

**HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE IN RE-
VIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010 AND THE
FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM**

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2009

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m. in room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Akaka, Ben Nelson, McCaskill, Udall, Hagan, Begich, McCain, Inhofe, Chambliss, Graham, Thune, Martinez, and Wicker.

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

Majority staff members present: Madelyn R. Creedon, counsel; Creighton Greene, professional staff member; Terence K. Laughlin, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, counsel; Peter K. Levine, general counsel; Roy F. Phillips, professional staff member; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Joseph W. Bowab, Republican staff director; Daniel A. Lerner, professional staff member; Christopher J. Paul, professional staff member; and Richard F. Walsh, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: Kevin A. Cronin, Jessica L. Kingston, and Breon N. Wells.

Committee members' assistants present: James Tuite, assistant to Senator Byrd; Christopher Griffin, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Tressa Steffen Guenov, assistant to Senator McCaskill; Gerald Thomas, assistant to Senator Burris; Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Lenwood Landrum, assistant to Senator Sessions; Clyde A. Taylor, IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Adam G. Brake, assistant to Senator Graham; Brian W. Walsh, assistant to Senator Martinez; and Erskine W. Wells, assistant to Senator Wicker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. We welcome Secretary Donley and General Schwartz back to the committee this morning to testify on the plans and the programs of the Air Force

in our review of the fiscal year 2010 annual budget and overseas contingency operations request.

Please extend, both of you, on behalf of our committee our gratitude to the men and women of the Air Force and their families for the many sacrifices that they make and will continue to make on behalf of this Nation. We thank both of you for your long careers of leadership and service.

A number of critical issues confront the Air Force. Although not at the same operating tempo as the Army and the Marines, the Air Force face a difficult challenge in balancing its modernization needs against the costs of supporting ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The previous chief of staff of the Air Force said that something like an additional \$20 billion per year beyond the fiscal year 2009 budget request would be required to maintain and modernize the Air Force. We know that each of the other services is facing its own modernization and readiness challenges.

We would like to hear from both of you this morning about the risks that will, in your opinion, face future secretaries and chiefs of staff if the budget proposal is adopted.

General Schwartz, I note that your unfunded priority list this year totals approximately \$1.9 billion, which is a decrease from the roughly \$20 billion level of General Moseley's comparable list last year.

We know that the Air Force is providing forces to the Central Command war efforts in a number of traditional roles but is also providing airmen in support of land component tasks in the so-called "in lieu of," or ILO, missions. At this time last year, there were more than 6,000 airmen performing ILO missions in the theater. We should hear from the witnesses about what systems are in place to cushion the impact of this on the organizations who are giving up these airmen for these ILO deployments.

On the acquisition front, one of the challenges facing the Air Force is in space systems. All the Air Force space satellite systems are in the process of modernization and replacement. All have seen substantial growth and schedule delays.

In many instances, the initial cost and schedule predictions were unrealistic. In others, the technical risk was greater than previously thought or not well understood, and others suffered from poor management and execution. Some of these programs are showing improvement, but most are not out of the woods yet. As a result, space programs costs have increased substantially overall.

Another challenge facing the department is the potential closure of several production lines and what effects those closings might have on meeting future warfighting requirements. Such proposed closures are but a few of the Air Force programs in this budget that generate significant interest here in the committee.

Among the many announcements that Secretary Gates made on April 6th and that are reflected in the President's budget are, first, decisions not to buy additional weapon systems, like the F-22 and C-17; second, program delays, like the next-generation bomber; next, program reductions, like the early retirement of 250 tactical fighter aircraft; next, program terminations with substitutes, like the Transformational Communications Satellite program to be replaced with additional Advanced Extremely High Frequency sat-

ellites; and finally, program terminations with no replacement program, like the new Combat Search and Rescue helicopter and the Airborne Laser aircraft.

Now many of these are going to require tough choices by Congress, and it is important that we hear from our witnesses clear explanations of how these weapon systems' proposed changes are derived from the new strategy as espoused by the Secretary of Defense on April 6th and at our hearing with him and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff last week and about the Air Force's plans for each of these mission areas.

Underlying all of these major acquisition concerns is an acquisition management issue. Secretary Donley, a central point in your predecessor's agenda as Secretary was improving the Air Force acquisition corps. He knew he would have to take significant steps to build up the acquisition workforce and restore confidence in the Air Force acquisition system after the abuses and poor decisions that were previously documented on the tanker lease program, and we would like to hear from you this morning about what steps you are going to take to make progress on that front as well.

The balance of my statement I will put in the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Levin follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. We look forward to your testimony this morning. I note that there is a vote apparently scheduled for about 10 o'clock, and I call upon Senator McCain.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN MCCAIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM
ARIZONA**

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank the witnesses.

In light of a vote forthcoming, I would like to have my entire statement be made part of the record, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. It will be, of course.

Senator MCCAIN. I support the overall priorities outlined in the department's 2010 budget request. These priorities set the stage for more thorough and much-needed review of our Nation's military posture.

As our witnesses probably know, the Senate yesterday passed through the unanimous vote on the acquisition reform bill that has been worked on on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol. We believe that it will have a very beneficial effect, and I would be interested in our witnesses' views on that.

But most importantly, many of the most egregious cost overruns have—and it is understandable because the Air Force is a highly technological—modern weapon systems are an integral part of the United States Air Force. Some of the most significant cost overruns have been associated with some of the Air Force weapon systems. And I look forward to hearing from our witnesses concerning the future of the Joint Strike Fighter and whether we are going to experience the same kinds of cost overruns that we have seen with the F-22 and how we expect to move forward with the absolutely vital replacement of the aging tanker fleet and perhaps a couple of other areas.

This is a seminal time, I think, in the history of the Air Force and where they go and how they are adjusting to the new era of unmanned aircraft. This is an important period.

I think manned aircraft will be a part of our inventory for decades and decades to come, but I don't think there is any doubt that we are also transitioning to an unmanned aircraft type of situation in warfare, which would be a wrenching experience, very frankly, for the United States Air Force. I am confident they can accommodate to it and make the transition as we go into the 21st century and the new challenges that we face.

I thank the witnesses for being here.

And I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator McCain follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.
Secretary Donley?

**STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL B. DONLEY, SECRETARY OF
THE AIR FORCE**

Mr. Donley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this committee again today.

It is a privilege to be leading the Air Force with General Schwartz after almost 1 year in this position. I could not have a better partner in this work, I will tell you.

In recent months, Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen have led a constructive dialogue about necessary changes in our National defense priorities and areas of emphasis. Our discussions emphasized taking care of our most important asset, our people; institutionalizing the lessons from today's fight and being prepared for other risks and contingencies; and reforming how and what we buy.

We have contributed our analysis and judgment throughout this process. We prepared for these discussions by undertaking several strategic reviews in the Air Force and with our sister services, our OSD, and interagency partners.

Last fall, we refined the Air Force mission statement. We articulated our five strategic priorities. We refined our core functions to more clearly articulate the Air Force's role in our National security establishment, and we made progress in areas that needed focused attention, like strengthening the Air Force's nuclear enterprise, preparing to stand up our cyber numbered air force, articulating our strategy for irregular and counterinsurgency operations, consolidating our approach in the Air Force for dealing with global partnerships, and advancing our stewardship of the Air Force energy program.

Our reviews have been guided by the concept of strategic balance, which has several meanings for us. Balance means prevailing in today's fight while being able to respond across the spectrum of conflict to emerging hybrid threats, such as those Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen have described.

Balance also means allocating investment across our 12 diverse, but complementary core functions in a way that sustains and advances the Air Force as the world's finest air, space, and cyber

space force. Finally, balance means organizing and training and equipping across our active and Reserve components in an appropriate way.

Our budget proposal recognizes that our people are our most important asset. Without them, our organizations and equipment would grind to a halt.

For fiscal year 2010, we are halting previously planned reductions for Air Force active duty end strength with commensurate adjustments in the Reserve components as well. We will also plan to grow our civilian cadre, especially the acquisition workforce.

At the same time, we will continue to reshape the skill sets of our workforce with emphasis on stress career fields and missions that need our attention now, such as ISR, acquisition, maintenance, cyber operations, and nuclear forces.

In fiscal year 2010, we are also driving more balance into our force structure. In the theater, the demand for ISR and special operations capabilities continues to increase. So we will increase unmanned aerial aircraft system combat air patrols from 34 today to 43 next fiscal year, as well as increase special operations forces end strength.

We will also reshape the portfolio of the fighter force by retiring about 250 of our oldest tactical fighters, completing production of the F-22 fighter at 187 aircraft, and readying the fifth generation F-35 Joint Strike Fighter to become the Air Force's workhorse for the new fighter fleet ahead.

We are also ensuring balance across the airlift fleet by terminating the C-17 production program, but continuing to modify our C-5s, reinitiating the C-130J production line, and transitioning the C-27 program from the Army to the Air Force.

We will also enhance stability in our military SATCOM programs by extending the AEHF and WGS inventories and continuing our partnerships with commercial providers.

As the chairman has noted, we have also put additional attention on Air Force acquisition. We recently published our acquisition improvement program, which will revitalize first the acquisition workforce. It will improve the discipline in our requirements process, instill better budget and financial discipline, improve our source selection process, and establish clear lines of authority within our Air Force acquisition organizations.

I would like to personally thank the committee for its leadership in this important area, and I look forward to working with you and Secretary Gates and Ash Carter as we continue to work on defense acquisition.

Air Force leadership will continue to participate in the QDR, the space posture review, and other DOD-level reviews over the coming year. From these analyses, we will better understand the need, the requirement of available technologies for a long-range strike, as well as our requirements and potential joint solutions for personnel recovery.

Mr. Chairman, stewardship of the United States Air Force is a responsibility that we take very seriously, and we are grateful for the continued support of this committee for the world's finest air force.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Donley follows:]
Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Secretary.
General Schwartz?

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL NORTON A. SCHWARTZ, CHIEF OF
STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**

General Schwartz: Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, and members of the committee, I am proud to be here with Secretary Donley, representing your Air Force.

The United States Air Force is fully committed to effective stewardship of the resources the American people place in our trust, a commitment which is founded on our core values of integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. And guided by our core values, American airmen are all-in, working courageously every day with precision and reliability.

I recently had a chance to take a trip and visit with some of our airmen who are serving in various locations around the world, and they are providing game-changing capabilities to the combatant commanders in the air and on the ground.

Last year, American airmen conducted 61,000 sorties in Operation Iraqi Freedom and 37,000 sorties in Operation Enduring Freedom. That is about 265 sorties a day. Airmen also serve on convoys in the coalition operations centers and delivered 2 million passengers and some 700,000 tons of cargo in the U.S. CENTCOM area of responsibility last year.

And dedicated airmen directly support CENTCOM operations from right here in the United States by providing command and control of unmanned aerial vehicles, while our nuclear operations professionals support the umbrella of deterrence for our Nation and its allies across the globe. And our space professionals are providing truly amazing capabilities, ranging from early warning to the global positioning navigation and timing capabilities.

