

Stenographic Transcript  
Before the

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

## UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF:  
DR. LISA J. PORTER TO BE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY  
OF DEFENSE FOR RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING;  
JAMES N. STEWART TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
OF DEFENSE FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS;  
DR. JAMES H. ANDERSON TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
OF DEFENSE FOR STRATEGY, PLANS, AND CAPABILITIES;  
GREGORY J. SLAVONIC TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
OF THE NAVY FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS;  
AND  
DR. CHARLES P. VERDON TO BE DEPUTY  
ADMINISTRATOR  
FOR DEFENSE PROGRAMS, NATIONAL NUCLEAR  
SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Thursday, May 10, 2018

Washington, D.C.

ALDERSON COURT REPORTING  
2020 K STREET, NW  
SUITE 700  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006  
(202) 289-2260  
[www.aldersonreporting.com](http://www.aldersonreporting.com)

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12 ADMINISTRATION

13

14 Thursday, May 10, 2018

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U.S. Senate

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Committee on Armed Services

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Washington, D.C.

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20 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:31 a.m. in  
21 Room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. James M.  
22 Inhofe, presiding.

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Committee Members Present: Senators Inhofe

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[presiding], Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis,

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Sullivan, Sasse, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Shaheen,

1 Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King,  
2 Heinrich, Warren, and Peters.

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1           OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S.

2   SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

3           Senator Inhofe: The committee will come to order.

4           Today we meet to consider the nominations of Dr. Lisa  
5   Porter to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Research  
6   and Engineering; Mr. James Stewart to be Assistant Secretary  
7   of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs; Dr. James  
8   Anderson to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy,  
9   Plans, and Capabilities; Mr. Greg Slavonic to be Assistant  
10   Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and  
11   also an old-time friend of mine; and Dr. Charles Verdon to  
12   be Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, National  
13   Nuclear Security Administration.

14          Before starting -- first of all, we thank all of you  
15   for being here. We are looking forward to hearing from you,  
16   but I would like to introduce Senator James Lankford who  
17   would participate in an introduction of Mr. Slavonic.

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1           STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES LANKFORD, U.S. SENATOR FROM  
2 OKLAHOMA

3           Senator Lankford: Senator Inhofe, thank you for that.  
4 Allow me to be able to just step in for just a moment. I  
5 will be brief.

6           But I wanted to be able to introduce to this committee  
7 as well Greg Slavonic. Greg is someone that I not only know  
8 but I know extremely well. He has been chief of staff for  
9 the last 3 years that I have been here in the Senate. When  
10 I transitioned from the House, serving 4 years in the House  
11 and then serving in the Senate, I was sort of looking for a  
12 chief of staff that could help us in this process. And I  
13 found Greg Slavonic basically out on the golf course without  
14 his time being well used.

15           Greg Slavonic started as a seaman recruit in 1971 and  
16 advanced after 30-plus years in the Navy all the way to a  
17 rear admiral. He has served both active duty and reserves.  
18 He has been a solid person to serve in multiple different  
19 theaters. And you have got his list of all his different  
20 medals and ribbons and such as well. But he has been a  
21 solid leader for us in our State and for the United States  
22 in the Navy for all these years.

23           When I reached out to him, he was unofficially retired.  
24 He was working multiple different media outlets and other  
25 places. But I reached out to him and asked him to be able

1 to step back up and serve his country again.

2 I cannot tell you how thrilled I am that his country is  
3 asking him to be able to serve in this role as well. He  
4 would be a solid leader for the Navy. He is someone who  
5 brings a wealth of experience both for active duty and  
6 reserves, and that is a great asset to be able to have  
7 somebody that has a good perspective in both those areas.  
8 And after decades of service to our nation, he is well  
9 suited for this task. So he is not only a friend, but I  
10 think he will be a solid leader for our country in the  
11 Pentagon as well.

12 So thank you for allowing to give a brief introduction  
13 of him and my overwhelming support for him.

14 Senator Inhofe: Thank you so much, Senator Lankford.  
15 And I agree wholeheartedly in your remarks.

16 As this is always the case, we have some required  
17 questions and answers that have to take place before we can  
18 proceed with our hearing. And what I would like to do is  
19 ask you the questions and ask you to respond audibly so that  
20 we do not have to go back and try to seek you out and pump  
21 you for another answer. All right?

22 First of all, have you adhered to applicable laws and  
23 regulations governing conflicts of interest?

24 Mr. Slavonic: Yes.

25 Mr. Stewart: Yes.

1 Dr. Porter: Yes.

2 Dr. Anderson: Yes.

3 Dr. Verdon: Yes.

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

8 Mr. Slavonic: Yes.

9 Mr. Stewart: Yes.

10 Dr. Porter: Yes.

11 Dr. Anderson: Yes.

12 Dr. Verdon: Yes.

13 Senator Inhofe: Will you cooperate in providing  
14 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional  
15 requests?

16 Mr. Slavonic: Yes.

17 Mr. Stewart: Yes.

18 Dr. Porter: Yes.

19 Dr. Anderson: Yes.

20 Dr. Verdon: Yes.

21 Senator Inhofe: Will those witnesses be protected from  
22 reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

23 Mr. Slavonic: Yes.

24 Mr. Stewart: Yes.

25 Dr. Porter: Yes.

1 Dr. Anderson: Yes.

2 Dr. Verdon: Yes.

3 Senator Inhofe: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear  
4 and testify upon request before this committee?

5 Mr. Slavonic: Yes.

6 Mr. Stewart: Yes.

7 Dr. Porter: Yes.

8 Dr. Anderson: Yes.

9 Dr. Verdon: Yes.

10 Senator Inhofe: And do you agree to provide documents,  
11 including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a  
12 timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee  
13 or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any  
14 good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

15 Mr. Slavonic: Yes.

16 Mr. Stewart: Yes.

17 Dr. Porter: Yes.

18 Dr. Anderson: Yes.

19 Dr. Verdon: Yes.

20 Senator Inhofe: Lastly, have you assumed any duties or  
21 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the  
22 outcome of the confirmation process?

23 Mr. Slavonic: No.

24 Mr. Stewart: No.

25 Dr. Porter: No.



1 Dr. Anderson: No.

2 Dr. Anderson: No.

3 Senator Inhofe: Thank you very much.

4 Dr. Porter, you have been nominated to serve in the  
5 Department's acquisition enterprise at an important moment.  
6 As we have heard from our senior leaders, America's military  
7 advantage is eroding. I go back and listen to the statement  
8 of our Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff when he said  
9 that we are losing our edge, and we have been losing our  
10 edge.

11 A better acquisition system will be critical in  
12 reversing this trend. If confirmed, you will be helping to  
13 carry out some of the most important reforms, the  
14 reorganization of the acquisition enterprise that will  
15 require real leadership and vision, and we hope that you  
16 will consider us as a partner in this work. And I would add  
17 that I can remember this all the way back to the service I  
18 had in the House Armed Services Committee. We have been  
19 working at this. So, Dr. Porter, you are the one who can  
20 get it done.

21 Mr. Stewart, during recent years of inadequate funding  
22 and budget uncertainty, we know personnel and readiness were  
23 often the hardest hit. Looking forward, ensuring the  
24 military's ability to recruit and to retain high quality  
25 service members will be necessary to maintain an effective

1 all volunteer force. The committee is increasingly  
2 concerned that the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act  
3 is an outdated policy and mandates rigidity over flexibility  
4 and is simply unable to cope with the demands of the modern  
5 force. If confirmed, we will look to you to help us  
6 modernize the personnel system.

7 Dr. Anderson, if confirmed, you would play a central  
8 role in the implementation of the National Defense Strategy.  
9 Major decisions lie ahead about how we equip, posture, and  
10 employ the joint force. You rendered a distinguished  
11 service in the Marine Corps and have significant experience  
12 related to Middle East policy. Today we hope you will  
13 explain how you intend to apply your background and  
14 experience to exercise strong civilian control of the  
15 functional areas for which you would be responsible,  
16 including force planning, force development, contingency  
17 planning, joint requirements, and joint concept development.

18 Mr. Slavonic, if confirmed, you will be tasked with  
19 ensuring the Navy has the people needed to responsibly grow  
20 the fleet. As you know, we have got some pretty ambitious  
21 ideas on what is going to be happening to the Navy, and you  
22 are the guy, if confirmed, that would be overseeing that.  
23 Achieving the proper balance between end strength and  
24 equipment is no small task. If Navy manpower grows too  
25 quickly without the ships to accommodate the new sailors,

1 readiness will suffer. Conversely, if the fleet grows  
2 faster than the Navy's ability to recruit new sailors, the  
3 service risks wearing out those who are already serving.  
4 The Navy has innovative plans as it looks to the future, and  
5 we look forward to you to continue those efforts, if you are  
6 confirmed.

7         And Dr. Verdon, your decades of work at the Lawrence  
8 Livermore National Laboratory and other National Nuclear  
9 Security Administration facilities have, no doubt, prepared  
10 you to serve as the Deputy Administrator for Defense  
11 Programs. If confirmed, you will be charged with  
12 implementing the NNSA portion of the Nuclear Posture Review,  
13 including life extension programs and supplemental  
14 capabilities in a number of large infrastructure projects.  
15 We look forward to hearing your thoughts on how you would  
16 approach these difficult tasks.

17         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 our nominees and also  
5 thanking them for their willingness to serve and also to  
6 thank the family members who are here because none of these  
7 jobs are performed in isolation or alone. So thank you very  
8 much.

9           Dr. Porter, if confirmed, you will be responsible for  
10 helping Dr. Griffin, the new Under Secretary of Research and  
11 Engineering, stand up his office so that it can promote  
12 innovation in the Defense Department at a very complex time.  
13 You will be tasked to develop strategic guidance and provide  
14 leadership to all elements of the research and innovation  
15 community, ranging DARPA to the labs to newer offices like  
16 the Strategic Capabilities Office and DIUx, the Silicon  
17 Valley outreach activity. You will also be responsible for  
18 maintaining technological superiority over rising near-peer  
19 adversaries, especially in emerging technology areas like  
20 artificial intelligence and quantum computing. I look  
21 forward to hearing your thoughts on how to address these  
22 complex challenges.

23           Mr. Stewart, if confirmed as the Assistant Secretary of  
24 Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, you will face many  
25 challenges. First and foremost, the Department and the

1 military services must have adequate numbers of ready and  
2 trained service members of sufficiently high character and  
3 talent to meet national defense objectives, an increasingly  
4 difficult task given the declining propensity and  
5 eligibility among the nation's youth to serve in the  
6 military. You will also be addressing the reform of the  
7 officer management system and streamlining the operations of  
8 the DOD Education Activity and the Defense Commissary  
9 Agency.

10 Mr. Stewart, your past experience will serve you well  
11 in your new position. I look forward to working with you.

12 Dr. Anderson, you have been nominated to serve as the  
13 Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and  
14 Capabilities. This is an important position that oversees  
15 the National Defense Strategy, the development of global  
16 defense posture, the review of campaign and contingency  
17 plans, nuclear and missile defense policy, and security  
18 cooperation activities. In other words, the position you  
19 will assume, if confirmed, is critical to preparing the  
20 Department for the future strategic environment.

21 The implementation of the recent National Defense  
22 Strategy will likely be your primary challenge. While the  
23 reemergence of long-term strategic competition with Russia  
24 and China is the central challenge facing our nation, the  
25 Department must address other equally urgent situations,

1 including tensions on the Korean Peninsula, Iran's ongoing  
2 malign activities, and violent extremist organizations like  
3 ISIS. Therefore, I would welcome your thoughts on the  
4 priorities you will pursue, if confirmed as the Assistant  
5 Secretary, in the context of a dynamic defense environment.

