

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF GENERAL VINCENT K.
BROOKS, USA, FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND
TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED NATIONS COMMAND, COMBINED
FORCES COMMAND, AND UNITED STATES FORCES KOREA

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Washington, D.C.

ALDERSON COURT REPORTING
1155 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 200
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036
(202) 289-2260
www.aldersonreporting.com

1 HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF GENERAL VINCENT K.
2 BROOKS, USA, FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND
3 TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED NATIONS COMMAND, COMBINED FORCES
4 COMMAND, AND UNITED STATES FORCES KOREA

5

6 Tuesday, April 19, 2016

7

8

U.S. Senate

9

Committee on Armed Services

10

Washington, D.C.

11

12 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in
13 Room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. John McCain,
14 chairman of the committee, presiding.

15

Committee Members Present: Senators McCain

16

[presiding], Inhofe, Wicker, Ayotte, Fischer, Cotton,

17

Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Reed, McCaskill, Manchin,

18

Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine,

19

and King.

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN McCAIN, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM ARIZONA

3 Chairman McCain: Well, good morning. The Senate Armed
4 Services Committee meets this morning to consider the
5 nomination of General Vincent Brooks to the Commander of the
6 United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and the
7 United States Forces Korea.

8 General, we congratulate you on your nomination. We
9 thank you for your decades of distinguished service and your
10 willingness to step forward and lead once again.

11 Of course, we know today would not be possible without
12 the support and sacrifice of your wife, Carol, who's with us
13 this morning. And as in our tradition, we hope you will
14 take the opportunity to introduce your family joining you
15 today.

16 North Korea's destabilizing behavior continues to
17 present a real and rising risk of conflict. Over the past 3
18 months, it has defied the international community by testing
19 a nuclear device and launching a long-range missile. And
20 now there are reports that it may seek -- test another
21 nuclear device. These calculated cycles of provocation
22 continue to pose a risk of violent escalation on the Korean
23 Peninsula. This is the daunting challenge that American
24 forces on the Korean Peninsula confront every day, but it is
25 one they confront together with their South Korean brothers

1 and sisters in arms. This committee is deeply grateful for
2 the close cooperation of our friends in Seoul and between
3 U.S. Forces Korea and the ROK armed forces. I applaud the
4 leadership of President Park these last few months as she
5 and her government contend with the continued menace from
6 the North.

7 As I've said previously, I'm very encouraged by the
8 Joint U.S./Republic of Korea statement from January that our
9 two countries will begin the process of consultation for
10 deploying the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, THAAD,
11 system for the Korean Peninsula. The development of this
12 system by the alliance is a critical step to providing a
13 further layer of defenses against North Korean provocations.

14 As the United States and South Korea continue to work
15 together on strengthening our common security, I want to
16 stress how important it will be for nations like South Korea
17 to support the outcome of the Permanent Court of
18 Arbitration's upcoming decision on disputed maritime claims
19 in the South China Sea. The international order, based on
20 rules, standards, and norms, has brought decades of security
21 and prosperity to the Asia-Pacific. The continued strength
22 of this order is in the interest of all nations, but it's a
23 special responsibility of prosperous and democratic nations
24 to speak up forcefully in its defense. Furthermore, I am
25 increasingly hopeful that the recent agreement between South

1 Korea and Japan on the issue of so-called "comfort women"
2 will mark a new era between Seoul and Korea based, not on
3 the burdens of history, but on the shared goal of forging a
4 more stable, peaceful, and prosperous future for the Asia-
5 Pacific region.

6 Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the --
7 General Brooks' candid and forthright comments concerning
8 the impact that misguided budget cuts and sequestration have
9 made on U.S. Forces Korea and the continued risk they pose
10 to its mission in the years ahead. It's irresponsible to
11 continue asking our military servicemembers and their
12 families to serve on the Korean Peninsula while at the same
13 time accepting a budget situation that reduces their
14 readiness and degrades their ability to perform their
15 mission.

16 As this committee turns its attention to this year's
17 defense authorization bill, we look forward to your
18 testimony on your views on how we can work together to
19 ensure that the men and women you will lead have everything
20 they need and deserve to defend our Nation.

21 Senator Reed.

22

23

24

25

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

3 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.
4 I join you in welcoming General Brooks.

5 And I thank you, General, for your dedicated service to
6 the Nation over many, many years and your willingness to
7 continue to serve in a most challenging position.

8 I also want to recognize and thank your family members,
9 because I think you serve not alone, but with a great
10 family. And your father, Major General Leo Brooks, retired,
11 sir, thank you for your service. Your mother, Naomi, who is
12 really in charge of the whole operation. We know that. So,
13 brother Leo, thank you, General, for your service. Your
14 sister, Marquita, and, of course, your wife, Carol. Thank
15 you, Carol.

16 As the Chairman has pointed out, the actions of Kim
17 Jong Un over the past 3 years illustrate that he remains
18 determined to defy the international community, to the
19 detriment of North Korea's prosperity and growth, and with
20 little concern for the well-being of his own people and also
21 for the stability of the region and the world. Last year,
22 for example, a land mine placed in the demilitarized zone by
23 the regime severely wounded two South Korean soldiers, and
24 could have resulted in a major escalation of hostilities,
25 had South Korea not limited itself to an appropriate and

1 proportionate response that eventually was effective.

2 Earlier this year, North Korea conducted its fourth
3 nuclear test and tested an engine designed for an
4 intercontinental ballistic missile, making it clear that
5 North Korea will continue its reckless pursuit of ballistic
6 missiles and nuclear weapons, thereby threatening its
7 neighbors and the overall peace and stability of the region.

8 And, while I support the implementation of additional
9 U.S. and United Nations sanctions, it is, unfortunately,
10 likely that North Korea will continue on this dangerous
11 path, necessitating our continued support and a strong
12 posture on the Peninsula. And, General, we look forward to
13 your views on how you believe we can best deter and contain
14 the threat posed by the North Korean regime.

15 I'd also like to make a few points regarding China's
16 role in the recent sanctions regimes that were passed by the
17 Congress and the United Nations. China has finally agreed
18 to implement strong U.N. sanctions meant to curb North
19 Korea's nuclear development. However, China's insistence on
20 exceptions for trade, quote, "determined to be for the
21 purpose of people's livelihood," unquote, raises a serious
22 concern about China's commitment to sanctions. How broadly
23 these exceptions are interpreted may determine whether the
24 U.N. sanctions are successful overall.

25 China is responsible for the vast majority of North

1 Korea's trade and financial assistance, and their actions
2 are, therefore, key to success of the sanctions regime. And
3 we hope it's successful. Without effective sanctions, it is
4 clear that North Korea will continue destabilizing the
5 region with its nuclear missile developments.

6 General, I look forward to hearing how you view the
7 security situation on the Peninsula, the role China can play
8 to curb North Korean ambitions, and your other comments.

9 And thank you again for your service. And thank you
10 for being here.

11 Chairman McCain: Welcome, General.

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL VINCENT K. BROOKS, USA, NOMINEE
2 FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE
3 COMMANDER, UNITED NATIONS COMMAND, COMBINED FORCES COMMAND,
4 AND UNITED STATES FORCES KOREA

5 General Brooks: Well, thank you, Chairman McCain and
6 Ranking Member Reed, members of the committee. I certainly
7 appreciate this opportunity to appear before you today. And
8 I'm honored to have been chosen by President Obama,
9 Secretary Carter, and General Dunford for this important
10 position, this complex and tri-hatted command. And I'm very
11 grateful for the confidence.

12 Chairman, as you've asked, I'd -- I thank you for the
13 privilege of having my family with us today, and I'd like to
14 again review who they are.

15 I'd start by saying that they've been my inspiration
16 and really my guiding light for my life and my career. And
17 I certainly appreciate their presence here today.

18 I'd begin with my wife, Dr. Carol Brooks, who's a
19 physical therapist and educator. She's also a fellow Army
20 brat, married within the tribe, in this case. She's been my
21 partner in this journey of service for over 33 years since
22 we were married.

23 Chairman McCain: Welcome.

24 General Brooks: Second, my parents, General Leo
25 Brooks, U.S. Army, Retired, and my mother, Naomi Brooks.

1 They really set the foundation for the military tradition of
2 our family, and have been my inspiration for service to God
3 and country, as well.

4 Chairman McCain: Welcome.

5 General Brooks: Next, my brother, General Leo Brooks,
6 Jr., U.S. Army, Retired, who preceded me at West Point by 1
7 year. He was in the wrong class, but I won't hold that
8 against him.

9 Chairman McCain: He was in the wrong school.

10 [Laughter.]

11 General Brooks: Well, I'll take that one for the
12 record, Senator.

13 [Laughter.]

14 General Brooks: But, Leo is a fine example of an
15 infantry leader, and was a great example for me throughout
16 his career, and now has been an exemplar of how to
17 transition properly and carry the same type of leadership
18 into the corporate world.

19 And finally --

20 Chairman McCain: Welcome.

21 General Brooks: -- my sister, Marquita Brooks, who is
22 an attorney with a major Washington, D.C., law firm that has
23 international responsibilities and relationships. While the
24 youngest, she is clearly the most accomplished. And,
25 Senator Reed, she's actually the one who's really in charge

1 of the family, exercising civilian control of the military
2 in our house. But, I am very happy to have them here today.

3 Chairman McCain: Welcome.

4 General Brooks: Mr. Chairman and committee members,
5 the world is changing, and the dangers to our country, our
6 interests, and our friends continue to rise even as our
7 relationships improve. If confirmed, I intend to capitalize
8 on the relationships that I've had the privilege of
9 developing over many years of overseas duty in peacetime
10 engagements and in combat and stability operations.

11 Among these relationships, and particularly relevant to
12 the positions for which I've been nominated, are United
13 Nations sending states, regional allies, and Indo-Asia-
14 Pacific neighbors, most notably Japan, China, and especially
15 the Republic of Korea military leaders. Having commanded a
16 combat infantry battalion of more than 800 U.S. and ROK
17 soldiers near the demilitarized zone in the late 1990s, I
18 fully appreciate the need for continuously sharpening the
19 edge of our readiness to deter aggression while also being
20 ready to fight tonight. And having spent the last 3 years
21 as the Commander of U.S. Army Pacific, the Army component of
22 U.S. Pacific Command, I'm under no illusions as to the
23 challenges of shaping the environment to prevent a crisis
24 from escalating into open warfare. I'm also fully aware of
25 the challenges of sustaining military operations in

1 northeast Asia at the distant end of our Pacific lines of
2 communication, and particularly so in a time of fiscal
3 constraint, which raises the risks to our ability to
4 respond.