Through Secretary Donley's guidance and leadership, we have set a course to provide even greater capabilities for America and to balance our priorities to meet the spectrum of challenges. The top priority is to reinvigorate the Air Force nuclear enterprises outlined in our nuclear roadmap.

We are also fielding capabilities that will allow us to innovate partnerships with our joint and coalition teammates to win today's fight by expanding, for example, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance with the procurement of 24 MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aerial systems.

At the same time, we will continue to support our most precious asset, and that is our people. We are focused on providing programs that develop and care for our airmen and their families with world-class quality of service and honor the commitments we have made to our wounded warriors.

Part of ensuring support for our airmen means providing them with the tools they need to do their jobs effectively. Therefore, we are modernizing our air and space inventories, organizations, and training with the right, if difficult, choices.

In addition to the programs Secretary Donley just mentioned, we are committed to providing robust air refueling capability. We also intend to increase efficiency by retiring aging aircraft, and we will

complete the production of the F-22 at 187 aircraft and the C-17 at 205 aircraft, subject to congressional approval.

In recent testimony, Admiral Mullen stated, "We are what we buy." Following his lead, we intend to maintain stewardship of America's resources for our warfighters in the field and the taxpayers at home by recapturing acquisition excellence and fielding the right capabilities for our Nation on time and within budget. And I echo Secretary Donley's thanks for your continued leadership and support in our acquisition improvement efforts.

Mr. Chairman, with our core values guiding us, the U.S. Air Force will continue to provide our best military advice and stewardship, delivering global reach, vigilance, and power for America.

Thank you for your continued support of the United States Air Force, and particularly for our airmen and their families.

Sir, I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Schwartz follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, General.

We are going to try to work through this expected vote. Let us try a 7-minute first round.

Last year, the chief of staff of the Air Force, General Moseley, testified that the Air Force would require something like \$20 billion per year additionally beyond the budget request to maintain and modernize the Air Force.

Secretary Donley, General Schwartz, have you made your comparable assessment of modernization needs for sustaining the Air Force? How much additional, if any, do you believe will be required? Mr. Secretary?

Mr. Donley: Mr. Chairman, we have reviewed with Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen the overall requirements for the Air Force. You have an unfunded requirements list from General Schwartz that reflects his military judgment on those capabilities above and beyond those proposed in the fiscal year 2010 budget, which we would prioritize for additional consideration.

The Air Force, like—

Chairman LEVIN. Are they prioritized?

Mr. Donley: Yes, they are.

Chairman LEVIN. And that was the total of \$1.7 billion?

Mr. Donley: \$1.9 billion. Yes, roughly.

Chairman LEVIN. And you joined in that request?

Mr. Donley: Yes, we discussed that fully. The request went to General Schwartz, and so it is answered by General Schwartz. But it was discussed across the Air Force leadership.

Chairman LEVIN. And General Schwartz, I take it that is your personal—

General Schwartz: It is, sir. And the 20 items are in priority order.

Chairman LEVIN. Relative to the Joint Cargo Aircraft reduction proposal by the administration, is it your intention that those aircraft be assigned exclusively to the Air Guard or the Air Force Reserve units?

General Schwartz: Mr. Chairman, I would say that is not yet clear. We have the direction from the department to make the transition of the program from the Army to the Air Force. That is not

an instantaneous undertaking. It will take us well into 2010 in order to accomplish that.

We, the Army, and General McKinley from the National Guard bureau, and our people are meeting to get together with how one would execute a program of at least 38 aircraft, which is reflected in the 2010 budget proposal, and both how we would operate the fleet, what the basing footprint would look like, and so on. We have to make a recommendation to the Deputy Secretary not later than the 30th of this month in that regard.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you support the reduction in the Joint Cargo Aircraft from 78 to 38?

General Schwartz: Sir, we will have an opportunity through the Quadrennial Defense Review process to confirm that 38 is the right number. My view is that the correct number is at least 38.

Chairman LEVIN. Have you made a personal assessment as to what the right number is?

General Schwartz: Mr. Chairman, we have a number of studies, including the analysis of alternatives, which the Army did in the 2005–2006 timeframe. In more recent studies accomplished by RAND as late as 2009 that suggest that the 78 aircraft package, which was split between the Army and the Air Force originally at 54 and 24, respectively, is a valid—a valid need.

And obviously, what occurred through the budget process was a commitment on the part of the department to replace the Army's C-23 Sherpas, those being 42 currently, with 38 C-27s. As I suggested, I see 38 C-27s as the floor, not the ceiling.

Mr. Donley: Sir, if I might follow up? I think that the discussion that is still underway in the department, that the Secretary has opened up and I think intends to pursue this summer, is sort of the break point between the C-27 capability and the C-130 capability.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, we are going to need to have it further, your further thoughts on that. If you want your thoughts to be considered, we are obviously going to need those before we take up this authorization bill at markup. So we can expect those further thoughts from both of you before that time?

Mr. Donley: We would be happy to respond to the questions of the committee within the timeframe required for your work. But honestly, I can't predict exactly when the QDR discussions will close out.

One thing I think, just to be clear, that the issue between 38 or a higher number, say, 78 or something in between, is not necessarily something that impacts the fiscal year 2010 budget immediately. I think the important parts, from our point of view, were that the Secretary had made a decision to shift the direct support mission from the Army to the Air Force. That has started the work that General Schwartz described, which is considerable.

Chairman LEVIN. That is not up in the air, that recommendation?

Mr. Donley: Our understanding is that that mission has now shifted to the Air Force.

Chairman LEVIN. The number is up in the air?

Mr. Donley: The number is going to be revisited, as I understand it. The Secretary is open to that discussion later this year.

And our first priority, our first priority is meeting the operational commitments for, I believe, the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2010. So we are collaborating with the Army on how best to do that. Those are the most important issues out in front of us on JCA.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay, thank you.

General Schwartz, when you were the commander of the Transportation Command, you said that you believed that meeting the requirement for strategic airlift aircraft could be met by having 111 C-5s and 205 C-17s, and that is what we have now planned for and paid for. Is that your personal and professional military view still?

General Schwartz: It is, sir. 205, 111 for total tails of 316.

Chairman LEVIN. Now relative to these in lieu of forces, stress on the Army, Marine units have driven the department to use sailors and airmen in a in lieu of mode outside of their normal or trained military specialty. You have got airmen being used as convoy security forces, detention facility guards. Obviously, they are performing well. They do their duty.

But using airmen outside of their primary military duties has got to have some impacts, both on them, perhaps on their morale, but also on the institutional Air Force. And I am wondering, General, if you would describe the pace and the scope of airmen being used in lieu of ground combat forces for these types of assignments in Iraq and Afghanistan and what you expect the future is going to hold in this regard?

General Schwartz: Mr. Chairman, we currently have about 4,500 of our airmen associated with these nontraditional tasks. As you indicated earlier, that number has been as high as 6,700 in times, recent times.

My personal view and the view of my counterparts throughout the Air Force is that this is part of our commitment as a service with the Nation at war. That when we say we are all-in, we mean it.

And so, we have actually stopped using, sir, the term "in lieu of." We call it now "joint expeditionary tasking." And that may seem like a silly change, but it is not because "in lieu of" gave the impression that somehow what these youngsters are doing is not worthy. And in fact, it is worthy.

And the truth is we feel that when these youngsters grow up to chief master sergeants, the Air Force will be a much better service than it might otherwise have been. This experience is contributing to making our Air Force a better service.

Now our obligation is to make sure that our airmen who are doing nontraditional tasks are properly trained, and we are doing that. And we have kept that commitment. So the bottom line, sir, is that if there is a need, your Air Force will fill it wherever it is required and for however long it is required.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, I think that is a very appropriate sentiment. On the other hand, to say it contributes to a better Air Force, if you had your choice, are you saying you would actually select that particular—those missions because they contribute to a better Air Force? Or are you saying that we are going to do what we need to do jointly because we are at war? We understand that,

and we don't view this as a negative. But you don't really mean that you would prefer this, do you?

General Schwartz: No, it is the latter. I certainly agree with you, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. All right.

General Schwartz: But again, we are not doing this grudgingly. That is the clarification.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, we admire that sentiment.

Senator McCain?

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Donley and General Schwartz, can you give us an update on the Joint Strike Fighter, whether it is on time and what, if any, cost overruns are associated with it?

Mr. Donley: The Joint Strike Fighter is getting lots of senior leader attention. I have worked on this issue with Dr. Carter and, before him, Secretary Young and also Secretary Lynn since his arrival early this year.

The program responsibility has just shifted. The program manager is now General Heinz from the Marine Corps. The SAE oversight is now in the Air Force, and we did several months of research and due diligence to prepare for taking on that responsibility.

Joint Strike Fighter is one of the biggest and most complex airplane programs we have ever managed. So it is not only joint, as you know, across all three services, it is international. About nine air forces around the world, including our own, are dependent on the success of this program. So we must keep this program on schedule and within cost.

Senator MCCAIN. How is it doing?

Mr. Donley: It will be a challenge. It continues to be a challenge.

Senator MCCAIN. Where are you? How is it doing so far?

Mr. Donley: We are—I think it is doing very well, considering all the technical issues that have to be addressed. There have been occasional engine issues. There have been occasional other issues that have popped up—costs, schedule issues. We manage those very closely.

We are at a very significantly vulnerable time, though. Let me explain. We have added aircraft. We have added hours for testing for JSF, and we are making that transition right now from advanced development and test aircraft into early production.

And so, this is a very sensitive time. There are probably things that we will learn in testing that we do not know about this aircraft. But we must keep it on cost and schedule.

Senator MCCAIN. Maybe you can maybe submit in writing a response as to where we are as to the original cost estimates and the original schedule?

Mr. Donley: I would be happy to do that.

Senator MCCAIN. Appreciate it, but I still don't get from your answer a feel. Has there been cost overruns that are significant already?

Mr. Donley: I would have to go back and look at the baseline program, sir, to sort of give you a sense for where things have come since the program started.

Senator MCCAIN. I certainly hope you would keep track of that every single day.

The Air Force's current program includes 205 C-17s and 111 C-5s for a total of 316 strategic airlift aircraft. Do you believe you have—is that enough? Is that adequate to meet your needs, General Schwartz?

General Schwartz: Senator McCain, I do. And if we need that number of aircraft, or as occurred out of the Nunn-McCurdy on the C-5 re-engining program, the definition of million ton miles per day is 33.95 million ton miles per day is the threshold. And that mix of airplanes—that is, 205 C-17s, 52 modified C-5s, and 59 of the original version of the C-5—will satisfy lift requirements of the National defense strategy. And it is the best business case as well.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you believe we need additional C-17s, General?

General Schwartz: I do not.

Senator MCCAIN. Talk to me a little bit about the transition over time from manned to unmanned aircraft. General Schwartz, you are sort of presiding over the beginning of that transition, and you have seen it for many years. Give us a few words on that, will you?

General Schwartz: Senator, this is an inflection point. I agree with you completely, and the trend lines are unmistakable that the United States Air Force will be an increasingly unmanned aviation service. There will still be manned platforms, to be sure, but the beauty of these platforms is that rather than getting simply several sorties a day out of the manned platform, which fundamentally are limited by availability of human capital, that we can get 24-hour coverage out of unmanned vehicles with substantial manning, but in a different place, not onboard.

