

**HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS
OF ADMIRAL JAMES G. STAVRIDIS, USN
FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF
ADMIRAL AND TO BE COMMANDER, U.S. EU-
ROPEAN COMMAND AND SUPREME ALLIED
COMMANDER, EUROPE; LIEUTENANT GEN-
ERAL DOUGLAS M. FRASER, USAF TO BE
GENERAL AND COMMANDER, U.S. SOUTH-
ERN COMMAND; AND LIEUTENANT GEN-
ERAL STANLEY A. McCHRYSTAL, USA TO BE
GENERAL AND COMMANDER, INTER-
NATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE
AND COMMANDER, U.S. FORCES, AFGHANI-
STAN**

TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2009

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:36 a.m. in room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, Webb, Udall, Hagan, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Chambliss, Graham, Thune, Wicker, and Collins.

Also present: Senator Murkowski.

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

Majority staff members present: Joseph M. Bryan, professional staff member; Ilona R. Cohen, counsel; Mark R. Jacobson, professional staff member; Jessica L. Kingston, research assistant; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, counsel; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; Michael J. Noblet, professional staff member; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Joseph W. Bowab, Republican staff director; Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Richard H. Fontaine, Jr., deputy Republican staff director; Michael V. Kostiw, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, minority

counsel; Richard F. Walsh, minority counsel; and Dana W. White, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Christine G. Lang and Brian F. Sebold.

Committee members' assistants present: James Tuite, assistant to Senator Byrd; Vance Serchuk, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn A. Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Akaka; Christopher Caple, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Patricia Hayes, assistant to Senator Bayh; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Jennifer Barrett, assistant to Senator Udall; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Lenwood Landrum and Sandra Luff, assistants to Senator Sessions; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Adam G. Brake, assistant to Senator Graham; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Dan Fisk and Brian W. Walsh, assistants to Senator Martinez; Erskine W. Wells III, assistant to Senator Wicker, and Chip Kenneth, assistant to Senator Collins.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. The committee meets this morning to consider three military nominations: Admiral James Stavridis, nominated to be Commander, U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe; Lieutenant General Douglas Fraser, nominated to be general and to succeed Admiral Stavridis as Commander, U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), marking the first time that an Air Force general would take command of SOUTHCOM, if confirmed; and Lieutenant General Stanley McChrystal, nominated to be General and Commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, and Commander, U.S. Forces, Afghanistan.

On behalf of the committee, we want to thank each one of you for your service to our country, your willingness to continue to serve. And we also want to acknowledge the sacrifices that you and your families have made along the way. The support that our military families provide is critical, and we want to do all that we can to support them.

If confirmed, these three nominees will lead our military in meeting today's security concerns in their areas of responsibility, and preparing for tomorrow's. One of the most immediate challenges is implementing the President's new civil military strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. If confirmed, two of our witnesses, Admiral Stavridis and General McChrystal, will need to coordinate closely for that strategy to work. As Commander EUCOM and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral Stavridis will need to work with our NATO and other European coalition partners to build the capabilities needed in Afghanistan and secure allied commitments to the NATO ISAF mission.

Our European allies continue to provide the majority of the nearly 35,000 non-U.S. troops in Afghanistan, but only a portion are in the fight where the fight mainly is, in the south and east of Afghanistan. The NATO contribution in Afghanistan remains inadequate. Even as President Obama has approved increasing the U.S. presence by some 21,000 soldiers, to a total U.S. force of 68,000 by the end of this summer.

Moreover, Secretary Gates testified recently that the Secretary Afghan Army Trust Fund has received contributions of less than one-tenth of its target of 1 billion Euros from our NATO allies. Admiral Stavridis, we'd be interested in any thoughts that you may have as to how to get NATO and our other allies in Europe to do their share for the Afghanistan mission, whether by providing additional military resources, additional trainers for the absolutely critical task of growing the Afghan security forces faster, financial contributions to defray the costs of Afghanistan reconstruction, and providing civilian technical expertise to build the country's governance capacity.

Another issue relative to European security relates to Russia. Vice President Biden and Secretary Clinton have called for resetting U.S.-Russian relations. I believe there are opportunities to find and build common security interests between the United States and Russia, including the development of a unified response to the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran.

The President, Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, and National Security Advisor General Jones have all commented positively about the prospects of the United States and Russia working on a common missile defense as a way of deterring Iran's nuclear ambitions. Senators Bill Nelson, Susan Collins, and I recently explored that possibility on our visit to Moscow, Prague, and Warsaw, and came back with some positive possibilities worth exploring.

Admiral Stavridis, I invite your comments on whether a cooperate U.S.-Russian missile defense program could possibly change the overall dynamic in the region and might cause Iran to recalculate any nuclear weapons ambitions. And we also would welcome comments that you might have on the potential for the NATO-Russia Council to serve as a useful forum for discussing such possible joint missile defense cooperation.

General McChrystal, if you're confirmed, you would bring what Secretary Gates called "fresh eyes" to the task of commanding NATO's International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF, in U.S. Forces, Afghanistan. Implementing the counterinsurgency approach outlined in the President's strategy will require significant coordination, not only between two chains of command, one reporting up to the NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and the other through U.S. Forces, Afghanistan, to General Petraeus at the U.S. Central Command, but also to coordinate between the military and civilian components of the effort in Afghanistan.

The next commander of ISAF and U.S. forces in Afghanistan will confront a myriad of challenges, including a resurgent Taliban, an effectively open border in the area between Kandahar, Afghanistan, and Quetta, Pakistan, over which border extremists come into Afghanistan and return to safe havens in Pakistan. In addition to that, there is crippling poverty, unchecked narcotics trafficking corrupting the government. All instruments of U.S. and coalition power, not just military force, but also diplomatic, economic, and legal tools, will be needed to turn the situation in Afghanistan around.

General McChrystal, I also invite you this morning to clarify your understanding of U.S. standards for the treatment of detainees and to comment on allegations of detainee mistreatment by

units under your command during your tenure as commander of the Joint Special Operations Command from 2003 to 2008. You may want to address both that issue and the Tillman matter in your opening statement. Both subjects were discussed in executive session of the Armed Services Committee last year in connection with your nomination to your current position as director of the Joint Staff.

General Fraser, if confirmed, the challenges facing you in the western hemisphere may be different, but they're also complex. As a result of the relative success of Plan Colombia over the past decade, security has improved for Colombians; however, you will still be confronted by an illegal narcotics trade that is constantly adjusting its tactics in response to U.S. surveillance and counternarcotics efforts. As General Stavridis can attest, the violence that shook Bogota 10 years ago is now challenging governments across Central America and Mexico. Countries like El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama have now become the focal point of territorial battles for production sites and trafficking routes for drugs. The committee will be interested in hearing your views on this situation and how you intend to address this burgeoning challenge.

In addition to addressing these issues, you'll also be in charge of developing our security relations with important allies. General Fraser, we look forward to hearing from you on these matters, and how you plan to build on the work of your predecessors.

Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I join you in welcoming Admiral Stavridis and General McChrystal and General Fraser, and congratulate them on their nominations. The importance of each of these positions to our national security can't be overstated.

The recent fighting in Pakistan, coupled with our ongoing challenges in Afghanistan, underscore the high stakes our country faces in this theater. I support the long overdue change of course announced for Afghanistan earlier this year. The war there and in Pakistan is one that we can and must win. But, for years now we have been fighting without a clear strategy, with insufficient resources, and with less than total support of the Government of Pakistan. Now that we have a new strategy, I believe we must quickly follow up with the development of an integrated joint-agency civil-military campaign plan for all of Afghanistan and for the Pakistan border area.

We also need to ensure that General Rodriguez has the staff and resources he will need to conduct operational planning similar to the activities conducted by him in CII in Iraq.

Finally, we must take every possible step to accelerate the growth of the Afghan Security Forces. The Afghan army is too small, and, even with the current projected end strengths of 134,000, it will not be big enough to tackle the many security challenges at hand.

At a minimum, we need to more than double the current size of the Afghan army to 160,000 troops and consider enlarging it to 200,000. The costs of this increase should not be borne by the

United States alone, but by the international community. I look forward to hearing General McChrystal's thoughts on these aims, as well as your views on the need for a comprehensive civil-military campaign plan and for the establishment of a planning corps under General Rodriguez.

Admiral Stavridis, you will play a critical role in marshaling NATO's efforts in Afghanistan and elsewhere. While I believe the United States should continue to encourage European troop contributions and press for reductions of caveats on their use, I also believe we should move away from stressing what Washington wants Europe to give and more together encouraging what Europe is prepared to contribute.

Many of our NATO allies, and other allies and partners outside NATO, including countries in Asia and the Gulf, are fully capable of contributing many badly needed resources. As Secretary Gates noted in remarks over the weekend, in many areas, noncombat-related contributions, from police training to a trust fund for the Afghan National Army, will be critical to long-term success, and as critical as more European troops on the ground. Admiral Stavridis, we will look to you for new approaches in these areas that will increase NATO involvement.

America's future is fundamentally tied to the stability, prosperity, and security of our southern neighbors. The recent uptick in violence along our southern border is perhaps the chief example of the interplay between our own security and that of our southern neighbors.

Today, Phoenix, Arizona, is the kidnapping capital of America, and gangs that were born on the streets of El Salvador and Nicaragua wreak havoc on our Nation's cities and towns.

Through the Merida Initiative with Mexico and via our various SOUTHCOM security partnerships throughout the hemisphere, we must help our southern neighbors help themselves in a concerted effort to fight crime, stop drug trafficking, and provide security for their people. General Fraser, I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how SOUTHCOM is addressing these problems.

I thank our nominees for their service, and I look forward to their testimony today, and rapid confirmation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator McCain follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

And before we call on our witnesses for their opening statements and to introduce their families, one of our dear colleagues, Senator Murkowski, is here, and we will call on her to make an introduction.

Senator Murkowski?

**STATEMENT OF HON. LISA MURKOWSKI, U.S. SENATOR FROM
THE STATE OF ALASKA**

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member McCain. Thank you.

I am—I'm truly honored this morning to sit before you to introduce Lieutenant General Douglas Fraser. General Fraser is accom-

panied by his wife Rena, his son, Ian, and his daughter, Heather, and, I also understand, her husband, as well.

I have had the pleasure and the privilege to come to know, not only General Fraser, but his family, through the time that he has spent up north in Alaska. He comes before the committee this morning for confirmation to the rank of general, capping off a 34-plus-year Air Force career. That career officially began in 1975, upon his graduation from the Air Force Academy. Following graduation, General Fraser served in Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Alabama,

Idaho, Hawaii, Colorado, Washington, D.C., in addition to Alaska. So, I think those children are certainly well traveled, there. He's also served in Germany and Japan. But, General Fraser calls Alaska home, and we certainly could not be prouder.

General Fraser served two memorable assignments in Alaska, the first from January 2000 to April of 2002, when he commanded the 3rd Wing at Elmendorf Air Force Base there in Anchorage. It was during those years that I represented the airmen of Elmendorf in the Alaska legislature. I became familiar with General Fraser's leadership, both on base and off. General Fraser and his wife, Rena, were more than ambassadors for the Air Force, they were truly forces of good for our whole community.

In October of 2005, General Fraser returned to Elmendorf after two assignments in Colorado. He headed up the Joint Alaskan Command, where he remained until April of 2008. And it was during this time period where our Armed Forces were really coming to grips with the challenge of treating men and women returning from Iraq with PTSD and traumatic brain injuries. General Fraser was truly committed to addressing the challenges. He was involved in a roundtable that we had convened to discuss how we deal with the healthcare facilities, how our ability to deal with the challenges could be handled. At the time I learned about an innovative project that the Air Force medical wing at Elmendorf would undertake, it was called a Hometown Healing. And the Air Force medical wing determined that it was capable of treating wounded warriors in Alaska. It sought out Alaskans who were recovering in the Lower 48 hospitals, brought them back to Alaska, and this occurred under General Fraser's watch at the Alaska Command, and it's something that we are very, very proud of. That Elmendorf hospital was subsequently voted the best in the Air Force.

Alaska is known across the globe for the high level of support that it provides to members of the armed services that are stationed in our State. And this doesn't happen by coincidence. It's the product of strong partnerships between the senior leaders on Alaska's installations and the leaders of our Alaska communities, partnerships that each senior leader improves upon during his tenure and passes along to his successors. The Air Force has sent to Alaska some of its very best, people like the current chief of staff, General Norton Schwartz, the commander of Pacific Air Forces, General Howie Chandler. I would say that, General Fraser, you stand shoulder-to-shoulder with these senior leaders, in terms of support for Alaska's military communities.

While I have to express some disappointment that General Fraser's next assignment is going to take him away from the Pacific,

that's where the Nation needs him, and that's where he will go. Wherever General Fraser goes, I know that he will be an inspiration to the troops that he leads, a strong force in his community, and a military leader of the highest qualities. And I strongly endorse his confirmation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Murkowski follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Murkowski. A very significant introduction. We're delighted you were able to join us today.

Let me now call on our three witnesses, in the following order, for their opening comments: General Stavridis, General Fraser—I'm sorry—Admiral Stavridis, General Fraser, and General McChrystal.

STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL JAMES G. STAVRIDIS, USN, NOMINEE FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF ADMIRAL AND TO BE COMMANDER, U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND, AND SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, EUROPE

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Chairman Levin, Ranking Member McCain, members of the committee, I'd like to begin by simply saying how proud I am to be here with General Fraser and General McChrystal. Couldn't ask for a better Army-context battle buddy, Air Force-context wingman, and the Navy would say shipmates. We're glad to be here together.

I'd just make the comment, as you look at the three of us here, it really is a joint Goldwater-Nichols kind of panel—Army, Navy, Air Force—and also, Skeet Fraser, as nominated as the first airman to go to SOUTHCOM, I'm lucky enough to be nominated as the first admiral to go to Europe; Stan McChrystal, a product of real improvements in legislative quality built into special operations, all came out of this Congress, came out of Goldwater-Nichols. And so, we're proud to be here, and I thank you for taking the time to hear us.