5 I endorse General Scaparotti's four priorities:
6 sustain and strengthen the alliance, maintain the armistice,
7 transform the alliance, and sustain the force. And I
8 believe these to be the right direction for the three
9 commands for which I've been nominated. And, if confirmed,
10 I will, as any commander would, make my own assessment of
11 the way ahead. And I hope to keep the committee informed on
12 my conclusions.

13 I am most excited about the honor of commanding, once
14 again, if I'm confirmed, the privilege of leading the finest
15 our Nation has to offer, and their counterparts from the
16 Republic of Korea and the United Nations sending states, is
17 what I enjoy most and what I do as a professional military
18 officer. And I pledge to give them my best as they give me
19 their best.

20 I recognize my personal and professional responsibility
21 to provide my best military judgment and candid military
22 advice. And, if confirmed, I will fulfill both. Also, if
23 confirmed, I look forward to joining with Ambassador Mark
24 Lippert, and I pledge to do my best on behalf of our Nation
25 and the Republic of Korea during this challenging time of

1 danger, change, and opportunity.

2 Again, thank you, Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed,
3 members of the committee, for your support to our forces and
4 for this opportunity. And I look forward to your questions.

5 [The prepared statement of General Brooks follows:]

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Chairman McCain: Thank you very much, General.

2 I think, for the record, it's pretty important for us
3 to recognize the contributions that the Republic of Korea
4 pays for our presence there. Isn't it a fact that it costs
5 us less to have troops stationed in Korea than in the United
6 States, given the contribution the Republic of Korea makes
7 to the stationing and all the other -- the services that
8 they provide for the American military?

9 General Brooks: Senator, thanks for the question.

10 I believe, as you do, that the Republic of Korea is
11 carrying a significant load and is dedicated to our presence
12 there. And I would give two examples of that.

13 First is that they pay about 50 percent of our
14 personnel costs of being there.

15 Chairman McCain: Which comes up to around \$808
16 million, is that correct --

17 General Brooks: That's correct, Senator.

18 Chairman McCain: -- from last year? \$808 million.

19 General Brooks: That's correct.

20 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

21 General Brooks: And it rises -- as their consumer
22 price index rises, they bring it up as well.

23 The second example would be the largest DOD
24 construction project we have anywhere in the world, about a
25 \$10.8 billion project that is really being used to relocate

1 U.S. forces further to the south.

2 Chairman McCain: And how much are they paying for
3 that?

4 General Brooks: They carry 92 percent of that.

5 Chairman McCain: Ninety-two percent.

6 General Brooks: Ninety-two cents on a dollar, Senator.

7 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

8 So, it would cost more to keep those troops stationed
9 in the United States than it would be in Korea. Is that
10 correct?

11 General Brooks: Absolutely, Senator.

12 Chairman McCain: Let's talk about sequestration, real
13 quick. The terms of our ability to "fight tonight," what
14 has been the effect of sequestration on your ability to
15 respond to a crisis in the -- on the Korean Peninsula?

16 General Brooks: Senator, first, because Korea has such
17 a high priority, the forces who are there are kept in high
18 readiness. The consequence of sequestration, though, in my
19 view, is what happens to the forces who are behind it. I've
20 certainly had to recognize that, as the Commander of U.S.
21 Army Pacific. I have concerns that there is a shallowing of
22 the depth of the forces that are behind to reinforce and --
23 whether they're in a lower state of readiness that would
24 require more time or if they are not able to respond at all
25 due to other crises in the world.

1 Chairman McCain: So, if it continues, what's the
2 consequences, if sequestration continues?

3 General Brooks: Senator, I think we're going to
4 continue to lose options that would be available in a time
5 of crisis.

6 Chairman McCain: In recent years, the North Koreans
7 have invested heavily in asymmetric capabilities, nuclear
8 weapons, missiles, submarines. And it's our information
9 that their conventional capabilities have suffered. What
10 are we -- lesson are we to draw from that?

11 General Brooks: Senator, I'd say the first lesson is
12 that they're shifting their focus, but doing it on a base of
13 a very large military. They're still the fourth largest
14 military in the world, even though the conventional
15 capabilities are atrophying to a degree, where they don't
16 get to train them as much as they might like. But, these
17 asymmetric capabilities you referred to, particularly long-
18 range missiles, nuclear capability, and cyberactivity, are
19 causes for great concern. And I think that's the direction
20 they're going to continue to head.

21 Chairman McCain: How serious is their intercontinental
22 ballistic missile threat over time?

23 General Brooks: At the present time, Senator, I think
24 that they're struggling with getting the program up and
25 operational, but it's very clear, through the parades that

1 they've done, what systems they have, and some of the
2 attempted launches that they have not had success in. Over
3 time, I believe we're going to see them acquire these
4 capabilities if they're not stopped.

5 Chairman McCain: Have you heard of cooperation between
6 North Korea and Iran?

7 General Brooks: Senator, I've heard these reports, and
8 am very concerned about it.

9 Chairman McCain: What are the benefits that deploying
10 a THAAD system is?

11 General Brooks: Senator, the key benefit is that it
12 thickens the defensive structure that is there. And I think
13 that's very important, that there would be an integrated,
14 layered air defense system. This Terminal High-Altitude Air
15 Defense takes care of a particular set of threats that are
16 emerging in their missile development.

17 Chairman McCain: Do you think there's any additional
18 steps that we could take to reassure allies and counter
19 North Korea nuclear provocations?

20 General Brooks: I think probably the best actions to
21 be taken, Senator, would be, continue to maintain a strong
22 alliance and increase the number of countries that are
23 aligned against North Korea and its development.

24 Chairman McCain: Are you worried about the -- what
25 apparently is the immaturity and unpredictability of the

1 rotund ruler in Pyongyang?

2 General Brooks: Senator, in my view, we need to take
3 his actions with a great deal of seriousness because of the
4 direction he's going with these weapons and these
5 capabilities that are emerging. I am very concerned about
6 the direction he's going. And it's evident that he's not
7 yet deterred in his pursuit. If confirmed, I intend to be a
8 close partner with the Republic of Korea to make sure
9 they're ready.

10 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

11 I forgot, at the beginning of the hearing, I have to
12 ask standard questions. And you just say yes or no on it.
13 This is standard for this committee to ask these questions.

14 In order to exercise its legislative and oversight
15 responsibilities, it's important that this committee and
16 other appropriate committees of the Congress be able to
17 receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of
18 information. Have you adhered to applicable laws and
19 regulations governing conflicts of interest?

20 General Brooks: Yes, I have.

21 Chairman McCain: Do you agree, when asked, to give
22 your personal views, even if these views differ from the
23 administration in power?

24 General Brooks: I do.

25 Chairman McCain: Have you assumed any duties or

1 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the
2 outcome of the confirmation process?

3 General Brooks: No, sir.

4 Chairman McCain: Will you ensure your staff complies
5 with deadlines established for requested communications,
6 including questions for the record in hearings?

7 General Brooks: I will.

8 Chairman McCain: Will you cooperate in providing
9 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional
10 requests?

11 General Brooks: I will.

12 Chairman McCain: Will those witnesses be protected
13 from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

14 General Brooks: They will.

15 Chairman McCain: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear
16 and testify, upon request, before this committee?

17 General Brooks: I do.

18 Chairman McCain: Do you agree to provide documents,
19 including copies of the electronic forms of communications,
20 in a timely manner when requested by a duly-constituted
21 committee, or to consult with the committee regarding the
22 basis for any good-faith delay or denial --

23 General Brooks: I do.

24 Chairman McCain: -- in providing --

25 General Brooks: Excuse me.

1 Chairman McCain: -- providing such documents?

2 General Brooks: I do.

3 Senator Reed.

4 Senator Reed: I now pronounce you --

5 Chairman McCain: Senator Reed.

6 Senator Reed: -- a general.

7 [Laughter.]

8 Senator Reed: Thank you, General Brooks, for your
9 testimony, and for all your service, and your family's
10 service.

11 And the Chairman touched on the issue of THAAD, which
12 is critical. As I understand it, there are negotiations
13 going on with the South Korean government, but they're
14 influenced by the Chinese statements of disapproval or
15 dismay at the deployment of THAAD. Could you give us your
16 views on this issue? How critical the system is. Do you
17 expect it to be deployed quicker -- in a reasonable period
18 of time?

19 General Brooks: Senator, there is a binational group
20 that's already doing evaluation of the utility of THAAD and
21 potential placement, if it were to be approved. And I
22 think, first and most importantly, this has to be a decision
23 between the United States Government and the Republic of
24 Korea Government, particularly so for the Republic of Korea.
25 I am aware that there are some concerns that have been

1 expressed by China. And we are trying to reassure. I know
2 that this is not an issue for China, but there's a need for
3 communication at the present time.

4 Senator Reed: Thank you.

5 What additional force posture upgrades would you think
6 would be desirable in addition -- let's assume that a THAAD
7 system was in place. Are there other systems or force --
8 forces that should be moved into the Peninsula, or operating
9 there?

10 General Brooks: Senator, first -- thanks for the
11 question. The -- there is a -- an ongoing effort by the
12 services to provide a rotational set of forces. And this
13 brings units that are already in a higher state of readiness
14 to the Korean Peninsula. First, I would say, I want to
15 reinforce that, if confirmed. I think that's a good
16 solution that's providing us a better foundation of
17 readiness.

18 I know General Scaparotti has raised concerns about
19 more intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets
20 --

21 Senator Reed: Right.

22 General Brooks: -- and layered, integrated missile
23 defense.

24 So, I would ask for those two, and to adopt those
25 concerns as I take command, if confirmed.

1 Senator Reed: So, I think, in terms of priorities, it
2 would be the layered missile defense, including THAAD, and
3 ISR, which is a asset that commanders desire across the
4 world, but you think it's critical.