6 Admiral Slavonic, if confirmed, you will serve as the  
7 Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve  
8 Affairs where you will face many of the same thorny policy  
9 issues as Mr. Stewart. Senator Lankford's commendation can  
10 only be seconded. Thank you for your service to the Navy  
11 and to the nation. I look forward to working with you as  
12 you too confront the same problems of finding qualified,  
13 eligible, talented young Americans to serve in the United  
14 States Navy.

15 Dr. Verdon, you are highly qualified for the position  
16 of Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs within the  
17 National Nuclear Security Administration, or NNSA. You are  
18 now the director of the weapons program at Lawrence  
19 Livermore Laboratory, and before that, you were at the  
20 University of Rochester's Laboratory for Laser Energetics,  
21 which serves as an important feeder of scientists to the  
22 NNSA laboratories.

23 If confirmed, you will confront a broad array of  
24 challenges in modernizing our stockpile, which right now  
25 encompasses programs extending the life of four or even

1 probably six weapon systems within the next 5 years. In  
2 particular, you will confront the daunting challenge of  
3 restarting plutonium pit production to meet the needs of the  
4 Department of Defense, while ensuring there is an adequate  
5 workforce and infrastructure at the laboratories and plants  
6 to accomplish the overall modernization mission. This  
7 plutonium mission is of particular concern to me, and I am  
8 interested in your thoughts on the major issues you expect  
9 to confront.

10       Once again, let me thank you all for being here today  
11 and for serving the nation.

12       Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

13       What we are going to do is put your entire statement  
14 into the record, but you can have an abbreviated statement.  
15 Try to keep within 5 minutes. We will have a well attended  
16 bench up here, and we want to have time to ask you  
17 questions.

18       And we will start with you, Mr. Slavonic. You are  
19 recognized.

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1           STATEMENT OF GREGORY J. SLAVONIC TO BE ASSISTANT  
2           SECRETARY OF THE NAVY FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS

3           Mr. Slavonic: Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

4           Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, distinguished  
5           members of the committee, it is an honor and privilege to  
6           appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the  
7           Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve  
8           Affairs. Words cannot adequately express how I feel.  
9           Should I be confirmed to once serve in the Department of the  
10          Navy and the people of the United States will be a great  
11          honor.

12          Before I begin, I would like to again thank Senator  
13          Lankford for taking time from his busy schedule to come and  
14          make comments on my behalf. That was truly appreciated, and  
15          I am humbled and honored.

16          Before I begin, let me say thank you to the President  
17          of the United States, Secretary Mattis, Secretary Spencer  
18          for their support and confidence in me to serve in this  
19          position.

20          I would like to again thank Senator Lankford for the  
21          opportunity to return to Washington, D.C. to serve with him  
22          and the people of Oklahoma for the past 3 and a half years  
23          as his chief of staff.

24          Most of all, I want to thank my wife Molly, who has  
25          been my partner for 46 years of marriage and truly



1 understands what it means to be a Navy spouse. Molly; my  
2 daughters, Kara, Maggie; my son Blake; and my brother Gary  
3 were all unable to be here today, but I know they are here  
4 in spirit.

5 As I look at this date, May 10th, it did not dawn on me  
6 the significance of it until last night when I was preparing  
7 for this hearing. 46 years ago today I was a young Navy  
8 seaman aboard the USS Constellation in the Tonkin Gulf, and  
9 we were launching aircraft into Hanoi and minding the  
10 harbors of Haiphong. And it is truly ironic that some 46  
11 years later I am now here, if confirmed, to be the Assistant  
12 Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

13 I had the honor to wear the uniform of our nation for  
14 34 years and serve with some of the best and brightest  
15 civilians and military in the Department of Defense. If  
16 confirmed, I intend to once again bring those experiences of  
17 success to the position for which I have been nominated.

18 If confirmed, I promise to continue the excellence that  
19 has been the hallmark of the United States military and  
20 specifically the Navy and Marine Corps. I will dutifully  
21 carry out the laws of this great nation and, most  
22 importantly, ensure that U.S. Navy and Marine Corps  
23 personnel are of the highest quality and are properly  
24 trained and prepared for the missions that they have been  
25 called to undertake.

1 I am fully aware of the challenges that face our  
2 military, especially the Navy, but I also know the military  
3 is full of very bright minds and determined individuals and  
4 I will not have to face these challenges alone. If  
5 confirmed, I will have dedicated military and civilian  
6 personnel alongside that I can count on as a team and we can  
7 work together to solve the problems and these future  
8 challenges.

9 Looking to the future, should you confirm my  
10 nomination, I have identified two objectives which I would  
11 like to address immediately.

12 First is to ensure the people within the Navy and  
13 Marine Corps team, uniform and civilian, are always our  
14 first priority. I learned 34 years ago during my naval  
15 career -- and it appears to continue today -- that we ask  
16 our military to do more with less. At some point, this  
17 cycle must be broken. People are our greatest and most  
18 powerful asset. We must ensure that they have the tools to  
19 accomplish the mission.

20 Second is to ensure we continue to have the best and  
21 brightest serving in the Navy and Marine Corps. There is a  
22 war for talent and we must win. As former Chief of Naval  
23 Operations Admiral Vern Clark once told a group of fellow  
24 flag officers, "We are not in the business of finishing  
25 second." This statement is true today as it was 15 years

1 ago.

2           If confirmed, I commit to working with the committee  
3 and every Member of Congress to address any concerns that  
4 may arise and to be accessible and transparent. After all,  
5 I believe it is in the best interest of our military to work  
6 hand in hand with the legislative branch to address any and  
7 all issues that affect the Navy, Marine Corps, and the  
8 security of our nation.

9           I want to reiterate my appreciation to the chairman and  
10 ranking member and the committee staff for their courtesies  
11 and professionalism that I have been shown. I look forward  
12 to your questions.

13           [The prepared statement of Mr. Slavonic follows:]

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1 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Slavonic.

2 Mr. Stewart?

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1           STATEMENT OF JAMES N. STEWART TO BE ASSISTANT  
2           SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS

3           Mr. Stewart:   Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, and  
4           distinguished members of the Committee on Armed Services.  I  
5           am deeply humbled and honored to be here with you today.  
6           Thank you for considering my nomination for the Assistant  
7           Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

8           I am also grateful to the President and Secretary  
9           Mattis for their support and trust and confidence in my  
10          ability to fill this important position.

11          Finally, I would like to thank my immediate family  
12          members who are here with me today:  my wife of 40 years  
13          Kristi, my daughter Aubrey, and my son Aaron.

14          Senator Inhofe:  Hold their hands up here.

15          Mr. Stewart:  Right behind me here.

16          Senator Inhofe:  Good.  Thank you.

17          Mr. Stewart:  I would also like to thank my brothers  
18          and sisters, my mother, my father, who is no longer with us,  
19          for their untiring support over these many years as I served  
20          like my father and brother in the United States Air Force.

21          There are over 4.5 million active, reserve component,  
22          and retired military personnel and over 860,000 appropriated  
23          and non-appropriated civilian employees in the Department of  
24          Defense.  If confirmed, it will be my responsibility to  
25          serve as the principal advisor to Secretary Mattis and Under

1 Secretary Wilkie on all personnel policy, plans, and program  
2 issues involving these outstanding Americans and, most  
3 importantly, their families as well. From rating systems  
4 and awards to child care, education, groceries, this is an  
5 enormous and humbling charge.

6         Given the diverse and extensive scope of the manpower  
7 and reserve affairs portfolio, it is crucial that each  
8 decision made by the Assistant Secretary enhances Secretary  
9 Mattis' vision to provide management systems and policies  
10 where leadership can harness opportunities and ensure  
11 effective stewardship of the taxpayer resources. This  
12 position has the awesome responsibility of ensuring our most  
13 important asset, our people and their families, are well  
14 served by providing them with the tools and the help they  
15 need to ensure our national defense in a budget constrained  
16 environment.

17         As the Department of Defense seeks to improve and  
18 sustain readiness, balance capability and capacity, and  
19 maximize our lethality, improvement must be pursued in the  
20 overall management of the total force of the active and  
21 reserve component, government civilians, and contracted  
22 service personnel. Reforms and efficiencies should be  
23 pursued in order to provide the maximum capability and  
24 lethality for the personnel dollars spent. If confirmed, I  
25 will work with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel

1 and Readiness, the Office of Personnel Management, the  
2 Department's subject-matter experts, along with the Joint  
3 Staff, service chiefs, and reserve component leadership to  
4 pursue promising courses of action that best serve our  
5 mission needs while freeing up money for readiness demands.  
6 I will organize for innovation by adapting organizational  
7 structures to best support the force, to drive budget  
8 discipline, consolidate and streamline processes, and  
9 eliminate duplication of effort.

10 Sustainment of the all volunteer force is my ultimate  
11 priority, and this objective cannot be met unless you take  
12 care of the member's family. Whether it is spouse  
13 education, career opportunities, dependent education,  
14 medical care, child care, relocation assistance, the  
15 exchange or commissary, deployment support, Yellow Ribbon  
16 reintegration, employer support of the Guard and Reserve --  
17 yes, all of these fall underneath the purview of the  
18 Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve  
19 Affairs -- if you do not pay attention to the family's  
20 needs, the member will leave. Trust me. There are numerous  
21 civilian companies looking for the skills our members  
22 possess.

23 If confirmed for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for  
24 Manpower and Reserve Affairs position, I will strive to be a  
25 consistent, transparent, and honest advocate for the needs

1 of all of our Department of Defense personnel and their  
2 families while maintaining open lines of communication  
3 between my office and the Congress. To this end, I will  
4 proactively communicate with Congress and ensure the  
5 congressional defense committees receive timely and  
6 informative updates on all major issues and initiatives in  
7 my portfolio, were I to be confirmed.

8 Thank you.

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

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1           Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Stewart.

2           Dr. Porter?

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1           STATEMENT OF DR. LISA J. PORTER TO BE DEPUTY UNDER  
2           SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING

3           Dr. Porter:   Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, and  
4           distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the  
5           opportunity and the privilege to appear before you today.

6           I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary  
7           Mattis for nominating me for the position of Deputy Under  
8           Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering and this  
9           committee for consideration of my nomination.

10          The dominance of our military depends critically on our  
11          ability to develop and deploy technologies that provide our  
12          warfighters with an overwhelming advantage over our  
13          adversaries.   Both DOD leadership and this committee have  
14          emphasized that the increasingly global nature of technology  
15          advancement necessitates a shift in our strategy regarding  
16          our military's technology development.   Furthermore, we face  
17          not only a diversity of threats but also a diversity of  
18          technological approaches being used against us, which range  
19          from innovative uses of existing technologies in ways we  
20          have not always anticipated to the employment of cutting-  
21          edge capabilities ranging from space systems to cyber  
22          attacks to machine learning to hypersonics to biotechnology.  
23          Delivering effective technological solutions at the speed of  
24          relevance against such a complex threat space demands  
25          significant depth and breadth of expertise coupled with a

1 sense of urgency and a laser focus on mission impact.

2           Fortunately, our nation possesses an incredible amount  
3 of talent that spans our universities, government, and  
4 nonprofit laboratories, and the private sector. My  
5 experience at DARPA, NASA, IARPA, and In-Q-Tel has exposed  
6 me to brilliant innovators across the country, and I have  
7 seen firsthand the great things that can be accomplished  
8 when those powerful minds are focused on a really hard  
9 problem and asked to solve it. Each of these communities  
10 has an important role to play, and I am confident that the  
11 DOD will be able to unleash the full power of the expertise  
12 resident throughout our nation's research and engineering  
13 enterprise to develop solutions to our military's most  
14 pressing problems. If confirmed, I will be fully committed  
15 to achieving this goal.

