

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF GENERAL
DAVID L. GOLDFEIN, USAF, FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO
THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE CHIEF OF STAFF,
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Thursday, June 16, 2016

Washington, D.C.

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U.S. Senate
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:57 a.m. in
Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John
McCain, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Committee Members Present: Senators McCain
[presiding], Inhofe, Wicker, Ayotte, Fischer, Cotton, Ernst,
Tillis, Sullivan, Reed, McCaskill, Manchin, Gillibrand,
Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King, and Heinrich.

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

3 Chairman McCain: I would like to apologize to my
4 colleagues for beginning this hearing a little late. There
5 was a meeting called by our Republican leader of the
6 Republican Senators, which is still going on, which I am
7 sure our other colleagues will be joining us soon at the
8 conclusion of those monumental discussions.

9 The Senate Armed Services Committee meets today to
10 consider the nomination of General David Goldfein to be the
11 21st Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force.

12 General Goldfein, we thank you for joining us this
13 morning. We are grateful for your many years of
14 distinguished service to our Nation and for you continued
15 willingness to serve. I also recognize that you are a
16 member of the elite group of pilots whose number of landings
17 do not equal the number of takeoffs. Congratulations on
18 that. It is not a club that many choose to be members of.

19 We also welcome members of your family who are joining
20 us this morning and thank them for supporting you and the
21 Nation. As is our tradition, at the beginning of your
22 testimony, we will invite you to introduce any family
23 members that are joining us today.

24 Now more than ever, a strong Air Force is central to
25 our Nation's ability to deter our adversaries, assure our

1 allies, and defend our national interests. Global
2 challenges continue to grow, the threat of terrorism from
3 North Africa to the Middle East to South Asia, advanced
4 potential adversaries like Russia and China, and rogue
5 states such as North Korea and Iran.

6 Despite these growing threats, today's Air Force is the
7 oldest, smallest, and least ready in its history, no doubt
8 in part because of the arbitrary budget cuts that Congress
9 and the President agreed to 5 years ago and have since
10 failed to reverse. Even under the best of budget
11 conditions, modern airspace and cyber capabilities are much
12 more expensive in absolute terms than their predecessors,
13 that is, if they even have predecessors.

14 That is one of the primary reasons the Air Force's
15 inventory of warfighting weapons has steadily decreased over
16 the past decades. In 1960, the United States Air Force had
17 2,000 bombers and 4,300 fighters. In 1980, that declined to
18 323 bombers and 3,600 fighters. Today the Air Force has 159
19 long-range bombers and less than 2,000 fighter aircraft.
20 Today the Air Force is retiring aircraft faster than it
21 procures them and will continue to do so for years to come.

22 While the aircraft we have today are highly capable,
23 our adversaries are shrinking that gap or finding asymmetric
24 ways to negate our advantage. The Air Force's global reach
25 and global power are being tested as our adversaries invest

1 heavily in fifth generation fighter aircraft, advanced
2 missiles, and integrated air defense systems that expand
3 contested airspace and exacerbate the tyranny of distance.

4 Meanwhile, as our Air Force shrinks, the combination of
5 relentless operational tempo and misguided reductions in
6 defense spending continues to deplete readiness. The Air
7 Force does not expect to return to full spectrum readiness
8 for more than a decade.

9 General Goldfein, addressing these three challenges,
10 capacity, capability, and readiness, will require the next
11 Chief of Staff's strong leadership and personal engagement.
12 One of the principal obstacles you will confront is a huge
13 bow wave of modernization investment programs, costs that
14 are all coming due in the next decade. Just consider the
15 list of Air Force modernization priorities: F-35A fighters,
16 KC-46A tankers, B-21 bombers, JSTARS, Compass Call, AWACS,
17 and a new trainer aircraft, not to mention a modernized
18 nuclear force, including the ground-based strategic
19 deterrent, B-61 gravity bomb, and the long-range standoff
20 weapon. There is simply no way all of these important yet
21 expensive modernization programs will fit into the projected
22 Air Force budget. At this point, it is by no means clear to
23 me that the Air Force has conceived a plausible path through
24 this tremendous budget crunch. With the future of our Air
25 Force on the line, it will be your task, if confirmed, to

1 chart this course in the coming years.

2 In any event, no matter how many dollars we spend, we
3 will not be able to provide our military the equipment they
4 need in a defense acquisition system that takes too long,
5 costs too much, and innovates too little. In the last two
6 defense authorization bills, this committee has embarked on
7 a major effort to reform this system, including ways to
8 empower our service chiefs to manage their own programs and
9 take on greater accountability. I will be keenly interested
10 in hearing how you would employ these new authorities to
11 accelerate and streamline Air Force acquisition programs,
12 ensure our warfighters get the equipment they need when they
13 need it, and act as a responsible steward of American
14 taxpayer dollars.

15 Finally, we must acknowledge the service and sacrifice
16 of the outstanding men and women in the United States Air
17 Force. As you mentioned in your opening statement, General
18 Goldfein, the Air Force has been at war for 25 years
19 straight, and we cannot take our airmen for granted. We
20 must recognize that high operational tempo, reduced
21 readiness, and lucrative opportunities outside the Air Force
22 continue to drive some of our best talent to leave the
23 service. I am interested in your plans to recruit and
24 retain the best talent for our Air Force, including how best
25 to provide a competitive and tailored compensation package

1 that incentivizes retention especially for the United States
2 Air Force pilots.

3 General Goldfein, we look forward to your testimony.

4 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 Let me join you in welcoming General Goldfein to this
5 confirmation hearing regarding his nomination to the Chief
6 of Staff of the United States Air Force.

7 And, General Goldfein, welcome to the Armed Services
8 Committee and thank you for your many years of service to
9 our Nation and your willingness to continue to serve.

10 We are mindful that families also serve, and so we
11 wanted to extend our thanks to the family as well. And you
12 will have an opportunity to please introduce your family.

13 General Goldfein is highly qualified for the position
14 to which he has been nominated. His most recent position is
15 Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force, which means he is
16 extraordinarily familiar with the challenges facing the Air
17 Force today and into the future. General Goldfein has also
18 had numerous senior positions of responsibility before that,
19 including Director of the Joint Staff. With all this
20 responsibility and all these insights, I think General
21 Goldfein is superbly prepared to serve as Chief of Staff of
22 the Air Force.

23 You will be tasked with significant responsibilities:
24 recruiting and retaining a quality force, ensuring the force
25 contains the necessary structure and readiness levels to

1 meet our Nation's current challenges and future challenges,
2 and then the posture to respond to crises that are evolving
3 today and could evolve in the future. That is all within
4 your responsibility.

5 The Air Force is facing challenges in affording all the
6 aircraft and weapon systems that it needs. It is also
7 facing recapitalization of its bomber fleet, the land-based
8 missile fleet. And on top of those challenges, the Air
9 Force and the rest of the military services are facing the
10 sequestration cliff next year, which I think would be
11 devastating.

12 General Goldfein, I look forward to your thoughts on
13 how you intend to take on these daunting challenges, should
14 you be confirmed. I intend to support your confirmation,
15 and I hope there will be early action by the Senate to
16 confirm you. Thank you again for your to our Nation.

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Chairman McCain: General, as is the custom of this
19 committee, we have standard questions to ask the nominees,
20 and if you will just respond appropriately to these
21 questions.

22 In order to exercise its legislative and oversight
23 responsibilities, it is important that this committee and
24 other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to
25 receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of

1 information. Have you adhered to applicable laws and
2 regulations governing conflicts of interest?

3 General Goldfein: I have, sir.

4 Chairman McCain: Do you agree, when asked, to give
5 your personal views even if those views differ from the
6 administration in power?

7 General Goldfein: I do, sir.

8 Chairman McCain: Have you assumed any duties or
9 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the
10 outcome of the confirmation process?

11 General Goldfein: I have not, sir.

12 Chairman McCain: Will you ensure your staff complies
13 with deadlines established for frequent communications,
14 including questions for the record in hearings?

15 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I will.

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

19 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I will.

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

22 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, they will.

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

25 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I do.

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

6 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I will.

7 Chairman McCain: Thank you, General. Please proceed.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL DAVID L. GOLDFEIN, USAF, FOR
2 REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE CHIEF OF
3 STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

4 General Goldfein: Chairman McCain, Ranking Member
5 Reed, distinguished members of this committee, let me begin
6 by thanking you for your tireless support and advocacy for
7 the greatest treasure in our Nation's arsenal: the young
8 men and women who continue to join our ranks and serve their
9 country during time of war. If confirmed, it will be my
10 honor to lead the over 660,000 active, Guard --

11 Chairman McCain: General, I do not mean to interrupt,
12 but would you care to introduce your family to the
13 committee?

14 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I would. I am thrilled to
15 introduce my family, beginning with our youngest daughter
16 Diana, who is a third generation first grade school teacher
17 following in the footsteps of her Gramma Mary and her mother
18 who are both here today.

19 Chairman McCain: Welcome.

20 General Goldfein: In a few months, Diana will be a
21 published author of her first children's book. She reminds
22 me of the very best teachers I ever had growing up, kind,
23 caring, compassionate, but tough when she has to be.

24 Chairman McCain: Maybe we ought to make that required
25 reading.

1 [Laughter.]

2 General Goldfein: If asked, most of us can remember
3 our favorite teachers, but almost all of us can name our
4 first grade teacher. Her kids are blessed to be in her
5 class, and I could not be prouder to be her dad.

6 Our oldest daughter Danielle is a captain in the Air
7 Force is on duty today, so could not attend. She is also a
8 third generation, following in the footsteps of her Grampa
9 Bill, a retired F-4 pilot who fought in Vietnam and is here
10 today, and both of her uncles, her cousin, and her dad.
11 Dani is a great officer and a combat veteran, having
12 recently returned from a deployment to Afghanistan. She
13 helps keep me grounded and in tune with our younger force,
14 and I could not be a prouder father.

15 All that is good in our daughters comes from their
16 mother Dawn, who I met in high school 40 years ago when both
17 of our parents were stationed in Germany. Dawn represents
18 the best deal our Nation gets in a military family, our
19 spouses. 33 years, 21 moves, 3 wars, and several
20 deployments to include a recent 2-year separation. I not
21 only love her, I admire her strength and her courage, and I
22 believe I am the luckiest man on the planet that she chose
23 me.