5 General Brooks: I do think those are critical,
6 Senator.

7 Senator Reed: Getting back to the political dynamic
8 you face, the Chinese are the most influential, vis-a-vis
9 the North Korean regime, but some question of how much
10 influence they even have. Do you think that -- and will you
11 work with your colleagues to try to develop a better
12 relationship, in the sense of getting the Chinese to put
13 more pressure on the North Korean regime? Is that something
14 within your hopes or aspirations?

15 General Brooks: Well, Senator, I'd say I'm fortunate
16 that I already have relationships with the People's
17 Liberation Army, from my current position in U.S. Army
18 Pacific, and I would want to use those, if confirmed, to
19 improve the posture. I think there are challenges that have
20 been expressed to me by the senior Chinese military
21 leadership, but they don't have the influence that they once
22 had. I think some of that is doubtful, as well. I would
23 want to challenge that. I do believe they have
24 opportunities to influence greater than they have in the
25 past. But, I would want to be part of that dialogue, if

1 confirmed.

2 Senator Reed: And part of that is the implementation
3 of these sanctions. So, I would presume, not only yourself,
4 but your civilian colleagues, will be looking carefully at
5 the actual implementation of sanctions. Is that accurate,
6 too?

7 General Brooks: That's accurate, Senator. I would.

8 Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

9 The -- right now, we have been, for a decade or so,
10 looking at our command relationship with the South Koreans,
11 in terms of who will actually be in charge of operations
12 there. Can you give us your assessment of where we are in
13 that sort of evolution or devolution of command
14 responsibilities from U.S. forces, U.N. forces, to South
15 Korean forces?

16 General Brooks: Yes, Senator. This is a very
17 important aspect that, if confirmed, I would concentrate a
18 lot of my attention on, and that is ensuring that the
19 conditions for the transfer of operational control are being
20 met. And that has to be done over time, not with a
21 particular timeline.

22 Where we are is that, we've shifted from a fixed
23 timeline to a conditions-based transition. And I see
24 progress being made, whether it's in the procurement of key
25 systems by the Republic of Korea or the creation of things

1 like combined divisions. There's a combined second infantry
2 division now, that is ROK and U.S. That's strengthening the
3 alliance, but, at the same time, building the muscle memory
4 that makes it possible for them to take leadership.

5 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, General. And
6 we hope, and we're confident, that you will do a superb job
7 and actually redeem the reputation of your brother's school.

8 Thank you very much.

9 General Brooks: Thanks, Senator.

10 Chairman McCain: Thank you, Colonel.

11 [Laughter.]

12 Chairman McCain: Senator Rounds.

13 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 General, thank you for your service.

15 China/North Korea relations appear to have deteriorated
16 in recent years. How do key stakeholders in China view
17 North Korea's growing belligerence? And to what extent, if
18 at all, do tensions between Beijing and North Korea provide
19 opportunities for a closer, more meaningful U.S./China
20 collaboration on the issues surrounding North Korea?

21 General Brooks: Senator, thank you for the question.

22 I'd say, first, that -- again, this is based on my
23 encounters with senior People's Liberation Army military
24 leaders. The word is "frustration." So, they're
25 frustrated. That's what's been communicated to me. I do

1 think that that creates room for opportunities.

2 First, as we look at the U.S. and ROK relationship, we
3 would want to make sure that that is truly ironclad, as
4 there will need to be a discussion between the Republic of
5 Korea and China, as well. So, how we think our way through
6 approaching nuclear disarmament, when it's all said and
7 done, will require cooperation among many nations.

8 Senator Rounds: Sino-South Korean relations appear to
9 have been strengthening, and some observers sense that South
10 Koreans increasingly believe that the road to unification
11 runs through Beijing. Is this your assessment? And what
12 are the implications for U.S. interests for growing Sino-
13 South Korean ties?

14 General Brooks: Senator, I believe that there is an
15 important role to be played in all of the relationships in
16 the region. And I -- if I can broaden it just a bit, I
17 would say the Japan/Republic of Korea relationship, the
18 U.S./Japan/Republic of Korea relationship, the Republic of
19 Korea/China relationship, these are critical to the way
20 ahead. I wouldn't agree that it goes through Beijing. I'd
21 say that it goes through cooperation, and that that
22 cooperation is something that's building at the present
23 time. If confirmed, I would commit myself to that purpose.

24 Senator Rounds: Many U.S. allies and partners in the
25 region have strong economic ties to China. South Korea, in

1 particular, has worked -- deepened its economic relationship
2 with China through a free trade agreement. Does this
3 economic reliance by U.S. allies on China create any
4 complication for U.S. security strategy? And, if so, how
5 should the United States react?

6 General Brooks: Senator, it's my opinion that there
7 are some complications that come -- that really just comes
8 from the potential of leverage being exercised by someone
9 who's a significant trade partner. And China from time to
10 time asserts that leverage on, not only the countries of
11 northeast Asia, but many of the countries. They are the
12 primary trading partner with nearly every country in the
13 Indo-Asia-Pacific region that I have encountered.

14 I don't think that that should preclude cooperation.
15 And I think it's necessary to then work through those
16 pressures that emerge in order to create a greater sense of
17 connectedness among the countries that would seek nuclear
18 disarmament from North Korea. And, if confirmed, that's
19 where I will have my attention focused.

20 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 Chairman McCain: Senator Shaheen.

23 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

24 And thank you, General Brooks, for your service, for
25 your family's service. And congratulations on your

1 nomination.

2 You and the leadership here on the committee have
3 talked about the commitment of South Korea to our
4 relationship, to the positioning of U.S. troops and their
5 continued contributions on the Korean Peninsula. Is there
6 any concern that the loss, by the ruling party, of its
7 recent parliamentary elections will affect that
8 relationship?

9 General Brooks: Senator, I think it's still a bit
10 early to determine that. What I can tell you is, if
11 confirmed, I'll be committed to whichever government and
12 whichever structure they have. That's really our
13 obligation. And that has been the case through these many
14 years of armistice.

15 Senator Shaheen: And obviously, North Korea's recent
16 actions show that it is going to continue to defy the
17 international norms, U.N. Security Council resolutions, and
18 all other reasonable actions that we would expect from --
19 country. Can you talk about what else we can do, other than
20 increase sanctions to thwart North Korea's nuclear
21 ambitions? You talked about THAAD. Are there other things
22 that we should be doing and other ways that we should be
23 responding to North Korea's actions?

24 General Brooks: Senator, I -- it's a -- that's a
25 challenging question. I would tell you that I believe that

1 the foundation for anything that comes next is what we're
2 doing right now. And that's a very strong alliance, an
3 increasing number of countries who are aligned against North
4 Korea, and the sanctions. We have -- certainly have hope
5 that they will have some effect. Thus far, it has not
6 deterred Mr. Kim Jong Un in his pursuit of missiles and
7 other technologies that are very dangerous. That would
8 mean, then, I would have to be among those, if confirmed,
9 who would provide options and alternatives how military
10 pressures could be used to try to change the calculus. And
11 I'm not prepared to say what those would be, but I hope to
12 come back and report to the committee, if confirmed.

13 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

14 In the response to the committee's questions, you
15 highlight North Korea's efforts to develop a submarine-
16 launch ballistic missile capability. And obviously this
17 signifies North Korea's commitment to continue to diversify
18 in the Pacific region, and will obviously have a -- an
19 impact on security. How important is our undersea
20 superiority in the region? And have we -- is our attack
21 submarine procurement plan adequate to meet our demands in
22 the future?

23 General Brooks: Senator, I'd refer back to Admiral
24 Harris's testimony as he gave the posture of the Pacific
25 forces. And I agree with his point about the asymmetric

1 advantage we have in our undersea capability. I am
2 concerned about the pursuit of submarine-launched ballistic
3 missiles by North Korea. While they have not been
4 successful, this is like watching someone ride a bike and
5 falling off of it, but eventually they could become a BMX
6 champion. So, we can't underestimate the hazard that is
7 emerging on this. And we have to remain strong in that.
8 And -- but, I would defer to him and to the Department of
9 the Navy, in terms of what is required.

10 Senator Shaheen: Well, look forward to hearing more on
11 that.

12 Finally, as you know, more than 7800 troops remain lost
13 and unrecovered from the Korean War. We in -- last year,
14 had an Army first class private, Elmer Richard, from Exeter,
15 New Hampshire, who was returned to his family. He had been
16 lost in December of 1950, was listed as Missing in Action.
17 And I know this is a sensitive issue, but do you foresee any
18 potential to restart talks with North Korea on how to
19 recover the -- those who are Missing in Action from the
20 Korean War?

21 General Brooks: Senator, I think it's one of the most
22 important obligations we can fulfill; and, if the conditions
23 change in our relationship, where we can have a reasonable
24 dialogue with North Korea, that should be one of the first
25 things considered. And, if confirmed, I would commit myself

1 to that. It's a solemn obligation that we never, never
2 leave those behind. If we can recover them, we will.

3 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. I very much appreciate
4 that. And I agree that that should be a priority for us.

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 Chairman McCain: Senator Ernst.

7 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 General, thank you very much for being here today. And
9 I truly appreciate your service to our Nation. Thank you
10 very much.

11 A number of topics have been covered today. And I'd
12 like to go back to the OPCON, the transfer of the ROK
13 military. And let's go back and -- specifically, what areas
14 of the ROK will you seek to help develop to set conditions
15 for a successful OPCON transfer in the future? And
16 understanding that this may not occur until 2020s or so.
17 But, what are the specific areas that we can assist them
18 with?

19 General Brooks: Senator, thanks for the question.

20 I would say that some of the first things we should
21 concentrate on -- and, if confirmed, this would be my focus
22 -- their ability to exercise effective command and control
23 over their forces and U.S. forces in a complex environment.
24 That would be the first one.

25 The second would be their ability to control some of

1 the critical operations that have to begin in the beginning
2 of any crisis. Some of the counterfire missions, for
3 example, would be very important to ensure they're able to
4 take that mission.

5 The third that I would want to be actively engaged in,
6 if confirmed, would be to assist them in their leader
7 development so that their leaders are being generated in
8 such a way that once the transfer of operational control
9 occurs, they're able to handle it in perpetuity, with our
10 support.

11 Senator Ernst: And can you elaborate a little bit on
12 -- is it a cultural divide, and why we have not worked in
13 some of those areas before to develop their leadership
14 further? Can you explain, maybe, why this hasn't happened,
15 and why, maybe, it's taking so long to actually go through
16 the OPCON?