16           I greatly appreciate the focus of this committee and of  
17 current senior DOD leadership on the need to significantly  
18 expedite technology transition to operational use. The  
19 "valley of death" is a term that has been used extensively  
20 for decades. It is not a new problem, and importantly, it  
21 is not a problem unique to DOD or even to the government.  
22 It is a fundamental challenge of innovation.

23           My experience has taught me that one of the key  
24 ingredients of successful technology transition is a culture  
25 of experimentation and prototyping, with full and early

1 engagement from end users. Rapid and effective prototyping,  
2 where meaningful failures steer us quickly through an  
3 exploration of both the opportunities and the limitations of  
4 innovative ideas, can build a bridge over the valley of  
5 death. Such an approach must be accompanied by both the  
6 willingness to stop doing the things that do not work and  
7 the utilization of sound science and engineering principles  
8 that guide the experimental testing of new technologies and  
9 systems. If confirmed, I will work with the USDR&E to  
10 establish a culture of experimentation, technical integrity,  
11 and warfighter engagement to ensure that we design, develop,  
12 and transition technological solutions that enhance the  
13 lethality of our joint force.

14 I would like to thank this committee for its commitment  
15 to ensuring that the DOD maintain its ability to rapidly  
16 develop and deploy the breadth of technological capabilities  
17 that our warfighters need to remain the most impressive and  
18 dominant military force in the world. I am truly humbled to  
19 be here today, and I look forward to answering your  
20 questions.

21 [The prepared statement of Dr. Porter follows:]

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1           Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Dr. Porter.

2           Dr. Anderson?

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1           STATEMENT OF DR. JAMES H. ANDERSON TO BE ASSISTANT  
2   SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR STRATEGY, PLANS, AND CAPABILITIES

3           Dr. Anderson:   Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed,  
4   distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to be  
5   here today.

6           I am thankful for the confidence that President Trump  
7   and Secretary Mattis have placed in me as the nominee to be  
8   Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and  
9   capabilities.

10          I would not be here today without the support of  
11   family, friends, and mentors who have helped me throughout  
12   my career.   My parents, Barbara and Michael Anderson,  
13   instilled in me the value of hard work, honesty, and respect  
14   for others.   My children, James and Olivia, inspire me every  
15   day.   I wish to thank Emily Anderson, my much better half,  
16   who is present today.   She knows well the sacrifices of  
17   Pentagon positions --

18          Senator Inhofe:   Where are you?   There you are.

19          Dr. Anderson:   -- from my prior service in the  
20   building.   Her love and support make everything worthwhile.

21          My professional experience has helped prepare me for  
22   this opportunity.

23          I served in the Office of the Secretary of Defense from  
24   2001 to 2009, initially working in legislative affairs.   I  
25   then spent most of my appointment working policy issues in

1 international security affairs. I served as Country  
2 Director, Israel, and coordinated defense cooperation  
3 activities for a key United States ally. I also served as  
4 Director, Middle East, and gained a broader perspective on  
5 regional dynamics.

6 I have also taught national security topics at several  
7 civilian and military educational institutions, to include  
8 the George C. Marshall Center for European Security Studies  
9 in Germany. Living overseas and working at this splendid  
10 institution reinforced to me the importance of working with  
11 allies and partners.

12 I have authored or in some cases co-authored a wide  
13 range of strategy-related topics throughout my career.  
14 These topics include the threat of weapons of mass  
15 destruction, theater and national missile defense, security  
16 alliances, great power competition, and national defense  
17 strategy.

18 In my current job at Marine Corps University, I am the  
19 chief academic officer for educational programs that reach  
20 thousands of marines annually. In this capacity, I help  
21 officers and enlisted personnel develop the critical and  
22 creative thinking skills necessary to prevail on future  
23 battlefields.

24 I served 3 years on active duty as a Marine Corps  
25 officer in the late 1980s, an experience that indelibly

1 imprinted upon me the importance of teamwork and esprit de  
2 corps. Nothing is more inspiring than working alongside  
3 fellow professionals in defense of the country's interests  
4 and values.

5       The Department of Defense issued its National Defense  
6 Strategy in January. This document clearly outlines  
7 priorities and concepts needed to ensure our nation's  
8 competitive advantages amid the exacting demands of great  
9 power competition. If confirmed, I will do my level best to  
10 help implement this strategy in a cost effective and  
11 affordable manner. The men and women in uniform, as well as  
12 the citizens of our great nation deserve no less from their  
13 senior defense leaders.

14       I look forward to your questions.

15       [The prepared statement of Dr. Anderson follows:]

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1           Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Dr. Anderson.

2           And Dr. Verdon?

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1           STATEMENT OF DR. CHARLES P. VERDON TO BE DEPUTY  
2 ADMINISTRATOR FOR DEFENSE PROGRAMS, NATIONAL NUCLEAR  
3 SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

4           Dr. Verdon:   Senator Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed,  
5 distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege to  
6 appear before you today.  I am honored by this opportunity  
7 serve my country and thank President Trump and Secretary  
8 Perry for placing their trust and confidence in me, putting  
9 forward my nomination as Deputy Administrator for Defense  
10 Programs within the Department of Energy's National Nuclear  
11 Security Administration.

12           Unfortunately, my family is unable to be here today but  
13 watching from California are my wife Joyce, my son Ryan, and  
14 his wife Camille.  I am grateful to them and the rest of my  
15 family for their tireless support over the years and as I  
16 prepared for today's hearing.

17           The DOE and NNSA have the nation's responsibility of  
18 ensuring a safe, secure, and effective U.S. nuclear  
19 stockpile.  To do this, the NNSA must maintain confidence in  
20 the state of the current stockpile, carry out life extension  
21 programs as required, and ensure that the nation has the  
22 capabilities, the underpinning science, technologies, and  
23 engineering, the facilities and workforce necessary to  
24 sustain the U.S. nuclear stockpile and hence the deterrent  
25 for the long term.

1           In addition, NNSA pays a great deal of attention to the  
2 safety and security of the weapons and associated materials  
3 throughout their life cycle. Robust security protects  
4 weapons and weapons materials at each of the NNSA sites and  
5 through securely transporting materials and weapons between  
6 NNSA facilities and NNSA facilities and military locations.

7           My top priority, if confirmed, is the effective  
8 execution of the nuclear weapons activities within the NNSA.  
9 Success in carrying out this enduring mission requires  
10 working closely with NNSA Administrator Gordon-Hagerty and  
11 the close coordination and integration across the NNSA  
12 federal workforce, NNSA laboratories and production sites,  
13 and the Department of Defense. Of particular importance is  
14 the ongoing stockpile modernization effort. The successful  
15 execution of this effort requires the careful balancing,  
16 planning, and execution of NNSA's production infrastructure  
17 modernization with the stockpile modernization. In  
18 addition, continued development of the science, technology,  
19 and engineering required to sustain confidence in our  
20 nuclear deterrent must also be maintained.

21           I look forward to executing the vision expressed by  
22 Administrator Gordon-Hagerty to ensure a partnership between  
23 NNSA, the laboratories and production sites and with the  
24 DOD. It will take all of us working together to continue to  
25 ensure maintaining a modern and appropriately tailored

1 nuclear deterrent in an ever-changing geopolitical  
2 environment.

3 I believe my work experience provides a unique skill  
4 set of more than 30 years of experience and vision to the  
5 position. During this time, I have gained experience  
6 ranging from an individual technical contributor to the  
7 leader of the nuclear weapons program at Lawrence Livermore  
8 National Laboratory. I have firsthand knowledge and  
9 experience working with some of NNSA's most talented and  
10 dedicated scientists, engineers, technicians, and safety and  
11 security professionals and with very dedicated and  
12 professional individuals within the Department of Defense.  
13 I have devoted my career to the national security mission.

14 To lead the nuclear weapons activities within NNSA, if  
15 confirmed, would be the highest honor. I will work to  
16 ensure our nation's stockpile remains safe, secure, and  
17 effective, modernization of the stockpile is well planned  
18 and being actively executed, and that the capabilities,  
19 facilities, and workforce continue to be developed and  
20 matured to ensure the long-term viability of our nuclear  
21 deterrent.

22 I thank you again for inviting me to appear before this  
23 committee today. I am prepared to answer any questions you  
24 have and, if confirmed, to address questions you may have in  
25 the future.

1 [The prepared statement of Dr. Verdon follows:]

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1           Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Dr. Verdon.

2           Let me ask a question of Dr. Porter. I alluded to  
3 this. You know, when we are out talking to the American  
4 people, there is this assumption that the United States has  
5 the best of everything. In fact, we do not. And we have  
6 gone through a period of starvation where we really need to  
7 get out of this thing. And you are fully aware of this, Dr.  
8 Porter. In such areas as hypersonics, we are actually  
9 behind China and Russia at this time. In the areas of  
10 artillery -- and normally artillery is measured with rapid  
11 fire and range -- both China and Russia are ahead of us in  
12 that area. Our nuclear triad -- we had not done any  
13 modernization in a long period of time, while they have.

14           When you look at these things, how do you view these  
15 things in terms of what do you want to do to make sure that  
16 we get back in the position that the American people think  
17 we are in right now?

18           Dr. Porter: So, Senator, I think you have highlighted  
19 very succinctly the fundamental frustration that a lot of us  
20 share. It is why I appear before you today, hopefully to  
21 help to contribute to solutions to this.

22           I believe actually, as I said in my opening remarks, we  
23 do have a tremendous amount of talent throughout our  
24 enterprise. Our universities are world-class, as we all  
25 know. Our DOD laboratories and national laboratories more

1 broadly, including the DOE, are fantastic.

2       It is a question of how do you focus that energy and  
3 that talent and create a sense of urgency that I believe we  
4 have lost. Dr. Griffin has spoken publicly about we have  
5 been on a holiday, and you mentioned the starvation. I  
6 think we have gotten too comfortable being in first, and  
7 that is not a good strategy. So we have got to get back to  
8 the business of excellence and urgency and focus on mission,  
9 and that is hopefully what I will be able to do.

10       Senator Inhofe: You know, it is pretty obvious. We  
11 had a hearing not too long ago in a subcommittee hearing.  
12 We had all the vices in front of us, and they came to the  
13 conclusion we are kind of back to the old hollow force days  
14 and we are going to have to address that.

15       And a very similar thing, Mr. Slavonic. Right now we  
16 are talking about increasing the Navy 7,500. The problem  
17 that you are going to have is you have got to make this  
18 attractive and go after these people because we do not want  
19 to find ourselves in the position -- and those of us would  
20 all agree with this on this committee -- that in order to  
21 reach that number, you are going to have to lower standards  
22 or lower quality. Have you thought about this?

23       Mr. Slavonic: Yes, Senator. There is no way in my  
24 opinion that we should ever lower our standards. We have to  
25 somehow work through the process and figure out how we bring

1 in the best and brightest to the Navy and Marine Corps. We  
2 are in a war for talent. I think between the age group of  
3 17 and 24, only 25 percent of that age group is qualified to  
4 join the military. So it becomes a very big challenge to  
5 the Navy and Marine Corps to find the best and brightest and  
6 bring them in to serve the Navy and Marine Corps.

7 Senator Inhofe: Yes. Would you assure this committee  
8 that in the event it looks like that is the only  
9 alternative, you come to us so that if it is resources or  
10 whatever would be necessary, just to make sure we do not  
11 drop that quality?

12 Mr. Slavonic: Yes, sir. You have my word.

13 Senator Inhofe: Good.

14 Dr. Anderson, just set aside Russia for a minute and  
15 look at China. Several of us, Senator Ernst, Senator  
16 Rounds, and I, were in the South China Sea and seeing what  
17 is happening right now with China. The perception that is  
18 out there -- the seven islands that we look at -- it is no  
19 secret that these islands are there with armaments. It is  
20 almost as if they are preparing for World War III. And when  
21 we talked to -- and we did -- we talked to our allies there.  
22 I am talking about the Philippines, Taiwan, and other areas.  
23 It is almost as if they are making a choice. If World War  
24 III comes, which side are we going to be on?

