cyber  
24 personnel in May of 2018.

25 General Nakasone, SolarWinds and Microsoft Exchange

1 cyberattacks demonstrate we are vulnerable, we have  
2 vulnerabilities out there. What authorities or resources do  
3 you need, again, it is kind of the same question I asked Mr.  
4 Maier, what resources do you need to accomplish what we have  
5 to accomplish, because this is the place you go to for  
6 resources.

7 General Nakasone: Ranking member, thank you very much  
8 for the question.

9 I think, first of all, just taking a step back, we as a  
10 nation right now, are taking a very hard look at both of  
11 these intrusions. I think there are two gaps that are being  
12 addressed right now that have to be addressed and one of  
13 them is this idea of information sharing. These attacks  
14 took place within the United States, these intrusions, and  
15 there are, right now, legal barriers and disincentives for  
16 the private sector to share information with the Government.

17 We have a difficulty, as a government, understanding  
18 the totality of the actual intrusion, so that is being  
19 worked. And the second piece is, as I mentioned to the  
20 chairman, we have an inability to see everything. So, we,  
21 as U.S. Cyber Command or the National Security Agency may  
22 see what is occurring outside of the United States, but when  
23 it comes into the United States, our adversaries are moving  
24 very quickly. They understand the laws and the policies  
25 that we have within our nation, and so they are utilizing

1 our own infrastructure, our own internet service providers  
2 to create these intrusions.

3 The resourcing of U.S. Cyber Command right now to  
4 include the 133 teams has been instrumental in us being able  
5 to have an ability to act. And, certainly, we are looking  
6 as a department, if further growth is necessary, we will  
7 come back to the committee if that is a requirement.

8 But I would say the first two pieces, being able to  
9 identify and being able to fix those areas, are part of the  
10 resilience of the nation that has to be addressed.

11 Senator Inhofe: Okay. That is very good.

12 My time has expired, but we are interested and is it a  
13 work-in-progress right now and you are making headway, I  
14 assume.

15 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

17 Senator Shaheen, please?

18 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank  
19 you to each of our witnesses.

20 General Nakasone, I want to congratulate you on the  
21 work that Cyber Command did on the elections in 2020 and  
22 your also mentioning of the National Guard. The Guard in  
23 New Hampshire were very helpful in securing our election  
24 there.

25 But as you point out, we still have challenges ahead



1 and the Defense Intelligence Agency's defense intelligence  
2 officer for Cyber, James Sullivan, recently asserted that  
3 Russia right now is clearly ahead and the more aggressive  
4 and practiced operator in information operations.

5 So, how should we, do we need more authorities to allow  
6 Cyber Command to respond to what is happening in Russia?

7 You talked about the gaps between the private sector  
8 and the public sector. Do we need cyber securities, someone  
9 who is going to coordinate the activities on both, the  
10 defense side and the private sector side?

11 What else do we need to do in order to respond to this  
12 threat?

13 General Nakasone: Senator, I think there are two  
14 pieces that are really important for us to continue to focus  
15 on regarding the threat. First of all, as I mentioned, the  
16 resiliency piece. We can have all the capabilities that we  
17 want, all the teams that we want, but if there is a hole in  
18 the bucket, and we are filling water, and the water is  
19 coming out faster than we can fill it in, there is a  
20 problem. And that is the analogy I would use in terms of  
21 our resiliency right now. We have to be able to see what is  
22 happening in terms of the broad depth of our nation.

23 The other piece is that we should understand what our  
24 adversaries are doing. They are no longer just launching  
25 their attacks from different parts in the world. They

1 understand that they can come into the United States, use  
2 our infrastructure, and there is a blind spot for us not  
3 being able to see them. Those are critical pieces.

4 The other piece that I would come back, in terms of  
5 your information operations question, that is something that  
6 both General Clarke and myself have taken on, and I think  
7 that you rightly point out that there is work that we have  
8 to do here. We have done a tremendous amount in terms of  
9 understanding and operating against adversaries to our  
10 election, but now we are in the area of great power  
11 competition. Is it the ability for multiple combat and  
12 commands, not just U.S. Cyber Command, but our geographic  
13 commands like European Command and INDOPACOM Command and  
14 U.S. Special Operations Command to harness the abilities  
15 that we have collectively against adversaries that are using  
16 information against us.

17 Senator Shaheen: So we have had, I remember several  
18 years ago we had a discussion in this committee about  
19 whether cyberattacks were an act of war and at what point we  
20 should consider them an act of war and we never resolved  
21 that discussion.

22 Is that a discussion we should get back to and should  
23 we change policy, with respect to cyberattacks on the United  
24 States?

25 General Nakasone: So, that is obviously a policy

1 question that I would leave to, you know, the policy experts  
2 in the Department of Defense and the administration.

3 In terms of my role in being able to ensure that the  
4 nation has capabilities and capacities, what we are focused  
5 on is ensuring we understand our adversaries, understand  
6 what our adversaries are attempting to do, and having the  
7 capabilities and the capacity to be able to get after those  
8 adversaries.

9 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

10 I would argue, Mr. Chairman, that we should revisit  
11 that discussion in this committee.

12 General Clarke, there is a lot of debate right now  
13 about whether according to the agreement we made in  
14 Afghanistan with the Taliban, that we should withdraw our  
15 troops by May 1 and I have been an opponent of doing that  
16 because I question whether we have the capacity right now  
17 within the Afghan forces to be able to respond to the  
18 Taliban.

19 Can you give us an update on where you think the Afghan  
20 security forces are in terms of their ability to respond to  
21 the threat.

22 General Clarke: Senator, I was recently in Afghanistan  
23 and met with the head of their new, what they have stood up  
24 as a joint special operations command. While progress has  
25 been made, and I found a very dedicated commander in General

1 Aziz, I think one of the capabilities that the U.S. provides  
2 for the Afghans to be able to combat the Taliban and other  
3 threats that reside in Afghanistan are critical to their  
4 success.

5 Senator Shaheen: I find it particularly troubling that  
6 violence has increased on the part of the Taliban and in the  
7 last couple of months, we have had directed assassinations  
8 against civil society leaders in the country in a way that  
9 is clearly designed to take out the potential for leadership  
10 in the country if western forces withdraw.

11 Do you think that presents an added risk to  
12 Afghanistan?

13 General Clarke: Senator, it is clear that the Taliban  
14 has not upheld what they said they would do and reduce the  
15 violence. While, on the positive side, they have not  
16 attacked U.S. forces, it is clear that they took a  
17 deliberate approach and increased their violence since the  
18 peace accords were signed.

19 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

20 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

22 Now, via Webex, Senator Fischer, please.

23 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank  
24 you gentlemen, for being here today.

25 General Nakasone, I recall the 2015 Rose Garden

1 announcement with President Obama and President Xi that a  
2 common understanding had been reached to halt China's state-  
3 sponsored cyber theft of intellectual property. Over 5  
4 years later, how would you assess that commitment and has  
5 China's actions matched its words?

6 General Nakasone: Senator, based upon what I have seen  
7 over the past several years that I have been in command of  
8 U.S. Cyber Command and as the director of NSA, I have seen  
9 the Chinese continue to utilize cyber activities below the  
10 level of armed conflict to steal our intellectual property,  
11 to steal our personal identification, and at times, attempt  
12 to influence our populous.

13 Senator Fischer: More specifically, did this agreement  
14 have any impact on cyberattacks against our defense  
15 industrial base?

16 General Nakasone: Senator, if I might, I would like to  
17 take that question for the record just because we are  
18 learning things every single day and I want to make sure  
19 that it is a fulsome answer.

20 Senator Fischer: Okay. Thank you.

21 What lessons have you learned from the experience,  
22 especially on how we can reduce this hostile cyber activity  
23 that we are seeing in cyberspace?

24 General Nakasone: So, I think the first lesson is that  
25 we should all take this as a wake-up call. That this is not

1 business as usual, as the chairman had mentioned.

2 These are adversaries that are operating with increased  
3 sophistication, scope, scale, and I mentioned sophistication  
4 of what they are doing.

5 The second piece is that this is about partnerships for  
6 us as a nation. How do we drive a better partnership  
7 between what the public needs and what the private sector  
8 can offer?

9 That information sharing that I mentioned is really  
10 critical for us to have success in the future.

11 And then the last piece is that we truly need to look  
12 at the ability for us to see ourselves and right now it is  
13 difficult for us to see ourselves because we have  
14 adversaries that are coming into our nation and being able  
15 to utilize our infrastructure very timely and very  
16 effectively against us.

17 Senator Fischer: Thank you, General.

18 General Clarke, your predecessor testified that, quote,  
19 our effectiveness over the last 15 years does not  
20 necessarily equate to success against near-peer competitors.

21 We also require urgent investments in capabilities  
22 necessary for denied battlefields of the future. This  
23 includes submersibles, terrain-following avoidance and all-  
24 weather radar, advanced electronic attack capabilities,  
25 countermeasures, and precision munitions. We must enhance

1 our effectiveness in partnership with these services, end  
2 quote.

3 Do you agree with that?

4 General Clarke: Senator, I do agree with that and I  
5 will tell you since General Thomas, my predecessor, made  
6 those remarks, SOCOM has been on that path to, in fact,  
7 ensure that we are cementing things in place that will allow  
8 our force to modernize for both, competition and for future  
9 conflict.

10 Senator Fischer: What progress has SOCOM made in  
11 developing these higher-end capabilities?

12 General Clarke: Senator, both team with both, academia  
13 and with industry. We are making sure, first, that we are  
14 not procuring capabilities that can't be used in a  
15 sustainable extremist fight, but that can also be used in  
16 near-peer, and we are focused very highly on next-  
17 generation, ISR, mobility, and putting a significant amount  
18 of effort into data and our networks to ensure that we have  
19 precision strike and effects into the future.