17 General Brooks: Senator, I can comment as an outside
18 observer. I'm not deeply involved in the way that's
19 happening right now. I do know that my predecessors -- and
20 I've talked to many of them -- have been committed to these
21 purposes for many years. And I would want to continue that.

22 I do believe it's generational. I have seen the
23 difference, in my own experience, from the way we interacted
24 with the Republic of Korea military forces back in the mid-
25 '90s and to the present. And an example would be their

1 ability to be critical of themselves in the results of an
2 exercise. In the 1990s, it just wouldn't happen. In the
3 present time, there is hearty and healthy debate and
4 disagreement. And I think that it's very important. So,
5 some of this just takes time, and we have to stay on it. I
6 would do that, if confirmed.

7 Senator Ernst: Okay, I appreciate that very much.

8 And the United States and South Korea currently operate
9 under the Special Measures Agreement in which the ROK
10 contributes towards the U.S. costs. And I know this was
11 brought up, as far as contributions of the South Koreans, as
12 well. But, if we can go back, what types of specific
13 services -- just lay it out there for Joe out on the street
14 -- what specific services are the South Koreans providing to
15 our U.S. forces in Korea? Is it housing? Is it -- you
16 know, so forth?

17 General Brooks: It's a combination, but it includes
18 housing. It includes civilian pay for those Republic of
19 Korea nationals who are providing much of the workforce in
20 support of the U.S. forces there that would otherwise have
21 to be U.S. Government civilian employees, and it would be
22 another burden for this body and others to carry. So, it's
23 those types of things. It's the services, in particular.
24 It's the 50 percent of the pay and allowances that happen
25 over there, that are carried by the Special Measures

1 Agreement. But, it's also those things that have to do with
2 operational preparations. And we want to make sure that, as
3 we continue to negotiate the Special Measures Agreement over
4 the next few years, that we keep an eye focused on the
5 operational support aspects, as well, whether that's base
6 construction, et cetera.

7 Senator Ernst: And I just wanted to reemphasize how
8 important it is to understand those measures, those basic
9 measures that are supported by South Korea, so that we make
10 an informed decision as this occurs, what it will cost our
11 military is what they're providing. So, I appreciate that
12 very much. Thank you for your service.

13 Thank you.

14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator Hirono.

16 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Aloha, General Brooks. I want to add my thanks to you
18 and your family for your service to the country. And, of
19 course, as you -- I fully expect that you will be confirmed
20 in your new position. And I thank you very much for being
21 the Commander of U.S. Army Pacific.

22 When you look at the important relationships in this
23 part of the world, and you mentioned the U.S./Japan/Republic
24 of Korea relationship, very important. And, as you know,
25 the Japan/ROK relationship could be better. If confirmed,

1 do you see a role that you could play in strengthening the
2 Japan/South Korea relationship?

3 General Brooks: Senator, thanks for the question. And
4 aloha, as well.

5 I absolutely see a role. If confirmed, I would want to
6 capitalize on the relationships that I've already developed.
7 I'm very close to the chief of the Ground Self-Defense Force
8 and the Self-Defense Force of Japan, those two particular
9 leaders. I'm also -- I have a good relationship already
10 with the Chairman of the Republic of Korea Joint Chiefs of
11 Staff. I think that positions me very well to try to use
12 our good relationships to strengthen their relationship.
13 And we've been very effective at that, thus far. I would
14 add to that, if confirmed.

15 Senator Hirono: I think that it's clear that the
16 military relationships are very strong. And it would be
17 good if Prime Minister Abe and President Park could have
18 more of public kind of meetings to show that we are all on
19 the same page.

20 The actions of North Korea have been, of course,
21 extremely troubling. And the development of their long-
22 range missile capabilities are concerning to the U.S. and
23 our allies in the region. And you did mention, I think, in
24 response to a question, that the Chinese military leaders
25 with whom you come in contact, they are frustrated with what

1 North Korea is doing. Can you elaborate a little bit more
2 on what their frustration is and what they intend to do
3 about their frustration to limit North Korea's provocative
4 actions that leads to instability in that part of the world?

5 General Brooks: Senator, the word "frustration" is the
6 word that was used. And so, I always try to characterize it
7 that way. That's what they said to me, and that's what I'm
8 passing on. So, it's frustration -- it's frustration with
9 the -- I think, a loss of the controls that perhaps they
10 once had, or perceived that they had, their ability to guide
11 the behaviors of North Korean leadership, especially with
12 Kim Jong Un himself. This is what the source of the
13 frustration is. They've not communicated to me what their
14 intentions are on how to build pressure on that right now.
15 I see that happening in the diplomatic arena, but I don't
16 see what military actions are being taken.

17 I would have concerns about their reorganization if
18 they begin to concentrate on their position adjacent to
19 North Korea and what that would mean. And I, frankly, would
20 think that would challenge us to have a greater dialogue
21 with them on what their intentions are.

22 Senator Hirono: So, of the -- one of the things that
23 we're contemplating doing is the THAAD, and -- locating it
24 in South Korea -- and China has expressed their displeasure
25 with that. So, how do you think we can resolve or reassure

1 China as to our own intentions with that?

2 General Brooks: Senator, I believe the most important
3 step is for us to find an opportunity for dialogue and try
4 to work through it. There's a diplomatic aspect of that,
5 that I would want to support, if confirmed, but there's also
6 a military aspect of it, where we could talk to them very
7 specifically about the capabilities of the system, if
8 permitted to do so.

9 Senator Hirono: I have been a -- all of us, I believe,
10 here are aware of the importance of the rebalance to the
11 Asia-Pacific and our country's leadership role in
12 maintaining a level of stability. So, having been our
13 USARPAC commander, what is your impression of our presence
14 in the Asia-Pacific region? And what are our strengths in
15 this region? What are areas we can improve? And what road
16 do you think the U.S. Forces Korea can play in strengthening
17 our presence and partnership in the Asia-Pacific area?

18 General Brooks: Senator, thanks for the question. And
19 thanks for your support in the -- our efforts to rebalance.

20 I'd say, first, that it's very important that we
21 concentrate on the totality of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.
22 The northeast Asia part of it, where Korea is located, is a
23 foundation of that, and the relationships that really help
24 to build strength for the -- this broader Indo-Asia-Pacific
25 engagement begin there, in many ways. And so, I think we

1 have to continue to set an example of strong alliance in
2 northeast Asia while we also increase our presence and our
3 activities and engagements throughout the rest of the Indo-
4 Asia-Pacific region. And that's what's ongoing right now.

5 This is an important opportunity for us to pursue. It
6 will take resourcing to do that. And we shouldn't
7 underestimate the power of our presence west of the
8 International Date Line and our leadership as we interact
9 with other countries of the region. And I hope that the
10 committee will be able to sustain that.

11 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman McCain: Senator Tillis.

13 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Good morning, General Brooks. I want to thank you for
15 you being here. I want to compliment you on your
16 outstanding resume and accomplishments in your career.

17 I also want to compliment the Brooks family for a long-
18 term dedication to service to this Nation. So, thank you
19 all for being here. I'm sure you're very proud.

20 General Brooks, I want to go back, maybe, to -- to
21 begin with, following up on some questions about rebalancing
22 the -- when we were down in the region last year for an
23 update, the problem that I have with where we are with
24 rebalancing is that, although we're shifting assets to an
25 area of the world that we're having increasing concern, it's

1 -- there's a baseline that's being reduced. While, on the
2 one hand, we seem to be moving resources in that area, it's
3 a percentage of a smaller baseline. Do you share that
4 concern? What should we, as we're looking at appropriations
5 in NDAA, should we pay particular attention to, in terms of
6 making sure we have the resources, the materials, down in
7 that region?

8 General Brooks: Senator, I think it's a -- it's very
9 important, as I know all the services chiefs have testified
10 to, that there's a strong foundation of the services first,
11 because it's the services that make it possible for the
12 combatant commanders globally, but certainly in the Pacific,
13 to do their work.

14 I would ask that the committee consider the
15 consequences of further reductions or the impacts of
16 sequestration which will limit options on responding to
17 crises that are unfolding in the region. That's, to me, the
18 biggest challenge. It is the potential loss of the ability
19 to generate options to change a situation in a time of
20 crisis. So, whether that's reclamation activities in the
21 South China Sea or a natural disaster, like the four
22 earthquakes that happened in one of the provinces of Japan,
23 here, just in the 3 days. We have to be in many places
24 simultaneously, and have to have sufficient forces to be
25 able to respond to each of them.

1 Senator Tillis: And today, what does that look like?
2 How many places could we be, simultaneously, at the current
3 capabilities and funding?

4 General Brooks: Senator, we're -- we have a robust
5 force in the Pacific. I will certainly acknowledge that.
6 And as an Army officer, I can say that we've significantly
7 increased the presence of forces that are assigned to PACOM
8 by 40 percent over the last 2 years. And that gives us the
9 ability to be in a lot of places. But, if the resourcing
10 foundation is pulled back, we will have fewer of those units
11 in readiness. And that's the biggest concern. We can be in
12 a number of places. We can have small engagements that are
13 happening in India the same day that we're in Indonesia, the
14 same day that we're in Oceania, in the island states of the
15 Pacific Ocean, and maintaining, still, a robust presence in
16 northeast Asia.

17 Senator Tillis: How well do you think we're doing with
18 either partners or potential partners in the region to share
19 in the responsibility to keep this part of the world safe?

20 General Brooks: Senator, I'd say, first, that we're
21 doing an excellent job in northeast Asia, where we have
22 alliance structures to work with. We are in close dialogue
23 with other allies in the region -- Australia, in particular
24 -- as they are reassessing their strategy for the future.
25 And we're actively involved in that discussion with them.

1 We have to have that conversation with other countries
2 in the region who are emerging, who are developing their
3 capabilities. And I would say that, within U.S. Pacific
4 Command, all the components are very actively engaged in
5 helping as many countries as possible who want to work with
6 the United States to be able to do so.

7 Senator Tillis: General Brooks, the -- you know, every
8 -- it seems to me that the greatest threat in that area --
9 although China is doing what they're doing, the greatest
10 threat in the area, I think, uniformly, everyone agrees, is
11 North Korea. The -- do you see any meaningful change their
12 behavior over the past couple of years, or is this the same
13 old antagonistic role that they want to play in that region?
14 Do you see any trends that would concern you with -- maybe
15 they're looking -- maybe they're going beyond just being a
16 nuisance and a threat in that area, to a real threat that we
17 may have to deal with over the next couple of years?

