

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

NOMINATIONS – BINGEN, KAREM, RAPUANO

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Washington, D.C.

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TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF:

MS. KARI A. BINGEN TO BE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE;

MR. ROBERT S. KAREM TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS;

MR. KENNETH P. RAPUANO TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE AND GLOBAL SECURITY

Thursday, May 18, 2017

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:37 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, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis,
Sullivan, Sasse, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Shaheen, Donnelly,
King, Heinrich, Warren, and Peters.

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

3 Chairman McCain: Good morning. The Senate Armed
4 Services Committee meets today to consider the nominations
5 of Kari Bingen to be Principal Deputy Under Secretary of
6 Defense for Intelligence; Robert Karem to be Assistant
7 Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; and
8 Kenneth Rapuano to be the Assistant Secretary of Defense for
9 Homeland Defense and Global Security.

10 I note the presence of several of our colleagues here,
11 including our distinguished Majority Leader, who is here, as
12 well as Representative Barbara Comstock. So if it's
13 agreeable to my colleagues, we would like Senator McConnell
14 to make an introduction. I know he has a very heavy, busy
15 schedule.

16 Welcome, Senator McConnell.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. MITCH MCCONNELL, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 KENTUCKY

3 Senator McConnell: Thank you, Chairman McCain, Senator
4 Reed, members of the committee.

5 I'm exceedingly proud to be here today to introduce
6 Robert Story Karem, a very experienced and well-qualified
7 nominee to serve as the next Assistant Secretary of Defense
8 for International Security Affairs.

9 Through his hearing, this committee will find an
10 individual who has worked to prepare himself to address some
11 of the major challenges facing our country. Because of his
12 razor-sharp intelligence and diligence, Robert, a native of
13 Lexington, Kentucky, rapidly moved up in my office from
14 Staff Assistant to Legislative Correspondent and eventually
15 to be my Legislative Assistant for Foreign Affairs. He
16 proved himself a quick study, and I learned not to doubt his
17 advice or his judgment.

18 Robert also worked in my office when our nation
19 experienced one of the most harrowing days in its history.
20 He was hard at work on Capitol Hill on September the 11th,
21 2001, when our country was hit by the devastating al Qaeda
22 terrorist attacks. Witnessing this heinous attack on our
23 country, including on our Pentagon, from this close vantage
24 point I know left a profound imprint on Robert and
25 heightened his already keen appreciation of the seriousness

1 of the threats confronting our nation.

2 Robert was a stellar legislative staffer, and he
3 advised me on a wide array of foreign policy issues. For
4 instance, he played an important role in assisting me on
5 matters related to Burma, something Chairman McCain and I
6 have both been involved in over the years, the bipartisan
7 sanctions effort, which led ultimately to the adoption of
8 much needed reforms. Burma has been and remains a
9 bipartisan issue on Capitol Hill, and Robert played a
10 significant role in our efforts in this regard in the early
11 2000s.

12 He also provided vital assistance in staffing a
13 congressional delegation I led to Afghanistan and Iraq back
14 in 2003.

15 Eventually, Robert left my office to work in the Bush
16 Administration as a Special Advisor for National Security
17 Affairs and Middle East Policy to Vice President Cheney,
18 where Robert would work for a number of years. The Vice
19 President evidently thought enough of Robert's skills that
20 after he left office he asked him to assist him in
21 researching and editing his memoirs.

22 Following his tenure with the Vice President, Robert's
23 abilities drew the attention of House Majority Leaders Eric
24 Cantor and Kevin McCarthy, both of whom Robert advised on
25 national security matters. He later was the lead foreign

1 policy staffer on the Jeb Bush campaign.

2 Today we face numerous security threats from around the
3 globe. President Trump made an outstanding choice by
4 nominating a man with both experience and ability to serve
5 as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security
6 Policy.

7 I'm looking forward to this committee's consideration
8 of the nomination and to Robert's confirmation. The
9 President simply could not have picked a better person for
10 this office.

11 Thank you.

12 Chairman McCain: I thank you, Senator McConnell, for
13 taking the time from your busy schedule to be here on behalf
14 of this nominee. I guess your message is that we need to
15 confirm him or hire someone to start our car in the morning.

16 [Laughter.]

17 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

18 Representative Comstock, welcome.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK, U.S.
2 REPRESENTATIVE FROM VIRGINIA

3 Ms. Comstock: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman
4 McCain, Senator Reed, and members of the Armed Services
5 Committee, thank you for having me here this morning for the
6 great honor of introducing my fellow Virginian and friend of
7 over 30 years, Mr. Kenneth Rapuano, to be Assistant
8 Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global
9 Security.

10 He is surrounded here today by his family, his wife
11 Dixie, as well as his son Scott, a recent West Point
12 graduate, and also a recent newlywed here with his wife;
13 also Ken's daughter Claire, who is joining the Peace Corps
14 shortly, as well as another daughter Taylor, and son Will;
15 his proud mother, Kathy Rapuano, is also here, along with
16 his brothers Richard and Dave, as well as sister-in-law
17 Sarah.

18 Mr. Chairman, this is truly a family of public service.
19 Ken has my strong support based on my personal knowledge of
20 his abilities, as well as his significant and stellar
21 expertise in the areas covered by the Assistant Secretary of
22 Defense position.

23 Ken, a Marine, volunteered for two combat tours in Iraq
24 and Afghanistan, his previous service at the Pentagon in key
25 areas, and then he also had more recent service in positions

1 of ever-increasing responsibility at the Department of
2 Energy as a Deputy Under Secretary for Counter Terrorism,
3 focused on unconventional nuclear threats. Then he also
4 went on to serve at the White House as Deputy Homeland
5 Security Advisor to President Bush, where he chaired the
6 interagency process developing and overseeing homeland
7 security and counter-terrorism policies.

8 Ken has also worked in industry in these primary
9 fields, with recent service in two key federally-funded
10 research and development centers, at Mitre and ANSER,
11 supporting our government in the core areas of the position
12 he has been nominated to.

13 Mr. Chairman, Ken is fully prepared to be the Assistant
14 Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global
15 Security by his lifetime of service and experience, his vast
16 knowledge, and his hands-on experience in the field, as well
17 as in government agencies and, of course, across the globe.
18 He is a diligent public servant who goes beyond the call of
19 duty with great skill to defend our homeland, and I
20 particularly appreciate his stepping up again -- and I know
21 it's always a family sacrifice too, so we really appreciate
22 him stepping up in this new role, and I look forward to
23 seeing him and his success.

24 Again, thank you so much.

25 Chairman McCain: Thank you very much, Congresswoman,

1 for coming over, and I appreciate your introduction. Thank
2 you.

