HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF: MR. ANDREW C. WEBER TO BE ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR NUCLEAR AND CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAMS; MR. PAUL N. STOCKTON TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE AND AMERICAS' SECURITY AFFAIRS; MR. THOMAS R. LAMONT TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS; AND MR. CHARLES A. BLANCHARD TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2009

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m. in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Webb, Hagan, Begich, and McCain.

Other Senators present: Senators Durbin and Lugar.

Also present: Representative Sam Farr.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Joseph M. Bryan, professional staff member; Jonathan D. Clark, counsel; Madelyn R. Creedon, counsel; Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; and Gerald J. Leeling, counsel.

Minority staff members present: Joseph W. Bowab, Republican staff director; Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Daniel A. Lerner, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, minority counsel; Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member; and Richard F. Walsh, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: Kevin A. Cronin, Mary C. Holloway, and Jessica L. Kingston.

Committee members' assistants present: Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Gerald Thomas, assistant to Senator Burris; and Lenwood Landrum and Sandra Luff, assistants to Senator Sessions.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. Today the committee considers the nominations of Andrew Weber to be Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs; Paul Stockton to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs; Thomas Lamont to be assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs; and Charles Blanchard to be General Counsel of the Air Force.

We welcome our nominees and their families to today's hearing. Senior Defense Department officials put in long hours every day. We appreciate the sacrifices that our nominees, but frankly even more importantly that their families, are willing to make to serve their country.

Each of our nominees has a distinguished background. Mr. Weber spent 24 years in public service, serving most recently as Adviser for Threat Reduction Policy in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, a position in which he has helped to run the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. Dr. Stockton has been a senior member of the faculty at the Naval Postgraduate School and Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation for almost 20 years. Mr. Lamont served in the Illinois National Guard for over 25 years while working as a partner in two Illinois law firms and holding a succession of positions in State government. Mr. Blanchard served as General Counsel of the Army from 1999 to 2001 before joining the Phoenix office of a major law firm.

If confirmed, our nominees will play a critical role in helping the Department of Defense address any number of critical challenges and difficult issues. These challenges range from ensuring that our nuclear stockpile remains safe, secure, and reliable to determining the appropriate role of our armed forces in securing the border with Mexico at a time of unprecedented drug violence and a potential pandemic outbreak of swine flu, and from addressing the burdens and stress imposed on our soldiers and their families by repeated deployment in two wars, to the ascertaining the appropriate legal status of individuals detained at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

So we look forward to the testimony of our nominees on the important issues, and I turn it over now to Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Senator Levin.

I want to thank our colleagues from the Senate for being here this morning, and from the House, to introduce our nominees. So I'll be brief except to say welcome to the nominees. I thank them and their families for their willingness to serve in the new administration.

At the outset, I join you, counsel, in expressing our sorrow over the deaths of five soldiers and wounding of three others at Camp

Liberty at the hands of another soldier and extend our condolences and sympathy to the families of all who are involved.

Mr. Chairman, in August 1999 I had the pleasure of introducing Mr. Blanchard to the committee at the hearing on his nomination to be General Counsel of the Army. I applaud his willingness to once again depart his law practice in Phoenix and return as the nominee to be the General Counsel of the United States Air Force.

Mr. Blanchard is extraordinarily well qualified to assume these duties. His academic credentials include outstanding achievement at Lewis and Clark College and at Harvard Law School, where he graduated first in his class. He completed a master's degree at the John F. Kennedy School of Government and subsequently clerked for one of Arizona's greatest jurists, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

In addition to his prior service as General Counsel of the Army, Mr. Blanchard's contributions in the public sector are particularly noteworthy. He was chief counsel to General Barry McCaffrey in his role as drug czar in the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy from 1997 to 1999. In 2003 Mr. Blanchard acted as interim Homeland Security Director in the office of Governor Janet Napolitano, crafted a homeland security plan and helped establish an Arizona Office of Homeland Security. From 1991 to 1995 Mr. Blanchard served as an Arizona State senator, where he chaired the judiciary committee.

It's gratifying that Mr. Blanchard has again stepped forward to serve his country and I know he will be heavily relied on by Secretary of the Air Force Donnelly and General Schwartz.

Mr. Andrew Weber, the nominee for the position of Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Warfare, as I noted, will be introduced by our esteemed colleague Senator Lugar. However, I am aware he has worked in the Department of Defense since 1996 as the Adviser for Threat Reduction Policy. He has over 24 years of government service, most of which has been dedicated to reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Thomas Lamont, the nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, is an accomplished attorney. He'll be introduced by Senator Durbin. He recently completed a 25-year career of service as a judge advocate with the Illinois Army National Guard.

The Army is severely stressed today and we know that its leaders at every level are working hard to craft programs and policies that will enable soldiers and their families to meet the great demands being placed on them. Mr. Lamont, I hope you will be—I know you will be a positive influence in assisting Army leaders in addressing these critically important problems.

Yesterday I met with wounded warriors at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. I learned from them that the staff is stressed, case managers have very high case loads, and that high turnover of these managers is a negative factor in achieving continuity and smooth transition for these young heroes. This indicates to me that more work needs to be done to improve execution of the warrior transition unit concept.

Mr. Stockton, you have an impressive record of academic scholarship in homeland defense and homeland security policy, including

leadership positions at the Naval Postgraduate School and most recently at Stanford University. I have to say that your qualifications for the equally important Americas' security affairs portion of the portfolio you've been nominated for appears to be lacking. Your responses to the committee's advance policy questions relating to Haiti, Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Panama, U.S. Southern Command, and others were completely unresponsive and raise serious questions which must be clarified before any action should be taken on your nomination. I understand the committee staff intends to follow up with you in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I welcome our nominees and our colleagues.

[The prepared statement of Senator McCain follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Senator McCain.

First we'll call on an old friend, Senator Lugar, to make his introduction. Then we'll call on Senator Durbin to make your introduction. Sam Farr, you would then become next. Senator McCain has already introduced Mr. Blanchard. Then once each of you make your introductions, you can either stay or leave as you need to. We know you all have heavy schedules.

Senator Lugar, it's always great to see you here. I made reference to Nunn-Lugar in my introduction and you're well known for many wonderful advances, but that surely is one of them; and we now call on you.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain.

Chairman LEVIN. Is your mike on?

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain. It's a real privilege to be here to introduce my friend Andy Weber.

President Obama has nominated Andy to be Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs. I've worked closely with Andy for more than a decade. I believe the President could not have made a better choice. Andy Weber has played an instrumental role in the success of the Nunn-Lugar program. He's been at the forefront of our government's efforts to meet the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. I've seen Andy's decisionmaking, energy, personal diplomacy firsthand during many Nunn-Lugar inspection visits to the former Soviet Union.

He has served his country with honor and courage, most recently as a long-time adviser on the Nunn-Lugar program in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and I am confident he will continue to do so in his new position.

