

Stenographic Transcript  
Before the

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

## **UNITED STATES SENATE**

TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE POSTURE OF UNITED  
STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND AND UNITED STATES  
TRANSPORTATION COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE  
AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND THE  
FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Thursday, April 11, 2024

Washington, D.C.

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1 TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE POSTURE OF UNITED STATES  
2 EUROPEAN COMMAND AND UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND  
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5  
6 Thursday, April 11, 2024

7  
8 U.S. Senate

9 Committee on Armed Services,  
10 Washington, D.C.

11  
12 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 7:59 a.m.,  
13 in Room 216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed,  
14 chairman of the committee, presiding.

15 Committee Members Present: Senators Reed [presiding],  
16 Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Kaine, King, Peters,  
17 Rosen, Kelly, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Ernst, Sullivan,  
18 Scott, Tuberville, Mullin, Budd, and Schmitt.

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

3           Chairman Reed: Good morning. We will begin the  
4 hearing. Welcome, General Cavoli, General Van Ovest.  
5 Senator -- I will defer from giving my opening statement  
6 and submit it to the record. I believe that the Ranking  
7 Member will do so also so we can expedite questioning.  
8 With that, General Cavoli, let me recognize you.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL CHRISTOPHER G. CAVOLI, USA  
2 COMMANDER, UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND, NORTH ATLANTIC  
3 TREATY ORGANIZATION SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE

4 General Cavoli: Thank you, Chairman. Chairman Reed,  
5 Ranking Member Wicker, distinguished members of the  
6 committee, it is my honor to testify before you today on  
7 behalf of the brave men and women and families of U.S.  
8 European Command.

9 And before we start, I would like to publicly  
10 recognize our service members' shared sacrifice and praise  
11 their devotion to the mission, and I would like to thank  
12 you for the support you give them every day. They are  
13 represented here today by my Command Sergeant Major Rob  
14 Abernathy, who I am lucky to serve with.

15 And I am delighted to testify next to my friend Jackie  
16 Van Ovost. We are facing challenging times in the European  
17 theater, ladies and gentlemen. Russia's brutal, unprovoked  
18 war has ravaged Ukraine for over two years. Their forces  
19 are demolishing cities, destroying innocent lives at a  
20 scale we have not seen since the Second World War.

21 Moreover, Russia is turning to the People's Republic  
22 of China, to Iran, and to North Korea to sustain its  
23 campaign in Ukraine. Those countries are forming  
24 interlocking strategic partnerships in an attempt to  
25 challenge the existing order from which we benefit. This

1 is profoundly inimical to U.S. national interests, and it  
2 is important to note that Russia shows no signs of  
3 stopping, nor does Russia intend to stop with Ukraine.

4 Russia presents to us a chronic threat. USEUCOM has  
5 responded to this threat by enhancing our deterrence  
6 posture across Europe. We have strengthened our Eastern  
7 flank with rotational force deployments.

8 We have expanded pre-positioned stocks. We have  
9 modernized our infrastructure to enable rapid reception of  
10 forces, and we have demonstrated our ability to reinforce  
11 in all domains through dozens of multinational training  
12 exercises.

13 So, we are ready to defend, and this allows us to  
14 deter. And we have deterred Russia from attacking our  
15 alliance. USEUCOM is also proud to lead the international  
16 effort in support of Ukraine. We do this, as you know,  
17 through the Security Assistance Group Ukraine, SAG-U, which  
18 is led by Lieutenant General Tony Agudo.

19 In the past 26 months of war, the U.S. and our  
20 partners have delivered vast amounts of critical munitions  
21 and equipment to our Ukrainian colleagues. SAG-U has been  
22 in the lead, and they have facilitated a full range of  
23 training to promote unit readiness. We have ensured that  
24 Ukraine knows how to use their new equipment, and just as  
25 important, how to maintain it. Nevertheless, Russia

1 persists in its vicious campaign.

2           Meanwhile, Ukraine remains almost entirely dependent  
3 on external support to stay in the fight. The severity of  
4 this moment cannot be overstated. If we do not continue to  
5 support Ukraine, Ukraine could lose.

6           So, our efforts are great, but in all of this, EUCOM  
7 is not alone. War in Europe has also given our allies and  
8 our partners clear purpose and unity. They have seized  
9 this opportunity which has been presented by this  
10 catastrophe, and over the past year or two there have been  
11 profound changes in NATO.