That is what is needed right now. Persistence in the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance realm is the important parameter, and unmanned vehicles give us that capability. We know we started with the Predator as originally as a test program and then fielded that. We are migrating to the larger, more capable Reaper platform, and we will transition out of the Predator to the Reaper.

The Global Hawk is the strategic platform for, again, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance that will supplant the U-2 at some point, when we are ready to make the handoff.

So absolutely, sir, for long duration, long dwell, persistent requirements, these platforms are where we are going.

Senator MCCAIN. This is a significant cultural adjustment for the United States Air Force. Is that true?

General Schwartz: It is. I won't soft-pedal that. The truth is that young men and women don't necessarily aspire in quite the same way as you and I did to fly high-performance airplanes, you know, from a ground station wherever it may be.

But it is very interesting. We have had cadets from the Air Force Academy and ROTC volunteer to go as their initial flying assignment to unmanned aerial vehicles. Why? Because there is an understanding that you are right in the fight. From the first time you are qualified, you are operating platforms that people on the joint team rely on.

For example, the best shooters in America won't go through a door or through a window or around the corner, and we shouldn't

ask them to, without the situation awareness that these platforms provide. Now, if they had to do it, sir, they would. You know that. But they have come to rely on this sort of situation awareness, and our youngsters increasingly will adjust to the reality that this is the way we support America's wars.

Senator McCAIN. Reward and recognition are a big part of that.

General Schwartz: Indeed, it is. And a case in point, Senator, was that Suzie, my wife, and I spent Christmas at Creech last year. First, to be there, they are on 24–7. You have got folks doing that work every single day, but part of that was exactly as you suggest—to demonstrate that the Air Force leadership values their contribution in a very visceral way.

Senator McCAIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. [presiding] Thanks, Senator McCain.

There is a vote on now. The chairman has gone to vote.

Senator Udall, you are next. And I will pass the baton to you. I am going to go to vote. Senator Levin should be back by the time you are finished, or whichever Republican comes back will be next.

So you have risen rapidly to be the acting chairman of this committee.

Senator UDALL. [presiding] Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, gentlemen. Thank you for your service. Thank you for taking the time to join us here today.

As you know, General and Secretary, in Colorado, we are the proud home of the Air Force Academy, and we also have Space Command and Peterson and Schriever Air Bases and NORAD and Northern Command. So we look forward to that continuing relationship.

If you might, would you take a moment and describe the programs and capabilities that the department is funding in the 2010 request to improve space situational awareness, space control, and counterspace, and will these activities reduce the vulnerability of our space assets? We have been having a lot of conversations about these topics, as you know.

Mr. Donley: Well, Senator, many of these programs are still in development. We do have a space situational awareness effort underway in the department. We do have a space protection program. We are working on space fence technologies. The space-based systems are being put in place to improve our situational awareness.

But I would emphasize to the committee we are at the front end of this work. We are at the front end of this work, much like—and I would use the analogy of the cyber domain, where we have had C4 systems in place for many decades. Only more recently do we recognize all those C4 systems as highly networked, highly capable force multipliers and enablers for our own forces. And in the cyber domain now, they need to be protected.

And I think we are seeing the same analogy on the space side, recognizing the importance not only of the individual capabilities we are putting on orbit, but the extent to which they enable and network other capabilities terrestrially. And we need to be focused on protecting that space domain, which is now more contested than it had been in the past.

Senator UDALL. General and Mr. Secretary, do you have resources you need in this budget and in the out-years to undertake the mission you just outlined? General Schwartz?

General Schwartz: I think we do, Senator. And I would echo what the Secretary said is there was a time not that long ago when the presumption was that space, that space was a sanctuary. The reality is it is no longer the sanctuary we once thought it was. It is contested space, and as a result, we need to prepare ourselves to have the kinds of situation awareness we need to know whether our assets are being challenged and, if so, to attribute that challenge to specific actors. That, as the Secretary suggested, is one of many efforts that are underway.

But if you look at the array of things we are doing, GPS 3—for example, 2A and 3—that is sustaining the global positioning system constellation for both military and civil use. There are imagery needs which are being attended to, perhaps less so by the Air Force than the National Reconnaissance Office. As you know, in this program for us there are decisions related to communications architecture, as well as other requirements related to making sure we can maintain connectivity with ground forces and also assets not located in the immediate theater.

So, in short, Senator, my take is that we did make some hard choices. We decided, for example, that with TSAT, that it was a very, very ambitious program and that it was too ambitious. And so, we decided to roll back to something we know we can do with improvements. That is the AEHF constellation, and that is a good strategy.

Same thing is true with expanding the existing wideband global capability. So I think if I were to describe the strategy we are taking as one that is less ambitious and relying on proven capabilities and a little bit less on the exotic.

Senator UDALL. Thanks for that explanation. I was a bit remiss when I mentioned all the exciting activities in Colorado in leaving out the new Cyber Command, and I think you know we are excited that Air Force Space Command is a key part of this effort.

We were disappointed in Colorado that Peterson wasn't selected to host the 24th, but we know that Cyber will still play a key role in Colorado's activities. And General, you don't need to comment on that unless you would like to.

But I would want to move then to further discussion of the recent collision between the Iridium and the Cosmos satellites and wanted to get your sense of how STRATCOM is altering its plans for monitoring satellites? debris. And it was particularly interesting because we saw the nexus this last week between a civilian side and the military side with the Hubble mission, which, what a success that was. And we have now given that incredible instrument additional life, and I know it is exciting for all of us.

But if you would speak to the debris situation, I would appreciate it.

General Schwartz: Sir, in the past, we have focused primarily on the circumstances that were associated with high-value Department of Defense assets, protecting them while in orbit from potential collisions. And as a collateral benefit, there were—we main-

tained connectivity with industry in order to inform them of potential collisions as well.

But it was focused intently, as it should be, on DOD resources. We are, and the Secretary can elaborate on this, we are expanding that capability. It largely is a matter of processing capacity to enable us to offer this deconfliction advice on a more routine and a more robust basis.

Mr. Donley: Sir, we have been working on the commercial foreign entities, the CFE pilot project, which the Congress had helped set in motion a little over a year ago, I believe. That work continues, and we are developing a transition plan that takes that from a pilot program to a more operational program going forward so that the capabilities we are building up are sustained and grow over time.

We are working with STRATCOM on how to do that. They will take operational responsibility for that work later this year. And as General Schwartz indicated, part of this is oriented around understanding responsibilities of the Air Force, responsibilities of the United States Government, how we want to interact with commercial entities, both in the United States and foreign commercial entities, and also other international partners, sovereign governments.

How we will share data in that relationship, making sure we have the expectations understood on all sides of those relationships, and that we have the capability within the United States Air Force to deliver on the agreed capabilities that we are discussing with these partners.

We have a need to continue to upgrade and modernize our Joint Space Operations Center at 14th Air Force. I have had this discussion with General Kehler. It is part of our program going forward.

But in comparison to our air operations centers, the kind of situational awareness, command and control capabilities that you would see at a place, for example, at an AOC supporting CENTCOM today or at some of our other air operations centers, our space operations center capability is considerably behind and is still in the early stages of its development and growth.

There is much promise there. There is a lot of good technology that can be brought to bear. With respect to space situational awareness, space protection, the JSPOC, these are all part and parcel of a broader effort on our part to get better situational awareness of the space domain. And at a strategic level, it is my goal inside the Air Force to bring that forward as quickly as we are able to absorb it and afford it.

Senator UDALL. Thank you.

I see my time has expired. I did want to make one last comment, and perhaps there is a yes or no answer to a question I might pose.

I think we were all baffled and even angered by the Chinese actions when it came to shooting down their satellite. In your mil-to-mil contacts, do you think that that is a one-time event and that the Chinese understand that wasn't very useful to any of us?

General Schwartz: I think they understand that. I wouldn't predict their decision process the next time around.

Senator UDALL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. [presiding] Thank you, Senator Udall.
Senator Inhofe?

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, I apologize. It seems like we always have these committees meeting at the same time, and so we have to jump back and forth.

But let me just mention a couple of things, and you may have covered this in your opening statement because I had to be at the other committee hearing. And that is one of my least favorite subjects, aging aircraft.

And I know that both of you are very familiar with the problem that we have, and it is a problem we have never had before. When you look at the list and you see the average age of our fighters is 20 years. The average age of the flying hours of the bombers is 11,200. That is average, 11,200. And the flight hours of the tankers, of course, almost 20,000 hours. That is just unacceptable.

Just as a general statement, and then I will talk about a couple of specific vehicles, what do you think about our aging situation? Because this is something we haven't had before, and it is something that I think is negatively impacted by this current budget.

But, Secretary Donley, what is your thinking?

Mr. Donley: Well, there is no question that I believe all the military departments, including the Air Force, are behind where we would like to be in modernizing and reinvesting in the forces that we built largely in the late 1970s and early 1980s. All of us face the problem of aging inventories. But I believe we have, within the resources available, a pretty prudent plan going forward.

We continue to have challenges in that aging inventory. We have 2 percent of the fleet at any time that is grounded or on restricted—and many more, actually, that are on restricted flight profiles. But we have multiple mod programs to extend the service life and add to the capability of these older airframes.

Some of which have, while they are aging, have low-stress missions, and so the airframes do still have potentially in some areas decades of service available. But we do have plans going forward in mobility. At the strategic level, we have addressed that with the C-17, with the C-5 RERP. At the tactical level, we are always working on the C-130 fleet to manage within available resources sort of the best combination of 130s at the best balance of—

Senator INHOFE. Yes, we understand that. But still, the stuff is old. Now you are talking about the 130s.

Mr. Donley: Right.

Senator INHOFE. I think I told you about my experience. I had two trips in a row where one of them, we lost two engines. The other, we were shot at. And if we had had—that was an E model. If we had had J models, we would have been out of their range 8 minutes after taking off from Baghdad.

So I think that we are getting—I know we are doing the best with what we have. And you guys are doing that, and I compliment both you for doing the best. But it is just that we need to deal you a better hand.

Now I think I understood you to say that the 2 percent were grounded. My information is that one-third are either grounded or are under flight restrictions in one way or another. Is that incorrect, General?

General Schwartz: Senator, that is high. Two percent is the number that we have that is actually grounded.

Senator INHOFE. That is grounded.

General Schwartz: And there is a number at about 12 percent that has other restrictions. For example, some of the F-15s, until we get modifications done, are speed limited. They can still fly. We would exceed that speed limitation if we had to for a real deal, but—

Senator INHOFE. Well, and I understand your B-1s are restricted to 3Gs now?

General Schwartz: And you would not want to fly typically the B-1 at 3Gs in any case.

Senator INHOFE. I understand.

General Schwartz: But I think the point is that we do have programs underway to manage fleet age. The most important one, though, frankly, after the new tanker and so on, is F-35.

Senator INHOFE. Yes.

General Schwartz: And we need to get F-35 to a production rate that will allow us to manage the fleet age for the rest of the—

Senator INHOFE. It is my understanding that the Air Force would be the last to receive the F-35s? The Marines first and then Navy and you guys last?