Mr. Chairman, because of Andy's work we live in a safer world. He has led the program's efforts to address the threat posed by biological weapons. Under his leadership, the program has secured toxic pathogens that could have fallen into terrorist hands, and because of his efforts pathogen strain samples that might some day lead to cures and treatments are being studied in United States

laboratories and public health professionals are developing important assessment tools to understand and to prevent the outbreak of deadly diseases that directly threaten the wellbeing and stability of the world.

In addition to securing biological weapons, Andy has been the point man for our nonproliferation operations in a number of countries. He led the American team that traveled to Moldova to remove 21 MIG–29 fighter aircraft and personally oversaw the transportation of the planes back to the United States. The jets were capable of launching nuclear weapons and would have been extremely dangerous had they been transferred to rogue states.

Andy also led the United States efforts in a once-classified operation known as Project Sapphire. In the winter of 1994, the Kazakh government discovered nearly 600 kilograms of highly enriched uranium, enough to make several nuclear weapons. The material was highly vulnerable. We know that a number of governments and organizations had a strong interest in acquiring it. Andy's efforts ensured that these materials were transported to the United States for safekeeping.

He also played a crucial role in raising the largest anthrax production facility in the world. The plant, known as Stepnogorsk, was built by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Each piece of equipment involved in the production and weaponization of biological weapons was destroyed and the structure was bulldozed to the ground.

Andy's operational successes are matched by his diplomatic skills. With an innovative negotiating style all his own, he has built relationships that led to unprecedented nonproliferation breakthroughs. With little fanfare, he has served in remote locations negotiating, monitoring, implementing the elimination of the most deadly substances ever created.

The position for which Andy has been nominated will be different than the role he played in the Nunn-Lugar program. But I am confident that in a few years we will be reflecting on another long list of his accomplishments. I am proud to offer my strongest endorsement of Andy Weber's nomination. I urge the committee to act favorably. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to confirm him promptly. And I thank very much the committee for inviting me to appear today.

[The prepared statement of Senator Lugar follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Senator Lugar. We're delighted to hear from you. We know that you have another commitment, as do our other introducers.

Now a great favorite of all of ours, Senator Dick Durbin.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD DURBIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Senator DURBIN. Thanks a lot, Senator Levin, chairman of the committee, and Senator McCain. Thank you very much for your hospitality today.

It's my honor to introduce Tom Lamont to support his confirmation as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. President Obama made the right choice when he nomi-

nated Tom for this position. Tom is a dedicated public servant who's spent a lifetime dedicating himself to public life. He is also a good friend and neighbor in Springfield. I know him and his family very well.

Unfortunately, his wife Bridget and family could not join him today as Bridget's father passed away Saturday evening. He was 90 years old. But that's why Tom is here by himself, but they are with him in spirit and totally supportive of this nomination. I know that Bridget's proud of Tom's service, 25 years of experience as a judge advocate general with the Illinois Army National Guard. He was the State staff judge advocate general before retiring at the rank of colonel in 2007.

Tom's public service goes beyond the Guard. In 1990 he was elected to the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois. He also served in the highest capacities with the Office of State's Attorney as appellate prosecutor, civil litigation in the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education. He has a private law practice in Springfield, most recently has served as Special Counsel for the University of Illinois.

If confirmed, this broad array of service and experience will serve him well. The Army needs leaders like Tom right now. The Army has soldiers deployed around the world. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan create tremendous strain on the soldiers and their families, as we saw with this morning's tragic headline.

Of the 178,000 troops serving today in Iraq and Afghanistan, roughly 138,600 are Army soldiers. Of those, 88 to 90,000 are members of the Guard and Reserve. That includes, incidentally, 2700 members of the Illinois Army National Guard's 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Many of these soldiers have served extended deployments and often multiple deployments.

As the Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Tom will supervise the essential manpower and personnel issues facing the Army, no small task, but one that he is certainly up to. He will be responsible for championing the Army's Reserve components. With his years of experience in the Illinois Guard, he has a strong understanding of the needs of the Reserves as well. He will make sure the Army Reserve has the resources and capabilities it needs to be an operational force.

I strongly support his nomination. I urge the committee to favorably report this nomination for full consideration by the Senate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain.

[The prepared statement of Senator Durbin follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Senator Durbin.

Now we will call on Congressman Farr. We're delighted that you could join us today, Sam.

STATEMENT OF HON. SAM FARR, MEMBER OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. FARR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Mr. McCain.

I'm very pleased to introduce to you Paul Stockton, who I have known for more than a decade as a friend and a mentor. Paul and I became acquainted when he became the Director for the Center

of Civil-Military Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. From my background as a former Peace Corps volunteer in Colombia, I was interested in how the United States could assist foreign nations in resolving civil-military affairs and Paul was the leading expert in this area.

Paul was interested in and knowledgeable about Latin American affairs and developed the DOD programs in Colombia that helped build the effective security partnerships with important democracies, including assisting the Colombian armed forces with programs to reinforce the rule of law and respect for human rights. That program involved officers from throughout Central America, El Salvador, and Latin America.

His expertise in international affairs led him to establish the School of International Graduate Studies, where he served as the acting dean until he was appointed provost of the Naval Postgraduate school in 2001. The tragedy of September 11 drove Dr. Stockton to create the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Postgraduate School. Dr. Stockton developed the Nation's premier master's degree curriculum that educates our Nation's first responders in critical homeland security issues.

Again, recognizing the need to integrate the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security, Paul brought the DOD officers together with their civilian counterparts at the local, State, and Federal level. As the first Director of the Nation's only Department of Homeland Security-supported master's degree program, at the Center for Homeland Defense and Security, Dr. Stockton developed education modules to support the homeland security efforts of governors and mayors all across the country.

Dr. Paul Stockton is among the Nation's top experts in homeland security issues and will lead the Office of Defense and Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs with honor and distinction.

In closing, Senators, I'd like to mention that Paul's beautiful wife Missy and his two adorable sons William and Henry cannot be here today, but his in-laws are present and I would like to recognize Bill and Carol Engler, who are sitting right behind me.

Thank you for allowing me this time to pay tribute to my good friend and mentor Dr. Paul Stockton.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Farr follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Congressman. Say hi to my brother, would you? I haven't seen him for a few days.

We'll now turn to our nominees. We're going to ask you first all together standard questions. First, have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest?

Mr. WEBER. Yes.

Mr. STOCKTON. Yes.

Mr. LAMONT. Yes.

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Have you assumed any duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

Mr. WEBER. No.

Mr. STOCKTON. No.

Mr. LAMONT. No.

Mr. BLANCHARD. No.

Chairman LEVIN. Will you ensure that your staff complies with deadlines established for requested communications, including questions for the record, in hearings?

Mr. WEBER. Yes.

Mr. STOCKTON. Yes.