20 Senator Fischer: In light of the priorities that have  
21 been laid out in the NDS, how is SOCOM balancing its  
22 investments to operate against those near-peer competitors,  
23 like China and Russia, with efforts to fulfill its global  
24 counterterrorism requirements?

25 And I would like to know where, if you could answer

1 that, and then let me know where you are willing to accept  
2 risk.

3 General Clarke: Senator, first, on the acceptance of  
4 risk, intel drive ops, and where we put our focus on are  
5 those most virulent threats, you know, that could actually  
6 come back to our homeland and the persistent threat against  
7 threats like Al Qaeda and ISIS and those networks.

8 But then as we have looked at those sustainable  
9 capabilities against those threats, what else can come back,  
10 and that goes with both access and placement in other  
11 countries around the globe where counterterrorism can also  
12 equate to great power competition in someplace like the  
13 Philippines where our access and placement in helping the  
14 Filipinos fight ISIS allows us, also, to be involved in  
15 great power competition.

16 Senator Fischer: Thank you, General. Thank you both  
17 very much.

18 Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Fischer.

20 Now, let me recognize Senator Gillibrand via Webex.

21 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 First, for General Clarke, we entrust the special  
23 operations community with some of our most important  
24 missions and they have truly been the tip of the spear over  
25 the last decade. And I wonder if these units are not being



1   overtaxed or undersupervised. In recent years, we have  
2   heard troubling stories about SEALs and Marine Raiders, a  
3   murder of a Green Beret, and allegations of war crimes by  
4   Navy SEALs.

5           So, first, should we be more concerned about good order  
6   and discipline problems in this community and, second, even  
7   if these cases are being prosecuted appropriately, are we  
8   taxing the operators with too heavy a load?

9           The chronic stress of these missions lead to post-  
10   traumatic stress, anxiety, and other mental health  
11   challenges.

12           And, third, are you adequately resourced to provide the  
13   necessary mental health treatment for these servicemembers  
14   and their families?

15           General Clarke: Senator, the items that you bring up  
16   are exactly why I directed last year a comprehensive review  
17   to look at our forces. And while, yes, I do believe that we  
18   are overfocused on employment and mission accomplishment, I  
19   do believe that through that comprehensive review, we have  
20   taken a hard look at ourselves and are making the corrective  
21   steps to ensure, I think most importantly is that we have  
22   the engaged leadership present throughout the force at the  
23   right time to reduce those incidents from occurring that  
24   have been highlighted.

25           I think one specific area that you mentioned which is

1 important, is in the resources in our preservation of the  
2 force and family, which Congress allocates to us, today,  
3 more than 40 percent of our manpower that is associated with  
4 that is actually going to the cognitive and, most  
5 importantly, the psychological efforts to ensure that our  
6 special operators and their families are cared for.

7 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

8 Mr. Maier, as you know, the current special operations  
9 force structure is largely derived from counterterrorism and  
10 foreign internal defense operations in Iraq, in Afghanistan.

11 Do you think that this structure has created gaps in  
12 Special Operations' capabilities to win against global  
13 rivals like Russia or China?

14 Mr. Maier: Senator, I think it has and I think that  
15 has been recognized, and I think that is where we are laser-  
16 focused on closing that gap. And whether that gap is, as  
17 General Clarke alluded to, having higher-end capabilities  
18 that is more data-driven, more technology, more cutting-  
19 edge, but also at the same time, as has already been  
20 highlighted, being able to do our counterterrorism mission  
21 in a sustainable fashion and reap some of the benefits of  
22 those partnerships that give us, frankly, an asymmetric  
23 advantage over our peer adversaries, because we do work with  
24 so many countries in so many different ways.

25 So, this is absolutely something that I think the NDS

1 has highlighted for us and within the SOF enterprise,  
2 continue to be very focused on.

3 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

4 General Nakasone, I really appreciate your leadership,  
5 and it was great to see you last week. I want to talk a  
6 little bit about sort of where we are, because in February  
7 2020 when you were at a hearing, you said that you were  
8 understanding our adversaries better than our adversaries  
9 understand themselves. Well, obviously, we just had the  
10 SolarWinds hack. Experts estimate that maybe a thousand  
11 software engineers executed that operation.

12 And so, what did we get wrong? What do we need to do  
13 to make sure we don't miss those kinds of assaults in the  
14 future, and what do you propose to address long-term  
15 concerns?

16 And, specifically, we talked a lot about cyber  
17 workforce, about how to make sure we have the best and the  
18 brightest working for us so that we don't have intelligence  
19 gaps like this in the future.

20 General Nakasone: Senator, with regards to our  
21 adversaries and understanding them, the comment I was making  
22 there was in reference to what we are seeing with their  
23 election influence. But I agree with you, we have to  
24 understand our adversaries better, particularly, given the  
25 recent intrusions that are ongoing.

1           Part of understanding our adversaries, though, is being  
2 able to see our adversaries. And so, again, if we have a  
3 problem where we only see our adversaries when they operate  
4 outside of their country and we don't see them when they  
5 operate inside our country, it is very difficult for us to  
6 be able to, as I say, connect those dots.

7           That is something that the administration and obviously  
8 others are addressing right now. In terms of what we are  
9 doing at U.S. Cyber Command, we are very much focused on how  
10 do we ensure that our capacity, our capability remains the  
11 best in the world. And that get back to your point on  
12 people what we have learned over the past couple of years is  
13 that the services bring in incredible talent for us. We are  
14 able to see these young soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines,  
15 Coast Guardsmen come into our force, train them, but then  
16 our great challenge is, how do we retain them?

17           And that is something that certainly I give a lot of  
18 attention to every single day, and it is retaining the best  
19 of the people that we are able to bring in. Now, we have  
20 been able to leverage a number of the authorities that this  
21 committee has been able to generate for us, and so that is  
22 one of the areas that we are focused on right now, so as we  
23 continue to improve being able to see the adversary in its  
24 totality, we have the people that are able to apply,  
25 obviously, the capacity and the ability to defend the

1 nation.

2 Senator Gillibrand: I would like to work with the  
3 committee on getting you those authorities.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator  
5 Gillibrand.

6 Let me recognize Senator Rounds, please.

7 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 Gentlemen, good morning, and I thank you all for your  
9 service to our country. And I would like to thank your  
10 families, as well, for their sacrifice, as you continue that  
11 service.

12 General Nakasone, I want to work through this issue a  
13 little bit more about whether or not we see our adversaries,  
14 and I would like to just have a discussion with you. I  
15 understand that you have always made it very clear in all of  
16 our discussions that you are not here to tell us how to do  
17 public policy, but in order to make the public policy, we  
18 really do need your professional advice in terms of what is  
19 working and what is not.

20 You have alluded to it a couple of times today and I  
21 would really like to flush this out. Right now, we have  
22 provided the ability for Cyber Command to use cyber  
23 activities as traditional military activity, and so you can  
24 work outside of a war zone, as long as it is not within the  
25 United States. And our country has always said that our

1 Armed Forces are not designed to be utilized within our  
2 country; they are designed to be used outside and to defend  
3 our country.

4 And yet now, we face cyberattacks where adversaries,  
5 near-peer adversaries, Russia, China, Iraq, North Korea,  
6 have figured out that because of the laws that we have in  
7 place to protect our personal privacy, that they are using  
8 internet connections to literally get into the United States  
9 and then to launch attacks probably from systems that are  
10 found within the United States.

11 It seems to me that most Americans would suggest that  
12 if we have the ability or we have a design to stop those  
13 attacks, we either have to be able to defend forward, to go  
14 on out to find them and to literally provide a very active  
15 cyber defense outside in an offensive capability, or we have  
16 to have the ability, as I think you are suggesting, to be  
17 able to see inside of our own country and to find where they  
18 are actually launching those attacks at.

19 And I want to take a few minutes here and just allow  
20 you to expand on that and to share with us a little bit so  
21 that we have a better understanding of what the public  
22 policy challenges are that limit you from the ability to be  
23 able to see our adversaries here within the country.

24 General Nakasone: Senator, thank you.

25 So, in terms of my authorities as both, the commander

1 of U.S. Cyber Command and the director of the National  
2 Security Agency, I operate outside the United States, our  
3 forces do. It is not just a matter of policy; it is also  
4 law in terms of we, as a nation, rightly so, have a very,  
5 very determined balance between privacy and security. So,  
6 the authorities within the United States reside with the  
7 Federal Bureau of Investigations and others to do that type  
8 of surveillance.

9 What I am identifying right now, though, is our  
10 adversaries understand that they can come into the United  
11 States and rapidly utilize an internet service provider,  
12 come up and do their activities and take that down before a  
13 warrant can be issued, before we can actually have  
14 surveillance by a civilian authority here in the United  
15 States. That is the challenge that we have right now.

16 Now, I would, again, would offer that there are  
17 probably a number of different ways that we can look at  
18 this: whether or not it is greater public and private  
19 partnership; whether or not it is, you know, laws in terms  
20 of private sector, understanding who their customers are.  
21 But these are all areas that I think we, as a nation, have  
22 to be able to address.

23 Senator Rounds: Thank you, General Nakasone.

24 I just really think it is important that we share with  
25 the American public, this is not a case of where we are not

1 technically adept. This is a case of where we have made  
2 laws that we think are correct and that we don't use our  
3 resources, our military uses within the United States, but  
4 we do expect that our other law enforcement capabilities are  
5 able to coordinate and to rapidly assist you so that you can  
6 go on out and find and take these folks out before they do  
7 it again, so to speak.

8 Is that a fair way of looking at it?

9 General Nakasone: Senator, I would offer this is at  
10 the heart of our Fourth Amendment, and so being able to  
11 obviously look at that in terms of why it is so important  
12 that we have that right balance between privacy and security  
13 that is maintained, so being able to address that,  
14 obviously, is the challenge that we have going forward.