12           We have new war plans for the first time in 35 years.  
13 We have new force and readiness models. They make 700  
14 percent more European troops available to me as the Supreme  
15 Allied Commander than just a couple of years ago. We have  
16 streamlined and focused new command structures. We have  
17 new authorities that give me, as SACEUR, the ability to  
18 respond to crisis in a timely fashion.

19           And European governments are backing these  
20 organizational changes with a concrete uptick in  
21 investment. In 2024, at least 20 nations are expected to  
22 meet the 2 percent of GDP defense spending, compared to  
23 only 3 who met it in 2014. Nevertheless, continued U.S.  
24 leadership is essential. Our allies are stepping up, but  
25 they require our leadership and our example.

1           And by upholding our commitment to Ukraine and by  
2 demonstrating steadfast cohesion with the NATO alliance, we  
3 provide a clear deterrent to our adversaries. Of course,  
4 should deterrence fail, USEUCOM, along with our allies is  
5 ready to fight and win.

6           We thank you for Congress's unwavering support to  
7 USEUCOM servicemembers missions, to their safety, and to  
8 their well-being. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Wicker, on  
9 behalf of the entire European Command, thank you for this  
10 opportunity today. I very much look forward to your  
11 questions.

12           [The prepared statement of General Cavoli follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you, General Cavoli. General  
2 Van Ovost, please.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL JACQUELINE D. VAN OVOST, USAF  
2 COMMANDER, UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND

3 General Van Ovost: Chairman Reed, Ranking Member  
4 Wicker, and distinguished members of the committee, it is  
5 my honor to join you today with my Senior Enlisted Leader,  
6 Chief Master Sergeant Brian Kruzelnick, to represent the  
7 men and women of the United States Transportation Command  
8 as we defend the nation, take care of our people, and  
9 succeed through teamwork.

10 I am extremely proud of our team of logistics  
11 professionals who lead the joint deployment and  
12 distribution enterprise, continually exceed expectations,  
13 and ensure hope, deterrence, and victory are assured as we  
14 underwrite our nation's defense.

15 From competition to crisis, the entire enterprise  
16 proudly deliver for our nations, our allies, and partners.  
17 We know our success around the globe would not be possible  
18 without the steadfast support of this committee and the  
19 whole of Congress. The Fiscal Year 2025 budget request  
20 continues to make strides in closing gaps in our mobility  
21 areas as we prepare for global operations in a contested  
22 environment.

23 A contested environment is the reality of today.  
24 Whether in the homeland or abroad, we cannot presume  
25 freedom of maneuver to execute our operations with full

1 access to our lines of communication.

2 Our organic fleets, coupled with the vital capacity  
3 provided by our commercial transportation partners, must  
4 continue to present credible capacity. Meaning, we must  
5 modernize our mobility capabilities to include cyber  
6 resiliency and digital modernization.

7 A connected, aware, and survivable mobility fleet and  
8 network is needed to maintain our advantage against a  
9 capable and determined near peer adversary. My top  
10 readiness concerns remain sealift and air refueling.  
11 Sealift is the backbone of our ability to deliver a  
12 decisive Joint Force.

13 However, the age of the fleet is dragging readiness to  
14 alarming levels. 17 of the 47 organic reserve force ships  
15 are 50 years or older. To address readiness and decrease  
16 in capacity due to the planned retirement of 27 ships in  
17 the next 8 years, we must add younger ships to the fleet.

18 TRANSCOM supports Navy strategy to acquire used  
19 sealift vessels from the commercial market, and further  
20 request to provide the Secretary of Defense discretionary  
21 authority to purchase foreign built used ships under  
22 favorable market conditions without restrictions.

23 We acknowledge Congress's intent to include domestic  
24 newbuild sealift ships to recapitalize the ready Reserve  
25 Force, and we are working with the Navy and Maritime

1 Administration to create an acquisition strategy for new  
2 construction that will complement the buy used program.

3 I greatly appreciate your support for timely,  
4 predictable, and stabilized funding to meet our sealift  
5 requirements. Similarly, our refueling is foundation to  
6 our nation's power projection advantage. It is our most  
7 stressed capability.

8 We must ensure continuous modernization and  
9 recapitalization of the aging fleet to meet the operational  
10 requirements of the modern battlespace. TRANSCOM supports  
11 the Air Force's strategy for the uninterrupted tanker  
12 recapitalization and accelerated fielding of the next  
13 generation air refueling system.