18 General Brooks: Senator, it's my opinion that North
19 Korea is moving in the wrong direction, and the changes that
20 we've seen are all provocative and more dangerous. Their
21 willingness to draw blood, to sink vessels, to fire some of
22 their numerous artillery systems into populated areas, to
23 put land mines outside of Republic of Korea camps, all these
24 things are indications of an escalating approach to crisis.
25 And we've seen more crises in the last 5 years than we've

1 seen in the majority of the time of the armistice. I'm very
2 concerned about that. And, if confirmed, that would be a
3 focus of my attention.

4 Senator Tillis: Well, thank you, General.

5 I also want to compliment you on the thorough nature of
6 your responses to the written questions. Thank you very
7 much. There's a lot of good information in there. And I
8 look forward to supporting your confirmation.

9 Chairman McCain: Senator Manchin.

10 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 And thank you, General, for your service to the
12 country, and also, just as importantly, your family's
13 support for our country.

14 Sir, if I may, with all that's going on in the world
15 today and we're -- our presence in Iraq, Afghanistan, and
16 Syria, and all that part of the world -- we've been in South
17 Korea for 60 years, since the Korean War. If we had left,
18 as we have left Iraq and now we see what's happening, and
19 we're thinking -- contemplating Afghanistan, downsizing --
20 if we'd have had that same knowing hindsight, if it is 20-20
21 -- what would Korea look like today if we had left, 60 years
22 after the Korean war?

23 General Brooks: Senator, it's difficult to answer that
24 question, but I appreciate the spirit of it. And I would
25 tell you that, in my view, having seen the changes that just

1 occurred in the last 20 years, the trajectory of the
2 Republic of Korea's rise would have been completely
3 different. I'm convinced of that. I think that the degree
4 of our commitment there has had impacts that are far beyond
5 military security and preservation of the armistice. It's
6 everything. It's form of government. It's the role of
7 civil society. It's education. It's public health. It's
8 impacted all of those. And that's, to me, the fruit of our
9 commitments.

10 Senator Manchin: Is Korea -- is South Korea able to
11 take care of itself now?

12 General Brooks: Senator, it is. I -- although I'd say
13 its defenses are not able to be taken care of by itself, but
14 certainly its population is well cared for by the ROK
15 government.

16 Senator Manchin: And also, with the new change of
17 government -- I know it's been touched on here -- with the
18 new South Korean elections, having multiple parties now and
19 a lot of rhetoric coming, how do you think that's going to
20 affect our relationship there?

21 General Brooks: First, Senator, I would say that
22 that's the fruit of our commitment there, and we should
23 recognize it as such, that there are two parties, that there
24 is political competition.

25 Senator Manchin: I thought they had --

1 General Brooks: It's a good thing.

2 Senator Manchin: I thought they had -- I thought
3 they've had more than two parties --

4 General Brooks: They have, over time. And I'm
5 speaking of this shift of --

6 Senator Manchin: Okay.

7 General Brooks: -- power that just happened on the
8 most recent election. But, this is, in my view, the fruit
9 of our commitment there.

10 Senator Manchin: Hasn't there been rhetoric that they
11 want to downsize our military presence?

12 General Brooks: To my knowledge, Senator, that is a
13 topic of debate in Korea, just as it is here.

14 Senator Manchin: The one question about, basically,
15 the threat stemming from offensive cyberoperations, are not
16 a new, you know, discussion or topic in this committee, for
17 sure, but their attack on Sony, in November 2014, made it
18 clear that they were prepared to use their cybercapabilities
19 against the U.S. companies and its citizens. And they seem
20 to do it without fear of retribution. And the kind of
21 attacks go beyond simple nuisance, especially those aimed at
22 the government institutions. So, I says -- I guess I would
23 ask, What are we doing to curb these actions? And what do
24 you believe is appropriate response to these attacks?

25 General Brooks: Thanks for the question, Senator.

1 It -- this is another area that I am not optimistic
2 about the direction that North Korea is going. So, I agree
3 with your point that they seem to be more and more willing
4 to do this. They've -- they have, in fact, electronically
5 attacked U.S. companies. What we can do about it, first,
6 from a military perspective, is, we try to make sure our
7 networks are protected, knowing full well that this will be
8 one of the instruments that they will use. And they can use
9 it today. They can use it at any point in time.

10 Senator Manchin: Are there counterattacks we can use
11 to do harm on them, let them know that we're not going to
12 tolerate this, and it's going to be our -- you know,
13 irreversible if they do that and we hit back?

14 General Brooks: Senator, I would want to talk about
15 our full capabilities in a classified session, but --

16 Senator Manchin: Right.

17 General Brooks: -- that is an option that's available.

18 Senator Manchin: Okay. And if I can, the last
19 question I have is, the annual -- Korea -- U.S.-South Korea
20 military exercise called Foal Eagle will end April 30th, I
21 guess, end of this month, here. I think it marks another
22 successful year of combined training. I've been supportive
23 of these exercises, since they prepare both of our
24 militaries for a wide range of situations, including the
25 fall of the North Korean regime, how they would be able to

1 take over at that point. And also, being a former Governor
2 of West Virginia, I was pleased to see our State guardsmen
3 were able to participate. How is that working, the National
4 Guard being involved in those proceedings?

5 General Brooks: Senator, these exercises, like the
6 Foal Eagle exercise that you alluded to, that -- it's about
7 to be completed -- these are very important as
8 demonstrations of our commitment and our resolve, but
9 they're also practice. And so, if we want to be ready to
10 "fight tonight," we have to practice to be ready to "fight
11 tonight."

12 I'm very pleased about the engagements we have with the
13 Guard units, Air and Army National Guard, throughout the
14 region, but certainly in Korea, as well. It -- they're an
15 important part of the team, and we look for them to
16 participate with us as much as we can on the events that we
17 do in the region at the present time.

18 Senator Manchin: Well, General Brooks, I -- the
19 congratulations has come from both sides of the aisle. I
20 think it's a bipartisan effort here that we're going to be
21 able to support you, and do it in fine fashion. We're happy
22 to have you here, sir.

23 Thank you.

24 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly.

25 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 And, General, thanks, to you and to your family, for
2 your service to the country.

3 General, I visited several U.S. and allied missile
4 defense sites in the Middle East and Europe last month. And
5 whether in Israel or the Gulf states or among the NATO
6 allies, I constantly heard about the need to improve the
7 integration and the interoperability of our missile defense
8 forces with our partner nations. What are your top
9 priorities for improving interoperability across the U.S.
10 and South Korean missile defense efforts?

11 General Brooks: Senator, thanks for the question.

12 If confirmed, the first emphasis would be on building
13 trust, which would then be followed by authority to share
14 information. I think the key to the interoperability
15 efforts in all of these areas -- and I've been part of the
16 ones in the Middle East, and certainly part of the ones in
17 the Pacific -- is about having the authority to share the
18 information that can cause the systems to be actually drawn
19 together into an effective network of response. That would
20 be my priority, if confirmed.

21 Senator Donnelly: General, my fellow Hoosier and
22 friend, Senator Richard Lugar, championed nuclear
23 nonproliferation efforts in the Senate for decades.
24 Historically, we've combated nuclear proliferation by
25 extending the umbrella of our own deterrent to protect our

1 friends and neighbors, as well. What is your view of the
2 importance of our extended nuclear deterrent on the Korean
3 Peninsula, both in deterring attacks and countering
4 incentives for nuclear proliferation?

5 General Brooks: Senator, I believe it's very important
6 and must be part of our arsenal of options that are
7 available to respond in crisis.

8 Senator Donnelly: One of the things, when I visited
9 General Scaparotti there, was to talk about: the core of
10 the mission is "fight tonight." I was wondering if that is
11 going to be one of the cores of your tenure there, following
12 through on that "fight tonight." And what is your
13 understanding of the concept of "fight tonight" as it
14 applies to South Korea and North Korea?

15 General Brooks: Senator, if confirmed, that absolutely
16 would be one of my priorities. Again, I'll adopt General
17 Scaparotti's priorities. So, this idea of being ready to
18 "fight tonight" means that we have less and less warning
19 about what can occur. When we take, for example, that North
20 Korea has somewhere on the order of 160,000 artillery
21 pieces, and most of those -- or 116,000, rather -- most of
22 those are within 60 kilometers of the demilitarized zone.
23 So, it's a matter of an order to fire, in many cases. The
24 amount of warning time, therefore, is extremely short. We
25 must -- we have to be ready to respond to things tonight,

1 which means we can't have a long cycle of readiness and
2 preparation. Time gives us an advantage of being sharper,
3 not being fundamental or foundational. And that's what I
4 would focus on, if confirmed.

5 Senator Donnelly: One of the things I remember -- and
6 I know the Chairman remembers this well -- was when the
7 U.S.S. Pueblo was taken, and still sits at a North Korean
8 port. And having read a little bit about that, one of the
9 things that was said was that, when they were taken, we had
10 no resources in the area, we had no ability to -- once it
11 was taken, we weren't able to interdict it or to stop it.
12 You know, we saw what just happened in the Arabian Gulf with
13 some of our riverine boats in that area. Do you have a
14 commitment that, if there is an effort made, that our ships
15 will not -- if somebody tries to grab one of them or take
16 one of them, that it will be interdicted before it gets into
17 a North Korean port again?

18 General Brooks: Senator, that would be my expectation,
19 that, first, we would establish some rules of engagement. I
20 think we've learned a lot about having standing rules of
21 engagement over the years. And I would not want that to
22 happen again. If confirmed, that would be a focus of mine,
23 to make sure we're better postured this time than last.

24 Senator Donnelly: Okay. I think it would be -- it
25 would probably be beneficial to work with our other leaders

1 in the area just to make sure we've gamed that out, so to
2 speak, that, if this were to happen, how would we be able to
3 stop it from ending with one or more of our ships in their
4 ports?

5 As you look at your new assignment, what is the biggest
6 concern that you have as you look at the lay of the land
7 there? And how do you plan to deal with it?