General Schwartz: Again, this is a question of production rate.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, okay.

General Schwartz: And if we are able to ramp to at least 80, and we need more than that, frankly—closer to 110 a year.

Senator INHOFE. Okay. Let me get onto something else.

General Schwartz: Yes, sir.

Senator INHOFE. I appreciate that very much.

As you folks know, both of you, but probably most up here don't know that at Tinker Air Force Base, we have quite a reverse engineering facility. And the reason for that I would say, Mr. Chairman, is that we have got those old KC-135s, 40 years old, and you can't buy parts for them anymore. So you have to reverse engineer.

The cost is—while we are doing a good job of that, still, the cost and the efficiency of that is—now, I mean, we are way past the curve, and I know that it is typical of Government. We can only hit that which is bleeding worse at this given moment, as opposed to thinking ahead. But I think that with the KC-X out, kind of uncertain right now, did you cover the KC-X in your opening statements? Any comments you would like to make about that?

Mr. Donley: Well, just a couple of points. First, I think it was very significant that KC-X remains a priority for Secretary Gates and the department, as it does for the Air Force.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, I agree.

Mr. Donley: We went through many difficult choices to be made for this budget, but KC-X remained a priority. So that is the first point.

Second, we are about getting that back on track. I have been working with the Deputy Secretary, Dr. Carter, and AT&L, and we expect to see the Secretary soon on this subject to get an RFP out this summer, get an award next spring, get that program back on track.

Senator INHOFE. Okay, and gentlemen, I am not going to dwell on the F-22 because I think the Senator from Georgia most likely is going to get on that. But I would only say this. When you remember back when General Jumper made the observation in 1998 that we are going to have get up because we have China and Russia and the rest of them getting into, starting to approach fifth generations, I am concerned about it.

I would only say this is a chart that is an unclassified Air Force chart that shows the—it can't be too old. It is not dated, but it can't be too old because it shows 183 F-22s. But it says that when you go up the chart, and I think you are familiar with that, it is really not 183, but the combat coded would be 126 right now.

Do you think that is adequate?

General Schwartz: Sir, the point you make is that we will have to manage this fleet in a different way than we would manage a much larger fleet, like we have with the F-16 and F-15.

Small fleet dynamics are a significant issue here, and we will have to look hard, for example, at whether we have dedicated training aircraft. We might have to use combat coded airplanes to do training as well, which is not as ideal as being able to rely on a constant throughput for training. But these are the realities of managing a smaller fleet.

Senator INHOFE. All right. And just any comment about the C-27 dropping down from 75 to 38? Or have you covered that in my absence?

General Schwartz: Sir, we did. But just—

Senator INHOFE. Okay, that is fine. I will get that from the record then.

And lastly, any comments about the CSAR-X, the Search and Rescue, because this is one that I guess will be terminated now, and did you make any comments about that?

General Schwartz: I did not, sir. The CSAR-X program was canceled, although the Secretary did leave about \$2.8 billion in the program to accommodate the needs of that mission. And I think there are two basic points here.

He had some questions about whether this was a single-service mission or a joint mission, and we need to satisfy him that what we in the Air Force do is, in fact, for the whole team, certainly the joint team and our partners. That we don't have people sitting around on alert, waiting to go pick up pilots. That is not all they do.

And thirdly, that perhaps we need to be a little bit less ambitious about the platforms we are seeking and to look at those which are currently performing the mission or improvements on those platforms.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is a privilege to work with both of you. Thank you so much for your service.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Ben Nelson?

Senator Nelson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, gentlemen, for being here.

Senator Inhofe mentioned the KC-X tanker is listed as one of the Air Force's top procurement priorities. The fiscal year 2010 budget request has \$0.4 billion for it. Is that a sufficient amount of money for what it is you seek to do? And do you have an estimated timeline for the replacement for the National Guard units that are currently fielding the KC-135s?

Mr. Donley: On the funding, sir, we did anticipate, in putting together this budget, that the RFP would be delayed so into the middle of this year, as is planned. So we did drop back. At one point, we had procurement dollars in this budget, and we have dropped back to continued R&D dollars. And so, there has been some resources to come out, and we will put that back on a ramp going forward as appropriate.

Senator Nelson: And in fiscal year 2010, is that sort of the time-frame you are looking at that you would pick up procurement costs?

General Schwartz: Absolutely, sir. Absolutely. And we would be looking for roughly 15 aircraft a year for procurement, which will start that process of moving on the oldest and least capable KC-135s.

Senator Nelson: Would the same locations that currently refuel the KC-135s, would they be the same locations you would anticipate for the new tank or for the new airframe?

General Schwartz: Sir, I couldn't make that assurance without some qualification. It is not clear that this program, when it is all done, which will be some decades down the road, will result in a one-for-one replacement of KC-135 for KC-X.

And that being the case, there will probably be some footprint adjustments, to be candid. And so, we understand that we have to modernize both the active and the Guard and Reserve in a responsible way, and we intend to do that.

But my hunch is, is that again, as we sort of alluded to earlier, that the Air Force overall is changing its composition, and that certainly will have an effect on what units retain flying missions that are manned, for example, what may have to migrate to unmanned missions that are a little bit different than where they have been, or perhaps non-flying missions.

Senator Nelson: But there is not a plan in place to move the refueling operations away from the Guard to the active duty? Is that fair to ask?

General Schwartz: That is fair to say, sir. The balance that we have right now where the preponderance of the tanker and capability actually is in the Guard and Reserve is likely to remain the case.

Senator Nelson: I have been pushing for progress measures, metrics, or benchmarks for Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the development of those, are all the chiefs and secretaries involved in discussing? Because everybody will have a role of one sort or another in those missions. Are you being included in the discussions?

General Schwartz: I can only speak for the chief, sir. The Secretary can—

Senator Nelson: I will ask the Secretary.

General Schwartz: But for sure, the JCS is intimately involved in this in every detail.

Senator Nelson: Is that your understanding as well, Mr. Secretary?

Mr. Donley: The Secretariat is less involved in the operational details. I have turned up the wick in the Air Force headquarters in terms of focus on our contributions to building partnership capacity with the new Iraqi air force and with the Afghan National Army's air arm as well. So we are very focused on the training programs and how the Air Force is supporting those programs and the progress being made.

Senator Nelson: In March this year, as chairman of the Personnel Subcommittee, I held a hearing on the incidence of suicides of our service members and also to discuss the initiatives within the services and the Department of Defense to prevent them. The fiscal year 2010 budget summary states that \$42 billion has been allocated for agile combat support.

What percentage of those funds will be going to address the shortage of mental health professionals and healthcare professionals because that seems to be one of the challenges that the military is facing, and particularly with the Air Force? And what do you feel that you are doing that will help us overcome that shortage in healthcare professionals?

General Schwartz: Sir, this is a really difficult problem. We have hired about 80 mental health professionals in this most recent period and have a total of about 400 or so that are trained to deal with post-traumatic stress and the other signature elements of the current fight in which we are involved.

But the truth of the matter is, and we have about \$80 million committed to recruiting and, again, trying to expand that pool. The dilemma is there are shortages not just amongst the services, but in the civilian community as well. This is a highly competitive environment, and we understand the need and are working it as diligently as we can to make service for mental health professionals both satisfying, rewarding, and of course, their service is needed.

I just would conclude, Senator, by saying that we do have programs in our Air Force, the logo for one of them, for example, is landing gear. It is an effort on our part to have predeployment evaluations of our people, and then when they return, they have an evaluation as well and then one 6 months following, in order to ascertain that they are readjusting back to the sort of garrison setting.

This is hard work. We have to continue. One suicide is too many, but I think we have a good effort here in order to manage that well, sir.

Senator Nelson: The Secretary mentioned that the men and women in uniform are the primary and most important asset of the Air Force. And so, being concerned about the stress that they experience is a higher priority than even concern about the stress of the airframes that are being used in the conflicts as well.

So I hope that we always keep that in mind that both are being stressed and pushed to their limits and that we will do everything we can to keep them both in appropriate shape.

General Schwartz: Senator, I take your point.

Senator Nelson: Yes, thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Chambliss?

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And gentlemen, as always, thank you for your service and for being here.

General Schwartz, you testified before the House Armed

Services Committee on Tuesday, at which time you confirmed what you and I have talked about any number of times on the phone, and that is that 243 F-22s is the right number, and that is the military requirement for the Air Force today. And I appreciate your honesty in saying that, and I am not going to get into that anymore, except to say this or to ask you this.

Under the force planning construct where we assume that 183 is going to be the number, what is the level of risk that we are taking at 183? Is it low? Is it moderate, or is it high risk?

General Schwartz: I would characterize it as moderate to high, sir.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Okay. And if you characterize it as moderate to high, is that based upon a one-theater scenario or a two-theater scenario?

General Schwartz: Moderate to high is based on a two major combat operations scenario, sir.

Senator CHAMBLISS. And do you assume that F-22s will be used in both those scenarios?

General Schwartz: It depends—the short answer is that it depends on the mix of scenarios. But the short answer is, yes, at a greater or lesser level, F-22s would be applied in both.

Senator CHAMBLISS. And going back to the chart that Senator Inhofe showed you a minute ago, based on 183, we are talking about 126 combat coded. Even if you use all of the trainers, which is 28, you are talking about 154 F-22s. And General, in a two-theater combat scenario, 154 is going to be a moderate to high risk, as opposed to a high risk?

General Schwartz: Senator, it depends on what the need is between the two scenarios, what the planning factors involved are. There is no question that the program which is recommended in the fiscal year 2010 budget is adequate for one major combat operation, however you define it, and then the follow-on question, which you imply, is certainly a good one. And that is what is the second scenario, and how quickly does it evolve?

We do not have that level of specificity until the QDR outputs are known, and so we are still some months away from a definitive position on that.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Well, I would note again on this Air Force chart that is unclassified, that even under a scenario where we had 381 F-22s, which was the number before it was reduced to 180, we would have 240 combat coded aircraft under the scenario that is laid out here by the Air Force. And under the current rotational capability, that is less than the historical demand for F-15s.

So even if you go up to the next number of 381, it appears to me that we are taking a huge risk here, whether you quantify it as moderate to high or whether it is high, which I think it is, in my opinion. But irrespective of that, that is why we are here to talk about this.

Secretary Donley, in the House hearing on Tuesday, you made a comment that Secretary Gates has also made and that he made before this committee last week regarding the fact that the plan to complete the F-22 program at 183 had been in place since 2004 and had been in place under multiple administrations.

Well, I have got two reactions to that. First, I would just note that it doesn't really matter what previous administrations recommended. What is important is what is the right number to meet the threats that we are encountering now and can expect to encounter in the future?

Those threats are maturing and growing. They are not static. So if we are relying on 2005 information, I don't know how anybody can be comfortable with that.

Second, in his fiscal year 2008 budget request before this committee last year, Secretary Gates himself said that he was recommending procuring four additional F-22s in order to keep the line open and preserve the next administration's option for F-22 procurement. So the option is here, and obviously, we are seeing that this administration has made a decision 183 is the number.