14 Over the past year, we have made great strides in  
15 synchronizing global fuel management and delivery in  
16 collaboration with our key partners in the Joint Petroleum  
17 Enterprise, leading to robust planning, posture,  
18 operations, and capability development to assure end to end  
19 fuel distribution in a contested environment.

20 This includes diversifying our distribution and  
21 delivery posture by having an increased forward presence  
22 with fuel afloat in contracted maritime tankers and  
23 increasing capacity and access to the U.S. flagged maritime  
24 tanker fleet through the Tanker Security Program.

25 In addition, we fully support the Maritime Security

1 Program, the Jones Act, and cargo preference laws that all  
2 work to ensure that we have the necessary U.S. flag  
3 capability and U.S. merchant mariners to move sensitive  
4 defense materials during a national emergency.

5 Maritime stakeholders have been experiencing  
6 challenges with recruiting and retaining qualified  
7 Mariners, and we support MARAD and industry efforts to  
8 identify strategies that address the Mariner shortage and  
9 ensure their readiness.

10 To effectively sense adversary threats and activities  
11 in our logistics networks, the nation must utilize all  
12 available resources. Section 702 of the Foreign  
13 Intelligence Surveillance Act provides me insights into  
14 adversary intent, capabilities, and activities to contest  
15 our logistics flows. The loss of this authority adds risk  
16 to my mission.

17 Additionally, passing a national defense supplemental  
18 is vital for the health of the Transportation Working  
19 Capital Fund, which preserves essential readiness and  
20 ensures response options for the Secretary of Defense. I  
21 am honored to join General Cavoli today, where we stand  
22 firmly with Ukraine and its fight for democracy,  
23 sovereignty, and territorial integrity, that in turn  
24 delivers success and stability for our allies and our  
25 nation.

1 I would like to thank you once again for your  
2 leadership and the support you provide our workforce. I  
3 look forward to your questions.

4 [The prepared statement of General Van Ovost follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Van  
2 Ovost. Before we begin, let me remind everyone that we  
3 must stop at 10:00 a.m. for the Joint Session. So, please  
4 limit your questioning to five minutes, and the closed  
5 session will begin at noon after the Joint Session in SVC-  
6 217.

7 Thank you. General Cavoli, you indicated the severe  
8 consequences of a failure to support Ukraine. And those  
9 consequences, I presume, are not localized, but global.  
10 Could you elaborate?

11 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Mr. Chairman. So, the  
12 -- if Ukraine fails in this fight, I think problems radiate  
13 outwards, beginning with Europe. So, there will be the  
14 possibility, the probability that Russia will continue  
15 aggressive behavior that will certainly be emboldened.  
16 They are certainly building a military that is going to be  
17 capable of it.

18 They are replenishing what they have lost so far, and  
19 they are working very hard to build a larger army. They  
20 have announced their plans for it, and they are on track to  
21 do that. There are other nations in the neighborhood that  
22 Russia publicly covets -- has publicly stated that they are  
23 not really nations.

24 The same sort of rhetoric that led up to the invasion  
25 of Ukraine. Beyond Europe, which is critical to our

1 security, beyond Europe, there are other places and people  
2 are watching all over the world, Mr. Chairman. Obviously,  
3 the People's Republic of China we know is watching very  
4 closely, and all other nations are watching very closely.

5 First, to gauge what is the value of a partnership  
6 with the United States. And second, to see what happens if  
7 it fails. And the those who would be our friends would be  
8 made nervous by a loss in Ukraine, and those who would be  
9 our adversaries would be emboldened by it, sir.

10 Chairman Reed: I had the opportunity to stop in  
11 Grafenwoehr, Ramstein, and several other places, and we are  
12 teaching the Ukrainians, but we are also learning a lot.  
13 So, this effort has allowed us really to significantly  
14 increase our insights into the way Russia particularly  
15 conducts operations, and also others who are aiding Russia  
16 --

17 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Mr. Chairman. First of  
18 all, thank you and all members for your visits to  
19 Grafenwoehr and elsewhere. They help us a great deal and  
20 we appreciate them. Yes, absolutely, we are learning from  
21 the Ukrainians every day. We learn in a variety of  
22 different ways.

23 First of all, just talking to them, we get their  
24 experiences. This is very valuable for our younger troops  
25 especially because it keeps them galvanized. It keeps them

1 focused on the mission. They understand the import of it.

2 But in a more practical way, we practice tactics and  
3 techniques with them and refine them, things that they have  
4 developed under fire. We bring them out and we work on  
5 those things. These can be technical specific things about  
6 electromagnetic interference and things like that. They  
7 can be tactical.