24 Chairman McCain: Welcome to the entire family.

25 General Goldfein: Chairman, I would like to thank

1 President Obama, Secretary Carter, Secretary James, and
2 Chairman Dunford for this opportunity of a lifetime.

3 I would also like to thank General Mark and Betty
4 Welsh. Not only are they concluding 40 years of
5 distinguished service, they have led our Air Force over the
6 past 4 years with passion, style, and unwavering commitment.
7 It is my honor to serve as General Welsh's Vice Chief of
8 Staff, and if confirmed, Dawn and I look forward to building
9 on their success.

10 Chairman, I have seen firsthand how important a service
11 chief's relationship is with members of this committee to
12 help you execute your oversight responsibilities. If
13 confirmed, I am committed to building a relationship of
14 trust and confidence with each of you based on openness,
15 candor, and competence. The questions you just asked form
16 the foundation of this relationship, and I fully understand
17 the gravity and the importance of living up to my answers.

18 Today's global landscape offers an equal amount of
19 challenge and opportunity. The combination of strong states
20 challenging world order, weak states that cannot preserve
21 order, and under-governed spaces providing sanctuary to
22 extremists all represent challenges we must counter
23 simultaneously as part of a joint coalition and interagency
24 team. From troubling Chinese military activity in the South
25 China Sea to recent provocative actions by Russia in Crimea

1 and Ukraine, to continued malign activity across the Middle
2 East by Iran, to the increasingly unpredictable actions we
3 see out of North Korea, each represents state-sponsored
4 activity that challenges world order and the stability and
5 predictability all civilized nations rely on for prosperity
6 and freedom. Add to this the military campaign to deliver a
7 lasting defeat to ISIL and our continued work in
8 Afghanistan, and we have the framework Secretary Carter laid
9 out months ago as the five global challenges the Department
10 of Defense must be ready to counter: China, Russia, Iran,
11 North Korea, and violent extremism. If confirmed, I take
12 very seriously my role as a member of the Joint Chiefs and
13 look forward to providing an airman's voice as we deliberate
14 military options, capabilities, and risks in formulating our
15 best military advice.

16 The other hat I will wear, if confirmed, is the top
17 officer in my service, responsible for assisting Secretary
18 James to properly organize, train, and equip an Air Force
19 that can meet these challenges both today and tomorrow.

20 When I was commissioned in 1983, we had not fought in
21 combat since my dad came home from Vietnam. The Cold War
22 was in its final years, and there was no conflict on the
23 horizon. This all changed in 1991 when we launched
24 Operation Desert Storm. When the war ended, the Air Force
25 stayed. From Operations Northern and Southern Watch to

1 follow-on campaigns in the Balkans during Operations
2 Deliberate Force and then Allied Force, to the last 15 years
3 of Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Inherent
4 Resolve, and Resolute Support, the Air Force has been in
5 continuous combat for 25 year.

6 While we are extremely proud of our contributions to
7 these operations, it has taken its toll on our ability to
8 properly balance capability, capacity, and readiness. When
9 combined with unpredictable budgets and the devastating
10 impacts of sequestration, I am acutely aware that, if
11 confirmed, I will be taking the reins of the smallest and
12 oldest Air Force in our 69-year history with significant
13 readiness challenges.

14 But where there is challenge, there is opportunity.
15 And I believe it is the obligation and duty of senior
16 leaders to offer the President, the Secretary of Defense,
17 and the Congress creative solutions to our most complex
18 challenges. We are the service known throughout our history
19 for innovation and breaking barriers. From the earliest
20 days of manned flight to breaking the sound barrier, to
21 reaching the outer limits of space, to fielding advanced
22 stealth technology, we are the service you rely on to push
23 the limits of innovation. It is in our bloodline. We have
24 faced challenging times before and overcome them with ideas.

25 Over 90 percent of today's Air Force joined after 9/11.

1 They have never known a day when we were not at war. As I
2 speak, airmen stand watch with our Nation's most
3 destructives weapons in the nuclear enterprise. They sit
4 alert and will scramble, when called upon, to defend our
5 homeland. They work side by side with their fellow SOF
6 warriors in the most remote corners of the globe to build
7 partner capacity and hunt down our enemies. They are flying
8 global mobility missions to deliver supplies for
9 humanitarian relief or personnel for a complex joint
10 mission. They are flying combat over Iraq and Syria,
11 providing top cover for the joint and coalition teams as we
12 deliver a lasting defeat to ISIL. And they are operating 12
13 constellations of satellites, providing everything from an
14 uninterrupted GPS signal to an unblinking eye on our
15 adversaries. These airmen, proud members of the profession
16 of arms, provide the oxygen the joint team breathes.

17 This is who we are. Your Air Force. We operate from a
18 capsule below the surface to a combat controller or cyber
19 warrior on the surface, to a cockpit at all altitudes above
20 the surface, to a constellation in the outer reaches of
21 space. We are everywhere. We know who we are, and we know
22 what we are expected to deliver for the joint team: air
23 power.

24 If confirmed, it will be my honor to work every day
25 with Secretary James to create the environment where great

1 ideas get a hearing, where barriers are crushed, where
2 airmen and their families thrive, and where warfighting
3 excellence remains our top focus.

4 Thank you again for this opportunity, and I look
5 forward to your questions.

6 [The prepared statement of General Goldfein follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you, General.

2 On the issue of the B-21 bomber, do you know what the
3 independent cost estimate associated with the winning bid
4 was, roughly? Is it \$23.5 billion?

5 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. That is the independent
6 cost estimate.

7 Chairman McCain: And the aircraft per unit cost
8 associated with the winning bid was about \$556 million. Is
9 that correct?

10 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. That is correct.

11 Chairman McCain: And the Air Force budget request as
12 developed is about \$1.36 billion. Is that right?

13 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

14 Chairman McCain: The Air Force released an artist
15 conception of the B-21?

16 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

17 Chairman McCain: The Air Force released the top tier
18 suppliers for the B-21?

19 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

20 Chairman McCain: I am having a difficult time
21 understanding how the public disclosure of a single contract
22 award value funded from an unclassified budget request is
23 going to give the enemy more information on the capabilities
24 of a new bomber than what the Air Force has already
25 disclosed. All I can see is that keeping it a secret

1 deprives the American taxpayer of the transparency and
2 accountability they deserve.

3 Can you explain what new information our enemies might
4 learn from the release of the contract award value that they
5 could not learn from the information the Air Force has
6 already released?

7 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And, Chairman, I agree
8 with you, and I believe that if we are not transparent with
9 the American people on the cost of this weapon system,
10 through its elected leadership, then we have a good chance
11 of losing this program.

12 Chairman McCain: I thank you for very much for that.

13 During the Air Force posture hearing on March 3rd,
14 General Welsh testified in reference to long-range readiness
15 issues that need investment. Quote: that will take us 8 to
16 10 years once we have a chance to reset the force from what
17 we are doing today, which is not going to happen.

18 Obviously, the issue is sequestration and what it is
19 doing. And we know what it is doing as far as acquisition is
20 concerned because all you have to do is count.

21 But talk to us a little bit about the effect on the men
22 and women that you just adequately and appropriately praised
23 in your opening statement on how they can do their job and
24 what effect it has on retention particularly, very frankly,
25 on pilot retention. Maybe you could, for the record, give

1 us your views on what I think at least in my view is almost
2 an emergency situation given the events that are taking
3 place in the world and the changes in the world since 2011
4 when in our act of incredible cowardice we enacted
5 sequestration because we did not have the guts to make the
6 budget cuts that were necessary.

7 General Goldfein: Thanks, Chairman.

8 When I think about retention, I think about it in two
9 areas: quality of service and quality of life. And when it
10 comes to quality of service, our airmen, when they join, are
11 looking to be the very best they can be. Pilots who do not
12 fly, controllers who do not control, cyber warriors who do
13 not operate because they are not given the resources to do
14 so, morale goes down and they vote with their feet. When we
15 were sequestered in 2015, we grounded 13 fighter squadrons
16 that stopped flying. We are still recovering from that
17 effort, and if we are sequestered again, it will be even
18 worse.

19 Chairman McCain: And retention. Are you beginning to
20 feel the effects of this lack of flying hours? I have been
21 told that our pilots now are flying less hours than Russian
22 and Chinese pilots are per month.

23 And do you agree with, I believe it was, the Chief of
24 Staff of the Army who stated before this committee that we
25 are putting the lives of the men and women who are serving

1 at greater risk?

2 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. The reality is it is a
3 mixed story because where we are flying a significant number
4 of hours is where we are stationed forward. So all crews in
5 the Middle East are actually at a high standard of readiness
6 and they are all flying a significant number of hours. The
7 bill payers to allow that level of readiness forward is what
8 is happening at home station. So at home station, sir, you
9 are actually correct. We are not flying the number of hours
10 that we used to fly.

11 There is a number of issues that contribute to that,
12 not the least of which is a shortage of critical skills in
13 our maintenance force, and when you add that up to the age
14 of the aircraft that makes them harder and harder to keep
15 airborne, that has both contributed to a less number of
16 flying hours we have available for training.

17 Chairman McCain: Is it not true that a B-1 squadron
18 just came back with something like six aircraft out of 20
19 that were operational? Is that not a story that I have
20 heard?

21 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, you have. When I was
22 deployed forward as the air component commander, I enjoyed
23 upwards of 95 percent, on average, mission capable rates
24 across every fleet that was forward. That was the B-1.
25 That was the F-16, A-10, every one. So we had the parts.

1 We had the supervision. We had the maintainers. That is
2 what we pushed forward. I knew that if I went back to the
3 home station, that was the bill payer to get me that level
4 of readiness.

5 So back home at Dyess and those other locations that
6 you talked about, the B-1's when they come home -- they
7 require a significant recovery time when they come back from
8 combat operations.

9 Chairman McCain: Well, I do not mean to get parochial
10 here, but we just had a vote that I was trying to fix the
11 problem, and it was not just Democrats that voted against
12 it. It was Republicans that voted against it as well and
13 members of this committee. I think it is a very heavy
14 burden for them to carry given the state of our military
15 today and the situations and challenges that we face in the
16 world, which are just epitomized by the terrible tragedy in
17 Orlando. I hope that the voters understand that a good
18 faith effort was made and it was turned down, four votes
19 short, by members, some of the members of this committee. I
20 am embarrassed.

21 I thank you, General.

22 Senator Reed: General, you have the responsibility of
23 modernizing the bomber and the ICBM force. Are there any
24 particular authorities that you think are necessary to help
25 you accomplish those tasks which you do not have?