3 It's my understanding that Chairman Thornberry wanted
4 to be here but he has another obligation, but he wanted to
5 join us this morning to introduce Ms. Bingen in person, so
6 I'll insert his statement of support into the record and
7 simply note for the members of the committee that Chairman
8 Thornberry writes that Ms. Bingen's commitment to public
9 service will serve the Department of Defense and the nation
10 well.

11 [The information referred to follows:]

12 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman McCain: So, welcome to the witnesses this
2 morning. We thank you for joining us. We also welcome your
3 families and friends who are with us here today. As is our
4 tradition, at the beginning of your testimony, we invite you
5 to introduce those who are joining you today.

6 It's the standard for this committee to ask certain
7 questions in order to exercise its legislative and oversight
8 responsibilities. It's important that this committee and
9 other appropriate committees of the Congress to be able to
10 receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of
11 information, so if you'll answer the following questions.

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

14 Ms. Bingen: Yes.

15 Mr. Rapuano: Yes.

16 Mr. Karem: Yes.

17 Chairman McCain: Will you ensure that your staff
18 complies with deadlines established for requested
19 communications, including questions for the record in
20 hearings?

21 Ms. Bingen: Yes.

22 Mr. Rapuano: Yes.

23 Mr. Karem: Yes.

24 Chairman McCain: Will you cooperate in providing
25 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional

1 requests?

2 Ms. Bingen: Yes.

3 Mr. Rapuano: Yes.

4 Mr. Karem: Yes.

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

7 Ms. Bingen: Yes.

8 Mr. Rapuano: Yes.

9 Mr. Karem: Yes.

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

12 Ms. Bingen: Yes.

13 Mr. Rapuano: Yes.

14 Mr. Karem: Yes.

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

21 Ms. Bingen: Yes.

22 Mr. Rapuano: Yes.

23 Mr. Karem: Yes.

24 Chairman McCain: Have you assumed any duties or
25 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the

1 outcome of the confirmation process?

2 Ms. Bingen: No.

3 Mr. Rapuano: No.

4 Mr. Karem: No.

5 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

6 Ms. Bingen, the United States faces an increasingly
7 complex global threat environment where terrorist
8 organizations are metastasizing and exercising states'
9 capabilities, and nation-state adversaries are increasingly
10 asserting power, often through irregular and asymmetric
11 means. Every component of our Defense Department must have
12 timely intelligence to understand the very threats we face
13 to prepare for potential conflict and to respond swiftly,
14 accurately, and decisively, when necessary. With persistent
15 budget constraints, accurate and timely intelligence becomes
16 all the more vital. We look forward to hearing from you as
17 to how you will address this important mission, if
18 confirmed.

19 Mr. Karem, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for
20 International Security Affairs is charged with a wide
21 breadth of responsibilities, from security cooperation and
22 foreign military sales to U.S. defense policy in Europe, the
23 Middle East, and Africa. We will be interested to hear from
24 you on a number of issues, U.S. strategy for countering
25 Russian aggression, what U.S. force posture in Europe should

1 look like over the long term, U.S. strategy for defeating
2 ISIS, and what the United States should be doing to create
3 space for political solutions in Iraq and Syria, and much
4 more.

5 Mr. Rapuano, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for
6 Homeland Defense and Global Security is responsible for a
7 wide range of policy portfolios ranging from homeland
8 defense, defense support of civil authorities, counter-WMD,
9 cyber policy, and space policy.

10 You have an extensive background in a variety of
11 homeland security issues both in government and in the
12 private sector. I look forward to hearing you discuss how
13 your previous experiences would inform your approach to
14 these complex issues, especially the need for a U.S. policy
15 and strategy in cyberspace.

16 Senator Reed?

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

3 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I
4 want to join you in welcoming the nominees this morning.

5 Thank you for your willingness to serve our nation, and
6 I want to express my gratitude to your family members who
7 are here today and whose support for you throughout your
8 careers has been so important.

9 The nominees before the committee today have extensive
10 experience and are well qualified for the positions to which
11 they have been nominated.

12 Ms. Kari Bingen, the nominee to be Principal Deputy
13 Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, is well known
14 to this committee for her work as a senior staffer at the
15 House Armed Services Committee. The Principal Deputy
16 supports the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence,
17 who serves as the Principal Intelligence Advisor to the
18 Secretary of Defense. The Under Secretary oversees all
19 intelligence security organizations within the Department of
20 Defense, including the National Security Agency, the Defense
21 Intelligence Agency, the National Geospatial Intelligence
22 Agency, the National Reconnaissance Office, and the
23 intelligence components and combatant commands of military
24 services.

25 Throughout her work both on the Hill and in the private

1 sector, Ms. Bingen has substantial expertise in the areas of
2 defense policy, strategic forces, and space policy.

3 The nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of Defense
4 for International Security Affairs, Mr. Karem, also brings
5 significant experience on defense and foreign policy issues,
6 including as a foreign policy advisor to the Majority Leader
7 and a Middle East expert in the White House to the Vice
8 President.

9 Assistant Secretary of Defense for International
10 Security Affairs serves as the principal advisor to the
11 Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Secretary of
12 Defense regarding defense policy and strategy for Europe,
13 Russia, the Middle East, Africa, and the Western Hemisphere.
14 The position involves managing critical defense and security
15 relationships with some of our closest allies and partners.

16 Mr. Rapuano has had an impressive career in government
17 service and private-sector work in the areas of national
18 security, counter-proliferation, and policy analysis. He
19 has previously served as a senior advisor on issues of
20 homeland security and counter-terrorism in President George
21 W. Bush's White House, the Department of Energy, and the
22 Department of Defense. Mr. Rapuano has also served the
23 Marine Corps and, as a Marine Corps reservist, served on the
24 Iraq Server Group. He has been nominated to serve as the
25 Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and

1 Global Security, a position for which he would be charged
2 with developing policy and overseeing planning for
3 countering weapons of mass destruction, cyberspace, missile
4 defense, defense continuity and mission assurance, support
5 of the civil authorities, and the homeland defense
6 activities at the Department of Defense.

7 If confirmed, all three of these nominees will be
8 instrumental on a number of cross-cutting issues within the
9 Department, including various aspects of a strategy to
10 defeat the ISIS threat and countering the Russian malign
11 influence threat to the integrity of our political
12 institutions and those of our international partners.

13 The committee looks forward to hearing your views on
14 these and other complex issues.

15 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman McCain: I thank you.

17 Mr. Karem, we'll begin with you. Welcome.

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1 STATEMENT OF ROBERT S. KAREM, TO BE ASSISTANT
2 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

3 Mr. Karem: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Reed,
4 members of the Committee on Armed Services. It is an honor
5 to appear before you this morning as a nominee to become
6 Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security
7 Affairs.