So I am going to take issue with this idea that this decision to end production was made in 2004 and the department hasn't looked back. You are just carrying out what you have been told to do here. Clearly, you have looked back, and clearly, it is important to note that the 2004 decision was made 2 days before Christmas during a DOD budget drill and with absolutely no input from the Air Force.

Now, gentlemen, let me also say that the information I have been able to gather is that your commanders in the field were okay with retiring some legacy aircraft and as you are recommending in your budget, but under the condition that we procured more F-22s to replace those retired aircraft. Instead, the DOD budget retires the aircraft but uses the money that will be saved elsewhere.

We have had several combatant commanders testify before this committee this year, but they all did so prior to this budget being released. I hope we get a chance to question some of them now that the budget is out, as well as some of your field commanders to see if they still believe they can adequately execute their plans, given this significantly reduced force structure.

Gentlemen, the fiscal year 2010 budget request for the Air Force would spend approximately \$1.7 billion for UAVs, manned ISR platforms, and modifications to those platforms. How many of those platforms are going to be stealthy?

General Schwartz: Sir, the program of record for the UAVs is 24 of the Reaper class UAVs and 5 of the Global Hawk class UAVs, none of which you would classify as stealthy.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Well, I understand the need to meet the ISR requirements of our forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I support that need. But Iraq and Afghanistan are permissive environments with respect to the air threat.

If the next conflict we are in, say, a Middle Eastern country or even a South American country that has gotten its hands on a double-digit SAM, or even single-digit SAMs, none of the platforms that this budget would procure would be able to operate in that

conflict until something else established air superiority. Is that correct?

General Schwartz: That is correct, sir.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Well, gentlemen, as I mentioned earlier, this budget would accelerate the retirement of 250 legacy aircraft by retiring them this year, and I understand that more retirements are on the way next year, that the Air Force may recommend retiring another 250 fighters.

And if I recall in the fiscal year 2007 budget request, the Air Force recommended retiring almost 50 percent of their B-52 fleet and planned to use the savings to fully modernize the remaining bombers. This sounds all too familiar. Congress disapproved the proposed retirements, as we all know, and the B-52 is flying close air support missions in Afghanistan today and proving to be very valuable.

The same year, 2006, the Air Force also recommended retiring the entire U-2 fleet, which Congress also prevented. And within the last year, the Air Force has themselves backed off the plan to retire U-2s because your commanders rely on it and because we don't yet have another platform that can perform its mission.

Looking back, those proposed retirements were ill advised, and Congress was right to prevent them. So I would just close by saying that we have been down this road before. Your commanders were okay with the retirement plan you are proposing in this budget, provided you procured more F-22s, which your budget does not do.

So I am extremely concerned that your plan creates additional risk, which you readily admit, and with the Air Force's history of wanting to retire planes that you later decide you need to keep, I am having a hard time really justifying your analysis here, particularly when you are recommending forgoing the option to provide a proven platform like the F-22 that could effectively mitigate that risk.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Hagan?

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, I just wanted to commend you on the excellent training for the young men and women in the Air Force. I take this personally. I have a nephew who is a graduate of the Air Force Academy and flies the F-15, and we are obviously extremely proud of him.

But my question has to do with the Global Strike Command, General Schwartz. As you know, the Air Force is in the midst of implementing the decisions that resulted in the assignment of cyber space responsibilities to the Air Force Space Command and the creation of the Global Strike Command. And I understand that this newly established command will control all the U.S. Air Force nuclear-capable bombers, missiles, and personnel and is expected to begin operations in September of this year.

Can you address the status of the Global Strike Command's resource requirements with respect to the Air Force's intercontinental nuclear missile capabilities, and how will the change of responsibilities result in contributing to U.S. deterrence?

General Schwartz: Ma'am, it reflects our long-term commitment, that is the establishment of Global Strike Command, to performing the nuclear mission as it is needed, and that is with precision, with reliability, and, as some that have described it, to a standard of perfection.

That is what is expected, and that is what is needed. And we, as an institution, had to organize ourselves in a way that will allow that to occur. And it evolved over time, but we had the operational capability distributed through several commands in the Air Force.

On the sustainment side, we had sustainment responsibility for the missiles and the bombers in four different commands. It was not a good arrangement. And so, what we have done, ma'am, is to consolidate that.

In the operations realm, you will have one commander responsible for the missiles and for the nuclear-capable bombers, and on the sustainment side, one commander responsible for all of that. And those two commanders would be very close together as they do their day-to-day work.

The important thing here is that Global Strike Command, we are not going back to Strategic Air Command days. But there are some things from the SAC days, the culture of compliance and disciplined execution, which we need to have rekindled, if you will, and that is what Global Strike Command will allow us to do.

Senator HAGAN. Will it be ready and operational in September?

General Schwartz: It will have initial operational capability in September with the commander that has been confirmed by this committee and by the Senate. That is Lieutenant General Frank Klotz. They will be manned at 70 percent initially, in that neighborhood, and then they will ramp through the next year to the full complement of their personnel, which exceeds 700 folks or thereabouts.

In addition, the weapon systems will transition at different times after September. The missiles will migrate when—again, when the command is ready to execute. You have to appreciate that General Chilton from Strategic Command, his bottom line is he thinks this is the right thing to do, but he does not want to disrupt or interrupt the continuity of the operational element. So we will migrate the missiles at a different time than we migrate the bombers to make sure that we have got everything tidy with regard to command and control and execution of nuclear missions.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

As you know, satellite communications provide our mobile warfighters with real-time images and video of the battlefield, accelerating the strategic and tactical decision-making for our mobile warfighters. I had the privilege of speaking recently to General Petraeus, and he underscored how the unmanned aerial vehicles, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets enable our warfighters with battlespace awareness information to conduct the counterinsurgency operations.

My question is how do you see the utilization of these systems in conjunction with the satellite communications involving in the theater? General Schwartz?

General Schwartz: Yes, ma'am. As I suggested in an answer to an earlier question, this is a very powerful capability. And it is de-

pendent on communications, both communications to control the platforms as well as to download the data that they collect so that it can be processed quickly and sent forward to the folks that need it for execution.

And in fact, one of the wonderful developments here is that we actually are downloading video directly to tactical elements as they are operating in Iraq and Afghanistan. And it is dependent on an architecture that provides that communications connectivity, and it is our view that the program that has been proposed with AEHF and WGS expansion is the way to proceed.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Hagan.

Senator Thune is not here. Senator Wicker?

Senator WICKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, we appreciate your service and appreciate your testimony. In your testimony, you stated, "Replacing the aging KC-135 fleet remains the Air Force's top acquisition priority." Where are we on this project?

Are we going to have a recompetition? Are we going to go back to square one? There is been a lot of talk about a dual or split buy between the two different platforms. So I would appreciate you enlightening the committee on the status there.

Mr. Donley: Sir, the KC-X does remain top priority for the Air Force and remains a priority for the Department of Defense. I think it was important that Secretary Gates did not make any adjustments to that. Even though we had many programs, many issues in front of us in considering how to put together the fiscal year 2010 budget, we left the KC-X alone.

Our intent remains, as he described it earlier this year, to release a draft RFP soon, within the next month or so, and to make a contract award probably next spring and to get that program back on track.

Senator WICKER. Spring of 2010?

Mr. Donley: Spring of 2010. And we have been working with the Secretary on the issue of acquisition strategy for that. We very much are in agreement that a split buy or a dual buy would not be in the best interests of the taxpayer. It would require us to develop two airplanes instead of one.

We would end up with two logistics tails as a result, and it would also require us to spend a lot more money upfront to support two sort of minimum economic order production lines at the same time, in excess of what we currently have planned from sort of fiscal planning in our budget going forward. So we think the dual award or do the split buy is not the way to go with this program.

Senator WICKER. How long do you expect the program to last once it is started, two decades, three decades?

Mr. Donley: This is a two-decade plus—this first increment KC-X is 179 aircraft. We have—I have forgotten off the top of my head, just about 430 KC-135s, I think, in our inventory. We have another increment of tanker modernization to pursue after these first 179 aircraft. The department strategy is that that is going to take a while, probably 10 years or so. And we will need to readjust at that point with the new technologies available to assess the way forward after that.

Senator WICKER. There is a school of thought that two platforms going forward over time might bring about savings because they would be competing with each other. We would have a competition of ideas, and we could see which one actually provides a better aircraft for our mission and for our service members, as well as for the taxpayers.

Have we ever tried that in the history of acquisition, and would you comment on that, General? You seem to be ready to jump in there.

General Schwartz: Well, there is some evidence that that works if you have a large enough program and if you have enough resources to devote to it. The so-called great fighter engine wars of the 1980s is a case in point, where we had two offers, two competitors, and it did prove beneficial.

But the bottom line here, sir, is that on the tanker, I mean, we are not dealing with sophisticated platforms here. We are dealing with commercial derivative platforms. And what we need to do is to acquire those platforms as rapidly as we can and as cheaply as we can. And having two producers do that could imply two supply chains, two training activities, and so on, which is money we need to invest in the platforms to modernize that fleet, which is approaching 50 years old.

Senator WICKER. Well, I will leave this subject, gentlemen. But let me just say, I don't see how anybody in this room or anybody on this committee can be proud of what has happened over the last year with regard to this program. The people tasked with making the decision called it by the numbers. There were only a very minimal number of discrepancies brought forward, and yet basically, it seems to me that the Secretary, for whom I have the highest regard and admiration, was forced to make a political decision and punt this down the road.

The taxpayers and the airmen and the security of our Nation is just going to have to wait 2 years because of a political decision. And if this becomes the model that the acquisition team can call it by the numbers and then a few politicians can raise hell and a couple of folks on TV can make some jingoistic statements and bring this down in a political manner, I really fear for the future of across-the-board, transparent acquisition by our DOD. And I am sorry that it has come to that.

Let me briefly ask one more question, Mr. Chairman, if I might? On the UAVs, General, are we getting the cooperation that you would like to have from the FAA with regard to using space in a responsible—using our airspace in a responsible manner for the increased training that we are going to need as we ramp up the use of UAVs for our service?

General Schwartz: It is wrestling match. And again, I do not want to cast aspersions on the FAA. Their concern, it is a legitimate concern, is for safety of flight. And they are concerned about having unmanned aircraft, which do not have, obviously, pilots aboard, and how you maintain separation between aircraft in controlled airspace. I mean, this is not a simple problem.

On the other hand, we think we have ways to facilitate that deconfliction and hope that we can persuade the FAA to perhaps be a little bit less conservation. Part of the way ahead is technical.

It is called sense and avoid. It is a capability, an electronic capability on the UAVs that would augment their capability to avoid collisions in the air.

That is part of the solution. But until we get there, we—that is on the part of DOD, reasonable people, reasonable people in the FAA need to come to accommodation so that we can operate and train.

Senator WICKER. As FAA and DOD wrestle, what is the resolution process? Is there going to have to be a mutual accommodation, or is someone at a higher level going to have to—

General Schwartz: I think this is doable at our level between DOD and DOT. And again, some of this is education. Some of this is, again, coming to understand each other's various imperatives, and I think we just need to be straightforward and candid with our counterparts in FAA. They likewise with us, and we will come to a solution that allows us to operate safely in controlled airspace.