1 General Goldfein: Sir, actually the authorities that
2 you pushed recently to service chiefs are very helpful. And
3 the way I look at those authorities, it is in both
4 authorities but also increased accountability for a service
5 chief.

6 So in the two areas where I am focused, number one is I
7 am the lead requirements officer for all major weapons
8 systems. It is my responsibility to ensure that we do not
9 have requirements creep that increases cost or increases
10 schedule on any of our programs. That is number one.

11 And number two that I now have more authority and
12 accountability in some of the milestone decisions,
13 specifically milestone A and milestone B, that allow a
14 service chief to have an input on a program as it goes
15 forward.

16 Senator Reed: Very good. And so you feel at this
17 point confident you have the legal authorities to bring
18 these programs online in a very cost effective way.

19 General Goldfein: Sir, I do, and I would highlight
20 that those authorities also -- many of those authorities
21 reside with the Secretary of the Air Force. So I believe it
22 is my job to actually work with her as we keep these
23 programs on track.

24 Senator Reed: We have had an ongoing debate in the
25 committee and in the Congress about the plans to retire the

1 A-10 aircraft, which is an extraordinarily effective close
2 air support platform. The Air Force seems, at least
3 temporarily, to adjusting to keeping it. But longer term,
4 this issue is going to come up again and again. And it
5 raises the issue of how do you develop and can you develop
6 the same capabilities if at some point A-10 is retired. Can
7 you give us some thoughts about that?

8 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. My commitment to you, if
9 confirmed, is that we will cover down this mission set for
10 the joint team, and I will take ownership of that.

11 When it comes to the A-10, I am actually as concerned
12 about the A-10 community as I am about the A-10 platform
13 because the A-10 community is actually our Ph.D. force when
14 it comes to close air support, and they set the bar for not
15 only the joint team but for the coalition team. Anybody who
16 does close air support -- they try to reach the level that
17 the A-10 community has been able to achieve. So my focus is
18 going to be on ensuring that I go back to the doctors of
19 CAS, the A-10 fleet and the A-10 operators, and say what is
20 the future of close air support. That is the conversation
21 we need to have. We need to maintain what we have for the
22 current fight, but where are we going in the future? Why is
23 it that I only get a minute and a half of trigger pull on a
24 30 millimeter bullet? Why do I not get 10 minutes? And why
25 is not every bullet precision guided? Why do I spend so

1 much time having to figure out who is actually friend and
2 foe on the ground when we have technology to be able to help
3 us do that? Why is that I have to do all the work for
4 collateral damage estimates when I have a machine that can
5 help me do that? So for me it is a matter of where we are
6 going in the future, and my commitment to you is that I will
7 take this on.

8 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, General.

9 Another issue that we have been dealing with and we
10 have seen some movement is deploying more and more enlisted
11 pilots for remotely piloted aircraft. There are various
12 models in history of military warfare. The one that always
13 has sort of some impact with me is that helicopter pilots in
14 Vietnam, particularly Army, were mostly warrant officers
15 with some officers, but the vast majority were warrant
16 officers. They were extremely capable. In fact, they had
17 more hours in that aircraft than anybody else. And it seems
18 to me that model could be applied much more vigorously. I
19 know the Air Force is taking steps. Can you elaborate on
20 what you are doing and what you want to do?

21 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. So for us the remotely
22 piloted aircraft, or RPA community, actually is the largest
23 number of pilots that currently serve in the Air Force. We
24 have over 1,300 RPA pilots currently serving. The next
25 closest second of any community is the C-17 with just shy of

1 800. So the RPA is part of the fabric of the Air Force. So
2 for me, this is a question of what is the future of this
3 business as we go forward, and how does the professional
4 enlisted corps that we enjoy fit into that enterprise.

5 And we are committed to having enlisted pilots, and we
6 are already starting on a program. We will start this fall.
7 We will have our first class of enlisted RQ-4 pilots that
8 will go through. They will graduate in 1 year and right
9 behind them will be another class, followed by another
10 class. And so we are focused on moving forward in the RQ-4
11 to ensure that our enlisted pilots are fully a part of that
12 weapon system. And so I see this as one of the major growth
13 industries in the Air Force, and I think this is the exact
14 right path to be on.

15 And we have a model for it that we know works. We
16 actually started off flying satellites when we had nothing
17 but officers, and we transitioned over a few years from
18 officers with scientific backgrounds to officers with more
19 political science kind of backgrounds, and then we made it
20 into enlisted. And today 50 percent of the satellite
21 constellations are flown and managed by the enlisted force.
22 So we are taking that same very successful model and
23 applying it to the RPA model and we are on track.

24 Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman McCain: Just to follow up, General, in other
2 words from your comments on the A-10, at this time it is
3 best not to retire them but to look at other options for
4 follow-on. Is that a correct statement?

5 General Goldfein: Sir, right now we are looking at
6 that as an option. The challenge will be to keep a
7 capability so that the fight that we are in today -- there
8 is no degradation to any of the soldiers, sailors, or
9 marines or my airmen that are on the ground.

10 Chairman McCain: So we should not be retiring them
11 now.

12 General Goldfein: Not in the near term, no, sir.

13 Chairman McCain: I thank you.

14 Colonel Roger Wicker, United States Air Force Reserve.

15 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 General, you said you are going to give us your
17 personal views regardless of the administration's policy.
18 Let me ask you this. Chairman McCain has repeatedly
19 referenced the terror and carnage caused by Assad's barrel
20 bombs that are deployed by Syrian aircraft. Our chairman
21 has made the point -- and I agree with him -- that as evil
22 as ISIS is, it is the barrel bombs and air attacks that are
23 causing most of the civilian casualties in Syria. Is that
24 correct in your view?

25 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

1 Senator Wicker: And do you agree with General Petraeus
2 who testified before us a few months ago when he said that
3 we have the capability to take out Assad's air force?

4 General Goldfein: I do.

5 Senator Wicker: Did the presence of Russian air forces
6 in Syria impact the administration's decision not to
7 implement a no-fly zone last year?

8 General Goldfein: Sir, I do not know whether it had
9 any impact on the administration's decision. I will tell
10 you from a military standpoint as a service chief, if
11 confirmed, it absolutely complicated the situation that we
12 were facing.

13 Senator Wicker: Okay. It complicated the situation,
14 and did it rule it out or was it a close call? And do you
15 think that should be revisited?

16 General Goldfein: Sir, whether it would be revisited
17 or not would certainly be a decision that would be above
18 mine. Let me tell you as an airman who has planned and
19 executed no-fly zones, this is a capability that we retain.
20 We know how to do it. The question is can we do it. The
21 answer absolutely is yes. But there are three fundamental
22 questions that I think have to be answered before I would
23 ever recommend that as an option.

24 The first is I would have to have the authority to
25 shoot down and kill anybody who violated the no-fly zone.

1 Since ISIL does not have an air force, that would mean I
2 would have to have the authority to shoot down and kill
3 Russian or Syrian aircraft.

4 The second is I would have to have a clear
5 understanding of exactly what the objective was on the
6 ground below the no-fly zone. And if the objective was to
7 do humanitarian safe zone or refugee return, that would
8 require some indigenous ground force that would be able to
9 control that because I cannot control that from the air.

10 And the third would be a clear-eyed decision that I
11 would have to divert resources from the current campaign to
12 do the no-fly zone.

13 But with the answer to those three questions, sir, we
14 can do that.

15 Senator Wicker: Do you believe a no-fly zone would
16 have saved lives of innocent civilians in Syria?

17 General Goldfein: Sir, a no-fly zone alone that would
18 have stopped aircraft that were going out to bomb civilians
19 absolutely would have had an impact.

20 Senator Wicker: Thank you.

21 Let me ask about a replacement of the legacy Huey
22 helicopters, some of which are nearly 40 years old. These
23 helicopters are used to secure our nuclear weapons for
24 Global Strike Command, as well as the Air Force District of
25 Washington's mission to ensure continuity of government

1 operations.

2 Some members of this committee are interested in
3 learning more about the Air Force strategy to replace these
4 legacy Huey helicopters. We would like to obtain a
5 description of the Air Force helicopter requirements,
6 including how requirements differ between Global Strike
7 Command and other missions such as the Air Force District of
8 Washington.

9 We are also interested in obtaining a lifecycle cost
10 analysis of alternatives that includes mixed fleet versus
11 single fleet solutions.

12 If confirmed, will you commit to providing this
13 committee with a report on the Air Force acquisition
14 strategy for replacing these Huey helicopters?

15 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I will.

16 Senator Wicker: Do you think you could get this report
17 to us by October 1st of this year?

18 General Goldfein: Sir, yes, I believe we can.

19 Senator Wicker: Thank you very much.

20 And I yield back the time.

21 Chairman McCain: Senator Gillibrand?

22 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Thank you for visiting with me earlier this week. I
24 recently visited the Niagara Air Reserve Station with my
25 colleague, Senator Schumer, and we were pleased to see the

1 progress underway in converting the 914 airlift wing to the
2 KC-135 mission. However, as you and I discussed, there is
3 not yet a simulator scheduled to be move to Niagara Falls to
4 obtain the training that is necessary, even though there is
5 a building waiting.

6 Will we have your assurance that the excellent airmen
7 of the 914th will have all the tools they need to sustain
8 their expertise, including a KC-135 flight simulator on the
9 grounds of the air station?

10 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. And I will also tell
11 you that my mother, who was born and raised in Niagara
12 Falls, would go after me if I did not.

13 [Laughter.]

14 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

15 As you know, General, the New York Air National Guard's
16 109th airlift wing operates our only fleet of LC-130
17 Skybirds which permit takeoff and landing on ice and
18 snowpack. Giving the evolving terrain and increased
19 commercial and military activity in the polar regions of the
20 world as a result of global warming, these aircraft provide
21 a critical capability to national security, as well as to
22 scientific research. At the moment, however, there is no
23 recapitalization plan in progress for these aircraft.

24 If confirmed, will you commit the resources to ensuring
25 this fleet of high-demand aircraft remains operationally

1 capable?

2 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am.

3 Senator Gillibrand: New York's pararescue jumpers are
4 transported to those in need via the combat rescue
5 helicopter, an aircraft undergoing a modernization program.
6 I was thrilled when I learned, however, that the combat
7 rescue helicopters belonging to the reserve components will
8 not receive upgrades until the last 3 years of a 10-year
9 cycle. For now, they will receive refurbished helicopters.
10 I think this is unacceptable and not in line with the
11 concept of total force integration that Secretary James and
12 General Welsh have generally adopted.