8 Leader McConnell, thank you for your generous
9 introduction. I'm tremendously grateful for the confidence
10 you showed in me 17 years ago. The experiences,
11 opportunities, and lessons provided by my tenure in your
12 office played an essential role in inspiring a career in
13 public service that has led to my appearing before this
14 committee today.

15 I would like to thank the President of the United
16 States and the Secretary of Defense for my nomination. If
17 confirmed, it would be a tremendous and humbling honor to
18 serve our country at the Department of Defense.

19 Let me also thank my friends, mentors, and former
20 bosses, colleagues, and counterparts, without whose support
21 I would likely not be here today.

22 I am particularly grateful that some of my family could
23 join me this morning. My parents, Fred and Suzanne, of
24 Lexington, Kentucky, and my brother Fred of Chapel Hill,
25 North Carolina, are joined by my girlfriend, Alina

1 Polyakova. My sister, Rebecca Hughes, of Birmingham,
2 Alabama, could not be here today, but I am immensely proud
3 of the amazing mother my little sister has become to her
4 four children.

5 Chairman McCain: We welcome your family members.
6 Welcome.

7 Mr. Karem: Thank you.

8 The responsibilities of the office of the Assistant
9 Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs
10 cover the vast majority of the globe and stretch across five
11 combatant commands. It is impossible these days to open a
12 newspaper without confronting bold-face headlines about some
13 conflict, crisis, or challenge with which the dedicated
14 government servants and military personnel who work in ISA
15 are already ably grappling. The national security policy
16 challenges these quiet professionals confront every day are
17 real, and they are sobering.

18 If confirmed, it would be a great privilege to serve
19 alongside these American patriots to help rebuild America's
20 military capabilities and readiness, bolster and modernize
21 critical alliances such as NATO while rebalancing burden-
22 sharing within these alliances, strengthen U.S. credibility
23 and influence in regions of key strategic interest, defeat
24 ISIS and other terrorist groups, confront Russian and
25 Iranian aggression, combat new cyber threats, and create

1 conditions favorable for safeguarding our national security
2 and promoting America's economic prosperity.

3 If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with
4 this committee, and with the Congress as a whole, to address
5 these and other national security challenges facing our
6 nation.

7 I am grateful for your consideration of my nomination,
8 and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

9 [The prepared statement of Mr. Karem follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

2 Ms. Bingen?

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1 STATEMENT OF KARI A. BINGEN, TO BE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY
2 UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE

3 Ms. Bingen: Thank you. Chairman McCain, Ranking
4 Member Reed, and distinguished senators of this committee,
5 thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and
6 for your consideration of my nomination to be the Principal
7 Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence.

8 First, I would not be here without the strong support
9 of my family, my husband Sean, our two young sons, Henry and
10 Harrison, and my parents, John and Rebecca.

11 My father enlisted in the Army at 18, and both my
12 grandfathers served in the Army during World War II. My
13 time on the House Armed Services and, if confirmed, my role
14 in the Department is my opportunity to continue our family's
15 tradition of service and to give back to our country.

16 Chairman McCain: Welcome to your family members.

17 Ms. Bingen: Thank you.

18 I wish to thank the President and Secretary Mattis for
19 placing their trust and confidence in me. I am also
20 grateful to several mentors who have helped shape my career,
21 including Chairman Thornberry, Congressman Mike Turner, and
22 retired Congressman Terry Everett, as well as to the HASC
23 team and many of the staff behind you, who I have learned
24 from and had the privilege to collaborate with in support of
25 the NDAA.

1 Henry Kissinger's statement before this committee in
2 2015 has stuck with me, that "The United States has not
3 faced a more diverse and complex array of crises since the
4 end of the Second World War." While threats increase, our
5 military force structure has decreased. Thus, as Secretary
6 Mattis has stated, we have less of a military shock absorber
7 than we once did. This makes intelligence and a highly
8 effective defense intelligence enterprise all the more
9 critical to buy our leaders the time and space necessary to
10 develop policy, posture accordingly, and resource
11 capabilities.

12 Keeping America safe and supporting our forces in
13 harm's way is a humbling and solemn responsibility. If
14 confirmed, my first priority will be to support the
15 warfighter. We have troops today in harm's way in Iraq,
16 Afghanistan, and elsewhere around the world. They deserve
17 the best intelligence our nation can provide to protect them
18 and to support their missions.

19 Additionally, we must improve our defense intelligence
20 posture and capabilities to better address the full spectrum
21 of security challenges, particularly from near-peer
22 challengers, that range from high-end nuclear and advanced
23 conventional threats to grey-zone tactics in the cyber and
24 information domain. The battlefield is more dynamic, and
25 the defense intelligence enterprise must be more agile and

1 adaptive, whether in its integration with operations,
2 collection and analysis, or incorporation of new
3 technologies and innovative concepts.

4 Furthermore, I am reminded of the reason why the USDI
5 was established in the first place: in the wake of 9-11, to
6 improve the integration, management, and allocation of
7 resources across a stove-piped enterprise. Integration and
8 unity of effort across the defense intelligence enterprise
9 is the value that this position brings to the Secretary, the
10 Director of National Intelligence, and the Congress. I also
11 recognize that collaborative relationships and motivated
12 people focused on a clear mission are the foundation to
13 implementing these priorities.

14 It has been an honor working for the House Armed
15 Services Committee, starting with the strategic forces and
16 intelligence portfolio and now as its policy director. I
17 believe my time on Capitol Hill, coupled with my technical
18 background and work in the private sector in support of
19 several of the three-letter intelligence agencies, have
20 uniquely prepared me for this position.

21 If confirmed, I am committed to working with this
22 committee and other committees of jurisdiction. I hope to
23 earn your trust and confidence, and I am committed to
24 providing you with the information you need to do your
25 oversight. If confirmed, I also look forward to working

1 closely with the new Under Secretary, once nominated and
2 hopefully confirmed, and the great team in the USDI office
3 and across the Department.

4 Thank you again for your time today and for your
5 consideration of my nomination.

6 [The prepared statement of Ms. Bingen follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

2 Mr. Rapuano?

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1 STATEMENT OF KENNETH P. RAPUANO, TO BE ASSISTANT
2 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE AND GLOBAL
3 SECURITY

4 Mr. Rapuano: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member
5 Reed, and members of the committee. Thank you very much for
6 the privilege of appearing before you today.

7 I'd like to start by thanking my family. First of all,
8 my wife, Dixie, who has been my best friend and partner for
9 28 years, and our four kids, who are all with us here today:
10 Taylor, our oldest, who is currently studying at North Park
11 University in Chicago to become a counselor; Scott, West
12 Point class of 2015 and currently an infantry platoon
13 commander with the 3rd Infantry Division, and his wife
14 Katie, our brand new daughter-in-law and a very welcome
15 addition to our family; and Claire, who last month graduated
16 Phi Beta Kappa from James Madison University and is leaving
17 next month for two years of service in Africa as a Peace
18 Corps volunteer; and finally Will, who will be a third year
19 at University of Virginia this fall. He is on track to
20 become a business major. He aspires to become a captain of
21 industry someday.