8 General Brooks: Senator, as I contemplate potentially
9 being assigned to this important position, there are several
10 things that concern me. I would say trying to find -- this
11 is for me, personally, as a commander -- to find the balance
12 between the readiness to "fight tonight" and the
13 preservation of the armistice. These are two different
14 roles, and I think they have to be balanced. That's
15 particularly important as we think about the pressure that
16 has been placed on the Republic of Korea and the testing of
17 their patience. And so, if confirmed, I would be actively
18 involved in trying to find the right balance between those
19 two, in close partnership with the ROK military.

20 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, General, thank you your
21 family, too, for your service.

22 Chairman McCain: Senator King.

23 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 General, I apologize for being late. I was meeting
25 with your colleague, General Clark, on other issues this

1 morning.

2 We had a good discussion, you and I, a week or so ago,
3 and I want to follow up on some of those questions.

4 On Senator Donnelly's question about rules of
5 engagement, I think it's very important to be as clear as we
6 can with the North Koreans -- and I don't know whether this
7 is via your position, the President, or somewhere in between
8 -- about what the rules of engagement are so there aren't
9 misunderstandings about what type of incursion will draw
10 what type of response. Clearly, you don't want to lay out
11 your whole battle plan, but, on the other hand, most wars
12 start based upon one side or the other misunderstanding or
13 being surprised by a reaction. So, I would hope that our
14 rules of engagement can be rather clear in order to avoid
15 the possibility of hostilities inadvertently escalating,
16 either along the DMZ or somewhere else on the Peninsula.

17 General Brooks: Senator, I agree with that point.

18 Senator King: Let me ask a specific question. I
19 understand that Secretary Carter announced that there are
20 now official discussions about the deployment of the -- of a
21 THAAD battery or batteries on the Peninsula. What are your
22 thoughts about where that -- what the implications of that,
23 whether that's desirable, from a military point of view, and
24 what China's reaction might be?

25 General Brooks: Senator, if confirmed, we would

1 continue to work through this bilateral mechanism of
2 discussing the utility and the possible placement of a
3 terminal high-altitude battery. In my opinion, it is a
4 needed capability, whether THAAD or something like that.
5 There needs to be that layer of protection added to a
6 broader set of protections against ballistic missiles. And
7 so, I -- if confirmed, that would be a point of emphasis for
8 me.

9 Senator King: Especially given the new acceleration --
10 apparent acceleration of North Korean efforts toward both
11 miniaturization of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

12 General Brooks: That's correct, Senator. That's the
13 reason why we have to have this. We see the direction that
14 North Korea is going; and, to be ready to "fight tonight"
15 against it, we have to posture.

16 Senator King: Do we have Patriots in Korea now?

17 General Brooks: We do, Senator.

18 Senator King: You have such a challenging position. I
19 mean, we've got ISIL and China, Russia, Iran, but yours is
20 right up there in the top five, for sure, in terms of the
21 danger and volatility of the region. I hope -- one thing I
22 want to communicate is that you keep in touch with us. To
23 the extent we can be helpful in either the resources
24 necessary to meet the challenges that you see -- and you'll
25 -- you're going to be situated on the ground, you'll see

1 what those challenges are -- but also policies and
2 authorities that you think are important, I hope you will
3 have a -- that this will not be a one-hearing relationship
4 with this committee, because we want to be engaged with you.
5 And I want this to be a -- an ongoing set of discussions so
6 that we are -- we know what you need and can help you to
7 obtain those resources.

8 General Brooks: Thank you, Senator. If confirmed, I
9 look forward to working with the committee.

10 Senator King: A final question about the relationship
11 between Japan and Korea -- and South Korea. It's been
12 strained, historically, for reasons going back into the last
13 century. But, it seems to me that, strategically, they have
14 so much in common. Do you see a potential for increasing at
15 least the military-to-military relationship? And how does
16 that play into an overall strategy for the region?

17 General Brooks: Senator, I do see great potential in
18 this. And, frankly, great progress also, given some of the
19 very, very deep issues that cannot be overlooked. But, I am
20 confident that the military-to-military relationship will be
21 a key way for countries -- and those two countries, in
22 particular -- to move forward. I mentioned trust, a bit
23 earlier, and how important it is for trust to be
24 established. We're not there yet. And we know that. And I
25 think each of the countries knows that. The -- there's not

1 an abundant trust. So, how do we build that? And that's
2 through continued engagements like we've talked about.

3 Senator King: Well --

4 General Brooks: And, if confirmed, that's what I would
5 commit to.

6 Senator King: -- one way we build it is by a common
7 understanding of the danger that both face from the North.
8 And I think, hopefully, that will be a spur to these
9 discussions, which I think, in terms of long-term stability
10 of the region, are very important, that those two allies of
11 ours also can find a way to become allies of each other.

12 General Brooks: I agree, Senator. I recall having a
13 conversation with leaders in each of the two countries,
14 saying, "We can't have our friends not getting along. And
15 so, let's try to find ways to work together." And we can be
16 that candid with them, because we have very close
17 relationships.

18 Senator King: General, thank you very much for your
19 service. And I'm delighted that someone of your quality is
20 willing to take on this very difficult assignment. And, as
21 I said, I want to reiterate, let this be the beginning of a
22 conversation, not the end. I look forward to being in
23 touch.

24 General Brooks: Thank you, Senator.

25 Senator King: Thank you, General.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan.

3 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 And, General, good to see you again. I want to thank
5 you for taking on this important assignment. And I want to
6 thank your family, as well. Know that these kind of
7 assignments, it's not just one person serving, it's
8 everybody. So, appreciate that, your family members, here.

9 I'd -- I want to follow on this line of questioning
10 about allies and Korea and Japan. I think you are
11 incredibly well positioned to help with that trilateral
12 relationship, which we all recognize is so important.
13 Senator Hirono was talking about it. Could you talk more --
14 specifically on that -- U.S., Korea, Japan -- what you could
15 be doing, helping that, from a military training
16 perspective, what we should be doing? And then, if you
17 wouldn't mind, given your previous -- the billet you're in
18 right now, and then where you're going to be going, just the
19 broader importance of allies, as Senator King was talking
20 about. You know, there's this kind of strain, kind of,
21 going through the political discussion nationally. It's in
22 the Congress, it's certainly in the presidential campaign,
23 on both sides really, Republicans and Democrats campaigning,
24 where they seem to be dismissive of the need for allies.
25 President's interview in The Atlantic Monthly, I thought was

1 kind of unprecedented, that he would be dismissive of
2 numerous allies of ours, given that he's still the
3 President. He's not writing his memoirs yet. And, you
4 know, on the Republican side, there are some presidential
5 candidates who are equally dismissive. Can you give us your
6 sense of how important allies are for the security of the
7 United States and the region? I think some people need a
8 little education on that issue.

9 General Brooks: Senator, thanks for the question.

10 I would begin on the question related to the trilateral
11 relationship and what we might be able to do. Because the
12 relationship is recognized as being important -- by Japan,
13 by the United States, and by Korea -- I think we have a good
14 momentum that's already undertaken. It's underway. What we
15 can do militarily is look for more opportunities for
16 engagement. Some of that would be at the highest levels.
17 It would be most senior military leaders, like their
18 political leaders, just having conversations, whenever
19 possible, and a trilateral event. I've been part of some of
20 those already, and, if confirmed, I would want to continue
21 that, to try to be part of any trilateral discussions.

22 There are real readiness concerns that help to inform
23 this, as well. For example, the United Nations Command has
24 a United Nations Command rear area that's in Japan. The
25 mission in Korea cannot be fulfilled without cooperation

1 from Japan. So, we have practical military reasons to have
2 cooperation. And, if confirmed, I would highlight those as
3 a need.

4 If I can comment on the broader question of the need
5 for partners in the region, I -- it's been my experience, in
6 my military judgment, that is a fundamental part of our U.S.
7 engagements internationally.

8 Senator Sullivan: And that keeps us safe, as well as
9 our allies, and helps with prosperity in the region. It's
10 not some kind of, you know, zero-sum gain, where allies and
11 -- it only benefits one party. Isn't that correct?

12 General Brooks: I agree, Senator. I would say that
13 our history shows what happens when retrenchment occurs.
14 And we can look at the 1930s and see the consequences that
15 followed, 1940s, of what happens if we retrench ourselves
16 back, focused only on ourselves and not on the rest of the
17 world. And certainly we've moved a long way since the '40s,
18 in terms of the role of the United States in leadership.
19 So, leadership has to be fulfilled through relationship.
20 And the relationships are what these engagements are all
21 about.

22 And so, I'd strongly advocate for continued engagement,
23 and the resourcing to do it. It shouldn't be seen as
24 something that's not of value for us. It's significantly
25 valuable. That's where our partners come from at a

1 coalition, if we transition to crisis. That's how we keep
2 16 United Nations sending states, and maybe move it to 20 if
3 we had a crisis. It's through those relationships. And I
4 strongly advocate those.

5 Senator Sullivan: Let me just end by, again, a
6 specific question, then a general one. You know, we're
7 talking about the ability to "fight tonight." Are there
8 capability gaps and training challenges that you're seeing
9 right now with regard to Korea, but also with regard to the
10 issue of the size of the Army? You know, the administration
11 is pushing for an Army of 450,00 Active Duty forces.
12 General Milley, to his credit, came in front of this
13 committee 2 weeks ago, said that put us at high military
14 risk. That didn't make a lot of news. I thought it should
15 make a lot of news. High military risk, at 450. I want to
16 -- your view on how that could possibly impact your mission
17 to "fight tonight."

18 And then if you wouldn't mind commenting very briefly
19 -- as General Milley's been looking at readjusting our force
20 posture, he did make the decision to reverse an earlier
21 decision by the Army to get rid of the 425 at JBER, the only
22 airborne brigade combat team in the Asia-Pacific. When he
23 made that announcement, he said how well they're trained,
24 how critical they are to a contingency in Korea. Do you
25 support that decision by General Milley? And can you

1 explain why, if you do?

2 I know I asked you about five questions in there.

3 Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

4 General Brooks: Thanks, Senator.

5 First, if I can comment on the very important
6 capability that exists in a -- an airborne force in Alaska,
7 in close range to any of our interests or concerns. That is
8 very important to us. It is located at a power projection
9 platform. And I'd strongly support the decision that was
10 made by General Milley to defer any further reductions on
11 that unit until later in 2017. We're not out of the woods
12 on that. The resourcing and the pressures on the size of
13 the force are driving that. I think that there's a clear
14 recognition that we need those capabilities, but will we be
15 sized enough and resourced for the size that we're given?
16 And that's what I'd ask for the committee to really help us
17 focus on. And I think General Milley made that point very,
18 very well.