8 The how to negotiate new forms of Russian obstacles  
9 and defensive fortifications. We have both the incidental  
10 benefit of working with them, but we also have very  
11 specific, focused, structured programs to call out that  
12 information. We also have a couple of other programs, Mr.  
13 Chairman, that would be delighted to talk about on closed  
14 session that are also extremely useful.

15 But overall, yes, we benefit significantly from this.  
16 We are watching them adapt to Russia's adaptations. So it  
17 is, you know, warfare as it goes on is a series of moves  
18 and counter moves, and Russia's military has evolved  
19 significantly during this conflict, and this is helping us  
20 to keep up with that as well.

21 Chairman Reed: Well, thank you. General Van Ovost,  
22 you have already been delivering a substantial amount of  
23 materiel to our forces in Europe, which is transshipped to  
24 the Ukrainians. So, you have got a lot of money tied up in  
25 the supplemental. Is that accurate?



1           General Van Ovost: Senator, thanks for asking that  
2 question. Indeed, about \$550 million of the supplemental  
3 is earmarked for U.S. Transportation Command, mainly in  
4 response to unreimbursed work for the Middle East after the  
5 events of October 7th.

6           However, we work very closely with EUCOM and the  
7 Secretary of Defense to deal with transportation costs  
8 associated with Ukraine.

9           Chairman Reed: And so, if the supplemental doesn't  
10 pass, you have to find ways to pay for that internally,  
11 which would be very disruptive, I assume.

12          General Van Ovost: Senator, that is absolutely  
13 correct. Not just TRANSCOM, but all the services and  
14 Combatant Commands of it have costs that are unreimbursed  
15 at this point.

16          The issue with Transportation Command is it comes out  
17 of our Working Capital Fund, and our Working Capital Fund  
18 is there in case we have an emergency where we have to go  
19 somewhere around the globe.

20          And not having funds in there would slow down any  
21 response and certainly reduce the options for the  
22 Secretary.

23          Chairman Reed: I will yield that my 6 seconds to the  
24 Ranking Member, Senator Wicker.

25          Senator Wicker: Thank you, and I will take it.

1 General Cavoli, you just said, if we don't come forward  
2 with assistance from the United States, Ukraine could  
3 actually lose this war. That implies that Ukraine could  
4 also actually win this war.

5 I would remind you, and you don't need to be reminded  
6 but anyone listening, that there were voices in the United  
7 States, well-intentioned Americans, in the late 30s and  
8 early on in watching the European war that said there was  
9 no way that the United Kingdom could win the war against  
10 Germany, against Hitler's Germany.

11 Respected, well intentioned Americans like Charles  
12 Lindbergh, who I still hold in high regard, said that there  
13 was no way we should help because the war was already lost.  
14 Can Ukraine win this war?

15 General Cavoli: Yes, Senator. Absolutely.

16 Senator Wicker: And is it also true that while we are  
17 being asked and our allies are being asked to help Ukraine,  
18 Russia is seeking help also from other countries on their  
19 side, is that correct?

20 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Senator.

21 Senator Wicker: And those countries include countries  
22 that have a malign intent toward the United States. Who  
23 are those countries?

24 General Cavoli: Absolutely. First in line is the  
25 People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's

1 Republic of Korea, and Iran, sir.

2 Senator Wicker: Now, we have the Japanese, Prime  
3 Minister, in this capital city today, and I will be  
4 attending, along with most of my colleagues, his joint  
5 address to the Congress. What do the Japanese leadership  
6 have to say, and what tangible indication have they given  
7 as to the importance of the Ukraine, Russia conflict?

8 General Cavoli: Senator, in my role as the Supreme  
9 Allied Commander for Europe, I recently traveled to Japan  
10 about a month ago, sir, and met with their Chief of Defense  
11 and a number of high -- highly placed officials there. It  
12 is a part of NATO's burgeoning relationship with key Indo-  
13 Pacific allies. They are focused on the Ukraine question.  
14 They are watching it very closely. They understand that  
15 the stakes are high.

16 Senator Wicker: Are they helping in a tangible way?

17 General Cavoli: They are helping in intangible ways  
18 and some tangible ways. Yes, sir.

19 Senator Wicker: And what about South Korea? What  
20 about Australia?

21 General Cavoli: Sir, they are all focused on this  
22 question, and all of them are rendering intangible help and  
23 some tangible help. And some of it like --

24 Senator Wicker: They are rendering help in terms of  
25 dollars and cents, are they not?

1 General Cavoli: Absolutely.

2 Senator Wicker: Yes. Well, Ukraine seems to have a  
3 lot of fight in them. Is it true that they have retaken  
4 over half the territory seized by Russia two years ago?

