

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF GENERAL CURTIS M. SCAPARROTTI, USA FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND AND SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, EUROPE; AND GENERAL LORI J. ROBINSON, USAF FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND/COMMANDER, NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

Thursday, April 21, 2016

Washington, D.C.

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2 SCAPARROTTI, USA FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL
3 AND TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND AND
4 SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, EUROPE; AND GENERAL LORI J.
5 ROBINSON, USAF FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND
6 TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND/COMMANDER,
7 NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

8
9 Thursday, April 21, 2016

10
11 U.S. Senate
12 Committee on Armed Services
13 Washington, D.C.
14

15 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in
16 Room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. John McCain,
17 chairman of the committee, presiding.

18 Committee Members Present: Senators McCain
19 [presiding], Inhofe, Wicker, Ayotte, Fischer, Cotton, Ernst,
20 Tillis, Sullivan, Graham, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Manchin,
21 Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine,
22 King, and Heinrich.

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

3 Chairman McCain: Good morning.

4 The Senate Armed Services Committee meets this morning
5 to consider the nominations of General Curtis Scaparrotti to
6 be Commander of U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied
7 Commander, Europe; and General Lori Robinson to be Commander
8 of U.S. Northern Command and Commander of North American
9 Aerospace Defense Command.

10 We congratulate both of you on your nominations. We
11 thank you for your decades of distinguished service to our
12 Nation and for your willingness to serve once again. Of
13 course, we know today would not be possible without the
14 support and sacrifice of your family and friends, some of
15 whom are with us this morning. As is our tradition, we hope
16 you will take the opportunity to introduce your family
17 joining you today.

18 General Scaparrotti, you seek to lead a command very
19 different from the one your predecessor, General Breedlove,
20 inherited just 3 years ago. When Vladimir Putin invaded
21 Ukraine and annexed Crimea, dismembering a sovereign nation
22 in the heart of Europe for the first time in 7 decades,
23 General Breedlove led with clarity and purpose. He pushed
24 EUCOM and NATO to adjust the scope, scale, and seriousness
25 of the new strategic reality we face in Europe. That will

1 be the urgent and unfinished task left to you, General
2 Scaparrotti, if confirmed.

3 Over the past 2 years, Vladimir Putin has been learning
4 from bloody experience in Ukraine and Syria that military
5 adventurism pays, that diplomacy can be manipulated to serve
6 his strategic ambitions, and that the worst refugee crisis
7 since World War II can be weaponized to divide the West and
8 weaken its resolve.

9 The only deterrence that we seem to be establishing is
10 over ourselves. Indeed, 2 years after Russia invaded
11 Ukraine and annexed Crimea, the administration has still not
12 provided Ukrainian forces with the lethal assistance they
13 need to defend themselves and which the Congress has
14 authorized for fear of provoking Russia.

15 This fear of escalation only encourages the kind of
16 aggressive and dangerous behavior we saw last week when
17 Russian fighter jets conducted simulated attacks within 30
18 feet of a U.S. Navy destroyer in international waters and
19 performed dangerous maneuvers within 50 feet of a U.S.
20 surveillance aircraft in international airspace.

21 The European Reassurance Initiative is a positive first
22 step to reestablishing deterrence in Europe. But it is just
23 that, a first step. Russia is building an advanced anti-
24 access, area denial network from Kaliningrad to Crimea to
25 the Eastern Mediterranean. Russian submarine activity in

1 the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean is at the highest
2 level since the Cold War. Russia's military modernization
3 and expanding operations demand a comprehensive review of
4 U.S. force posture in Europe and the resources necessary to
5 support it.

6 But a strong response to Vladimir Putin's aggression
7 cannot come from America alone. With a revanchist Russia on
8 its doorstep and a flood of refugees pouring across its
9 borders, NATO has to step up. Our NATO allies not only need
10 to reverse declining defense budgets and honor their pledge
11 to reach the 2 percent target within a decade, they must
12 also invest in critical military capabilities that further
13 alliance interoperability.

14 A strong NATO is in America's national security
15 interests. Nowhere has that been clearer than in
16 Afghanistan. Our allies have sacrificed blood and treasure
17 fighting alongside us for 15 years. Now the balance of our
18 shared mission and, indeed, the fate of Afghanistan hangs in
19 the balance.

20 The President has announced he intends to reduce U.S.
21 forces in Afghanistan from the current level of 9,800 to
22 5,500 by the end of the year. Such a reduction will have
23 profound consequences, especially the end of the U.S. train,
24 advise, and assist mission at all but the highest levels of
25 the Afghan military. This at the same time ISIL is now on

1 the battlefield, Al Qaeda is resurgent, and the Taliban is
2 on the offensive. Just this week, the Taliban conducted a
3 suicide bombing in Kabul that killed over 60 people and
4 wounded more than 300, most of whom were civilians,
5 including women and children.

6 The President has a decision to make: maintain or
7 increase the current level of U.S. troops given conditions
8 on the ground, or continue with a calendar-based withdrawal.
9 The right answer is clear. But whatever his decision, the
10 President needs to make it as soon as possible. The
11 uncertainty surrounding America's commitment to Afghanistan
12 discourages our allies and encourages our enemies.

13 NATO's force generation conference is in June and the
14 NATO summit in Warsaw is in July. At stake is whether NATO
15 forces will remain in western and northern Afghanistan or
16 whether those areas will be ceded to the influence of Iran
17 or criminal drug rings. Have no doubt: NATO will follow
18 America's lead on troops in Afghanistan. It is up to the
19 President of the United States to show that leadership.

20 General Robinson, the committee looks forward to
21 hearing your assessment of the threats to the U.S. homeland
22 that NORTHCOM is tasked to defend, especially the
23 development of advanced missiles capable of carrying nuclear
24 payloads by Russia, Iran, and North Korea.

25 We will be interested to hear your views on the

1 importance of the U.S.-Mexico security relationship.
2 Heroin, largely produced in Mexico, continues to ravage
3 communities across our Nation and demands a renewed effort
4 to combat this scourge both in our streets and at its
5 source. We must reckon with the fundamental truth that the
6 real driver of drug trafficking is demand for drugs here at
7 home. And while it is clear the Mexican Government must do
8 more within its borders, our government needs to finally get
9 serious about border security. As former SOUTHCOM Commander
10 General John Kelly recently testified about our southern
11 border -- and I quote -- the border is, if not wide open,
12 then certainly open enough to get what the demand requires
13 inside of the country.

14 While border security is ultimately the responsibility
15 of the Department of Homeland Security, I am deeply
16 concerned about the lack of coordination between DOD and DHS
17 along the border. During a recent visit that I made to Fort
18 Huachuca Army Base in Sierra Vista, Arizona, I observed the
19 Army conducting training missions with its UAV fleet.
20 Despite these aircrews flying along the U.S.-Mexico border,
21 the training missions were not being coordinated with the
22 Department of Homeland Security to surveil the border for
23 drug trafficking activities. This is unacceptable.

24 Not only does military training in areas along the
25 border benefit military readiness by providing realistic

1 training in a real world, operationally relevant
2 environment, it can also provide a vital secondary benefit
3 to DHS counterdrug and border security operations by
4 increasing situational awareness. DOD and DHS should be
5 working to ensure training missions for UAV squadrons,
6 ground sensor platoons, and other units are fully
7 integrated. General Robinson, I look forward to hearing
8 your views on how NORTHCOM can contribute to enhancing
9 interagency cooperation along our borders.

10 Senator Reed?

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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 want to welcome the nominees and thank both of them
5 for their extraordinary service to the Nation and recognize
6 your families that serve along with you. I have had the
7 privilege of knowing Cindy Scaparrotti for many years.
8 Thank you, Cindy. And, General Robinson, your father George
9 was a career Air Force pilot. Thank you, sir. And your
10 husband was born in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. So you have
11 already got some momentum behind your nomination. Thank
12 you.

13 [Laughter.]

14 Senator Reed: The nominees before us today, as I have
15 indicated, have impressive records of service. General
16 Scaparrotti is currently Commander of the United Nations
17 Command, the Combined Forces Command, United States Forces,
18 Korea, previously served as Director of the Joint Staff,
19 Commander International Security Assistance Force, on and
20 on, including Commander of the 82nd Airborne Division. So
21 thank you, sir, for your distinguished service.

22 General Robinson has been Commander now of the Air
23 Component for the U.S. Pacific Command. She has been Vice
24 Commander of Air Combat Command and a list of other
25 important assignments. So thank you.

1 General Scaparrotti, if confirmed, you will be dual-
2 hatted as the Commander of U.S. European Command and NATO
3 Supreme Allied Commander. You will be asked to consider a
4 diverse array of challenges in the European security
5 environment, including foreign fighter flows emanating from
6 the conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa, the
7 ongoing refugee crisis and its potential destabilizing
8 effects, and the specter of continued aggressive behavior
9 from Russia, which the chairman has very accurately and
10 thoughtfully pointed out. You will oversee a shift in U.S.
11 efforts in Europe. In addition to the ongoing assurance
12 efforts of our NATO allies and partners, we will be adding
13 strategic investments to deter further Russian activities.
14 The committee looks forward to hearing your views on these
15 and other complex issues.

16 You will also continue the important work EUCOM is
17 doing with the Ukrainian Government to identify military and
18 security shortfalls and strengthen Ukraine's capacity to
19 defend itself. The committee would benefit again from your
20 views in this regard.

21 And, General Robinson, if confirmed, your
22 responsibility as NORTHCOM Commander will comprise defending
23 the homeland, which ultimately is the most important mission
24 we have, including against such threats as cruise and
25 ballistic missiles. You will have to support civilian

1 authorities in this mission not only in terms of potential
2 conflict, but also natural disasters which affect the
3 country. And you will also have to maintain very close
4 security cooperation ties with our neighbors, again as the
5 chairman pointed out, Mexico in particular. And you will
6 also be dual-hatted as Commander of NORAD, our bi-national
7 command with Canada which is the mission to provide
8 aerospace warning, aerospace control, and maritime warning
9 at a time when the Arctic is becoming rapidly another area
10 of operational activities for the Russians and for ourselves
11 and for many others. So we look forward to hearing your
12 views on all these issues.

13 And thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman McCain: As is the custom of this committee,
15 we need to ask some formal questions for the witnesses, and
16 just respond by yes or no, if you choose to.

17 In order to exercise its legislative and oversight
18 responsibilities important to this committee and other
19 appropriate committees of the Congress, we are able to
20 receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of
21 information. Have you adhered to applicable laws and
22 regulations governing conflicts of interest?

23 General Robinson: Yes.

24 General Scaparrotti: I have.

25 Chairman McCain: Do you agree, when asked, to give

1 your personal views even if these views differ from the
2 administration in power?

3 General Robinson: Yes.

4 General Scaparrotti: Yes.

5 Chairman McCain: Have you assumed any duties or
6 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the
7 outcome of the confirmation process?

8 General Robinson: No.

9 General Scaparrotti: No.

10 Chairman McCain: Will you ensure your staff complies
11 with deadlines established for requested communications,
12 including questions for the record in hearings?

13 General Robinson: Yes.

14 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir.

15 Chairman McCain: Will you cooperate in providing
16 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional
17 requests?

18 General Robinson: Yes.

19 General Scaparrotti: Yes.

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

22 General Robinson: Yes.

23 General Scaparrotti: Yes.

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

1 General Robinson: Yes.

2 General Scaparrotti: Yes, I do.

3 Chairman McCain: Do you agree to provide documents,
4 including copies of electronic forms of communications, in a
5 timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee
6 or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any
7 good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

8 General Robinson: Yes.

9 General Scaparrotti: Yes.

10 Chairman McCain: General Robinson, we will begin with
11 you. Welcome.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL LORI J. ROBINSON, USAF, FOR
2 REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDER,
3 UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND/COMMANDER, NORTH AMERICAN
4 AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

5 General Robinson: Thank you, sir. Good morning,
6 Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished
7 members of the committee. I am honored to meet with you
8 today as the President's nominee to be Commander of United
9 States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense
10 Command. I would like to thank President Obama for
11 nominating me, as well as Secretary Carter and Chairman
12 Dunford, for the trust they have placed in me.