Senator WICKER. Do you agree that readiness will be affected if we don't come to a resolution that expands your ability?

General Schwartz: I certainly do, sir.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Before I call on Senator Lieberman, I know he will join me in this. This happens to be Senator Akaka's 62nd wedding anniversary. He and his beloved Millie have been married 62 years today. I am not sure you will be able to stay around long enough for me to recognize you because we have a number of other Senators that are scheduled here first. But congratulations, Danny.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I give the credit to my lovely wife, Millie.

Chairman LEVIN. Just where it is deserved.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Lieberman?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you. I was just calculating, on my 62nd wedding anniversary, the good Lord willing, I will be 103.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN. And we will call on you in order, too.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you. That is very kind of you. That may keep me going.

I wanted to ask you both—and thank you for your service and your testimony, first—about the aerial refueling tanker. I know you were asked some questions before. I don't believe you were asked this. Secretary Gates has already announced plans to proceed with a competition to award the \$35 billion contract in a competition, excuse me, this summer.

I know that some of our colleagues on the House side are advocating a split buy between the two major competitors to meet the requirement. I wanted to ask both of you, I will start with you, General Schwartz, what you think about that idea?

General Schwartz: I don't favor it, sir, for very pragmatic reasons.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes.

General Schwartz: If we buy two different airplanes, what that imposes on us is two different infrastructures, two different training regimens, two different supply chains. It does not make eco-

conomic sense or, in my view, good institutional sense. If you are talking about manufacturing the same airplane in two locations, again, that is an inherently more expensive approach, although it might serve other interests.

But I think from our point of view, we should invest the limited dollars we have to get the most airplanes as quickly as we can. That is the imperative.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Secretary Donley, do you have an answer to that? And have you projected, assuming you agree with what General Schwartz has said, the additional costs probable from a split buy?

Mr. Donley: We have. We have been over this ground very carefully. It could be about \$7 billion.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Seven billion?

Mr. Donley: Billion dollars in difference. But just as importantly, as General Schwartz suggested, having a split buy requires us to support two production lines at probably a minimum level at the same time. Instead of buying about 15 airplanes per year, which is what our program planning projects at this point, we would have to build probably 24 per year. There are advantages to that, but it costs us a lot more money to do that every single year.

So from a budget and sort of fiscal planning point of view, it would take a huge dent in our procurement plans going forward for other necessary capabilities in other areas. So that would be, I think, a considerable downside.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So I think you have just answered my follow-on question, which is that you assume that that projected extra \$7 billion for a split buy of the tanker will come out of future Air Force budgets?

General Schwartz: Sir, I think we have to assume that. The truth is, there is not that much space in our budget. The tough choices we have made here with regard to other weapon systems we have talked about reflects how challenging the financial situation is.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I just thought of this. I wasn't planning on asking it. But this issue, which has been quite heated in past years, seems to be quiet for now, the issue I am about to get to, which is the alternative engine for the Joint Strike Fighter.

The President's budget again recommends against the alternative engine because of cost. Do you want to talk about that? And I presume you support that recommendation?

General Schwartz: I do, sir. We have talked today about aging of the fleet. The bottom line is we have got to get the F-35 production rate sufficiently high to help us deal with that looming issue, and diverting resources from aircraft production to dual source the engine, to me, makes that more difficult, not less.

I know that in the 1980s, we were pushing technology on engines, and we had the resources, and there was good logic perhaps in pursuing a parallel path at that time. I think we have more confidence in the technology all these years later, and given the resources available, I think that we need to invest that in fielding aircraft and not a dual source on the engine, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, I agree with that. I think you are operating—obviously, we are all operating in a resource-constrained

environment, made all the more intense by the fact that we are in two active fields of battle. So we have to make tough decisions on these matters.

Let me go to something I know I have talked to you about when you were good enough to come to my office. Let me approach it this way. The budget before us has significant increased funding for unmanned aerial vehicles, various classified programs, all the kinds of things that will help in the irregular wars that we are in.

My concern, as you know, is that in some ways this relates to the unmanned/manned argument or discussion that you had before that we are shortchanging the Joint STARS program, the JSTARS program, which will carry a radar system much larger and more effective, certainly more comprehensive within its coverage than the smaller ones that we are putting on the unmanned vehicles, and part of this is MP-RTIP program, the Radar Technology Insertion Program that I have been interested in for a while.

So I wanted to ask you if you could—actually, last year, we obligated, we appropriated for JSTARS in this program, JSTARS modernization, and we have not yet seen a plan for obligating the funds or a timeline for moving forward with MP-RTIP. I wanted to ask you if you can update us on that this morning?

General Schwartz: Senator, this is one of those areas where we have made a choice that while it is certainly true that the larger aperture, the larger radar that would be associated with the JSTARS has more capability in a number of interesting ways, that persistent surveillance is the coin of the realm, that we will get that much more so out of a Global Hawk class vehicle than a dated KC Boeing 707 class aircraft.

And that, again, it would be in the neighborhood of \$300 million a year in order to field MP-RTIP on the JSTARS. I am not arguing there isn't merit in that effort, but given the demands we face in providing an array of capabilities, our recommendation to you and the committee is that that is something that we just can't swing, given the resources available.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, as you know, I respectfully disagree. But I will consider your arguments, and we will talk further on it. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. My time is up.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Thune got here by the nick of time, I am afraid.

Senator MARTINEZ. Oh, man.

Chairman LEVIN. Yes, Senator Martinez, I was looking at you, but I saw John.

So, Senator Thune, and you are next, according to my chart.

Senator THUNE. I feel really bad about that.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN. You could walk out for a minute if you feel that bad. If you have to leave, maybe he would yield to you?

Senator THUNE. I will yield to you. Go ahead.

Chairman LEVIN. Because he has been here a long time, and I think if I weren't distracted, it would have been your turn.

Senator MARTINEZ. I have someone waiting for me in my office.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Thune, for doing that.

Senator Martinez?

Senator MARTINEZ. I appreciate it very, very much. I just will be brief. I might not even take all my time, in deference to all the courtesies I have been shown.

But, gentlemen, thank you for being here. My questions are mainly to do with the Joint Cargo Aircraft. I am very concerned about this, very concerned about the mission. Also very concerned, obviously, about the impact that it would have on Jacksonville, where the potential for jobs being lost.

This is an aircraft that was going to be built in the U.S. Now the manufacturer says that with this low number, it probably won't be. That is too bad.

But on the mission, which is really what we should focus on—not whether jobs comes or go—I am worried about two or three things, and I would like to address these questions and let you both reply. I am worried about the fact that this aircraft has the opportunity to land in airfields where the C-130 would not.

And I know last week I was told that perhaps that was 1 percent of airfields. I find that hard to believe. And since then, I have been talking to people who are more knowledgeable than I, and it appears to me that it is a much larger range of potential for that than just a 1 percent limitation.

The second is the issue of loads, whether you need to fly a C-130 for a load that actually could very well be managed by a much smaller aircraft, and you don't fly a big aircraft when you don't have to.

I am worried about the Air Force Special Operations Command gunship, and I am worried about the need for the Army to have that delivery for the last tactical mile and whether the Air Force can make the cultural shift to create that mission as part of what the Air Force does. So if you could take all those issues and answer for me?

I am also encouraged, General, to hear you say that you believe the floor is 38, which would suggest to me that you and I would not have a hard time agreeing that a larger number would be a much better thing for us to be doing.

General Schwartz: Senator, let me start big, and then walk small. First, one of the things that the United States Air Force does extremely well is what I call general support. That is providing whether it be lift or reconnaissance or strike on a theater basis and so on, we do this well.

There is another approach, which tends to be something that the Marine Corps and that the ground forces generally and the Army have practiced, which is direct support. That is capabilities are committed to specific maneuver units full time, and that they—and therefore, they are less available for application elsewhere. But you make a trade in that space.

I have committed to General Casey from the Army that the United States Air Force can do and will do the direct support mission if that is the conclusion of the department, if that is what is required. That if the brigade commander expects to see the same aircrew for 30 consecutive days, that is what we will do, rather than the efficient way to manage these things is you get the crew that they are qualified for the same level, but we run this in the most efficient way, which might not be the same crew every day.

That is an example of what we are trying to do. We can do this. And we will do this, if that is the decision.

The second piece is migrating the program from the Army to the Air Force. There is both a program management piece to this, and that is not instantaneous. The Army is going to have to stay in the lead at least well into 2010. And then we will make a handoff on the program going forward to whatever level that it ends up.

Third, with respect to the special operations capability, the Secretary of Defense's judgment was that it would be better to use existing C-130 capacity in Air Force Special Operations Command to host the weapons package than to buy new aircraft to do that. And so, there are eight MC-130Ws, which will be configured with the same package, avionics and guns and so on, that would have gone on the so-called AC-27. That is a choice. That is a trade off, and one, in my view, that is not unreasonable.

The last point I would make, again, is what is the number? We have to get together. That certainly will be one of the key outputs from the QDR. But in addition, the Army and the Air Force and the National Guard have to get together, and we are.

We are working this to define how we are going to organize to perform the mission, whether it is Army National Guard, whether it is Air Force National Guard, or whether it is some component of active duty. That is not yet fully cooked, but it will be by the end of the month.

Senator MARTINEZ. I would like you to speak briefly to me on the issue of versatility in terms of the utilization of airfields and so forth. The National Guard issue I didn't bring up in my question. I am glad you brought it up, but I know the National Guard is very keen on this aircraft being a part of their—but on the versatility in terms of utilization?

General Schwartz: As the former commander of the Transportation Command, I appreciate the place that this platform would have in the fleet mix. There are, given today's distributed battlefield where you have soft special operations teams and provincial reconstruction teams and small elements distributed around the battlefield, that a machine that takes a couple or three pallets or 12 to 20 passengers is a tidy-sized airplane for that distributed battlefield.

As you suggested earlier, sometimes the Herc is too much. It is too much airplane for that mission.

Now the tension is will we have excess capacity when we are done with this? Too many Hercs and whatever mix of C-27s it is. That is a legitimate question, which the Secretary has impressed on us and one we have to give him a rational response.

Senator MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, thank you for the courtesy.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Martinez.

Senator BEGICH?

Senator BEGICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Secretary Donley and General Schwartz, thank you for being here.

And I know, General, you have served in Elmendorf. So it is good to see you. And you left just as I was coming in as mayor of An-

chorage, so we crossed paths. So thank you very much for being here.

First, I want to say thank you to the support that is coming through the military construction. It is a little over \$65 million, which is a positive thing for us, and as you know, we continue to grow the bases up there, and they are very strategic in the long-term defense of the country.

One which I think I know the answer, but I want to make sure it is on the record, and as you know, the restructuring of the Air Force and the F-15s and the early retirement and how we end up in Alaska with the F-22s. Could you reassure me that that retirement of the F-15s, which in Alaska is about 24, if I remember right, a couple dozen, that when all done and said, that the timing of the replacements, the retirement of the F-22s and all that together, will not reduce the capacity or the capability of response as necessary in Alaska.

General Schwartz: Sir, it won't. And I would just qualify one thing, that the 24 aircraft you mentioned may not, tail number by tail number, actually retire. In many cases, we will be reassigning those aircraft to other units, either National Guard units, to replace yet older aircraft.