5 General Cavoli: Yes, sir.

6 Senator Wicker: And how is it that they have been so  
7 successful in the Black Sea? How is it that Ukraine has  
8 been so successful against one of the most powerful  
9 countries in the world in the Black Sea, and how so?

10 General Cavoli: It starts with their determination to  
11 have access to the Black Sea. So, they are determined.  
12 Secondly, they have extremely talented engineers and  
13 extremely talented scientists who have devoted this portion  
14 of their lives --

15 Senator Wicker: And some people in the audience may  
16 not be aware to what extent they have been successful. So,  
17 what has their success in the Black Sea been?

18 General Cavoli: They have sunk more than 20 percent  
19 of the Black Sea Fleet. But more to the point, they have  
20 damaged critical infrastructure associated with its  
21 sustenance and its maintenance. And the net effect has  
22 been we do not see Russian surface ships West of Crimea  
23 ever anymore.

24 Senator Wicker: Okay, well, let's talk about burden  
25 sharing. Are we being asked to do more than anybody else

1 in terms of our capacity?

2 General Cavoli: No, sir. We are doing a fair share.  
3 If you measure by percentage of GDP how much assistance we  
4 are giving, we actually rank well below 15 --

5 Senator Wicker: We are down around 14, 15.

6 General Cavoli: Yes --

7 Senator Wicker: Of our economy as compared to all of  
8 the other allies who see the importance there. What do our  
9 friends and people we want to be more friendly with, what  
10 do they think about the likelihood of America keeping its  
11 word long term?

12 General Cavoli: Sir, they believe in America. They  
13 believe in America's leadership. They believe in America's  
14 consistent dedication to global security and to European  
15 security, because they understand it is in our interest.  
16 However, when they hear things or see things from our  
17 country, they can get nervous sometimes.

18 Senator Wicker: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Wicker. Senator  
20 Shaheen, please.

21 Senator Shaheen: General Cavoli, General Van Ovost,  
22 thank you both for your service and for being here this  
23 morning. Senators Reed and Wicker have been very broad and  
24 expansive in covering Ukraine, which I appreciate their  
25 comments and your responses to that.

1           So, I want to focus on the Western Balkans, where we  
2 are seeing tensions rise. And I appreciate your attention  
3 to that, General Cavoli. A persistent problem is ensuring  
4 that EUFOR and KFOR missions are adequately prepared to  
5 respond to those security concerns.

6           I think so far we have been -- the missions have been  
7 relying on each other as reserve forces. I think this dual  
8 heading is concerning, and especially as we see tensions  
9 increase in both Kosovo and Bosnia.

10          So, can you talk about how EUCOM is engaging with our  
11 European partners to emphasize the need to establish  
12 separate reserve forces for EUFOR and KFOR?

13          General Cavoli: Yes, ma'am. Absolutely, because it  
14 is an extremely important question. And as you know, NATO  
15 is not a one problem an alliance. We are not a one problem  
16 country. And so, it is important to recognize that there  
17 are other things going on in Europe that are not good for  
18 US national interests.

19          They are also not unrelated to the conflict in  
20 Ukraine, as you well know, Senator. The first thing  
21 USEUCOM did was get the EUCOM Commander to persuade the  
22 Supreme Allied Commander to do something about this inside  
23 of NATO with regard to the reserve forces and everything.  
24 So, we have done a complete O plan review for KFOR  
25 specifically, and it is revealed that we need not just more

1 forces, but we need heavier forces.

2 We are in the process of sourcing that right now.  
3 Nations are being quite generous, but we will put heavier  
4 equipment on the ground as well as more people. The second  
5 thing we are doing is we are untying the relationship  
6 between the reserve forces for the EU mission Althea in  
7 Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the KFOR mission, because as you  
8 pointed out and I agree, that was an economy that we can no  
9 longer afford to share the strategic reserve force there.

10 I would like to call out France for being especially  
11 generous. As you know, the Commander of the Althea mission  
12 is a French Lieutenant General, Hubert Cottereau. He is  
13 also my Vice Chief of Staff at the Supreme Headquarters.  
14 And so, in that dual hatted role, just like I can dual hat  
15 his benefits from his relationship with France.