13 It is my privilege to be sitting next to my dear friend
14 and colleague, Curt Scaparrotti, an incredible leader. It
15 has been an honor to work with him in the Pacific these last
16 18 months.

17 I also wish to thank my good friend, Admiral Bill
18 Gortney, for his outstanding leadership and 39 years of
19 dedicated service to our Nation. If confirmed, it would be
20 a tremendous honor to build on his efforts in this extremely
21 important position.

22 I would like to introduce my father, George Howard,
23 from Jackson, New Hampshire, a 30-year Air Force veteran and
24 R-4 pilot. He also flew RF-101's in Vietnam. I have looked
25 up to my father my entire life.

1 Chairman McCain: I take it that his landings match the
2 number of takeoffs.

3 General Robinson: Sir, he is here.

4 [Laughter.]

5 General Robinson: Also my amazing sister Carol, an
6 incredible nurse, mother, and wife; my full-of-energy niece
7 Megan and her husband Brian is here. Megan works here on
8 the Hill. And finally, the love of my life, my husband
9 David, a retired two-star reservist, fighter pilot,
10 Thunderbird pilot, and a retired airline pilot. I can tell
11 this committee without hesitation that without his constant
12 love and support, I would not be sitting here before you
13 today.

14 Today we face a rapidly evolving and growing threat
15 environment, both in the number of those who wish to do us
16 harm and the complexity of tools at their disposal. Our
17 country faces many challenging threats from within and
18 abroad, ranging from threats such as homegrown violent
19 extremists, cyber attack, trafficking of drugs and other
20 illicit products by transnational criminal organizations to
21 threats posed by nation states such as Russia, North Korea,
22 and Iran.

23 In my experience as the Pacific Air Force's Commander
24 and the Air Component for Admiral Harris, I am intimately
25 aware of the tenuous situation on the peninsula and

1 throughout the region and understand the potential threats
2 posed to the security of our homeland. Defense of the
3 homeland is a sacred responsibility, and the number one
4 mission of the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I will
5 work passionately to uphold the faith the American people
6 have placed in these commands and ensure that we remain
7 vigilant and postured to outpace any potential threat.

8 If confirmed, I will also continue to develop strong
9 relationships with our homeland partners so that we are
10 prepared to provide defense support to Federal, State, and
11 local authorities, as requested, when the American people
12 need it the most.

13 And if confirmed, I will further strengthen our
14 outstanding friendship with Canada, as well as growing our
15 partnerships with Mexico and the Bahamas. I am deeply
16 honored and humbled to have been nominated for this
17 position.

18 If confirmed, I look forward to working with this
19 committee to address the many challenges we face to defend
20 our homeland and to provide defense support to civil
21 authorities. I look forward to providing the committee with
22 my candid views on issues and challenges and pledge to
23 provide you my best military advice. I seek to establish a
24 trusted relationship with each member of this committee.

25 In closing, I would like to thank the members of this

1 committee and your staff for the unyielding support you
2 provide the men and women in uniform and civilian service
3 who protect our Nation. These patriots are motivated by
4 duty, honor, and call to service and deserve the very best
5 our Nation has to offer. Thank you for supporting them and
6 recognizing the invaluable role they play in safeguarding
7 our Nation and our way of life.

8 Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to be
9 here and for the committee's consideration. I look forward
10 to your questions.

11 [The prepared statement of General Robinson follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you. Welcome to your family.
2 General?

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL CURTIS M. SCAPARROTTI, USA, FOR
2 REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDER,
3 UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND AND SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER,
4 EUROPE

5 General Scaparrotti: Chairman McCain, Senator Reed,
6 and other distinguished members of the Senate Armed Services
7 Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear here
8 today, and I also want to thank you for the support that you
9 have provided to our service members, our Department of
10 Defense civilians, and their families who selflessly serve
11 in the defense of our great Nation and in the defense of our
12 way of life.

13 I would also like to thank the Secretary of Defense and
14 the President for their trust and confidence and for
15 nominating me to be the next Commander of United States
16 European Command and Supreme Allied Commander of Europe.

17 In particular, I would like to introduce and thank my
18 wife Cindy who is here with me today. She has been by my
19 side for 37 years and has been an essential part of my
20 service. Cindy has supported me during multiple
21 deployments, cared actively for our service members and
22 their families, and raised our children, Mike and Stephanie.
23 Like so many other military families, they have given much
24 so that we can serve.

25 I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the

1 Republic of Korea and the United Nations Command
2 contributing states for their steadfast cooperation and
3 support in confronting a serious global threat in North
4 Korea. Without doubt, my experiences leading and working
5 within this great alliance in the midst of the critical
6 security concerns have prepared me for this next command, if
7 confirmed.

8 Finally, I would be remiss not to acknowledge General
9 Phil Breedlove's leadership as the present EUCOM Commander
10 and SACEUR. His excellent leadership has been critical in
11 meeting the many challenges in NATO and Europe and posturing
12 the force for the future.

13 America's closest allies reside in Europe and uphold
14 our shared democratic values. Additionally, transatlantic
15 trade with Europe constitutes over half of the world's GDP.
16 If confirmed, I will work diligently to preserve the
17 transatlantic alliance and these vital American and allied
18 interests.

19 This is a pivotal moment within the European Command
20 area of responsibility as it faces numerous threats and
21 strategic challenges. First, the resurgent Russia is
22 contesting for power with increasingly aggressive behavior
23 that challenges the international norms, often in violation
24 of international law. Furthermore, terrorism poses an
25 immediate threat as the world witnessed with the recent

1 tragedies in Brussels, Paris, and Ankara. Third, the
2 significant influx of migrants and refugees has resulted in
3 economic, demographic, and humanitarian crises that are
4 testing the social fabric of Europe. And finally, Israel
5 continues to confront threats from Iran and from extremists
6 within and along its borders.

7 The common thread among these threats is the attempt to
8 weaken our NATO alliance and our European partnerships.
9 However, I am confident that our unity will prevail. If
10 confirmed, I will do all that I can to leverage the full
11 spectrum of military, political, and economic capabilities
12 of our alliance to address these critical concerns.

13 If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with
14 this committee, with Congress, with our civilian military
15 leadership, and with our European allies to advance our
16 national interests, defend the United States, and ensure a
17 free and prosperous Europe.

18 If confirmed, I commit to service members and DOD
19 personnel in EUCOM that I will do all that I can to ensure
20 their readiness for the mission and to provide the support
21 that they and their families deserve.

22 I look forward to working with this committee and with
23 Congress to realize this commitment.

24 I am honored to appear before this committee with
25 General Robinson. We have been serving together in the

1 Pacific for some time, and she is a great senior leader and
2 friend who has supported me and our forces to maintain the
3 security in the Republic of Korea.

4 I thank the committee again for the opportunity to
5 appear today, and I look forward to your questions.

6 [The prepared statement of General Scaparrotti
7 follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

2 General Robinson, Senator Shaheen and Senator Ayotte,
3 who are here today, will talk to you more at length about
4 this issue of the epidemic of manufactured heroin that is an
5 emergency in their State and in other States. The incidence
6 of manufactured heroin, drug overdoses is, in the view of
7 some, an epidemic. And that means that, obviously, our
8 border is the transit point for much of this manufactured
9 heroin from Mexico.

10 I was stunned down at Fort Huachuca that we are flying
11 UAVs, but we are not flying them along the border. We are
12 not coordinating with the Border Patrol. It is insane. So
13 I hope that you will look at the whole situation of this
14 border -- the whole challenge of this manufactured heroin
15 that is coming across our border and killing Americans in
16 larger numbers to the point where I believe the Governor of
17 New Hampshire said it is an epidemic. Is that correct,
18 Kelly?

19 Senator Ayotte: Absolutely.

20 Chairman McCain: So we have got to do a lot more on
21 the border. We all understand posse comitatus, and we are
22 not seeking military action on the part of our armed
23 services, but there are so many ways that coordination can
24 be implemented that is not being done today. I would like
25 for you to send a written statement to the committee on what

1 actions you think need to be taken to try to stem this
2 epidemic which is killing so many Americans.

3 General Robinson: Senator, yes, sir. I will commit to
4 you that I will do that, and I will also commit to you very
5 early, if confirmed, that I will go down and look at the
6 border so I understand it and put my eyes on it, just as you
7 have on several occasions. And I will send you a written
8 statement.

9 Chairman McCain: I will be glad to escort you.

10 General Robinson: Sir, I would be honored.

11 Chairman McCain: General Scaparrotti, thank you for
12 your great work in Korea. We are proud of what you have
13 done, and we have every confidence in you in your new
14 assignment.

15 There is a NATO force generation conference in June,
16 NATO summit in Warsaw in July. Should we not make a
17 decision as to what our troop strength level should be
18 before those two conferences?

19 General Scaparrotti: Sir, I believe we should come to
20 terms with that before we enter those conferences, and if
21 confirmed, I will do my best to do an immediate review and
22 present my best military advice.

23 Chairman McCain: In Afghanistan today -- I referred in
24 my opening statement about this latest attack in Kabul. In
25 your assessment, is the security situation getting better or

1 worse now that we have ISIS, we have Al Qaeda, and a
2 declaration by the Taliban that the fighting season has
3 begun?

4 General Scaparrotti: Sir, from what I have seen from
5 my vantage point, it appears to be getting worse. If
6 confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to go back to
7 Afghanistan and talk to General Nicholson who is doing a
8 review as well and provide my advice.

9 Chairman McCain: I thank you for that.

10 So if we go down to 5,500, as is the present plan, will
11 there be no coalition presence in Herat and Mazar-al-Sharif?

12 General Scaparrotti: Chairman, I am not sure about
13 that plan at this point, but I know that at some point in
14 time that was a part of the plan, and I think that the lack
15 of our presence in those critical areas in the north and the
16 west that provide assistance and training to both the Army
17 Corps headquarters and the Afghan National Police are very
18 important.

19 Chairman McCain: Four of the most senior officers in
20 our military, General Neller, Milley, Selva, and Dunford,
21 testified Russia is the greatest threat to America. Do you
22 agree?

23 General Scaparrotti: Chairman, I do agree.

24 Chairman McCain: A "New York Times" story this
25 morning, Russian Submarine Threaten Mediterranean and North

1 Atlantic. Are you concerned about sea lines of
2 communications in the Atlantic and the Suez?

3 General Scaparrotti: Chairman, I am concerned.

4 Chairman McCain: Russian fighters made passes inside
5 of 50 feet. You heard my opening statement. What should be
6 our response to this gross violation of international law?

7 General Scaparrotti: Chairman, I believe that from a
8 military perspective, we should sail and fly wherever we are
9 allowed to by international law, and we should be strong,
10 clear, and consistent in our message in that regard.

11 Chairman McCain: This may sound a little tough, but
12 should we make an announcement to the Russians that if they
13 place the lives of our men and women onboard Navy ships in
14 danger, that we will take appropriate action?

15 General Scaparrotti: Sir, I believe that should be
16 known. Yes.

17 Chairman McCain: I thank you.

18 General Breedlove said in March that less than 10
19 percent of EUCOM's intelligence, surveil, and -- ISR
20 requirements are being met. If Russia is our greatest
21 threat, does that make any sense?

22 General Scaparrotti: Sir, the actual allocation of
23 intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets is a
24 complex one looking at what is going on day to day. But I
25 would say that given the threat in Russia, it is obviously a

1 very high priority. And if confirmed, I will review that
2 and request the appropriate assets.

3 Chairman McCain: I thank you, General. These are very
4 interesting and challenging times. It is the view of this
5 member that you are obviously very well qualified, but I
6 hope that in your present position, you will demand that
7 decisions be made that enable you to carry out your mission,
8 which is not the case in my view today.

9 Senator Reed?

10 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

11 Let me begin by seconding the point that the chairman
12 made, that the decision with respect to the force structure
13 in Afghanistan should be made soon, not later simply because
14 there are operational considerations that will stretch over
15 many months once that decision is made. And based on my
16 visit in January, it seems that a stronger force rather than
17 a smaller force would be more appropriate. But that is a
18 view I think that you and General Nicholson will consider
19 and make a recommendation to the President.

20 The issue of Russia is obviously central, General
21 Scaparrotti. The Ukraine is an area of proxy conflict
22 between the two, and my position is that we have to succeed
23 there because if we succeed there, it will be the most
24 effective way to dissuade any further, we hope, aggression
25 or designs on other free nations in the area.