I'm here with my family—my wife, Laura, right here behind me, my childhood sweetheart. We lived together in Europe when we were both children, so the prospect of going back to Europe is extremely appealing to both of us. We have two daughters ourselves now, who are both here, Christina, a proud graduate of the University of Virginia, works out at Google in San Francisco, my daughter, Julie, makes us very proud by signing up, this year, for the Navy ROTC program, going to the University of Texas at Austin. So, I'm very proud and lucky to have the family here with me.

I am personally, obviously, very honored and humbled by the President's nomination and the Secretary's recommendation for this position. I have a fair amount of background in Europe. In addition to having lived there as a child, I've traveled Europe extensively over the years. I've operated with NATO off of Haiti, the Balkans, in the Gulf, studied NATO as part of my academic work that the Navy sent me to at the Fletcher School, years ago. And I believe in the transatlantic alliance. I think it's an important one. And, if confirmed, I hope to be a positive force, as Senator McCain was just talking about, and the Chairman, in convincing our allies

to continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with us in important missions throughout the world, and, in particular, in Afghanistan.

My approach will be, as it has been at Southern Command for the last 3 years, to be collegial, to be oriented toward international solutions, multilateral approaches, and, above all, interagency and whole of government. These are challenging times in Europe, they're challenging times in Afghanistan and the world. If confirmed, I will do my best.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Stavridis follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, thank you so much.

General Fraser?

**STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL DOUGLAS M. FRASER,
USAF, NOMINEE TO BE GENERAL AND COMMANDER, U.S.
SOUTHERN COMMAND**

General FRASER. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for this opportunity. Senator McCain. And I would like to also thank Senator Murkowski for her kind introduction and for her continued support of our men and women in uniform.

If I could, let me first introduce my wife, Rena, my partner for 11 years, who has eagerly learned about the Air Force and the joint community, and now steadfastly advocates for and supports military families around the globe.

Next, I'm joined by my son, Ian. He spent 4 years in the Air Force. He's a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom and now works with industry.

I'm also accompanied by my daughter, Heather, and her husband, Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Lyman, a businessman and member of the Air Force Reserve. Lieutenant Colonel Lyman, when performing duty with the Air Force Reserve, routinely travels forward to Iraq and Afghanistan to directly support our joint warfighters. Heather and Bruce have also blessed us with our first grandchild.

We're also joined today by Lieutenant Michael Dinmore, a USAF Academy graduate who we sponsored while we were in Colorado Springs while he was attending the Academy, and he's now a third-year medical student at Bethesda, and he's essentially another son to us.

Finally, our daughter, Hannah Green, couldn't be with us today. She is, I'm sure, studying very hard and doing well in her final exams back in Honolulu.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to introduce my family. As you can see, we've grown very robustly, in our Air Force career and our time in the Armed Forces.

Distinguished members of the committee, it's my distinct privilege to appear before you today as the nominee for the Commander of United States Southern Command. I am both honored and humbled to be nominated by the President and the Secretary of Defense for this important role and for the opportunity to continue serving with the magnificent men and women who voluntarily defend this nation.

I am no stranger to Latin America. I spent 3 years in high school in Bogota, Colombia, graduating there in 1971. During this time, I gained a lifelong appreciation and affection for Latin America.

Since that time, I have visited several countries in the region on a couple of different occasions, and, if confirmed, I relish the opportunity to return to the wonderful lands of my childhood.

While I haven't spent much time in Latin America during my career, let me assure you that I will spend all my time and energy enhancing the role that United States Southern Command plays with our partner Armed Forces in the region and continual Admiral Stavridis's dedicated efforts to enhance the interagency cooperation and coordination.

Finally, as Admiral Stavridis mentioned, I am honored to share this venue with he and Lieutenant General McChrystal. I can't think of two better joint partners—battle buddies, wingmen, shipmates—I'd rather be with here today than these two distinguished gentlemen.

I've not had the pleasure of directly serving with Admiral Stavridis. As I have looked more closely at Southern Command, I'm impressed by what Southern Command has accomplished under his leadership, by his foresight and his innovation, and I look forward to the opportunity to build on his distinguished accomplishments.

Likewise, during my current duty as the Deputy Commander United States Pacific Command, I've shared some time with Lieutenant General McChrystal while he served as the Director of Joint Staff. I am equally impressed with his vision, intellect, and drive to improve the coordination and operation of our joint forces.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity and the privilege to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Fraser follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General.

General McChrystal?

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL STANLEY A. McCHRISTAL, USA, NOMINEE TO BE GENERAL AND COMMANDER, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE, AND COMMANDER, U.S. FORCES, AFGHANISTAN

General McCHRISTAL. Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you.

I'd like to thank the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense for recommending me, and the President for nominating me to serve the team engaged in this important mission.

I'm accompanied today by my wife, Annie. Her love and support for more than 32 years have been extraordinary.

The President's new Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy outlines a path to attaining our strategic goal in the region through a fully resourced counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan. It is important for me to give you my perspective on where I believe we are and where we must go. I appreciate this opportunity.

First, I'd like to recognize the many Afghan civilians, soldiers, and police, who, along with young Americans and all our coalition partners, have sacrificed greatly to stand up and fight for Afghanistan. I honor the fallen, as I know do each of you on this committee.

You gave me the opportunity to discuss in detail one of those fallen, Corporal Pat Tillman, in closed session with this committee a year ago, in advance of my confirmation as Director of the Joint Staff, which I appreciated. I stand ready to answer any additional questions you may have.

And I would like to express my deepest condolences to his fellow Rangers, who lost a comrade, and to his family, who lost a brother, a husband, and a son.

As a fellow soldier, I'd also like to recognize the service of General David McKiernan.

In Afghanistan, despite impressive progress in many areas since 2001, the situation is serious. Afghans face a combination of challenges: a resilient Taliban insurgency, increasing levels of violence, lack of governance capacity, persistent corruption, lack of development in key areas, illicit narcotics, and malign influences from other countries. Together, these challenges threaten the future of Afghanistan and regional stability.

The potential re-emergence of al Qaeda or other extremist safe havens in Afghanistan, as were present before 9/11, and existing safe havens in Pakistan, are critical threats to our National security and to our allies.

Additionally, challenges to legitimate governance, like those underway in Pakistan, undermine an important partner and threaten regional stability.

Finally, I believe that providing the Afghan people, battered by 30 years of almost unbroken violence, an opportunity to shape their future requires our firm commitment and demonstrates the values that underpin America's credibility worldwide.

For all these reasons, we must succeed.

The challenge is considerable. This is not the environment we, along with our NATO allies and other international partners, envisioned 4, or even 2, years ago, but it is the environment we have today and the place from which we must navigate a way forward.

There is no simple answer. We must conduct a holistic counterinsurgency campaign, and we must do it well. Success will not be quick or easy. Casualties will likely increase. We will make mistakes. Commitment and continued support of this committee, Congress, and the American people will be vital. With the appropriate resources, time, sacrifice, and patience, we can prevail.

A key component of resourcing is people. More than 21,000 additional U.S. military personnel will have deployed to Afghanistan by October this year. You might properly ask if that is enough. I don't know. It may be some time before I do. What I do know is that military-centric strategy will not succeed. The Department of State and other members of the interagency are preparing to train and deploy additional civilian personnel with vital governance and development expertise. Development of an integrated civil-military plan with Ambassador Eikenberry and his team to unite efforts across security, governance, and development is ongoing. It complements efforts by Ambassador Holbrooke, General Petraeus, and others to address issues across the region. I will support fully the completion and execution of that plan.

Counterinsurgency is difficult business and demands resources, courage, and commitment over time. Each step of the essential

shape-clear-hold-build process offers challenges and pitfalls. We face serious challenges, but the insurgency threat and the Afghan people offer no vision for a better future and, thus, remain vulnerable to a government in Afghanistan that can provide one.

Central to counterinsurgency is protecting the people. Efforts to convince Afghans to confer legitimacy on their government are only relevant if Afghans are free to choose. They must be shielded from coercion while their elected government secures their trust through effective governance and economic development at all levels. This must be Afghanistan's effort, with our committed support.

In counterinsurgency, how you operate, the impact of civilian casualties, collateral damage, cultural insensitivity, and the inherent complexities involved in separating insurgents from the population often determine success or failure. If defeating an insurgent formation produces popular resentment, the victory is hollow and unsustainable.

In Afghanistan, faced with a determined and unconstrained foe, precision and discipline are essential, from limited but necessary air strikes to small-unit search and detention operations. If confirmed, I would emphasize that how we conduct operations is vital to success. This is a critical point. It may be "the" critical point. This is a struggle for the support of the Afghan people. Our willingness to operate in ways that minimize casualties or damage, even when doing so makes our task more difficult, is essential to our credibility. I cannot overstate my commitment to the importance of this concept.

My experiences leading counterterrorist forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other locations did much to develop my strong belief in the importance of a holistic counterinsurgency campaign. While proud of the contributions of the forces I was honored to command, we were most effective when integrated with interagency and allied-nation partners in full-spectrum counterinsurgency campaigns. In Afghanistan, I believe intelligence-driven precision operations will remain critical, but must be subordinate to efforts that protect the population and set conditions for governance and economic advancement.

Although I expect stiff fighting ahead, the measure of effectiveness will not be enemy killed, it will be the number of Afghans shielded from violence. Securing the population is ultimately best done by Afghans. I consider the development of Afghan Security Forces, both the Afghan National Army and Police, our highest-priority security task. If confirmed, I would work with our NATO, EU, and Afghan partners to support this effort.

At this point, I also believe the Afghan National Security Forces will likely need to grow beyond the currently approved strengths to provide adequate security. Like you, I am keenly aware their efforts are part of a coalition, many of whom have sacrificed greatly and invested heavily to support Afghanistan. If we are both confirmed, I will have the honor of working for my friend Admiral Jim Stavridis, and my command will include approximately 59,000 servicemembers from 41 nations, all 28 NATO nations, and 14 NATO partner nations supporting Afghanistan. Presently, ISAF forces are conducting security and stability operations, providing senior leadership in all five regional commands, and are directly in-

volved in the mentoring, training, and equipping of the Afghan National Army. I look forward to listening to, learning from, and leading, this team in our common challenge.

As this committee knows, since 9/11 our forces have learned valuable lessons regarding the treatment of detainees, and made mistakes along the way. When I took command in 2003, I found our treatment of detainees followed existing guidance but needed improvement. Our facilities were limited, our expertise in specialties like interrogation was insignificant—or, insufficient—and we lacked organizational experience at every level. In the months and years that followed, we invested considerable energy, developed expertise and experience, and improved continuously. If confirmed, I will strictly enforce the highest standards of detainee treatment consistent with international and U.S. law.

Our effort in Afghanistan demands expertise and continuity. Working within the realities of family needs and career development, we must develop a core of professionals who possess expertise in the theater, in its languages and culture. Assigned for repeated tours, remaining focused on Afghanistan when not deployed, these experts can significantly increase the effectiveness of our overall effort.

I'd like to thank the committee for consistent support. Programs like the Commanders Emergency Response Program offer critical flexibility. Robust ISR assets facilitate unprecedented and intelligence fusion. Equipment like the MWRAP all-terrain vehicle save lives, and programs like the Afghan National Trust Fund build partner capacity. But, most important is our magnificent volunteer force. Seasoned by years and growing experience in counterinsurgency operations, they continue to inspire us with their courage and commitment. They are strong, but have given much.

Thank you for the unfailing support you have provided these tremendous professionals and their families.

I was honored to be nominated for this position, and, if confirmed, pledge to you and to the men and women for whom I would serve the best of which I am capable. With that, I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of General McChrystal follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, General.

We'll have an 8-minute round. Before we begin with questions, let me ask the standards questions of each of you. We ask these of all of our nominees.

Have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest?

[All three witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

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

[All three witnesses answered in the negative.]

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

[All three witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

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

[All three witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

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

[All three witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

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

[All three witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

Chairman LEVIN. Do you agree to give your personal views, when asked before this committee to do so, even if those views differ from the administration in power?

[All three witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

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

[All three witnesses answered in the affirmative.]

Chairman LEVIN. I think there's going to be a vote at 11 o'clock, and if there, is we'll try to work right through it.

Let me ask both Admiral Stavridis and General McChrystal about the end strength of the Afghan National Army. General McChrystal, you made reference to it. The current goal, target end strength, for the Afghan National Army is 134,000. As of April, there are 86,000 troops assigned to the army. President Obama has approved the deployment, later this year, of 4,000 soldiers as trainers to embed and to work with the Afghan Security Forces. But, I'm very much concerned, as many of us are, about the size of that army and the lack of a higher end-strength goal. I joined with Senator Lieberman and 13 other Senators in a letter to the President to urge him to support, now, the increase in the end-strength levels for the Afghan army and the police to the higher ranges, which were recommended by the Afghan defense and interior ministers; and for the army, that range was between 250,000 and 300,000, which would mean double the current target.

Admiral, let me ask you first, because General McChrystal has already commented on it, but then I want to ask the General the same question. Do you believe that the realities on the ground in Afghanistan necessitate growing the Afghan National Security Forces beyond the currently planned end strengths?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Mr. Chairman, my study of, sort of, classic counterinsurgency doctrine, looking at everything from T.E. Lawrence through David Kilcullen's "The Accidental Guerrilla" as I prepared for these hearings, would lead me to believe that we do need larger security forces in what Stan has correctly referred to as a classic counterinsurgency campaign.

Chairman LEVIN. And that means larger than the current end strength?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. And, General, do you—would you say that you, also, believe—you said that we're likely to need them; in your judgment, will the Afghan Army need to have a significantly higher end strength than 134,000?

General MCCHRISTAL. Yes, sir, that's my belief right now.

Chairman LEVIN. In terms of the Pakistan situation—and here, I think, General, you also made reference to this—would you agree with me that assistance to Pakistan will only be effective if the Pakistani government is perceived by the people of Pakistan as taking the fight to the insurgents because of their own needs as a nation, not because of U.S. pressure?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir, I do.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, do you want to give a quick comment on that, if you have a—

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Yes, sir, I do.

Chairman LEVIN. All right.

General, are you familiar with the—General McChrystal, are you familiar with the National Solidarity Program in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir, I am.