13 Should you be confirmed, will you see to it that the
14 combat rescue helicopters in the reserve components receive
15 concurrent modernization along with their active duty
16 counterparts?

17 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am, I will. But if I could
18 add, our current plan, because we are getting attrition
19 reserve helicopters back that we have lost in combat --
20 those attrition reserve aircraft, which will be HH-60G
21 models, the newest aircraft, are actually going first to the
22 Air National Guard. And then we will replace the oldest in
23 the fleet. And then the reason right now the Air National
24 Guard is on the back end of the combat rescue helicopter is
25 that as we go through that, they are actually going to have

1 the newest helicopters that we will replace.

2 Senator Gillibrand: Okay.

3 According to the most recent annual report of sexual
4 harassment and violence at the military service academies
5 for 2014 and 2015 academic year, despite being similar in
6 size to both the Naval Academy and the U.S. Military
7 Academy, the Air Force Academy had almost double the number
8 of sexual assault reports with 49 reports as compared to 17
9 at West Point and 25 at the Naval Academy.

10 Have you been able to look at this information, and do
11 you have any explanation about the larger number of reports
12 at the Air Force Academy compared to other academies? And
13 what measures are in place to prevent and respond to sexual
14 assault in the Air Force Academy?

15 General Goldfein: Thanks, ma'am. On a personal note,
16 I want to personally thank you for your passion on this
17 issue and keeping the pressure on. I have actually thought
18 a lot about our conversation, and you have given me several
19 things to think about. And I actually shared that with my
20 staff. And I look forward to working with you on this
21 issue, if confirmed.

22 At the Air Force Academy, the numbers you are looking
23 at, I believe, are just the restricted reports. If you take
24 a look at a combination of restricted and unrestricted, you
25 actually do not see the large jumps.

1 But the data tell you one thing. The reality for me is
2 what is the culture at the Air Force academy that makes this
3 crime more and more difficult over time to actually commit
4 so not only do we bring in cadets with the right moral
5 background and character that would make this unacceptable
6 in their squadron, but also that when we infuse them and
7 work on that character and build on that character so they
8 can be leaders of character when they come out. And so we
9 are not going to stop or take our foot off the gas we are at
10 zero.

11 Senator Gillibrand: I think the discrepancy is between
12 unrestricted and restricted, and unrestricted are the ones
13 where an investigation can move forward. So your
14 unrestricted numbers would show that people are comfortable
15 with the investigation. If your restricted numbers are
16 higher, it means they are not comfortable. So when you are
17 reviewing your own protocols at the Air Force Academy, I
18 would look to retaliation and perhaps investigate what the
19 reason for not reporting is. They may fear retaliation.
20 They may fear it will harm their careers. So I would dig
21 deep on what the climate is like within the academy to get
22 those unrestricted numbers up.

23 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. I will do that.

24 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman McCain: Senator Fischer?

2 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Good morning, General.

4 General Goldfein: Good morning, ma'am.

5 Senator Fischer: General, do you believe that the
6 current mix of capabilities in our nuclear forces -- and by
7 that, I mean the triad of our delivery vehicles, the gravity
8 bombs, standoff weapons, the forward-deployed tactical
9 weapons that we have. Do you believe that that will
10 continue to be necessary for deterrence in the 21st century?

11 General Goldfein: I do, ma'am.

12 Senator Fischer: Do you believe that there are any of
13 those capabilities that would be unnecessary?

14 General Goldfein: I do not.

15 Senator Fischer: Given the investment of Russia and
16 China in their nuclear arsenals and in particular concerning
17 statements by Russian officials about the limited use of
18 nuclear weapons, would you say it is important to preserve
19 the variety in U.S. nuclear forces to ensure the President
20 has flexibility in his ability to respond?

21 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. And I would add too the
22 nuclear command and control that we are responsible for for
23 the Nation to ensure that we tie those three legs together.

24 Senator Fischer: Aside from capabilities, do you see
25 reductions in number of nuclear weapons as being likely in

1 the near term? And do you believe that any reductions in
2 nuclear forces should only be made as part of a negotiated
3 bilateral and verifiable agreement?

4 General Goldfein: Ma'am, I would defer to the
5 Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense on this.

6 I will tell you that as a service chief, if confirmed,
7 my job will be to execute according to the guidance that we
8 are on track right now to execute against the START II
9 treaty, and so we are making the associated changes
10 according to that direction.

11 Senator Fischer: Would you personally recommend
12 against any unilateral reduction in U.S. nuclear forces?

13 General Goldfein: My personal opinion is I would
14 recommend against that. Yes, ma'am.

15 Senator Fischer: Thank you.

16 And, General, when we met last month, we discussed
17 milestone A, that decision for the GBSD. And I am also
18 concerned that the LRSO has yet to receive its milestone A
19 certification as well. Both of these programs I believe are
20 absolutely essential for the Air Force's component of our
21 nuclear deterrent.

22 Do I have your commitment to resolve these two issues
23 as soon as you possibly can?

24 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am, you do.

25 Senator Fischer: And also, as you know, the Department

1 has embarked on a so-called third offset initiative and the
2 continued advancement of potential adversaries to ensure
3 that the issue of technological superiority and innovation
4 will be something that you confront, if confirmed.

5 Are there specific technologies that you believe will
6 be key to ensuring future superiority, and how do you view
7 the balance between investing in these current requirements
8 such as readiness and also to be able to balance that with
9 our future needs?

10 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. And as I said in my
11 opening statement, innovation and breaking barriers are
12 something that you would expect the Air Force to do.

13 As we look forward in the third offset strategy, it is
14 about actually tying together three grids in new ways.

15 The first is the sensor grid which looks at six
16 domains, air, land, sea, space, cyber, and under sea, and
17 says how do we use all of those domains in a way that we can
18 actually pull those sensors together and fuse that
19 information and use machine to machine and autonomy to be
20 able to produce decision quality information for a
21 commander.

22 And then we have to tie that grid into an effects grid,
23 and the effects grid is to all the members of the joint team
24 and what we bring that is beyond platform. It goes to our
25 special forces. It goes to what we are doing at sea. It is

1 tying those together. What effects are we trying to create?
2 And so there is some significant investment there.

3 But the coin of the realm and where I think the Air
4 Force is going to be focused is on the third grid, which is
5 command and control, because it is how we tie this all
6 together, old and new, manned and unmanned, penetrating and
7 standoff, through all those domains. It is the Air Force
8 that has the core mission of command and control, and we do
9 this with a joint team. So I believe it is going to be
10 where we are going to spend most of our time investing to
11 pull those three grids together.

12 Senator Fischer: Thank you for that very thorough
13 answer. I appreciate it.

14 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator Kaine?

16 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17 General, it was good to visit with you in the office,
18 and congratulations on the nomination for this important
19 post.

20 Senator Warner, my colleague, and I today did something
21 that we do once a year, which is really fun. We have a
22 coffee for all of the academy nominees that are about to
23 report to all the service academies. And I am here to tell
24 you that we are sending some great Virginians to Colorado
25 Springs, and they are very, very excited to report I guess

1 on June 30 is when they are out, 2 weeks from today. Very,
2 very excited.

3 A couple of questions. You and I talked a lot about
4 readiness in my office, and you have testified and spoken
5 briefly with the chair about this, that there is a
6 projection, because of the readiness shortfalls, that it is
7 going to take to the mid to late 2020s to return to the
8 readiness level that is adequate.

9 We have just passed off the Senate floor the NDAA.
10 Does the funding and end strength and policies contained in
11 the NDAA that we passed -- will that enable you to stay on
12 that same track, not that that track is so great, 2020s mid
13 or late? But does the NDAA we passed enable you to stay on
14 that track with respect to recovering readiness?

15 General Goldfein: Sir, it does. And the number one
16 issue for us that is the limiter for producing and
17 increasing our readiness, beyond producing it for what we
18 consume, is manpower and specifically maintenance manpower.
19 So your support for our increase in manpower is the number
20 one issue for us.

21 And every service creates and sustains readiness
22 differently. For an Air Force, there are five key elements
23 that we have to got keep in balance, and any one of them can
24 be a limiter.

25 The first is the critical skills, and it is beyond the

1 pilot. It is the maintainers. It is the air traffic
2 controllers. It is the munitions specialists. It is all of
3 the folks that have fingerprints on an airplane before it
4 takes off.

5 The second is weapon systems sustainment, and it is all
6 the depot work and the required maintenance that keep that
7 airplane sustained.

8 And the third is the flying hour program, which is
9 operations and maintenance to get that airplane airborne and
10 funded for its mission.

11 And then the fourth is the critical infrastructure, the
12 ranges, and the exercises that a lot of us have trained to
13 full spectrum readiness.

14 And the final is time, which is OPTEMPO relief.

15 Right now, the two limiting factors that keep us from
16 being able to build readiness beyond what we are actually
17 consuming is people and time. So what you did in the NDAA
18 to support our increase in people is critical, and then we
19 will manage the time based on the OPTEMPO and the demands on
20 the Air Force.

21 Senator Kaine: One of the points you mentioned was my
22 next question, and that is this maintainer shortfall. You
23 have testified to us before about that. Now, the end
24 strength on active that you are currently working with is
25 317,000. It is obviously larger when you add Guard and

1 Reserve to it. But just because that end number might be
2 okay, that does not mean that within the number there are
3 not some disparities. And talk to us a little bit more
4 about the maintainer shortfall and what are the plans that
5 you would have as the chief to deal with that issue.

6 General Goldfein: Sir, right now we project that we
7 have 4,000 maintainers short of what we need, so a
8 significant number of the additional manpower coming in is
9 going to go into maintenance.

10 Senator Kaine: And the maintenance is layered between
11 active, Guard, and Reserve.

12 General Goldfein: It is.

13 Senator Kaine: I have noticed this down at Langley.
14 You are doing a very good job. It is a real seamless
15 operation between active, Guard, and Reserve on maintenance
16 billets.

17 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. It is actually that same
18 way across the force. I mean, if you go to the cockpit of a
19 C-17 and ask who is active, who is Guard and Reserve, all
20 three hands will go up very often. So we truly are one Air
21 Force.