1 Your assessment of Ukraine right now, what we can do,
2 what we should do, what we are not doing.

3 General Scaparrotti: Well, Senator, as you know, we
4 have provided both training and assistance and the defensive
5 means to Ukraine at this part. We have supported also our
6 allies in doing the same. If confirmed, it will be my task
7 to, one, review the situation there. But secondly, I
8 believe that we should continue both assistance and aid in
9 the kinds of assets that they need in order to defend their
10 country, their sovereignty, and their territorial integrity,
11 and that we ought to continue building partnership capacity
12 to help them do that on their own.

13 Senator Reed: I think one of the other aspects that
14 you are going to confront -- there are so many and the
15 chairman touched on many of them -- is this evolving hybrid
16 warfare, which is a combination of initial cyber activities
17 from undisclosed or at least difficult to determine sources,
18 together with irregular forces, together with, obviously,
19 conventional weaponry and over the horizon, certainly
20 traditional military forces.

21 I presume that as you enter your responsibilities, you
22 are going to be able to begin to retool, if you will, NATO
23 to be not only capable but superior in this hybrid warfare.

24 General Scaparrotti: Yes, Senator, I will. I think it
25 is an important area, one that we are obviously challenged

1 in today not only in Ukraine but throughout three of the
2 four flanks basically within Europe and also globally.

3 Senator Reed: Thank you.

4 And, General Robinson, again you have many
5 responsibilities. One is you are responsible for the
6 operation on the ground-based midcourse defense, our
7 national missile defense effort. Admiral Syring was
8 testifying recently before the Appropriations Committee
9 very, very thoughtfully about the need to fly before you
10 buy, to test these vehicles, not simply to just put them up
11 and hope they work, also to invest in additional
12 capabilities to discern targets and the concentration being,
13 at least initially, on the west coast. Is that something
14 that you would support?

15 General Robinson: Yes, Senator, I would support his
16 priorities.

17 Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

18 The other issue too -- and it goes to so much of what
19 you do -- is the coordination with other Federal agencies,
20 particularly the Department of Homeland Security. And one
21 of the issues we all face will be trying to unwind
22 sequestration. But the effects, I would presume, on your
23 mission would be very difficult, if not only DOD but DHS was
24 not released from the bounds on sequestration. Is that
25 correct?

1 General Robinson: Sir, obviously, I appreciate the
2 committee's Bipartisan Act and having us be able to have a
3 consistent budget. The effects of sequestration, if it came
4 back, especially on the Department, for readiness and across
5 the board would be concerning.

6 Senator Reed: One other of your responsibilities,
7 since you are dual-hatted as the NORAD Commander, is the
8 advanced warning and the readiness to protect ourselves from
9 any type of missile, either a high altitude or increasingly
10 low altitude. Can you give us any preliminary sort of
11 notion of your sense of NORAD's activities and what you
12 intend to do to ensure that they can protect us?

13 General Robinson: Sir, as we defend with our Canadian
14 partners to the north, I would go and continue to
15 understand, if confirmed, where they are and what
16 technologies and things we are thinking to the future so
17 that we can ensure both air and maritime warning to defend
18 the homeland.

19 Senator Reed: Thank you.

20 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

21 Chairman McCain: Senator Ernst?

22 Senator Ernst: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

23 And thanks to both of you for being here today as well.
24 And I want to thank your families for joining you and being
25 supportive, and we appreciate your achievements as well. So

1 thank you for joining us today.

2 General Scaparrotti, I am glad to see an enhanced
3 effort with ERI in the President's budget request, as I do
4 believe Russia is one of the greatest existential threats to
5 our Nation. But I am concerned that rotating an armored
6 brigade combat team through Europe instead of permanently
7 stationing one there fails to show our optimum level of
8 commitment to our allies and to Russia as well. And
9 furthermore, as you know, the National Commission on the
10 Future of the Army had suggested and made the recommendation
11 that we include a forward armored BCT in Europe.

12 And I would like to know from you if you believe that
13 rotating an armored brigade combat team through Europe is
14 the right level of commitment, or do you believe that we
15 should have one permanently stationed there? What are your
16 thoughts on that, sir?

17 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I understand the
18 service's challenges in light of today's resources to
19 provide a permanently stationed brigade at this time, but I
20 personally believe a permanently stationed armored brigade
21 in Europe would be best.

22 Senator Ernst: We have heard some differing opinions
23 on that, but I appreciate that.

24 Also, we did speak yesterday, and thank you for coming
25 by the office. I do appreciate it.

1 In our meeting, I stated that I am concerned that Putin
2 and the Assad regime has been weaponizing the migrants
3 coming out of Syria. And they are being used to destabilize
4 the European Union, and we have heard those comments from
5 General Breedlove as well. And I admire him. I think he is
6 on to something there.

7 And I am concerned that Turkey could do more to help
8 stop the flow of refugees to Europe. As you know, over the
9 past couple of years, it has been pretty easy for terrorists
10 to negotiate. They have lines of communication through
11 Turkey, who is a NATO partner, and to plan and conduct
12 attacks in Europe, as well as in Iraq and Syria.

13 So I would like your take on if you think Turkey is
14 doing enough to stem that flow and cut those lines of
15 communication to refugees and terrorists into Europe? And
16 can Turkey do more? And if so, what do you believe they
17 should be doing?

18 General Scaparrotti: Senator, Turkey, as you stated,
19 is an important ally, a NATO member that sits on the
20 southeastern flank, really I think at the nexus of the
21 challenges you talked about. You have an aggressive Russia.
22 They have encountered the escalation personally.
23 Counterterrorism, the ISIL threat, Syria, and the refugee
24 challenge that you talked about. It is important that they
25 work hard to secure their borders, that they take part in

1 the security operations that are ongoing to reduce the
2 refugee flow. And if confirmed, I will obviously make it
3 one of my priorities to understand their challenges and what
4 we can do to better help them in that regard.

5 Senator Ernst: Thank you, General.

6 And I have been told that if the Pentagon named
7 Operation Atlantic Resolve as an actual named operation, it
8 could potentially enhance and make more effective the
9 support and capabilities provided to EUCOM. And if you are
10 confirmed, then can you commit to me that you will look into
11 whether or not naming Operation Atlantic Resolve as an
12 actual named operation through the Joint Staff would allow
13 EUCOM to more effectively reassure our allies and deter
14 Russian aggression in the near and long term?

15 General Scaparrotti: Yes, Senator, I can commit to
16 that.

17 Senator Ernst: And can you also commit to me that, if
18 confirmed, you will provide feedback to us whether or not
19 the National Guard State Partnership Program, another one of
20 my favorite programs, could be expanded to more nations in
21 the EUCOM AOR to enhance our mil-to-mil cooperation and
22 partnership between the U.S. and our European allies?

23 General Scaparrotti: Yes, Senator. I am a great
24 supporter of the National Guard program, and I will report
25 back to you on that.

1 Senator Ernst: Thank you very much.

2 And finally, General Scaparrotti, do you think Russia's
3 use of hybrid tactics is making our life more challenging,
4 especially through NATO? Just very briefly. I am running
5 out of time.

6 General Scaparrotti: Yes, Senator, it is. They
7 purposely keep it below the threshold that we would normally
8 consider conflict.

9 Senator Ernst: Absolutely. Thank you, General. Thank
10 you, General Robinson.

11 Chairman McCain: Senator Shaheen?

12 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 And thank you to both of you for your service and
14 congratulations on your nomination.

15 And, General Robinson, I want to congratulate you this
16 morning too for being named to Time's 100 most influential
17 people in the world actually. And we are very proud of you
18 in New Hampshire for your nomination for being named to
19 Time's list, but mostly because you are a graduate of the
20 University of New Hampshire. So congratulations.

21 And, General Scaparrotti, having had a chance to meet
22 you in Afghanistan, I am not at all surprised to see that
23 you have achieved what you have and very much appreciate
24 that you are taking over at EUCOM at a very challenging time
25 for Europe.

1 General Robinson, I want to begin with you. What do
2 you think are the greatest threats that are facing the
3 homeland right now?

4 General Robinson: Ma'am, as General Scaparrotti said,
5 Russia is the greatest threat facing the homeland. But if
6 you look inside the United States, the concern becomes with
7 homegrown violent extremists. And so those would be the
8 things that, if confirmed, I would continue to track
9 closely.

10 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

11 Senator McCain talked about the challenge from the
12 heroin epidemic that we are facing in New Hampshire. I had
13 a chance to visit the southern border last year, and talking
14 to CBP agents about drugs coming across the southern border,
15 they said those drugs are going up Interstate 35 to the
16 middle of the country and Interstate 95 to New England.

17 I very much appreciate your agreeing to look at that
18 firsthand and to make a written report to us. But can you
19 talk about some of the things that NORTHCOM can do to
20 address that heroin epidemic?

21 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am. The epidemic is
22 absolutely heart-wrenching. And if confirmed, I know that
23 NORTHCOM will support Federal agencies to provide military
24 unique capabilities to support the drug problem. And as the
25 chairman mentioned, take a look what is with Fort Hauachuca

1 and the UAVs and can we partner there and look at that. So
2 those would be a couple of things that early on that I would
3 be looking at if confirmed.

4 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

5 General Scaparrotti, I just want to make sure I
6 understood how you responded to Senator Ernst. You said
7 that you do believe it would be preferable to permanently
8 station troops in Eastern Europe. Did I understand that
9 correctly?

10 General Scaparrotti: Senator, if confirmed, I have got
11 to look at the service's situation. If confirmed, I would
12 request a force like a brigade, and they determine how that
13 is provided. But I think if I had the option of that or a
14 rotational brigade, I would prefer a permanently stationed
15 brigade.

16 Senator Shaheen: I have had a chance to visit with
17 officials from the Baltics and from Eastern Europe a number
18 of times over the last year. And clearly, they are very
19 anxious to see a very strong United States and NATO presence
20 on the eastern border. So can you talk a little bit about
21 why you think a permanent brigade would be preferable to
22 what we are currently considering with respect to rotating
23 troops in and out?

24 General Scaparrotti: Yes, Senator. I think a
25 permanent brigade -- I am assuming in Europe that we have

1 the facilities that we could readily station those, care for
2 families, et cetera. But a permanent brigade gives you a
3 brigade that establishes relationships with the supporting
4 elements of all forces for the United States, as well as a
5 more permanent relationship and lasting relationship with
6 all of our allies that they work with day to day. And that
7 can be done over time better than a rotational force can
8 potentially do it. It also develops relationships and
9 operating procedures with all of those allies and with the
10 forces that are in Europe. So primarily it is one that
11 gives you a little more substance, a little more strength in
12 relationship building and, obviously, a trained brigade with
13 really less turbulence in terms of you can establish it
14 there, assuming families are with them.

15 Senator Shaheen: Thanks. I appreciate that.

16 My time is almost over, but as both Senators McCain and
17 Reed have pointed out and as you know very well and said in
18 your testimony, this is a very challenging time in Europe.
19 They have a number of threats from Russia to the migration
20 crisis. Can you talk about what else EUCOM can do to help
21 reassure the Europeans and help work with them to encourage
22 stability there?

23 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I think that EUCOM is,
24 under Phil Breedlove, on the right track. You know, he has
25 emphasized very close relationships, collaboration,

1 developing better information and intelligence sharing, a
2 close partnership with our allies where we assist each other
3 in building capacity, building interoperability, and the
4 exercise of forces in training. Finally, he has begun the
5 proper planning that will reflect the change in the
6 environment there that has taken place in the last 2 years.
7 And I think, if confirmed, I will continue all of those
8 things.

9 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Thank you very much.

10 Chairman McCain: Senator Wicker?

11 Senator Wicker: General Scaparrotti, in an interview
12 this month, Secretary-General Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary-
13 General, said that NATO has to be ready to deploy forces and
14 to intervene again if needed. Do you agree with that
15 statement? And how likely is it going to be necessary for
16 NATO forces to intervene? And what is your assessment of
17 the capability of NATO forces to do so?

18 General Scaparrotti: Well, I think, first of all,
19 Senator, the purpose of the alliance is to provide a
20 collective defense within Europe. And to do that today, it
21 has to be agile in its movement of forces. So I agree that
22 it has to be able to deploy forces throughout Europe both to
23 what is commonly seen today as the threat on the eastern
24 flank with Russia, but also, where necessary, to assist
25 allies in threats in the southern border to include

1 terrorist threats, et cetera.