16 France has put the Charles de Gaulle offshore in the  
17 Adriatic and has recently deployed a battalion on an  
18 operational deployment for a medium term. So, they have up  
19 their forces. Especially important right now, as you  
20 understand, because this week in particular, the tensions  
21 are significantly higher.

22 So, I am satisfied that we are in a good position  
23 right now, Senator, but it is always necessary to keep a  
24 very close eye on it. We have run at least two focused  
25 collection missions to increase our intelligence collection

1 and understanding of what is going on in both of those  
2 countries, and I have supported that from USEUCOM with  
3 aerial ISR and other things we could talk about in closed  
4 session, ma'am.

5 Senator Shaheen: Great. I have several other  
6 questions, specifically about the situation there, but I  
7 will save those for closed session so I can ask General Van  
8 Ovost a question about the National Guard Bureau's decision  
9 to level Air National Guard units and the impact that that  
10 is going to have across the country.

11 We are concerned about that impact on the 157th Air  
12 Refueling Wing in New Hampshire, where we have the KC-46s.  
13 So, can you -- have you been briefed by the Guard Bureau on  
14 what they are planning, and are you concerned about the  
15 impact that will have on TRANSCOM?

16 General Van Ovost: Thanks, Senator. You know, as you  
17 know, two-thirds of our area fueling force are in the Guard  
18 and Reserve. They bring such a great capability and  
19 absolutely required. We could not do our mission without  
20 them.

21 So, this is an issue that is emerging that I am  
22 tracking. I have not been briefed by the Air National  
23 Guard. However, we have looked at -- I have no immediate  
24 concerns. But as we look into the out years as how this is  
25 going to be leveled out and where the capabilities are



1 going, we are going to track that very carefully for the  
2 Guard.

3 Senator Shaheen: Well, again, we are concerned that  
4 the 157th is going to be affected and they have major  
5 responsibility for refueling over the North Atlantic, and  
6 they have been called in the past to help with missions in  
7 Europe. So, I hope you will track that closely and that we  
8 can make sure that doesn't affect their ability to do their  
9 jobs.

10 General Van Ovost: Yes, ma'am. The 157th has led the  
11 way for the Guard for integration of the KC-46, which is  
12 absolutely the future of air refueling.

13 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Shaheen. Senator  
15 Fischer, please.

16 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank  
17 you both for being here today and thank you for your  
18 service. General Van Ovost, the California Air Resources  
19 Board has a proposal that would significantly impact the  
20 ability of the National Rail Network to support the  
21 movement of Department of Defense equipment and materiel  
22 deployment to the West Coast.

23 This proposal would impose unrealistic emission  
24 standards and require zero emission locomotives, which do  
25 not exist because that technology is not even commercially

1 available at this point in time.

2       And this means that about 65 percent of the nation's  
3 locomotives would be prohibited from operating in  
4 California starting in 2030. What would the operational  
5 impact be if railroads could not service routes in  
6 California, or had to divert cargo to other areas to meet  
7 the DOD logistics requirements?

8       General Van Ovost: Senator, we rely every day on this  
9 nation's transportation network, whether its seaports, its  
10 rail, or its roads.

11       So, and I think about the reduction in capacity across  
12 California and think about -- I have 15 nodes in California  
13 that we use different -- from two different railroad lines.  
14 And we have five ports, one of which is our only West Coast  
15 ammunition port for containerized ammunition, which is  
16 critical to our operational plans.

17       And of course, we have close relationships with the  
18 railroad industry, and so we are working with them as this  
19 is a merging and they are understanding what the  
20 implications are. Initially, I believe that any increased  
21 costs will be passed directly on to the customer, but I am  
22 concerned about the technology and their ability to  
23 recapitalize between now, the readiness of now, and the  
24 readiness of future if they have to transition.

25       Senator Fischer: Have you expressed these concerns to

1 the Administration?

2 General Van Ovost: I have not.

3 Senator Fischer: Do you plan to?

4 General Van Ovost: In my normal course of action  
5 through the Secretary of Defense, if this is going to  
6 impact national security, I absolutely will.

7 Senator Fischer: Thank you. When we look at the  
8 requirements that you have in the plans that you have, if  
9 we are seeing conflict take place in the Indo-Pacific, how  
10 would a surge of forces be impacted?

11 General Van Ovost: When we think about options every  
12 day, and we rerun several planning events in several  
13 simulations that occur around the globe, these globally  
14 integrated plans, should we have to surge for an event like  
15 the events after October 7th -- and so we think about it,  
16 and we run these simulations, and we ensure that we have  
17 readiness for the fleet.