Mr. LAMONT. Yes.

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Will you cooperate in providing witnesses and briefers in response to congressional requests?

Mr. WEBER. Yes.

Mr. STOCKTON. Yes.

Mr. LAMONT. Yes.

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Will those witnesses be provided—be protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

Mr. WEBER. Yes.

Mr. STOCKTON. Yes.

Mr. LAMONT. Yes.

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify upon request before this committee?

Mr. WEBER. Yes.

Mr. STOCKTON. Yes.

Mr. LAMONT. Yes.

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

Mr. WEBER. Yes.

Mr. STOCKTON. Yes.

Mr. LAMONT. Yes.

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Now, as I call upon each of you, you could feel free to introduce members of your families if they're with you or friends who are with you. We'll start with Mr. Weber. We'll go from Mr. Weber, the order given to me, Mr. Stockton, Mr. Lamont, and then Mr. Blanchard. So Mr. Weber, do you have an opening statement?

STATEMENT OF ANDREW C. WEBER, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR NUCLEAR AND CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAMS

Mr. WEBER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. Chairman Levin, Senator McCain: It is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as the nominee for Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs. I am grateful to President Obama and Secretary Gates for their confidence in nominating me to this important position.

I would like to thank Senator Lugar for the generous introduction and note that he has been an inspiration to me and countless other people around the world, and that his vision and leadership

of the Nunn-Lugar programs have all made us—have made us all safer.

I especially want to thank my loving family. Let me introduce my wife Julie, my daughter Eleanor Jane, my mother Pat. I would also like to thank my father, James Weber, an Army Air Corps veteran, resting in peace across the Potomac River in Arlington National Cemetery. Finally, I would like to thank my friends and colleagues who are here today to support me.

By nominating a career public servant to this important position, President Obama has demonstrated his faith in the professionals, civilian and military, whose greatest calling is to serve the American people. I have had the privilege of serving under every President since Ronald Reagan these last 24 years. I am truly humbled by the opportunity President Obama has given me, and if confirmed I pledge to work closely with you and this committee to strengthen the Nation's security against weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, I thank you for your consideration and welcome any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Weber follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Weber.

Next, Mr. Stockton.

STATEMENT OF PAUL N. STOCKTON, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE AND AMERICAS' SECURITY AFFAIRS

Mr. STOCKTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator McCain, for the opportunity to appear before you this morning. I'm honored that the President has nominated me to be the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs. This day would not have been possible without the love and support of my wife Missy, who had to stay back in California with my two wonderful boys, William and Henry, and with my parents, to whom I owe so much.

I want to acknowledge two special debts of gratitude. The first is to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who gave me my real education in government. Second, I want to acknowledge Lacy Suiter, who helped me understand the importance of building effective partnerships between the Department of Defense and local, State, and Federal civil authorities.

Should I be confirmed by the Senate, I would welcome the opportunity to strengthen those partnerships in support of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, the Deputy Secretary, and the Secretary of Defense. I would also do everything possible to strengthen the homeland defense of the United States and to build security in the western hemisphere with our regional partners.

Finally, if confirmed by the Senate I would commit myself to respecting the vital role played by this committee and the Senate as a whole, and would welcome any questions you might have for me this morning.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stockton follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Stockton.

Mr. Lamont.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS R. LAMONT, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS

Mr. LAMONT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Levin, Senator McCain: I am deeply honored and privileged to appear before this committee as the President's nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. I'd like to thank the President and the Secretary of Defense for the trust and confidence shown me by nominating me to serve in this position. I'd like to also thank Senator Durbin for introducing me here today and for his support and guidance through this process.

If I am confirmed, as a former National Guardsman I look forward to the opportunity to serve my country again at a time when our National security environment is as challenging as it has been at any other time in our Nation's history. If confirmed, it would be my distinct honor to help them accomplish the complex and challenging missions our Nation asks the Army to perform.

I'd like also to thank my family for their support and encouragement to undertake this new challenge. Unfortunately, my wife of 37 years cannot be here today. Her father passed away this past weekend and the funeral is today. Our son Michael is the oldest grandchild and he is serving as a pallbearer. His duty is with his mother. While I would have liked to have joined the family today, we decided family trials such as this can and do arise at any time for our soldiers and they persevere and soldier on. They should not expect any less from me.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to any questions you and other members of this committee may have. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement Mr. Lamont follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Lamont. If you would extend our condolences to your family. Their separation from you on a day like this I'm afraid is standard for families.

Mr. LAMONT. Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. They come through a lot of trials supporting their member who's in public service, and here we have a very dramatic example on the very day that you have your confirmation hearing. But thank them for their understanding. Tell them that we miss them. We understand why they're not here and we very much appreciate their support.

Mr. LAMONT. Thank you for your remarks.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Mr. Blanchard.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES A. BLANCHARD, NOMINEE TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes, Mr. Chairman and Senator McCain. It's a great honor to be before this committee as a nominee for General Counsel of the Air Force. I especially want to thank Senator John McCain for his kind introduction. This is twice he's done this for me and I deeply appreciate it.

I would also like to thank President Obama and Secretaries Gates and Donnelly for the trust they have placed in me. Finally, I want to thank the staff and the members of this committee for the great courtesy that they've shown during this process. I realize

this is a very busy time and I appreciate the hard work it took to do this hearing so quickly.

My wife Allison wanted to be here today, but obligations had required her to remain in Arizona. I'm very proud of my wife. In addition to being the best possible mother to our very active 4-year-old boy, she also has a long history of public service, including many years in the Pentagon.

I am deeply humbled and honored by this nomination. The most fulfilling job I've had in my career to date was as General Counsel of the Army and I'm excited by the prospect, if confirmed, of serving as General Counsel of the Air Force.

The challenges facing the Department of the Air Force are many and I look forward to helping Secretary Donnelly and the rest of the Air Force team as they grapple with these challenges. But most of all, I'm especially happy to be nominated for a position that will allow me to improve the lives of the dedicated Air Force personnel who work to protect America and, when called upon, put themselves in harm's way for our country.

I am committed to a close and productive working relationship and partnership with the Air Force Judge Advocate General and the other military lawyers in the department. I am proud that I had a great relationship with the Army JAG leadership during my tenure as General Counsel of the Army and General Walt Huffman was not merely a great colleague, he became a close friend. I am firmly convinced that the leadership of the Air Force is best served when the civilian and military lawyers work together as a team to offer the best possible legal advice to our mutual clients.

Should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee in addressing any legal issues that may arise during my tenure, and I appreciate the opportunity the appear today and would be happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Blanchard follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much.

Let's try an 8-minute round for our first round.

First, Mr. Lamont, family support programs are more important than ever in light of continued deployments and the related stress, both on members of the armed services, as probably was the cause of yesterday's tragedy, but also on their families. Can you give us your view of the importance of family support programs? Where would you put greater focus?