2 I think NATO is in a position today where we have
3 capability, but obviously since the Wales summit, the
4 purpose has been to develop those capabilities because we
5 realize that there has to be change in order to meet the new
6 environment that we see in Europe today.

7 Senator Wicker: And we are not completely ready to
8 meet that new environment as a NATO alliance. Are we?

9 General Scaparrotti: No, sir, we are not.

10 Senator Wicker: Let me also ask you. Secretary-
11 General Stoltenberg said this with regard to Afghanistan.
12 He said, we have been able to prevent that Afghanistan
13 becomes a safe haven for international terrorists. Do you
14 agree with that?

15 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I believe that we have
16 changed the conditions in Afghanistan, but I also believe we
17 have much work to do to realize our objective of a stable,
18 democratic Afghanistan that is no longer a safe haven.

19 Senator Wicker: He said we have been able to build a
20 national unity government. Do you agree with that?

21 General Scaparrotti: Senator, there is a national
22 unity government. I believe personally there is much work
23 to do there as well.

24 Senator Wicker: He said we have been able to build an
25 Afghan national army and security forces of 350,000 soldiers

1 and personnel.

2 General Scaparrotti: Yes, Senator, 350,000 taking part
3 in the establishment of that army. And I am proud of the
4 services and the service that I have had in Afghanistan with
5 the Afghan security forces.

6 Senator Wicker: And he said we have enabled them to
7 take over the security in Afghanistan themselves. To what
8 extent do you agree with that statement? And is that
9 another area where there is work to be done?

10 General Scaparrotti: Senator, they are responsible for
11 the security of their nation now. There is much work to do,
12 particularly when it comes to enablers, C2, and logistics,
13 and it is important that we continue that assistance to
14 develop that capability.

15 Senator Wicker: So your testimony is that these
16 accomplishments have, in fact, taken place, but there are
17 still concerns and still real work to be done to solidify
18 them. Is that correct?

19 General Scaparrotti: That is correct, sir.

20 Senator Wicker: And Chairman McCain and Senator Reed
21 have touched on this in their statements and questions. But
22 do we risk losing these accomplishments by a further
23 drawdown in American troops in Afghanistan?

24 General Scaparrotti: Sir, I believe strongly in the
25 conditions that have to be met in order to meet a drawdown.

1 So I believe in conditions being the driver not time.

2 Senator Wicker: And so are you prepared to say whether
3 those conditions have been met? In other words, I am
4 echoing I think what our chairman and ranking member have
5 said. Does it make any sense with so much invested and so
6 many accomplishments -- does it make any sense for us to
7 risk that by drawing down troops?

8 General Scaparrotti: Senator, given my experience
9 there, all of the sacrifices that we have made to realize
10 our objectives, I think that we need to keep those
11 objectives in mind and work hard to achieve them. And any
12 drawdown should be set on conditions to achieve our end
13 states.

14 Senator Wicker: Well, we want to work with you on
15 that. It just seems to me that we risk tossing away hard-
16 fought and hard-won gains.

17 So thank you very much. I look forward to your
18 service.

19 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly?

20 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 And I want to thank both of the witnesses and your
22 families for all your sacrifice.

23 General Robinson, I want to recommend to you a book to
24 read in your new job, and it is called "Dreamland." And it
25 is about the heroin epidemic that is not only sweeping our

1 country but in particular this focuses a lot on Ohio. And
2 my home State of Indiana is right next door.

3 And I just want to tell you a little story. We have a
4 small county in southern Indiana, Scott County, and a small
5 town there, Austin, 4,200 people. In a town of 4,200
6 people, we had 190 HIV cases that came from dirty needles
7 that were passed around while using prescription drugs. And
8 this epidemic has basically hollowed out and destroyed all
9 of these families. It starts with the prescription drugs,
10 and then it goes to the heroin, the black tar heroin that
11 comes across from Mexico. And this book, "Dreamland," helps
12 to describe how destructive it is of these towns and of
13 these families.

14 In my hometown, we lost a 20-year-old and a 19-year-old
15 young man just from one of these parties that they were at.
16 Going to be a sophomore at IU, going to be a freshman at
17 Ball State. And it happens in town after town all across
18 New Hampshire, all across Cape Cod. People think of it as a
19 vacation place. Cape Cod has a heroin epidemic, and it is
20 coming up from Mexico. And we desperately need you to be
21 the point person in stopping this effort.

22 General Robinson: Senator, thank you for that advice,
23 and I commit to you that I will read "Dreamland" independent
24 of being confirmed.

25 Senator Donnelly: It is heartbreaking.

1 General Robinson: Yes, sir. It is heart-wrenching.
2 As Senator Shaheen mentioned, you know, the epidemic that is
3 happening in New Hampshire, in my State of residence, I
4 commit to you that I will do everything to understand it and
5 to work with DHS to do just what you have asked.

6 Senator Donnelly: We see more than auto crashes now,
7 more than car crashes, automobile-related deaths heroin and
8 prescription drug-related deaths have rocketed past that.
9 So we lose young person after young person. When I go to
10 high school graduations and speak to them, I basically spend
11 half my time begging them to keep an eye out for one another
12 because there is so much black tar heroin coming across from
13 Mexico.

14 General Robinson: Senator, I agree with you too, not
15 only the heart-wrenching deaths, but as you mentioned, what
16 it does to families. So, yes, sir.

17 Senator Donnelly: Thank you.

18 And, General Scaparrotti, it was a privilege to be with
19 you in Korea, and you did such an extraordinary job there.
20 You talked about Afghanistan, and the number 5,500 has been
21 mentioned by the chairman. The last thing I would like to
22 see -- and I know you would too -- is all the efforts for so
23 many years just kind of be thrown away because of a number
24 as opposed to what conditions require. I know you have said
25 it will be conditions-based. We want to make sure you give

1 us your absolutely 100 percent unvarnished opinion of what
2 actually needs to be done there as you take a look at it.

3 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I absolutely commit to
4 you that, if confirmed, I will do just that.

5 Senator Donnelly: Thank you very much.

6 As we look to what just happened with the Russians
7 recently, you know, doing a barrel roll over one of our
8 ships there or over one of our planes there, is there a
9 point where this has happened time after time after time
10 where we tell them in advance enough? The next time it does
11 not end well for you.

12 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I think it is important
13 that we are, as I said, strong, clear, and consistent with
14 them. And we should engage them to make clear what is
15 acceptable operations of both of our forces in close
16 proximity. And I think once we make that known, then we
17 have to enforce it.

18 Senator Donnelly: General Robinson, what is your
19 assessment, as you take a look, of the ballistic missile
20 threat to our country posed by North Korea and Iran? And,
21 obviously, you are going to be significantly involved in
22 providing answers for that and in making sure we are safe.

23 General Robinson: Yes, sir. The North Korean threat
24 is real. Right now, it is a medium range, but they are
25 trying very hard to be able to hit the homeland. And Iran

1 continues to evolve its capability. And if confirmed, that
2 will be a threat that I will continue to monitor very, very
3 closely.

4 Senator Donnelly: Thank you both very, very much for
5 your service.

6 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 Chairman McCain: Senator Ayotte?

8 Senator Ayotte: Thank you, Chairman.

9 I want to thank both of you for your distinguished
10 service to the country. And I have to say, General
11 Robinson, I echo Senator Shaheen's comments. We are so very
12 proud of you in New Hampshire as a UNH grad and, obviously,
13 as your stated residency of New Hampshire. I want to thank
14 your family as well, and I want to thank certainly the
15 Colonel, Colonel Howard, for his service as well as a great
16 resident of the State of New Hampshire.

17 I wanted to ask you -- in the meeting that we had in my
18 office, one of the issues we talked about with your
19 responsibility for the southern border as a Commander of
20 NORTHCOM is this idea of the tunnels. In fact, this
21 morning, as I am looking at the news, we discovered that
22 there were reports that U.S. authorities discovered a half-
23 mile tunnel under the border with Mexico into San Diego used
24 to smuggle drugs. And as we think about this heroin and
25 also fentanyl issue, which is a very deadly synthetic drug

1 that is really killing people in New Hampshire -- I got an
2 amendment in that focuses on cooperation with the Israelis
3 because they have the tunnel issue with Hamas and Hezbollah.
4 And Admiral Gortney had said that was a very helpful,
5 cooperative effort.

6 So I would like to ask you, as you go to the southern
7 border, will you look at this tunnel issue too and how we
8 can develop better technologies to ensure that we are
9 looking at not only how they are transporting the heroin and
10 fentanyl over in traditional ways but also building these
11 tunnels.

12 General Robinson: Yes, Senator, I will do that. I saw
13 the article this morning, and it did remind me of our
14 conversation and the conversation that we had about Israel
15 and the technologies that they had. And as we discussed
16 yesterday, when I understood that, it piqued my interest.
17 So two things. I will go down and look, understand the
18 tunnels, see what they look like, understand the
19 technologies that we have, and then understand the things
20 that Israel is also teaching us what they have learned.

21 Senator Ayotte: Terrific.

22 And in terms of this fentanyl issue, this is the
23 synthetic basically analgesic that is almost 50 times more
24 powerful than heroin, and it is also being manufactured in
25 Mexico. New Hampshire had last year 430 drug deaths.

1 Actually 160 of them are attributed to fentanyl. So in your
2 role in addressing not only the border, but in dealing with
3 Mexico, what I would like to also have you focus on is
4 talking to the Mexican Government, obviously, in these
5 military-to-military relationships of how we can have them
6 step up more on this interdiction issue.

7 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am. Early on, I do want to
8 meet with my military counterpart, understand what they are,
9 and also provide an assessment, as I mentioned to the
10 chairman, back to the committee and what we need to do
11 together more to support them.

12 Senator Ayotte: Terrific.

13 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am.

14 Senator Ayotte: Thank you.

15 General Scaparrotti, I want to thank you for your
16 distinguished service in Afghanistan. I would like to ask
17 you, if confirmed for this important position, one of your
18 roles not only serving as European Commander, you will also
19 serve as the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe. And
20 recently we met with the NATO Secretary-General. The
21 committee did. And one of the issues he raised is that he
22 believed that NATO countries and NATO as a whole should be
23 more involved in the train, advise, and assist mission in
24 Iraq to defeat ISIS. And so do you agree with the
25 Secretary-General that we should seek to get NATO more

1 involved in the train, advise, and assist mission?

2 Obviously, we all have a part in defeating ISIS, given
3 the threats that this group presents to not only the United
4 States of America but also Europe with the recent attacks
5 there.

6 General Scaparrotti: Senator, if confirmed, I will
7 obviously discuss that with the Secretary-General. It is a
8 matter of policy within NATO. But to give my personal
9 opinion, I think we have very strong and capable allies, and
10 the more allies that we have assisting us in Iraq and other
11 places around the globe where we have the same challenges is
12 important and we should pursue that.

13 Senator Ayotte: Terrific. Thank you.

14 And in terms of the Russian threat, one of the issues
15 -- there was a recent article I think yesterday that talked
16 about Russian attack submarines that I believe the chairman
17 briefly touched on that are prowling the coastline of
18 Scandinavia and Scotland and the Mediterranean Sea and the
19 North Atlantic. I wanted to ask you about the importance of
20 our attack submarine fleet in terms of having the capacity
21 with this Russian threat, but also, obviously, we know that
22 the Chinese are another issue in the South Pacific. But
23 yet, our requirements for attack submarines -- we are not
24 keeping up the pace of what we see the Russians doing. How
25 important of an asset is this in terms of combating the

1 Russians in what they are doing right now?

2 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I believe that it is
3 critical. We presently have dominance undersea. And I do
4 not believe we should pace it. We should maintain that
5 dominance, and it is critical to our security.

6 Senator Ayotte: Great.

7 I want to thank you both for your leadership and
8 distinguished service and especially your families as well.
9 We appreciate it.

10 Senator Cotton [presiding]: Senator Hirono?

11 Senator Hirono: Thank you very much.

12 I echo the sentiments of the members of this committee
13 in thanking you, General Scaparrotti and General Robinson,
14 for your service to our country and, of course, that of your
15 families.