15 Senator Rounds: Thank you, sir.

16 Mr. Maier, I just want to bring up an issue that I  
17 think is really important. Secretary Mattis implemented a  
18 close-combat lethality task force in 2018. This was an  
19 organization dedicated to providing resources and policy  
20 solutions to the force who have accounted historically for  
21 nearly 90 percent of all the casualties, yet constitute only  
22 4 percent of the force, and receive only 1 percent of  
23 institutional investments.

24 This has been and will remain as a very important  
25 legislative priority for my office. Nevertheless, despite



1 its noble goals, this task force has floundered in the  
2 bureaucracy over the last year and I would like to see it  
3 get back on track.

4 Can you give me your perspective on the need for an  
5 effective cross-functional team such as this task force that  
6 would be focused on our special operations forces, as well  
7 as Army and Marine and infantry units and their enablers.

8 And I know that I am 30 seconds over my time allotted,  
9 so I am asking the question now, but I would ask if you  
10 would respond for the record to that request.

11 Mr. Maier: Senator, I would be happy to.

12 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

15 Now, let me recognize Senator Kaine, please.

16 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and Ranking  
17 Member Inhofe.

18 And it is great to have these great public servants  
19 before us. General Nakasone, I would like to begin with  
20 you. First, just congratulations. I just have been so  
21 impressed with the work of Cyber Command over my time on  
22 this committee both, in the 2018 election cycle and the 2020  
23 election cycle, I think that you have just done a  
24 magnificent job and I just wanted to state that up front.

25 Here is a concern that I have. I am on the foreign

1 relations committee and I am the chairman of the  
2 subcommittee that oversees the Western Hemisphere. We had a  
3 hearing yesterday on sort of democracy backsliding in the  
4 Western Hemisphere, and one of the areas of concern is that  
5 the next two years, 2021 and 2022 are kind of, I think one  
6 of the witnesses described it as sort of an avalanche of  
7 elections or a tsunami of elections in Central and South  
8 America in nations where we are partners.

9 I spoke to the Columbian ambassador to the United  
10 States recently and he talked about increasing cyberattacks  
11 that they are suffering to delegitimize elections, to  
12 promote chaos and division. Most of these cyberattacks seem  
13 to emanate from Venezuela, from probably Cuban or Russian  
14 actors in Venezuela, and other nations in the region that  
15 are aligned with the United States, are seeing the same  
16 thing. The Columbian ambassador to the United States asked  
17 if SOUTHCOM and CYBERCOM could be of assistance in this  
18 significant wave of elections in the next couple of years.

19 And so, I wanted to ask you, we had our posture hearing  
20 with SOUTHCOM last week, what are you doing or what might  
21 Cyber Command do, together with SOUTHCOM, to try to help our  
22 allies in the region, avoid this escalating trend of  
23 disinformation that destabilizes Democratic elections?

24 General Nakasone: Senator, let me begin by, first of  
25 all, thanking the committee. What you refer to our

1 successes in 2018 and 2020 are based upon the work that this  
2 committee did in the fiscal year 2019 NDAA to identify cyber  
3 as a traditional military activity. That allowed us to  
4 operate outside of our networks. It allowed us to do things  
5 like hunt-forward operations, of which, we did 11 hunt-  
6 forward operations in nine different countries for the  
7 security of the 2020 election.

8 In terms of working with Admiral Faller and SOUTHCOM,  
9 both the admiral and I have discussed a series of countries  
10 that are coming up. We have worked together to identify  
11 teams that can assist these countries to provide advice. We  
12 know a lot about what our adversaries are doing in terms of  
13 influence and interference when election comes to part. So,  
14 we want to make sure that we share that with our allies as  
15 well.

16 Senator Kaine: I think the U.S. has played a good  
17 role. EUCOM has played a good role with the NATO and  
18 European nations with, you know, cyber defense. It is often  
19 centered in Estonia, a great center there of cyber defense,  
20 and I hope that we might explore what we can do in the  
21 Americas, as well. Thank you for that.

22 Senator Shaheen asked some questions about war powers  
23 that we have to grapple with and I am going to have one  
24 question for each, General Nakasone and General Clarke.

25 In the War Powers Resolution, basically, it requires,

1 and there is some confusion and some good faith argument  
2 about the legality of portions of the 1974 War Powers  
3 Resolution, but it requires notice from the administration  
4 to Congress when the U.S. military is engaged in hostilities  
5 or situations that can lead to hostilities.

6 And one of the things I have noticed on the committee  
7 is over time, even recently, we will get a notice letter  
8 from the administration, for example, about the strikes that  
9 were carried out in Syria. If my memory is not playing  
10 tricks on me, I don't believe we have ever gotten a notice  
11 letter about a cyber, an offensive cyber action carried out  
12 by Cyber Command.

13 Am I right about that?

14 General Nakasone: So, we do have a very strict  
15 congressional notification that we do adhere to. I think we  
16 had just recently had published a congressional notification  
17 for the committee. I will go back and check, though, just  
18 to make sure on that, Senator.

19 Senator Kaine: Okay. It may be that it goes to some  
20 on intel or other committees and may not go to all the  
21 members of this committee, but I would like to explore that.

22 And, secondly, to General Clarke, the War Powers  
23 Resolution does have a reporting exception for deployments  
24 which relate solely to the supply, replacement, repair, or  
25 training of forces in a foreign nation. So, if we deploy

1 forces to do those things, there is not a reporting  
2 requirement under the War Powers Resolution and yet  
3 sometimes those activities, as in the sad case of the loss  
4 of four servicemembers in Niger, I think it was in 2017,  
5 they can lead to military action and even loss of U.S. life,  
6 and that is something, again, I just think we need to  
7 grapple with.

8 The notion of what hostilities might be quite a bit  
9 different than it was in 1974 when Congress drafted the  
10 resolution and passed it, and it may require that we sort of  
11 get into what is the current nature of hostilities and  
12 warfare and grapple with that a bit.

13 And last, I will just say to you, General Clarke, not a  
14 question, but thank you to you and Secretary Maier. The  
15 special forces community is a really important and valued  
16 portion of our commonwealth and we thank you for the work  
17 that you do.

18 And I will yield back, Mr. Chair.

19 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Kaine.

20 I would like to recognize Senator Cotton, please.

21 Senator Cotton: Thank you, gentlemen, for your  
22 testimony.

23 General Clarke, on January 20, President Biden and his  
24 national security advisor, Jake Sullivan, issued a  
25 derivative that withdrew authority to conduct certain

1 military operations outside of Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan,  
2 from our combatant commanders and reserved it to the White  
3 House, itself.

4 Has that affected operations and Special Operations  
5 Command, or is that simply affecting our regional geographic  
6 combatant commands?

7 General Clarke: Senator, I am aware of that, as it was  
8 reported in the open-source. I would respectfully submit or  
9 request that we talk about that in a closed hearing.

10 Senator Cotton: Okay. It has been confirmed by the  
11 National Security Council on the record, but I understand  
12 the hesitation.

13 Maybe I will ask Mr. Maier, do you know the problem  
14 that that decision was designed to solve, because it is not  
15 apparent to me what problem was raised by having combatant  
16 commanders or their subordinate commands make the decision  
17 to conduct military operations outside of Afghanistan,  
18 Syria, and Iraq. And let's just get down to brass tacks  
19 here, we are talking primarily, I think Yemen, Somalia, and  
20 the African Sahel.

21 Mr. Maier: So, Senator, I think it is meant to be an  
22 initial review of this administration in the use of a series  
23 of different actions that, again, we should probably talk  
24 about it in closed session. But I think like a lot of the  
25 reviews that are underway, I already alluded to everybody on

1 the committee certainly knows about Afghanistan, Somalia,  
2 the posture hearings and reviews that are underway, those  
3 are all part of an overall series of looking at what has  
4 been done and whether this administration would continue to  
5 proceed with those.

6 Senator Cotton: Okay. We will discuss it in the  
7 closed session. Again, this has been reported and confirmed  
8 by the National Security Council.

9 To make a point, I will relay a story the past  
10 President told me. I don't think he will be offended if I  
11 share his thoughts. He said early in his administration, he  
12 was doing some reading late one night and he got a call from  
13 an action officer about approving a strike and his response  
14 was, well, what do they expect me to know about it? Don't  
15 they have some captain on the ground near this country that  
16 has been following this target and knows that this is the  
17 bad guy and that we should conduct this strike?

18 And I agree with that sentiment.

19 General Clarke, I have the highest confidence in you  
20 and in General McKenzie in Central Command and General  
21 Townsend in Africa Command to know whether or not we should  
22 smoke a bad guy overseas. And that doesn't need to be  
23 decided by civilians at the White House.

24 General Clarke, I want to turn to Special Operations  
25 Command and something we discussed in our visit yesterday,

1 and I just want you to elaborate for us on the record here.

2 What specific changes in force design and capabilities  
3 do you believe are necessary to attain the force that you  
4 need to accomplish your mission going forward and what do  
5 you believe are the most pressing of those needs?

6 General Clarke: Senator, in order for us to compete  
7 effectively in the future, we have to modernize both, our  
8 precision strike and ISR. We particularly have to look at  
9 data and data management so that the most specific  
10 requirements enabled at the tip of the spear where our  
11 operators are, so that they can quickly see and sense the  
12 battlefield that they may have to be fighting in, into the  
13 time of crisis.

14 And then we also have to have encrypted and electronic  
15 warfare capabilities so that our forces that could be  
16 forward in a joint war-fighting capacity, reduce the  
17 probability for them to be targeted. So, we are looking at  
18 all of these, Senator.

19 I, personally, changed our modernization priorities and  
20 restructured some of our funding to modernize those  
21 capabilities.

22 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

23 General Nakasone, in the time we have remaining, I want  
24 to ask a question that may seem to be a boring bureaucratic  
25 matter to some people watching, but it is an important



1 question that this committee has addressed in the past and  
2 that the intelligence committee has addressed, as well, and  
3 that is the so-called dual-hat. In addition to being the  
4 commander of the Cyber Command, you are also the director of  
5 the National Security Agency; is that right?