19 I do remain concerned about the consequences of a
20 smaller set of forces, whether it's U.S. Army or the other
21 services who also are part of the U.S. Forces Korea, and
22 what that would mean, in terms of how much flexibility we
23 have to respond to the unforeseen in a time of crisis.
24 What's behind the tip of the spear in this case? If it is a
25 force that is under-resourced and, therefore, in a lower

1 state of readiness, then the risk is elevated. We're given
2 a choice at that point in time: respond rapidly with
3 undertrained, underequipped forces, or take the time to
4 train and equip them and perhaps lose a significant amount
5 of momentum or have a catastrophe at the start of an
6 operation. This is the tradeoff that's happening. I don't
7 think we're sized correctly for the missions we're seeing in
8 the world. The world has changed since some of the
9 assumptions were made a few years ago about force sizing.
10 And with the committee's support, I look forward to
11 informing that on what we need in Korea.

12 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman McCain: Senator Blumenthal.

15 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

16 I would like, first of all, to thank you, as others
17 have done, for your service and for your family's service
18 over many, many years since your graduation from West Point
19 and your serving in a variety of different places around the
20 world.

21 I want to follow a series of questions that I think
22 Senator Shaheen asked about undersea warfare and our
23 capabilities in the part of the world where you will have
24 responsibility of the Asia-Pacific. In that theater,
25 undersea capabilities are especially vital, given the size,

1 geographically, and the nature of the terrain, which is
2 primarily sea, even though the most publicized part of the
3 confrontational area with North Korea is often the land.
4 And certainly, the Ohio replacement, in terms of nuclear
5 deterrence, is particularly important.

6 I think that we can continue to produce both the
7 Virginia class and the Ohio replacement in a way that keeps
8 constant our need for the Virginia class at a level of 48,
9 which is the designated number, and also can -- replaces the
10 Ohio class. The Ohio replacement program, I think, is very,
11 very important as part of our nuclear deterrence.

12 I would like a commitment from you that you will
13 support that program. The Navy has outlined it, but we
14 still have the challenge of finding a way to pay for it.
15 And I think your commitment, in terms of the interests that
16 you have to consider in North Korea and the surrounding
17 area, are very important.

18 General Brooks: Senator, thanks for the question.

19 I can -- first, I would defer to the Department of the
20 Navy on exactly what the requirements are. I can tell you
21 that, if confirmed, I would be one of the consumers of the
22 capability that's generated, and I would certainly want to
23 have those capabilities. In my view, if we were to find
24 ourselves in a crisis, it would not be restricted to the
25 Korean Peninsula in its physical geography; it would be the

1 surrounding areas. It would be the airspace over it. It
2 will be space. It will be in the cyberdomain. So, it'll be
3 a much more expansive experience than what we saw in 1950 to
4 1953. We have to recognize that. So, these capabilities
5 are very important to me, as a Joint Commander, and I would
6 want to have that. So, you have my commitment that I would
7 be asking for them, to be sure.

8 Senator Blumenthal: And, in terms of undersea warfare
9 -- you've mentioned cyber. I agree, it is critically
10 important. The Virginia-class capability enables
11 surveillance, intelligence, special operations. And, of
12 course, Ohio replacement, nuclear deterrence. Would you
13 agree that these programs have to be funded so that you, as
14 a consumer, can take advantage of them?

15 General Brooks: I would, Senator, particularly when we
16 think about where North Korea and South Korea are located
17 and who's in the neighborhood. We can't ignore the Pacific
18 fleet from the eastern military district of Russia, and what
19 actions they might take in a time of crisis. And so, these
20 kind of capabilities, I think, would be very important to
21 maintain security and focus on the actual operation at hand.

22 Senator Blumenthal: Senator King asked you about the
23 issue of how to define war and response to, in effect, a
24 declaration of war by certain attacks on our capabilities.
25 Obviously, this issue is particularly pertinent when it

1 comes to cyber, since we are under attack literally every
2 day from certain elements, including, potentially, North
3 Korea. And would you agree that we need to define more
4 precisely and more accurately what constitutes an act of war
5 against our country in the cyber area?

6 General Brooks: Senator, I would say that, if
7 confirmed, I would want to lay out all options, and not to
8 preclude any options or consideration. So, I, for one,
9 would offer caution about being too explicit -- and I think
10 that point was made earlier -- while at the same time, being
11 very clear of things that we are extremely concerned about
12 and intend not to tolerate. But, we have to make sure we
13 back up our words. And this is the important part.

14 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you very much.

15 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman McCain: Senator Gillibrand.

17 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you very much for this
18 hearing.

19 General Brooks, in the first 4 months of 2016, we've
20 seen a nuclear test, a space launch, multiple short-range
21 ballistic missile launches, and a ground test of ICBM engine
22 from North Korea. Do you believe that our current strategy
23 is successfully halting or slowing down North Korea's
24 missile technology development? And do you think that the
25 newest sanctions agreed to by China will have an effect?

1 And if North Korea's technology continues to advance, what
2 are our options for halting it?

3 General Brooks: Senator, thanks for the question.

4 I believe the first part of the strategy, which has led
5 to deterrence and preservation of the armistice, is working.
6 I think it's too early to make judgments on U.N. Security
7 Council Resolution 2270 and what effect that that might have
8 on their programs. At the present time, it has not stopped
9 them in pursuing these capabilities.

10 Senator Gillibrand: As many as 70 of North Korea's top
11 leaders have been executed in the last 5 years. How do you
12 think these purges have impacted the stability of the regime
13 in Pyongyang? And, in the event of a significant
14 destabilization in North Korea, what would be your primary
15 security concern?

16 General Brooks: Senator, the approach that Mr. Kim
17 Jong Un is taking toward his military leadership is a cause
18 for concern. The potential of having anyone who can
19 counterbalance him or provide advice, that potential is
20 going down. It is not evident that he's able to receive
21 advice. What that then means, in terms of a cycle of
22 provocation and having any breaks that would stop that, I
23 believe should be a cause for concern. I don't know what
24 mechanisms we have to influence that directly. And I think
25 the alternative is, as a military leader, I would have to be

1 more concerned with, What do I do if he uses the
2 capabilities that he has? How do I prepare to "fight
3 tonight"? And I'd have to rely on other mechanisms, other
4 parts of our governmental efforts that would have a better
5 influence on changing his calculus and changing the way he
6 approaches that. But, to me, it's very concerning. I don't
7 know which direction this could go. I'm -- frankly, I'm not
8 optimistic about the direction that North Korea is going.

9 Senator Gillibrand: On March 8th, the South Korean
10 government announced that dozens of its top officials had
11 their smartphones hacked by North Korea. How do you assess
12 the cyberattack capabilities of North Korea, relative to our
13 and our allies' abilities to defend against them? And what
14 can you tell us about this, in an unclassified setting,
15 about what we are doing to increase our cyberwarfare
16 advantages?

17 General Brooks: Senator, I'd say this is an area of
18 growth. This is part of the asymmetric effort that North
19 Korea is undertaking. While I wouldn't characterize them as
20 the best in the world, they are among the best in the world,
21 and the best organized. And so, what they are experimenting
22 with, what they're willing to do, their demonstrated attacks
23 against a U.S. company, that shows a boldness and a
24 capability. And that is cause for concern.

25 From a military perspective, our first concern, first

1 approach is to protect our networks, protect our
2 capabilities so that we remain ready to "fight tonight"
3 without disruption. But, I think that has to also be
4 applied beyond the military domain, as is clearly evident,
5 and that's a whole-of-government effort that the United
6 States and the ROK government would have to undertake. If
7 confirmed, I would want to advise and inform that, what
8 options there might be, and the nature of the problem as we
9 see it.

10 Senator Gillibrand: On April 13th, the ruling party in
11 the South Korean Parliament lost its majority for the first
12 time in 16 years. How do you think this development will
13 impact regional security?

14 General Brooks: Senator, I'm not sure. I think it's
15 too early to say whether there'll be any differences in the
16 approach to policy, the international engagements of the
17 Republic of Korea. I'm confident, though, there will not be
18 a change in the recognition of the need for a strong
19 alliance. How that manifests itself inside of Korea, we'll
20 work through that. If confirmed, I'll do that closely with
21 Ambassador Mark Lippert.

22 Senator Gillibrand: Okay.

23 And last question. On December 29th, 2015, South Korea
24 and Japan signed an agreement addressing the issue of
25 "comfort women." The agreement has yet to be fully

1 implemented, but its signing reflected an effort to improve
2 the relationship between the two countries. Our strategy in
3 the region is tied to effective coordination with both Japan
4 and South Korea. How would you assess the current state of
5 relations between the two sides? And do you think this will
6 change following the recent elections? And what can the
7 U.S. do to assist our allies moving towards a better
8 relationship between them?

9 General Brooks: Senator, I think that it was a very
10 important step that -- those steps you alluded to in the
11 agreement, and recognizing that very complex and deep-rooted
12 issue. I think both countries recognize there's still work
13 to be done, but it created an opening for us, militarily.
14 And that's what I would highlight, that, by those political
15 decisions, military engagement increased nearly immediately.
16 And I would want that to continue, because we know the
17 importance of having a close connection between the Republic
18 of Korea, Japan, and the United States in security. That
19 would be where I'd concentrate my attention, if confirmed.

20 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 Chairman McCain: Senator Ayotte.

22 Senator Ayotte: Thank you, Chairman.

23 I want to thank you, General and your family, for your
24 leadership and service and willingness to step up to this
25 important position.

1 I wanted to reiterate my agreement with Senator Shaheen
2 on, where you can, to restart recovery operations for those
3 Missing in Action in North Korea, obviously where conditions
4 warrant our ability to do that. In New Hampshire, we have
5 at least 42 that have been identified that are Missing in
6 Action, so this is an important issue, I think, to all of
7 us. But, I understand the conditions on the ground are very
8 difficult in North Korea.

9 General Brooks: They are, Senator. And thanks for
10 your continued pursuit of that. As I mentioned, this is a
11 solemn obligation. And, if confirmed, I would remain
12 committed to that, in support of the Defense POW/MIA
13 Accounting Agency.