25 Are you really sensitive to the perception that is out



1 there of what China is doing, whether or not that is  
2 accurate?

3 Dr. Anderson: Senator, I think the Chinese  
4 militarization of the islands that you reference in the  
5 South China Sea is very concerning. Absolutely. They are,  
6 according to press reports, selling anti-ship missiles and  
7 anti-aircraft weapons on several of those islands.

8 I think this administration and previous  
9 administrations have made clear U.S. commitment to our  
10 security commitments in the Indo-Pacific region, our  
11 commitment with South Korea, with Japan, with the  
12 Philippines, with New Zealand, with Australia and that we  
13 intend to honor those commitments. Thanks to the work of  
14 Congress with the omnibus bill and the 2-year agreement,  
15 there is a sizeable and sufficient funding stream in place  
16 for the Department of Defense to increase some of its  
17 capabilities in the Pacific theater. And by doing this with  
18 respect to aircraft and some munitions and increasing our  
19 capabilities, the P-8 Poseidon for example, Virginia payload  
20 on an attack submarine, that will strengthen deterrence.  
21 That will send a message both to our potential foes and our  
22 allies as well that we are committed to their defense and to  
23 defend our interests in that region.

24 Senator Inhofe: That is a good answer.

25 I have questions for the other two, but with respect

1 for my other members here, I will do that for the record.

2 Senator Reed?

3 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

4 Again, because of the short time limit, I may not be  
5 able to reach all of you. So some people can relax.

6 But, Dr. Porter, let me follow up on the chairman's  
7 comments, Senator Inhofe's comments, about the need for  
8 meeting and exceeding particularly the Chinese when it comes  
9 to quantum computing and artificial intelligence. They are  
10 putting on a nationwide effort -- billions of dollars,  
11 concerted, coordinated. My sense is we do not have that  
12 same kind of coordinated activity today.

13 You will be in the Department of Defense. You will be  
14 leading our efforts, but we have got private research  
15 universities. We have a host of public companies that are  
16 actually spending more on this research than we are. We  
17 have to coordinate those together.

18 And then we have the issue of human capital. Many of  
19 the scientists that are coming in and helping are not only  
20 not Americans, but some of them are from countries like  
21 China and Russia and Europe, et cetera.

22 So this is sort of stepping back from your specific  
23 role, but how are we going to get this national Manhattan  
24 Project for cyber AI underway? Will you sort of try to move  
25 that from your position?

1 Dr. Porter: So, Senator, yes. That is quite an  
2 expansive challenge, as you just described very well.

3 Senator Reed: It is, I think, a challenge though.

4 Dr. Porter: It is certainly a challenge.

5 And as you know, the focus on things like machine  
6 learning, hypersonics, cyber, all of those elements -- the  
7 ingredients are here. We have got to focus them. As you  
8 said, we have got to identify problems that are big and  
9 clear and gravitate the talent towards solving those  
10 problems. We do have significant amount of talent. As you  
11 said, our private sector is frankly crushing it in many  
12 aspects of the machine learning domain. We have got to  
13 figure out how to get them to work on our problems rather  
14 than just the problems that they are solving. How do we  
15 harness that talent? That is the key challenge I think we  
16 have.

17 Senator Reed: And that might require you informing  
18 this committee -- and frankly, we would have to share or  
19 collaborate with probably other committees -- to convince,  
20 persuade, or even require that this cooperation take place.  
21 So we would look for your insights very much.

22 Dr. Porter: Absolutely, Senator.

23 Senator Reed: Thank you.

24 Mr. Stewart, one of the issues -- and Admiral Slavonic,  
25 both -- and my time is limited. We all know we have this

1 crisis. 25 percent of young people are qualified for the  
2 service. It is tough. You are competing against big  
3 companies. You are competing against lots of factors. I  
4 know Admiral Slavonic indicated that he was not willing to  
5 reduce standards. But if we look ahead now at some of the  
6 jobs of the future in the military, when you were flying  
7 C-141's back in the 1970s, I do not think you thought there  
8 would be a whole bunch of folks sitting in trailers in  
9 Nevada flying attack --

10 Mr. Stewart: Drones.

11 Senator Reed: Yes, attack aircraft. Maybe you did.

12 Mr. Stewart: Not at that time.

13 Senator Reed: Yes. So I think if we look ahead, we  
14 just have to think about it. Are there some areas that do  
15 not require the same kind of physical dexterity or something  
16 else where, in fact, these individuals could be very  
17 valuable components of the military?

18 Mr. Stewart: Senator, thanks for the question.

19 I think in many cases we can look at the type of  
20 individuals that we bring in as well. Granted, some of the  
21 individuals we are looking at are not necessarily going to  
22 work in the military environment, but perhaps will work in  
23 the civilian environment. And so as a total force, we have  
24 to look at not only what is required for the military piece  
25 but overall for the mission. And so, if confirmed, Senator,

1 I would look forward to going at and looking at the total  
2 picture, to include the military, the reserve component, and  
3 the civilian piece, along with the contractors.

4 So I think we have to be creative. I think we have  
5 been very, very proactive on doing that. But I think that  
6 there is more work to be done.

7 Senator Reed: Thank you.

8 And just a moment, Admiral Slavonic, please.

9 Mr. Slavonic: Yes, sir. Senator, when you wear the  
10 uniform, I feel -- I deal in the world of perception, and  
11 when the public sees individuals that are not up to the  
12 standards of others -- certainly in the Marine Corps -- then  
13 I just think that is a negative for us as we move forward.  
14 But as Mr. Stewart said, if we look at other areas possibly  
15 where you will not wear the uniform, then I think, yes,  
16 there is a possibility to look at other options.

17 Senator Reed: I think we are going to have to deal  
18 with that issue. It is just a question of demographics and  
19 changing technologies. Both of those.

20 My time is expiring. And I will follow up with  
21 questions, Dr. Anderson, Dr. Verdon.

22 Again, thank you for your commitment. Thank you  
23 already for your service.

24 And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

1           Senator Ernst?

2           Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3           And thanks to all of you for accepting this nomination,  
4 and we are excited about the opportunities that you have.

5           Mr. Stewart, I would like to start with you, please.  
6 If confirmed as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower  
7 and Reserve Affairs, the DOD EA schools will fall within  
8 your portfolio. And as you know, there have been some  
9 pretty alarming recent news articles highlighting some  
10 issues about how there are juvenile-on-juvenile crimes and  
11 how they have been tracked and handled by both the schools  
12 and law enforcement. I understand that the DOD has been  
13 actively working on fixing things on their end particularly  
14 with regard to how misconduct is tracked and recorded. And  
15 I did recently sit down with some of those DOD officials,  
16 and they have assured me that this will be fixed.

17           If confirmed, can I have your assurance that you will  
18 continue to review and improve processes relating to how  
19 juvenile crimes are tracked and coordinated with law  
20 enforcement? This is a very important issue to me, to other  
21 members on this committee, and I do believe that our DOD  
22 families deserve better than what we have seen in the past.  
23 So can you give me that assurance and then maybe walk me  
24 through some of the ideas on how we might be able to fix  
25 this problem?

1 Mr. Stewart: Senator, I would be happy to.

2 We need to take care of our dependents, and it is very,  
3 very important that we do so. Thank you, ma'am.

4 Senator Ernst: Are you aware of the incidents that  
5 have occurred at DOD schools?

6 Mr. Stewart: I was informed. I have to get more  
7 information on it. That is an important issue that, as you  
8 said, they are already working on. And if confirmed, I will  
9 be read in on what they have done so far. But more needs to  
10 be done, and we need to take care of those dependents.

11 Senator Ernst: Absolutely. It is concerning. We want  
12 to make sure that we are taking care of those juveniles,  
13 especially when it is juvenile against juvenile crimes, not  
14 only that we are tracking it appropriately but it is being  
15 reported and dealt with as well. So I think we have lost  
16 some of those families through the cracks. We have lost  
17 some of those children through the cracks. And it should  
18 not be occurring. So we will make sure that we follow up  
19 with you.

20 Mr. Stewart: Yes, ma'am.

21 Senator Ernst: Assuming confirmation, we will be  
22 following up with you.

23 Dr. Porter, as chairman of the Emerging Threats and  
24 Capabilities Subcommittee, I have had the pleasure of  
25 visiting with Dr. Griffin several times over the course of

1 the last several months about our long-term strategic  
2 competition with China. And one of the discussion points  
3 that has been raised over and over again is the fact that  
4 when we are competing with China, they truly are a country  
5 that does not care about the formalities or the niceties of  
6 our acquisition process.

7 Just so we thoroughly understand the gravity of the  
8 situation, can you illustrate what China-U.S. military  
9 overmatch will look like if we do not find a way to maximize  
10 agility and efficiency within our own acquisitions process?

11 Dr. Porter: It is certainly a daunting prospect to  
12 consider. I believe we would have a real problem if we do  
13 not start getting in the business of pushing ourselves much  
14 faster. I think you have heard Dr. Griffin talk a lot about  
15 the speed, that we need to move much more quickly. They  
16 have got a head start on us in hypersonics. You have  
17 alluded to that. They have got a head start on us in some  
18 areas as well. But we have to recognize that we can catch  
19 up if we are deliberate and focused.

20 The spirit of experimentation that I have talked about  
21 in my opening statement is a real critical component of  
22 that, the ability to fail and failure not being something  
23 that is seen as the end of your career, but something that  
24 is seen that you learn and you keep going, and ultimately  
25 you succeed. Failure on the road to success is obviously



1 not failure. But I think in the DOD, particularly in the  
2 R&E environment, there has been a culture of extreme risk  
3 aversion, and that has been stifling to innovation. Those  
4 things do not go together. Risk aversion and innovation  
5 cannot coexist. So we need to get back to the spirit of  
6 experimentation that the DOD used to have, and I believe we  
7 can do that.

8 Senator Ernst: I appreciate that very much. And I do  
9 also believe that we should be taking prudent risk to move  
10 forward and move forward quickly.

11 Just very quickly, I am almost out of time, but maybe  
12 just the top priority, what we should be investing in right  
13 now.

14 Dr. Porter: So I would agree that hypersonics is at  
15 the top of the list.

16 Senator Ernst: Good. Thank you very much.

17 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Ernst.

19 Senator King?

20 Senator King: First, seeing you before us today in the  
21 positions you are in, I have to tell a story of when I was  
22 on a staff of a committee here in the Senate 40 years ago  
23 and I called the Office of Management and Budget for a  
24 witness for a hearing. And they said we are sending the  
25 Deputy Under Secretary of something or other, and I said I

1 do not really understand the titles. Who is this person?  
2 And the fellow gave me an answer which, if I ever write a  
3 book about Washington, this will be the title. He said he  
4 is at the highest level where they still know anything.

5 [Laughter.]

6 Senator King: And that is you guys.

7 By the way, for the record, we are all above that level  
8 now. So I really appreciate your being here because you are  
9 doing such important work.

10 And, Mr. Slavonic, I just want to reassure you -- you  
11 may have been uneasy about this -- that your association  
12 with Senator Lankford will not prejudice my vote on your  
13 nomination.

14 Mr. Slavonic: Thank you for that, sir.

15 Senator King: Yes, sir. I am going to overlook that.

16 Dr. Porter, you just said something that, taken out of  
17 context, could -- you said the Pentagon must move quickly.  
18 Most people would not think that was a phrase that they had  
19 ever heard before that made much sense. How do we implement  
20 that? That is a nice thing to talk about. You worked with  
21 In-Q-Tel. One of the most disturbing hearings we had was  
22 about a year ago we had some people from Silicon Valley.  
23 They basically said we have given up dealing with the  
24 Pentagon. It is too big. It is too slow. We do not even  
25 make proposals anymore. How do we break through that?