16 Of course, General Robinson, it is good to see you.
17 Thank you for your years of service in Hawaii and leading
18 the Pacific air forces. Of course, we are very proud of you
19 as being one of the 100 most influential people in the
20 world.

21 General Robinson, in response to a question, you noted
22 that one of the biggest concerns that you have is with
23 homegrown violent extremists. If confirmed, what would be
24 the steps that you would take to protect our country against
25 homegrown violent extremists, which I share with you?

1 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am. One of the things that
2 is incredibly important in that is sharing of intelligence
3 across all the agencies. So it would be important to
4 understand that intelligence to share and support DHS and
5 Federal law enforcement agencies as we watch that. It is a
6 very difficult threat to find and pay attention to.

7 Senator Hirono: So any other steps that you would take
8 to --

9 General Robinson: No, ma'am. If confirmed, that would
10 be one of the things. It is one of my focus areas. As I
11 look back into the southwest border and the defense of the
12 homeland, that is one of the things that I, if confirmed,
13 will start looking, what are some other things that
14 NORTHCOM, Northern Command, can do in support of all the
15 interagency in the whole-of-government approach.

16 Senator Hirono: And I think that when you are dealing
17 in this area, the State and local law enforcement
18 communities, as well as the larger communities --

19 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am.

20 Senator Hirono: -- have to be brought in.

21 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am, and supporting them.
22 Yes, ma'am.

23 Senator Hirono: I would to continue to work with you
24 on addressing those issues.

25 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am.

1 Senator Hirono: General Scaparrotti, the capabilities
2 of the European phased adaptive approach, or EPAA, deepen
3 our missile defense partnerships and assurances with NATO.
4 What do you assess are the benefits of the EPAA, and how
5 does it project strength to our allies and, of course, our
6 strength to our adversaries?

7 General Scaparrotti: Well, Senator, we have globally
8 but particularly in Europe a serious threat from ballistic
9 missiles. The phased adaptive approach is very supportive
10 of the defense of not only our citizens and bases in Europe
11 but also of our allies and partners in Europe. I think it
12 is critical. And I think it is an important contribution
13 then to our allies' defense systems, and we should work for
14 a layered interoperable defense of Europe. And I believe it
15 is the appropriate step to get that done.

16 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

17 For General Robinson, Admiral Gortney mentioned in our
18 last NORTHCOM hearing that China is in the process of
19 operationalizing its first viable class of ballistic missile
20 submarines. And you were asked some questions relating to
21 what Russia is doing, but China is moving in this direction.
22 And he testified that, if successful, they would be China's
23 first sea-based strategic nuclear deterrent. And in
24 previous hearings, the submarine capabilities of our country
25 have been highlighted as one of our country's most valuable

1 assets.

2 What are the implications of a successful employment of
3 this class of ballistic missile submarines by China, and for
4 what you can talk about in this setting, how would this
5 affect our capabilities especially in the Asia-Pacific
6 region?

7 General Robinson: Yes, ma'am. China continues to
8 evolve their capabilities, and they continue to be able to
9 range further and further. So the more that they can range,
10 then the more that it becomes a threat to the homeland, both
11 Hawaii, Guam and then, if capable, further here to the
12 homeland.

13 Senator Hirono: Do we need more submarines?

14 General Robinson: Ma'am, they are our asymmetric
15 advantage, and they are an asymmetric advantage in the
16 Pacific as we speak.

17 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

18 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Senator Cotton: Senator Graham?

20 Senator Graham: Thank you.

21 I thank both of you.

22 General Scaparrotti, some are saying in America that we
23 need to get out of NATO or limit our participation. What is
24 your response?

25 Senator Cotton: Turn your mike on, Senator Graham.

1 Senator Graham: It is on. We must not have paid the
2 bill down here.

3 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I think you asked that
4 some have said that either we need more participation or
5 payment into NATO.

6 Senator Graham: That we need to get out of NATO, that
7 it is obsolete.

8 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I personally believe
9 that NATO is critical to our interest and our defense.

10 Senator Graham: In 30 seconds, why?

11 General Scaparrotti: Because we have very close ties.
12 They are our longest allies, and we have 50 percent of the
13 GDP that goes through there, one of our most important
14 markets.

15 Senator Graham: You agree that other countries should
16 contribute more to NATO's overall budget.

17 General Scaparrotti: Yes, I do. They should meet the
18 commitments.

19 Senator Graham: Do you believe that Russia is trying
20 to basically fracture Europe?

21 General Scaparrotti: I do.

22 Senator Graham: Do you believe that Putin would love
23 nothing more than the United States to withdraw from NATO?

24 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir.

25 Senator Graham: Do you believe that everybody in the

1 Baltics -- that it would be a very dark day for them if
2 America withdrew from NATO?

3 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir.

4 Senator Graham: So Putin would be the biggest
5 beneficiary of a breakup of NATO given the current
6 construct?

7 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir. I believe Putin is
8 deliberately trying to split the alliance.

9 Senator Graham: Do you think ISIL would benefit from
10 the breakup of NATO?

11 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir.

12 Senator Graham: Do you think the Taliban would benefit
13 from the breakup of NATO?

14 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir.

15 Senator Graham: All right.

16 If the President goes down to 5,500 U.S. forces in
17 Afghanistan, do you believe NATO countries will respond in
18 kind by reducing their commitment?

19 General Scaparrotti: Sir, I think given my experience
20 there that they most likely follow our lead.

21 Senator Graham: Have you known of one country to get
22 to our right when it comes to Afghanistan?

23 General Scaparrotti: No, sir.

24 Senator Graham: So do you agree with me that any
25 withdrawal in Afghanistan should be conditions-based?

1 General Scaparrotti: I do, sir.

2 Senator Graham: So I just want to say for the record
3 to the President, you ignored sound military advice when it
4 came to Iraq to keep a residual force. The rest is history.
5 You turned down the advice of your entire national security
6 team to help the Free Syrian Army when it would have
7 mattered in Syria. You drew a red line against Assad. You
8 did not follow up when Qaddafi was taken down by his people,
9 along with NATO's help. Please do not repeat these mistakes
10 by reducing our forces in Afghanistan because you will get
11 the same result, probably worse. That is just my editorial
12 comment.

13 In terms of budgets, if we go back into sequestration
14 mode, General, what would it mean to our presence in Europe?

15 General Scaparrotti: Sir, it would have an immediate
16 impact on the forces that we have there today, and I believe
17 it would potentially put at risk the forces that we plan to
18 rotate today to reinforce our posture. And certainly it
19 would impact the readiness of our remaining forces to come
20 to Europe if deterrence should fail.

21 Senator Graham: Would it be an encouraging sign to
22 Russia that we are less committed to Europe?

23 General Scaparrotti: It would, sir.

24 Senator Graham: General Robinson, what would
25 sequestration do to your ability to defend the Nation's

1 homeland?

2 General Robinson: Sir, it would definitely affect the
3 readiness of the force and our ability to invest in
4 capabilities to defend the homeland.

5 Senator Graham: Can you give me some examples of what
6 we would lose in terms of capabilities?

7 General Robinson: Depending upon where we are with
8 sensor development or hit-to-kill development, those would
9 be two capabilities.

10 Senator Graham: Is the threat to the homeland
11 declining or increasing?

12 General Robinson: Sir, the threat to the homeland is
13 increasing.

14 Senator Graham: Is the threat to our partners in
15 Europe and to our interests in Europe declining or
16 increasing, General Scaparrotti?

17 General Scaparrotti: It is increasing, sir.

18 Senator Graham: Can you think of a worse time for the
19 American Congress to cut the military's budget to historic
20 lows, given your time in service?

21 General Scaparrotti: No, sir. This is the most
22 challenging time I have seen, and we need to reinforce our
23 capabilities.

24 Senator Graham: Do you agree with that, General
25 Robinson?

1 General Robinson: I do, sir.

2 Senator Graham: Thank you. Thank you both for your
3 service.

4 Senator Cotton: Senator King?

5 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A meteoric
6 rise.

7 [Laughter.]

8 Senator King: I just want to associate myself with the
9 comments of Senator Graham and the chairman and several
10 others. Particularly as you go to this NATO meeting this
11 summer that is going to be so important in Europe, it would
12 be a grave mistake in my view to not maintain a level of
13 force in Afghanistan that is necessary to support the Afghan
14 security forces. And the problem is this decision has to be
15 made reasonably soon because we are not going to go from
16 9,800 to 5,500 in a couple of days at the end of the year.
17 The process has to start this summer. And I think it would
18 be a mistake, particularly given the Taliban essentially
19 served notice on us in the last few days that they do not
20 view this struggle is over by any manner or means. So I
21 hope that as you work with the NATO allies, the message will
22 come back from them and to the President that we need to
23 maintain a significant force with the authorities necessary
24 to adequately support our NATO allies and the Afghan
25 security forces.

1 Secondly, I just want to associate myself with the
2 comments that were made about the border and the drug
3 epidemic. Since this meeting started, six people have died
4 in the United States of drug overdose, just since we sat
5 down here an hour and 5 minutes ago. And that is a definite
6 threat to the homeland. We do not want to militarize the
7 border, but to the extent we can coordinate better, utilize
8 the resources that you will have, General, in your
9 capabilities to work with our civilian authorities, that is
10 I think a very high priority.

11 General Scaparrotti, one of the things that is
12 concerning me about Europe is that what we are seeing in
13 Ukraine is a new kind of hybrid war with indigenous people,
14 some Russian troops, no necessarily identifications. We are
15 not talking about armies and tanks coming across the border
16 in a conventional way. Are we developing a strategy and a
17 doctrine for dealing with what is essentially a new kind of
18 war? Because my concern is that what we are seeing is a
19 practice for something similar, for example, in the Baltics.

20 General Scaparrotti: Yes, Senator. I know just from
21 personal experience that EUCOM, SOCOM, as well as the other
22 COCOMs have gathered, and we are studying hybrid warfare.
23 It presents a problem because it is actually intended to be
24 below the level that we would normally consider conflict.
25 So it challenges the norms that we have been used to.

1 Senator King: What is an act of war?

2 General Scaparrotti: That is correct. It challenges
3 those norms, and it challenges the authorities that our
4 forces have in order to react. So we are working on how
5 best to handle this, the authorities, the doctrine that we
6 need and the capabilities in order to deal with this type of
7 conflict.

8 Senator King: Let me ask a question of both of you.
9 The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs recently mentioned that he
10 would like to see an update to Goldwater-Nichols to account
11 for the real-time need for the COCOMs to be in communication
12 with the President in the case of an emergency. We have
13 been talking a lot about Goldwater-Nichols throughout this
14 year in preparation for our National Defense Act coming up.
15 What is your thought about the relationship of the COCOMs to
16 the chain of command, to the presidency? What do you see,
17 either or both of you, as potential improvements to the
18 Goldwater-Nichols organizational structure? General? I
19 guess "General" applies to both of you. General
20 Scaparrotti.

21 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I would like to first
22 say that Goldwater-Nichols has produced the officer that I
23 am today and the magnificent military that we have today as
24 well that works well as a joint force and is very capable.
25 However, I do believe, given the change in our strategic

1 environment, particularly in the last 3 or 4 years, that it
2 is time to do a review.

3 With reference to your specific question, I do not know
4 that there is a need for the change. I report to the
5 Secretary of Defense and, if confirmed, I will report to the
6 Secretary of Defense and the President.

7 But I think what we need in this environment is we also
8 -- and I think what General Dunford was suggesting is we
9 need the ability to have agility in our decision-making and
10 the deployment of assets. Very few of these challenges
11 today are limited to one COCOM. They are multi-regional,
12 multi-functional, multi-domain, and they challenge your
13 structure that we have today and our ability to be as agile
14 as our challenges are and our adversaries are.

15 Senator King: So we have to be sure that our
16 organizational structure allows that agility.

17 General Scaparrotti: And the authorities as well.

18 Senator King: General Robinson, your comment?

19 General Robinson: Sir, I agree with General
20 Scaparrotti 100 percent. It is a great time to look at it.
21 The act is 30 years old and the strategic landscape has
22 changed. And the most important part out of all of this is
23 the agility and the ability to work with each other.