6 General Nakasone: That is correct, Senator.

7 Senator Cotton: And that is the so-called dual-hat  
8 that you command this military combat command and also that  
9 you run an intelligence agency.

10 What do you think are the positive things that result  
11 from wearing that dual-hat?

12 General Nakasone: Senator, over the past 3 years, what  
13 I have learned as being both, the commander of U.S. Cyber  
14 Command and the National Security Agency is that the ability  
15 for myself to operate in both roles provides the nation,  
16 speed, agility, and flexible responses to adversaries that  
17 are increasingly modernizing, getting quicker, and getting  
18 more sophisticated.

19 We operate in a domain that changes rapidly and this  
20 change is measured in weeks, perhaps months. Being able to  
21 rapidly react to that, as we have been able to prove in such  
22 things as securities of elections in 2018 and 2020, is  
23 empowered by that relationship.

24 Senator Cotton: Thank you. Thanks, gentlemen. I will  
25 see you in the closed session.

1 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Cotton.

2 And let me now recognize Senator King via Webex.

3 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 General Nakasone, a couple of quick questions about  
5 your staffing. Would it help, in terms of recruitment and  
6 retention if you had the authority, as part of this process,  
7 to forgive student loans, would that be a factor that you  
8 think might be effective in helping to retain and bring on  
9 the people that you need?

10 General Nakasone: Senator, certainly, that would.

11 And the services have that power as they recruit talent  
12 for our force. We have utilized it also with our civilian,  
13 but that is one mechanism that we get feedback that is very  
14 attractive to our workforce.

15 Senator King: The second specific question, we have  
16 had a real backup problem in the past with the security-  
17 clearance process. Is that improving or has that been a  
18 barrier?

19 I have heard of people that just get so discouraged  
20 they move on even though they have been accepted for a  
21 position.

22 General Nakasone: Senator, it has improved and it has  
23 improved significantly over the past couple of years. I  
24 applaud the work that has been done by the Department toward  
25 that, but even with that said, for those that operate at

1 U.S. Cyber Command, it does require a full security  
2 investigation. So, there are times that there are a  
3 fraction of our workforce that takes longer than others.

4 Senator King: I think that is something we have to  
5 continue to work on, because we don't want to lose good  
6 people who are making the commitment but can't set their  
7 lives aside for a year or more for that process to carry-  
8 forward.

9 You used the term at one point, to change the subject,  
10 you used the term "risk calculus." You have used the new  
11 authorities very effectively in the elections of 2018 and  
12 2020 in terms of defending forward and engaging with the  
13 adversaries in their systems.

14 Has that had a deterrent effect that you have observed,  
15 do you believe that the adversaries are thinking twice about  
16 some of the things they may be planning against us because  
17 they know of the capacity that you have demonstrated?

18 General Nakasone: Senator, I continue to see our  
19 adversaries operate rapidly in terms of being able to try to  
20 operate below the level of armed conflict. We have  
21 effectively gone from being a very static to a very active  
22 force, as you refer to, to defend for the Department's cyber  
23 strategy of 2018 and our instantiation at U.S. Cyber Command  
24 of persistent engagement, how do you both, enable your  
25 partners and act?

1           We continue to do that. We are operating in a space  
2 where our adversaries are not going to stop. They are going  
3 to continue to look for ways to steal our intellectual  
4 property, to steal our identification, and to try to  
5 influence our populous.

6           We, at the same time, have to be forward. We have to  
7 be operating, and we have to be engaged with our  
8 adversaries, and that is what has been my focus over the  
9 past couple of years.

10          Senator King: Well, would you agree that we need to  
11 develop a cyber doctrine, if you will, of declared  
12 deterrents, because, as you say, they are going to continue  
13 to do this until they have a risk calculus that tells them  
14 that there will be a price to be paid that they are not  
15 willing to undertake.

16          General Nakasone: So, certainly, Senator, the  
17 policymakers continue to look at this type of doctrine and I  
18 know that is being worked. From my perspective or my  
19 responsibilities, I am very, very focused on operationally,  
20 how do we ensure that we can operate against these  
21 adversaries that continue to try to operate below the level  
22 of armed conflict.

23          Senator King: I think there is one point that has been  
24 discussed repeatedly today that really bears a lot of policy  
25 discussion, and that is the gap that you have identified

1 where you aren't able, either in Cyber Command or NSA, to  
2 operate within the United States, but our Vice President  
3 Harris have learned that if they can hop and use a server or  
4 an ISP in the U.S., they can evade your surveillance, and  
5 then we have the FBI, as you mentioned. We are dealing with  
6 the fundamental issue of protection of privacy.

7 But would you agree that this is a serious issue?

8 SolarWinds is a perfect example where they operated in  
9 this country for something like a year, 9 months to a year,  
10 and were picked up by the private sector, not by our  
11 services.

12 So, I take it from your prior discussion, this is  
13 something we really need to focus upon; isn't that correct?

14 General Nakasone: I do think we need to focus on it,  
15 Senator. The only alteration I would make to it, it is not  
16 necessarily that it is U.S. Cyber Command or the National  
17 Security Agency that needs to be doing this. I am saying  
18 that the nation needs an ability to be able to see what is  
19 going on within the United States.

20 Senator King: I agree. I am not saying that it is  
21 your job, necessarily, but what I am saying is this gap is  
22 an issue that we have to address and SolarWinds points it  
23 out.

24 I think one other point, and my time is expired, but  
25 that needs to be emphasized is the relationship with the

1 private sector. You have already mentioned that and that is  
2 something that we are going to be working on, I hope, in  
3 this session of Congress. That is a key part of cyber  
4 defense.

5 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator King.

6 Let me now recognize Senator Ernst.

7 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 Gentlemen, thank you very much for being here today and  
9 for your command teams and, as well, the men and women  
10 within your commands.

11 General Clarke, certainly, our Special Operations  
12 Forces is probably the most capable military element on the  
13 face of the planet, and as well, General Nakasone, the men  
14 and women within Cyber Command have proven essential to us  
15 over the past number of years. So, thank you very much for  
16 being here today.

17 Mr. Maier, I appreciate the opportunity to sit down  
18 with you recently and discuss our SOLIC forces. We think it  
19 is really important and General Clarke, as well. I will  
20 start the questioning with you. I appreciate you sitting  
21 down a couple of weeks ago and visiting about our shared  
22 commitment to the men and women of SOF, so thank you.

23 Senator Inhofe and Senator Fischer touched a little  
24 upon some of the gray zone activities where our SOF covers  
25 down and we know how important that is. As we have seen

1 counterterrorism actions in the past, and as we move to, you  
2 know, the near-peer competition under the guise of our  
3 National Defense Strategy, we understand there needs be a  
4 little shift, but if you can, just reinforce how important  
5 it is that we continue not only to adjust to that near-peer  
6 competition with our special operators, but also to  
7 continually focus on counterterrorism efforts.

8 General Clarke: Senator Ernst, as you know, SOCOM has  
9 to enable the joint force in both, crisis, competition, and  
10 if necessary, conflict. And in this space, there will  
11 remain that persistent threat and we have to prioritize  
12 towards that persistent threat and that would be groups like  
13 Al Qaeda and ISIS.

14 But there are SOCOM and SOF unique capabilities that  
15 can be used in competition that the rest of the joint force  
16 doesn't have, and that could be things like undersea, seabed  
17 warfare and only we provide, the strategic reconnaissance  
18 that our forces are extremely capable of. And so, as we  
19 look at that competition area and as we look to modernize  
20 our force for the future, those are the specific  
21 capabilities that we will continue to work with this  
22 committee to move forward on.

23 Senator Ernst: Thank you, sir.

24 And just as a reminder to this committee, as we are  
25 looking at potentially flat budget for DOD in the future, we

1 just need to understand the role that SOF plays, that SOCOM  
2 has around the globe, and that we do get a lot of bang for  
3 our buck when it comes to the men and women within your  
4 command.

5 You know quite well that my heart and soul is behind  
6 POTFF and how important it is. And I know, sir, the fifth  
7 pillar of your command philosophy is health of the force,  
8 but we go back to the SOF truth that humans are more  
9 important than hardware. And so, this is something that I  
10 have long been involved in.

11 And if you could, please explain a little bit about  
12 what your focusing on in the area of brain health.

13 General Clarke: Thanks, Senator.

14 I think it is important that the entire committee  
15 understands when we started POTFF, we focused on the  
16 physical, our men and women who were physically wounded  
17 where you could see the wounds, and in the last couple of  
18 years, we have refocused those efforts towards cognitive and  
19 the psychological, as we saw suicides go up. But then we  
20 looked at the health of our force for 20 years of engaged  
21 combat, and now we have put more than 40 percent of our  
22 resources and our capability specifically to the brain  
23 health and the cognitive domain and the psychological domain  
24 to be able to ensure that our operators are both, physically  
25 and mentally capable. So, we baseline all of our operators



1 with their cognitive piece, so if there are reductions in  
2 their capabilities, if they actually have some type of  
3 concussive event, we can then go back later. We are working  
4 with industry academia and even elements like the National  
5 Football League in this space so we can make sure that we  
6 take care of our operators.

7 Senator Ernst: Right. And I think it is just  
8 important to stress that the investment into these  
9 activities is extremely important for, again, the  
10 preservation of our force. I have had the opportunity to  
11 visit a number of those types of activities in Coronado with  
12 Admiral Green a number of years ago, as we kind of dove into  
13 behavioral health activities, as well as spiritual activity  
14 is very important for our force, but then also the THOR3  
15 facilities that are available for our men and women of the  
16 force and making sure that they are physically strong and  
17 capable of what is expected of them by the American people.

18 So, again, I will continue advocating on behalf of  
19 SOCOM and I certainly appreciate your wonderful efforts.

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair. I yield back.

21 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Ernst.