1 Because that is where a lot of the innovation is going to  
2 come.

3 Dr. Porter: It is where a lot of the innovation comes  
4 from, and I think their frustrations are very  
5 understandable. We have talked a lot about this  
6 bureaucracy. The risk aversion I talked about is anathema  
7 to them. The startup community is all about taking risk,  
8 learning quickly, and then pivoting to make sure you are  
9 getting on the track to success.

10 Senator King: Well, are you going to implement a new  
11 strategy? I mean, just saying we are going to take more  
12 risks and we are going to be quicker, I need to see and  
13 understand a new doctrine of how you are going to deal with  
14 these issues.

15 Dr. Porter: Well, I think it starts with being clear  
16 that an aversion to failure is not acceptable. We have to  
17 reset the culture in the R&E community. We have to be very  
18 clear that that is how we will approach. Our problem  
19 solving will be faster paced. We will conduct experiments  
20 on a regular basis. We will not punish those who fail, but  
21 rather we will appreciate their efforts to push the  
22 boundaries. If we get to a point where we are not  
23 continuing to push ourselves and we are comfortable and we  
24 are in that status quo, then that is --

25 Senator King: I think you also have to deal with the

1   bureaucratic form. You know, pretend you are an applicant,  
2   and how long is the form? How long does it take to fill  
3   out? What is the information necessary? What are the  
4   security -- we have got a 900,000-person backlog in security  
5   clearances in this government. I want to put some urgency  
6   on this.

7           By the way, in my office I often find it salutary to  
8   remind people that Eisenhower retook Europe in 11 months.  
9   That should be about the maximum for getting things done.

10          Mr. Stewart, we have talked about this -- and I think,  
11   Mr. Slavonic, we have talked about the demographic  
12   challenge. This is not going to be business as usual. We  
13   are facing a negative demographic time bomb in terms of  
14   young people coming up, 75 percent of whom, at least by  
15   current standards, are not qualified for the military.  
16   Again, I want to push you for more specifics.

17          I think Senator Reed had an interesting idea. It may  
18   be that if you are going to have somebody in Cyber Command  
19   whose job it is to work on a computer all day, maybe they do  
20   not need to meet the physical requirements. Maybe they can  
21   be disabled in some way, for example. I think we are going  
22   to have to really think differently about how we are  
23   recruiting because we are just not going to be able to  
24   maintain the force.

25          Mr. Stewart: Senator, I agree with you, and that is

1    why I mentioned the fact that there are other avenues to  
2    look at, for instance, looking at the civilian side and  
3    looking at the reserve components.  When you put together a  
4    force, you need to look at the overall personnel available  
5    to you.  And so there are ways in which you can go ahead and  
6    structure the force such that you can adjust based on the  
7    demographics that you have.  But long-term, we have to go  
8    ahead and look into how to go ahead and fix that problem.

9           Senator King:  It is not going to be just a question of  
10   more bonuses or more recruiters.  It has got to be  
11   qualitatively different.

12           Mr. Slavonic, I presume in the Navy one of the ways to  
13   approach this is ships that require fewer sailors.

14           Mr. Slavonic:  Yes, Senator, unmanned surface,  
15   subsurface vehicles, and I believe aircraft as well.  So I  
16   think that is certainly an out-of-the-box type of thought  
17   process.  I know it has been talked about, but you do have  
18   to have people that work that particular box to make those  
19   things work.

20           Senator King:  I know that there are cases where we  
21   have ships where historically have taken a crew of 300-350  
22   that now the newer versions can have 150, and I think that  
23   is one of the directions we have to think about.

24           Mr. Stewart:  I would agree with you, Senator.  Yes,  
25   sir.

1           Senator King: Thank you. I appreciate all of your  
2 willingness to take on this challenge. It is incredibly  
3 important. And what you are doing is very meaningful to the  
4 country and I congratulate you and thank you for your  
5 service.

6           Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7           Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator King.

8           Senator Rounds?

9           Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10          First of all, thank you to all of you for offering your  
11 services to our country once again.

12          Dr. Porter, I think we have started down this line a  
13 couple times now, and I just want to pursue it a little bit  
14 from the point of trying to explain to an American public  
15 that sometimes we talk words but they do not really mean  
16 anything unless you are in it every day. Hypersonics is one  
17 of them, cases where something can simply move more than  
18 five times as fast as the speed of sound.

19          What does that mean in terms of the need? And what are  
20 the threats to our country if China and Russia have a degree  
21 of capabilities greater than ours just in hypersonics? What  
22 does that mean to the average American?

23          Dr. Porter: So what that means to the average American  
24 is that they can hold our forces at risk.

25          Senator Rounds: Why? What does it do?

1           Dr. Porter:  Because by being able to move, as you  
2  said, at least five times faster than the speed of sound,  
3  which to put that in terms, that is a mile per second.  That  
4  is fast.

5           Senator Rounds:  So we are talking about weapon  
6  systems --

7           Dr. Porter:  Weapon systems that can move so fast that  
8  you cannot get them essentially and you cannot see them.

9           Senator Rounds:  We are not talking about a manned  
10 vehicle necessarily.  Are we?

11          Dr. Porter:  Oh, no, no.  We are talking about unmanned  
12 weapon systems.  We cannot see them until it is too late,  
13 and then we cannot get them because they can maneuver so  
14 quickly.  That kind of weapon should be very scary to  
15 people.

16          Senator Rounds:  Would it be fair to say that today we  
17 have peer adversaries who have more in-depth knowledge of  
18 hypersonics than we do?

19          Dr. Porter:  I would say that is probably a fair  
20 assumption.  I am not privy to all of the knowledge.

21          Senator Rounds:  Would it be fair to say that they are  
22 farther along in the deployment of hypersonics than we are?

23          Dr. Porter:  I would put it this way, sir.  I am  
24 concerned that they might be based on what I know, what is  
25 publicly available, and what I have been aware of in

1 watching this issue.

2 Senator Rounds: So what does that do in terms of the  
3 risk to our forces? Let us take an example in the Pacific.  
4 What does it mean to an aircraft carrier that is 1,500 miles  
5 away from the coast of China?

6 Dr. Porter: Right. If you cannot see it coming, which  
7 we would not be able to see it coming right now, if they  
8 were to launch hypersonic that far in advance, you have got  
9 a problem seeing it and then you got a problem of shooting  
10 it down before it gets to you.

11 Senator Rounds: So what you are saying is for our men  
12 and women that are out there right now, in the case of the  
13 deployment of a hypersonic weapon, it would not be a fair  
14 fight.

15 Dr. Porter: No. That is my concern, sir.

16 Senator Rounds: And what we really want is --

17 Dr. Porter: We want to be overmatched. We want to be  
18 over them.

19 Senator Rounds: So what we want is the case of where  
20 our men and women never enter into a fair fight.

21 Dr. Porter: That is correct.

22 Senator Rounds: But it is not with the other folks  
23 having the advantage.

24 Dr. Porter: That is correct.

25 Senator Rounds: And that is what this is all about.



1 Dr. Porter: That is what this is all about, and  
2 multiply that on some of the other technologies that people  
3 have raised as well.

4 Senator Rounds: It is not just hypersonics.

5 Dr. Porter: It is not just hypersonics.

6 Senator Rounds: It is space.

7 Dr. Porter: It is space.

8 Senator Rounds: What about space? What is so  
9 important about space right now to the American public?

10 Dr. Porter: So for decades, we have assumed that space  
11 is uncontested environment.

12 Senator Rounds: Are we at war in space today?

13 Dr. Porter: We have a challenge in that our assets are  
14 at risk, and they will be at risk if we do not -- and they  
15 will continue to be at risk if we do not address that.

16 Senator Rounds: Our assets in space today are at risk,  
17 and they are at risk because is space a contested  
18 environment?

19 Dr. Porter: I believe the Russians and the Chinese  
20 believe that they need to ensure that they hold our assets  
21 at risk, including those in space, and so they are taking  
22 action to ensure they can do that.

23 Senator Rounds: Would it be fair to say that we look  
24 at space different than what Russia and China do?

25 Dr. Porter: That I do not know because I do not know

1 enough about how they think about space, but I think we need  
2 to be --

3 Senator Rounds: Would you say there is evidence that  
4 they consider space to be a place where it is a domain in  
5 which war will be fought?

6 Dr. Porter: I think they see it as a domain where they  
7 need to take away our advantage in space that we currently  
8 enjoy.

9 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Dr. Porter.

10 Dr. Anderson, a number of us on this committee truly  
11 believe that we have an issue with regard to our doctrines  
12 concerning cyber war and a policy gap with regard to the  
13 employment of our considerable capabilities in the cyber  
14 domain. This problem is compounded by the fact that there  
15 is no federal entity that provides unity to the effort in  
16 both defense of our cyber capabilities on both the DOD level  
17 and also in the American public's level. And we do not have  
18 a single point of accountability for the deterrence against  
19 those attacks, and should deterrence fail the detection of  
20 an attack, the attribution of where it comes from and a  
21 response in terms of being offensively capable.

22 What is your perspective in terms of how we should  
23 synchronize cyber operations across the interagency?

24 Dr. Anderson: Senator, I think the lines of  
25 responsibility for DOD at one level are pretty clear. DOD

1 has to protect its own networks from cyber intrusion, cyber  
2 attacks. And I know the Department has been working hard on  
3 this. They have a series, I think, of 130 out of 133 cyber  
4 teams that are now working to defend our own networks.

5 Beyond that, the Department of Defense also has a role  
6 to play in defending at least some of the infrastructure,  
7 the civilian infrastructure, and here the lines of  
8 responsibility also fall to the Department of Homeland  
9 Security with the Department of Defense in support. And  
10 this is a fairly new area for the Department of Defense, and  
11 I understand that some of those specific delineations are  
12 still being worked out.

13 Senator Rounds: Is it fair to say that we have work to  
14 do in that area?

15 Dr. Anderson: Yes, absolutely.

16 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

19 Senator Kaine?

20 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 And thank you to our witnesses. Congratulations on  
22 your service and on your nominations.

23 Mr. Slavonic and Mr. Stewart, I want to talk to you  
24 about an important aspect of overall manpower, which is our  
25 military families, especially military spouses.

1           When I was elected to the Senate and came in in 2013,  
2 we had a higher unemployment rate among veterans than the  
3 national average, especially Iraq and Afghan War veterans  
4 who were enlisted. This committee has done a lot of work on  
5 that issue and so have our employers, so has the Pentagon.  
6 And I am proud to say here 5 years later the unemployment  
7 rate for veterans from this era is now below the national  
8 average. We made progress by focusing on it.

9           And yet, the unemployment rate for our military spouses  
10 is two to three to four times higher than the national  
11 average. It is a little bit difficult to determine because  
12 we do not even care enough about it to measure it. The  
13 Bureau of Labor Statistics does measure veterans  
14 unemployment. They do not measure military spouse  
15 unemployment. So we have to do that through surveys to try  
16 determine what the unemployment rate is.

17           The reasons for military spouse un- or under-employment  
18 are pretty easy to grasp: frequent moves, often at odd  
19 times of the year. Spouses might move to a State who have a  
20 profession or career with a credential -- it could be a  
21 cosmetologist, real estate agent, lawyer, teacher -- that  
22 the license may not immediately transfer or there may be a  
23 cost to transfer the license that can be prohibitive for  
24 some.

25           I have introduced two bills with bipartisan colleagues

1 on this committee -- one, the Military Spouse Employment  
2 Act; and the other, Jobs and Child Care for Military  
3 Families Act -- to try to tackle four or five of the key  
4 complaints I hear from military spouses and clear some  
5 obstacles out of the way. My hope is that colleagues and I  
6 might find an accord and enable some of these to be included  
7 in the NDAA.