24 Senator King: My time is up, but I hope you will
25 supply your thoughts perhaps in writing after the hearing

1 because this is a topic of very active consideration by the
2 committee, and having people of your experience and wisdom
3 would be very helpful to us. Thank you.

4 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Chairman McCain [presiding]: Senator Inhofe?

6 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 The questions I was going to ask were pretty much asked
8 by Senator Graham. And I would just ask you, General
9 Scaparrotti, in your memory, in your history, in your
10 service, have you ever seen a time when this country is more
11 threatened than they are today.

12 General Scaparrotti: No, sir, I have not.

13 Senator Inhofe: General Robinson, first of all, all
14 you have to do is repeat the performance that you gave us in
15 Tinker, and you are going to do a great job in this new
16 position.

17 I want to mention a few things here just to make sure
18 since I was not here until just now in this committee. I
19 was at another committee -- to make sure they are in the
20 record.

21 First of all, due to the proliferation of technology,
22 the number of countries possessing a ballistic missile
23 capability continues to increase with the weapons becoming
24 more complex with countermeasures, greater range and
25 accuracy. General Mann testified last week, quote, nearly

1 30 countries possess ballistic missile capability with
2 approximately 50 different variants of ballistic missiles
3 and currently 13 new intermediate range and 8
4 intercontinental ballistic missile ranges variants under
5 development.

6 Since signing the Iran deal, which was a disaster, Iran
7 has conducted at least three sets of tests of nuclear
8 capability ballistic missiles. The latest test had, quote,
9 Israel should be wiped off the earth, unquote, inscribed and
10 had a range of up to 1,250 miles. General Votel, CENTCOM
11 Commander, testified last month that Iran has been more
12 aggressive since the nuclear deal. I think we all
13 understand that.

14 On 9 February, James Clapper assessed, quote, that
15 North Korea has already taken initial steps toward fielding
16 the KN08 road-mobile ICBM.

17 Let me ask you, General Robinson. We talked about this
18 before. Number one, do you think there should be a
19 restructuring? Because there is some confusion as to who is
20 in charge of homeland security. Do you think some changes
21 should be made?

22 General Robinson: Sir, I know if confirmed as the
23 Commander of NORTHCOM, that I work closely with the
24 interagency, the Department of Homeland Security. If
25 confirmed, that would be something --

1 Senator Inhofe: So you would be in constant contact
2 with them.

3 General Robinson: Yes, sir. There is a constant
4 coordination.

5 Senator Inhofe: In light of everything that I just
6 said about the threat that is out there and then the comment
7 by General Scaparrotti, are you confident in the
8 intelligence that we are getting on North Korea's and Iran's
9 ballistic missile capability?

10 General Robinson: Sir, given my recent experience and
11 time that I have spent in the Pacific and focus on North
12 Korea, I am confident and comfortable with the intelligence
13 that we are getting. Sir, I would have to come back to you
14 about Iran, because I have not been focused there, to give
15 you an accurate answer, if confirmed.

16 Senator Inhofe: Yes. Well, I have never been all that
17 confident. It is kind of a scary thing when we know all
18 these things that I mentioned, the statements I made. That
19 is reality. That is today.

20 General Scaparrotti, let me ask you a question. I have
21 been concerned for some time about the capabilities. A lot
22 of our friends who historically always have been at our side
23 are now kind of in a position with Russia due to the fact
24 that they control the -- Russia and Iran, between the two of
25 them, control the capabilities, the energy capabilities,

1 that we have in this country. Now we have passed lifting
2 the ban. Unfortunately, the ban was lifted at a time when
3 the price of natural gas was down so low it did not have the
4 results that we anticipated and we hoped would be there.

5 But what is your thinking right now about the
6 capability that we are going to have? How is lifting this
7 ban going to help us in some of these areas that would like
8 to be working with us as opposed to Russia?

9 General Scaparrotti: Well, Senator, I think we have
10 talked about the hybrid warfare that Russia practices. They
11 use all the instruments of power to influence our allies and
12 particularly the use of energy. And it is to our benefit, I
13 believe, to assist our allies in any way that we can to
14 relieve them of that dependence as much as possible on
15 Russia and that ability of Russia to use that as a form of
16 coercion.

17 Senator Inhofe: And do you believe that we should do
18 everything we can -- I think you just said this in a
19 different way to sum that up -- to correct the situation to
20 be able to allow them to get their energy from us, that this
21 is a great national security benefit we would have when that
22 happens?

23 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I have not delved into
24 this as a policy issue, but to me it is reasonable that if
25 we could provide energy to them, it would both assist them

1 and us in our security.

2 Senator Inhofe: I appreciate it.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Chairman McCain: Senator Kaine?

5 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6 And thanks to the witnesses. Many of my questions have
7 been answered, but sort of one topic for each of you.

8 General Scaparrotti, Senator Ernst asked you a question
9 about Turkey and border control. I kind of want to get into
10 a little bit of a different question. They are an important
11 NATO ally, but I would like you to talk about the
12 complexities of dealing with Turkey, given the internal
13 politics of Turkey, especially concerns about the Kurds.
14 The Kurds have been wonderful partners for the U.S. in the
15 anti-ISIL mission in Iraq, obviously, and Kurdistan in Iraq
16 has traditionally had a pretty good relationship with
17 Turkey.

18 But we have also found strong partners in the Kurds in
19 northern Syria, and that has created significant tensions
20 with Turkey. We cannot abandon a strong anti-ISIL partner
21 that has been very, very valiant as the Kurds in northern
22 Syria have been, but by the same token, we need to manage
23 the relationship with Turkey so that they will step up on
24 border control and help us in the anti-ISIL fight.

25 How do you see your role in EUCOM in trying to work

1 with the Turkish relationship so that we can keep up the
2 anti-ISIL fight, keep our partnership with the Kurds alive,
3 and yet manage that important relationship with our NATO
4 ally?

5 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I think you outlined the
6 challenges there very well. They are a very important ally.
7 If confirmed, obviously, I will build a close relationship
8 with their military leadership and with -- my intent --
9 their civilian leadership as well.

10 Thank you look at counterterrorism and they look at the
11 PKKs of the threat. When we talk counterterrorism,
12 primarily we think about ISIL. So it is those dynamics that
13 both of us have to realize our interests and find areas that
14 commonly we can work together. And I think in Turkey's
15 case, there are areas where we can support them and
16 encourage them to help us in the overall effort within the
17 southeast flank of NATO.

18 Senator Kaine: General Robinson, you talked about the
19 agility and the ability to work together in response to
20 Senator King's question on Goldwater-Nichols. I am really
21 interested in the seam between NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM. We
22 talked about this a little bit in some of the other
23 questions about drug trafficking, et cetera. There is some
24 of that that originates in Mexico, but much of it originates
25 in South America, transits through the Northern Triangle

1 countries and through Mexico. And whether it is drug
2 trafficking or human trafficking or the migrant flows that
3 are driven by violence in Central America, that border
4 between Mexico and the countries to the south is really
5 important. Talk a little bit about the kind of working
6 relationship that you would hope to form with Admiral Tidd
7 on that border between NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM.

8 General Robinson: Sir, that is an incredibly important
9 border. The more that we can push everything down towards
10 that border, Guatemala and Belize, the less the people will
11 migrate across our southern border between us and Mexico.

12 Kurt Tidd and I are very good friends, and if
13 confirmed, I know that he and I will dialogue on a very
14 regular basis to work together to ensure that seam is as
15 seamless as possible. It is incredibly important that we do
16 that and that we work together to support the Mexican
17 military in their efforts with that southern border.

18 Senator Kaine: Thank you very much.

19 Thanks, Mr. Chair.

20 Chairman McCain: Senator Tillis?

21 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22 This has been a great confirmation hearing, and I
23 appreciate both of you all's service.

24 General Robinson, your service of 34 years. I know you
25 are a resident of New Hampshire. I am not rushing you to

1 retire, but when you do, I hope you will consider North
2 Carolina at least as winter home. I lived in New Hampshire.
3 I guarantee you the winters are better.

4 But one quick question for you. I sometimes think that
5 we lose sight of the fact of the number of victims that have
6 been victims of narcoterrorism. So we are talking about the
7 opioid epidemic today, but we have to recognize that
8 hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives
9 because of the activities that are flowing between SOUTHCOM
10 and NORTHCOM. So I am not going to go back and cover the
11 landscape again except to say it would be very helpful for
12 us to shed light on it.

13 If you were to equate this to what we are dealing with
14 in the Middle East, we have a lot of specific targets that
15 we could go after that we simply do not have the resources
16 to go after. We know a lot of times where they are
17 starting, where they are ending, and we simply do not have
18 the resources to interdict as many as we could.

19 First, do you agree with that? And what kinds of
20 things can we do to really step up our game there, not at
21 the expense of other important priorities? But this is a
22 critical priority. It is killing more Americans than just
23 about any other terrorist activity going on today.

24 General Robinson: Sir, if confirmed, I think it is
25 incredibly important for me to understand the border. I

1 think it is incredibly important for me to walk the
2 landscape. And also, if confirmed, very early on too, as I
3 work that, is to work with the agencies and interagency to
4 understand the problems that you were just talking about. I
5 know interdiction is important, and I know getting after the
6 networks is important. And so where is the interagency?
7 Where is DHS? Where are law enforcement agencies trying to
8 get after that? For me to understand that, and then if
9 confirmed, to be able to support their activities.

10 Senator Tillis: That is great. And within an area of
11 your purview, I am glad that you recognize that working with
12 the Mexican military and recognizing that much of the
13 pressure on the northern border of Mexico can be relieved by
14 taking care of the challenge on the southern border of
15 Mexico. And that can only come with good partner
16 cooperation. So I appreciate your commitment to looking at
17 that. To me it is one of the most pressing things we need
18 to do in this hemisphere.

19 General Scaparrotti, you mentioned earlier about
20 stepping up our partner relationships with Europe. Can you
21 give me just a brief synopsis of the state of our
22 partnerships in terms of our mil-to-mil relationship, in
23 terms of their countries' specific efforts to budget and
24 fund the things that we need to do to make it very clear to
25 Russia this will not end well if they continue their

1 aggression?

2 And then thirdly, just the general messaging within the
3 region. Are the words that the countries are conveying to
4 their people and to the region consistent with what you
5 think our objectives should be in that area?

6 General Scaparrotti: Well, Senator, first with respect
7 to our partnerships, we have got very strong allies in
8 Europe. I have served with many of them. And as you know,
9 they provided about a third of the force in Afghanistan and
10 suffered 1,000 casualties right alongside of us. So I think
11 that is an indication of just how good they can be and what
12 we share.

13 I do believe that as a part of the alliance and as
14 partners, we should meet our commitments and provide our
15 fair share of the defense because we are strong --

16 Senator Tillis: Do you feel like we have work to do
17 there?

18 General Scaparrotti: We do have work to do there. As
19 I understand it, out of the alliance of 28, there are five
20 that have 2 percent or more of their GDP, and there are nine
21 that have increased their spending. As you know from the
22 Wales summit and looking forward to the Warsaw summit, that
23 commitment is one of the things that we are focused on.

24 In terms of the communication, I feel confident to say
25 that those that are on the eastern flank are communicating

1 very seriously about the need for strength in defense in
2 light of Russia.

3 Senator Tillis: Probably because of the imminent
4 threat.

5 General Scaparrotti: Because of the proximity. I
6 think that is true with the remainder of our allies as well.
7 However, to the south, you have got a different but just as
8 important a threat. And I think one of the important
9 things, if confirmed, that I need to do is to recognize all
10 of our threats and help our allies to be unified.

11 Senator Tillis: Thank you.

12 In closing, I want to associate myself with Senator
13 Graham's comments and also just make the point, because
14 people watch these hearings and take a lot from them, I do
15 not think that there is any serious discussion among any
16 Member of Congress that would suggest that anyone thinks
17 that withdrawal from NATO makes sense. And the rhetoric in
18 the political circles now should not be confused with
19 anything that we would seriously consider. I find that
20 unimaginable.

21 Thank you all. I look forward to supporting your
22 confirmation.

23 Chairman McCain: Mr. Stoltenberg, the NATO Secretary,
24 pointed out to us in a meeting that 9/11 was an attack on
25 the United States of America, not a European country. And

1 they joined and over 1,000 of the young men and women that
2 have come from those countries have been killed in action.
3 When we talk about how much money that they have not spent
4 and we should keep the pressure on, I do not think we should
5 forget that over 1,000 of their young -- I think all young
6 men -- have given their lives because of an action that was
7 taken against the United States of America.