22 Chairman McCain: Welcome.

23 Mr. Rapuano: Dixie and I are extremely proud of our
24 kids. Raising them has been the most important and
25 rewarding role of our lives.

1 I'd also like to thank my parents, Al and Cathie
2 Rapuano. If it wasn't for their love, hard work, and
3 perseverance, I am quite certain I would not be sitting
4 before you today.

5 Mr. Chairman, I have been working national security
6 issues my entire career, and I believe that the threats we
7 face today are as complex, unpredictable, and dangerous as
8 at any time in our history. The U.S. homeland is no longer
9 a sanctuary. The growing sophistication and proliferation
10 of threats, such as cyber, space, ballistic and cruise
11 missiles, CBRN materials, endemic diseases, and unmanned
12 technologies, combined with the growing number of nations
13 and non-state actors with access to them, continue to
14 increase risk to the homeland and defense mission assurance.

15 I see no more important role in national security than
16 serving in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense
17 for Homeland Defense and Global Security, and focusing on
18 ensuring the continuing ability to defend our nation against
19 dynamic and evolving threats.

20 If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and
21 your staffs, and I appreciate the opportunity to answer your
22 questions today.

23 Thank you very much.

24 [The prepared statement of Mr. Rapuano follows:]

25

1 Chairman McCain: Well, thank you. I thank the
2 witnesses.

3 Mr. Rapuano, what do you think should be the key
4 elements of our national cyber policy?

5 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, there has been a lot of focus on
6 our cyber policy of late, for very understandable reasons.
7 The '17 NDAA, as you well know, has very specific directives
8 with regard to development of a deterrence framework and
9 policy. There was the recent defense cyber deterrence study
10 that really got at the importance of tailored deterrence
11 campaigns and the whole approach to a declaratory policy.

12 I believe that we have got to have both what is
13 perceived to be and what is actually effective cyber
14 capabilities that will introduce such an element of doubt in
15 our adversaries that the cyber attacks that they would be
16 interested in taking to achieve some goal would be
17 outweighed by the high likelihood of our response.

18 Chairman McCain: Ms. Bingen, as you know, we just had
19 a very serious cyber attack worldwide. How well equipped
20 are we intelligence-wise to anticipate or even adequately
21 respond to this kind of really unprecedented activity?

22 Ms. Bingen: Mr. Chairman, I believe this continues to
23 be a challenge within the intelligence community writ large,
24 but also particularly in the defense intelligence
25 enterprise. We continue to need the capabilities to detect

1 and attribute where these attacks are coming from, to
2 understand the totality of them, but also to think more
3 strategically about where is this headed. We look at each
4 individual event as a more tactical event, but the challenge
5 for the defense intelligence enterprise is putting it all
6 together. As we look to stand up U.S. Cyber Command, our
7 challenge is also from an intelligence perspective how do we
8 support that command's responsibilities, military plans and
9 operational capabilities. I believe that that's a very
10 important area that we need to do a better job in, sir.

11 Chairman McCain: Mr. Karem, what lesson do you think
12 that Putin is learning, since there seems to be a
13 significant lack of an international response to his actions
14 in Ukraine, in Syria, obviously other cyber activities that
15 emanate from Russia? What kind of lesson do you think he's
16 learning from what seems to be rather successful activities
17 from his standpoint?

18 Mr. Karem: Senator, I believe that Russia's
19 interference, invasion, and continued illegal occupation of
20 Ukraine poses a significant threat to international security
21 and our own, and his actions in Syria have also contributed
22 to that problem. I do not believe that Vladimir Putin is
23 sufficiently deterred from perpetuating similar and
24 continuing malign activities.

25 Chairman McCain: Well, I believe that all three of our

1 nominees are highly qualified and much needed, very frankly.
2 I regret that Secretary Mattis does not have the team around
3 him that he needs to do his job in the most efficient
4 fashion, and we will expedite your nominations following a
5 vote of the committee to get you to work as quickly as
6 possible. I view all three as highly qualified.

7 Senator Reed?

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

9 Again, I've been impressed with the witnesses' not only
10 experience but their discussions in the office. So, thank
11 you all very much.

12 Mr. Karem, we have seen since last year Russia's
13 involvement in elections, particularly our own election. Do
14 you agree with the assessment of the Russian activity in the
15 2016 presidential elections by our intelligence community?

16 Mr. Karem: Sir, I have read the unclassified
17 assessment from the intelligence community, and I agree with
18 it.

19 Senator Reed: And do you feel that this is an ongoing
20 threat, not just an historical incident but an ongoing
21 threat that you'll have to deal with?

22 Mr. Karem: Senator, I believe the Russians, like the
23 Soviets, have a long history of engaging in active measures
24 against their adversaries, and I understand that the
25 Director of National Intelligence has testified recently

1 that these activities continue.

2 Senator Reed: And, Mr. Rapuano, the same question
3 about your sense of the Russian involvement in our election
4 and other elections. Is it a credible and growing threat?

5 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, yes, I believe it is. I believe
6 they are going to continue doing it as long as they feel
7 it's in their interest and the consequences are less than
8 the benefits that are occurring.

9 Senator Reed: And how do you believe we're postured to
10 counteract these operations that they're conducting in a
11 larger sense too, participating in the kind of information
12 campaigns and, in some cases, disinformation campaigns that
13 we see from our adversaries? Are we in a similar position
14 at least having the capability, if necessary, to do it?

15 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, I think that our information
16 operations capability has attrited since the Cold War, and I
17 think that of late there has been growing recognition of how
18 important it is. I think that recognition is understood in
19 the Pentagon, and there are focused review groups looking at
20 our cyber policy and that nexus with information operations.

21 Senator Reed: Let me address this question again to
22 Mr. Rapuano and Mr. Karem, and then I'll ask a question of
23 Ms. Bingen.

24 Some of this, I suspect, and I think you suspect too,
25 is to stovepipe organizations that seem to be rampant within

1 the Department, then among departments -- Homeland Security,
2 Department of Energy, et cetera. And as a result, I don't
3 think we've come up with an integrated plan. We have
4 pieces, but they're very discrete and fragmented. Is that
5 fair? And more importantly, how are you going to deal with
6 that and make it coherent?

7 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, I believe it is fair, and I
8 believe that that has been recognized. There's a lot of
9 work that needs to be done in terms of understanding all the
10 players and stakeholders, the respective roles and
11 responsibilities, authorities and resources, and then what
12 are the threats, how we prioritize them, and how do we blend
13 together to make for a very effective set of policies and
14 capabilities and actions.