22 Let me recognize Senator Blackburn, via Webex. Senator  
23 Blackburn?

24 Senator Blackburn: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 And General Clarke, thank you for the time and the

1 conversation yesterday. We talked about 40 percent of  
2 SOCOM's forces are aligned to support the great power  
3 competition fight. That is a big increase. So, for the  
4 record today, I would like for you to talk about the  
5 resourcing standpoint of what do you need from this  
6 committee in terms of authority; advocacy, what do you need  
7 to engage in near-peer competition from Beijing; and then  
8 let's talk a little bit about the posture that SOCOM has to  
9 counter these nefarious activities from the CCP and where  
10 you are positioned there.

11 I think you can really do more with a lower dollar  
12 amount than the regular force, so I would love to just get  
13 your comments for the record.

14 General Clarke: Senator, thank you.

15 You know, as pointed out, with about 2 percent of the  
16 Department of Defense budget, I think we are a very good  
17 return on our investment, with about 3 percent of the force.

18 And the continued resourcing, specifically, you know,  
19 for SOCOM so that we can modernize in this area, where we  
20 can provide unique capabilities for our forces is critical.

21 We have to balance both, operations readiness and  
22 modernization. And the continued support of this committee  
23 remains critical.

24 As we look at, you specifically asked about our  
25 employment and our capacity at 40 percent. That is exactly

1 right. We have, in fact, adjusted our forces to a  
2 sustainable presence against the persistent terrorist  
3 threats, while, at the same time, rebalancing those forces  
4 across the globe. Some of our competitors are now global  
5 threats and not necessarily specific to Europe or INDOPACOM,  
6 and so we continue to look at where our forces are located  
7 across the globe so they can counter, you know, those  
8 specific threats.

9 And then the last thing I would hit in this area is the  
10 specific authority for our forces to conduct unconventional  
11 warfare in this space.

12 While I can take specific points in closed session,  
13 that authority that allows us to work with partner forces to  
14 increase both, the resistance and resilience, working in the  
15 information space, is absolutely critical.

16 So, Senator, thank you.

17 Senator Blackburn: Yes. And we talked a little bit  
18 about the term that you and Admiral Davidson use about  
19 slowing down China's clock. And I would like for you to hit  
20 just quickly on what that means and then what we have, what  
21 we can do with operation within that gray zone.

22 General Clarke: Senator, as you are well aware, we  
23 established the joint task force, Indo-Pacific. It is the  
24 first task force that went and is actually west of the  
25 International Date Line that we developed with INDOPACOM to

1 ensure that we work with like-minded partners in the Indo-  
2 Pacific. And I think part and parcel of that is that that  
3 element is focused on the information operations so that  
4 China, who works very well in the space of creating false  
5 narratives and not always being up front with the messages  
6 that they send, that we actually are able to tamp down some  
7 of the disinformation that they continuously sew, and that  
8 is an important part to SOCOM and to CYBERCOM, is working in  
9 this information space.

10 Senator Blackburn: And with the time remaining, we  
11 talked a little bit about OPTEMPO and the changes there and  
12 the comprehensive review from 2019. And where have you seen  
13 holistic improvement across the force and where would you  
14 like to continue to see improvement?

15 General Clarke: Senator, through our comprehensive  
16 review, we have now ensured that by this year, all of our  
17 forces will be above a 2:1 deployment to dwell ratio. That  
18 will be the first time that that has happened since  
19 September 2001. We continue to strive toward meeting the  
20 3:1 dwell ratio for all of our forces, and some of our  
21 forces already there and we will continue to strive in that.

22 Senator Blackburn: Thank you, sir.

23 General Clarke: Thank you.

24 Senator Blackburn: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Blackburn.

1           Before I recognize Senator Hawley, I will depart for  
2 the vote. Senator Inhofe will preside, and I will return,  
3 and we will switch off.

4           Senator Hawley, please.

5           Senator Hawley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6           Thank you, gentlemen, for being here. It is good to  
7 see you again.

8           General Nakasone, let me start with you. Many  
9 companies use Chinese hardware like printed circuit boards  
10 in their information systems they provide to the Department  
11 of Defense, including systems that are used to store and to  
12 transmit information. At the same time, DOD and others have  
13 warned that the Chinese Government might be able to tamper  
14 with these Chinese-made products in order to create cyber  
15 vulnerabilities that they can exploit and use against us.

16           My question is, do you think it is important for the  
17 Department to at least know which systems contain Chinese-  
18 printed circuit boards so that it can address potential  
19 cyber vulnerabilities and contain any exposure or any danger  
20 that is identified?

21           General Nakasone: Senator, in light of the recent  
22 SolarWinds intrusion, I think this is, as you point out, an  
23 area that we, as a Department, continue to look at very  
24 hard. There are procedures and processes that the  
25 Department utilizes to verify this, but I agree that this is

1 an area that we have to obviously shine a light on in the  
2 future.

3 Senator Hawley: And do you agree that further steps  
4 would be useful in order to identify vulnerabilities here  
5 and, as you just said, shine a light on this?

6 General Nakasone: So, Senator, I am a person that  
7 every single day is worried about the vulnerabilities that  
8 our adversaries might exploit, so you can well-imagine that  
9 this is an area that I have a great deal of, you know, focus  
10 on right now.

11 Senator Hawley: Good. Well, I look forward to working  
12 with you on that.

13 General Clarke, let me come to you. The Baltic nations  
14 have spent some years honing their ability to conduct  
15 irregular warfare in the event that Moscow attempts to seize  
16 a Baltic territory, so it won't be able to hold it. It has  
17 become a key part of their deterrent strategy, as you know,  
18 in the Baltic region.

19 What I am asking about this is, do you wonder, do you  
20 think that the Baltic model could be applied in Taiwan; in  
21 other words, would helping Taiwan improve its irregular  
22 warfare capabilities help it deter potential Chinese  
23 aggression?

24 General Clarke: Senator, bottom line, yes.

25 We have worked closely with the Baltics. I have met

1 with every Baltic SOF commander personally and we have been  
2 engaged in the Baltics for a long time, but we also, and I  
3 can talk more specifically in closed hearing, we remain  
4 close with capabilities for Taiwan.

5 Senator Hawley: Do you think that it would be helpful  
6 to us and should we be prioritizing helping Taiwan develop  
7 its irregular warfare capabilities?

8 General Clarke: Yes, Senator, I do think we should  
9 help them.

10 Senator Hawley: Let me, still with you, General  
11 Clarke, but switching topics. President Obama's former  
12 acting special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan  
13 recently wrote that, and I am quoting now, for the long  
14 term, the United States will need a counterterrorism  
15 capability in that region that doesn't depend on a permanent  
16 U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, which I completely  
17 agree with.

18 My question is, what options has SOCOM provided to the  
19 secretary to allow us to achieve counterterrorism objectives  
20 in Afghanistan without a permanent military presence in the  
21 country?

22 General Clarke: Senator, we will always provide  
23 options. As you well know, Al Qaeda and ISIS are not just  
24 in Afghanistan, but they are a global threat, and we will  
25 always provide the secretary and the Department and the

1 National Command Authority with options so that if there is  
2 a threat, that we can actually detour or actually disrupt or  
3 defeat that threat.

4 Senator Hawley: And, specifically, you are saying, and  
5 we can discuss this more in closed session, as appropriate,  
6 but just to be clear, you are working on providing options  
7 to deal with the counterterrorism threat and with -- for  
8 counterterrorism measures that do not rely on a permanent  
9 standing military presence in country; is that right?

10 General Clarke: Senator, there has been no decision  
11 made for Afghanistan, so I think it would be, you know, a  
12 hypothetical to know what we are going to do at this time,  
13 but we will always provide options, you know, for the  
14 Department of Defense.

15 Senator Hawley: Good. Well, I look forward to  
16 following up with you more on that.

17 General Nakasone, I am going to come back to you here  
18 in my few remaining seconds. The People's Liberation Army  
19 in their writings often refer to cyber capabilities as the  
20 strategic commanding heights of future warfare.

21 I am wondering how the PLA's emphasis on information  
22 operations and maintaining the information advantage  
23 influences CYBERCOM strategy for detouring China.

24 General Nakasone: Senator, I think this whole  
25 discussion in terms of where our adversaries are going and



1 in the influence spaces is among the most important areas  
2 that we are taking on at Cyber Command, and I know General  
3 Clarke is addressing at U.S. Special Operations Command.

4 This is really the competition that we are involved  
5 with today where our adversaries are, again, trying to  
6 influence ourselves and our people through a number of  
7 different means. So, we have work ongoing today, ongoing  
8 both, in our commands and with our commands trying to  
9 address that, as well.

10 Senator Hawley: Very good. I will look forward to  
11 following up with you on that, as well.

12 Thank you, gentlemen, for your testimony.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Hawley.

15 Senator Kelly is recognized.

16 Senator Kelly: Thank you, Senator.

17 I understand that in January of 2020, nine combatant  
18 commanders, including you, General Clarke, sent the letter  
19 to the director of National Intelligence requesting more  
20 assistance from the intelligence community in being able to  
21 publicly illuminate, malign, influence, and coercive  
22 activities by China and Russia.

23 So, to all the witnesses, starting with General Clarke,  
24 what, if anything, has been done in response to this request  
25 from the nine combatant commanders?

1           General Clarke:  Senator, from that request, SOCOM,  
2 with the other combatant commanders, continues to look  
3 specifically in the information space and where we can best  
4 effect to provide capacity against our adversaries.  And I  
5 think that specific memo led to some sort of concurrence  
6 requirements being lifted for the Department.

7           Senator Kelly:  And in your view, would the  
8 illumination of these malign activities help to dissuade or  
9 detour China and Russia?

10          General Clarke:  Senator, at this point, I cannot point  
11 to specific deterrents or detraction of that.  I would tell  
12 you we would continue to look, but I think it is most  
13 important that we continue to develop the capacity required  
14 to work in the information space.