Mr. LAMONT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Obviously, the family support program is extremely important. When a soldier deploys, his family goes to war in many respects themselves. They are confronted with many of the same concerns, housing and education, financial issues, of our society, but yet it's exacerbated with the loss of a loved one.

If I am confirmed, I think it behooves us to do everything in our power to ensure the strength of our family support program, because if we are to sustain the volunteer Army we need to sustain that family support group.

Chairman LEVIN. We've seen a significant increase in suicides. Can you give us your thoughts on prevention?

Mr. LAMONT. I'm aware that we have had it seems to be a significant increase in suicides. This is a terrible tragedy. Again, it some-

what mirrors society, and again exacerbated by the long deployments and the lack of a family support group. We think much more needs to be done in recognizing behavioral and risk factors, and the Army I'm aware has initiated a great deal of new training regimens just in order to try to recognize those risk factors among our troubled soldiers. Again, it's something that we must have constant vigilance on.

Chairman LEVIN. Mr. Weber, you've spent many years working in the Cooperative Threat Reduction, the CTR program, particularly in the implementation of the biological threat reduction programs. The National Academy of Science recently released a report which set forth recommendations on future opportunities for the CTR program, particularly within the area of biological threat reduction initiatives. Can you give us your view of the report and the recommendations and which of those recommendations would you follow or try to follow for expansion of the CTR program?

Mr. WEBER. Mr. Chairman, my friends Ron Lehman and Dave Franz did an excellent job co-chairing that National Academy report. As required by law, the Secretary will soon be reporting to you with his assessment of that report. But I have studied it closely. It's an excellent report and I personally endorse all of the recommendations.

The most important one is that we take the lessons learned from our threat reduction programs in the former Soviet Union and expand them geographically to other areas of the world. The Secretary is working on a determination to allow us to use the new authorities given by this committee in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and the initial focus of that will be on biological threat reduction programs. Later perhaps we could expand these programs into other parts of the world, like Southeast Asia and Africa.

Another recommendation which I fully endorse is the need for less bureaucracy and more agility and flexibility as we implement these programs. If confirmed for this position, I will oversee the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and will work with that agency on improving the flexibility. Secretary Gates has said that a 75 percent solution in months is better than a 100 percent solution in years, and I think that will be sort of our guiding mandate as we move forward with these programs.

Finally, the report criticized the government for not having more high-level attention on these programs. The fact that I am being considered for this senior leadership position in the Department of Defense will position me personally to give these programs the attention that you and Senator Lugar have given them and Senator McCain by traveling to the countries, meeting with our partners, and visiting some of these weapons of mass destruction sites where the day to day work goes on.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Dr. Stockton, the Commission on National Guard and Reserves made a number of findings and recommendations in their final report on increasing the capabilities and responsibilities of the National Guard and Reserves in the homeland. The commission concluded that: "The Department of Defense must improve its capabilities and readiness to play a primary role in the response to major

catastrophes that incapacitate civilian government over a wide geographic area." This is a responsibility, in their words, that is "equal in priority to its combat responsibilities."

Now, in response to a request from this committee, Admiral Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, wrote in April of 2008 that: "I have some concerns with the commission's ideas on enhancing the Defense Department's role in the homeland. While Reserve component civil support requirements are important, they should not be of equal importance to the Department of Defense's combat responsibilities."

Can you give us your view on that issue? Do you agree with Admiral Mullen or do you agree with the finding of the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves.

Mr. STOCKTON. Thank you for the question, Mr. Chairman. I agree with Admiral Mullen. I believe that the current national defense strategy specifies that the core mission of the Department of Defense is the defense of U.S. homeland from attack and the securing of U.S. interests abroad. The civil support mission and support of civil authorities is absolutely vital and if confirmed I would work to strengthen U.S. capacity for that. But the core missions are as stated in the national defense strategy.

Senator MCCAIN. Dr. Stockton, State Governors have authority to activate their National Guard in State status to respond to major disasters and emergencies. However, much of the equipment and many of the specialties needed to respond to these disasters and emergencies are in the Reserves of the armed forces and the President is precluded from mobilizing these Federal forces for that purpose.

Governors have opposed Department of Defense efforts to authorize the President to mobilize the Reserves to respond to insurrections and manmade disasters, accidents, or catastrophes because the Reserves would not be under State command and control.

My question is whether you believe that Congress should authorize the President to order the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Marine Corps Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve to active duty to respond to an insurrection or a serious natural or manmade disaster, accident, or catastrophe even though they would not be under the governors' command and control?

Mr. STOCKTON. Thank you, Senator. My view is that the current statutory authorities of the President are adequate and that the Insurrection Act as in law today spells out the very limited circumstances under which these kinds of uses of Federal forces, National Guard forces under Federal control, might be used. And I do not see at this time the need for further legislation on that subject.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you all.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Weber, do you believe that any ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty should be preceded by plans for a new redesign and more reliable warhead. Secretary Gates recently stated that without future testing it will become impossible to keep extending the life of our nuclear arsenal.

Mr. WEBER. Senator McCain, I believe that the President's desire to have ratification of the CTBT needs to be backed up by in-

creased attention of the Nuclear Weapons Council, of the Department of Defense, and the Department of Energy on ensuring that we have a safe, secure, reliable, and credible deterrent. We have an aging stockpile and over time it becomes more difficult to certify the reliability of those weapons without testing. I believe one of the safeguards that we need to have is a supreme national interest clause that would allow testing if it were in the supreme national interest, and we also need to maintain our nuclear weapons testing readiness if one of those situations arose.

But if I am confirmed, making sure that the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense dedicate the resources as outlined by the recent Perry-Schlesinger Commission on the U.S. Strategic Posture, that will help us continue into the future to be able to certify the safety, security, and reliability, and most importantly credibility, of our nuclear deterrent.

Thank you.

Senator MCCAIN. Mr. Stockton, recently the Homeland Security Committee had a hearing on the increasing border violence, violence on the border with Mexico. Do you think that the United States is doing enough to assist the Calderon government in combating these cartels?

Mr. STOCKTON. Thank you, Senator McCain, for the question. I believe that under the Marita Initiative and other opportunities for the United States to be in support of President Calderon's government, that we have some ongoing programs of support that are very, very valuable, and should I be confirmed in this position I would welcome the chance to hear your insights and those of your staff as to how those programs could be further strengthened.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, let me suggest that you take a trip down to the U.S.-Mexican border and get an assessment. The level of violence is dramatically increasing the atrocities that are being committed between the cartels and between the government and the cartels in an unprecedented level.

I don't know if you're aware, but the Governors of California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas have requested the National Guard to be deployed on the border because of their concerns of the spillover of violence into our country. Do you think that the deployment of National Guard along the southern border would be helpful?