15 Senator Reed: Where do you think that level of
16 coordination has to be? Because again, it's not just DOD.
17 It's the Department of Energy, the Department of Homeland
18 Security.

19 Mr. Rapuano: I think ultimately the White House has a
20 very important marshaling role in the National Security
21 Council staff.

22 Senator Reed: And they should be coordinating and
23 leading an effort to come up with doctrine as well as
24 organizational changes and personnel augmentations or
25 movements? Is that fair?

1 Mr. Rapuano: I believe they should be setting those
2 expectations. I believe that the executive order issued by
3 the President last week goes a long way to identifying the
4 challenges and setting in motion the steps to start to
5 identify the issues that need to be addressed.

6 Senator Reed: Mr. Karem, quickly, any comments in this
7 regard?

8 Mr. Karem: Yes, Senator. I agree with Mr. Rapuano's
9 assessment with respect to the U.S. Government. I would
10 only add that the problem is magnified when you look at the
11 threat that these activities pose to our allies. So there
12 would need to be coordination not just among the U.S.
13 Government but with our allies. NATO's Cyber Center of
14 Excellence is a step in the right direction, but clearly
15 there's more work that needs to be done.

16 Senator Reed: And, Ms. Bingen, we had a chance to talk
17 on this topic in the office, and that is particularly after
18 the OPM database breach there was a huge shift back to DOD,
19 but now we have a backlog of 600,000 people in terms of just
20 getting cleared so we can have the people to do these jobs
21 we've been talking about.

22 First, do you agree that this is a significant problem
23 that DOD faces and that it's essential that we deal with
24 this very quickly and very effectively?

25 Ms. Bingen: Senator, I absolutely agree with that. Of

1 that 600,000, most of those are DOD personnel awaiting a
2 background investigation or update.

3 Senator Reed: Now, we've mandated that DOD provide a
4 plan to transfer completely the mission back from OPM, and I
5 would assume that you are going to be one of the chief
6 architects of this plan, and I also assume you're going to
7 hit the ground running. Those are fair assumptions,
8 correct?

9 Ms. Bingen: Absolutely, Senator. The NDAA last year,
10 as you fully know, sir, requires a plan by August 1st on
11 that transfer. So that is something that I absolutely, if
12 confirmed, would have to hit the ground running and focus on
13 meeting that deadline and providing you the information that
14 you need, sir.

15 Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Chairman McCain: Senator Shaheen?

18 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 And to all three of you, congratulations on your
20 nominations, and thank you for your willingness to serve the
21 country, continue to serve the country at this critical
22 time.

23 Mr. Karem, I want to start with you because I very much
24 appreciate that you have been a supporter of the Special
25 Immigrant Visa Program that has helped those who helped us

1 in Iraq and Afghanistan. As I'm sure you're aware, while
2 the Iraq program is almost at completion, the program in
3 Afghanistan continues. There are many people in the queue
4 who helped us who would like to come to the United States.
5 Can you talk about why you think this is important?

6 Mr. Karem: Senator, thank you. I first want to
7 recognize your leadership on this issue, and that of the
8 Chairman and the Ranking Member. When I served in House
9 leadership, I was proud to get to work with your staffs on
10 both the Iraq and Afghanistan Special Immigrant Programs to
11 make sure they were extended, and I believe very strongly
12 that the United States should be no better friend -- there
13 should be no better friend and no worse enemy.

14 If confirmed, however, the portfolio for ISA would not
15 include Afghanistan but for the NATO component. So this
16 program would not fall under my jurisdiction. But as you
17 know, I've been a long-time believer that we need to stand
18 by those who have risked their lives alongside our soldiers.

19 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you, and I very much
20 appreciate Secretary Mattis' support for the program as
21 well.

22 Let me follow up on the questioning that Senator Reed
23 started around NATO. You were answering that you think the
24 Cyber Security Center of Excellence at NATO is important as
25 we look at how we can better, with NATO, address the cyber

1 threats to ourselves and the allies, the NATO allies. Can
2 you expand a little more on what you would like to see NATO
3 do with respect to cyber threats?

4 Mr. Karem: Yes, Senator. I think there are a couple
5 of pieces, and there are obviously things that the United
6 States can do to increase its deterrence. But with respect
7 to NATO, all of our allies have an obligation under Article
8 3 to increase their national resilience. Some nations in
9 the cyber realm have done more than others. The Estonians
10 are real leaders in this regard, and it's no surprise that
11 the Cyber Center of Excellence is located in Tallinn.

12 Senator Shaheen: I've had a chance to visit there.
13 It's very impressive.

14 Mr. Karem: It is. So there are investments in cyber
15 security technologies. They are making budgetary decisions
16 and really changing the culture so that we prioritize this.
17 If confirmed, I really want to get a little more deeply into
18 this subject and work with our NATO partners on it.

19 Senator Shaheen: Great.

20 Ms. Bingen, you're going to be responsible for or have
21 intelligence gathering as part of your portfolio, as I
22 understand what you will be doing. How important is the
23 intelligence sharing that we do to our allies in helping us
24 to get the information that we need to take actions?

25 Ms. Bingen: Senator, I believe it's incredibly

1 important. Nearly every military operation that we
2 undertake today is done in a coalition, and so it is
3 incredibly important that we be able to provide our
4 coalition partners intelligence information, but also that
5 they be able to provide us information as well. At the end
6 of the day, the mission is to protect our collective
7 national security.

8 Senator Shaheen: And how important to that effort is
9 it that people believe that when they share that
10 intelligence, it will continue to be confidential in the
11 United States with those people who are going to act on it?

12 Ms. Bingen: Senator, if confirmed as Principal Deputy,
13 it is my responsibility to safeguard classified information
14 and safeguard our sources and methods, including those from
15 our allies and partners.

16 Senator Shaheen: And it's important to our allies that
17 that be the case; is that correct?

18 Ms. Bingen: Yes, Senator.

19 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

20 Mr. Rapuano, in thinking about cyber, what we've seen
21 with some of the breaches within DOD have been with respect
22 to the contractors that we work with. Do you have thoughts
23 about what more we can do to ensure that our contractors are
24 doing everything possible to make sure that they are not
25 susceptible to cyber threats and that they maintain secure

1 networks?

2 Mr. Rapuano: Yes, Senator. The contractors are a very
3 important component of the total force, and if they have
4 vulnerabilities and the ability for adversaries to access
5 their systems, it really weakens the entire system. So
6 looking at their IT at the level of modernity, how
7 often/frequent, what are their policies for patches and
8 other security measures is critical, and that's an area
9 that, if confirmed, would be a higher focus for me.

10 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman McCain: Senator King?