Chairman LEVIN. And do you have an opinion as to its success and its—whether it's a good program?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, at this point—and I want to learn more when I get on the ground, but, what I've seen from here, it's been very successful and very positive.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Now, relative to the question of detainees—and you made brief reference to it, General—we have a letter from you, which I'll make part of the record—clarifying an answer which you provided for the committee in advance of the hearing today.

And one line in your letter says that, “We must at all times adhere to our obligation to treat detainees humanely. Military necessity, as well—along with humanity or principles of—underlying the Law of War, military necessity does not permit us to derogate from those imperatives.” And I'll put the entire letter in the record, but it is an important clarification of your pre-hearing answer for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Now, relative to the events that occurred, I want to just clarify your understanding and your awareness and knowledge of what occurred when you were the commander of special operations. How many special-mission unit task forces were there when you were the commander?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, they were multiple. We had a task force at Afghanistan, which then had subordinate task forces, and sometimes it was as few as two, sometimes it was as many as four. In Iraq, similarly, we had a major task force, then later went to two major task forces, and each of those had subordinate task forces.

Chairman LEVIN. All right.

General MCCHRYSTAL. I couldn't give you, off the top of my head, but it was—at times it was as many as eight to ten task forces, all under my command.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. And now, you were the commander of special operations, is that correct?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I was commander of part of special operations. There was—there were theater special operations, as well.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Now, you were not the task force commander.

General MCCRYSTAL. Sir, I was the joint task force commander for task—

Chairman LEVIN. But, the—

General MCCRYSTAL.—force 714.

Chairman LEVIN. But, in terms of those special-mission unit task forces, you were not the commander of those task forces.

General MCCRYSTAL. Sir—

Chairman LEVIN. You were not a commander of one of those task forces.

General MCCRYSTAL. Sir, they were—those task forces made up my joint task force—

Chairman LEVIN. Did each of those task forces, those special-mission unit task forces, have a commander?

General MCCRYSTAL. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Now, what was your understanding, your awareness of the treatment of detainees when you were the overall commander? The inspector general of the Department of Defense indicated that a memorandum of the Secretary of Defense which was approved on December 2nd, 2002—and that memorandum, relative to the interrogation of detainees, authorized the use of things like stress positions, sleep deprivation, and the use of dogs. And the report of this committee showed how that memorandum of December 2nd, 2002, then went to, first, Afghanistan and then was transmitted verbatim to Iraq. And, in terms of the treatment of detainees—when you got there, tell us what you were aware of, what you did, relative to that subject.

General MCCRYSTAL. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

I took over in October 2003, and I'd like to sort of start with three things, to begin with. First, I do not, and never have, condoned mistreatment of detainees, and never will. When we found cases where we thought there was an allegation of mistreatment, we investigated every one, and we punished, if, in fact, it was substantiated. And that was from the beginning.

That said, when I took command, I found the detainee facilities really insufficient for need. They were physically not prepared for that. We didn't have the right number of interrogators. We didn't have the right experience in the force, either. None of us had ever done this with the level of precision that we needed to, so we learned.

We stayed within all of the established and authorized guidelines. They were in them when I took command, and then, with each change in guidelines, we did a legal review, and stayed within those all the time. But, it also—as I outlined last year when we discussed it, it also was something that I believe continuously improved. Each month, we got better at it, for lots of reasons. One, our experience got better. Two, the procedures got, just, constantly looked at and so that they were improved. So, I think the constant improvement is the thing that took us from what I think was acceptable and legal to something that I became much more proud of over time, in terms of the quality of the operation.

Chairman LEVIN. When you say “acceptable and legal,” you mean that they were within the guidelines established by the Secretary of Defense.

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, they were within legally prescribed guidelines, that’s right, the policy we were given.

Chairman LEVIN. The policy that you were given—

General MCCHRYSAL. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN.—that you understood at that time was legal.

General MCCHRYSAL. Yes, sir, that’s right.

Chairman LEVIN. And that policy included, at that time, under that December 2, 2002, memorandum of the Secretary of Defense—that policy included the aggressive acts that I described: stress positions, the use of dogs, and nudity. Is that correct?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, it did. We did not use all of the things that were outlined there. We—

Chairman LEVIN. Were—some of them were used?

General MCCHRYSAL. Some of them were used when I took over, sir, and then, as—we immediately began to reduce that.

Chairman LEVIN. You immediately began what?

General MCCHRYSAL. To reduce those, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay.

Senator McCain?

Senator MCCAIN. Go ahead if you want to—

Chairman LEVIN. No, I think that—

Well, I just want to make sure, when you say that you “improved”—

General MCCHRYSAL. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN.—you meant that even though some of the actions relative to detainees, the aggressive interrogation techniques, had been approved by the Secretary of Defense in a memorandum, which you understood had been legally authorized, that, when you say you “improved them,” you reduced the number of techniques which were utilized, even though they had been authorized—

General MCCHRYSAL. That’s right.

Chairman LEVIN.—is that correct?

General MCCHRYSAL. That’s correct, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Now, were you uncomfortable with some of the techniques that you saw there?

General MCCHRYSAL. When I took over, I was, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. And the direction of reduction of the use of those techniques, even though they had been authorized by the Secretary, nonetheless was something that you felt was appropriate and necessary.

General MCCHRYSAL. That’s correct, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Thank you.

Senator McCain?

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank the witnesses for their excellent opening statements.

General McChrystal, General McKiernan reportedly had a request pending for the deployment of an additional 10,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan in 2010. Do you expect to renew this request, alter it, or rescind it?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I believe I'll have to make an assessment on the ground, and can't tell you right now whether I would do that.

Senator MCCAIN. What is your initial assessment? Do we need the additional 10,000?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I'm just not sure, at this point.

Senator MCCAIN. How long do you expect the counterinsurgency effort in Afghanistan to last?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I can't put a hard date on it. I believe that counterinsurgency takes time. I believe that we need to start making progress within about the next 19 to 24 months to know—

Senator MCCAIN. But, you do comment, in your statement, that you believe that casualties will go up in the short term.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I do.

Senator MCCAIN. I think that's an important message that Members of Congress and the American people understand.

Roughly how many detainees are in prison in Bagram today? Roughly.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I believe it's about 600, but I—

Senator MCCAIN. And some of are foreign—are not from Afghanistan, some are more—are foreign other nationals.

General MCCHRYSTAL. I don't know the detailed breakdown right now, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you expect that other fighters, as we saw in Iraq, from other countries will be on the battlefield in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I do, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. And we will be probably capturing some of those?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I do, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. So, then our problem with what to do with detainees from other countries will continue.

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe that it will.

Senator MCCAIN. The death by friendly fire of Corporal Tillman was a great tragedy, as we all know, and the pain and the loss of this American hero to his family was compounded by the misinformation that quickly spread about the circumstances of his death, some of which were included in the recommended citation for the award of the Silver Star Medal that was forwarded by his commanding officer through you, as the commanding general of the Joint Special Operations Command, and approved by you on April 28th, 2004. Can you describe what happened in April with respect to the information about the circumstances of Corporal Tillman's death, and why you forwarded the Silver Star recommendation in the form that it was in?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I can. I appreciate the opportunity to do that.

Corporal Tillman was killed on the 22nd of April, and in the days following, as with the loss of any soldier, a number of things happened, administrative and just practical things that occurred. I particularly took part in two things. I arrived back into Afghanistan from a meeting in Qatar with General Abizaid on about the 23rd, and I was informed, at that point, that they suspected that friendly fire might have been the cause of death, and they had ini-

tiated what we call a 15-6, or an investigation of that. And so, we initially were waiting for the outcome of that initial review before we went forward with any conclusions. So, it was a well-intended intent to get some level of truth before we went up.

At the same time, we looked at his potential award for valor. And any lost soldier, they immediately look and determine whether an award was appropriate. In the case of Corporal Tillman, a Silver Star was recommended. I sat down with the people who recommended it. That was higher than some had been given, and we went over a whiteboard, and we looked at the geometry of the battlefield, and I queried the people to satisfy myself that, in fact, that his actions warranted that, even though there was a potential that the actual circumstance of death had been friendly fire.

And I need to stress, here, we've had a number of famous people in American in history killed by friendly fire—Stonewall Jackson, Leslie McNair, and the like—and I don't separate—or, I don't believe that the circumstance of death detracts from his courage, commitment, or contribution.

So, I was comfortable recommending, once I believed that the people in the fight were convinced it warranted a Silver Star, and I was too, with forwarding that.

I also sent a message informing my chain of command that we believed it was fratricide, and we did that when we were told there were going to be fairly high-profile memorial services.

Now, what happens, in retrospect, is—and I would do this differently if I had the chance again—in retrospect, they look contradictory, because we sent a Silver Star that was not well written—and, although I went through the process, I will tell you now I didn't review the citation well enough to capture—or, I didn't catch that, if you read it, you can imply that it was not friendly fire. And also, when I sent the message, the intent entirely was to inform everybody up my chain of command so that nobody would be surprised.

If I had it to do all over again—and we subsequently changed Army policy after this, because the intent on awards at that time was to do an award rapidly so that it could be presented to the family at the memorial service for their comfort. What we have learned since is, it is better to take your time, make sure you get everything right with the award, and not rush it.

So, I say that, in the two things which I believe were entirely well intentioned on my part and, in my view, everyone forward that I saw was trying to do the right thing. It still produced confusion at a tragic time. And I'm very sorry for that, because I understand that the outcome produced a perception that I don't believe was at all involved, at least in the forces that were forward.

Senator MCCAIN. And you believe that Corporal Tillman earned the Silver Star by his actions before he died.

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, I absolutely do. I did then, I do now.

Senator MCCAIN. Given your experience in Afghanistan, do you believe that the interrogation techniques that are provided in the Army Field Manual are sufficient to get the information to fight the battle that you need?

General MCCHRISTAL. Yes, sir, I do.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you believe any additional techniques are necessary?

General MCCHRYSAL. No, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. And I interrupted you. You expect the counter-insurgency in Afghanistan to be dependent, to some degree, on Pakistan; therefore, unpredictable. Are you encouraged by the recent, perhaps temporary, but some success by the Pakistani Army in Swat and perhaps moving in to Waziristan?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I am encouraged.

Senator MCCAIN. And how do you account for that?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I believe that, if you looked back several years, what appeared to the people of Pakistan as an American problem of terrorists that were transnational, some of whom happened to be in Pakistan, I believe that they now view it as an internal insurgency, which—they have an internal insurgency. The actions which they have taken over the last weeks have been resolute in going after that internal insurgency, and I think that—

Senator MCCAIN. So, the situation isn't as bad as we had feared, but not as good as we hope, as far—as regards the effectiveness or commitment of the Pakistani government and military.

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I think the situation is very serious, but they know it and are acting on it.

Senator MCCAIN. Aren't you concerned about the overall corruption problem in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I am.

Senator MCCAIN. Are you worried that there's still not a joint strategy, or agreed-upon strategy, as far as the eradication or control of the poppy crops?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I believe that is critical, that we develop one.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you see any coherency in that policy?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I haven't been forward to look at it closely, but I know we need one.

Senator MCCAIN. As a result of your experience in Iraq, what lessons do you apply to Afghanistan? Briefly, since I think I'm out of time.

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I believe a counterinsurgency campaign, a classic counterinsurgency campaign, well resourced, is going to be required. I think that's all—

Senator MCCAIN. Under very different circumstances.

General MCCHRYSAL. It's different, sir, but many of the same requirements. We have to get governance, development, and security, or we won't make progress.

Senator MCCAIN. And a large geographic area?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, it is more limited than it was at some times in Iraq; it's mostly in the south and the east, but there are some problems in the west and popping up in the north, as well.

Senator MCCAIN. And you experience—we will experience significant resistance as we move into the south of Afghanistan.

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I believe that we will.

Senator MCCAIN. Am I out—

Chairman LEVIN. You are out of time.

Senator MCCAIN. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator Lieberman?

Thanks, Senator McCain.

Senator Lieberman?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks, to the three of you for your extraordinary careers of service to our country. And congratulations on these nominations.

I want to focus in on Afghanistan, for most of my questions, and say that, in nominating Admiral Stavridis and General McChrystal to the positions you're going to, it seems to me that the President has put in place here what I would call, not just a strong team, but really an all-star team. With Admiral Stavridis, for European Command, General Petraeus in Central Command, you now, General McChrystal, heading our operations, as you've described, in Afghanistan, with General Rodriguez, that, together with the diplomatic nonmilitary effort there with Ambassador Holbrooke, now Ambassador Eikenberry going into Kabul with crew of his own that will feature, I guess, several State Department personnel of ambassadorial rank, this is—we're really—we're really concentrating our strength, here, because it's so important to win in Afghanistan. And I suppose I want to ask you that, as a first question.

General McChrystal, do you believe this is a winnable war in Afghanistan for ourselves and our Afghan allies?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I believe it is winnable, but I don't think it will be easily winnable.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Oh, I think both those points—one you brought in response to Senator McCain, is—are both very important to hear from you—that is, for Members of Congress and the American people to understand, that it's winnable, but it's not going to be easy; it's probably going to get worse before it gets better.

I know you're a general and not a political leader, but, I think, in these kinds of positions these days, you're going to probably be asked the kinds of questions that we're asked. So, let me ask you, Why do you think it is important that we succeed in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I think the first and obvious thing is to prevent al Qaeda safe havens as were before 9/11. I actually believe that the importance is much wider than that. I believe the regional stability of Afghanistan and Pakistan are linked, and a lack of stability in that area, I think, is going to cause geopolitical problems. Even if there were no al Qaeda, I think it would still be an important region.

And then, finally, I think our credibility in the world—we have the ability to support the people of Afghanistan and to move in to shape a better future that they want, and I think that that will make a difference in how we are viewed, worldwide.

Senator LIEBERMAN. You made some interesting statements in the question and answers we exchanged—you exchanged with the committee about the linkage between the Taliban and al Qaeda. There have been a lot of people, in recent months, who have been saying that it may be possible to break off the Taliban to cooperate with us. But, you've made some very strong statements here about your skepticism about the—our ability to do that, to break Taliban away from al Qaeda. And I wanted to ask you—certainly not so

long as they think they are winning—I want to ask you to speak a little bit to the Taliban/al Qaeda linkage, as you see it.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir. I guess, first, I'd say that the al Qaeda linkage is somewhat to the Taliban, but it's also to other organizations there. They have, in fact, been there for many years now. They've intermarried, they've created connections that are beyond just organizational.