18 The most important thing is to ensure not only do we  
19 have the capacity, but it is a credible capacity to operate  
20 in the environment we expect to be in. We expect it to be  
21 contested, and an example right there is the Red sea.

22 Senator Fischer: Thank you. General Cavoli, I am  
23 concerned about the increasing cooperation between Russia,  
24 China, Iran, and North Korea, which we are seeing the  
25 impact of in real time, with Russia's war against Ukraine.

1 How is EUCOM altering its posture to address the strategic  
2 dilemmas created by these partnerships?

3 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. The first thing  
4 we have done is we have responded to the Russian aggression  
5 by bolstering our presence along with NATO's presence on  
6 the Eastern flank. We did that over the last two years.

7 NATO moved very quickly after the invasion to  
8 establish new battle groups and to increase the size of the  
9 existing battle groups on the Eastern flank, and to thicken  
10 the air policing -- that is the air defense efforts that we  
11 were doing. USEUCOM was a part of that.

12 In fact, USEUCOM led some of that with U.S. unilateral  
13 deployments to that sort of seed corn to get things going.  
14 We have continued that, and we have actually regularized  
15 the procedures, and those are going to become long term  
16 deployments that our allies have out there.

17 The second thing we have been doing is tightening our  
18 air and missile defenses. I am under instruction from the  
19 32 heads of state and government to tighten our air and  
20 missile defense. With regard to the connections among the  
21 countries, we worked very closely with the -- that is these  
22 adversarial countries who have formed this network that is,  
23 you know, profoundly against our interests.

24 We are working very closely with the interagency  
25 across all the instruments of national power to try to

1 interrupt that and to hinder their ability to cooperate.  
2 We have, based on my intelligence section, my J2 section,  
3 something called Task Force Champion, which focuses on this  
4 question, those relationships, and feeds information to the  
5 interagency to take action through a variety of different  
6 means.

7 Senator Fischer: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

9 Senator Kaine, please.

10 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to  
11 our witnesses. To General Van Ovost, in your written  
12 statement you say, the DOD's ability to project military  
13 forces is inextricably linked to the commercial industry,  
14 what we like to call our fourth component. TRANCOM's  
15 relationship with the commercial sector is pretty unique.

16 Talk about the importance of our commercial sector and  
17 challenges you have with -- in working with commercial  
18 companies.

19 General Van Ovost: Thank you, Senator. We cannot do  
20 our job every day without our strong commercial  
21 partnerships. In fact, 90 percent of our passengers flow  
22 through commercial operations, and day to day, 97 percent  
23 of our sustainment goes through commercial sealift. So, it  
24 is absolutely significant.

25 When -- while that is -- the opportunity to use them

1 and use their networks is significant and provides us an  
2 asymmetric advantage, the top vulnerability concern I have  
3 with them is through cyber, frankly.

4 We have heard even from the CIA Director that the PRC  
5 has infiltrated some of the logistics networks of our  
6 commercial partners. So, we have been working with them on  
7 how to secure their systems through the no cost  
8 cybersecurity collaboration center and the defense  
9 industrial base work that we have been doing. And they are  
10 paying attention at the CEO level.

11 Senator Kaine: That is great. In your written  
12 statement, you also mention the joint communication support  
13 element, which is part of the Joint Enabling Capabilities  
14 Command in Norfolk. Why do you mention them specifically,  
15 and how important is it that they be recapitalized?

16 General Van Ovost: A joint communication support  
17 element provides deployable communications on air, land,  
18 and sea in support of standing up joint task forces. So,  
19 if we go into a crisis mode, they need to have the  
20 modernized equipment to be able to support the joint task  
21 force commander around the world -- and we have done that  
22 multiple times here, I would say, in the past couple of  
23 years. So, we need to make sure that our equipment is  
24 modernized.

25 Senator Kaine: Thank you for that. General Cavoli,

1 talk to us a little bit about how Sweden and Finland are  
2 integrating into the existing NATO military structure.

3 General Cavoli: Absolutely. Thanks, Senator. So,  
4 first, I think it is important to note that Finland and  
5 Sweden have been cooperating for years with NATO, not just  
6 in training, but in operations.

7 They have also been very close -- closely tied to the  
8 United States and bilateral agreements. They are also  
9 closely tied among the Nordic countries through  
10 multilateral arrangements that they have among themselves.