13 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 The discussion of cyber policy, I don't want to say I
15 laughed, but I felt a sense of irony, because we probably
16 spent more time on cyber policy and cyber issues in this
17 committee than any other single issue in the last year or
18 so, but there is no cyber policy. I realize that you all
19 are not at the level where you will be setting that policy,
20 but I hope you will be the continued irritant within the
21 administration, and this spans the last administration and
22 the prior administration.

23 We've got to get to the point where we have a doctrine
24 and a policy and a clear deterrent strategy. We don't have
25 that now, and I hope that this is something that, for

1 example, in your list, Mr. Karem, you're looking at
2 international security. The most likely attack is a cyber
3 attack, and we have so many warnings that keep coming. It's
4 the longest wind-up for a punch in world history, and we're
5 still not ready.

6 So I hope that each of you will take very seriously the
7 necessity for a consistent overall government and non-
8 government strategy and doctrine for dealing with this
9 issue. I just hope you'll take that on.

10 Mr. Karem, a more specific question. What's your
11 recommendation for our long-term military posture in Iraq
12 after the defeat of ISIS?

13 Mr. Karem: Senator, I believe there are ongoing
14 discussions between the United States and Iraq about a
15 longer-term U.S. presence after the defeat of ISIS. I think
16 our objectives in Iraq should be to make sure that Iraq
17 remains a long-term strategic partner in the fight against
18 terrorism, and that Iraq remains free from Iranian malign
19 interference. The precise mechanics of what that
20 relationship looks like and the authorities under which it
21 occurs I think are under negotiation, and if confirmed, I
22 would want to work with counterparts throughout the
23 interagency and with the Congress on what those mechanics
24 should be.

25 Senator King: But I take it, it would be your

1 recommendation that some kind of total disengagement would
2 not be good policy?

3 Mr. Karem: Yes, sir. I believe history would caution
4 against walking away from our partners.

5 Senator King: Thank you.

6 Ms. Bingen, you're part of a much larger intelligence
7 community in your position. Do you see areas of redundancy
8 and opportunities for better coordination, cooperation, and
9 perhaps even efficiency in terms of the 17 agencies that are
10 involved in the United States Government in intelligence
11 matters?

12 Ms. Bingen: Yes, Senator. Right off the bat, I think
13 that there is an opportunity for greater air space
14 integration. I know we continue to have these discussions,
15 but it's an area that we haven't made as much progress on as
16 I would have expected. So air space integration, more
17 integration on the ground in terms of the processing,
18 exploitation, dissemination capabilities, and bringing in
19 whether it's commercial technologies or other technologies
20 out there. There is a lot of data right now out there,
21 whether it's slow-motion video or others, that our analysts
22 are frankly spending more time searching for that data than
23 they are doing the analysis.

24 So I think there are some opportunities to integrate
25 not only better across the defense intelligence enterprise

1 but also in support of that national intelligence community
2 enterprise as well.

3 Senator King: Will you participate in your position as
4 a member of the intelligence community, or is that General
5 Stewart? How does the structure work?

6 Ms. Bingen: Yes, Senator. One of the jobs of the
7 Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, and as
8 Principal Deputy, if confirmed, I would support that. It is
9 dual hat. It is the Director of Defense Intelligence and
10 Principal Advisor to the DNI for Military Intelligence
11 matters.

12 Senator King: So you will be engaged in those
13 discussions?

14 Ms. Bingen: Absolutely, sir, if confirmed.

15 Senator King: Mr. Rapuano, what do we need to do to
16 ensure defense of the homeland from the growing threat of
17 missile attack from North Korea? How do you feel about the
18 state of our missile defense? This is a key area, it seems
19 to me, that is becoming more important every day, literally
20 every day.

21 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, missile attack is not directly
22 in my portfolio, but clearly it's a growing threat
23 specifically with regard to North Korea. There are a number
24 of systems that we have in place, both in terms of our
25 capability to detect and track these systems, as well as to

1 engage and defeat them. I think it would be difficult
2 without going into a closed hearing to get into some of
3 those details, and I haven't been fully briefed on them, but
4 I certainly recognize your concern, and that would be an
5 area of focus should I be confirmed.

6 Senator King: Thank you.

7 My time has expired, but another area I think it's
8 important to pay attention to in a changing environment is
9 the Arctic. In the absence of Senator Sullivan this
10 morning, I'll carry the water for him. It's an incredibly
11 important area. The opening up of the Arctic Ocean is the
12 equivalent of the discovery of the Mediterranean Sea. It's
13 a new body of water that's never been available for human
14 activity in human history, and the implications in terms of
15 national security are very serious. So I hope that each of
16 you in your respective areas will be thinking about that as
17 an important part of the development of American doctrine
18 and strategy. Thank you very much.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Chairman McCain: Senator Cotton?

21 Senator Cotton: I share Senator King's concern about
22 the Arctic because I think we all do, but did we adopt a
23 committee role that only Senator Sullivan gets to bring that
24 up repeatedly in hearing after hearing?

25 [Laughter.]

1 Senator Cotton: You're his proxy today since he's
2 absent for the time being.

3 Thank you all for being here. Thank you for your
4 willingness to serve your country again. Thanks to all the
5 family members I see behind you as well, for the support
6 you've given them.

7 Mr. Karem, is it your sense that our NATO and U.S.
8 posture in Europe is adequate today to meet the threat from
9 Russia?

10 Mr. Karem: Senator, I believe that Vladimir Putin
11 remains undeterred from conducting activities that are
12 harmful to the interests of the United States and its NATO
13 allies. So I would, if confirmed, want to look at what
14 additional steps the United States and its partners could do
15 to bolster our deterrence and ability to defend against such
16 activities.

17 Senator Cotton: So we're currently undertaking
18 something called the Reassurance Initiative. It's
19 regrettable that we've reached the point that we need to
20 reassure our allies. But if Vladimir Putin remains
21 undeterred, what are some of the broad steps -- I understand
22 you haven't been confirmed and you're not in office, you
23 haven't seen the most recent intelligence -- the broad steps
24 necessary to reach a point where Vladimir Putin is deterred?

25 Mr. Karem: Senator, I would look at it a couple of

1 different ways. There are investments that the United
2 States could make in technologies to offset the advantages
3 the Russians have acquired after 15 or 20 years of military
4 modernization. There are steps we could take to reinforce
5 our position on the continent. But as importantly, there
6 are steps that our NATO allies could take to meet the 2
7 percent pledge of Wales and to invest in technologies that
8 allow them to play a larger role within the alliance in
9 defending and deterring against Russian aggression.

10 Senator Cotton: Investing in technologies, not
11 pensions and health care.

12 Mr. Karem: Correct. And the Wales pledge speaks to
13 this.

14 Senator Cotton: Yes, it does. I mean, the 2 percent
15 goal is an important goal, but it's only a goal. Some
16 countries might want to spend more than that. They might
17 want to coordinate the technologies that they acquire given
18 their positions within Europe and the threat that Europe
19 poses to them, and they should all try to reach the 2
20 percent goal by increasing the numerator, not decreasing the
21 denominator of the size of their economy, the way some
22 European countries have done so.