8 But talk a little bit about how you would focus on this  
9 issue of military spouses, should you be confirmed in these  
10 manpower positions to which you are nominated.

11 Mr. Stewart: Would you like me to go first, Senator?

12 Senator Kaine: Please, yes. That would be great.

13 Mr. Stewart: So the spouses, of course, if they are  
14 not taken care of, then ultimately there is going to be a  
15 problem with retention because if the family is not happy  
16 and if the family readiness is not taken care of, then  
17 ultimately that will have a severe impact on the retention  
18 of these forces that we are trying to go ahead and keep and  
19 ultimately recruit as well. And so ultimately I would, if  
20 confirmed, love to see this legislation and work to go ahead  
21 and make sure that the spouses are taken care of.

22 Senator Kaine: Mr. Slavonic?

23 Mr. Slavonic: Yes, sir. Spouses are a key to the  
24 well-being of the service member. And we must make sure  
25 that when they are deployed, whether at sea, Iraq,

1 Afghanistan, wherever the conflict may be, that they have  
2 got peace and comfort to know, one, that their spouse and  
3 family are taken care of. And in this case that you  
4 address, if the spouse is able to be employed, that is very  
5 important, and we need to find a way, at least speaking for  
6 the Navy and Marine Corps, Department of the Navy, I need to  
7 learn more about how the Navy does things so that I have a  
8 better idea, if confirmed, to be able to maybe come back and  
9 have a conversation with you.

10 And I know Norfolk, Virginia has a very large Navy  
11 presence, and I am sure you have talked to a lot of those  
12 individuals there. So I have not been to Norfolk in a long  
13 time, so I need to get up to speed on a lot of areas, and if  
14 confirmed, I will certainly support whatever --

15 Senator Kaine: I would love to go there together.  
16 There is a lot to see. That would be great.

17 Mr. Slavonic: Yes, sir.

18 Senator Kaine: I have a boy in the Marine Corps who,  
19 when he got in, was single. When he did his first re-up  
20 after 4 years was single. But now he is married and he has  
21 a decision coming up in a year or 2. And it is a very  
22 different kind of a decision when you are making a decision  
23 and trying to grapple with spousal issues. I really see  
24 that in my own family.

25 Dr. Porter, I have a question for you. You know, we

1 talk strategy here a lot, and I have always been impressed  
2 with this idea of an offset strategy where we use our own  
3 unique technological capacities to give us strategic  
4 advantages. Maybe if we are short in some area, we can use  
5 unique technological capacities to gain an edge in others.

6 But that whole notion of the offset strategy to me  
7 seems to be maybe a little bit passe since our near-peer  
8 competitors are basically pursuing exactly the same  
9 technologies as we are. And I am wondering if there is much  
10 that is really an offset these days.

11 Is "offset" the proper term? Are we still doing things  
12 different than others, or are we basically just in a linear  
13 arms race across all the technological areas with our nation  
14 state competitors?

15 Dr. Porter: So, Senator, I think you have hit on the  
16 way to think about it, which is we have access to a lot of  
17 the same technologies. Can we be clever in how we use them  
18 in different ways? I have personally seen in my own  
19 experience that really great innovation occurs when you  
20 bring different disciplines together in novel ways. So we  
21 have talked a lot about artificial intelligence. Sometimes  
22 people stovepipe how they think about that versus, let us  
23 say, cybersecurity or biotechnology. And it turns out from  
24 research that I have actually seen recently in my own job  
25 when you bring those together, you can get very powerful

1 solutions. So I think the creativity the American mind  
2 brings to things or the natural tendency we have to be  
3 holistic in how we look at problems can give us that  
4 strategic advantage.

5 Senator Kaine: And you have been at DARPA and NASA and  
6 IARPA, as well as in the private sector.

7 Dr. Porter: Yes, sir.

8 Senator Kaine: So all of those are institutions that  
9 are about this sort of holistic reaching across the silos  
10 problem solving. Well, I think you are very well qualified  
11 for this position and look forward to supporting you.

12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13 Dr. Porter: Thank you.

14 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Kaine.

15 Senator Heinrich?

16 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Mr. Chairman, as soon as this afternoon, the NNSA is  
18 expected to announce its plan to halt the long-planned  
19 modernization of our nuclear infrastructure for plutonium  
20 pit production. This will set back our military's life  
21 extension program by years, stretch the workforce to its  
22 limits, and waste billions of dollars on another plan that  
23 will, in all likelihood, never come to fruition.

24 As we all know on this committee, the NNSA's record of  
25 construction projects has been abysmal over the years.



1 Twice before the NNSA started down a path to produce pits  
2 that later had to be terminated. I expect the NNSA will  
3 announce today a new plutonium strategy that is not  
4 justified by the data and will once again be a giant waste  
5 of taxpayer time and money.

6 DOE needs to disclose a legitimate per-pit lifecycle  
7 cost of each of the options on the table. I think if they  
8 do that, it will be clear that the only choice that actually  
9 meets our cost and schedule requirements is to move forward  
10 immediately with modernization at Los Alamos as originally  
11 endorsed by both Congress and the Nuclear Weapons Council.  
12 Nuclear weapons are dangerous. They are serious. They are  
13 not political currency or checker pieces that can be picked  
14 up and moved around based on political expediency.

15 Dr. Verdon, you have been nominated to a position that  
16 will be responsible for this program, and you and the NNSA  
17 need to know that this ill-conceived plan defies logic on  
18 all accounts and I believe will be rejected. And I believe  
19 that DOE needs to go back to the drawing board and fix this.

20 Dr. Porter, I have a couple of questions for you. I  
21 agree with your advance statements that it is critical that  
22 lab directors have the ability to adapt to rapidly changing  
23 environments and particularly when it comes to actually  
24 shaping their workforce.

25 Do you agree that it makes sense for lab directors to

1 have direct hiring authority over the personnel that they  
2 oversee rather than having to go all the way to headquarters  
3 for approval on those personnel decisions?

4 Dr. Porter: So, Senator, I am not as deep into that  
5 particular topic as I need to be, and if confirmed, I would  
6 like to get into that much more deeply because I agree with  
7 you that the flexibility is certainly necessary,  
8 particularly in today's environment where it is so  
9 competitive to hire talent.

10 Senator Heinrich: We are constantly in a position of  
11 competing for talent with Silicon Valley, with many other  
12 entities that can offer a lot in terms of incentives.

13 This committee, to its credit, has provided direct  
14 hiring authorities, but implementation, I have to say, has  
15 been painfully slow. So, if confirmed, I would just urge  
16 you to look at those policies.

17 We had an Emerging Threats and Capabilities  
18 Subcommittee hearing a few weeks ago, and Dr. Griffin laid  
19 out an ambitious plan for developing and fielding a number  
20 of directed energy weapons in the next decade. Those speak  
21 directly to the issues of a new offset, a third offset,  
22 however you want to phrase it, that Senator Kaine raised in  
23 his questions.

24 Do you support the development of directed energy  
25 weapon systems, and what are your thoughts in particular on

1 that line of research?

2 Dr. Porter: Yes, Senator, I do. I actually was able  
3 to read the transcripts of that hearing, and I think Dr.  
4 Griffin spoke very eloquently about the need to address that  
5 and across the board, as he said, ground, air-based. How do  
6 we address that problem, and yes, I support it completely.

7 Senator Heinrich: How do you think we can establish --  
8 and you touched on this a little bit and I appreciate it.  
9 We cannot punish failure because when you are testing to  
10 failure, you are actually testing the limits. We need to do  
11 that.

12 Dr. Porter: Absolutely.

13 Senator Heinrich: How do we establish a culture of  
14 persistence that does not kill a program with great  
15 potential at the first technological challenge or setback?

16 Dr. Porter: I think it comes from leadership from the  
17 top. People will follow how their leaders set the standards  
18 for expectations. If the leadership at the top allows for  
19 that failure, that experimentation, the pushing the  
20 boundaries, then it will flow down.

21 Senator Heinrich: I was also encouraged by your  
22 comments on establishing a culture of execution that really  
23 embraces the use of disciplined experimentation and  
24 prototyping to quickly drive down technological risk, and  
25 when you do that, sometimes you fail.

1 Dr. Porter: Correct.

2 Senator Heinrich: That is part of the process. But  
3 all too often, emerging technologies do not make it from one  
4 side of the so-called valley of death to the other, but they  
5 die due to endless pursuit of perfection in the lab not  
6 because they are not good technologies and useful and  
7 fieldable technologies.

8 So what kind of policies are you thinking about that  
9 could encourage operational prototyping, increase speed of  
10 delivery, get things out the other side and into the hands  
11 of an actual operator?

12 Dr. Porter: So this is something I have a great  
13 passion for that I intend to work, if confirmed, with the  
14 under secretary. This is something he shares the same  
15 passion for, and I think we do need to look how do we  
16 encourage, how do we incentivize that behavior you are  
17 alluding to. Stop polishing the apple. It is good enough.  
18 You got to get it out. As a former scientist, I understand  
19 the compulsion for perfection. However, it can lead to,  
20 obviously, the reality is, if you have delivered perfection  
21 too late, it is no good.

22 Senator Heinrich: Thank you.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

25 Senator Sullivan?

1           Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2           And I want to congratulate the nominees and their  
3 families. I appreciate all your desire to serve your nation  
4 at a very important, challenging time.

5           Let me go back to -- I know that it has been raised a  
6 couple times already. But Mr. Stewart and Mr. Slavonic, the  
7 issue of training standards. I think it cannot be  
8 overemphasized. I know the chairman talked about it. Have  
9 any of you read the book by T.R. Fehrenbach called "This  
10 Kind of War"?

11          Mr. Stewart: No, sir, I have not.

12          Mr. Slavonic: Sir, I have read excerpts of the book.

13          Senator Sullivan: So I have extra copies. I typically  
14 give it to all the nominees, including now the current  
15 Secretary of Defense, of course, has read it. It is kind of  
16 a standard fare for Marine infantry officers. But the last  
17 Secretary of Defense had not. So I will provide you a copy  
18 when you guys come by my office soon.

19          But the point of that is it is all about the Korean War  
20 in 1950 and what happened and how we went from the most  
21 formidable military in the history of the world to one that  
22 had a real hard time stopping a third world peasant army  
23 because the training standards were relaxed and not focused  
24 on.

25          So I just want to encourage all of you -- I know you

1 already heard it from a number of us, but as we rebuild the  
2 force, keeping the high standards possible is just critical.  
3 And you will get political pressure from this body, I  
4 guarantee you, to lower the standards. Do not do it. Do  
5 not do it. There is a number of us who think that the most  
6 important thing we can do is make sure there are super high  
7 standards because that is the best way to bring men and  
8 women home from combat if and when they are sent.

9 So can I get your commitment, both of you, to make sure  
10 that we maintain not only the high standards, but if you  
11 want to even make them higher and more rigorous, you will  
12 have the support certainly of most members of this  
13 committee.

14 Mr. Stewart: Yes, Senator. If confirmed, we will do  
15 that.

16 Mr. Slavonic: If confirmed, yes, sir.

17 Senator Sullivan: And then you will read this book,  
18 "This Kind of War," by T.R. Fehrenbach.

19 Mr. Stewart: I look forward to it.

20 Senator Sullivan: I guarantee you the Secretary of  
21 Defense probably has a couple copies on his -- okay.

22 Let me ask another question, Dr. Anderson, as it  
23 relates to missile defense. This committee last year -- we  
24 had a bipartisan bill, very strongly bipartisan, which was  
25 new in missile defense. Typically, if you look at the

1 history of missile defense, it has actually, unfortunately,  
2 been a partisan issue. But a bipartisan bill last year that  
3 passed and the NDAA fully funded to significantly boost the  
4 nation's missile defense, which we need right now, given the  
5 rogue threats.