14 Senator Ayotte: Thank you, General.

15 I wanted to ask about the ballistic missile testing by
16 North Korea; in particular, the KN-08, what the capability
17 of those missiles are, what activity we see right now in
18 North Korea that is of concern to us, how you think we
19 should address it. And I'd also like you, in turn, to
20 address the cooperation between North Korea and Iran, when
21 it comes to their missile programs, because we also know
22 that, recently, Iran has been testing ballistic missiles, as
23 well.

24 General Brooks: Senator, the KN-08 missile is one of
25 the capabilities that we see North Korea trying to develop.

1 We haven't seen success on that yet, but we know that that's
2 a pursuit. What that would mean to us then is, more of U.S.
3 territories, and the homeland also, could be threatened if
4 they're able to achieve that.

5 The big concern that we see is that some of the
6 technologies that would be needed to put together this type
7 of a system, they've demonstrated those capabilities. And
8 when we see that long-range missile capability that was able
9 to put a satellite into space, for example, that, coupled
10 with nuclear development, the chemical weapons that they
11 already have, and biological weapons, creates a significant
12 hazard. So, we have to make sure we're ready, first, to
13 defend the homeland and defend the Republic of Korea and our
14 forces who are there. This is where I would concentrate.

15 Senator Ayotte: And what can you speak to the
16 cooperation between Iran and North Korea on the missile
17 programs?

18 General Brooks: Thank you, Senator.

19 This is an area of great concern for me. I believe
20 that any cooperation between two proliferating nations who
21 are pursuing this kind of technology is very dangerous for
22 the world. It's very dangerous for the region, certainly
23 for the command that I would be in, if confirmed.

24 Senator Ayotte: Do you know how great that cooperation
25 is, at this point?

1 General Brooks: Senator, I'm aware of some
2 cooperation, and I -- that would -- I would want to detail
3 it in a classified session.

4 Senator Ayotte: Thank you.

5 I would like to ask you that -- in your response to the
6 advance policy questions, you state that the early
7 deployment of more Patriot systems in the event of crisis is
8 critical to the defense of our assets on the Peninsula. So,
9 could you speak to -- if we're going to need more Patriot
10 air and missile defense systems in the event of a crisis in
11 Korea, why aren't we deploying them now? Just, as I
12 understand, obviously, with some of the actions of the
13 leader in North Korea that are deeply troubling, that we
14 can't always predict what this individual will do.

15 General Brooks: Senator, I'd -- it's a -- this is a
16 very important question, as well. I -- because of the size
17 of our forces, to commit them in one place where you have a
18 hazard is to make them unavailable in another. So, a
19 portion of the U.S. Patriot force has to be held in
20 readiness to be committed to any number of regions. In a
21 time of crisis, a decision would be made by the Joint Staff
22 on where to prioritize that.

23 I would say, though, that there's positive news, here,
24 and that is that the Republic of Korea and its procurement
25 programs has chosen to purchase the Patriot Advanced

1 Capability 3, which is the same type of system we have. And
2 that relieves some of the burden on us committing U.S.
3 assets to solve this problem that still exists.

4 Senator Ayotte: Is this something that, as you are in
5 this position, going forward, you'll look at recommending if
6 we have enough assets, in terms of the Patriot, to defend
7 our own forces?

8 General Brooks: Senator, it is. I will focus on that
9 as a high priority if I am confirmed.

10 Senator Ayotte: Thank you. Really appreciate it.

11 Finally, in the advance policy questions, you state
12 that China, Russia, and North Korea all share similar goals
13 concerning U.S. military activity in the region and on the
14 Peninsula. What are those goals, in your view?

15 General Brooks: First, Senator, I'd say a non-nuclear
16 North Korea is the first common interest. And that's been
17 expressed diplomatically and publicly. The second is
18 stability on the Korean Peninsula. That, too, has been
19 expressed. We express it through our commitment to the
20 armistice, and that's been expressed verbally by other
21 countries, like China. Those, I think, are the two most
22 important. There clearly are differences, as well, that
23 must be highlighted --

24 Senator Ayotte: So, just --

25 General Brooks: -- how that's to be fulfilled.

1 Senator Ayotte: -- just so I understand, what are the
2 concerns about China, Russia, and North Korea, in terms of
3 what their alliance might be to undermining our interests?

4 General Brooks: I'm sorry, Senator, I misunderstood
5 your question.

6 Senator Ayotte: No, no. No worries.

7 General Brooks: I believe that we have to be
8 thoughtful of the interests of Russia and China as they
9 regard North Korea. There has been a historic relationship
10 among them. In my estimation, it is strained right now in
11 each case. But, what that would mean in a time of crisis is
12 a very different thing. So, coalitions of convenience,
13 coalitions of common interest can create a much more complex
14 problem for a United Nations Command or a Combined Forces
15 Command Korea.

16 Senator Ayotte: Thank you, General.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator King.

18 Senator King: One followup question.

19 General, you mentioned the cybercapability of North
20 Korea, which I think is very real. Did the United States
21 respond in any specific and identifiable way to the Sony
22 hack in -- to North Korea?

23 General Brooks: Senator, I think there were evident
24 responses in the public domain. Some of the condemnation,
25 some of the issues that followed that. I wouldn't want to

1 detail, in this session, any precise electronic measures
2 that were taken as a result of that. Be happy to discuss
3 that in a classified session.

4 Senator King: Thank you. I'd like to do that.

5 Thank you.

6 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 Chairman McCain: General, you mentioned that relations
8 are strained between Russia, China, and North Korea. But, I
9 don't see any result from that. China controls the economy.
10 They could shut down the North Korean economy in 2 weeks.
11 Can't be too strained.

12 General Brooks: Senator, I'd -- I am waiting to see
13 what the actual result is going to be. They do have
14 significant economic influence, and it has not been shut
15 down. These sanctions, if they agree to them and implement
16 them, could have a significant effect, but that hasn't
17 occurred yet.

18 Chairman McCain: So, do you think that the Chinese are
19 going to harm what little there is of the North Korean
20 economy?

21 General Brooks: Senator, I honestly don't know. I
22 think that they are going to take additional measures, but
23 they may have some back doors that are open.

24 Chairman McCain: How much arms sales does the United
25 States do to North Korea, roughly -- I mean, to South Korea,

1 roughly?

2 General Brooks: Senator, I don't know the exact
3 amount. I do know that some of the critical systems have
4 been purchased over the last 2 years.

5 Chairman McCain: Is it in the hundreds of millions?

6 General Brooks: I'd say it's probably in that order.
7 And I'd be happy to give you a more precise answer.

8 [The information referred to follows:]

9 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Chairman McCain: Do you think that it would be a good
2 idea for South Korea to develop -- the Republic of Korea to
3 develop their own nuclear capability?

4 General Brooks: At this time, Senator, I have not seen
5 anything that would move us in that direction. We're still
6 looking for a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula.

7 Chairman McCain: So, the removal of the nuclear
8 umbrella that's been in place for 70 years -- would not be a
9 good idea to remove that?

10 General Brooks: It would not at the present time,
11 Senator. If you're talking about the U.S. --

12 Chairman McCain: Would it --

13 General Brooks: -- nuclear umbrella.

14 Chairman McCain: Would it at any time?

15 General Brooks: I think that there could be a time
16 where we don't have a nuclear hazard, but we -- we're not at
17 that time now, and nor will we be in the near future.

18 Chairman McCain: So, for us to notify the South
19 Koreans that we are no longer -- that -- the government of
20 the Republic of Korea, that we will no longer provide them
21 with a nuclear umbrella would motivate them to then develop
22 nuclear capability, wouldn't you think?

23 General Brooks: Senator, I think they would have to
24 contemplate that to maintain their own security. That
25 question would likely come up.

1 Chairman McCain: How's the attitude towards -- the
2 people of Korea towards the United States and its military?

3 General Brooks: In my opinion, Senator, it's better
4 now than it was 20 years ago, and there's a greater
5 appreciation in this new generation, which surprised me. I
6 thought we were going the other direction, some time ago.
7 But, perhaps some of the provocations have increased that
8 recognition and awareness.

9 Chairman McCain: So, you see no lessening of the
10 relationship in the Republic of Korea's commitment to
11 supporting our forces that are there?

12 General Brooks: I don't see any diminution of that.

13 Chairman McCain: And their military is quite capable.

14 General Brooks: They're very capable, about 640,000
15 strong, and getting stronger all the time with these
16 additional capabilities and our support.

17 Chairman McCain: And they are now, I believe, the
18 world's fifth largest economy?

19 General Brooks: Senator, they are. And they're
20 continuing to rise.

21 Chairman McCain: And the North Korean economy is about
22 150th?

23 General Brooks: It's depressing, the conditions that
24 exist in North Korea, Senator.

25 Chairman McCain: Have you seen anything of value from

1 this North Korean officer who defected?

2 General Brooks: I'm not aware of anything, at this
3 point, Senator. I've not seen any intelligence or any
4 results.

5 Chairman McCain: Have you any intelligence about the
6 capabilities of the North Koreans, particularly since they
7 seem to be investing in asymmetric capabilities, as opposed
8 to conventional capabilities?

9 General Brooks: I do see that development, Senator,
10 and remain concerned about it.

11 Chairman McCain: And their submarine capability?

12 General Brooks: My understanding is, they have
13 somewhere on the order of 70 submarines. And, of course,
14 they're trying to create a submarine-launch ballistic
15 missile at this time. And that's cause for great concern.

16 Chairman McCain: Have we been surprised at their --
17 despite repeated failures, their -- ultimately, success? In
18 other words, they seem to be moving towards greater and
19 greater capabilities, despite their repeated failures.

20 General Brooks: I don't think, Senator, that's a
21 surprise, that they've been able to achieve that. I don't
22 find it as a surprise. They're pursuing it, and they're
23 going to have success through iterations if they're not
24 stopped.

25 Chairman McCain: Where does their technological base

1 come from for that?

2 General Brooks: Senator, that's something I don't
3 know, and it would be a cause of great concern for me if
4 it's from proliferating parties elsewhere -- Iran and
5 others, for example. And I have some concerns that it might
6 be the case.

7 Chairman McCain: Well, I thank you, General. And I
8 thank your family for being here. And we'll look forward
9 to, unless Senator King would object, probably moving
10 forward with your candidacy.

11 [Whereupon, at 11:00 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25