23 Ms. Bingen, could you please speak to the importance of
24 ISR in Europe, especially as it relates to the threat from
25 Russia that we've been discussing?

1 Ms. Bingen: Absolutely, Senator. I would start by
2 saying that I think the defense intelligence community needs
3 to go to school on what Russia is doing in Ukraine and Syria
4 right now, particularly in Ukraine. Based on what I've seen
5 in my current position, when you look at how they've
6 integrated drones, electronic warfare, cyber, their
7 artillery capabilities, the little green men, they are
8 presenting a sophisticated challenge. And when I look at
9 the whole of Europe and our national security interests,
10 this is a very different operational challenge than what
11 we've experienced the last 15 years in the counter-terrorism
12 fight. We cannot assume that we have air superiority in the
13 future, and there are some tremendous, I think, foundational
14 intelligence requirements that need to be undertaken that
15 have atrophied over the last 15, 20 years, from better
16 foundational targeting information, order of battle
17 information, and a better ability to do indications and
18 warning.

19 Senator Cotton: You speak about air superiority. My
20 subcommittee, the Airland Subcommittee, we've heard from
21 numerous generals over the last four years, to include H.R.
22 McMaster in his previous role at CIC, about the threat that
23 we're being out-ranged and outgunned by our adversaries, in
24 particular Russia and China. Could you speak a little bit
25 about the threat that that poses to our forces in Europe?

1 Ms. Bingen: Senator, I think it's an incredible
2 threat. In my current position with the HASC, this is an
3 area that we focused on quite significantly in terms of what
4 our posture should be in that theater, but also the
5 readiness challenges of our forces, everything from
6 equipment to end strength to the training that's required in
7 this contested environment that, frankly, we have not had to
8 do, and we've had a whole generation of leaders coming up
9 through the system that have not had to go through -- well,
10 that have largely been focused on the counter-terrorism
11 fight, rightly so, but they have not had to do that high-end
12 training that would be required in that environment.

13 Senator Cotton: So in layman's terms, our adversaries
14 could hit our troops with bullets and bombs at a distance
15 that we can't reach them; or, as you say, if we don't have
16 air superiority, their aircraft could fly over our troops
17 and attack our troops in a way that gives them the greater
18 advantage that we have enjoyed for 15 years in Iraq and
19 Afghanistan.

20 Ms. Bingen: Yes, Senator.

21 Senator Cotton: Thank you all.

22 Chairman McCain: Senator Warren?

23 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 And thank you to all our witnesses for being here.

25 Mr. Karem, if confirmed, you'll be responsible for

1 advising the Secretary of Defense on defense policy toward
2 Iran, and there's no doubt that Iran remains a dangerous
3 influence in the region. But I'd like to ask you
4 specifically about the nuclear deal which imposed limits on
5 Iran's nuclear program and placed it under rigorous
6 monitoring and inspections.

7 At his nomination hearing before this committee,
8 Secretary Mattis referred to the Iran nuclear deal as, and
9 I'll quote, "an imperfect arms control agreement," but
10 stated "when America gives her word, we have to live up to
11 it and work with our allies."

12 Do you agree with that statement by Secretary Mattis?

13 Mr. Karem: I do, Senator.

14 Senator Warren: Good. And Donald Trump once
15 threatened to rip up the Iran deal. Instead, last month,
16 the Trump Administration certified that Iran is complying
17 with the nuclear deal, which was required for Iran to get
18 sanctions relief and to keep the agreement intact.

19 So, Mr. Karem, again, setting aside your views on the
20 Iran deal itself, do you agree with the Administration's
21 decision to certify that Iran is complying with its
22 commitments under the agreement?

23 Mr. Karem: Senator, I agree with the determination.

24 Senator Warren: Good.

25 Mr. Karem: I believe it was based on the assessment of

1 the intelligence community.

2 Senator Warren: Good. Do you think the nuclear deal
3 makes it harder or easier to counter Iran's other
4 destabilizing actions in the region?

5 Mr. Karem: Senator, I'm concerned that the nuclear
6 deal has in some ways limited our ability to confront Iran's
7 malign activities, that some of the sanctions relief has
8 been lessened that pertains to missile proliferation, for
9 example.

10 Senator Warren: All right. But that's about sanctions
11 in a different area, about Iran's behavior. The Iran
12 nuclear deal isn't perfect, but I think it is easier to
13 counter the ambitions of an Iran that has no nuclear weapons
14 than it is to counter an Iran that can threaten the world
15 with a nuclear bomb. If the United States tears up this
16 deal, we isolate ourselves instead of Iran and potentially
17 embolden the Iranians to revive their nuclear program and to
18 escalate their dangerous activities in the region.

19 I want to also have a chance to ask you about Russia.
20 Donald Trump has flip-flopped on many foreign policy issues,
21 including the NATO alliance. Now, candidate Trump said that
22 NATO was obsolete and suggested that the U.S. would meet its
23 Article 5 commitments to defend our allies only if the
24 country being attacked spent 2 percent of GDP on defense.
25 But recently, after meeting with German Chancellor Merkel,

1 the NATO Secretary and the NATO Secretary General, he
2 announced that NATO was suddenly no longer obsolete.

3 So, Mr. Karem, what change caused NATO to go from
4 obsolete to not obsolete in a matter of a few weeks?

5 Mr. Karem: Senator, I can't speak to any internal
6 deliberations inside the Administration that may have led to
7 a change in the opinions of those in the White House.

8 Senator Warren: So, do you believe now that NATO is
9 obsolete or not obsolete?

10 Mr. Karem: Senator, I believe that NATO is an
11 essential alliance --

12 Senator Warren: I'm sorry. Does that mean you believe
13 it's obsolete or not obsolete?

14 Mr. Karem: I believe it is not obsolete.

15 Senator Warren: You believe it is not obsolete. Do
16 you believe it used to be obsolete?

17 Mr. Karem: Senator, my own view is that NATO has been
18 and remains an important institution for the United States.

19 Senator Warren: Okay. I'll take that as not obsolete.

20 Should the United States refuse to defend our NATO
21 allies if they don't spend as much as we want them to spend
22 on defense?

23 Mr. Karem: Senator, I think it's important that our
24 NATO allies are full contributors to the alliance.

25 Senator Warren: Okay, but that's not my question. I

1 want them to be contributors to our alliance. The question
2 I'm asking is should we refuse to defend them if they don't
3 meet spending targets that we set that they should spend on
4 their own defense?