22 So we are bringing those maintainers in to make sure
23 that we bring in the right skill sets. The challenge, of
24 course, in bringing those maintainers is all the ones that
25 will come in will be what we call 3 levels, which is early

1 entry that can do basic maintenance, and it will take us up
2 to 2 years to get them fully trained. And then it will take
3 us up to 5 years before they are supervisors. So what we
4 got to do is manage this across the Guard and Reserve and
5 active based on where our experience is to ensure that we
6 can continue the mission at the OPTEMPO that we are in
7 today, which I do not expect is going to come down during my
8 tenure, if confirmed, while we also advance and bring on new
9 weapon systems for the future.

10 Senator Kaine: Can I ask one last question? You
11 talked a lot about the Air Force's being a key innovator,
12 and that is the case. A lot of the new missions that you
13 have looking forward are space, cyber, and ISR. Talk a
14 little bit with us about your ability to move out on new
15 missions in those domains under the current budget
16 realities.

17 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. The demand signal in the
18 Air Force over the past 15 years has actually been in four
19 key areas, space, cyber, ISR, and the nuclear enterprise.
20 That has been the resource growth area in the Air Force.
21 The bill payer for those has been conventional air power and
22 people. And if you take a look at the last 15 years of
23 strategic trade, you will see that is why we are where we
24 are today.

25 I would like to focus, to answer your question, sir, on

1 space because sometimes history placed the right individual
2 in the right position at the right time, and General John
3 Hyten is absolutely brilliant, and he is changing the way we
4 think about space. And he has got some fairly significant
5 initiatives that I look forward to championing, if
6 confirmed.

7 One of them is the space mission force, which takes the
8 force and actually now he has replicated what we see in the
9 flying business as opposed to where we used to be where most
10 space operators, the warriors, would come to work and be in
11 the business of primarily monitoring and reporting. Now he
12 has got them thinking about operating in space. He has
13 actually built a dwell time so that you spend some time in
14 operations and some time in training. It has changed the
15 culture and the thinking of space, which I think is perhaps
16 one of the most powerful things that he has brought to the
17 team.

18 And the other thing he has done is he is getting us to
19 think about space as an enterprise as opposed to individual
20 pieces and parts because any space capability normally has
21 three elements to it. There is a constellation. There is
22 an integration that happens within airframes for us or for
23 the Army or the ships. And then there is a ground control
24 element. And they always start lined up in the acquisition
25 plan, and then one of them gets slid. And we have not had a

1 way in the past to be able to actually realign them. And so
2 General Hyten is leading the way in that, and I think it is
3 powerful.

4 Senator Kaine: Great. Thank you so much.

5 Thanks, Mr. Chair.

6 Chairman McCain: Senator Cotton?

7 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

8 General, congratulations on your nomination. Thank you
9 for your many years of service and to your family for their
10 many years of serving alongside you.

11 I want to continue the conversation about readiness
12 from where Senator Kaine left off. I want to call attention
13 to one thing you said in particular, that you, quote, do not
14 expect the OPTEMPO will come down during my tenure. End
15 quote.

16 General Goldfein: If confirmed, yes, sir.

17 Senator Cotton: Yes. So for 4 years, you expect the
18 current OPTEMPO to remain at least as high as it is today.

19 General Goldfein: I do, sir.

20 Senator Cotton: Secretary Gates in his memoir "Duty"
21 wrote that the Department of Defense was designed to plan
22 and prepare for war, not to wage war. Now, that is 5 years
23 dated since he left office in December 2011. Do you believe
24 that the Department still has that challenge today?

25 General Goldfein: Well, sir, my sense would be -- I do

1 not know the context of what he was saying when he wrote it.

2 Senator Cotton: He meant specifically trying to
3 acquire rapidly the capabilities needed for the fight in
4 Iraq and Afghanistan, MRAP vehicles for ground troops,
5 airborne ISR platforms, wounded warrior care, and so forth,
6 the point being the Pentagon in some ways is designed to
7 procure the weapons and capabilities for the next
8 generation's war as opposed to fight the war it is in right
9 now.

10 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. I think that is an
11 accurate statement. But I will tell you, if confirmed, just
12 again there are certain capabilities that we bring to this
13 fight today that, if confirmed, I am absolutely committed to
14 ensure there is no degradation. And one of those is close
15 air support.

16 Senator Cotton: Good. Thank you.

17 Now I want to turn to a very specific question of
18 readiness beyond the general discussion we have had this
19 morning to the sortie effectiveness rates for deployed
20 aircraft in the fight against the Islamic State. We
21 discussed this in your office call last month. As I told
22 you, I continue to hear through official and personal
23 channels from the pilots who were flying aircraft over Iraq
24 and Syria's territory, as well as their families that tell
25 me some pretty harrowing stories about those effectiveness

1 rates. You mentioned in our conversation that you thought
2 the rates were in the 90 percent range but that you would
3 check on that. Do you have any further information on that
4 matter?

5 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. I went back and checked,
6 and that is still accurate. For aircraft that we are flying
7 forward, we tend to average around a 90 percent mission
8 capable rate. But the bill payer that is nowhere near that
9 if you went to every home station that generated those
10 aircraft and those crews and sent them forward, you would
11 see them hovering slightly around the 60 to 70 percent rate
12 at best.

13 Senator Cotton: So in hearing from pilots and their
14 families about maintenance issues that prevent aircraft from
15 taking off, require the early return to base, require them
16 to fly without their full spectrum of aircraft systems, or
17 to extend missions to perhaps dangerous lengths because the
18 relief aircraft cannot take off, I am hearing from that
19 small, less than 10 percent of all cases?

20 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. I think that is accurate.
21 And I could take that to get you more accurate numbers, if
22 you would like.

23 Senator Cotton: I would appreciate that. Thank you.

24 [The information follows:]

25 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

1 Senator Cotton: Now I want to turn to nuclear
2 modernization, which you discussed with Senator Fischer and
3 some others at a specific level about some matters, but I
4 want to speak at both a general and even more specific level
5 about the mindset reflected in nuclear modernization.

6 In February 2011 in his message to the Senate about New
7 START, President Obama stated that, quote, I intend to
8 modernize or replace the triad of strategic nuclear delivery
9 systems, the heavy bomber, air-launched cruise missile, an
10 ICBM, a nuclear powered ballistic missile submarine.

11 Since then, the Air Force has been examining
12 alternatives to a replacement for the air-launched cruise
13 missile called the long-range standoff missile and the
14 Minuteman ICBM called the ground-based strategic deterrent,
15 both systems expected a milestone A approval earlier this
16 year. Yet, they have both been deferred by Under Secretary
17 of Defense Frank Kendall.

18 I worry that this is inconsistent with the President's
19 commitment and could delay the fielding of these critical
20 replacements.

21 So, first, at a general level, do you share the
22 President's oft-stated commitment to replace the nuclear
23 air-launched cruise missile and Minuteman ICBM, or do you
24 believe that conditions have changed, that we might want to
25 reconsider or delay those modernization programs?

1 General Goldfein: No, sir. I absolutely believe they
2 need to be modernized.

3 Senator Cotton: Senator Fischer asked you for your
4 personal commitment about moving those milestone A decisions
5 along. You said, yes, ma'am. You do have that commitment.
6 Could we be more precise? Could you give me a timeline in
7 which we can expect the decisions for both the LRSO and
8 GBSD?

9 General Goldfein: Yes, Senator. So for the GBSD, we
10 are expecting a milestone A decision in August of this year,
11 and we are still on track to meet that. We are expecting to
12 put out a request for proposal out to industry within the
13 next 2 weeks. And also in the same time within the next 2
14 weeks, we should have a milestone A decision on the long-
15 range strike.

16 Senator Cotton: Thank you for both.

17 Finally, on June 6th in a public speech, the Deputy
18 National Security Advisor said, quote, the administration
19 has already made it plain our concerns about how the
20 modernization budget will force difficult tradeoffs in the
21 coming decades, and the President will continue to review
22 these plans as he considers how to hand the baton off to his
23 successor. End quote.

24 General, to your knowledge, has the Department of
25 Defense or the Department of the Air Force been asked by the

1 White House or National Security Council staff to examine
2 whether changes can or should be made to propose plans for
3 nuclear modernization?

4 General Goldfein: No, sir, not in any of the meetings
5 I have been in.

6 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

7 Chairman McCain: Senator Hirono?

8 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 General, thank you and your family for your commitment
10 and service.

11 I would like to turn to the issue of headquarters cuts.
12 With the Pacific Air Force headquartered in Hawaii, I am
13 very much concerned with possible reductions to staff
14 especially when the full set of requirements are not taken
15 into consideration.

16 What actions will the Air Force take, should you be
17 confirmed, in the near future to ensure that any cuts will
18 not be made across the board and that the capabilities and
19 necessary tasks will be taken into consideration?

20 General Goldfein: Ma'am, when the original 20 percent
21 reduction was given to the Department, two organizations
22 actually took those cuts up front, the United States Air
23 Force and the Joint Staff, and we did that to keep from
24 delaying the pain over time. And so it was a bit of the
25 "rip the band aid off" to be able to take those cuts up

1 front and then reorganize the Air Force accordingly to be
2 able to ensure that we continued our mission.

3 One of the examples of that was we stood up an
4 organization, installation mission support center, that now
5 consolidates all installations in the United States Air
6 Force. We had 1,500 airmen and civilians involved in
7 maintaining and running our bases. By consolidating into a
8 single center, we are down to 350. So that is just one
9 example of how we have taken the 20 percent reductions that we
10 were given and reorganized ourselves to be more efficient.

11 Senator Hirono: And you will continue with that kind
12 of an approach to any further reductions that you are going
13 to be asked to take.

14 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am.

15 Senator Hirono: Acquisition reform. The air
16 superiority 2035 plan introduced in May of 2016 has some
17 insights about the way that the Air Force is responding to
18 the current threat environment. And the report stated --
19 and I quote -- the traditional acquisition approach is not
20 agile and results in late to need delivery of critical
21 warfighting capabilities and technologically superior forces
22 and voiced a concern that our acquisition system prevents
23 the timely delivery of the capabilities that our warfighters
24 need to succeed.

25 What is the top recommendation that you would suggest

1 to improve the major system acquisition outcomes?

2 General Goldfein: Ma'am, actually it would be to use
3 the authorities that now are moving toward service chiefs to
4 do my job to ensure that I keep requirements solid, that I
5 do not allow any requirements creep, that I hold industry
6 accountable for delivering on the contracts that we sign,
7 and ensuring that I am doing my part for the milestone A and
8 milestone B decisions to ensure that we are putting the
9 right programs forward to meet the warfighter needs.