8 Senator Manchin?

9 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10 And thank both of you for your service and for being
11 here today.

12 I want to follow up, General Scaparrotti, on Senator
13 Kaine because I have been concerned also with the Kurds, our
14 support of the Kurds. I know the Iraqi Kurds and now the
15 northern Syrian Kurds seem to be valiant fighters. We do
16 not seem to be second guessing are they going to turn on us,
17 use our weapons, give our weapons to somebody else. We have
18 not had that concern. That is the only group that I know
19 that we have not had that concern with.

20 But with the concern that we have of the Turks, how
21 they are looking at our relationship, are we not giving the
22 support to the Kurds that we could even more? And basically
23 do the Iraqi Kurds -- are they still satisfied with a one-
24 state solution and having everything come through Baghdad,
25 or are they still what we understood very frustrated with

1 that?

2 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I do not know the answer
3 to that particular part of your question, the last part
4 about their satisfaction. If I could take that for the
5 record --

6 Senator Manchin: If you could take that for the record
7 just to find out where we stand there.

8 [The information follows:]

9 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Manchin: I mean, they have been very
2 cooperative. You can only take so much. If they are not
3 getting the support and basically if they rely on the
4 dysfunction of Baghdad right now getting the goods that they
5 need and the arms that they need to help us defend the
6 terrorists, I think it would be a shame not for us to make
7 sure they get it directly.

8 General Scaparrotti: To the first part of your
9 question, I agree. They have been a reliant and probably
10 one of the best combatants that we have allied with in our
11 fight in ISIL and in Syria. And if confirmed, I will work
12 closely with the combatant command, CENTCOM, and SOCOM in
13 support of that.

14 Senator Manchin: General Robinson, I was recently --
15 well, a year ago -- down in Argentina. And at that time, I
16 think the president was Cristina Kirchner, and she has been
17 replaced now by President Mauricio Macri, who I understand
18 is more pro-Western, pro-U.S. than she. And we were having
19 trouble with a lot of meth, a lot of drugs coming from
20 Argentina. Our officials were complaining that they got no
21 cooperation. Do you know, has that been strengthened? Has
22 new President Macri made a commitment to help us fight this
23 drug trade?

24 General Robinson: Sir, I do not know the answer to
25 that question right at the moment. But what I will commit

1 to you is my relationship with Kurt Tidd, as we work
2 together from SOUTHCOM and NORTHCOM, if confirmed, to watch
3 that and again to push things down as far as we can on the
4 southern border with Mexico.

5 Senator Manchin: You cannot go any further south than
6 Argentina.

7 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

8 Senator Manchin: If you can get that information, it
9 would be very helpful because our people were very
10 frustrated, were getting no help at all, and they were just
11 letting it come through.

12 General Robinson: Yes, sir.

13 Senator Manchin: General Scaparrotti, Senator Kaine
14 had asked you about NATO. I think the frustration -- I
15 think all of us agree that NATO -- we should all be a part
16 of NATO. The bottom line in frustration is that we know the
17 sacrifices they have made and they have come to the aid in
18 defending the United States, but they still have not made a
19 commitment of the 2 percent of their GDP. But there is no
20 quid pro quo. There is no penalty for that. Do you believe
21 that there is a way that we can hold them more accountable
22 if they are not coming up to the 2 percent?

23 General Scaparrotti: Well, sir, I think that is a
24 question for the alliance and North Atlantic Council to
25 wrestle with. Obviously, if confirmed, I will have the

1 ability to give best military advice to the Secretary-
2 General and the Council. As I have said, I do believe that
3 within the alliance, the commitments that we make are very
4 important for the strength of the alliance.

5 Senator Manchin: General Robinson, on the ballistic
6 missile defense, most importantly with Canada, I understand
7 they are going to engage again being involved in the missile
8 defense.

9 General Robinson: Sir, from what I read, they are in
10 the process of talking about what they are going to do with
11 that. If confirmed, early on I will engage with my Canadian
12 counterparts and my Canadian chain of command and see where
13 they are going.

14 Senator Manchin: If they do join our efforts, would
15 that reduce our missile defense responsibilities to the
16 north or would they only be reinforcing our current
17 defenses? How would that play towards what we are doing
18 right now?

19 General Robinson: Sir, I do not have that right now,
20 but if confirmed, that is something I will look into early
21 on.

22 Senator Manchin: I had one more I think real quick.
23 Russia, the whole thing. I think Senator Donnelly talked to
24 you about the Russia flyover. Were we in the right to shoot
25 down, if we desired to do so, with their aggression?

1 General Scaparrotti: Sir, not knowing the complete
2 circumstances, I really cannot answer that this morning.

3 Senator Manchin: So as far as the justification that
4 we could have taken -- I know Turkey has taken action on
5 Russia before, and I think Russia understands that Turkey
6 will continue to take action. But I think there is a
7 concern that we will not, and they were wanting to see how
8 far we would go. I am not advocating that we should have
9 shot the plane down, but I understood that Secretary Kerry
10 described it as a reckless, provocative, and dangerous act.
11 And he was not wrong in saying the U.S. ship would have been
12 justified to shoot down the Russian plane.

13 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir. I just do not have the
14 detailed information to make that call. But I would say
15 that it is absolutely reckless. It is unjustified, and it
16 is very dangerous when you have got our operations going on
17 as well as --

18 Senator Manchin: Was Russia basically just pushing the
19 envelope and the limits of confrontation to test the Western
20 resolve or the United States' resolve?

21 General Scaparrotti: I think they are pushing the
22 envelope in terms of our resolve. They are pushing the
23 envelope in terms of international norms and international
24 law purposely.

25 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan?

2 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Let me follow up on that line of questioning. General
4 Scaparrotti, do you think that we need to establish,
5 announce, and implement more robust ROEs particularly with
6 regard to our Navy? This is not the first time that it
7 seems that ROEs were very weak. Obviously, we had Navy
8 sailors taken hostage by Iran in the Gulf. What do we need
9 to do here to bolster this and send a message that we are
10 going to act more forcefully?

11 General Scaparrotti: Well, sir -- and I am not sure
12 the ROE that our forces are operating under at this present
13 time, I mean, the exact rules of engagement. But if you
14 look at our rules of engagement generally, Joint Staff rules
15 of engagement, they always have the right of self-defense
16 and to act in self-defense. So I am confident that they
17 knew that, and if it was a security concern, then our
18 commanders know they have that right and they can take that
19 step.

20 I think more what I would say to you is they have to
21 have the guidance of the chain of command in order to
22 understand and fully have confidence that they can take
23 steps in specific scenarios.

24 Senator Sullivan: Well, if confirmed, will you take a
25 look at that issue, the issue of our ROEs that are leading

1 to some of these kind of aggressive behaviors both in the
2 Baltic Sea and the Gulf?

3 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir.

4 Senator Sullivan: Let me turn to another area. Both
5 of you have enormous areas of responsibility in terms of
6 geographic scope. One place where you actually overlap is
7 the Arctic. And as you know, we have had discussions of the
8 much more growing strategic importance in terms of shipping
9 lanes, in terms of resources, and in terms of Russian
10 military buildup, SNAP exercises that we saw tens of
11 thousands of Russian forces twice last year.

12 One of the concerns I have -- and I just passed out
13 something -- it is reflected in the chart -- is in order to
14 address some of these challenges, we have COCOM operational
15 seams in the Arctic where NORTHCOM is the advocate for the
16 Arctic area. EUCOM contains the main threat to the Arctic
17 region, and PACOM controls most of the forces.

18 So I would like to ask just one hypothetical. You
19 know, we talk a lot about FONOPs. Hypothetically if Russia
20 decided to deny access to vital U.S. international shipping
21 in the Arctic region, which is growing tremendously, which
22 combatant commander would respond to that threat?

23 General Scaparrotti: Well, sir, this gets at the issue
24 that we talked about earlier about most of our threats today
25 cross the boundaries of COCOMs. If it were in USEUCOM's

1 area, I would take the lead and the others would probably or
2 primarily be in support of that.

3 Senator Sullivan: What if it were shipping like right
4 there in the Bering Strait, which is very close to your area
5 but not really in your area? It is kind of in your area,
6 General Robinson, but not really. This goes to the seams
7 issues.

8 In the NDAA last year, we actually had an amendment
9 that addressed this and had the Secretary of Defense to
10 focus on the operational seams with regard to putting
11 together an Arctic strategy.

12 If confirmed, working with Admiral Harris in PACOM,
13 will you focus on trying to address this COCOM operational
14 seam that certainly can be worked through but seems to be a
15 challenge?

16 General Robinson: Sir, if confirmed, I commit to you
17 that I will focus on the Arctic. It is a complex place and
18 it is becoming much more congested. And I will focus on
19 understanding comprehensively what that is, along with
20 Admiral Harris, and come back to you and talk about what
21 should we do.

22 Senator Sullivan: General Scaparrotti?

23 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir, I agree. I will.

24 Senator Sullivan: And in the NDAA last year, it
25 focused on the Secretary of Defense, because of these issues

1 and the growing threat, being required to develop an Arctic
2 strategy and new operational plans that reflect the new
3 situation in the Arctic. If confirmed, will you work with
4 OSD to make sure that those requirements from the Congress
5 are fulfilled?

6 General Robinson: Yes, sir. I commit to you to come
7 back and talk to you what I learn.

8 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir, I will.

9 Senator Sullivan: Let me talk just very quickly on the
10 European Reassurance Initiative. You know, General
11 Scaparrotti, we have talked about that. I think a lot of us
12 are very supportive of that. A lot of the focus, as you
13 have mentioned, is in the east. Given what we have just
14 talked about here, do you believe that that ERI should have
15 a focus that is not just east but certainly in the north
16 where some of our allies and friends have very significant
17 concerns about Russian threats and aggression?

18 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir. I think that ERI needs
19 to look at the entire threat, as well as it needs to be
20 joint in nature. There are other areas that we need to look
21 at that, if confirmed, I will look at as I move forward.

22 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Chairman McCain: Senator Cotton?

25 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

1 Congratulations to you both on your nominations and,
2 General Robinson, to your landmark nomination. I hope that
3 we will see speedy confirmation of you both.

4 General Scaparrotti, I want to return to a question
5 that a few of the Senators have addressed about Russian
6 aircraft flying by first one of our ships and then one of
7 our aircraft in northern Europe. I know that you are not
8 aware of all the circumstances to specify a response, but
9 does activity like that call for some kind of a response?

10 General Scaparrotti: Yes, sir, it does. It endangers
11 our crew members, our ships, and does require a response of
12 some type.

13 Senator Cotton: Is that because with no response, it
14 emboldens Putin's Russia to probe even further?

15 General Scaparrotti: I think they need to understand
16 what is acceptable. We are flying and sailing in
17 international waters in the Baltic, for instance, and we
18 have every right to do so.

19 Senator Cotton: Need that response be symmetrical?
20 Must we fly by one of their ships or one of their aircraft,
21 or could it be asymmetrical, for instance, Javelins showing
22 up on the border of Ukraine and Russia?

23 General Scaparrotti: I would just say that as we look
24 at what options, we should keep everything on the table.

25 Senator Cotton: Whatever the response may be, even if

1 it is not a public response, Vladimir Putin needs to
2 understand it is a response.

3 General Scaparrotti: Yes.

4 Senator Cotton: I want to turn to a topic we have
5 discussed previously in your current role in Korea, cluster
6 munitions and the coming ban on cluster munitions that have
7 a dud rate below 1 percent.

8 What is your understanding of how many cluster
9 munitions in the inventory today fail to comply with that
10 Gates policy?

11 General Scaparrotti: Sir, I could not answer that
12 accurately. I would just tell you my experience with the
13 munitions that I have in Korea that I would lose just about
14 all of my cluster munitions for use that I have stockpiled
15 today.