Insofar as with the Taliban, they do have a link with the Taliban, and I don't think that the Taliban have any reason, right now, to turn their back on al Qaeda. And therefore, I don't think there's a motivation to do that.

I think what is probably more important is, I don't believe that the Taliban are a single, cohesive organization. They are more a confederation of smaller entities, many of which are absolutely motivated by regional or financial or almost warlordism, so they do not have a large coherent structure, to the level it sometimes can look on a map or on an organizational chart. I think it might be easier to fragment the Taliban and separate the Taliban from the hard—the hardcore Taliban from the hardcore al Qaeda.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

General, it's my understanding that, as of today, we still don't have the kind of integrated civil-military plan—joint plan for Afghanistan that we have for, and had for some time now, in Iraq. Is that your understanding?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I know that planning is ongoing to develop that.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Oh—

General MCCHRYSTAL. Karl Eikenberry is an old friend of mine, and I have committed that, if confirmed, that would be something that we absolutely will complete as quickly as possible.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So, it's your statement, here, that you intend to work with Admiral Eikenberry on a joint civil-military plan for Afghanistan.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Absolutely, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Do you have a goal, a time by which you hope to complete that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I hate to be pinned to goals, but I think we need to finish that this summer.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Soon. Okay, good.

Admiral, I wanted to ask you—as you know, there's a lot of both appreciation for the European involvement in—NATO involvement in Afghanistan, and also a dissatisfaction with how it's working, overall, and particularly those of us who are very committed to NATO, concern that this significant out-of-theater involvement by this great military alliance succeed. And, of course, it's hard to run a war with this many nations, particularly if they come into the battlefield with individual caveats. So, as you assume this command, what are your thoughts about what we can do to improve NATO's involvement, here, in Afghanistan?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, thank you. First, if I could, I'd add to Stan's excellent list of why Afghanistan matters. The point precisely that you just raised, it matters because of the NATO engagement. And how the Alliance performs there will bleed over into the future of the Alliance. I don't think it's a go/no-go for the Alliance,

but it's certainly important and critical. So, in addition to all the excellent points Stan made, I would add that one, as well.

As I look at it—and, of course, I'm—I have not had any conversations yet with my military interlocutors in the world of NATO—I was very struck by what Ranking Member McCain said, that we need to think about asking our allies to do what they are willing to do and recognize where there are places they just cannot go. So, that runs the gamut of things, from money to civil-military actions, along the lines of the plan that General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry are going to put together. It includes the trust fund that we talked about, because, as the Chairman said, the odds are high that we will need more security forces, more Afghan security forces, at the end of the day. At the end of the day, all security is local. And so, we'll need funding for that. That's a potential zone of contribution for NATO.

So, sir, I think there are many different avenues for me to pursue, if confirmed, and I look forward to those interactions with our allies, working with General McChrystal to hear what he needs, and attempting to facilitate that.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Admiral. My time's expiring, so I'm—I just want to state for the record, on a different matter, that—you have some very strong statements, in the Q&A with the committee, on the rising ballistic missile threat to Europe, and particularly that posed by Iran. And, as a consequence, you argue that—and I quote you—the deployment of ballistic missile defense assets in Europe would make a significant contribution to the protection of the U.S. and Europe from a Middle-Eastern ballistic missile threat. You also very strongly said—and I quote—"We need multilayered missile defense capabilities stationed and operational in the region before a threat fully emerges to ensure our common European allies' and partners' security." In this vein, and quite specifically, warn that though the sea-based and—basically and Aegis and THAAD Patriot programs are very important, they cannot defeat, and I quote you again, "the entire range of threats by themselves," end quote.

I want to thank you for those statements. I couldn't agree with you more, and I look forward to working with you on those and other matters related to your command.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Inhofe?

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I—first of all, let me just state—which you're aware of, Mr. Chairman, but our guests may not be—that they always have an EPW meeting at the same time they have this, so that puts me in an awkward situation of having to go back and forth. And let me say, second, I can't think of any three people who are more qualified for the positions for which you're nominated than the three of you, and I just am very excited about what—things to come.

Now, you may have covered this in my absence, but I want to mention, in fact, there was a great editorial in Investors Business Daily called "Iran Grows Bold." And that's why—and I'll just read a little bit of here and then I want to make it as part of the record—"That's why, knowing we've decided on appeasement as the

best course, Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, on the very day of North Korean's demonstration of its nuclear bomb, said that a freeze of Iran's own nuclear program was out of the question." It goes on and talks about some of the individuals from—here it is—

"General Vladimir Dvorkin, head of Center for Strategic Nuclear Forces in Moscow," recently said, quote, "Iran is actively working on a missile development program, 1 or 2 years away from having a nuclear program."

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator INHOFE. I'm getting mixed signals here, because we have—we're all very familiar with the capabilities that we need to protect western Europe, and maybe even the United States, from a missile coming from Iran, and it's necessary to have the radar in the Czech Republic, as well as the Poland opportunities. And while they're for it, and they're ready to do it, and the Polish Parliament is even saying that they are hoping that we—that they—"We don't regress our—we don't regret our trust in the United States," I'd just like to have one of you respond to what is confusing to me, and that is why it is that we now have Russia saying that they don't want to participate in this, or they don't want to approve this until and unless they have certain conditions met on the START treaty, and yet they turn around and say that, yes, it is necessary to have this. Where do you think Russia is, and how important do you think—let's start with you, Admiral Stavridis—to have that site, that European site?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Yes, sir, I think I'm probably the right one to answer the question, given that Russia is part of the U.S. European Command area of focus.

Sir, as you fully appreciate, and the Chairman alluded to this in his opening statement, any of these decisions really are a matrix of diplomatic and political activity that goes well beyond the purview of a military commander. My own view, at this point, looking at it from a distance and before I have an opportunity, if confirmed, to go and—

Senator INHOFE. Yes, forget—

Admiral STAVRIDIS.—interact with the—

Senator INHOFE.—about the politics, just—

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sure.

Senator INHOFE.—the importance of the European site, that's what it—from a military perspective.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. From what I can see, at this point, I'd agree with the President's comments that he made at the NATO summit, which are that, as long as the Iranian threat persists, the system is effective, that the likelihood of proceeding forward is important.

Senator INHOFE. Yes. And I would say it looks like the Iranian threat will persist. And while I'm asking you a question, this is kind of off the wall, and I—I've fought this, and lost—the 3-year battle of Vieques, a few years ago. And I felt, at that time, that that was the best integrated training opportunity that we had. And we've been using it since 1941, we lost it, for political reasons, both Democrats and Republicans, because—President Bush was in on this decision. Now the things that I said were going to happen, the adverse thing, in terms of Roosevelt Roads and adversely affecting

Puerto Rico, I'm getting people coming back to me, saying, "Any possibility of reopening Vieques as a site?" Any thoughts on that?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, that would, of course, fall under the purview of my good friend, Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead. I'll take that message back to Admiral Roughead and ask him to interact with you. I'll—

Senator INHOFE. Do you think the quality of training today is as good as it was when we had that integrated training at Vieques?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, I don't know the answer to that question. I have not operated—

Senator INHOFE. Okay, but maybe for the record we could do that.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator INHOFE. General McChrystal, you and I talked about this, and I appreciate all of you visiting with me and giving me the time that you have. I know you've been very, very busy. But, the Nebraska—I don't see the Senator from Nebraska here—the Nebraska National Guard has been in Afghanistan on these agricultural programs, and then the Oklahoma Guard is going up to carry 'em on. Would you kind of give a real brief assessment as to what successes or failures they're having up there on that?

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, my information, as we discussed, is secondhand, but all I've gotten is very positive, and I do know that the importance of the agricultural part of the development program is key. So, on the basis of what I know right now, it's very positive.

Senator INHOFE. Good, I'm glad to hear that. I've heard that from a lot of the commanders in the field, and others.

Let me get my three or four programs that are my favorites, just, for yes-or-no answers from the three of you. It would be on train-and-equip, 1206, 1207, and 1208, as it refers to special forces, the IMET program, the CERP program, and the CCIF programs. I think those three, those four programs are among the most significant programs that we have going for us right now. And do you agree?

General FRASER?

General FRASER. Yes, sir, I do agree, they're very important programs.

Senator INHOFE. Admiral?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Yes, sir. Based on 3 years at SOUTHCOM, they are—approach indispensable.

Senator INHOFE. Good.

General MCCHRISTAL. Yes, sir, I concur.

Senator INHOFE. All right. Well, what I'd like to have you do—and this would be for the record—maybe, Admiral, for the record, if you could respond. I have been told, over there, that, by spending no more money, but by handling the cash flow in the IMET program, that we would—and maybe having a multiyear program—it would not be scored, and it would be immensely more beneficial to us for those partnerships with the other countries. If you could kind of answer that for the record, I'd appreciate it.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Aye-aye, sir.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator INHOFE. All right. AFRICOM, do you think the—I know this is not directly involved with what you—well, it would be, in your case—I've been concerned that they're not getting their resources. I was one of 'em who, when the continent was divided into three different commands, that it would—made much more sense to have AFRICOM, and that's what's happening today, although it appears to me that they're not getting the resources. And I'm talking about airlift resources and others. Do you think they are? And if not, would you try to improve that?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, I don't have the answer to the question. I'll to General Ward, who's a colleague and good friend.

And I would support the adequate resourcing of Africa Command. I agree it's important for unity of effort in that continent.

Senator INHOFE. Okay, good.

Lastly, then—I'm getting it all in here—the concern that I have had for a—for the aging fleet of everything that we're having right now—of course, the average of over 18 years old, the Navy aircraft averages 18 years; Marine Corps, over 21 years; refueling tankers, over 44 years. All of these things—and as we, you know—I'd like to ask each one of you what the impact on operating and maintaining 20- to 40-plus-year-old equipment on—is on combat readiness and if you have any thoughts about what we can do on this, the aging aircraft fleet.

Tinker Air Force Base, being in my State of Oklahoma, they're doing a great job on the KC-135s, but you know how old they are. If we are successful today and make a determination as to what kind of a tanker we would have, it would still be—we'd still be using 'em for another 30 years.

So, let's start with you, General. Are you—does that keep you up at night, concern about the aging equipment that we have?

General FRASER. Sir, it is a concern, and we need to keep our focus on it. I think—and I've really been on the outside as the services have really deliberated on this—as I look at my position currently, as the Deputy Commander, Pacific Command, we have the resources we need to do the job; it's one of those things we need to make sure we continue to focus on and enable us in the future.

Senator INHOFE. Admiral?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. I agree, sir.

Senator INHOFE. All right.

And, General McChrystal, I might go a little further, when I see your green uniform there, the Future Combat System is one of the first things—transformations in 50 years that we've had on the ground, and I know that it's very controversial. Many of these decisions are political decisions. But, I would still say that we're using some of the really outdated stuff. The Paladin was World War II technology. Recognizing the PIM program is going to at least go forward to improve the Paladin, it's undergone two or three of these renovations already since the—in the last 30 or 40 years. What do you think about the military's—or, the Army's aging equipment?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, my expertise on much of the equipment is pretty thin, but I would say that I think tough decisions were made in the Secretary's budget recommendations for this year, particularly moving toward some of the irregular warfare. I

think they've had to make tough tradeoffs. There are none that I've seen I didn't agree with—

Senator INHOFE. Yes. Well—

General MCCHRYSAL.—that I don't—

Senator INHOFE.—I know that's not in your purview, but it's still you; you're Army.

Thank you very much.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, I just add, QDR that Secretary Gates is doing now is looking very specifically at that issue, as well.

Senator INHOFE. Very good, thank you, Admiral.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Reed?

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

Gentlemen, thank you for your service to the Nation, and the service of your families.

Admiral Stavridis, Senator Lieberman raised the question of, sort of, the long-term NATO commitment to this effort. And the NATO heads of states agreed to create these training missions and operational liaison and mentoring teams. They still haven't filled them.

Is that going to be a deficit that will continue forward, or are you confident they can fill that and continue for a long period of time?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, the operational mentoring and leadership teams, the OMLTs, they're often called, are in shortfall right now. There are 52 fielded; we need 64. And the really bad news is, looking ahead, we're positioned to have 71, and need as many as 90-plus. So, sir, you've identified, I think, a crucial area. It's at the top of my priority list, if confirmed, to put an argument forward to our allies that this is the kind of thing they could perform very well in. The same discussion we were having earlier about, "Where are the comparative advantages?" these small teams could have tremendous effect and would be threaded into General McChrystal's civil-military campaign plan as a very central feature, because, at the end of the day, again, security is local; you have to train up these Afghans. And that's what these so-called OMLTs would be very good at. Top of my list, sir.

Senator REED. Let me ask you another question, Admiral. With the exception of the British, who have brigades, combat brigades in-country—and, frankly, I think French commandos and a few other national units—what's the ability to generate brigade-sized forces comparable to an American brigade?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, it's limited. And I think that, again, this is why we need to work with the allies to find the sizing of units that they could put in the field. The Canadians do terrific work, down south. They have, actually, the highest per-capita casualty rate; higher than our own in the United States, for example. The Dutch are doing terrific work. The French are doing terrific work, and so forth and so on. And, of course, the British.

So, we need to find the right sizing units, and that's something that I'll be looking very much for General McChrystal's expertise, and also talking to General Petraeus, who has excellent experience at this type of coalition structuring on the Iraq side. So, I think, between the three of us, we need to find ways to generate combat effect if we can't have big standing combat formations.

Senator REED. Thank you.

General McChrystal, the command structure now with General Rodriguez, how do you propose to utilize General Rodriguez?

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, General Rodriguez has got extraordinary operational experience, which most of you are aware of, both in Afghanistan and Iraq. And so, I think that almost any role, he's going to be value added.

What I would like to aspire to is that he would command—be in operational command of the regional commands, the five regional commands. That would allow me to look at the strategic level and the interface, and he would do the maneuvering. That requires NATO to be—to agree to that.

And that is not yet done, so I don't want to get ahead of reality. But, that would be my aspiration.