Mr. STOCKTON. Sir, any such deployment would be in support of the local, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies that have primary responsibility for dealing with violence spilling over from the activities of the drug cartels. Should I be confirmed by the Senate for this position, I again would look forward to opportunities for the Department of Defense to play that support role consistent with law, as appropriate and as approved by the President of the United States.

Senator MCCAIN. General Hayden, former Director of Central Intelligence, recently said: "Escalating violence along the U.S.-Mexico border will pose the second greatest threat to U.S. security this year, second only to al Qaeda." If General Hayden is correct—and from my own experience I believe he is—I would suggest that you pay attention to that issue and make a recommendation to the President accordingly, because right now the governors, who have

to deal with this issue every single day along the border, are strongly in favor of deploying our Guard troops, at least until we have sufficient security along the border.

Mr. Lamont, I think it's important to note that the retention and recruiting in the Army has increased rather dramatically. And we know that part of that is the economy, part of it is willingness to serve and a desire to serve, part of it is the fact that we've achieved success in Iraq, and it has had a very significant impact on morale.

I was out at Walter Reed yesterday and I had the opportunity of having lunch with some of our wounded warriors. They overall are satisfied with a lot of the treatment they're receiving and the improvements that have been made since the scandal out there. But they also think that there are some improvements, particularly in the transition area, from discharge from the hospital care to civilian life and that transitional period.

I would suggest that maybe a trip out to Walter Reed and Bethesda, where there are some Army personnel as well, and to Brook Army Hospital would be one of your top priorities so that you can get firsthand an understanding of the challenges that these brave warriors are facing. You will be astounded by the morale and the rehabilitation that's taking place, but there are still areas that need to be addressed if we're going to provide them with the care and attention that they have obviously earned.

So I hope you'll take the time to go to Walter Reed, Bethesda, Brook, and other, other facilities that are providing care for our wounded warriors.

Mr. LAMONT. Absolutely.

Senator MCCAIN. Mr. Blanchard, there's been a couple of scandals in the Air Force. One of them had to do with Boeing. Another one had to do with the former chief of staff of the Air Force. I urge you to make sure that the performance of all, both civilian and uniformed, in the United States Air Force comports with the highest standards of public service that we expect of them. I would imagine that your previous experience will qualify you to hit the ground running on this issue.

Mr. Stockton, again, our hemisphere is important. It's an important part of your portfolio. We have individuals such as President Chavez in Venezuela, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Ecuador, where we have significant challenges in our own hemisphere. I hope you'll clarify your answers to the committee and make sure that they are full and comprehensive.

I congratulate you all and your families, and we look forward to an early confirmation so that you can get to work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the witnesses and their families for their willingness to serve the country.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator Webb is not here. Senator Begich.

Senator BEGICH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

To all of you, congratulations on being here at this point and I look forward to being one of those that vote for confirmation for you all. I think you're a great group of folks and President Obama has once again selected some good individuals, especially in the armed services area. So again, congratulations to the families that are here. I wish you all the best because I know their hours now will

be longer than you had anticipated and what you were told. So be patient with them, but thank you for your support for them. It's very important when they have to do their duty late in the evenings. It's the family that makes the difference. So thank you all for doing that.

I just have questions for two of you, and that could be good and bad: good for the two that don't have to answer questions, bad that you have to wait for the other two to finish. But one is for Mr. Stockton and a couple for Mr. Lamont.

But first, Mr. Stockton, in regards to Arctic policy, how do you see your role or how do you see long-term impacts with regards to Arctic policy on homeland security and defense in general as it continues to have more activity and will obviously in the future have a lot of activity, based on the climate change issues? Do you have any general comments you'd like to make on that or specifics that you could?

Mr. STOCKTON. Thank you for the question, Senator. There are a lot of priorities competing for funding and programmatic support across the Federal Government now. I think in this realm of homeland defense and homeland security there are also terrific opportunities for more effective collaboration between the Department of Defense and the civilian agencies, Federal, State, and local, that the Department of Defense can support.

So in addition to continuing to strengthen capacity to deal with the challenges that our Nation faces, I will look for efficiencies and ways to make sure that these agencies are a more effective mutual support as we go forward.

Senator BEGICH. Do you see, as you look at the different agencies and working with them, as Congress and the White House are developing how we're going to deal with the Arctic issues, the issues up in the Arctic, how—let me put it another way. Do you think we have enough resources to deal with the future of the Arctic? Is that an area that, as again Department of Defense and Homeland Security work together on, which is probably very critical, do you think we have enough resources, or do you think that's an area that we need more engagement?

Mr. STOCKTON. I think we need more engagement, sir. As you know, the position for which I have been nominated is responsible for western hemisphere affairs. There are new challenges emerging due to climate change. In the polar region, new passages are opening up for ship traffic. New opportunities for exploitation of minerals, oil for example, in the seabed; and unresolved issues now that have been raised by this.

So should I be confirmed by the Senate, I would pay special attention to these emerging western hemisphere security issues that would fall under my policy purview.

Senator BEGICH. Very good. Thank you very much for that. As a Senator from Alaska, that's obviously an area of concern. We are an Arctic Nation because of the State of Alaska, the only reason that we are an Arctic Nation. I just truly believe we are totally underresourced up there for what is going to be necessary, not only today but into the future. So I appreciate your comments in that regard.

Mr. STOCKTON. Thank you, sir.

Senator BEGICH. Thank you very much.

Mr. Lamont, I have a couple questions and I do want to follow up on the chairman's questions in regards to family support, and something that I know—in Alaska we have lots of folks that have been deployed as well as rotated back. As a former mayor of Anchorage, we've done a lot of work with family support and the necessity of it. I want to echo that I think families and spouses are under great stress at this time based on the deployments and the amount of deployments.

I want to echo the question and have you expand if you could. Do you think we have enough resources focused on family support, not only here in country, but also on service, outside of the country, in the sense of folks that have been deployed in making sure that the families are well taken care of? And again, not just at kind of the large picture, but the battalion and company level. Can you give me some comment on that?

Mr. LAMONT. Well, I share your concern with that issue. It's absolutely vital that we have an extremely strong family support group. As I mentioned to Chairman Levin, soldiers don't deploy by themselves. All families share in the sacrifices that their loved ones are going through.

I am not totally familiar with all the resources available at this present time to suggest that we need more or less. Clearly, I think we're always open to doing whatever we can to support our families.

I will mention a new program entitled the Army Family Covenant, in which there is great stress and great emphasis on how we can serve the families, no matter where they're situated. And yes, we do have our share of thorns.

Senator BEGICH. Thank you very much. Actually, I was one of the first mayors when I served as mayor to sign the covenant with the Army, because it was an important message and mayors have capacity, especially because they're so local in the sense of connection to the bases, to do whatever they can to serve. We had our superintendent, myself, and others sign that. So I agree with you.