6 The chairman and I were recently at Fort Greeley,  
7 Alaska where a lot of our missile defense assets are taking  
8 place.

9 Let me ask two questions. Are you familiar with what  
10 we just did in the last NDAA on bolstering our nation's  
11 missile defense? What more do we need to do from your  
12 perspective? And importantly, the bill that we just passed-  
13 - the implementation of that needs to happen very quickly.

14 So let me give you one example. It was a little bit  
15 surprising and frustrating when we were at Fort Greeley  
16 recently. They are building a new missile field at Fort  
17 Greeley. It was part of our bill. But when we asked them  
18 how long it would take, they said 5 to 6 years. 5 to 6  
19 years. My point was, well, we won World War II in less  
20 amount of time. We cannot build a missile field for 20 new  
21 silos in less than 5 to 6 years?

22 So what should we be looking at for the next phase in  
23 missile defense, but also implementing what was, like I  
24 said, a very big bipartisan push to advance our missile  
25 defense system? 5 to 6 years to me is ludicrous. We need

1 to do a much better job. How do we do that?

2 Dr. Anderson: Senator, I think leadership has to play  
3 a large role in this. There is a clear sense of urgency, as  
4 indicated in your question, when we are considering rogue  
5 threats, in particular, Iran and North Korea. They have  
6 both been working on long-range missiles for quite some  
7 time, and the aim should not be to stay abreast of those  
8 threats, but in my view actually to stay ahead of them.

9 And the specific circumstance you just mentioned on the  
10 delay of the missile field is -- I am not familiar exactly  
11 with the delay, why someone is saying that, but it sounds to  
12 me very unfortunate.

13 Senator Sullivan: Well, if you are confirmed, can you  
14 commit to work with this committee to more rapidly implement  
15 the bill that we all agreed to last year and is fully  
16 funded? But it just seems remarkable. And we all need to  
17 look at this, but why it would take so long to actually just  
18 build an additional missile field. Will you commit to  
19 working with us to accelerate that?

20 Dr. Anderson: Senator, if confirmed, absolutely.

21 Senator Sullivan: And your ideas on additional missile  
22 defense we would welcome.

23 Dr. Anderson: Yes. So I know a number are under  
24 consideration to look at, for example, some unmanned systems  
25 that, for example, drones that may have some anti-missile



1 defense capabilities particularly in sort of the boost-phase  
2 intercept, which many would consider kind of the holy grail  
3 of missile defense.

4 In the next few weeks, I know the Department is  
5 planning to release its missile defense review, and I would  
6 anticipate that they will talk about some of these cutting-  
7 edge technologies again to stay ahead of threats that are  
8 evolving. It involves not only kill vehicles but also a  
9 series and suites of sensors as well to make sure we have  
10 the maximum time available to track and to shoot down them  
11 in a timely manner.

12 I think another area that is emerging is there is a lot  
13 of attention in terms of kind of the cost ratios to make  
14 sure that our interceptors are not costing more than the  
15 missiles coming our way. And that is an important sort of  
16 equation that has to be looked at over time if we are to  
17 sustain those levels of funding.

18 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Sullivan.

21 Senator Warren?

22 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 And thank you to our nominees for your willingness to  
24 serve.

25 Science and technology funding can often be directed

1 toward the most immediate technical priorities. But as we  
2 address short-term needs, it is absolutely critical that we  
3 do not take our eye off basic research and the longer-term  
4 bets on emerging technologies.

5 So, Dr. Porter, can I ask you how you plan to ensure  
6 the protection of the Defense Department's funding for basic  
7 and applied research? And just say a word about your top  
8 S&T priorities, if you could.

9 Dr. Porter: So you have hit the nail on the head with  
10 that. That is always the challenge. They call it the  
11 tyranny of the immediate. And, of course, I spent time at  
12 DARPA. It was one of the best jobs I ever had, and part of  
13 the reason for that is that DARPA does really keep its eye  
14 on that ball, as you said. We need to protect DARPA. We  
15 need to make sure they can continue to take on the really  
16 hard things. Much of what they try does not work, but the  
17 things that work are what give us our technologies we rely  
18 on today. I think you all are well aware of that. So that  
19 will be something that we make sure that we protect.

20 Senator Warren: Good. I really like hearing your  
21 strong commitment to this because I think it is absolutely  
22 crucial, and it has got to start at the top.

23 You know, one of the concerns I often hear is about the  
24 failure to convert promising new technologies in the lab to  
25 the field, what you referred to as the valley of death. And

1 I am glad that you and Dr. Griffin will be focused on  
2 science and technology.

3 But I remain concerned that splitting oversight of R&D  
4 from the Department's acquisitions office may actually make  
5 this problem worse. So can you just say something about how  
6 you plan to ensure that our R&D program stays closely linked  
7 with the Department's acquisition requirements and that  
8 these promising technologies are nurtured to the point that  
9 they can make it into the field?

10 Dr. Porter: So I think it starts with strong  
11 relationship building across that bridge between A&S and  
12 R&E. I am fully committed, if confirmed, to develop that  
13 bridge with them.

14 Senator Warren: Good, good. It is going to be a  
15 challenge, like the point about basic research and keep your  
16 eye on this.

17 So I have another one here, Dr. Porter. If confirmed,  
18 you are going to be the steward of our defense research  
19 enterprise. This is not only the network of federal labs  
20 but also organizations like DARPA where you have been with  
21 its focus on emerging technologies, DIUx which coordinates  
22 with non-traditional commercial partners and Strategic  
23 Capabilities Office which integrates new capabilities into  
24 existing equipment and which your colleague, Dr. Roper,  
25 previously ran.

1           Can I have your commitment that, if confirmed, you will  
2     prioritize the needs of these offices and that you will  
3     ensure that they have sufficient resources and authorities  
4     to accomplish their objectives?

5           Dr. Porter: Yes, ma'am, absolutely if I am confirmed.

6           Senator Warren: Good, good.

7           You know, I am especially concerned about the Strategic  
8     Capabilities Office. As you are aware, the SCO now reports  
9     to the research and engineering organization that you help  
10    lead. But no one has been selected to lead that office  
11    since Dr. Roper's departure. And I have seen public reports  
12    that suggest that the SCO could be disbanded. And I would  
13    just like to give you an opportunity to clear this up.

14          Dr. Porter: So because of the situation that I am  
15    currently in, I am not, of course, aware of any of the  
16    internal decisions.

17          Senator Warren: Let me ask it this way. Do you  
18    believe that the Strategic Capabilities Office should be  
19    maintained and strengthened?

20          Dr. Porter: Yes, ma'am. If you think about it, it is  
21    a perfect complement to what DARPA does. Right? It is  
22    about how do you take existing technologies that are already  
23    proven and use them in new ways which, by the way, our  
24    adversaries are very good at doing. So we need to make sure  
25    we are doing that as well.

1           Senator Warren: Good, good, because I want to hear the  
2 support for that.

3           Dr. Porter: Absolutely.

4           Senator Warren: That is good.

5           You know, the SCO has moved rapidly to extend the shelf  
6 life of our existing equipment in some amazingly creative  
7 ways. And if we are going to stay the most technologically  
8 innovative military in the world, I think we need that kind  
9 of fast and creative thinking.

10          Dr. Porter: Agreed.

11          Senator Warren: Good, good. I am glad to hear it.

12 Thank you.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14          Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Warren.

15          Let me share. Since you did not use all of your time,  
16 I will use a little bit by announcing the news just broke  
17 that President Trump will be meeting with Kim Jung-un. The  
18 place will be Singapore. The time will be June 12th.

19          Senator Cotton?

20          Senator Cotton: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21          Thank you all for your appearance today and thank you  
22 for being once again willing to serve your country.

23          General Stewart, what is your assessment of the impacts  
24 and challenges to the Department of Defense's readiness as a  
25 result of 7 years of the Budget Control Act and repeated

1 continuing resolutions?

2 Mr. Stewart: It has been devastating. You have to  
3 have a consistent budget that you can count on to make long-  
4 range plans.

5 Senator Cotton: Many Members of Congress were  
6 celebrating and spiking the football a couple of months ago  
7 when Congress passed a 2-year budget and then a 1-year  
8 omnibus spending bill to implement the first year of that  
9 2-year budget. Those are good things for the military.

10 How important is it, though, that we implement the  
11 second year of that budget in a timely fashion by passing  
12 the Department of Defense appropriations bill this summer?

13 Mr. Stewart: It is very important. And then a  
14 continuation on that for 2020.

15 Senator Cotton: That is my next question, which is  
16 that 2-year budget expires now in less than 18 months. The  
17 budget caps and sequestration or the Budget Control Act  
18 return in fiscal year 2020 and 2021, which is October 1,  
19 2019.

20 How important is it that this Congress act to repeal  
21 those caps and sequestration as we have failed to do for the  
22 last 7 years under the Budget Control Act?

23 Mr. Stewart: I think Secretary Mattis has made it very  
24 clear that that is very important, Senator.

25 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

1           I want to turn now to a broad question about the health  
2 of retention and keeping our troops on board. I will start  
3 with a specific example from the Army. There has been some  
4 reporting recently about the Army reducing and not meeting  
5 its recruiting goals. I spoke with Secretary Esper about  
6 this. He said that is not exactly right. So part of this  
7 is the result of the Congress not doing our job in a timely  
8 fashion. I forget which version of the NDAA last year set a  
9 10,000-man goal for recruiting. Another one set 5,000. The  
10 Army went with the more conservative version. So they set  
11 it first at 10,000. When we compromised between the two  
12 chambers, it was at 7,500. That accounts for a 2,500  
13 personnel reduction.

14           But then the Army succeeded in retaining more than its  
15 initial target, and because they have an overall cap, they  
16 had to reduce recruiting by the resulting level. So that is  
17 good news for retention. Obviously, recruiting though is  
18 still strained.

19           Can you talk a little bit about what we are doing in  
20 the Department to succeed in retention and what we can do to  
21 improve a little bit on recruiting?

22           Mr. Stewart: Well, Senator, I have not been read in on  
23 exactly what they are doing, but if confirmed, I would get  
24 back with you to see what they currently are doing.

25           As far as the future for recruiting, I think it is

1 very, very important that we understand that we are looking  
2 for a different type of individual. They are social media-  
3 oriented. I think the previous Secretary of Defense,  
4 Secretary Carter, had some unique ideas on the force of the  
5 future that we might look at and pursue. If confirmed, I  
6 would go ahead and look at those as a starting point and  
7 then work from there.

8         Senator Cotton: And what about retention? What is  
9 your sense of why we are succeeding on retention, beating  
10 our goals? What are the key factors do you think that we  
11 are getting our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines and  
12 their families to say we want to sign up for another hitch?

13         Mr. Stewart: I think we are providing a very good  
14 benefits package for them, Senator. I think it equates very  
15 easily with the civilian community. In other words, it is  
16 very favorable for them. They like the stability I think in  
17 many cases. The changes that have been made I think are  
18 important as far as stability, as far as movement, those  
19 kinds of things. And so I think the leadership is starting  
20 to listen to the ideas that are out there, and thus, it is  
21 having a tremendous impact on our retention.

22         Senator Cotton: Thank you for those answers. And  
23 thank you, in particular, for noting the non-monetary  
24 reasons why our troops reenlist. I think that is important.  
25 You know, this Congress has done a pretty good job over the



1 last 15 years of trying to keep pace with civilian pay and  
2 benefit packages, but we will never be able to keep pace  
3 entirely, especially in some certain critical skills, which  
4 leads me, Mr. Slavonic, to my final question for you. And  
5 that is about Navy and Marine Corps aviation.