Senator REED. There's another aspect to the questions that Admiral Stavridis and I have, and that is shifting away from a geographical base of operations to functional. That is, if NATO takes the training mission, if NATO takes logistical missions, then the geography of the fight could be up to those, you know, combat units. And they're not all exclusively American, but mostly American. Is that a thought you're giving?

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, I just looked at that. I haven't studied it. It seems to make a lot of sense to me.

Senator REED. Okay. There is another aspect, too, here, which is very, very sensitive; that is, the civilian casualties. Like so many of my colleagues, I've been out there recently, and that is an issue that has a great political effect, manipulated for purposes—self-interested purposes by all sides. How are you going to ramp up the battle as you intend to, particularly in the south, and then also minimize collateral civilian casualties?

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, I believe the perception of—caused by civilian casualties is one of the most dangerous things we face in Afghanistan, particularly with the Afghan people; the Pashtun, most likely. So, I think that we've got to recognize that that is a way to lose their faith and lose their support, and that would be strategically decisive against us.

So, my intent, if confirmed, is to review all of our existing rules of engagement, review all of our tactical directives, get with all of our forces, with the goal of not putting ourselves in a position, except when we have to protect American or coalition or Afghan forces, actual survival, from positions where we create civilian casualties.

Now, I'm free to say, as you know, with the chaos of war, it's difficult to say "always" or "ever." But, certainly I think it's got to be viewed as a critical requirement for us.

Senator REED. One of the aspects of your mission, not only to attack and disrupt the Taliban and the other elements there, but to minimize casualty, is the use of technology, like UAVs and—do you think you have enough of those? Do you need more?

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, I sort of have a history of saying, "I've never had enough," and I can't ever envision a day when I'd say that an operation I'm involved in has enough ISR. That said, there is—there has been significant increase in Afghanistan this year, and by the end of this year it's going to be significantly more. But,

every time you get more ISR, you get more precision. Every time you get more precision, then what you can do is, you can reduce civilian casualties, you can also reduce impact on civilian population. If you are going to an individual, and the operation goes after a single house or a single compound, and you don't affect the whole village, you don't have a negative impact on everyone else. So, while ISR is not a panacea for everything, the more you've got, the smarter you are as a force, and the more precise you can be. And so, I—I'm just a huge believer. Everything we can do to continue to increase that will be of value to us.

Senator REED. Thank you.

General Fraser, you have an area of the world which is very close to us, and I—one of the lessons I think we've learned worldwide is that governmental capacity is such a critical element of stability. And I wonder if you will undertake an assessment of the governmental capacity of the countries in your areas of operations to—sort of a leading-edge indicator of where problems might exist.

General FRASER. Senator, thank you for that question. As I understand it and as I've studied what SOUTHCOM is already doing, I think they already have a very robust program that looks to do that, a very interagency, very cooperative program. And the issues we deal with in that region, I think, reflect that. It's a whole-of-government approach, it's an interagency approach, it's an international approach. So, yes, sir, if confirmed, I'll continue efforts along that line.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Thank you, gentlemen.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Thune is next.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me echo what's already been said. And you all are extremely, extremely qualified. I can't think of individuals who are better equipped to serve in the posts for which you're here this morning. And I want to thank you for that service, and also add my appreciation to your families for the sacrifice that they make every—each and every day so that you can continue to serve our country with such distinction.

I also want to associate myself with the remarks that were made by Senator Lieberman earlier, and also Senator Inhofe, with regard to the third site in Europe and the danger imposed by the Iranian threat. And, Admiral Stavridis, you have made some fairly strong comments in that regard, and I also want to express my support for that view. And I think it's just really important that we continue to pursue that undertaking.

Let me—General McChrystal, if I might—the core goal of the new, sort of, AfPak strategy is to destroy the extremists and their safe havens within both Pakistan and Afghanistan, and it would—you would imply from that, I think, that it's not necessary to form a coalition government or a reconciliation of political elements in Afghanistan, as General Petraeus did in Iraq. It seems, rather, that the goal requires only that an agreement be reached with the Taliban to block al Qaeda operations in Afghanistan.

My question is, Is it acceptable, in your opinion, to have the Taliban once again in charge of Afghanistan if they agree to deny al Qaeda safe haven in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRISTAL. Senator, I find it very unlikely that the Taliban would make a credible agreement to do that. And so, I would have a difficult time even speculating.

That said, I think that the President's intent, and my belief, is that we need to create in Afghanistan a state that would not allow the return of safe havens. In my view, I think that means it's going to have to be a government that is—it may be a working coalition that may have some former Taliban. But, right now, based upon Taliban statements, I can't see them being a credible official part of the government.

Senator THUNE. The Washington Post report, on April 29th, that Pakistan's inability to slow Taliban advances has forced the administration to shift its Afghan-Pakistan strategy from a step-by-step process of greater engagement with Pakistan to a more accelerated approach. And I guess I'd be interested in knowing what that shift in strategy will do, in terms of affecting your job in Afghanistan.

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, I actually think it's positive. I think the degree to which Pakistan shows the resolve which they have shown lately, and their willingness to go after what they view as an important internal problem and let us partner and help them in any way possible, I think that's positive. And if we can, in good faith, do that, I think we continue to build a strategic partnership that I think is important for the long haul.

Senator THUNE. I'd like to get at one other issue—and, again, I'd address this to General McChrystal—dealing with the issue of corruption in Afghanistan. There is, of course, a lot been written about it. There is a—according to Sarah Shays, who operates an economic cooperative in Kandahar and appeared as a witness before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this year, corruption so widespread that nearly every citizen interaction with the government results in some form of shakedown. And traveling along the roadways requires one to pay a bribe at each police checkpoint. According to Ms. Shays, and I quote, “To pay your electricity bill, you have to go to eight different desks in two different buildings, and you have to pay bribes in order to have the privilege of paying your electricity bill,” end quote.

This sort of unchecked dishonest form of government—governance, I think, really is obstructing our progress in Afghanistan. And as she has noted, people, in some cases, prefer probably to live under the Taliban, you know, because of the excruciating difficulty that they encounter with the corruption in the government. And, in fact, I think that's what brought the Taliban to power back in 1994.

So, I guess my question is—if we don't work to clean up the corruption in Afghan government, we may not be able to win this war, and the question is, What, if confirmed, can you do, in terms of taking steps that would implement our new strategy there, that would lead to more honest government and end some of this corruption that is really plaguing the government and our ability, I think, to be successful there?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I concur with what both Sarah told you and also what you've stated, in terms of corruption. I think it is—it has a corrosive effect that undermines the legitimacy of any government, particularly Afghanistan right now, where it is a real problem, and it is perceived by the people to be a real problem. So, I think we need to help them at every level, partnering with them to try to work out corruption. I don't think there is a way we can suddenly take a society that, after 30 years of war, has developed some bad habits, and wring it out suddenly. But, I do think constant pressure on it, at the ministerial level—and I would look to partner with Ambassador Eikenberry and his team to try to provide people at each level to work, and then, out more locally, things like PRTs and our forces to put pressure on it to try to reduce it. I think it's one of the things that must be reduced for the government to be legitimate, and therefore, for the people to trust it.

Senator THUNE. Do you see us having any kind of success there, long term, absent a functioning—and “clean” is probably a—too much of a word to use, but at least a capable, accountable, and at least effective government in that country?

General MCCHRYSTAL. No, sir. It may not look exactly like a structure of our government, but it has to be functioning, it has to be perceived by the people as legitimate.

Senator THUNE. Okay.

I want to come back to one other question, I think, that was asked earlier by Senator Reed, and it has to do with the issue of the command structure there, and how, I think, that sometimes has hampered our efforts, as well. And critics often point out that part of the problem in Afghanistan is the lack of unified effort among our allies, and that we managed to cripple our effort, because there's not broad coordination or vision, and that there's confusion about strategy and tactics and operations and those sorts of things. So—and you've touched on this already. I would direct this to you, General, and to Admiral Stavridis, as well, about what can be done to establish a more unified effort, especially as we consider—contemplate pouring troops into Afghanistan.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I think the first point I'd make is, it's not as clean and as unified as we might like. On the other hand, the nature of coalition warfare is such that you bring a number of partners together with different values, different goals, different habits, and you get 'em to work together. At the end of the day, I think you have to judge whether you get more from fighting as a coalition than you give up by not having unity. I think, historically—and I think strongly—we get more out of being a coalition, and we—it's sort of like democracy, you pay for a certain lack of order, but the benefits are so great.

I think what we've got to do is work through it by overcommunicating, just constantly staying wired. And there are probably some things we can do, as I mentioned, with the aspiration for General Rodriguez's role that would make us more effective.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. I would agree, and I would add that the command relationships are complicated, but they are not, in any sense, unworkable. And I believe that the communication, and indeed, the friendship between myself, General McChrystal, General Petraeus, Ambassador Eikenberry, all of us well known to each other, will be

very effective in then turning and working with our allies to try and create a holistic approach, a pallet upon which we can all paint our different pictures, and yet, have it come out as the picture we want.

Senator THUNE. In your efforts with our allies—

Chairman LEVIN. Excuse me for interrupting, Senator Thune. I'm going to run and vote now. A vote has begun. After you, Senator Akaka would be next, and he will then identify whoever is—else is here.

Thank you. Excuse the interruption.

Senator THUNE. One final point I want to make on that is, in your efforts to—as you strengthen and build some of those relationships with our allies, this issue of caveats is really problematic. And if you talk to troops or commanders, it continually comes up, and it really does undermine and hamstring our ability to be effective. And I understand there are certain, as you noted, limitations when you're dealing with a coalition effort like this, but I really hope that you all can home in on that and see if, you know, perhaps we can provide some relief from some of these, just—the conditions and caveats that some of our allies impose on our ability to get the job done.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, if I could, we spoke earlier about the importance of these OMLTs, these teams that we're going to try and bring together. And that's kind of at the very top of the priority list for me. I would say caveats would be the next. I sat down, in the course of preparing for this hearing, and read every one of the 69 caveats that applied to the various nations involved in this. It is complicated. It's worth mentioning, 18 of the 42 countries are caveat-free, so there are examples, amongst the coalition, of nations, who do not place caveats upon themselves.

And so, I think by working with our allies, and, again, as we've talked about, trying to find where the absolute redlines are, but getting close and close and closer to those every day, will reduce the caveats. And again, that's, I think, an area where Stan and I will be working very closely together.

Sir, do you have anything you'd like to add?

Senator THUNE. Thank you all very much.

And, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Senator Akaka [presiding]: Thank you.

Thank you very much, to our panel, for being here. Welcome and aloha. And also, congratulations for your nomination. And also, thank you, to your families. I know families are great supporters of what you do, and I—I know your outstanding leadership is due to the support of your families. So, thank you all for you being here.

General Fraser, I would like to thank you very much for your steadfast leadership over the past year in the Pacific Command and—under the leadership of Admiral Keating and yourself. The proud men and women of the Pacific Command have met the challenges of a very demanding region, and I want to thank you for your service out there as you move on to Southern Command.

General, as you know, U.S. Southern Command is critical to our U.S. strategic objectives. If confirmed, what would be your top priorities for that region?

General FRASER. Thank you, Senator. I see two basic issues that we need to work. One is, in my role there, it's the basic defense in defending the southern approaches to the United States. It is, and will remain, a key effort, but that's for the United States.

I think the big thing within the region is an international and interagency approach. The issues that are resident there require us to take that approach. And so, if I'm confirmed, that is my goal, is to continue what Admiral Stavridis has so aptly done, and that is engage with the militaries in the region, engage in the interagency, engage internationally to continue to address the problems in the region, primarily poverty and income distribution.

Senator AKAKA. Well, thank you, General, for that. I'm glad to also know that you did spend your young life in that area, and for me, being knowledgeable of the culture of these areas makes a difference in the command there.

General McChrystal, according to Secretary Gates, the goal in Iraq is to have a soldier in a medical facility within 1 hour of being wounded. In Afghanistan, the response time has been closer to 2 hours. I applaud the initiative of Secretary Gates, in his defense budget, to improve the medical evacuation capability in Afghanistan. General, what is your current assessment of the medical evacuation issues in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRISTAL. Senator, thank you. You're exactly right, the—what they refer to sometimes as “the golden hour” is how quickly you can get a casualty to the right level of care, and the medical outcomes affected by that, always to the positive if it's lower.

Sir, we were behind in Afghanistan what we had in Iraq, just not nearly as many assets, plus not as many bases as distance to base. They—the Secretary directed some changes at the beginning of this calendar year. Many of those forces have already flowed in. Some of the others are still flowing, I believe, as part of the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade. When all of those are on the ground, and some of the additional new bases are established, I believe that that time will be down very close or about what it is in Iraq.

When I—if confirmed, one of the things I would look at closely is to make sure we maintain the ability to get our casualties—and that's all our casualties—coalition, Afghan, U.S.—to the right level of care quickly.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you.

Admiral, a major focus of European Command is building partners—partnerships and its capacity within the region. There are several security cooperation programs dedicated to building relationships. These programs conduct peacekeeping and contingency operations, and help minimize conditions that lead to conflict. What is your assessment of the partner capacity-building efforts of European Command?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Well, sir, let me begin by saying I'm in complete agreement that this kind of effort, which we in the military sometimes call “phase zero,” meaning working very early on in the problem to build partnership capacity, is crucial to the security of our Nation, and indeed to global security.

I have used those programs very effectively. We alluded to them a few moments ago. Sometimes called 1206, 1207, 1208, building

partnership capacity funds in Southern Command. And, if confirmed, I'd like to take that same approach with me to U.S. European Command.

From what I can see at a distance, not having traveled forward, General Craddock is doing a very good job of using those funds, as well, particularly in Eastern Europe and in the Caucasus, and if confirmed, I would seek to build on his good work.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you.

General McChrystal, the DOD has made significant progress caring for our returning warriors that have been diagnosed with mental health issues, but because of the stigma association, many don't seek assistance that is required. We must get the message to our warriors that one of the most courageous acts is reaching out for help.

General, if confirmed, what would you do to continue the efforts to tear down the stigma that deters many from seeking counseling?

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, I think primarily just talk to leaders. We've had some senior leaders who have very publicly sought help, and I thought that that was hugely helpful. I would continue to talk to our leaders and try to convince them that, obviously, they don't have to pretend they need help if they don't need it, but to break down the walls on the stigma of it. It really begins with leadership at every level, all the way down to squad and team leader, to take that away.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much.