Mr. LAMONT. We need that cooperative effort.

Senator BEGICH. That's a great program.

The other issue in regards to families: Do you think within the leadership at your level and other levels that people have made the psychological adjustment that the families—or the Army—the military of today—let me broaden it—the military of today versus 30, 40 years ago—it used to be 75 percent, basically men enlisted, now—single men, and now it is 75 percent families instead of single individuals.

Do you think that the folks have adjusted and psychologically changed in the sense of how they deal with the operations of the military, and obviously the Army specifically? Because it has changed dramatically in the last 40-plus years, from 75 percent single male to 75 percent family, give or take a percent there. Do you think that's occurred or do you think there's a lot more work or some work to be done?

Mr. LAMONT. Well, it certainly is a changing environment, although I'm led to believe that the Army has absorbed and reprogrammed to the extent they believe, to move to that psychology

with a much larger number of female lawyers now, with families. In fact, I'm told we have over 700,000 children of our Army families right now. I do think there's a lot to be done in that regard. Have we done enough?

Senator BEGICH. Hard to say.

Mr. LAMONT. I don't know that.

Senator BEGICH. That would be an area I'd be very—because I know when you shift like this you have to get the leadership to also recognize the change that's occurred. It's a tough change because some have been in the system so long, they've been there a long time, but some of the new challenges of families are pretty dramatic. But I appreciate that.

One other one. I think I'm getting close on time. But let me ask you about some of the recruitment and what's been happening in somewhat of a positive way, because the economy has been flat and in some cases, in some communities, very dramatically hit in the sense of unemployment and so forth.

Some of the recent reports that I have seen, at least in the Army, they have curtailed the waiver policies, reduced recruitment bonuses, and been a lot more selective in admittance, because they have a lot more choices now, which is a good thing in a lot of ways. But on the flip side, in this economy that's flat also the National Guard has had to cut personnel and recruitment budgets have also been reduced. so it's going to have an impact in the economy.

I guess the question is, do you think we have the right level of strength cap, the right levels here, and this is the right move to start reducing in some areas at this time, where we're in somewhat of a transition?

Mr. LAMONT. I think the end strength issues are very important. I share with you the concern of how we reach that end strength. Our recruiting and retention successes have been noted. I also note, frankly in today's paper, that there is a potential budget recommendation of a reduction in recruitment budget.

Senator BEGICH. Yes.

Mr. LAMONT. I would suggest that was not done without fully and deliberate consultation with our senior defense leaders, and I look forward to determining—realizing what those discussions were.

Senator BEGICH. Very good. Well, I appreciate it. My time is up and I do thank you for your answers to the questions.

Again, to all four of you, thank you for your willingness to serve your country in this manner. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Begich.

Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, I apologize for having stepped out. I'm on the Foreign Relations Committee as well and we have Ambassador Holbrooke two floors away. So it's a typical mil drill up here in the Senate.

Chairman LEVIN. We cannot hear him.

Senator WEBB. Excuse me?

Chairman LEVIN. Usually we can hear him two floors away.

[Laughter.]

Senator WEBB. You'll hear about him, I'm sure, in the next hour or 2.

Mr. Lamont, I wanted to really take some time today and talk to you about my concerns with respect to the approach that's been taken on manpower issues in recent years. As a follow-up—a good place to start—a follow-on to what Senator Begich was saying, I grew up in the military. I grew up in a military family. I know that part of it very well, the stress on the spouse and on the kids.

At one point there was a 3½ year period where my father was either deployed or assigned to bases where there wasn't family housing. When you go through the numbers that you and Senator Begich were trading about the transition of the percentage of married personnel, it really occurred principally in the 1980s, when I was Assistant Secretary of Defense running—responsible for the Guard and Reserve programs.

We saw huge jumps in the percentage of people who were married. In fact, we did just a through-line study. I had asked the question, what percentage of sergeants E–5 in the Army were married in 1971 as compared to 1986, and I think it was 14 percent up to 73 percent. We did a lot of funding during those periods, put a lot of quality of life programs on line.

As someone who had grown up in a different era, it was just remarkable to see the way that DOD stepped forward. And it has continued. I don't think that really is the main impediment today. There are two and I want to talk to you about both of them. One is the deployment obligations right now; and the second, it's a little bit of a different question, but I feel—I have great concern about this and I've been raising it ever since I've been here in the Senate, and that is—and I want to lay this down because I hope you will do something about it in your own position. When people from the Pentagon come over here on this committee and start talking about our active duty people, they tend to forget that a great percentage of them are citizen-soldiers. We tend to talk about, oh, you enlist the soldier, you reenlist the family, retain the family.

But it took me a year to get this data when I was pushing the GI Bill, which I wrote and introduced my first day in office, that 75 percent of the soldiers in the Army leave the military on or before the end of their first enlistment and 70 percent of United States marines do the same thing. They leave on or before the end of their first enlistment.

That is healthy for the country. We are a citizen soldiery. But at the same time, I'm not seeing from the leadership in the military today that same tone, at least over here in these hearings, of stewardship, a lifetime of stewardship toward the people who are not career people. We do very well in terms of identifying the needs and the requirements of the career force. I would urge you to, whenever you're looking at any of these issues, to consider the long-term impacts of service in this type of environment.

That's why I introduced the GI Bill. There are so many people who were leaving the military with the Montgomery GI Bill that couldn't even get into basic community college programs, when they had carried the load that very few other people in this country have been carrying since September 11.

It's also, by the way, why I introduced the dwell time amendment twice in 2007, basically saying, however long you've been gone, you deserve that much time back at home before you have to deploy again.

I will say here that—I'm not saying anything that I haven't said directly to General Casey—I was stunned when General Casey called me 2 years ago and said that the Army was going to 15-month deployments with only 12 months at home. The historical ratio on deployments has been two to one. In the Navy, the Marine Corps, in the Army—in the Navy, they would do—when I was Secretary of the Navy, their deployment cycle was 6 months at sea, 12 months back at home. The deployment cycle was a year away in the Marine Corps, 2 years at home.

We've gone down to .75 on the rotational cycle. I expressed my concerns very seriously more than 2 years ago about the emotional impact long-term on good people that could potentially come out of that. I'm not going to simply put the suicide issue on that.

But having spent 4 years as a counsel on the House Veterans Committee right after the Vietnam War and working on these issues of post-traumatic stress and these sorts of things, it's very clear that a lot of the long-term emotional difficulties come from your best people, people who have given the most, and then need the right sort of stewardship, whether they stay in or not.

So my strong request to you is that in the policy discussions that you have in your position that you will keep both of those on the table, because they tend to fall off the table when we're talking about effective deployment strategies or maintaining the size of the force and those sorts of things.

Mr. LAMONT. Well, certainly I'll take your comments to heart.