15          Senator Kelly:  General Nakasone?

16          General Nakasone:  Senator, to your second point there,  
17 I think that is a really important question.  In terms of  
18 what our adversaries are doing today, our most effective  
19 response is being able to respond to what they are doing.  
20 And we have a number of different ways upon which we  
21 respond.  Sometimes we respond to other means of the power  
22 in our government, whether or not it be diplomatic or  
23 sanctions or other ways, but I think it begins with the idea  
24 that we are competition right now and our adversaries are  
25 operating below the level of armed conflict in a matter of

1 trying to influence us.

2 Senator Kelly: But in downgrading the classification  
3 of this intelligence, is that helpful in meeting the goal of  
4 dissuading more aggressive action from China or Russia?

5 General Nakasone: I think we have to think broader  
6 than that, Senator. I think that it is more than just  
7 writing to release or perhaps even downgrading.

8 It is as General Clarke alluded to, there are other  
9 means upon which we gather intelligence these days. How do  
10 we take the best tools, the best techniques, not only from  
11 our Government, from also from the private sector, to look  
12 at what is occurring and being able to shine that spotlight.

13 I think a lot of times we look and just say, hey, we  
14 will simply go ahead and downgrade intelligence and provide  
15 that rapidly. Sometimes the better answer is, okay, where  
16 are the other streams of information, how can we use that  
17 most effectively with an audience.

18 Senator Kelly: Well, thank you, General.

19 And to Mr. Maier, so, Section 1202 of the fiscal year  
20 2018 NDAA sought to provide a new tool to counter these  
21 challenges by authorizing the Secretary of Defense to  
22 provide support to regular forces, the regular forces, and  
23 individuals supporting U.S. special forces, but that  
24 irregular warfare operation part, last year's NDAA raised  
25 the annual cap on funding for this authority from ten to \$15

1 million.

2           So, Mr. Maier, how would you characterize the demand  
3 for this authority across the geographic combatant commands?

4           Mr. Maier: So, Senator, that is a, I think, a very  
5 important tool we have that we haven't yet talked about in  
6 the great power competition. The demand is high. It takes  
7 some time, as you can understand, to build those  
8 partnerships to be able to operate in that partnership-  
9 driven approach.

10           We view this very much as the successful 127 Echo or  
11 the 1208 program, where there is a crawl, walk, run element  
12 to it, and I think that started very small. And as the  
13 progress, and in many respects, the high return on  
14 investment in terms of dollars and deployments in dwell and  
15 impact started to become apparent to the GCCs, and became  
16 more and more in demand, we see a similar model for 1202,  
17 sir.

18           Senator Kelly: Thank you.

19           I yield back.

20           Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Kelly.

21           Senator Sullivan?

22           Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23           Gentlemen, good to see you again. Thanks for all your  
24 work.

25           General, let me start with you. General Clarke, how

1 are you feeling, with regard to the resources that you have  
2 for your no-fail mission, you have a lot of no-fail  
3 missions, but your Counter-WMD mission that SOCOM was, a  
4 couple of years ago, given that mission, as well. It is not  
5 like you didn't have a lot of missions on your plate. That  
6 is a big one.

7 A number of us, myself, in particular, were concerned  
8 that the Special Operations Command does a lot of things  
9 right, really well, but being given the lead on that one was  
10 a whole other area that is really, really important, but  
11 also needs resources. And are you resourced enough for that  
12 mission?

13 That is a mission that, of course, there is no doubt,  
14 you can't fail on.

15 General Clarke: Senator, the bottom line is we do have  
16 sufficient resources to do that. The resources from  
17 STRATCOM, you know, that had that coordinating authority for  
18 CWMD were moved from STRATCOM over to SOCOM. I will  
19 continue to assess if additional resources are required  
20 going forward, but as you point out, the WMD threat is  
21 something that we must pay continuous attention to, because  
22 if we don't, we do it at our own peril.

23 Senator Sullivan: And as I know you know, and you and  
24 I have discussed this, we are reorienting. I think it is  
25 the appropriate orientation for our military and national

1 security to great power competition with China as a rising  
2 threat, but the WMD threat continues regardless of great  
3 power competition and that could be from violent extremist  
4 organizations, which clearly want to get their hands on  
5 that. It could be from North Korea, who is a well-known  
6 proliferator. Pakistan.

7 Are there any areas, in particular, that you are  
8 focused on, as it relates to the Counter-WMD that is not in  
9 the headlines, but we should be sure we are focused on here,  
10 as well?

11 General Clarke: Senator, one thing that we put some  
12 strong recommendations for is that is ensuring that our  
13 joint forces actually train to work in a contested  
14 environment, so that our adversary is well aware that they  
15 will be denied the benefit of use of these capabilities.  
16 And that deterrent and our principle, I think is critical.

17 As you and I discussed yesterday, there are those that  
18 would like to wish this problem away, but we don't think we  
19 can and we have to be prepared for its potential use.

20 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask another issue, which I  
21 think this committee is very focused on.

22 You know, the SOCOM enterprise, our Special Operations  
23 Forces have been very focused, appropriately, Post-9/11 in  
24 the Middle East. They have done a great job, a heroic job.  
25 Many have lost their lives in their service to their

1 country.

2 How are we starting the transition from the focus  
3 there, which we still need to do, but we need to also start  
4 focusing on China and the Asia Pacific and the INDOPACOM  
5 region. Are we doing enough there? Do we have enough  
6 experience with special operators?

7 It is a very different battlefield, as you know. It is  
8 probably less kill and capture and more gray zone  
9 operations. What is your thinking on that, General?

10 General Clarke: Senator, this is going back to the  
11 future for SOF. Many of our forces were regionally aligned  
12 prior to 9/11 that had both, the cultural and language  
13 understandings and now as we have actually reduced forces in  
14 the places that you have named, some of these forces are  
15 going back to where they do have that understanding and  
16 those capabilities.

17 So, we have aligned, in one case, I think important for  
18 the employment of our forces, but I think the second and  
19 really key aspect from a SOCOM perspective is that we have  
20 actually reallocated our budget for the modernization  
21 towards the capabilities that are required. So, I have  
22 adjusted 14 percent of my budget in modernization towards  
23 great power competition for those unique SOF capabilities.

24 Senator Sullivan: Great. That is good to hear.

25 General Nakasone, I just want to compliment you, sir.

1 I think you have been doing a phenomenal job. You probably  
2 don't get complimented enough because you can't talk about  
3 what you do, but in my own experience here, I am just  
4 starting my second term in the Senate, there was a hearing  
5 that I really remember in 2015, 2016. It was the Cyber  
6 Command. It was some of the others who were, I called us  
7 the cyber punching bag of the world. And the witnesses  
8 admitted that we don't retaliate when we are attacked from a  
9 cyber perspective.

10 I don't think we are the cyber punching bag of the  
11 world anymore and I think it is because of your work. You  
12 can't talk about a lot of that work, but can you just let  
13 the American people know that whether it is on elections or  
14 other cyberattacks, we are not just taking blows; we are  
15 going on uh offense, we are preemptive. I think it is  
16 really important for people to know that.

17 That was not the posture 5 years ago. We were just  
18 getting pummeled and we wouldn't do anything about it. Can  
19 you talk a little bit about that, to the extent that you  
20 can, in an unclassified session.

21 General Nakasone: Senator, I appreciate the question  
22 and, importantly, I appreciate the support of this  
23 committee, because as I was mentioning, really, 2018 was a  
24 watershed year for us, as we had looked at the future to a  
25 midterm election and knowing that we did not want to



1 experience what we had experienced two years previously, the  
2 ability for this committee to pass the NDAA that year that  
3 allowed us to operate outside of our networks, cyber as a  
4 traditional military activity. Moved us from being a static  
5 to an active force.

6 And this idea of persistent engagement, always being  
7 involved with your adversaries, whether or not you are  
8 enabling our partners or acting against our adversaries is  
9 critical in underlying to our support in 2018, 2020, and  
10 today.

11 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, General.

12 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Sullivan.

14 Let me now recognize Senator Duckworth via Webex.

15 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 And I do join my colleague, the senator from Alaska, in  
17 his admiration for the work that we have done, especially  
18 under your leadership, General Nakasone.

19 General Clarke, I appreciate our call yesterday and I  
20 wanted to express my support for Special Operations  
21 Command's diversity and inclusion strategic plan. As we  
22 discussed on our call, bringing more people from diverse  
23 backgrounds into the Special Operations community will make  
24 it stronger. By infusing teams with different ideas and  
25 perspectives and enabling them to engage more effectively

1 around the world.

2 I agree with you that greater diversity in the Special  
3 Operations community is an operational imperative. That is  
4 why I sponsored the ELITE Act in last year's NDAA to  
5 identify and remove barriers to underrepresented groups'  
6 participation in elite communities of the Armed Forces.

7 I am glad to see that you have taken on the challenge  
8 of increasing diversity and inclusion in Special Operations  
9 Command and it is an important first step in strengthening  
10 our military, and I really look forward to working together  
11 with you on this issue in the future.

12 My first question, I believe that being able to tap  
13 into the full talent of every [inaudible] of our population  
14 makes our military stronger. I also believe that in order  
15 to build the most capable military possible, we need to  
16 capitalize on the natural advantage of our National Guard  
17 and Reserve forces, namely, that those servicemembers are  
18 highly trained in their civilian jobs, as well as their  
19 military jobs.

20 If we viewed this as a strength, we can benefit from  
21 the expertise that our Guardsmen and Reservists bring from  
22 civilian life, especially infuse in fields that require  
23 advanced technical skills like cyber.

24 General Nakasone, can you please describe how the  
25 National Guard and Reservists like members of the Illinois

1 National Guard who are currently working the 176th Cyber  
2 Protection Team are contributing to your mission at U.S.  
3 Cyber Command.

4 General Nakasone: Senator, thank you, and thank you  
5 for the question. The 176th Cyber Protection Team is a team  
6 well-known to us at U.S. Cyber Command. They mobilized,  
7 came on active-duty, and did a tremendous job in protecting  
8 our infrastructure, the actual capabilities, upon which we  
9 utilize every single day to engage our adversaries, led by,  
10 you know, Major Jaime Marlock, who is the Cyber Protection  
11 Team leader.