Senator WICKER?

Senator WICKER. Senator Akaka, I'm on the horns of a dilemma. I understand you haven't voted.

Senator AKAKA. No.

Senator WICKER. And neither have I. I'd have a lot more confidence that they'll hold the vote open if you could get some assurance from the Majority Leader. I'm—my questions may be brief, therefore. But, I certainly appreciate the hearing. And it's been very, very educational.

Admiral Stavridis and Lieutenant General McChrystal, both of you said that you believe the Afghan army end strength will have to be higher than they are currently projecting. Is that correct?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Based on very preliminary and from-a-distant look at everything, but that's my intuition.

Senator WICKER. Okay. Okay, so that's your intuition. Well—and I guess it's an intuition on the part of General McChrystal, too, because, General, you are not willing to speculate on your predecessor's request for an additional 10,000 American troops. So, square that with us, if you can. And what is your—what's the estimate, from both of you gentlemen, on how much higher than 134,000 the Afghans might need to go, and how are you able to say that and not give us an estimate on the 10,000?

General MCCHRISTAL. Yes, Senator. When you look at the Afghan requirement, I look at the police and the army together, because together they form the security that the government has. I think that it's about, I think, 80,000 policemen right now, a little bit more than that, approved already, about 82- to 84,000 military. So, you've got about 160,000. I think we can literally just look at the size of Afghanistan and the size of the population, and you can

extrapolate out, even without a significant insurgency, that that would be a challengingly small number of security forces to have. With an insurgency, I think you factor it in.

I am reticent to speculate on U.S. forces, because I just want to get on the ground and—we haven't even gotten the additional forces the President authorized there yet, so I'd like to see them on the ground, see the impact we're having before I feel comfortable giving that kind of estimate.

Senator WICKER. Okay. Well, you're, all three, going to be involved in counternarcotics. But, let me start with you, Admiral Stavridis. Are you proud of the 10-year history of Plan Colombia? Are there fewer drugs coming from Latin America, as a whole, because of this? And what advice, based on that, will you have for General McChrystal in the field with the poppies, and for your successor in South America? And are we thinking outside the box enough, in terms of fighting the narcotics? I know we want them to go to alternative crops. Are we thinking outside the box, in terms of addressing the demand for narcotics, which we know will still be there, and thinking of ways to address that question, not only from the supply side, but the demand side?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Senator, as I have testified on numerous occasions, any counternarcotics effort is composed of three interlocking tasks. One is the demand side, which you just alluded to. One is the supply side, which gets into crop substitution and those kinds of things. And one is the interdiction piece, trying to understand the supply chain, reverse engineer it, and kill it. Those three things have to work together.

If I have advice for General McChrystal or advice for General Fraser, it would be that, it would be to understand that you can't attempt to use precision-guided ideas, if you will, to go after one single part of a counternarcotics problem. You have to have a robust demand side. You have to have an enlightened supply-side approach, which, again, crop substitution, I think, is very central to, but really encompasses the entire realm of development. And then, finally, you have to have capability in the middle, in the interdiction piece. And that's where I think General Fraser will find great challenge in Southern Command, because the distances are great, and I think General McChrystal will be working very hard on the supply side of this.

At the end of the day, the solutions are international, inter-agency, local security, and, I think, also with an additional component of strategic communications. It's very important to convince people not to use it, on the demand side, as you talked about, and also to convince them to quit growing and producing it, on the supply side. These are immense tasks.

Senator WICKER. Although we've made progress in Colombia.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. We have made—

Senator WICKER. Can you address the question about overall drug trafficking from Colombia and the neighboring region?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. There is still an extremely high level of drugs flowing through the region, Senator, as you well know.

And, to your point about, "Are we thinking out of the box enough?" I think that's an area where we need more creative thinking. To give you an example of the narcotic traffickers' innovative

thinking, they're creating semisubmersible submarines to move cocaine from Colombia. This is a real innovation, a difficult challenge. We need to step up and take similar types of approaches on the interdiction side, as well as on the demand-and-supply sides.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, gentlemen.

Senator Udall [presiding]: Gentlemen, welcome. I want to congratulate all three of you on your nominations. And I know you're careful to say "if confirmed," but I'm confident that all three of you will be confirmed.

I'm glad to have a chance to ask some questions today. I'm going to start with General McChrystal. I think we—we had talked before the hearing again, and I mentioned, you know, I had had a chance to travel to Afghanistan and Pakistan with Senator Hagan, Senator Begich, Senator Shaheen, and Senator Carper last week. And it's hard to see a lot in 5 days, but we had back-to-back meetings, and we were in forward operating bases in Kandahar and Helmand. We also visited Lahore, in Islamabad. And we did cover a lot of ground. We met with people on the ground who are working tactically to deliver the new strategy. We also had a chance to meet with many of the Afghan and Pakistan leaders, plus key American and NATO leaders, as well.

And, General, I came up with the sense that the new strategy has a chance to work. No strategy can work if it doesn't have buy-in, but I really had the feeling that this one clearly does. We met State Department personnel who were coordinating the influx of citizens and civilians for the new PRTs to the senior commanders, who talked a lot more about good governance than they did about weaponry or military tactics. So, all in all, there was just a feeling that we're on the march. In particular, the Pakistani political leaders were evincing real concern about the western regions of their country, not the eastern border with India.

If I might, I'd like to just drill down into this concept of success. It's hard to define. Even a strategy with widespread support could fail. Could you talk about what success might look like in Afghanistan and Pakistan? You said you hope to see progress in 18 to 24 months. What might that look like?

General MCCHRISTAL. Sir, I think it would have several components. I think, first, it would be a reduction or, hopefully, a complete elimination of al Qaeda inside Pakistan, where they mostly are now, with occasional elements inside Afghanistan. But, it would be essentially reducing their ability to either operate transnationally or to cooperate with elements like the Taliban in either country.

I think—inside Pakistan, I think it's a return to stability and essentially their victory against their internal insurgency. They do have a functioning government with a strong history, so if they continue with their counterinsurgency campaigns and they get relative stability, then I think it sort of looks like that.

Afghanistan's got much further to go, because after 30 years of war, their economic infrastructure is, I believe, fifth poorest in the world. There's just not much to build on physically so they have to start by doing that. But, what I think it looks like is—I think we achieve a level of security that allows each of the areas, to include those currently challenged by the Taliban, to bring in governance

that is maybe locally based, but it is linked to the National government. So, when they think of their governmental chain, they may think locally, and it may be tribal, in a village, but when they—when it goes back up the chain, it is absolutely recognized as going up through the district province and then to the National government. They are not challenged to the point where they have a Taliban shadow government.

I think the other aspects that—and the—so, the Taliban, rather than destroyed—I’ll steal a term that came from a bright young officer I worked with—he said, what—the challenge is to make them irrelevant, push them away from the population, and let them be irrelevant, a percentage of whom will, I believe, stop insurgency, and a percentage of ’em may not. And then, of course, the—then you can allow actual governance and economic development to go. I don’t expect a skyrocketing growth in the country, economically, but steady growth underpinned by solid governance is what I think success looks like.

Senator UDALL. You know, I think, in a sense, you’re distinguishing, as well, between the big-T Taliban and the little-t taliban. You talked about the hardcore Taliban elements that you believe are irredeemable, but you alluded to those Taliban who join the fight because that’s what Afghans do in the spring, join the fight because it’s the only way they can provide for their families.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Absolutely, sir. I—like Admiral Stavridis, I’m a friend of David Kilcullen’s, and I think a lot of what he says about “the accidental guerrilla” is true. And so, I think what we’ve got to do is eliminate the people who do it for other than just absolutely strong ideological reasons.

Senator UDALL. This may be a rhetorical question, but I want to ask it anyway. The al Qaeda situation is a large part of the problem in Afghanistan and Pakistan. But, if we were to capture or kill Osama bin Laden tomorrow, which is a goal we all hold, would the job be done in Afghanistan and Pakistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I don’t believe it would. When I think of al Qaeda, I think that you cannot destroy al Qaeda, finally, until Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri are gone. But, getting them gone doesn’t conversely automatically cause al Qaeda to go away.

Senator UDALL. Yes.

General MCCHRYSTAL. So, I don’t think it does.

Senator UDALL. An editorial comment from me. I know we’ve focused on UBL a lot of the time, but his number-two in command, the Egyptian, I think, is a serious target for us, as well. And we’ll continue that work, I know. That’s a—that’s a goal we all hold.

We had a changing focus to the ANA and ANP, the Afghan Security Forces, in a meeting with Defense Minister Warnock. And he agreed that the new strategy’s stated goals of 134,000 ANA troops and 82,000 ANP personnel would not be sufficient. We had some additional conversations about the sustainability of a large Afghan force—How would we pay for it. Do you have any thoughts about that question that we face?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I agree that the—and as I said earlier, I think a growth in the Afghan Security Forces, army and police, are likely to be required. I’d be surprised if we don’t.

Resourcing it, I think, is going to be a challenge, and I'm not—I have not really seen a solid recommendation for that yet.

Senator UDALL. General Fraser, you have similar challenges on the counternarcotics front. Admiral Stavridis has to oversee all of this from his position in Europe. It would seem like there are some common lessons and approaches that we might be able to apply, both in Afghanistan and in the northern reaches of South America. Would you care to comment?

General FRASER. Thank you, Senator. I do think there are great similarities between it, and I think, if confirmed, one of the challenges that I will have, that we'll all have, is communicating between one another. And I will endeavor to do that, to make sure that we communicate what's working in one region, how that applies to what would work in another region so that we're crossing the boundaries, we're decreasing the boundaries and enabling one another to use the best practices, wherever they are, to success in our regions.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. If I could add, Senator—worth noting that we're in conversations at SOUTHCOM with our Colombian friends about the possibility of Colombian military engagement in Afghanistan. So, that, if it comes to fruition, is a very direct and personal venue to have soldiers who have had experience in both counterinsurgency and counternarcotics transferring some of those lessons learned. And, I think, also important to note in that context, we talk a lot about NATO's involvement in Afghanistan, but there are 28 NATO nations, but 14 other countries that are also involved there. So, moving these lessons are very important.

Senator UDALL. Thank you. I see my time's expired. I would make one final comment—and, General McChrystal, you're well aware of this—that at one point before the last 30-year misadventure that's characterized Afghanistan, it fed much of the region; it has the potential to produce a lot of food. We did hear that, for example, the price of wheat can rival that of poppies. And so, it's not as if we're trying to fight upstream when it comes to the markets there, but we do have to provide an alternative. We have to provide that security and that development opportunity for the farmers, particularly in the south of Afghanistan.

Thank you again.

Chairman Levin [presiding]: Thank you, Senator Udall.

Senator Chambliss?

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, to each of you, having gotten to know all of you over the last many years, thanks for your leadership, thanks for your service, and Americans feel they're fortunate to have men like you in the roles that you are now. And, to your families, we say thanks.

General McChrystal, I think I've seen you probably in theater more than I've seen you out of theater here in recent years, and I note those bars on your sleeve indicate you've been gone from home a lot more often than you've been at home. So, to each of you, thanks for that.

General Stavridis, I was—excuse me—Admiral, I was in your ethnic home, as you know, over the last week, and had the opportunity to observe what's going on in Greece, particularly with regard to what's happening with the migration of folks out of Afghan-

istan and Pakistan through Turkey, through Greece, sometimes staying in Turkey, sometimes staying in Greece, causing some problems there. But, Turkey obviously is a very strategic country right now. Its European orientation, NATO membership, and enduring relationship make it a bridge of stability between the Euro-Atlantic community and the Nations of Central Asia and the Arabian Gulf. How would you describe our represent with Turkey today? And how has the situation in northern Iraq, with the PKK and the KGK, threaten that relationship?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Thank you, Senator. Probably worth noting that, although I'm ethnically Greek, my grandfather was actually born in Turkey and came through Greece on his way to the United States. So, I have—I think I have cultural understanding of both of those nations.

Turkey is an incredibly important friend and ally to the United States. I would categorize our relationship at the moment from what I can see before going to theater, if confirmed, and actually meeting with our Turkish military counterparts—from all that I can see, it is a strong relationship. We are conducting a great deal of information and intelligence-sharing with our friends. We recognize the threat to Turkey posed by the Kurdish separatist movements. And I believe it is both an important and a strong relationship, and one that I intend to focus on, if confirmed.

Senator CHAMBLISS. General McChrystal, Afghanistan obviously is so closely tied with what's going on in Pakistan that it's going to be a very difficult situation for us there. And, as you and I talked the other day, a political solution in Afghanistan is one thing, but, at the end of the day, it's going to have to require a political solution to ultimately solve the issues there. One of those political issues that we have is what is taking place in Pakistan. How do you see the relationship between what's going on in Pakistan right now having a direct impact on Afghanistan? And after your confirmation and being put in place, what are your intentions with respect to Pakistan?

General MCCRYSTAL. Senator, thanks for your question. I view Afghanistan and Pakistan as absolutely linked, but not one and the same. I think that—and sometimes people use the term “PakAf” or “AfPak,” and I think that may do a disservice to both of those countries, because both are very unique situations, unique people. I do believe, however, they suffer a very similar problem. In Pakistan, they now have what has become an internal insurgency. It's not strictly Taliban, although it uses that moniker. It's a collection of different groups that have essentially turned inward against the Government of Pakistan. And unless they can bring that insurgency under control and reestablish governance, I think that they will have tremendous problems. But, also it makes Afghanistan very, very difficult, because it offers a sanctuary, which any guerilla force or insurgency benefits from, and makes it very difficult to defeat. But, it also—it's—a friend of mine used to use the analogy, it's like burning leaves in your backyard on a windy day; it just constantly will keep blowing over and causing problems. So, I think we have got to see solution and progress in both countries almost simultaneously—the increase of governance, the reduction of the ability of elements like the Taliban to catch hold.