First let me applaud you for your efforts on the GI Bill. In my previous capacity, one of the first calls I got right after that took place was from our chancellor at the University of Illinois: How can we do this? How can we bring these people in? We want to encourage these people to take effect—to take their ability to come in and accept that bill and work with it. We want them to use that bill. So we appreciate that.

I am also very aware of the concerns with dwell time. We've seen it with our Reserve component. Secretary Gates has suggested a goal of 1 to 5 years. We're not there yet. I'm aware that the goal for our active component, we are not able to accomplish yet either. These are serious concerns, and they go to some of the other questions that have been raised here today with our family support. They all tie in together. I will certainly take your comments to heart.

Senator WEBB. I would say, one of the real surprises for me as we move forward on the GI Bill and the dwell time amendment was that the previous administration opposed both of them. They said that it was going to affect retention or that there were political overtones in terms of dwell time. I'm here to tell you, we have a stewardship toward these people and if we, the civilian leadership, don't articulate this stewardship, in a lot of cases it's not going to happen.

Another piece of that, by the way, when you're looking at issues like recruitment, there's two pieces on this GI Bill. One is the best

way to make sure that individuals have the proper transition out of a combat environment is to have an affirmation of their service. They go back in that community and say: You know what, I just got a 4-year scholarship for serving my country, and there's only one way you can get it.

The other piece of that is, in all the work that I've done over my lifetime, on the committee, I have 5 years in the Pentagon, the best recruiter is a former military person who has had a positive experience who's back in the community. Someone who has had a good experience and is back on the GI Bill is going to help you selfishly as well.

I wish you the best. For all of you, our door is open and I hope that if you have any questions with respect to issues that you're working on or if you want to ever take the temperature of our office, we are there.

Mr. LAMONT. Thank you.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Webb.

Mr. Lamont, I can assure you that Senator Webb's sentiments reflect the sentiments probably of every member of this committee.

Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I too want to congratulate all of you on your nominations to these very important positions. I want to welcome the family members here because you are definitely crucial to the fact that these individuals are going to be doing an outstanding job. I just want to thank you too for your commitment and in particular your support.

My first question is for Mr. Weber. Transnational terrorism I think is among the most important threats that the United States must be capable of combating and deterring. Key to this is preventing the terrorists from obtaining the nuclear fissile materials, to include highly enriched uranium. My question is how do you propose that the United States can achieve this objective in not allowing this fissile material to get into the wrong hands?

Mr. WEBER. Senator, I agree with you. I have had personal experience in this area. In Kazakhstan I helped lead an operation to remove highly enriched uranium for safekeeping at the Y–12 plant in Tennessee.

President Obama in his Prague speech has announced that locking up loose nuclear materials around the globe during his first administration will be a very high priority. He's asked Vice President Biden to help with that. I believe that the Department of Defense can play a role, working together with the Departments of State and Energy and other allies, in expediting this effort, because there is no greater threat to our National security than, God forbid, a group like al Qaeda getting its hands on an improvised nuclear weapon.

Senator HAGAN. Do you have any area that you would target first?

Mr. WEBER. The Department of Defense under the guidance of the National Security Council, together with the Department of Energy, is working on developing a campaign plan. There are a number of countries that have weapons-usable materials. Some are

more cooperative than others. A lot of work has been done in this area over the past 10 or 15 years.

We're left with some of the more difficult countries. It's going to take a lot of effort. But as I tell my colleagues, when Senators Nunn and Lugar created the Nunn-Lugar program they didn't tell anybody it was going to be easy. So there's a lot of work to do, but we have a great team in the U.S. Government, and with presidential interest and support I think we will accomplish that objective in the next 4 years.

Senator HAGAN. Last week we had the chairman and the vice chairman of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States testify before this committee. They suggested the importance of obtaining Russian cooperation on air and missile defense as a strategic message aimed to curtail the Iranian aspirations of developing nuclear weapons.

Once again a question for you: How do you think such an objective can be obtained?

Mr. WEBER. It's clear that we need Russian cooperation in this global effort to lock down loose nuclear material. We also need more Russian support of the international objective of preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability and mating that to their current ballistic missile capability.

I think President Obama has made this a personal priority. He's traveling this summer to Moscow to continue discussions with President Medvedev on this issue. But clearly we need more active Russian involvement in joining the international community to pressure the government of Iran to forego its nuclear weapons and related enrichment programs.

Senator HAGAN. Mr. Stockton, key to protecting the United States is to ensure that critical energy infrastructure in strategic parts of the world, such as Saudi Arabia, are protected from asymmetric and unconventional attack, most notably from Iranian ballistic missile surrogates and proxies, as well as al Qaeda hubs in Yemen. These factors can affect the world's oil supply and affect our military capabilities to conduct operations in theater.

What are your thoughts in countering this threat and what types of capabilities do you foresee that we need?

Mr. STOCKTON. Thank you for the question, Senator. My office, the one for which I've been nominated, has some very important support functions. As you know, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict has primary responsibility for global counterterrorism, and some of that would involve protection of these very important energy facilities.

But my organization, the one which I'm proposed to head up, also has very significant responsibilities. Let me talk a little bit about those responsibilities and then what I'd do to help strengthen them.

First of all, this position is responsible for global anti-terrorism. That is, the protection of U.S. bases and other facilities abroad so that—from terrorist attacks—so they can execute their missions. So I would ensure that I did everything possible to strengthen the ability of our forward-deployed forces to accomplish their responsibilities in protecting these critical energy resources.

Second, within the United States the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs is responsible for defense-critical infrastructure protection. To the degree that the Department of Defense is dependent on sources of energy in order to execute its missions, both at home and abroad, again I would treat this responsibility very, very seriously, especially, as you note, the risk that our adversaries will attack us asymmetrically in ways in which we are not well prepared today as we should be.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

Mr. Lamont, a question for you, and this follows up a little bit on what Senator Webb was talking about. As you know, the United States Army Reserve Command will transition to Fort Bragg by 2011. And I represent North Carolina and I've been to Fort Bragg a number of times recently, and they are doing an incredible job in a lot of the housing, in particular for the married families. I think that that's also attributed to the fact that when many of the people are deploying their spouses and families actually stay on base now, instead of returning home to their families in other States and other communities, which I think is very positive, in particular for the community of Fayetteville.

But one of the things that people are concerned about is the number of new people coming into that area and whether or not the infrastructure and the standards and requirements will be ready for this influx of new people.

Mr. LAMONT. Well, I certainly share with you those concerns. Clearly, adequate housing for those new people will be paramount, and I would like to believe that in the deliberations concerning the transition there that they are making efforts to resource them adequately and address those family needs. I think in my role it'll be very obvious that I will have to be involved in that situation.

Senator HAGAN. Another key component is actually education. I think we talked about the number of families with students involved, and I know the State government is doing a lot to help prepare, but I think that there will be such a large number of children going to the schools in the community also, that a lot of attention needs to be addressed to that issue.