Senator BEGICH. Within Alaska or throughout the system?

General Schwartz: Throughout the system. Throughout the system, and that we will be—one of the rationales, and I understand Senator Chambliss's skepticism on this. But one of the rationale is that this adjustment will allow us to invest in those machines that we are retaining by putting, for example, the electronically scanned array radars on the airplanes that they currently do not have or the infrared search and track capability, which they currently do not have.

So this is not just retiring older airplanes. It will allow us to keep the best frames on a frame-by-frame basis, as well as put equipment on them that will make them more viable in the years ahead.

Senator BEGICH. Thank you for that explanation. Again, I just want to make sure I am clear that through this transition, it will not reduce the capability of Alaska's role, its strategic role with regard to the Air Force specifically.

General Schwartz: We will have—there will be capability in Alaska to defend Alaskan airspace. That will not diminish. And as you are aware, as recently as 2 days ago, we intercepted a Russian long-range aviation platform off the northwest coast.

Senator BEGICH. Absolutely.

General Schwartz: We will continue to do that right, sir.

Senator BEGICH. Thank you very much.

Let me follow up, if I can, on Senator Martinez in regards to the Joint Cargo Aircraft. I know, what caught me, the attention, when you said by the end of the month, you will—the end of the month is next week. And we are out of here probably today, if not tomorrow. But I want to, I guess, put on the record, as I have done to every military personnel that has come in front of here, the concern that I have for Alaska. And to be very frank with you, the disappointment I have in what I have heard as the transformation, which I understand everyone has kind of worked that out.

But as you know, in Alaska, the Sherpa, which is fairly old, but yet very vital in that small capacity, what I understand is the goal was the 27s were to replace the Sherpas. We had eight authorized. That will not occur, according to what I understand. And that makes me very nervous, to be very frank with you, and disappointed.

And so, I just want to press upon you, as you know Alaska, especially in your position and being up there, that short-haul capacity or the small capacity hauling is critical in some of these areas, and it is very important for us to be considered as you, in the next week here, finalize the list. My understanding is that was going to go to the Army Guard. That is not going to happen now. That makes me very nervous.

General Schwartz: Sir, I don't know that is the case. How this is going to lay in and who is going to do it is not yet a done deal. But I understand your point.

Senator BEGICH. Very good. And I see the Secretary wants to jump in on that comment.

Mr. Donley: I just wanted to clarify the schedule so there is no misunderstanding on this point. We owe the Deputy Secretary a report on sort of the way forward on JCA, we and the Army, together with the National Guard Bureau, by the end of this month. But I do not think that this report will be the last report.

I think this is an interim description of how far the conversations have gone, what issues we have identified, and the path that we have outlined forward to continue working the issues of—related to future bed-downs, related to the program management, transfer of responsibility. And I must say that while we have much on our plate in this particular issue the way it is now framed, our immediate focus is delivering the operational capability that has been committed for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2010.

And both the Air Force and the Army leadership are focused on making sure we execute and deliver that capability to the theater as planned. That is the number-one priority. We will get to these issues going down the line, but certainly we won't have all that work done by the end of this month.

Senator BEGICH. Okay, I appreciate that. And I know you will probably keep us well informed as the report and other activity moves forward.

One issue, and it is one that again, I know, General, you will be familiar with, and I noticed that we have not done the research and what it means yet. But I looked at the budget, and we are working with your staffs now just to understand it. But the Alaska Civil Air Patrol was cut about \$800,000, which, in Alaska, the Civil Air Patrol is truly life and death in what goes on there.

And so, we have not finalized what that means yet. We are working with your staff, but it is of concern of the impact. That is a significant number in what happens up there. And as you know, it is truly the backbone to a lot of our ability to protect people and ensure their life safety. I just wanted to put that on.

The other one, there are some minor, but yet for us, of course, there are major reductions of some of the one-time allocations. But two that really stuck out was the coal-to-liquid initiative, which I

know the Air Force is very focused on alternative energy, renewable energies, really doing a great job.

And a matter of fact, General Carlisle and I have talked about this as how that has been a hallmark in a lot of ways of what the Air Force is doing. And it concerns me because that cut is a 50 percent reduction in new technology. And when you think of all the States in this country, Alaska has 50 percent of the coal of this country. You can combine all of the States. We have more.

And this project, even though it was kind of a last-minute ad last year, it is becoming more and more developed. And I would hope that there would be some review and reconsideration. Obviously, I am going to be pitching that because I believe, and especially on coal, that we have to continue to use and review new technologies because it is not fully clear what it all means yet. And I think Alaska has great potential there.

I wanted to put that on. My time is up here, but I just wanted to leave you just one other thought, and that is I agree with you on the issue and I am looking forward to how you are going to go through the bid process on the tanker. It is a simple platform. It is not complicated. It is a small number, and it is in great need now. And I agree with you on the bid process.

I wish you the best. And hopefully, it will be clean in process. But one bidder at the end of the day, getting that short supply of what you need now, I think, is a good move.

Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Begich.

Senator Thune?

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you for your courtesy.

Senator THUNE. And gentlemen, thank you very much for your service. General and Mr. Secretary, nice to have you here.

And I want to ask a question regarding something that your predecessors last year testified about. And incidentally, I went to associate myself with the comments of the Senator from Alaska on synthetic fuels. That is something I have a great interest in and something I know that there was a commitment made about, and we are all sort of watching to see what happens with that. And the fact that the proposed project in Montana has been sort of scaled back or done away with I think is something that would concern me as an advocate for use of synthetic fuels.

But I want to ask you about something your predecessors made a priority last time around, and it was the next-generation bomber, which was, I think, one of the top five acquisition priorities, ranking just below the Joint Strike Fighter.

And yet Secretary Gates—and he was here last week, and I asked him some questions about it, as perhaps you know. He announced his intent to end development of a follow-on bomber until there is a better understanding of the need, requirements, and technology.

In your personal opinions, is there a reason to delay the next-generation bomber? That is my first question.

And then, second, the 2006 QDR directed a follow-on bomber to be fielded by the year 2018, and I guess my follow-up question, the

first one would be does the Air Force have a good understanding of the need, requirements, and technology to go with that?

Mr. Donley: Well, first, let me emphasize the importance of the long-range strike mission, which we believe is still an imperative for the Nation's defense and for our Air Force going forward. So while we have scrubbed plans for a particular program, we still need to work the long-range strike issues. I think that mission has support from the Secretary and other DOD leadership. I think we will get into that issue in more depth in the QDR and also the nuclear posture review going forward.

In my view, we just needed more time with the incoming administration, with the new leadership, given the restarting of arms control negotiations and other factors in front of us, to revalidate where we are headed on long-range strike and how we want to approach this mission. So I think we will be circling back on these issues going forward.

And you may note that in the unfunded priority list that we have provided to the committee, there are dollars for technology integration work, which we think will be helpful in bridging our current situation. We just canceled a line of numbers, will help us bridge the technology issues between now and when a new long-range strike program gets started.

Senator THUNE. General?

General Schwartz: As the Secretary suggested, long-range strike is a central feature of what the Air Force provides to the country and to the joint team, and I think where we were at was that the Secretary of Defense wasn't comfortable with what had been scoped as the parameters of the previous program—range, payload, manned, unmanned, nuclear, non-nuclear, low observable, very low observable, and so on.

We will get the Secretary of Defense comfortable with a definition of this that we can get on with fielding a long-range strike capability for the Nation. I don't sense any lack of conviction on his part in that regard, but simply wanting to be sure that we have got it defined properly. And it is a horse on us for not having gotten him into his comfort zone in this regard.

Senator THUNE. Do you still see a need to have—field that by 2018, as was directed by the QDR in 2006?

General Schwartz: Senator, the reality is that even with the former program, we were not going to field by 2018. We would have had a developmental platform perhaps by 2018. I think this is less a question of sort of a specific target date than it is getting it right and getting on a path that again, as you have heard the term used, is maybe is not as exquisite as we formerly saw this but is something we know we can do with high confidence.

Senator THUNE. One of the reasons for the delay, as stated by the Secretary, was so that the program could be informed by the completion of the post START arms negotiations. And I guess I am wondering what possible effect a follow-on START treaty would have on the design of a next-generation bomber?

General Schwartz: It is a matter of is it nuclear capable or not? And that has cascading implications for other things, like manned and unmanned. These are serious issues, and so it is why I under-

stand Secretary Gates's ambivalence here in wanting to have a better-defined scenario, which we will provide him, sir.

Senator THUNE. My impression was that the decision had kind of been made that it should be a nuclear platform already, but—

General Schwartz: I think that has been our view but is subject to new information as we go ahead.

Senator THUNE. Let me ask you then, given that, that the timelines are perhaps changing and the planning, the schedule of all this will be perhaps changing, does that also not suggest that we need to be making significant investments in some of our current platforms?

And the B-1, which is doing much of the legwork in Afghanistan and Iraq, providing a lot of the close air support, seems to me that we are going to have to be making necessary upgrades to keep those planes flying and flying in a way that is up to some of the challenges that we are going to face in some of these theaters of operation.

General Swartz: Absolutely true, and we are doing so well in excess of \$1 billion, new radars for all three aircraft, different modifications. As you are aware, we have put targeting pods now on most of the aircraft as well to do the irregular warfare mission. There is a commitment, both on B-52s, B-1s, and the B-2s, to sustain their capabilities until we are able to field a modern platform.

Senator THUNE. Mr. Chairman, I see my time has expired.

Thank you all very much for your responses, and we look forward to working with you on these issues. Thanks.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Thune.

Senator Akaka?

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

I want to add my welcome to Secretary Donley and General Schwartz for joining us today and to discuss the current state of our Air Force. I would, first, like to compliment and thank you for your steadfast leadership of our Air Force and wanted to recognize and thank our airmen around the world who are bravely defending the freedom that we hold dear.

I would like to ask a question about our Korea tour normalization. Recently, the DOD approved tour normalization in South Korea that will allow about half of the troops stationed in Korea to have their families join them while they are serving in Korea. I am really encouraged about the new policy because it will keep more airmen and their families together. However, we should proceed smartly as we implement this policy.

General, can you comment on the plans to ensure the infrastructure, which would include housing, schools, and medical care, the infrastructure in place for our bases in South Korea?

General Schwartz: Sir, I just visited, and there are three phases to the tour normalization process in Korea. Phase one involves, primarily for the Air Force, Osan Air Base and the introduction of 627, if I recall correctly, accompanied tours. We can do that. We have the infrastructure, the schools, the medical capability, and the housing, and so on to accommodate that.

I have made it clear, however, to General Sharp, that to go beyond phase one will require synchronized investment in the kinds of support facilities and so on that would be needed for those fami-

lies and that we, as an air force, are not in a position to have families go forward without that support available.

So the key thing, Senator, is that phase one is doable at Osan, and we are completely onboard. And we collectively need to work with Pacific Command and General Sharp at U.S. Forces Korea to make sure that the rest of this is properly synchronized.