Senator CHAMBLISS. The 48th Brigade of the Georgia National Guard is back in Afghanistan. And again, you and I discussed this, and I look forward to visiting them and visiting you while they're over there. And we continue to call on our Guard and Reserve on a very regular basis. It's no longer a volunteer service on their part, almost; it's a constant service. Not part-time, for sure. We've talked about the seamless integration of the Guard and Reserve. Can you talk for a minute about that? Any issues there that we need to be thinking about that you're prepared to implement that would change what's going on right now?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I think we've made a lot of progress in the last few years. And, as you and I discussed, I've got a history back—with the 48th—back to about 1982, very close with that brigade. We do very well in the field. There is just not an issue in the field. And organizations work together. Sometimes we do have to employ organizations in smaller formations than they might like to be, the battalion or brigade level, and that's a challenge. But, it's a challenge, Active and Reserve component. So, I think it's legitimately looked at by all the commanders.

I think the Chairman has done an awful lot. He's got General McKinley very integrated now, as the chief of National Guard Bureau, in what he does. So, I sense progress there.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Senator, could I just add—

Senator CHAMBLISS. Sure.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. —the State partnership program, which was mentioned earlier, is a Guard and Reserve program that is just of seminal importance, based on my 3 years in Southern Command, and, I think, through these regions. And it gets to Stan's point about smaller formations can have tremendous impact, particularly in these counterinsurgency situations. It's a real strength of the Guard and Reserve, sir.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Not unlike what we saw in Iraq, the training of the military and the enlistment of folks into the military in Afghanistan is—has been on the rise, and it appears that we've got some very capable fighters; they've been fighting all their lives, so they certainly know what they're doing. But, on the other side of that coin, the security police is an issue. It has been, in Iraq. I think that still remains our weakest link there. And I saw, in my recent trip to Afghanistan, the same thing in Afghanistan. What—General McChrystal, what's your direction, there? What's your thought with respect to how we continue, number one, to provide funding? Or, do we look to the Afghans for the funding? And as far as the training, what about our partners? Are they stepping up and helping us like we need for them to?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, first, I absolutely agree with the assessment. I think that the army's come along well, although it's got some challenges. The police are lagging a bit. We have not been able to put the level of mentoring or partnering with them out in as many locations, or the training down to as low a level, as will need to be to be effective. We'd like to see more help from our NATO partners. We are now going to do more with the deployment of the 4th of the 82nd, which actually goes, in late August and in September, that will essentially double our ability to do that. But,

I think it's overdue. And so, I think that will be progress. It may be all that's required to get them to the level needed.

Senator CHAMBLISS. General, Senator Levin and I serve on the board at WINSAC, and we've had a good working relationship with the admiral and folks at WINSAC. We look forward to you being in place and continuing that strong relationship. We're doing good work down there. And again, just thank all of you for your willingness to serve and your great leadership.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator HAGAN?

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to once again welcome our men here today and thank you so much for your commitment to our country, to our military, to the men and women serving in the military, and, in particular, to their families, too. And certainly, welcome to all of the family members, your wives and children. I know it's so important for you to have them here. And the ones who aren't here—in spirit; I'm sure they're watching.

But, as I'm sure Senator Udall said, I—he and I and several others just got back from a trip to Afghanistan and to Pakistan, and it was certainly educational for me, but it was also—to be there, but to see the terrain that our military is working on, and obviously the heat, the need for equipment, the need for maintenance is also very important.

And it was interesting, as I'm sure you've heard, too, we had an opportunity to meet with President Karzai, President Zardari, a number of the other ministers, as well as the people in both countries. And I certainly enjoyed talking one on one to the troops that I could speak with from North Carolina, and they are certainly proud, serving and doing—what a good job they're doing.

While we were there, it was interesting, too, Karzai, Zardari and Ahmadinejad actually had a joint meeting in Iran during that time, so it was interesting hearing Karzai's and Zardari's aspects on that meeting.

But, in our meeting with President Karzai—and this is to Admiral Stavridis and General McChrystal—in our meeting with President Karzai last week, he emphasized the importance of defining the mission in Afghanistan and to work with Pakistan on the other side of the border. And the feeling that al Qaeda's presence in Afghanistan has really shifted to Pakistan's federally Administered Tribal Area, and specifically in Waziristan, and the fact that they've pretty much moved into the FATA area, but compounding the problem is that the Afghan Taliban High Command dwells in Quetta inside Pakistan's Baluchistan Province. And the increased U.S. ground strength in Afghanistan, coupled with the corruption with the Pakistan Army and Frontier Corps, are critical in depriving al Qaeda and the Taliban of safe havens in Pakistan and preventing the cross-border attacks.

My question has to do with keeping in mind Pakistan's sovereignty and reluctance for the U.S. to conduct operations inside Pakistan's FATA, what type of cross-border coordination strategy can we adapt—adopt with the Pakistan Army to deny the Taliban and al Qaeda safe havens there?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, ma'am. I think that the idea that we would conduct operations in Pakistan in any extent is not valid, and nor do I think we would want to. I think the road to success in Pakistan is through the Government of Pakistan and through the Pakistani military and Pakistani police.

It gets to the building-partnership-capacity kinds of activities that we have done with Pakistan, and hopefully will do with increasing effectiveness over the years, or in the years in the future.

I think everything we can do to share intelligence with them, to share, in some cases, ISR assets, that sort of thing, to coordinate operations—there have been a number of coordination centers established—those are still growing in size and in scope. So, I think everything we can do to empower and increase their capacity is really the road we've got to go, inside Pakistan.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. I agree with General McChrystal completely.

Senator HAGAN. You know, another comment that we heard quite a bit about was in the Swat Valley, obviously the military operations going on there in Pakistan, and the number of the IDPs, the internally displaced people, in Pakistan; it's—it was numbering 2.4 million while we were there. I was just wondering about any of the humanitarian needs and aspects that are taking place right now within Pakistan to help the—those huge numbers of people. Can you give me an update? Are you aware of any activity going on in helping, from a humanitarian aspect?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Ma'am, we—in my role as Director of the Joint Staff, we were working to provide, through CENTCOM, whatever the Government of Pakistan requested. And it did request some support. Maybe not as much as we expected at the beginning, but they have requested it, and we provided it. I think, again, that's key. I think the number of IDPs, if they are—if they hold the government responsible for their plight, obviously offer the chance for greater unrest. I think, right now, the sense is, they hold the Taliban, the insurgents, responsible. But, I think that's got to be worked hard by the Pakistani government, with whatever help the world can give.

Senator HAGAN. In Afghanistan, we—I met with the Prime Minister—with Minister of Interior Atmar, and he indicated—it was interesting—that the Afghan National Police was undergoing a pilot program to allow females to actually accompany, with members of their families, their fathers or their brothers—to come in as police recruits within the Afghan National Police and—in an effort to utilize family dynamics, to control violence, and to sustain order in the urban areas. And, as you know, security checkpoints in Afghanistan are usually—in many cases, manned by men, and obviously there have been a number of female suicide bombers recently. And what I understand, that the strategy of utilizing the women has been done effectively in Jordan, and that—in performing security functions and countering female suicide bombers.

It was interesting, too, President—I mean, Minister Atmar said that it was within several months that the enemy targeted its first female officer, and she was killed. But, I was just wondering if you were aware of that or if—what your opinion is on this initiative to recruit the Afghan women.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Ma'am, I was not aware of it, but, on the sound of it, makes absolute sense. When we deal with the cultural realities or sensitivities of any area we're operating in, the ability to adapt and get to the right person—I mean, I would guess that a female police officer could question females much more effectively, certainly, than a foreign soldier could, but probably even better than a male Afghan policeman. So, theoretically, I think it makes absolute sense.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. I would just add, ma'am, that this is an example of a program in which our allies could potentially play a very good role. Many of their police forces have cultural sensitivities that are different than ours and might be adaptable to this region. So, a good example of the benefits of approaching the coalition in a way that they can participate in comfortable ways for them.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

General FRASER, multilateral cooperation on drug interdiction and cash flow and the smuggling of weapons is essential in maintaining stability in the SOUTHCOM region. It's also an area of significant overlap with NORTHCOM, particularly with regard to the smuggling of drugs, cash, cash flow, weapons across the border in El Paso to the Mexican state near there. To what extent do you foresee working with NORTHCOM on these issues? And I know it's such a huge problem right now.

General FRASER. Yes, thank you, Senator.

As you know, a lot of the cocaine that flows into the United States flows through Central America into Mexico and then into the United States. Southern Command has already initiated a very close relationship with Northern Command. They have liaison officers. They share a joint operating area with Joint Interagency Task Force South. They've had staff-to-staff talks. They continue that dialogue on a routine basis. And I know Admiral Stavridis and General Renuart have a close working relationship.

I've had the pleasure of working for General Renuart before, so I anticipate, and, if confirmed, I look forward to, continuing and building on the relationship that Admiral Stavridis has already done.

Senator HAGAN. Thank each and every one of you for your comments, and I look forward to working closely with you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Senator Graham?

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, also, want to compliment you on your careers. And I think you're excellent choices for the jobs that you're about to take on, and I'm sure you'll be confirmed by the Senate.

General Fraser, along the lines of what the Senator from North Carolina was asking, if you haven't had a chance to evaluate it, that's fine, but could you give me an opinion as to whether or not the fence we're building on the U.S.-Mexican border is helping, in terms of drugs and illegal immigration? Do you have a view of that?

General FRASER. Senator, I don't have a view on that. I have not studied that, so—

Senator GRAHAM. Could you take—

General FRASER. Yes, sir—
 Senator GRAHAM.—a look at it and—
 General FRASER.—I'll take that for—
 Senator GRAHAM.—give me an—
 General FRASER.—and get—
 Senator GRAHAM.—opinion about that?
 General FRASER.—back to you.
 [The information referred to follows:]
 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator GRAHAM. General McChrystal, as I understand it, as we go forward, it's helpful to look back and see where we're at, a baseline in Afghanistan. Under the NATO operations, the Germans were supposed to train the police. Are they training the police now?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I'm not sure of their—

Senator GRAHAM. Yes.

General MCCHRYSAL.—current role, but—

Senator GRAHAM. I think they're not. And I think the U.S. Army, and particularly the National Guard, are training the police. So, we had several years lost, where one of our NATO allies who was primarily responsible for police training, and we, quite frankly, went nowhere. So, now the U.S. military has taken over that job. The Phoenix Program seems to have a lot of potential, where you put mentors out in different regions to train the police.

The Italians, Admiral, were supposed to be in charge of the judiciary. How well did that work?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Sir, I don't have the details on it, but I think the current state of the judiciary in Afghanistan needs improvement, as well.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, I can tell you, I think it was a miserable failure and that we now are having to take that job upon ourselves.

Admiral, who was in charge of dealing with the drug eradication program originally?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. I believe the British were, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, I think we've had a different view of how to do it.

And the reason I point out these things is not to be overly critical of our allies, but you have the police, which are key to us winning, were—have gone nowhere for years; the judiciary, I think, has probably gone backwards; and when it comes to drug eradication, we're having to start all over again. So, both of you have got a real challenge, here. We've lost time, money, and effort, and I want people in America to understand that you're taking over a NATO operation that has been less than successful.

And now, Admiral, you said the outcome in Afghanistan is important to the future of NATO, but it's not a go or no-go. In my view, it is, that if NATO fails in Afghanistan, it will never recover. Is that off-base?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Again, sir, I think it's critically important, and I think we're going to have to succeed, for a whole host of reasons, both national and international.

Senator GRAHAM. And I say this because I support what the President's doing. And I want the American public to know that this has been a NATO operation all along. That was a positive. And it could be a positive, but, quite frankly, when it comes to imple-

menting the war plan, the way to stabilize Afghanistan, we have not gone forward; we've, quite frankly, gone backwards.

If we go to 160,000 Afghan-manned army, General McChrystal, how much will that cost, each year?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I don't have the figures. I can—

Senator GRAHAM. Okay.

Senator GRAHAM. What's the entire budget for Afghanistan, their national government? How much money do they collect?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I don't have that figure right—

Senator GRAHAM. Well, it's under a billion dollars. So, the American people need to understand that we're about to build 150–60,000-man Afghan army, which I think is the key to getting home, but we're going to wind up paying for it. We're having to pay for our own Army, we're having to carry a lot of burdens in the world. We are the arsenal of democracy. But, Admiral, don't you think it's fair to ask our NATO allies that it's in their self-interest to build a larger Afghan army so we all can come home being safe? And they've contributed a whopping \$100 million to this effort, is that correct?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Yes, sir, I agree with you. And again, I think this is an area where persuasion with the allies is crucial. As you know, the trust fund needs at least a billion dollars, and we're at the 100-million—10 percent. So, we've got a long way to go.

Senator GRAHAM. I may be wrong, but I think the cost of the Afghan Army at that level's going to be \$3 or \$4 billion, at the very minimum. So, I hope our allies understand that the outcome in Afghanistan is important to them, just as it is to us.

Now, everyone's asked about winning. Tell me the consequence of losing in Afghanistan or Pakistan.

General McChrystal, walk me through. What would happen if America lost in Afghanistan and Pakistan collapsed?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I think, in the near term, I'd start with—and it's speculation to predict the future, but I think that what would happen is, it would break down into civil war. There would be—I don't believe that the Taliban would take over Afghanistan. I think it would go back to what it was before 2001, and that would be an ongoing civil war between different factions. I believe that al Qaeda would have the ability to move back into Afghanistan. And I cannot imagine why they would not do that. I think that if there was then that kind of safe haven in Afghanistan, with the ongoing problem in Pakistan, I think Pakistan would find winning its insurgency very, very difficult, if not impossible, because that is—

Senator GRAHAM. Would it probably lead to the collapse of the civilian government in Pakistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I think it's very likely. And then, of course, that's a nuclear-armed state, so you've got nuclear weapons under questionable control, at that point. And then I, sir—sir, I think, wider, the entire region is affected by that.

Senator GRAHAM. Admiral, do you agree with that assessment?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. I do. And I would add, as you just alluded to, the—at a minimum, the extreme demoralization of the NATO Alliance for having failed. And so, I'd add that to the list of bad outcomes.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, as Senator McCain and Chairman Levin indicated, the American people need to understand this is going to be difficult, it's going to be more expensive, more lives are going to be lost, but I hope we understand, as a nation, the consequences of losing. The benefits of winning are real, but the consequences of losing are equally real. And that's why I support President Obama's efforts to interject more troops.