5 Mr. Karem: Senator, I believe that the United States'
6 commitment to Article 5 of NATO is sacrosanct.

7 Senator Warren: Which means that we commit no matter
8 how much, right?

9 Mr. Karem: Correct, but our allies should understand
10 that they weaken the alliance by not meeting their
11 commitment.

12 Senator Warren: I understand that, but you're saying
13 we're still committed.

14 We've also increased our own spending on the region
15 through the European Resistance Initiative, ERI, deploying
16 our own equipment and --

17 Chairman McCain: It's "Reassurance."

18 Senator Warren: Oh, I'm sorry, "Reassurance." You're
19 right. Thank you. Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

20 Deploying equipment and rotating ground forces back
21 into Europe. But this conventional display of force
22 obviously by itself isn't sufficient to deter Russia. I'll
23 stop here because I'm out of time and I want to be
24 respectful, but I do want to submit a question for the
25 record about working with our NATO allies to counter Russian

1 aggression in the region.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman McCain: I thank you, Senator Warren.

4 Mr. Karem, would you judge Iranian behavior to have
5 increased or decreased their aggressive behavior in the
6 region since the agreement was made with the Iranians
7 concerning nuclear?

8 Mr. Karem: Senator, I believe the Iranian behavior has
9 not decreased. It has probably increased, and it poses a
10 significant threat to the United States and its allies.

11 Chairman McCain: I could not allow the witnesses to
12 leave without significant questions concerning the Arctic,
13 Senator Sullivan.

14 [Laughter.]

15 Senator Sullivan: Mr. Chairman, I'm very glad that
16 you're so interested in the Arctic.

17 [Laughter.]

18 Senator Sullivan: Mr. Karem, I'd actually like to
19 follow up on Iran. You know, a number of us have been
20 following that issue for quite some time, even well before
21 we started negotiations with the Iranians, and there are
22 some serious doubts, I think, both in classified and
23 unclassified venues, on whether and to what degree the
24 Iranians are actually complying with the nuclear agreement.

25 I know that the IAEA recently confirmed that they

1 believe that they were in compliance, but a number of us who
2 follow this very closely have a lot of skepticism with
3 regard to that issue. I think it's an incredibly important
4 issue.

5 If confirmed, will you commit to looking at that
6 outside of what the IAEA has stated and give us, give this
7 committee your own view based on both classified and
8 unclassified information on whether or not the Iranians or,
9 for that matter, the Russians are in compliance with this
10 agreement, which many of us thought was an ill-fated idea to
11 begin with?

12 Mr. Karem: Senator, I believe the Administration is
13 very focused on making sure the Iranians are living up to
14 their side of the agreement, and if confirmed I would
15 certainly commit to coming back to you on this.

16 Senator Sullivan: But coming back to us not just
17 parroting what the IAEA has stated but coming back to us
18 with your own and the Department of Defense's own
19 independent evaluation of whether or not you as an
20 organization believe that they're in compliance.

21 Mr. Karem: Yes, sir.

22 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

23 Mr. Rapuano -- sorry, I know I'm probably butchering
24 that. You know, in the last few days there's been -- not
25 few days, several weeks -- a growing concern about the

1 capability of the North Koreans with regard to their
2 intercontinental ballistic nuclear capabilities. It's been
3 stated in this committee several times that it's not a
4 matter of if anymore but when they're going to have that
5 capability, not just a range to states like Alaska and
6 Hawaii but the lower 48 states.

7 My view has certainly been that if we know that that
8 day is coming that they're going to have that capability,
9 whether in a year or five years, that we need to do much
10 more with regard to our nation's missile defense to array a
11 missile defense system that tries to integrate THAAD, Aegis,
12 the missile defense base in the U.S.

13 What's your view on missile defense capabilities right
14 now and what we should be doing with regard to our missile
15 defense given that perhaps during your watch Kim Jong-un is
16 going to be able to announce, and probably with good reason,
17 that he has the capability to send a nuclear missile to hit
18 Chicago or L.A. or New York?

19 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, missile defense, ballistic
20 missile defense does not fit within the portfolio for
21 Homeland Defense and Global Security. Cruise missiles and
22 air space defense does. But I will certainly acknowledge
23 that there are growing concerns about ballistic missiles,
24 particularly from countries like the DPRK. The capabilities
25 associated with detecting, tracking, acquiring, and

1 defeating these systems, as you know, we do have some of
2 them deployed. We have areas that require improvement, and
3 that is a growing focus of concern in the Department.

4 Senator Sullivan: Thank you. I'd like to get a
5 commitment that you work with other members within the
6 Administration on that important issue, if confirmed.

7 Mr. Rapuano: If confirmed, absolutely, Senator.

8 Senator Sullivan: And not to disappoint the Chairman
9 with my 30 seconds left but, Mr. Karem, give me your sense.
10 When Secretary Mattis, General Mattis testified, he did say
11 that the Arctic is an increasingly important area of
12 strategic interest for the United States because of, of
13 course, natural resources, the environment, opening shipping
14 lanes and sea routes. Vladimir Putin has called it the new
15 Suez Canal, which the Russians want to dominate. They're
16 massively building up their military capabilities in the
17 Arctic, four new brigade combat teams, a new Arctic military
18 command, 40 icebreakers, building 13 more.

19 We've been slow to the game up there. The Department
20 of Defense has just put out a revised Arctic strategy which
21 was mandated by this committee that the Secretary of Defense
22 put forward. If confirmed, will you give that strategic
23 area of the United States sufficient focus and interest the
24 way that Secretary Mattis stated he would during his
25 confirmation hearing?

1 Mr. Karem: Senator, I will, and if confirmed I look
2 forward also to working with our allies who share a
3 significant stake in the Arctic.

4 Senator Sullivan: Great. We just had the Arctic
5 ministerial led by Secretary Tillerson up in the great city
6 of Fairbanks, Alaska last week where all eight Arctic
7 ministers, including the foreign ministers of Russia, NATO,
8 and Canada, convened and tried to talk about cooperation in
9 that important area of the world. But the tensions
10 underlying that ministerial were apparent, mostly because of
11 the Russian aggressive actions, including five bomber runs
12 at sovereign air space in the United States, in Alaska,
13 where we've had to intercept those Russian bombers from
14 coming into American air space. So we want to work with you
15 on that. It's an important area of the world and
16 increasingly being militarized by the Russians.

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Chairman McCain: The Russians asserted their
19 sovereignty over Alaska again?

20 Senator Sullivan: Putin is just upset that we got such
21 a good deal 150 years ago when we bought Alaska.

22 Chairman McCain: Some of us question that.

23 [Laughter.]

24 Chairman McCain: I want to thank the witnesses for
25 their willingness to serve, for their past service, and we

1 will move forward as quickly as possible so that you can get
2 to work. I thank you for your service to the country and
3 your continued willingness to serve.

4 This hearing is adjourned.

5 [Whereupon, at 10:39 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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