10 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

11 In these times of budget constraints, I think that you
12 responded to some of the questions from Senator Kaine. In
13 Hawaii, we have Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickham, and we have
14 both a strong active Air Force presence there, as well as
15 the Guard and Reserves. So what are your guiding principles
16 in terms of active, Guard, and Reserve forces working
17 together?

18 General Goldfein: Ma'am, we are at the point in our
19 Air Force where we actually cannot accomplish our mission
20 without the Guard and Reserve. We talked earlier about that
21 you can walk into a C-17 cockpit, and you are going to find
22 one of each in a single cockpit. That is how we look across
23 the Air Force.

24 We are taking a series of initiatives through high
25 velocity analysis and looking and working with the adjutant

1 generals of the various States who are involved in our
2 deliberations to ensure that we optimize in each of the
3 missions that we are required to do what is the right mix
4 between active, Guard, and Reserve.

5 One of our biggest initiatives actually this year is
6 going to be to start up an integrated wing concept in South
7 Carolina at Seymour Johnson. And what we are doing there is
8 we are actually combining the Reserve and the active duty in
9 a single organization. And we are working our way through
10 the seams that occur and the authorities that occur to
11 ensure that that organization can actually operate as a
12 single wing. And perhaps the best outcome of this concept
13 is going to be we are going to have a better understanding
14 in each of the components of the pressures, the challenges,
15 and the motivations that cause each one to sign up and serve
16 and how we can work more effectively together to be able to
17 accomplish the mission.

18 Senator Hirono: So you are doing this in South
19 Carolina. So is the intent to see how this can function and
20 be implemented, and then you would do that in other places
21 such as in Hawaii?

22 General Goldfein: I correct myself. I think Seymour
23 Johnson is in North Carolina. I am geographically
24 challenged.

25 Senator Hirono: Oh, North Carolina.

1 General Goldfein: But we are doing that, yes, ma'am.
2 And based on expected success there as a pilot program, we
3 will then take a look at other organizations where we can
4 bring that same model.

5 Senator Hirono: Just one more thing. Senator
6 Gillibrand brought up sexual assault. And I appreciate your
7 commitment to influence the climate at the Air Force
8 Academy. And as you know, I am on the Air Force Academy
9 Board of Visitors. So your commitment to prevent sexual
10 assault, harassment, retaliation -- I think that is really
11 critical. And it is an ongoing concern for many of us on
12 this committee. So I thank you for that commitment.

13 General Goldfein: You have it.

14 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 Chairman McCain: Senator Ayotte?

16 Senator Ayotte: Good morning, General.

17 General Goldfein: Good morning, ma'am.

18 Senator Ayotte: Thank you for all that you do for the
19 country.

20 I wanted to ask you what your viewpoint was on the
21 performance of the Compass Call mission package and the
22 important role that it plays with ensuring that we disrupt
23 enemies' command and control.

24 General Goldfein: Ma'am, it is critical, and I believe
25 I can speak on behalf of the combatant commanders that it is

1 critical in every one of their area of operations.

2 Senator Ayotte: Thank you.

3 I wanted to follow up and ask you, as best as you can
4 answer in this forum, can you explain to us why this is an
5 urgent requirement that we actually place this mission
6 package on a more survivable and effective aircraft.

7 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. The reality is that
8 this mission, electronic attack, is actually becoming more
9 and more critical especially as we look to the global
10 challenges we face, China, Russia, Iran, North Korea
11 especially. But it is also playing a significant role in
12 the fight against violent extremism.

13 The challenge with the C-130 is that it does not
14 operate at the altitudes primarily that we need to be able
15 to put the footprint down on the target that we are trying
16 to service. So our challenge is any time delay in being
17 able to get this into an aircraft that can climb to a higher
18 altitude is going to diminish over that same time frame our
19 support to the combatant commanders.

20 Senator Ayotte: And so if we fail to authorize the
21 request that the Air Force has made to use existing rapid
22 acquisition authorities to rehost the Compass Call mission
23 equipment on the proper airframe, will that result in a 4-
24 to 6-year delay in providing this vital capability to our
25 combatant commanders in a more survivable and effective

1 aircraft?

2 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. And I would add to that
3 that if we have to do further integration of that equipment
4 on this new aircraft, you could add even 2 more years to
5 that.

6 Senator Ayotte: So based on the request that the Air
7 Force has made, do you continue to believe that it is
8 important for Congress to authorize in this year's defense
9 authorization the request to use rapid acquisition
10 authorities to rehost the Compass Call, given the fact that
11 this is such an important need for combatant commanders?

12 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am. Absolutely I do.

13 Senator Ayotte: Thank you, General.

14 General Goldfein: Yes, ma'am.

15 Chairman McCain: General, the Compass Call rehost
16 program is important, obviously, to our combatant
17 commanders, and I join Senator Ayotte in urging the Air
18 Force to field this warfighting capability as expeditiously
19 as possible.

20 Senator Heinrich?

21 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22 Welcome, General Goldfein. As you know from your time
23 in New Mexico, my home State is home to the Air Force
24 Research Laboratory, as well as two NNSA laboratories. I
25 want to start by just inviting you to come visit and see the

1 great work that goes on at both AFRL and Sandia for the Air
2 Force specifically.

3 So I want to ask broadly what role do you see our
4 defense labs playing in Air Force modernization.

5 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And I will go back to my
6 opening statement. I mean, we are the service, I believe,
7 you rely on for innovation and breaking barriers, and that
8 happens in our labs to a large extent. So the technologies
9 that they are looking at right now, whether you want to look
10 at hypersonics or new engine technology, small satellite
11 technology, these are all things that are going to be
12 potential game changers in the future.

13 Senator Heinrich: I would add directed energy to that
14 list.

15 General Goldfein: Amen.

16 Senator Heinrich: You know, despite the great work
17 that they do at those labs, this committee has expressed its
18 concern in the NDAA that it takes an unreasonable amount of
19 time to hire experienced individuals at the defense labs.
20 Sometimes it takes over a year to get somebody in place
21 which just seems like far too long. And the result of that
22 is that a sizable percentage of the authorized billets at
23 those DOD labs remain vacant due to lengthy delays, as well
24 as competition from the private sector where you can get
25 placed in a relatively reasonable amount of time.

1 So, if confirmed, can you make speeding this hiring
2 process a priority for our defense laboratories?

3 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I will.

4 And I will tell you that I absolutely align with
5 Secretary Carter that we are in a war on talent. And one of
6 the initiatives that is under his Force of the Future
7 initiative allows us to actually go directly to a university
8 and hire talent from the university. What we have done
9 previously up till now is we have told our talented young
10 men and women who are considering joining us to go get on
11 USAJobs, post all their resumes, and maybe we will get back
12 to them in 6 months. They are gone. So it is unacceptable
13 in this environment. And so everything the Secretary is
14 doing, anything I can do to make that easier I will do.

15 Senator Heinrich: Great. I appreciate it. I think
16 that focus will be incredibly important for getting the kind
17 of talent that we need in what is becoming a very
18 competitive environment with the private sector.

19 Regarding the Huey replacement discussion that Senator
20 Wicker brought up, is the Air Force going to -- obviously,
21 that will be competed, but will you consider the same
22 platform as the combat rescue helicopter, the HH-60 Whiskey?

23 General Goldfein: Sir, right now, it is a different
24 set of requirements. So the question will be -- you know,
25 clearly when you can get one platform that can do multiple

1 missions --

2 Senator Heinrich: You get efficiencies.

3 General Goldfein: -- there are certainly efficiencies.

4 But right now, as I have looked at the requirements --
5 and clearly, if confirmed, it is something I will get deeply
6 involved in, making sure we keep those requirements firm.
7 Right now, there are enough differences between what you
8 need to be able to fight your way to rescue someone versus
9 what you would do to provide security for the missile
10 fields.

11 Senator Heinrich: Given the dramatic improvements we
12 have seen in laser and particular technology in microwaves
13 as well in the last few years, what role do you see directed
14 energy playing in the third offset?

15 General Goldfein: Sir, I describe it as silent
16 sabotage. Right now, when we want to place fire power on
17 the enemy, they and everyone else in the area know we are
18 there. What we need is the capability to create an effect
19 and not have them know exactly where it came from or who. I
20 think directed energy is going to provide that for us, and
21 it is going to be especially effective in our special ops
22 forces, but it will also have conventional effects as well.
23 So I am excited about the technology, and if confirmed, I
24 will certainly push it.

25 Senator Heinrich: I look forward to working with you.

1 Thanks for your service.

2 Chairman McCain: Senator Inhofe?

3 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 First of all, I have always said that General Welsh's
5 greatest asset was Betty, and I have observed over the last
6 few weeks that in my opinion your greatest asset is sitting
7 behind you in green. So I am observing that Dawn is going
8 to be replacing Betty. Do you have a problem with that?

9 General Goldfein: No, sir.

10 Senator Inhofe: No. Okay.

11 The thing was brought up by one of the questioners here
12 just a few minutes ago that back in April of 2013 we
13 grounded some 17 combat-coded units -- squadrons. That
14 lasted for about 4 months. I think we had some 25 percent
15 of the pilots were uncertified during that time and had to
16 be retrained. Of course, you know what happens with some
17 sitting down there in terms of maintenance and all that.
18 Have you ever calculated the cost, and have you come to the
19 conclusion that we lost money on that deal?

20 General Goldfein: Sir, I have not calculated the cost
21 monetarily, but I will tell you that the cost personally for
22 those individuals that were affected, because it was not
23 only the pilots that stopped flying, it was the depot
24 maintenance folks who stopped maintaining --

25 Senator Inhofe: Oh, I know that.

1 General Goldfein: Air traffic controllers. It was the
2 impact across the force. And what we cannot calculate is
3 the number of folks who decided that you know what, if this
4 is how I am going to be treated, I am not going to stay with
5 the company.

6 Senator Inhofe: I actually talked to some of those at
7 the time, and of course, we had the first effect of that
8 from Tinker Air Force Base.

9 In terms of the refueler, the KC-46, right now General
10 McDew made the statement that our KC-135 and KC-10 refueling
11 fleet is stressed at a point near bending, and I am
12 concerned about our ability to flex that force to another
13 region of the world if we need to.