Do you feel constrained at all, General McChrystal, to ask for more troops? Is there any political restraint upon you to ask for more troops if you think they're necessary? Do you think you could make that request without any concerns?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I'm not in the job yet, so I—you know, I'm speculating on that. Yesterday, in a meeting, Admiral Mullen said that—if I was confirmed, to ask for what I need, almost quote/unquote. He looked me in the eye and said that. So, I believe that, if I have a requirement, I can look Admiral Mullen in the eye and tell him, "That's what I need."

Senator GRAHAM. Do you think that's true of the administration, also?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I don't know.

Senator GRAHAM. Don't know. Fair enough.

Detainee policy. Senator Levin brought up an example of where we had sort of gotten off script in Afghanistan. I think, General McChrystal, you've done a lot to put us back on script there. But, Senator McCain mentioned a dynamic that the country needs to get braced for. I think there's almost 700 detainees in Bagram. Pretty close now. And a percentage, under 100, but close to 100, are foreign fighters that I don't think will ever be sent to Afghan legal system, because they don't want to try 'em, and that we're not going to find a third country to repatriate 'em. Don't you think we need a comprehensive detainee strategy regarding Afghanistan, future detainees who are foreign fighters, as well as what we do with the people in Gitmo, that it all goes together?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I think we need a comprehensive detainee strategy, not just Afghanistan, but worldwide, for anyone.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes, including Iraq.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Absolutely, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. Thank you all for your service. I look forward to working with you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

Senator Webb?

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I appreciate all three of you individuals coming by my office and visiting with our staff and with me. And we've been able to have a lot of good discussions. I regret that we are unable, because of the Senate schedule, to have individual hearings on each of you, although I'm not sure you share that regret.

[Laughter.]

Senator WEBB. I remember when I went for my confirmation hearings, years ago, it was usually one individual in front of a—the entire committee.

General Fraser, just very quickly, I look forward to working with you in a very energetic way, following on some of the discussions that we had and I also had with Admiral Stavridis before, particu-

larly focusing on the impact of these transnational gang operations emanating from the area that you are going to be responsible for, but back up into American cities. It's a huge problem, and it's one that we are only now beginning to address.

Admiral, just very quickly, I want to make a point for the record here, that I have some real concerns about what has happened to the NATO Alliance, not with respect to Afghanistan, but I guess the only phrase you can really use is international sprawl. If you look at the NATO that I worked in when I was—particularly when I was assistant Secretary of Defense, I spent a lot of time in NATO, doing mobilization issues. It was really a different NATO. We have, on the one hand, I think, become a much more unilateral guarantor among the NATO countries for security issues, and, on the other, we have brought countries into NATO—into the NATO Alliance, that traditionally could only be called “protectorates.” They really don't add, quite frankly, to the security of the United States to have them as members of the NATO. We add to their security. And all we have to do is take a look at what happened in the situation in Georgia last year and to contemplate what that would have looked like if they had actually been a NATO member, to understand the implications of that. And I—there's not time today to have a full discussion of that, but I want you to know that's on my radar screen, and I will look forward to discussing it with you further.

General McChrystal, first I would like to ask you—you commented that you would agree that our goal, in terms of increasing the Afghan National Army, would be higher even than is what is now proposed. Is that correct?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I believe that it would.

Senator WEBB. What would you say—I'm not asking you to pick a number out of the air, but what would you—would you agree with Senator Lieberman's approach on this?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I believe we've got to look at it. I think some significant growth over what is already approved is probably going to be required, but I'd like to get on the ground to give a better—

Senator WEBB. You and I had some—something of a discussion about this, but can you tell me the largest national army—national army that the Afghans have ever had?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I—

Senator WEBB. In size? The numbers that I've see were approximately 80- to 90,000, with Soviet backing; and, of those, only a marginal percentage really effective as a valid national army. So, we are talking about more than doubling what they have been able to do at any time in their past. Are you comfortable that that actually is achievable?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I know that it would be a challenge, for lots of reasons. Afghanistan's got about 34- million-person population, but it also is struggling with about 28-percent literacy. So, as you develop the leadership core, you have the challenge that you have to teach people. It's not—

Senator WEBB. But, also a national—

General MCCHRYSAL. Sure.

Senator WEBB.—army is a component of a viable national government. We saw this in Lebanon, when I was a journalist there in the early '80s, where they attempted to create a national army, but because of the strong factions that had their own militia, it was basically impossible to have a national government that had that sort of reach. Do you think you're going to be able to do that?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I think it's one of the things that must be done. I believe that one thing the Afghan National Army can do, it can be one of the leaders of creating a more national view of the government. I think it—right now, one of the good things about it is, it is viewed as national, not as—

Senator WEBB. Right.

General MCCHRYSAL.—of a certain sect.

Senator WEBB. Do you have an idea about how these monies are going to be paid to this national army? I don't mean how they are going to be raised, but actually how we're going to transmit these monies in a situation where we all agree there's high-level corruption in the government—I'm speaking principally in terms of transparency, so that we know actually where our money is going?

General MCCHRYSAL. Sir, I don't, but I absolutely agree with on the importance.

Senator WEBB. Okay. General, you and I talked about another issue, and I want to address it here. It relates to Corporal Tillman's situation, and his family's situation. I assume you would agree—I know you would agree, with your background, that the definition of "leadership" goes well beyond battlefield competence, it goes to stewardship toward the people who have served under us. You would agree with that, would you not?

General MCCHRYSAL. Absolutely, sir.

Senator WEBB. And to their families.

General MCCHRYSAL. Absolutely.

Senator WEBB. We have a situation here that I think is highly, highly unusual in our history. I really mean that. I—you know, you did mention other notable Americans who died of friendly-fire incidents on the battlefield—General McNair, Stonewall Jackson. I actually had an ancestor who fought under Stonewall Jackson and died at Chancellorsville. But, this is a situation where a very special American, with a unique intellectual and athletic background, forewent millions of dollars in order to serve his country, and there was a period where I believe the Army failed the family, when the knowledge was going up through the chain of command that this was a friendly-fire incident.

And I've been contacted by their family again, once your name was forwarded. I'm going to read from a 19—excuse me—a 2005 letter from Pat Tillman's father, who is an attorney. He is very learned in these matters. He had been briefed by the Army in '05. He said, "No investigator worth a damn would have made the presentation I sat through unless they had an agenda different from the truth. The initial investigation was changed. Conflicting testimony was disregarded. Key evidence was destroyed and/or omitted. Witnesses, probably with supervision of superiors, changed their testimony. No one has been confronted with their conduct. The issue of importance is the integrity of the military"—this is from Pat Tillman's father, not from me, although I would agree—"from

the lieutenant colonel on the ground all the way up and past General Jones.”

The inspector general of DOD acted on this. They—in their review, they said, “Corporal Tillman’s chain of command made critical errors in reporting Corporal Tillman’s death and in assigning investigative jurisdiction in the days following his death, and bears ultimate responsibility for the inaccuracies, misunderstandings, and perceptions of concealment. Army officials failed to properly update family members when an investigation was initiated into Corporal Tillman’s death, and that the justification for his Silver Star contained inaccuracies.”

His brother, who, as you know, also served our country with great sacrifice, testified, after this finding, saying that, “The deception surrounding this case was an insult to the family, but, more importantly, its primary purpose was to deceive a nation. We say these things with disappointment and sadness. We have been used as props in a public-relations exercise.”

Secretary Geren apologized. He said, “We, as an Army, failed in our duty to the Tillman family and the duty we owe to all families of our fallen soldiers.”

You have not, to my knowledge, been on record in terms of how you personally feel about this incident, and I would like to give you the opportunity to do that.

General MCCHRISTAL. Thank you, Senator. And I do appreciate that.

I would say up front, I agree with Secretary Geren, we failed the family. And I was a part of that, and I apologize for it. And I would say that there is nothing we can do to automatically restore the trust, which was the second casualty of 22nd April. The first was the loss of a great American, the second was the loss of trust with a family, and, wider than that, with some additional people.

I will say that it was not intentional, with the people that I saw. I didn’t see any activities by anyone to deceive. That said, I do believe that the confluence of mistakes, either because they didn’t know the policy or people just didn’t line things up right—my own mistakes in not reviewing the Silver Star citation well enough and making sure that I compared it to the message that I sent—were mistakes. They were well intentioned, but they created—they added to the doubt and the sense of mistrust, and we didn’t get it right.

Now, we have—to provide context, as you remember, Senator, we were still in combat when we were doing all of that. So, we were in combat in the days after his death as we did this. We were in the first battle of Fallujah in Iraq at the same time, so we were making mistakes. But, I would say the people who made them also were in a situation where you sometimes do make mistakes.

So, that’s not an excuse, but I would say that we’ve learned from it. I’ve learned from it.

Senator WEBB. Well, I would say to you, I—I mean, first of all, I was at the Army Infantry School, giving a talk on lessons learned from Vietnam, the evening that we found out that Corporal Tillman had lost his life. And I don’t need to say to you the impact that had on the leadership. But, no matter what else is going on, when—with the enormity of that incident, in terms of national per-

ceptions and the attention that it got nationally, and the fact that you were sending a private message, P4 message, up your chain of command warning about the potential impact of a friendly-fire incident, I regretfully say I think that the Army really failed the Tillman family. And I appreciate your speaking about this today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Webb.

Senator Nelson?

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Fraser, you have some experience in China. What do you think is the growing influence of China in South America?

General FRASER. Sir, from my study there, what I see is that they have commercial interests, they have interests to gain access to natural resources. I see them—it can—working the same purposes in other parts of the world, also, not just influenced on and focused on Latin America. I do not see, from my study, that there is a military threat from that influence. So, all of it right now is focused commercially. I also see an interest on the part of Latin American Caribbean nations to gain access to markets in China, as well.

Senator BILL NELSON. As we discussed, when you kindly came by to visit, that the Southern Command is a great command at—headed by a four-star who is not only a warrior, but is also a diplomat. And, of course, Admiral Stavridis has perfected that role. It had been done before by General Hill. And it's been evolving over time. What kind of twist do you see, as you apply diplomacy, with being a commander? Just give me some of your ideas as you take over this command.

General FRASER. Sir, I think, from my standpoint, it's really about partnership-building throughout. That's partnership internationally, that's partnership with the interagency. From a specific Southern Command standpoint, responsibility is for the military portion of that. But, it is working with the State Department, with USAID, with the other Federal agencies involved there, also working with partner nations, Armed Forces, to build the capacities, build the capabilities that are there. So, if confirmed, I really look forward to engaging in all those arenas very robustly.

Senator BILL NELSON. I think we're going to have to perfect this role, wherever we are projecting United States force in the future. General McChrystal, you and I talked about it, even in a war zone like Afghanistan, same thing. It's—now it's not just the United States military. The military can take the lead, but it's all the other agencies of government to work in projecting our power in order to secure the interests of the United States.

Now, one area in your future command that is just still a basket case—I thought I'd ask Admiral Stavridis to comment on this—is Haiti. And then let's pick up the conversation, General Fraser.

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Well, Senator, of course, you and I have spent some time on the road together, including Haiti, and it is, indeed, a nation in extreme distress. It's the poorest nation in the Americas. It's among the poorest four or five countries in the world. It was devastated last summer by three separate major storms; two of them, high-level hurricanes. It has a—severe problems with soil erosion. I could go on and on.

What am I encouraged by there? I'm encouraged by the United Nations peacekeeping force, which has done a superb job with very little U.S. military engagement. I'm encouraged by what our ambassador has done down there, Ambassador Sanderson. I'm encouraged by the recent appointment of former President Bill Clinton. So, the situation is desperate, but not hopeless, is how I would categorize it at the moment, sir.

Senator BILL NELSON. I personally think that President Preval is really trying. What faces him is what faces sufficiently motivated elected leaders elsewhere in the world, is, underneath him is so much corruption.

What do you think—what should we—what do you want to do, General Fraser, with regard to—since Haiti is—will be in your area of responsibility?

General FRASER. Senator, I think it's very much along the line that I talked about earlier, and that is, a lot of the capability-building within Haiti, I think really still involves with an interagency approach. So, there's a lot of USAID, there's the State Department role. From my role, if confirmed for Southern Command, it is really going in, assisting those agencies in their capacities, as well as working with the armed forces in Haiti, although they are small, to improve their capacity. It's an overall ability to go at the poverty, to work on the distressed incomes, just the overall capacity of the Nation. And so, it will be an international and an interagency approach.

And I'm also, as Admiral Stavridis said, very encouraged by the continued presence of the United Nations mission there.

Senator BILL NELSON. Admiral Stavridis, the Chairman and I and Senator Collins went to Russia, and then Poland and the Czech Republic, and we came away convinced that, for the future threat of an Iranian missile with a nuclear warhead against Europe, that, in the foreseeable future, our Standard Missile 3, and on ships placed in the Mediterranean, the Aegis system, and then upgraded over time, could take care of that particular threat. In the meantime, we want to make sure that our commanders in the field have the Standard Missile 3 and the THAAD system. Do you want to give us some of your ideas of this?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. Well, I've, of course, talked to the Chairman about this, as well, sir, as well as you in your office earlier. I'm very intrigued by the findings of the three of you, and I look forward, as—if confirmed, immediately probing this, both from an Iranian-threat perspective and from the perspective of our military interlocutors in those countries and exploring this idea. And then, if it makes sense, which it certainly seems to, pushing that forward as military advice to Secretary Gates, who would then take it into the interagency. At the end of the day, of course, this is a political/diplomatic decision that the administration would have to take. I think it's a very intriguing idea, as it's been outlined. I look forward, if confirmed, to doing the military piece of that along the lines you've described, sir.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

And when you're referring to the possibility of the option as outlined, you're talking about the possibility of pursuing missile defense cooperation with Russia?

Admiral STAVRIDIS. I am. I think that's a very intriguing idea, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

There will be questions for the record. I know that I'll have some additional questions for you, General, particularly relative to the chronology of the detainee issue—treatment issue in Iraq and Afghanistan, which we talked about briefly. But, there will be other questions, I assume, from other Senators, as well.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Nelson, are you all set?

We will stand adjourned, with thanks, again, to you and your families that provide the great support that makes it possible for you and so many others like you to serve this country.

We stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:14 p.m., the committee adjourned.]