12 And, really, it starts at the top with the Illinois  
13 National Guard, in general, Brigadier General Neely, who has  
14 been instrumental in being out front, being very supportive  
15 of our efforts, and I think key to your point, attracting  
16 those that leave active-duty service and continue to want to  
17 serve. And so, the 176th is a great example of our  
18 partnership with the Guard.

19 Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

20 And how will increasing National Guard and Reserve  
21 components participation in cyber operations improve our  
22 national readiness and capacity to combat cyberattacks and  
23 how can Congress support this effort to increase the Reserve  
24 forces participation in our cyber activities?

25 General Nakasone: Senator, if I might use just an

1 example, and I would say it is from the state of  
2 Connecticut. As we were operating with the Connecticut  
3 National Guard in the early fall of 2020, on the 2nd of  
4 September, Connecticut faced a ransomware attack on their  
5 public school systems. Operating with the Connecticut  
6 National Guard, they provided us information via a  
7 capability that we called a Cyber 9-Line. That is utilizing  
8 a common ID card, being able to obviously share that and  
9 unclassified with us back at U.S. Cyber Command, we could  
10 use the power that we have at U.S. Cyber Command at the  
11 National Security Agency to look at this malware and to  
12 rapidly provide assistance.

13 But at the end of the day, it was the Connecticut  
14 National Guard that did the work and, you know, taking an  
15 ability to look at a situation where your school has been  
16 shut down because of ransomware and then in a matter of  
17 days, being able to bring that back up, I think it shows the  
18 power of the Guard and the power of the partnership between  
19 the private and the public sector.

20 Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

21 And when I think of complex cyber missions, I do think,  
22 in particular, about the challenges that U.S. Transportation  
23 Command faces in securing its network and safeguarding  
24 sensitive information about our troops, our capabilities,  
25 and our postures, and movement plans while also working with

1 numerous commercial partners, whether it is ocean-going or  
2 within the aviation community.

3 General Nakasone, please describe your current work  
4 with U.S. Transportation Command and explain why it is  
5 important that Congress fully resource and support this and  
6 future initiatives like it.

7 General Nakasone: Transportation Command is really a  
8 unique capability for our nation. It provides us global  
9 logistics. We are perhaps the only nation that can do that  
10 so readily and so well.

11 And so, under General Lyon's leadership at U.S.  
12 Transportation Command, he approached us and said, hey, we  
13 operate primarily off of the private sector with  
14 unclassified networks. How can you help?

15 And so, there has been a partnership ongoing for the  
16 past year and a half where both, U.S. Transportation  
17 Command, U.S. Cyber Command, and the National Security  
18 Agency have taken a look at, how do we improve that public-  
19 private partnership, how do we ensure the security of the  
20 data that is being transmitted, and then, also, how do we  
21 look to the future?

22 Thank you, Senator.

23 Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

24 I am out of time.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Duckworth.

2 Let me recognize Senator Tuberville, please.

3 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Thank you, gentlemen. Thanks for being here today.

5 General Nakasone, Space Force has already taken great steps  
6 in advancing U.S. national security in order to provide  
7 [inaudible] needed. It is going to continue to need a  
8 strong backing from our cyber intelligence community.

9 What role will the cyber mission force and CYBERCOM  
10 play in Space Force?

11 General Nakasone: Senator, it has been an early and  
12 active role already. General Dickinson has been out to U.S.  
13 Cyber Command to talk about how do we secure the networks  
14 upon which he operates. How do we work, obviously, as we  
15 take a look at our overhead constellation, what are the  
16 threats that USSPACECOM is going to approach in the future.

17 And so, we have been actively engaged with him over a  
18 period of several months to identify those.

19 Senator Tuberville: Thank you.

20 General Clarke, Section 922 of the 2017 NDAA, which was  
21 signed into law by President Obama, made clear that the  
22 administrative chain of command for the Special Operations  
23 community runs from the President to the Secretary of  
24 Defense, to ASD/SOLIC, and then to you, the SOCOM commander.

25 Prior to conducting congressional engagements, do you

1 obtain approval from ASD/SOLIC?

2 General Clarke: The secretary, we work very closely  
3 with ASD/SOLIC in that administrative chain of command for  
4 oversight, particularly for our budget, and acquisition.

5 Mr. Maier and his predecessors provide that oversight.  
6 But it also clear that my chain of command, and Secretary  
7 Austin made this very clear to me, that my chain of command  
8 as a combatant commander runs from the Secretary of Defense  
9 to the President.

10 Senator Tuberville: Thank you.

11 That is kind of my next question. Do you support the  
12 implementation of the law and, specifically, ASD/SOLIC's  
13 absolute control over administrative matters, such as  
14 legislative engagements, budgetary resource decisions,  
15 acquisitions, public affairs, personnel, legal  
16 accountability, and other related authorities held by the  
17 traditional military service?

18 General Clarke: Senator, what I believe is a key role  
19 for ASD/SOLIC is actually to be an advocate for SOCOM within  
20 the Department. And so, when decisions are made about  
21 services and service budgets and service-personnel  
22 decisions, I think ASD/SOLIC in the room to be able to be  
23 that advocate for us, to me, is the most important aspect  
24 that ASD/SOLIC can do for SOCOM.

25 It goes back to the old adage if you aren't at the

1 table, you become the lunch, and having ASD/SOLIC in and at  
2 that table, which has occurred, has been very helpful.

3 Senator Tuberville: Thank you.

4 Mr. Maier, I noted a moment ago the law mandates that  
5 the administrative chain of command for SOCOM passes from  
6 the President to Secretary of Defense, ASD/SOLIC, SOCOM  
7 commander. And in light of the clear chain of command, have  
8 you met with the secretary of administrative matters related  
9 to SOCOM?

10 Mr. Maier: Senator, yes, I have, and I participate in  
11 the secretary's regular service secretary meetings. I also  
12 participate, or my staff participate, in the series of  
13 governance meetings that the deputy secretary runs in order  
14 to do, just as was already said by General Clarke, to both  
15 advocate, but for the administrative chain of command.

16 We are responsible for both, setting direction and  
17 ensuring execution and implementation, consistent with the  
18 law.

19 Senator Tuberville: How often do you all meet, do you  
20 think?

21 Mr. Maier: The service secretaries meet at least twice  
22 a month. Obviously, a new administration, so a different  
23 series of meetings, but every day, sir, there are meetings  
24 that I am representing ASD/SOLIC in that service secretary-  
25 like hat with the secretary, deputy secretary, or their



1 direct reports.

2 Senator Tuberville: Thank you.

3 Thank you for your service.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator  
5 Tuberville.

6 Senator Peters, please.

7 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 And thanks to each of our witnesses here today.

9 Mr. Maier, in General Clarke's words, if I may use your  
10 words here, General Clarke, they are good words, he says  
11 SOF, quote, strengthens alliances and creates diplomatic  
12 options.

13 These strategic effects ultimately, clearly begin with  
14 actions undertaken by people in those areas. It is our  
15 number-one assets.

16 So, I would like to hear from you how you are  
17 modernizing professional development in a way that really  
18 reflects this very unique role of your personnel, how you  
19 are basically bridging the gap between direct action and  
20 working in an embassy across the span of training and  
21 education, a very obviously complex set of skills that are  
22 necessary.

23 So, and, specifically, my question is, how are you  
24 broadening mid-level SOF leaders and how much of that focus  
25 is on senior-enlisted personnel?

1           Mr. Maier: Senator, that is a very important part of  
2 this pivot, as we described it from being able to still do  
3 the counterterrorism missions that we have been involved in  
4 for the last, really, generation to be able to do that both,  
5 and then be competitive at that level, below armed conflict.

6           A critical component of that, as we have talked about  
7 already, is not only the ability to speak languages and  
8 really engage at the right level of cultural awareness, with  
9 not only the adversaries, but also those third parties,  
10 third countries that those adversaries are attempting to  
11 influence.

12           And a lot of that happens in the information space,  
13 social media, as we know. So, a critical component of a  
14 professional military education, but even more specifically,  
15 the operational imperatives that we have to evolve that  
16 force. This is the key part of this.

17           It was alluded already at the opening statement of  
18 General Clarke, that over 50,000 members of Special  
19 Operations Command are enlisted members. That is where the  
20 rubber meets the road. These individuals, especially in the  
21 SOF world, are often called upon to do things well above  
22 what their conventional counterparts, whether that is  
23 operating embassies, participating on interagency teams, or  
24 engaging with partners. So, we see that as really the crux  
25 of progress and where we are going to be successful in this

1 great power fight.

2 Senator Peters: So, Mr. Maier, does the SOCOM talent  
3 management then emphasize regional experience, is that  
4 something that you are really seeking out and trying to  
5 develop further?

6 Mr. Maier: Senator, yes, sir. And I think,  
7 specifically, evolving to those great power concerns, we  
8 often forget at times that a lot of what we have been doing  
9 over the last years in the counterterrorism fight was really  
10 focused on fairly narrow set of adversaries. And so, I  
11 think as we look more broadly and diversely at the  
12 adversaries we are going to confront, and in some cases,  
13 more importantly, those entities that they are trying to  
14 influence, it is important for us to be able to engage in  
15 those languages with that cultural awareness.

16 Senator Peters: Yeah, absolutely. Well, that is good  
17 to hear.

18 General Nakasone, on Tuesday, I asked Admiral Aquilino  
19 how he plans to align security assistance in INDOPACOM with  
20 the nature of our competition with China and Russia and if  
21 he believes that security assistance should include  
22 cybersecurity assistance to help our partners protect their  
23 critical infrastructure or enhance their resilience against  
24 information warfare.