Senator AKAKA. The 2008 Pacific Command strategy document was based on a strategy of partnership, presence, and readiness. This approach is critical to protecting our Nation and enhancing the stability of the Asia-Pacific region. A vital part of this strategy, of course, is air power. We enjoy air superiority in the Pacific region, but we can't ignore the military modernization of our adversaries in that region.

General Schwartz, with the planned arrival of the F- 22s at Hickam and other aircraft placements in the Pacific, how would you assess our air capabilities in the Pacific region?

General Schwartz: Sir, I think the proposal we have in place provides adequate coverage for foreseeable contingencies. And I know for a fact that Admiral Keating feels likewise. We would not have proceeded with the proposals that we have made without the advice of the combatant commanders involved.

Now I am not saying that either Tim Keating or John Craddock are ecstatic about the reductions that we have proposed, but I think they acknowledge, again, that we are managing this in a way that does not induce undue risk to their missions.

As you know, we are maintaining a presence of both fighter and bomber capability on Guam. Guam is sovereign U.S. territory, and we will continue to maintain that and other capabilities, including introducing Global Hawk next year and so on. Bottom line is I think that the combatant commander is satisfied that he has sufficient, not excessive, but sufficient Air Force capability to deal with foreseeable contingencies.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you.

Secretary Donley, the 2009 Defense Authorization Act requires the Chief Management Officer of each of the services to carry out a comprehensive business transformation program. An effective program can be critical as the Air Force tries to sustain and equip our airmen in today's fiscal environment. The actions of the CMO should also improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Air Force.

Mr. Secretary, what is your assessment of the Air Force's CMO's efforts?

Mr. Donley: Senator, my assessment would be that we are still at the front end of our work in this regard. As you recall, the statute puts the Chief Management Officer responsibility on the Under Secretaries of each of the military departments. The Under Secretary position in the Air Force has been vacant for some time. However, in lieu of that vacancy and in lieu of the statutory direction, we have created a deputy CMO office and staffed that within the Office of the Under Secretary to begin this important work.

And our first order of business has been to align some previous efforts undertaken by the Air Force, which were referred to as Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century, AFSSO 21, in which

we had identified some champions, we refer to them as, in several important business areas and operational areas of the department.

We have moved to start to align and consolidate the work done in AFSO 21 with the regular sort of daily, week-in, week-out work of our Air Force council process, and we think this will help bring together a good synergy between the business side and the operational side of the Air Force under the same oversight and leadership structure. So that has been our focus over the past 8 months or so.

Senator AKAKA. Mr. Secretary, I am glad to hear what you just said about that, and it is important that we have that part of our superstructure in place, and I thank you for that.

Mr. Chairman?

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

Senator GRAHAM?

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is just fascinating to listen to a representative democracy discuss military budgets. We all have our parochial interests, and it somehow seems to work. But I am going to start with my parochial interests. Shaw Air Force Base, the three-star Air Force CENTCOM commander, General Schwartz, we have talked about this. That is correct?

General Schwartz: Yes, sir. We have.

Senator GRAHAM. And you are of the belief to temporarily move the three-star flag into the Qatar, I believe, to be closer to operations?

General Schwartz: Yes, sir. I think that is the operational imperative.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes, when did you decide that? When did you think that would be a good idea?

General Schwartz: Sir, the conclusion was taken at our last Corona meeting, which was in March.

Senator GRAHAM. General Petraeus supports this?

General Schwartz: He does, indeed.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. And to assure people back at Shaw, this is a temporary movement of the flag?

General Schwartz: It is, sir. And in fact, the way we are going to do this is that the three-star position, as you are aware, we are decoupling Air Force Central from 9th Air Force, but the AFCENT position will be at Shaw with duty at. And we think that is further affirmation that this is temporary.

Senator GRAHAM. Right. And hopefully, hostilities will be over one day and the flag comes back.

General Schwartz: And we return to a peacetime alignment.

Senator GRAHAM. And you have a forward flag and a rear flag basically?

General Schwartz: Actually, we are trying to overcome the rear flag issue.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay.

General Schwartz: Senator, what happened, Gary North has done a terrific job, but he had both warfighting responsibilities in the theater and then had to worry about oversight and supervision of five wings and three direct reporting units at the same time. And as you know—

Senator GRAHAM. The 9th Air Force?

General Schwartz: The 9th Air Force responsibilities.

Senator GRAHAM. But when you look at AFCENTCOM, the goal is to keep it at Shaw, but just temporarily move it forward?

General Schwartz: Yes. We move the commander forward.

Senator GRAHAM. Right, moving the commander and dozens of people with him, not hundreds of people?

General Schwartz: Absolutely. It is certainly less than 50, probably less than 40.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. Well, thank you.

And the people at Shaw are very patriotic, as you well know.

General Schwartz: I do, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. You have been there many times, and the bottom line is I just want to assure them that this is an operational need, and we are all for doing what is necessary. We just want to understand because this is sort of a change that has caught people off guard, and we are trying to—and you have answered these questions from Congressman Spratt?

General Schwartz: Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. And if you can give us something in writing to memorialize this, it would be helpful.

In the Army, if they do the same thing with their three-star, it is the same deal?

General Schwartz: It is possible, and I—

Senator GRAHAM. Well, I have talked to the Army about that.

General Schwartz: Okay. I can tell you, I know that Dave Petraeus thinks this would be a good idea for both components.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay, well, we will make sure that everybody is on the same sheet of music, the people at Shaw, having the collocated Army three-star there, I think, is good so that these commanders can talk to each other. Shaw is a great environment to do it. But if they have got to move forward temporarily, I understand the need to as long, as it doesn't disrupt the system we have set up.

General Schwartz: Understood, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, and we will appreciate something in writing about that.

Mr. Secretary, glad to have you onboard, glad you are around. We are talking about two lines to build tankers. We are talking about two different engines. General, you have been very candid and direct. If you had—if money wasn't an object, would building, having two sources of an F-35 engine be a good idea?

Mr. Donley: Well, Senator, we have done it in the past. The concern for F-35 was that, especially earlier on in the program, we were not able to make a business case for how this would be—

Senator GRAHAM. But I mean, just from what I have heard about having dual sources that one source sort of is not as efficient as it should be. There is no redundancy. Do you agree with that, General Schwartz? There is an upside to having two sources.

Mr. Donley: There needs to be where we have single sources, even where we make down selects after we have had a competition, whenever we have a single source, there needs to be downward pressure on price. The Government has to drive hard bargain, has to watch cost growth from single sources.

Senator GRAHAM. And two sources can sometimes be better than one from a national security perspective. You have got one company you are depending completely on. Two companies that make quality products can, from a military point of view, be better. Is that right, General Schwartz?

General Schwartz: Senator, if money is no object.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes, well, but the reason I say that, money is always an object. But the amount of money we are trying to run the Department of Defense on I think is not enough, and I want to ask the Air Force their view if we go to 3 percent, 3.5 percent of GDP spent on our military, is that a wise decision to make for this Nation?

If we grow the Army and the Marine Corps as we have done, does that not put more obligations on you, General Schwartz, to service them?

General Schwartz: I think it does. But I have to tell you that if you ask me where I would put my next marginal dollar, at this point, it would not be in a second engine for the—

Senator GRAHAM. No, I understand that there are places you could put the money that makes more sense. My point is how much money makes sense for the Nation to spend on defense?

And we are looking at historic lows in terms of GDP being spent on defense at a time when, historically, peace is not breaking out. Do you see a peace dividend any time soon, General Schwartz?

General Schwartz: No, sir. I don't.

Senator GRAHAM. Mr. Secretary, are you worried about the role the Air Force is going to play increasing, not decreasing in the future?

Mr. Donley: I think there are lots of demands on the Air Force, in particular, the growth areas for our domains of air, space, and cyber. There is new growth demands on cyber. There are growth demands coming on space.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, isn't there also growth demands coming with servicing a larger Army and Marine Corps?

Mr. Donley: Perhaps.

Senator GRAHAM. And the threats that are in the future are not like the ones in Iraq and Afghanistan. They do have an air component to them, an Iranian threat, a North Korean threat in terms of South Korea. Combat aircraft would play a different role in that scenario. Is that true?

Mr. Donley: Each scenario has its own particular demands, no question about it.

Senator GRAHAM. Is that true, General Schwartz, that there would be a need for air supremacy there that doesn't exist in Iraq and Afghanistan?

General Schwartz: The need for defense of the air is very clear in whatever scenarios. We are—we enable the ground forces, for example, to operate with impunity from the air by asserting air superiority.

Senator GRAHAM. And there are some environments you would have to fight to be able to obtain that advantage?

General Schwartz: Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Sophisticated airplanes and sophisticated air defenses, and that is not an unrealistic scenario for this country?

General Schwartz: It is not.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

Senator McCaskill?

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I certainly follow and agree with some of the logic behind Senator Graham's questioning about two sources, and I have a number of questions I was going to ask about retiring of the C-5s once the statutory prohibition goes off this year, especially if the reliability still falls as far below the C-17 as it currently does.

But I am going to put those questions to you in the record. I think we have got a strong case to make that once that statutory prohibition goes off, that we should look at retiring some of the C-5s. And I know you all know that I want to make sure that we are not shutting down a line in terms of the C-17 that we are going to have to spend a lot of money to reopen as we look down the line in terms of our lift capability in our military.

But instead of going through all of those questions today, I want to just take a minute, and I hope you will indulge me, and you, Mr. Chairman. I think we talk about the brave men and women in this committee a lot, and we very rarely pause to specifically talk of our bravest.

And we lost a first lieutenant in the Air Force on Wednesday. It was a young woman from St. Louis. Her parents are good friends of mine. I had an opportunity to visit with her mother yesterday. Three men in uniform came to her door at 6:45 yesterday morning to tell her that Roz had been killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan.

Roz was an incredible young lady. She was an all-American lacrosse player in high school in St. Louis and a 2006 Air Force Academy graduate, where she was a group commander. And she was a political science major and interned for Senator Allard in Colorado.

And ironically, used to admire the F-15s in the skies over St. Louis and began being a very bossy young woman, saying that she had every intention of flying one of those planes. She ended up being a military intelligence officer and was busy in Afghanistan, helping with intelligence.

And I want to take a minute to recognize her and all of the other brave airmen out there that are doing their duty. And my deepest sympathy to Bob and Susie and her brother Todd, and just thank you all for the leadership you provide in our country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

I am also familiar with that tragedy, that tragic loss because of a relationship to somebody who has been working for me for a long time. So we share your passion for the men and women in uniform, your devotion to them, and your feeling of loss and grief that you have just expressed.

Mr. Donley: Senator, thank you very much. We likewise appreciate very deeply this opportunity you have taken to recognize Lieutenant Schulte and her family. They have been very much in our thoughts and prayers the last couple of days.

General Schwartz: And ma'am, she will return to Dover at 0400 tomorrow morning.

Senator MCCASKILL. Her family is aware of that, and thank you for all your sensitivity you have in terms of the way you deal with the families in these tragic situations.

Chairman LEVIN. There will be no additional questions at this time. There will be questions for the record, as Senator McCaskill and others have indicated.

We want to thank you again for being here, for your information. We again express our gratitude to the men and women of the Air Force family.

We will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:55 a.m., the committee adjourned.]