16 Senator Cotton: What is the Department of Defense's
17 current policy or plan to address this problem?

18 General Scaparrotti: Today there are studies ongoing,
19 and some assets available that in the future with programs
20 of purchase that could begin to replace those. Some of
21 those munitions do not have the same lethality as those that
22 we have today, particularly against armor. And presently
23 for those that are not envisioned but are actually munitions
24 we know we could build, we do not have that replaces them in
25 the numbers that we need. And I would say that is true in

1 Korea because I am very aware of what our requirements are.

2 Senator Cotton: Is one of those possible solutions
3 air-bursting traditional so-called dumb bombs and using them
4 against targets?

5 General Scaparrotti: That is an option.

6 Senator Cotton: Would that be an option that lacks the
7 kind of lethality against armor and artillery to which
8 you --

9 General Scaparrotti: If you were to use unitary
10 munitions to replace a cluster munition, you have to fire
11 three to five munitions in place of one. And so just
12 logistically it creates a problem as well. We need to
13 develop effective cluster munitions that meet the law, and
14 my recommendation would be that in the interim we retain the
15 cluster munitions that we have today.

16 Senator Cotton: Are you aware of any U.S.-produced
17 solution to this problem?

18 General Scaparrotti: I would like to take that for the
19 record. I am aware of some solutions we are working. When
20 you say it is U.S.-produced, I am not exactly sure who is
21 working on those products I am aware of, and it is probably
22 best I take that so I can also answer it in a classified
23 form as well.

24 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

25 This obviously of most famous concern on the border

1 between North Korea and South Korea given Russia's recent
2 probing throughout eastern Europe and the Middle East, how
3 important is this issue for you in the new job after
4 confirmation?

5 General Scaparrotti: It is very important. I would
6 point out that Russia has used cluster munitions in the
7 Ukraine themselves with great effect.

8 Senator Cotton: I thought so.

9 Vladimir Putin and many other analysts in Russia often
10 cite historical grievances for their activity in places like
11 the Ukraine and to bolster themselves domestically. They
12 cite three grievances in particular: the collapse of the
13 Warsaw Pact, the collapse and disintegration of the Soviet
14 Union, and then NATO expansion into those historically
15 Russian dominated territories. Do you think that that is a
16 fair account for what has happened in the post-Cold War era?

17 General Scaparrotti: Well, sir, if I am following you,
18 I would just say I think it is clear that Putin I believe --
19 I cannot say it is clear. I believe that Putin's view is
20 that Russia is being constrained by the international norms,
21 international norms established by the West and
22 predominantly the U.S. And it is from that view that he has
23 I think set out deliberately to challenge those norms, to
24 disrupt our international order globally wherever he has
25 that opportunity.

1 Senator Cotton: And given that countries like Poland
2 and Latvia and Lithuania and Estonia have all chosen freely
3 to join NATO, do you think there is any truth to his claims
4 that these are lands that are traditionally oriented towards
5 the east?

6 General Scaparrotti: Well, he certainly claims that,
7 but as you know, we believe and many of these countries
8 desire to be a sovereign nation and make their own choice as
9 to the type of government they have. And that is what we
10 have traditionally supported as a part of our values and we
11 are in support of today.

12 Senator Cotton: And the final claim he makes about
13 NATO expansion is that this is an aggressive action towards
14 Russia and could threaten their territorial integrity and
15 sovereignty. Has NATO been investing lately in large-scale
16 rearmaments of the kind that would launch a massive land
17 invasion of Russia?

18 General Scaparrotti: No, sir. As you know, NATO, for
19 nearly 20 years, reached out to Russia with the idea that
20 they could become a part of the security that NATO provides
21 to all of Europe as a partner, and they have refused that
22 hand at this point.

23 Senator Cotton: And to look at his claim from the
24 other direction, has Russia been investing in massive
25 defensive buildup, say, building tank ditches on its border

1 with NATO or moving in other kinds of massive defensive
2 weaponry to forestall this supposed NATO invasion of Russia?

3 General Scaparrotti: Their modernization of their
4 forces is significant. It is developing an incredible
5 capability that we have seen them display with their first
6 out-of-area deployment into Syria, for instance, and the
7 weapon systems they deployed there. And then finally, if
8 you look at the area access or denial -- those areas are
9 A2AD that they have established -- I think there is ample
10 evidence of that.

11 Senator Cotton: I think based on the historical
12 record, as well as their own investments, it suggests to me
13 that Vladimir Putin's narrative about the West is maybe
14 another classic Russian campaign of dezinformatsiya. Thank
15 you.

16 Chairman McCain: General Breedlove said that he
17 anticipated further Russian military activity -- separatist
18 Russian military activity in Ukraine. Do you agree with
19 that assessment?

20 General Scaparrotti: Sir, the indications that I have
21 seen, I believe that is true.

22 Chairman McCain: So do you believe that we should be
23 providing defensive weapons to Ukraine?

24 General Scaparrotti: Sir, I believe that we should
25 provide the weaponry that we believe they need to defend

1 their sovereignty and that they are capable of using
2 effectively.

3 Chairman McCain: Do you think they need and could use
4 Javelin?

5 General Scaparrotti: Sir, I think there is a
6 requirement for an anti-tank weapon like Javelin in their
7 situation.

8 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

9 General, I hope that you will give some urgency to the
10 issue that you and I discussed earlier and that is
11 concerning the troop strength numbers. All these things
12 take planning. They take execution, and now we are looking
13 at a couple of months from now. So I hope you will make
14 that a very high priority.

15 General Robinson, I am glad you are going to go down to
16 the border. You will find that this time of year it starts
17 getting very warm there. And you will also find that it is
18 very hard on the personnel sometimes to sit in a vehicle on
19 the border next to a fence in 115 degree heat, that
20 efficiency declines rather rapidly. And that is hwy we have
21 to emphasize technology. I hope at your first opportunity,
22 you will go see Secretary Johnson so that we can better
23 coordinate our activities on the border with Secretary
24 Johnson.

25 The answer to this both whether it be the epidemic of

1 manufactured heroin or whether it be people or whether it be
2 the possibility of a terrorist, which increases coming
3 across our southern border, can only be defeated by
4 technology. We need to have the ability to detect those
5 tunnels. The Israelis I understand have that capability and
6 the capability exists. We are not going to stop the tunnels
7 -- and they are myriad, believe me, over the years -- just
8 by observing. We have to have the kind of technology which
9 exists.

10 I also believe that it is very important that we
11 understand that a lot of this manufactured heroin is coming
12 across our ports of entry, not necessarily by the
13 traditional ways because small amounts can be concealed.
14 And again, that is technology.

15 So with the rise of ISIS, we have an additional now
16 threat on our southern border and that is the threat of
17 terrorists coming across. And so your involvement, with
18 full respect to posse comitatus, is dramatically increased.
19 So I hope you will understand here. We have the threat of
20 terrorism and we also have a flood of manufactured heroin
21 and we also have a flood of children who come from the three
22 Central American countries and also put enormous strains on
23 our capabilities on the border.

24 One program, amongst others, I hope you will look at is
25 that Guard units from States all over America have come to

1 Arizona to train unarmed but providing manpower and
2 capabilities that are much needed.

3 So I would say, obviously, you need to go to the
4 border, but I would like to see close coordination between
5 you and the Secretary of Homeland Security so that we can
6 use the best talents that we have. Have no doubt that this
7 is a crisis in the Northeast and the Midwest, the drugs
8 alone, not to mention the threat of terrorists coming across
9 our border. If those threats are true -- and I believe they
10 are -- then your involvement is greater than it has been in
11 the past.

12 Senator King, did you want to -- Senator Blumenthal?

13 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you, Senator McCain.

14 I want to emphasize how important Senator McCain's
15 comments are to all of us who are engaged actively in our
16 States in this war against an epidemic. It is a public
17 health hurricane that is sweeping our country and affecting
18 the quality of people who are available to you, our
19 military, doing your job very actively and responsibly in
20 recruiting new men and women to join your forces. This
21 public health hurricane is undermining the recruiting effort
22 insofar as it diminishes the quality of people who are
23 available to fight in our military, tearing apart families,
24 causing heartbreak and heartache. I think you used that
25 word, General Robinson.

1 I released last week a call to action with 23 specific
2 recommendations focusing on health care, on law enforcement,
3 on over-prescribing of pain killers on a variety of areas
4 where I think the Nation needs to do more and do it better.
5 And in my public comments, I have talked about the
6 interdiction challenge, and it is not within the ability of
7 States to do but it has to be part of our national mission
8 every bit as vital to our national defense as any of the
9 other missions that you have.

10 So I just want to second what my colleagues have said.
11 I am not the first, but I want to emphasize the point that
12 Senator McCain has just made so eloquently.

13 I want to go to another topic that you have also been
14 asked about, General Scaparrotti. I am very concerned about
15 our submarine undersea warfare capability force. I know you
16 are very much aware of it. You have been asked about it.
17 The continued building of our Virginia class at the rate of
18 two a year at some point will collide financially with the
19 Ohio replacement program. In my view, we need to continue
20 building those two Virginia class submarines every year.
21 The "New York Times" story that has been mentioned to you in
22 the course of this morning is only the latest evidence of
23 the increased emphasis of our adversaries on undersea
24 warfare capability, not just the Russians but the Chinese.
25 I think in the course of that article, one of the comments

1 from one of our military leaders was that we are back to, in
2 a sense, the Cold War competition undersea.

3 I would like to know your views -- and General
4 Robinson, if you want to comment, you are welcome to -- on
5 whether this program continuing our building of two Virginia
6 class submarines every year with the Ohio replacement are
7 important, in fact, vital to our national defense.

8 General Scaparrotti: Yes, Senator. I defer the
9 numbers, et cetera to the services responsible for that, but
10 I can say personally that I think that we have dominance
11 undersea today, that it is our asymmetric advantage, and
12 that it is very important that we continue to maintain that
13 advantage, particularly in light of the challenges you
14 noted. And I think that both of those improvements to our
15 submarine classes are necessary.

16 General Robinson: Sir, I would just echo what General
17 Scaparrotti said.

18 Senator Blumenthal: I have heard it said from that
19 very place from others, General Robinson, and I know that
20 you share the view strongly that we should have an
21 asymmetric superiority in this area. But I think the
22 specifics are very important. It is not enough to just
23 generalize about it. And I hope that when you say you will
24 defer, you bring, both of you, a lifelong expertise and
25 experience to these views that I think are very, very

1 important for our civilian leaders.

2 General Robinson: Sir, I probably misspoke and said I
3 agree with what General Scaparrotti said. I apologize if I
4 said I defer.

5 Senator Blumenthal: No. I think he said he deferred.

6 And I guess what I am asking, very bluntly, is that you
7 not defer. And I know that is also more easily said than
8 done, but I have such respect for both of your views that I
9 hope our civilian leaders hear them and I hope that you will
10 emphasize that this asymmetric advantage in undersea warfare
11 is vital to our future. So I think I have talked enough and
12 I defer to you, General Robinson and General Scaparrotti.

13 General Scaparrotti: Sir, if I could be clear, what I
14 meant by that was it is a really service decision, but I
15 assure you that, if confirmed, I will be clear in my advice
16 and needs to the CNO with respect to those programs,
17 particularly after I have a close look, if confirmed as the
18 EUCOM Commander of my needs there.

19 Senator Blumenthal: I appreciate your views, and thank
20 you very much. Thank you for your service to our Nation.

21 Chairman McCain: Senator King?

22 Senator King: Very briefly, General Scaparrotti,
23 talking about the undersea capability and the increase in
24 Russian submarine activity. I was in Iceland last fall and
25 was really struck by what a strategic place. It is one of

1 the most strategic places on earth. Keflavik -- as you
2 know, we are now putting P-8's back in there. I hope that
3 that might be an area that you will be in active
4 consideration of further reinvigoration of that capability,
5 subject, of course, to working with the people of Iceland.
6 But it sits right astride the Greenland-Iceland-U.K. gap,
7 and it is, as I say, I cannot imagine a more strategic
8 place. I hope we can focus some attention there. The
9 facility is amazing, and I think it would be one that we
10 would do well to do some concentrating on.

11 General Scaparrotti: Senator, I agree with your
12 concern and I agree with the importance of the location and
13 our capabilities in that gap that you described.

14 Senator King: Mr. Chairman?

15 Chairman McCain: Well, I thank the witnesses for your
16 service to the Nation, and we look forward to moving your
17 nominations through the United States Senate.

18 This hearing is adjourned.

19 [Whereupon, at 11:31 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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