25 My question to you, sir, is, do you believe that

1 security assistance to partner nations should include  
2 cybersecurity and information warfare measures, first off,  
3 and second, do you believe we should pursue these types of  
4 relationships outside of the traditional five I nations that  
5 we have talked about mostly?

6 General Nakasone: Senator, I believe that in terms of  
7 the theater engagement that you discuss right there, our  
8 most effective means is to begin with the discussion with  
9 the combatant commander. So, if confirmed, we will look  
10 forward to obviously working very closely with Admiral  
11 Aquilino.

12 I do take your point on the idea of a broader  
13 partnership. We do need broader partnerships. We have  
14 tremendous relationships with our five Is. It is a critical  
15 capability that we have as a nation, but we are also looking  
16 at how do we expand those partnerships to bring a degree of  
17 competitive advantage against our adversaries in the future.

18 Senator Peters: Great. Thank you.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Peters.

21 Senator Blumenthal, please.

22 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Thank you for your service, all three of our witnesses  
24 today.

25 General Nakasone, I appreciated our discussion before

1 this hearing about the contributions of the National Guard  
2 in Connecticut and you were mentioning them in your  
3 testimony. Across the country, the National Guard have  
4 really been integral to many of our cyber efforts. Before  
5 this last election, the Connecticut National Guard, in  
6 particular, was a really invaluable resource to many local  
7 officials in preventing cyberattacks and taking action to  
8 detour them, and then more recently, as you know and we  
9 discussed it, the National Guard was an immense resource to  
10 Connecticut in responding to ransomware attacks against  
11 Hartford schools and in preparing for responses to  
12 particular attacks, but also, again, detouring them.

13 I am also very expedited about the grant that the  
14 University of New Haven received to train more National  
15 Guard members on cybersecurity skills under Project  
16 Ironclad. Not only will the University of New Haven help us  
17 train more cybersecurity talent in New Haven and  
18 Connecticut, but it could also help create a national  
19 pipeline to recruit and retain the expertise in our country  
20 that we so desperately need.

21 Could you explain how the University of New Haven's  
22 Project Ironclad training program fits with our need for  
23 more cybersecurity talent.

24 General Nakasone: Certainly, Senator, but let me take  
25 a step back and just talk a little bit about the work of the

1 Connecticut National Guard, because I think that in my  
2 previous statement, I wasn't specific enough on how big a  
3 deal this was.

4 So, if you think about it, a ransomware, and as I  
5 indicated, ransomware on the 2nd of September that is  
6 impacting the school system, but it is also impacting fire,  
7 and police, and emergency medical services. Think about  
8 that, if you are losing that from a capability within your  
9 community, Connecticut National Guard, 24 hours, working  
10 with us at U.S. Cyber Command and National Security Agency,  
11 utilizing a capability called the Cyber 9-Line where they  
12 are able to leverage our expertise back at Fort Meade, and  
13 then being able to deal with the problem.

14 This is the Connecticut National Guard that is solving  
15 the problem. They are just getting a bit of assistance from  
16 us. That is a huge deal and I think it is really a great  
17 exemplar of how powerful the National Guard can be not only  
18 in a situation like this, but also, I want to point out the  
19 work that they did during the 2020 election in ensuring its  
20 success.

21 And also, most importantly, and I don't think it is  
22 well-known, their work with the Department of Homeland  
23 Security in ensuring the security of warp speed, our ability  
24 to bring a vaccine for COVID-19 to the American populous.  
25 This is the work that the National Guard has done over the

1 past 9 months and I think it is critical.

2 In terms of New Haven, this is really a great new story  
3 and being able to, again, generate interest, generating  
4 context, generating an ability for those that have, you  
5 know, a desire, a knowledge, an inkle of what they want to  
6 do in the future and bringing them with the capability to  
7 train and then being exposed to cyber for the future.

8 Senator Blumenthal: I think that your points are so  
9 well taken. Our National Guard has been such a critical  
10 resource in Connecticut in the elections, in countering  
11 ransomware, in building the kind of intellectual  
12 infrastructure that we need. And as I remarked to you in  
13 our conversation, the National Guard draws on the expertise  
14 of citizen soldiers who are in civilian jobs involving IT.  
15 They are experts in major corporations and they are  
16 providing their expertise now to not only our nation's  
17 military, through the National Guard, but also to civilian  
18 election officials, to local education efforts to deter  
19 ransomware, and I think your point about the University of  
20 New Haven is so well taken, the ironclad project offers  
21 tremendous promise of recruiting, training, and retaining  
22 the talent that we need in our military, as well as in our  
23 civilian lives for cybersecurity and cybersecurity is our  
24 future.

25 And I thank you for the work that you are doing and

1 that you are encouraging and promoting by the National  
2 Guard. Thank you.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

5 And now via Webex, let me recognize Senator Rosen.

6 And I thank Senator Kelly for his patience.

7 Senator Rosen?

8 Senator Rosen: Thank you, Chairman Reed.

9 Thank you to our witnesses for your service and, of  
10 course, always for being here today.

11 You know, as a former computer programmer, I am  
12 interested in learning how DOD's cyber strategy can really  
13 strengthen our nation's ability to withstand and respond to  
14 cyberattacks.

15 And I would also like to recognize today, the role that  
16 Nellis Air Force Base plays in supporting SOCOM mission in  
17 the battlefield. It is really, really important and I am  
18 proud of our men and women there at Nellis Air Force Base.

19 But I want to talk about information warfare. Despite  
20 an unprecedented level of foreign influence campaigns, we  
21 know they are targeting the United States and other  
22 democracies. We lack a clear strategy to combat information  
23 warfare.

24 As the National Security Strategy makes clear, our  
25 autocratic adversaries are using aggressive, aggressive



1 information warfare tactics to interfere in our democratic  
2 elections around the world, exploit the pandemic, and erode  
3 trust in the rules-based international order.

4 So, General Nakasone, and then General Clarke, what is  
5 the appropriate role for the military to play in this  
6 environment of heightened information warfare?

7 General Nakasone: Senator, I think the appropriate  
8 role is the role that we have begun playing since 2018,  
9 which is the perspective of how do we defend for the idea of  
10 operating outside of the United States, being able to both,  
11 enable our partners with information and act when  
12 authorized.

13 This is an active approach to our adversaries. It has  
14 been most effective, as we have seen, with the 2018 and 2020  
15 elections with adversaries attempting to influence us,  
16 attempting to interfere, but not being able to do that.  
17 That is based upon the strategy of defend forward and the  
18 instantiation of persistent engagement. That is the start  
19 of it.

20 As I mentioned earlier today, I also think there is a  
21 broader piece that is being worked right now by the  
22 administration in terms of how do we improve the further  
23 resilience of the United States as we look at adversaries  
24 continuing to avoid our laws and policies and try to use our  
25 own infrastructure in their own attempts.

1           This is a continual effort that we have to be at. This  
2 is not going to be episodic. This is something that U.S.  
3 Cyber Command and the other combatant commands need to  
4 continue to work in.

5           Senator Rosen: So, perhaps, General Clarke, you can  
6 speak to this. I want to add one more thing to this  
7 question now that you talk about defend forward.

8           How do we detour our adversaries' cyber aggression by  
9 changing their cost-benefit analysis? How do we make it not  
10 worth their while to attack us and what policies are we  
11 doing there? When you speak about defend forward, isn't  
12 that part of this equation, too?

13          General Clarke: Senator, you raised a great point.

14          Number one, I think we have to work closely with our  
15 Department of State and other agencies in this space.  
16 Number two is that while General Nakasone talks about forces  
17 forward, which I agree with, we also have SOCOM forces for  
18 it that are absolutely the meso professionals that work  
19 closely with the embassies and with foreign partners, and  
20 that ties this ecosystem of forward all the way back to the  
21 capabilities and capacities that exist in the U.S.

22          And I think by working closely with those partners to  
23 ensure that our adversaries or competitors are not getting  
24 that free pass and to recognize what is truth from fiction  
25 and continue to highlight that through using our intel

1 communities is critical.

2 General Nakasone: And, Senator, if I might add on to  
3 that, to your point with regards to imposing costs, this is  
4 not just the Department of Defense. As General Clarke  
5 rightly points out, this is a Whole-of-Government effort.  
6 This is what the power of Treasury brings to it, the Federal  
7 Bureau of Investigations, Justice, Department of Homeland  
8 Security. This is the lesson that we have learned is that  
9 we have to operate together, because the partnership is  
10 where the power is.

11 Senator Rosen: Well, that is great.

12 I want to continue on that. We do have a Cyber  
13 Strategy. We have had a lot of cyber espionage.

14 How often should our cyber strategy be updated to  
15 reflect current threats and the current challenges? How  
16 often do you envision that we need to do that in order to  
17 stay relevant?

18 If it is 2 years old, 3 years old, it is not being  
19 responsive, and so I was wondering what you think would be  
20 appropriate for these kinds of cyber strategy reports to be  
21 updated.

22 General Nakasone: So, we have an interim National  
23 Security Strategy guidance that is out, that the  
24 administration has put out, that has been very effective for  
25 us to start our guideline with it. It talks about

1 cybersecurity as a key enabler in that. That is an  
2 important piece of what our nation needs to do.

3 Senator Rosen: Yeah, but actual threats, how do we let  
4 people stay up to date on actual threats?

5 General Nakasone: Obviously, that is through the  
6 continuing dialogue in terms of what our intelligence  
7 community is talking about, obviously, what our Government  
8 is talking about, and also, really importantly, what the  
9 private sector is talking about, because they are seeing so  
10 many of these threats, Senator.

11 Senator Rosen: Thank you. I believe my time has  
12 expired, Mr. Chair.

13 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Rosen.

14 Gentlemen, thank you for your service to the nation and  
15 thank you for your testimony today.

16 This will conclude the open portion of the hearing. We  
17 will reconvene in SCV-217 as quickly as possible.

18 Thank you very much, again. The open hearing is  
19 adjourned.

20 [Whereupon, at 11:39 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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