14 Do you agree with his statement?

15 General Goldfein: Sir, I do. And I would like to, if
16 I can, highlight the magicians in our depots. Quite
17 frankly, there is only one reason we have aircraft still
18 flying after 50 years. It is because of the quality
19 individuals we have there at our depots that keep them
20 flying.

21 Senator Inhofe: You know, the KC-135 is 50 years old
22 now and the KC-10 30 years old.

23 But now we shift to the fighters. We have the same
24 problem there except it is a little bit different. We are
25 actually training now with T-6's, T-1's, and T-38's. The

1 T-38's again are 50 years old.

2 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

3 Senator Inhofe: Now, they are projecting that before
4 we are able to start replacing that, it is going to be 2024.
5 Is that correct?

6 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

7 Senator Inhofe: Now, I do not know how many years it
8 will take to rotate those around till the T-38 is finally
9 totally replaced because I have not calculated that. But
10 can we hold on till then?

11 General Goldfein: Sir, we are going to have to.

12 Senator Inhofe: I mean, here is the problem that we
13 have and it is using your quotes when you said -- this is
14 two revealing quotes. The most pressing challenge for the
15 United States Air Force is the rise of peer competitors with
16 advanced military capabilities and rivaling our own. Now,
17 we are talking about the third generation. And we have
18 already acknowledged that the training in the T-38 is not
19 adequate to train someone for fifth generation fighters. Is
20 that not correct?

21 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

22 Senator Inhofe: So it is almost if we are sitting
23 around saying everything is going to be happening in a
24 vacuum when in fact it is not. If you look at even today if
25 we are not getting adequate training for our new

1 competitors, what is it going to be like 10-15 years from
2 now? Is that one of the things that bothers you? Is it one
3 of your greater concerns?

4 General Goldfein: Sir, it is. And this is a classic
5 case of what a service chief is faced with, which is how do
6 I with the resources given, if confirmed, get the right
7 balance between capability, capacity, and readiness. And
8 there are trades that we make. And so when we look at, for
9 instance, bringing on the new trainer aircraft, that is one
10 of the trades that we have to make to push that to the right
11 till 2024, and so that is going to require us to keep the
12 T-38 flying longer. And it is just one of the inevitable
13 trades you have to make.

14 Senator Inhofe: Because, you know, we got spoiled over
15 the last few decades because we did not have competitors out
16 there that were almost equal with us or even advancing from
17 our current status. So that is one of the great concerns
18 that I have, and I know you and I have talked about that and
19 you are going to be addressing that.

20 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I will.

21 Senator Inhofe: I look forward to working with you.

22 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly?

24 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 I want to thank your family for being here as well,

1 General.

2 I would like to congratulate you on your nomination.
3 In our last meeting, you and I talked a bit about the 434th
4 air refueling wing at Grissom Air Reserve Base in Indiana
5 and the basing process for the next gen KC-46. When do you
6 anticipate we will see another KC-46 basing opportunity for
7 a Reserve-led unit?

8 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. The next ones up are in
9 what we call Mob-4, mobility base 4, which will be the next
10 one. And we expect the rollout with a candidate
11 announcement within the next 2 weeks.

12 Senator Donnelly: Thank you.

13 And in the last basing decision, the Air Force
14 emphasized the importance of Reserve-led associate units.
15 That aligns with the recommendation of the Air Force
16 Commission report in 2014. They recommended expanding the
17 number of associate units in the Air Force.

18 Do you anticipate that you will be creating more
19 Reserve-led associate wings in the future?

20 General Goldfein: I do, Senator. Right now, we
21 actually have got very successfully active duty officers
22 that are actually commanding Guard wings, Reserve officers
23 who are commanding active duty wings. So we have already
24 done this kind of a mix, and we look at every organization,
25 then look at the mission and the deploy-to-dwell and the

1 OPTEMPO that we can sustain there and how do we optimize all
2 three components to best accomplish the mission. And so as
3 we do this, I expect, if confirmed, that we will see more
4 associations of the future.

5 Senator Donnelly: The ground-based strategic deterrent
6 provides, I think, an important opportunity for cross-
7 service collaboration between the Air Force and the Navy on
8 strategic missiles. I think it is an historic opportunity
9 to leverage research and development, common parts, lessons
10 learned from the Navy's recent Trident modernization
11 program, which can reduce risk, enhance savings, which are
12 critical, and field an extremely capable follow-on to
13 Minuteman III.

14 So is the Air Force committed to commonality as a means
15 to modernize and maintain the triad?

16 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, we are.

17 Senator Donnelly: And what elements do you see as most
18 applicable for commonality with the ICBM program?

19 General Goldfein: Sir, as you know, in the ground-
20 based strategic deterrent, the GBSD, one of the aspects of
21 that is that is an enterprise approach. So as we field that
22 weapon system, it is actually not just the missile. It is
23 the missile. It is the launch. It is the command and
24 control. It is the entire enterprise approach. The Navy
25 does the same thing when they look at the submarine force.

1 So I think there is synergy there between how the Navy
2 approaches it and how we approach the enterprise that is
3 required to be able to support this mission. And so I think
4 there are various elements, not the least of which is
5 nuclear command and control.

6 Senator Donnelly: Will you ensure that the GBSD
7 acquisition program -- the process -- prioritizes
8 commonality as an important strategy to increase capability
9 while reducing risk and cost?

10 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I will.

11 Senator Donnelly: Thank you.

12 I want to talk to you a little bit about the 122nd
13 fighter wing in Fort Wayne who has conducted numerous
14 missions in support with their A-10 aircraft. We were
15 excited to see that the Air Force has charged the 122nd to
16 continue to wage war in the war on terror with the F-16.
17 The Air Force's fiscal year 2017 force structure actions
18 announcement shows Fort Wayne transitioning to F-16's in
19 fiscal year 2018. Due to concerns raised by this committee
20 and others, these plans may shift a little bit. And I was
21 wondering your assessment of how the Senate and House
22 versions of NDAA impact your ability to carry out force
23 structure changes involving the A-10.

24 General Goldfein: Sir, anything that allows us more
25 funding stability and flexibility to make the kind of key

1 decisions we need to make are helpful for a service chief.
2 Any restrictions we have on being able to move forward
3 obviously hurt us because as we look at balancing
4 capability, capacity, and readiness, we need that kind of
5 flexibility.

6 When it comes to Fort Wayne, as we put forward our
7 options for the Secretary of Defense in the 18 POM, as we
8 have talked about, we may ask your support to delay that
9 transition in order to make sure that we can continue to
10 fight against ISIL.

11 Senator Donnelly: How do you think it is going to
12 impact your timing as things currently stand?

13 General Goldfein: Sir, I think we are looking at
14 probably 1 year.

15 Senator Donnelly: Thank you very much.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan?

18 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 And, General, welcome. Congratulations to you and your
20 family.

21 I want to begin by paying a little compliment to
22 Secretary Carter, President Obama. I think that they have
23 been doing a very good job in terms of their selection of
24 their top military generals. Whether it is General Milley
25 or General Dunford or your nomination, it fits into a

1 category of incredible experience. But also what we have
2 seen is frankness where they have come to the committee and
3 they have been very upfront with the committee. I think it
4 is well respected, well appreciated. So if you are
5 confirmed, I certainly hope you will continue in that vein.

6 Let me just mention, you know, General Milley was here
7 a couple months ago, and he stated that given the current
8 budget of the -- the President's budget, given the force
9 levels of the Army would put the Army at, quote, high
10 military risk. Unquote. Pretty dramatic. It did not get
11 any news, but I thought it was pretty dramatic that the
12 Chief of Staff of the Army was saying that to do their
13 mission on the current budget.

14 You have an incredible diverse mission set, which I
15 think most people do not even recognize how broad it is, how
16 important it is. Do you also see high military risk, given
17 the current budget and Air Force numbers that are I think at
18 all-time lows right now in terms of what you need to do in
19 terms of your mission? High military risk. That would be
20 pretty remarkable that two service chiefs -- one incoming,
21 yourself, one current -- state that. We need to do
22 something about it. I have no doubt.

23 General Goldfein: Sir, I would characterize it as
24 significant trending to high, which has been the previous
25 assessment of --

1 Senator Sullivan: You do not think it is high right
2 now? You are at the lowest levels. You have F-35
3 maintainers who are now being contractors. You do not think
4 it is high risk?

5 General Goldfein: Sir, the challenge in readiness
6 really, when we have this discussion, I find is that you
7 have got to start the discussion with ready for what because
8 if you were to ask me what is the state of the readiness of
9 the United States Air Force to fight violent extremism in
10 the Middle East, I will tell you it is extremely high.
11 Every airmen I send down range is ready to execute the
12 fight. And if that was all we were asked to do for the next
13 decade, I would tell you that we could sustain that.

14 But if you tell me that I need to be simultaneously
15 ready for the other global challenges that Secretary Carter
16 has laid out, which I believe we need to be ready for, which
17 is China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea, state-on-state
18 actors, I believe that we are at high risk.

19 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

20 Let me turn to follow up on a topic that Senator
21 Donnelly was talking about, and that is the bed-down of the
22 KC-46. I know you are making decisions here. You are going
23 to be making some OCONUS decisions relatively soon. When do
24 you plan on making those decisions?

25 General Goldfein: Sir, on the KC-46, the next decision

1 will be Mob-4, and we will be doing that in the next several
2 months.

3 Senator Sullivan: And would that include OCONUS
4 locations?

5 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. As a matter of fact, we
6 have 11 locations that we will be bedding down, two of those
7 that we are planning for OCONUS. The next two I do not
8 believe are OCONUS.

9 Senator Sullivan: What do you look at in terms of
10 characteristics for basing OCONUS KC-46's?

11 General Goldfein: Sir, we have a set criteria and a
12 basing process that first lays out that criteria. We share
13 that criteria with the delegations, and then we score bases
14 against that criteria that then produces a preferred
15 candidate list. The preferred candidate list is where we
16 actually then begin our site surveys and --

17 Senator Sullivan: I will throw out a couple
18 characteristics that I think are important: strategic
19 location, hub or air combat power for the Asia-Pacific,
20 world-class training areas, 24/7 NORAD mission that
21 routinely intercepts Russian bombers, three Red Flag
22 exercises a year over 100 fifth generation fighters located
23 there, C-17, C-130's, F-16's. Do those sound like important
24 characteristics?

25 General Goldfein: Yes, sir.

1 Senator Sullivan: Do you know what place I am
2 describing?

3 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And I think Billy
4 Mitchell was right. It is strategic. Alaska is strategic.