Mr. LAMONT. The Army is aware of the large number of children in our Army families and we have to address that situation. Beyond housing, there is nothing more important than education in the minds of the support family groups at home. It's educating the children. So we must do whatever we can to provide them with, not just an adequate education, but a good education.

Senator HAGAN. I really encourage you to spend a lot of time and energy being sure that that does take place, because it is of crucial importance to those young children, but obviously to their parents, too.

Once again, congratulations to all of you and I look forward to working closely with you.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Hagan.

Let me, just a few additional questions for Mr. Blanchard and then, Senator Hagan, do you have any additional ones that you

want to ask now? You can do that now if you'd like, because then you will be able to leave if you need to.

Senator HAGAN. I had one, another one for Mr. Stockton. Last week I had the opportunity to meet with the ambassador with Mexico. He emphasized that drug trafficking violence in Mexico obviously has been affected by the availability of the assault rifles and extensive flow of cash emanating from the U.S. border in numerous places. In particular he was talking about El Paso, TX, while we were talking.

I was just wondering, what steps can we take in working with the Mexican Government and security officials to curb the flow of cash and these assault rifles across the border?

Mr. STOCKTON. Senator Hagan, I haven't been briefed in detail yet on the policy opportunities that exist. But in general, I'm aware that Secretary Napolitano has expressed strong interest in ensuring that the border is treated from a two-way perspective. That is, just as we are concerned about ensuring that we do whatever possible to prevent drugs and violence from coming north from Mexico, that the United States has a responsibility to do whatever is possible within the law to prevent the illicit flow of weapons and cash going down to Mexico.

Senator HAGAN. Well, I think it's something that obviously is of a concern.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Mr. Blanchard, we just received a devastating report on the Air Force acquisition system that was prepared by the Center for Naval Analysis at the request of the Secretary of the Air Force. The report says in part that: "Today the Air Force acquisition community is a mere shell of its former self. Since the mid-1990s, not only has cost growth for Air Force programs been rising at an ever-increasing rate, but it seems worse than the cost performance of its system services. Every day it seems there's a new story in the public media suggesting Air Force acquisition incompetence."

Some of the well-publicized Air Force problems include the presidential helicopter, the tanker lease program, and the improper sole source contracts awarded in the so-called Thunder Vision case. Now, I'd like to ask you about what role you expect to play in the acquisition system? More particularly, will you be limited to defending the Air Force in bid protests and other legal actions, or are you going to be able to play a more proactive role in making sure that the Department complies with law and regulation from the outset?

Mr. BLANCHARD. Mr. Chairman, Senator, Secretary Donnelly has made it very clear that acquisition reform and improving the acquisition workforce in the Air Force is one of his top priorities and that I need to play a major role; and that, if confirmed for this position, I would expect acquisition issues to be one of the top priorities. That includes not coming in at the end of making sure that my office and other lawyers, if confirmed, are involved early on in the process.

Chairman LEVIN. Which means proactively?

Mr. BLANCHARD. Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. This committee has always valued the important role that's been played by judge advocates general of the military departments in providing independent legal advice to the chiefs of staff. Now, there were a number of attempts to subordinate the legal functions and authorities of the judge advocates general to the general counsels of the Air Force and the other military departments, and we in response to that enacted legislation prohibiting any officer or employee of the Department of Defense from interfering with the ability of the judge advocates general of the military services to provide their independent advice to the respective service chiefs.

Will you comply fully with that legislation if you're confirmed?

Mr. BLANCHARD. Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. Can you describe your relationship which you expect to have with the judge advocate general of the Air Force?

Mr. BLANCHARD. In my view, the best relationship is a partnership. It's where you recognize the special expertise that comes from years of service in the Air Force. They know the Air Force better than I could possibly learn the Air Force, so I need to have that understanding. They know law of war issues and they also obviously know military justice issues, which is why they have the special role for military justice.

I expect to have a collegial, cooperative relationship, much as I had when I was general counsel of the Army. I understand that our aim is the have concurrence in our legal opinions, but if there comes a day when we have a different point of view I think our client, the Air Force, is best served when both legal views are expressed.

Chairman LEVIN. So you're going to respect and defend that independence?

Mr. BLANCHARD. Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. Mr. Blanchard, during the last few years there has been a number of issues regarding religious practices in the military that have gained some attention. They've required some revision of Air Force policies. Some of those issues involved some senior officers who used their position to proselytize other military personnel. They've also involved on the other side military chaplains who expressed concern that they're constrained in their ability to offer public prayer in accordance with their beliefs.

Can you give us some views on the authority of the Air Force relative to the rights of military personnel who have different religious beliefs or no religious beliefs, for that matter, not the be proselytized?

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I believe it's really important that we recognize that there are two parts of the First Amendment that deal with religion, the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause, and they both come into play. The Establishment Clause really requires that we be very careful that our leaders don't inject religion into areas where it's inappropriate to interject religion, such—and that's the experience the Air Force I understand had at the Air Force Academy and other areas, where there was a concern that subordinates felt that if they didn't have a particular religious view that would not be respected. So it's very important that we be very careful in those settings.

On the other hand, we also need to respect the free exercise of religion by our airmen, which means that we need to help facilitate their religious beliefs. So I think the current policies the Air Force has adopted in light of recent events are appropriate, but I also understand that you can't just sort of, problem solved, put it away, and go on to the next problem. This is an area by its very nature that has some tension and has to be watched very carefully by senior leaders.

Chairman LEVIN. Will you keep an eye on that issue, and particularly the policy clarification which resulted from some excesses where people were confronted with religious views and put in a position where they were forced to listen, in effect, to religious views which they felt reflected one particular segment of our religious community?

Mr. BLANCHARD. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Hagan, are you all set?

Senator HAGAN. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. I just have one additional question of Mr. Weber. How old is your daughter Eleanor Jane? Is that her name, Eleanor Jane?

Mr. WEBER. Yes, Senator, her name is Eleanor Jane.

Chairman LEVIN. How old is she? Because she's amazing.

Mr. WEBER. She's been very good. It's been a help to have my family behind me. She's 5 years old, Senator. She's at the Tuckahoe Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, I have three daughters, all of whom at one point were 5 years old. I've got five grandchildren, four of whom are granddaughters, three of whom have been 5 years old. And I can only tell you your young daughter is truly amazing. She has sat there looking absolutely enthralled and entranced with every question we asked, and she doesn't have the vaguest idea I'm talking to her, but some day you can just tell her what a big hit she was. Would you do that for all of us?

Mr. WEBER. I will. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Then, Mr. Stockton, you're going to get your answers in quickly for the record that Senator McCain asked. It's important that those prehearing questions be asked fulsomely.

We congratulate you all and look forward to a speedy confirmation, and we'll stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:31 a.m., the committee adjourned.]