6 We have seen the Air Force struggle to get the number  
7 of pilots it needs in part because of the issues that  
8 General Stewart and I were just raising. Our military is  
9 never going to be able to pay pilots what the private  
10 airlines or private charters can pay. Senator King and I  
11 have had private roundtables with company-grade pilots.  
12 They want to fly. They are staying in the service because  
13 they joined to fly a high performance aircraft in defense of  
14 our nation. They like the bonuses but the bonuses are never  
15 going to match what they get in civilian life.

16 I am beginning to see reports that the Navy and Marine  
17 Corps may face the same stress on its pilots. Could you  
18 talk a little bit about the status of the pilot force, as  
19 you understand it, in the Navy and Marine Corps and what the  
20 Department of the Navy can do to make sure that we keep the  
21 appropriate number of pilots in the service?

22 Mr. Slavonic: Yes, sir. As you stated, the Navy and  
23 Marine Corps are beginning to have problems in that area.  
24 As Mr. Stewart stated, it is not always about the money, the  
25 compensation. So I have to think that we have to be more

1 creative. We have to maybe develop a program where we keep  
2 those Southwest, American Airlines pilots who left the Navy,  
3 somehow be able to create a flow-in/flow-out ability to keep  
4 them in the reserves, allow them to work in the civilian  
5 world, but yet if and when the balloon goes up, that we can  
6 call them and ask them to come and serve. So I think we  
7 need to work harder in that area than we have in the past.  
8 I know that program is there, but I think recruiting -- we  
9 just have to work that much harder.

10 Senator Cotton: General Stewart, you raised your hand.

11 Mr. Stewart: Yes, sir. If you had the conversation  
12 with the company-grade pilots, I am sure they told you that  
13 they want to fly. And so ultimately if the dollars are not  
14 there to keep their training up, to keep their proficiency,  
15 they are going to leave. And so ultimately having the  
16 training dollars to go ahead and train and do what they love  
17 to do does have an impact on retention.

18 Senator Cotton: Thank you. My time has expired, but  
19 Drs. Porter, Anderson, and Verdon, sorry we did not get to  
20 you. You have very important jobs, and thank you for being  
21 willing to do them.

22 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Cotton.

23 Senator Blumenthal?

24 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thank you  
25 all for your service and to your families as well.

1           Dr. Porter, as you know, we are seeing progress in the  
2 F-35 program. The system development and demonstration  
3 phase was completed last month. The achievement of that  
4 milestone is important to the program. It is the most  
5 comprehensive flight test program in aviation history, and  
6 it will permit the F-35 program to move forward,  
7 fortunately, with completing the operational test and  
8 evaluation. The F-35 flight testing continues in support of  
9 phased capability improvements and modernization of the F-35  
10 as part of the joint program's offices continuous capability  
11 development and delivery framework. All of that process  
12 describes continuing development of this century's next  
13 fighter aircraft, which will be essential not only to our  
14 national security but to much of the world's.

15           I wonder what more research and engineering can be done  
16 or is necessary, so far as you know, to assure that the  
17 program is continued and completed.

18           Dr. Porter: Senator, I am not familiar on where the  
19 R&E role may play at this stage in that program's  
20 development.

21           Senator Blumenthal: Are there particular aspects of  
22 the F-35 that you plan to focus on?

23           Dr. Porter: At this time, I would have to say I am not  
24 familiar enough to say that the answer is yes or no. It is  
25 something I would have to get smarter on to know whether it

1 makes sense to have continued R&E engagement for later  
2 upgrades and so forth.

3 Senator Blumenthal: How about for the Colombia class  
4 submarine?

5 Dr. Porter: My answer would be the same on that.  
6 Given that these are acquisition programs, the question is  
7 how do we work with A&S to ensure we understand what follow-  
8 on capabilities they may need in these programs.

9 Senator Blumenthal: Do you see an opportunity for R&D  
10 in undersea warfare, particularly as to unmanned --

11 Dr. Porter: Absolutely, absolutely. There are a lot  
12 of challenges with undersea, particularly unmanned  
13 submarines and submersible vehicles. Those are challenging  
14 problems. Underwater comms, for example, is one example  
15 where there is a continuing need to do R&E work.

16 Senator Blumenthal: How would you assess our R&D as  
17 compared to other leading adversaries?

18 Dr. Porter: Generally speaking or specifically?

19 Senator Blumenthal: I am sorry. On undersea warfare.

20 Dr. Porter: On undersea warfare. I do not know enough  
21 about where our adversaries are putting their money. So I  
22 would not be able to give you a good answer on that right  
23 now. I would be happy to look into it and get back to you  
24 and confirm that.

25 Senator Blumenthal: If you would, I would appreciate

1 it.

2 How about more generally our R&D compared to our  
3 leading adversaries?

4 Dr. Porter: So it does vary by area, but we have  
5 talked today on some of these topics, and I think the things  
6 that we need to worry about are areas like advanced  
7 analytics, artificial intelligence, machine learning. You  
8 have heard a lot of those, obviously. Biotechnology is one  
9 that we need to be mindful of. Hypersonics, directed energy  
10 weapons. I am probably forgetting some. Cybersecurity  
11 would be one that I would be mindful of in terms of our peer  
12 adversaries. So there are a whole host of technology areas  
13 that I am concerned that our peer adversaries are getting  
14 ahead of us on.

15 Senator Blumenthal: In particular, artificial  
16 intelligence?

17 Dr. Porter: Yes.

18 Senator Blumenthal: Could you talk about that a little  
19 bit?

20 Dr. Porter: Sure. So as you are aware, that is a very  
21 hot topic these days. People are very excited about the  
22 opportunities that artificial intelligence and what I would  
23 call machine learning, which is what it is really doing --  
24 it is teaching machines to train on data, to learn to do  
25 things faster than humans can do, for example, detecting

1 objects and images. There is a lot of investment going on  
2 in China right now. There is a lot of investment globally  
3 going on right now. There are a lot of opportunities for  
4 people to get in and do well. And so we have to make sure  
5 we are staying ahead of that.

6 Senator Blumenthal: My understanding is that China has  
7 particularly devoted resources.

8 Dr. Porter: Correct, absolutely correct.

9 Senator Blumenthal: Are you concerned about that kind  
10 of investment?

11 Dr. Porter: Of course, Senator, yes.

12 Senator Blumenthal: And will you be an advocate for  
13 increased investment?

14 Dr. Porter: Increased and focused and make sure that  
15 we are using those capabilities to solve military-relevant  
16 problems.

17 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

18 My time has expired. I again thank you all for your  
19 service. The topics that have been explored here certainly  
20 could use a lot more of our attention, and I look forward to  
21 doing it with you. Thank you very much.

22 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

23 Senator Tillis?

24 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25 Congratulations to all of you for being nominated. Mr.

1 Slavonic, it is good to see you over there. It was a  
2 pleasure to work with you when you were supporting one of my  
3 colleagues.

4 I actually only have a few brief comments. I intend to  
5 support all of you and your nomination.

6 But I do want to go back to some comments that were  
7 made earlier. I think, Dr. Porter, it was you who said we  
8 do not punish those who fail, and we need incentives within  
9 the DOD to get things faster. I also do not think that we  
10 punish people who succeed but they took too long to do it.

11 And I did not have a chance to go back to my office and  
12 bring my 680-page RFP for the next generation handgun that  
13 took 10 years that has 680 pages in it but only 39 pages are  
14 specs. But we all know that all those other pages are  
15 relevant, complex, and costly for our suppliers to respond  
16 to. And that is an unacceptable success. For us to be in  
17 the procurement phase now is a good thing, but the reality  
18 is we probably already should have been working on the next  
19 generation handgun.

20 So each of you are going to go into areas where you are  
21 either going to have a direct line responsibility or matrix  
22 responsibilities where each and every one of you need to  
23 root out that sort of culture that is the complete opposite  
24 of what my experience was in business around lean design.  
25 Each and every one of you need to do it.

1           We need to be relevant again. I think it was Senator  
2 King that said that Silicon Valley has given up on us  
3 because, on the one hand, Senator Warren is right. We need  
4 to be thinking about the long-term big problems that DARPA  
5 is trying to tackle. On the other hand, when we stand up  
6 the Army Futures Command, wherever it is going to be, we  
7 also have to recognize that in the cyber space, a number of  
8 other spaces, look, we got to get a solution in 6 months  
9 because it is going to change in 12. And we have got  
10 acquisition and procurement systems that cannot move at that  
11 speed, which is why we are losing ground with our  
12 adversaries.

13           And I also think that there should be some reward for  
14 making a bad decision earlier so you can get on to a good  
15 decision not only within the halls of R&D efforts, but the  
16 whole of government.

17           I also believe for the two nominees who are going to be  
18 responsible for manpower and reserve affairs that we get  
19 better leverage out of our enlisted. When I would go and  
20 work in a manufacturer, a financial services entity, you  
21 would go to the C-suite to figure out what they thought the  
22 problem was, but you went into the factory or you went into  
23 the banking centers to come up with good solutions. And I  
24 do not see that systemic level of engagement. And we have  
25 to have a culture where we are looking down for the



1 solutions that come up. It is a traditional organizational  
2 construct in business. It is about as rare as a leprechaun  
3 riding a unicorn in the government.

4       And so we have to figure out a way -- I have not used  
5 that analogy before. I am sure somebody will criticize it.  
6 But we have got to have leaders going into these agencies  
7 who think lean, who find examples of it better not happen  
8 again, like that 689-page RFP. And all I want is your  
9 commitment to engage. You are going to be busy. But you  
10 have got to have transformation efforts within your agencies  
11 to look at specific initiatives so that when in the  
12 Personnel Subcommittee we come down and talk about manpower  
13 and reserve initiatives that are getting lean, that are  
14 producing value, that are freeing up resources across all  
15 your agencies, that I for one think we should reward you and  
16 plow back in for more change.

17       Look, I will vote for every repeal of sequestration  
18 that ever gets to the Senate floor. It is a disaster.  
19 There is no business that would stay in business in the  
20 competitive environment that you all play if they ran their  
21 books that way.

22       We have got a 5-year modernization plan and a 2-year  
23 funding strategy. So the fact of the matter is, as  
24 impressive as that plan was -- it was outlined by General  
25 Mattis and General Dunford a few weeks ago -- Secretary

1     Mattis -- we do not have any certainty that we are going to  
2     realize it over 5 years. We may. But we have our  
3     adversaries that are planning 10-year horizons and they are  
4     committed. And we have to recognize that is a problem  
5     Congress needs to fix.

6             So I want your commitment coming up with very  
7     enlightened and specific transformation efforts for the  
8     agencies you are going to lead, and I would like to speak  
9     with you about it. We can do it in the office. We do not  
10    have to do it in a hearing. And I also want your commitment  
11    to cast light on past decisions of past Congresses that are  
12    preventing you from realizing some of those goals,  
13    specifically how we should act beyond the funding piece.  
14    And with that commitment, that is all you need, just  
15    straight down the line, yes or no, to get my support.

16            Thank you.

17            Dr. Anderson: Yes, sir.

18            Dr. Porter: Yes.

19            Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Tillis. Very  
20    thoughtful.

21            Let me commend Senator King because you always stay to  
22    the bitter end. I am very proud of you.

23            Senator King: It is only because I have so much to  
24    learn, Mr. Chairman.

25            [Laughter.]

1           Senator Inhofe: Any further comment?

2           Well, thank you very much. It has been very  
3 enlightening. Certainly I am in full support of all of you,  
4 and I think we have got a lot to work going forward. I  
5 think Senator Tillis pretty much outlined it for us. So  
6 thank you so much for your service and for your being here  
7 today.

8           We are adjourned.

9           [Whereupon, at 11:12 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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