5 Senator Sullivan: So he called it the most strategic
6 place in the world. Is that important in terms of KC-46
7 basing?

8 General Goldfein: Sir, it is actually important across
9 all the mission sets of the United States Air Force.

10 Senator Sullivan: So can I get your commitment to take
11 a very serious look -- when you are making the OCONUS
12 decision, to take a look at Bill Mitchell's place that he
13 called the most strategic place in the world as part of
14 that?

15 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. You have it.

16 Senator Sullivan: Can I ask one other question? Are
17 you concerned about recent unprofessional behavior by both
18 the Chinese and Russian aircrafts during intercepts in
19 international airspace? And what should we be doing about
20 it? Some of us think that maybe we need to draw a line and
21 then just tell them not to cross the line, kind of like what
22 Turkey did. What is your recommendation on that? And how
23 dangerous are those? And how more frequent are those?

24 General Goldfein: Sir, they are dangerous, and it has
25 been more frequent.

1 And here is my concern. When we do an intercept, which
2 is one I have been personally involved in, you close on an
3 aircraft that cannot defend itself with lethal weapons well
4 inside of a lethal range, and very often in the back end of
5 that aircraft are people that cannot defend themselves. So
6 one would ask why would we allow each other to be able to
7 close at that range. And the reason is that for 50 years,
8 we have been doing this, three very professional air forces,
9 the U.S., China, and Russia who have a fairly professional
10 air force. And our pilots can do this with predictability
11 and professionalism.

12 And when that breaks down, two potential things can
13 occur. One is a miscalculation by either side, and the
14 second is that we find, as we did with the Chinese situation
15 when that aircraft violated the number one rule of aviation,
16 which is do not hit another aircraft with your aircraft, and
17 when he actually hit the EP-3.

18 The other concern I have is when you have an
19 incompetent pilot that then takes that aggressive behavior
20 and is not actually capable of being able to perform in that
21 kind of an intercept. So that troubles me.

22 And so, if confirmed, my message to my counterparts in
23 both China and Russia is we have professional air forces.
24 Let us hold our airmen accountable.

25 Senator Sullivan: What should we be doing?

1 Chairman McCain: The Senator's time has expired. Go
2 ahead.

3 General Goldfein: Sir, what we should be doing is
4 messaging them through mil-to-mil channels, through State
5 Department channels to ensure that they know this is
6 unacceptable behavior.

7 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 Chairman McCain: Some of us believe that Billy
10 Mitchell was not always right, General.

11 Senator Sullivan: His court martial was an injustice.

12 Senator King: I was going to mention that there was a
13 court martial involved, as I recall.

14 Chairman McCain: It could happen to anybody.

15 Senator King: I was waiting for the Senator to say
16 north of the 54th parallel is also one of the criteria.

17 Senator Sullivan: Well, the closest to Korea. But he
18 was vindicated I think later -- Billy Mitchell.

19 Senator King: General, thank you very much for being
20 here.

21 And you and I discussed this a week or so ago. We have
22 recently had testimony a week or so ago. We have recently
23 had testimony that over 80 percent of the current members of
24 the military of the United States come from military
25 bloodlines. You yourself, I believe your father, brother.

1 Your daughter is a captain in the Air Force. That certainly
2 is good in terms of esprit and commitment.

3 But two problems suggest itself. One is a narrowing
4 base of people to populate the military, as we go from the
5 Vietnam generation down to a much smaller base and,
6 secondly, the development of a separate sort of military
7 caste in our country. Talk to me about these two issues.

8 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. If you look at where the
9 active duty Air Force is actually located, we tend to be on
10 the eastern seaboard, somewhat along the south, certainly in
11 the northern tier, and on the western seaboard. But we are
12 not everywhere. So as we have gotten smaller and smaller,
13 it is harder to connect the American people with their
14 active duty Air Force.

15 Senator King: Do you see this as a concern?

16 General Goldfein: It is an absolute concern.

17 But where we actually are in every State is in our Air
18 National Guard. And I think the closer connections that we
19 have as one Air Force between all three components -- it is
20 our Air National guardsmen that actually are most connected
21 to the citizens, the people, the political leadership in
22 each State, which is where I think we need to leverage.

23 But I am concerned about exactly what you are talking
24 about, which is the lack of a connection, which is further
25 concerning the more and more we have second, third, and

1 fourth generation.

2 Senator King: Let me talk about math for a minute. We
3 are talking about maintaining operations, significant tempo.
4 We do not see conflicts resolving, disappearing, going away.
5 We do not see the world getting more calm and easy to deal
6 with. And yet, we are talking about these significant
7 upgrades. You are talking about the B-21, KC-46, deployment
8 of the F-35, in the Navy the Ohio class replacement, ICBM.
9 I mean, we are talking about major capital expenditures, and
10 I do not know anybody that is talking about additional
11 funds.

12 One of the things that bothers me is that we are now
13 operating under budgetary decisions made in 2011 before
14 Syria, before Ukraine, before South China Sea, before ISIS,
15 and yet we are trying to pack 10 pounds of capacity into an
16 8-pound sack. I just see this really as a looming huge
17 problem for this country if we do not somehow account for
18 increased threats and the necessity of the capital upgrades
19 that we are facing.

20 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. I agree.

21 Senator King: I mean, is there any way you could
22 maintain your capabilities and meet your responsibilities in
23 a world were the sequester to return next year?

24 General Goldfein: No, sir.

25 Senator King: It could not be done.

1 General Goldfein: No, sir. If we are sequestered
2 again, I cannot give you a better example of what sequester
3 did to the United States Air Force than the A-10 discussion
4 because in fact it was sequester that brought us the A-10
5 retirement. If we get sequestered again -- because we had
6 an \$8 billion math problem to solve in a single year in
7 2015. If we are sequestered again, we will have a \$10
8 billion math problem to solve in 2018.

9 Senator King: And will that have a direct measurable
10 effect on the national security of this Nation?

11 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And others have testified
12 and I will add to that. We will be unable to execute the
13 Defense Strategic Guidance if we are sequestered again.

14 Senator King: I just hope people in this building and
15 across the way are also listening to your testimony because
16 I think it is very important.

17 You helped develop, as Vice Chief, the budgetary
18 recommendations that turned into the authorizations that are
19 in the bill that we just passed a few days ago. Are you
20 comfortable with where the committee came out as far as the
21 Air Force's budgetary needs are concerned?

22 General Goldfein: Sir, I am generally comfortable. I
23 know there are continued issues that we will have to work,
24 and if confirmed, I will ensure that I work them with you.

25 Senator King: KC-46. A missed deadline apparently for

1 delivery next year. It is unusual to have a deadline missed
2 a year in advance. What is that going to do to the whole
3 schedule for the deployment of the KC-46? And are you
4 concerned about what is happening with that contract?

5 General Goldfein: Sir, I am absolutely disappointed
6 that we missed this milestone. What will happen now with
7 the program and having been out there and walked the line
8 and sat down and looked the company leadership in the eye in
9 Seattle with Boeing, I am confident they have a good plan to
10 be able to overcome the developmental challenges we are
11 finding right now primarily in the refueling boom, and they
12 are working those right now. But the unfortunate reality is
13 that we are going to delay now up to a year receiving those
14 airplanes.

15 We still believe that we can absorb the impact of that
16 1-year delay in the first two bed-downs, which will be in
17 Altus for the training unit and then McConnell, which will
18 be the first option. And then after that, we think we will
19 be back on track when we go to Pease and other bases after
20 that.

21 Senator King: I commend to you, as you make your
22 future decisions, the 101st out of Bangor, known as the
23 MAINEiacs. That is a very skilled and a very important
24 facility. I joined my colleague from Alaska, but now I am
25 talking about a base that is right around the 45th parallel.

1 Thank you very much, General, for your testimony.

2 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. Thank you.

3 Senator Sullivan [presiding]: General, just a few more
4 follow-ups. The committee had a lot of concern -- and there
5 are provisions in the current bill of the NDAA that was just
6 recently passed -- on the F-35 maintainer issue. Can you
7 speak to that a little bit and what you see as the best path
8 forward, how important it is to address that issue?

9 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. And this is a challenge
10 for all services who are trying to sustain and modernize at
11 the same time because none of us have maintainers that we
12 are currently operating in a weapon system that we can then
13 shift because when you bring on a new weapon system, the
14 first thing you do is train the maintenance force that is
15 going to receive that aircraft.

16 And so our challenge is the more we are told to keep
17 the old aircraft, it is going to further delay bringing on
18 the F-35. So those maintainers that we are counting on --
19 we are working through a lot of different options. We have
20 already done a number of things. We have transitioned to
21 contract logistics at all of our non-deploying locations.
22 As you know, sir, we did this in the Aggressors up there in
23 Alaska as well, and we appreciate your support for that.

24 So we are doing everything we can right now to be able
25 to bring the F-35 on, but the more we are delayed in terms

1 of bringing on new manpower and holding manpower in existing
2 weapon systems, it can have a significant impact on the
3 F-35.

4 Senator Sullivan: Is the best solution to increase the
5 end strength of the Air Force to make sure we have airmen
6 working those issues as opposed to contractors?

7 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, absolutely.

8 Senator Sullivan: Has that been mentioned in the
9 budget discussions in terms of your future end strength?

10 General Goldfein: Yes, sir. As a matter of fact, in
11 the 2016 NDAA, we are actually authorized to 321,000, and so
12 we have put all the resources in place both from a
13 recruiting and from a pipeline training to be able to bring
14 in the number of airmen. So if we are successful this year
15 at getting to 317,000 and we see the kind of recruiting
16 numbers we are looking for, we will likely come back to this
17 committee and ask you to reprogram money to allow us to get
18 to our authorization of 321,000. And the bulk of those
19 airmen that we are going to bring on are going to be
20 maintainers.

21 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

22 Just back to the C-46 issue, I mentioned a lot of the
23 characteristics that I think are very powerful in terms of
24 the strategic necessity of looking at Alaska. I would like
25 to get your commitment during your first year, if you are

1 confirmed, to come on up to Alaska and see those issues and
2 strategic strengths for yourself.

3 General Goldfein: Yes, sir, I will.

4 Senator Sullivan: Great.

5 Thank you again, General. Thank you to your family.
6 Thank you for your years, decades really, of service to our
7 country.

8 This hearing is adjourned.

9 [Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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