11 All of those things made it extremely easy to  
12 integrate those two nations militarily into the alliance,  
13 sir. They -- Supreme Allied Command Transformation is  
14 formally responsible for the integration effort and the  
15 integration documentation. That was completed in record  
16 time for Finland and will be for Sweden as well. They have  
17 already been incorporated into the regional plans that NATO  
18 has approved in the past year.

19 In fact, it took less than five days for us to bring  
20 the inclusion of Sweden forward to the North Atlantic  
21 Council and register that as an amendment to the plans. So  
22 overall, it has all been extremely easy because we have  
23 such a long history with them and because they have  
24 invested in defense over the years.

25 So, you know, defense investment has not been the

1 strong suit of many nations in Europe over the last 40  
2 years, but it has been in Finland in particular, and Sweden  
3 has radically stepped up defense budget right now.

4 So, both of them have maintained high capabilities and  
5 good capacity, and they are really welcomed in the  
6 alliance, sir.

7 Senator Kaine: Well, I know everyone on this  
8 committee understands this, but for the public, if you are  
9 going back five years and polled in Sweden or Finland about  
10 whether they wanted to join NATO, you would have been lucky  
11 to get to 25 percent yes.

12 The Russian invasion of Ukraine has caused the scales  
13 to fall from folks eyes about what the likely threat  
14 scenario is, and the deep desire of Sweden and Finland to  
15 join NATO demonstrates a reality we have to be aware of,  
16 and also demonstrates the vitality of NATO and other  
17 organizations of like-minded democracies.

18 Let me ask you one other question. The Radford  
19 Arsenal in Virginia produces munitions that are critical to  
20 the battle in Ukraine, but I think it is also important  
21 that munitions be produced closer to theaters of war. Talk  
22 about your discussions with our NATO allies about munitions  
23 production ramping up in Europe.

24 General Cavoli: This is something we talk about a  
25 lot, Senator, as you might imagine. Right now, Ukraine for



1 155 millimeter shells is mainly dependent on U.S.  
2 production. European production has just not gotten up and  
3 running yet. It is increasing.

4 It is increasing, and there are certainly plans and  
5 investments to make it go faster, but they are still  
6 ramping it up. Some countries have converted former  
7 factories very rapidly. Slovakia, I would point to here,  
8 is producing a significant amount of 155 NATO standard  
9 ammunition right now.

10 But really, there is a lot of work left to be done.  
11 The EU and NATO are cooperating closely on lifting  
12 production, and I believe they are going to break down some  
13 barriers and get that going. I do think it is going to be  
14 a few months before we see U.S. levels of production  
15 though. Related to that, Senator, is the --

16 Senator Kaine: Okay, I am over time, so --

17 General Cavoli: I am sorry. Sure, sir.

18 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. Senator Kaine.  
19 Senator Ernst, please.

20 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thank you,  
21 General Van Ovest, and thank you, General Cavoli for being  
22 here today. I want to thank both of you for your continued  
23 service and commitment to Ukraine.

24 It has been a very difficult time. And General  
25 Cavoli, I will start with you because I did just return

1 from a trip to Poland, Ukraine, where I spent three days  
2 with a delegation traveling across the country and to many  
3 different areas, and then onto -- into Moldova, which is  
4 one of those other areas that is pretty tenuous right now.

5 It is pretty darn clear that the American political  
6 system has been very ineffective in providing the needed  
7 support to a fellow democracy there in Ukraine. So, as we  
8 await the House's finalized decision on a supplemental  
9 package, what more can you do in your role to leverage  
10 assistance from friends and allied nations in Europe or  
11 other areas to provide support for Ukraine?

12 General Cavoli: We work that very, very hard,  
13 Senator, as you know.

14 First of all, I would point out that the principal  
15 coordinating mechanism for aggregating Ukrainian demand and  
16 presenting it to allies and partners, and soliciting their  
17 help and their contributions has been led by Secretary  
18 Austin since the very beginning with the UDCG, the Ukraine  
19 Donors Coordination Group, sometimes known as the Ramstein  
20 Group because it sometimes meets there. 50 nations, just  
21 over 50 nations come together about every six weeks, and we  
22 coordinate at a ministerial level.

23 That is preceded by weeks of hard work between our  
24 policy staffs and their policy staffs. And USEUCOM with  
25 the SAG-U works very hard to get the specifics of the

1 Ukrainian demand and their needs and consult with them  
2 about what they need to bring that forward. However, it is  
3 difficult.

4 A lot of this is dependent on production levels at  
5 this point. How much ammunition we can produce, how many  
6 missiles we can produce. And so, in that regard, I spent a  
7 lot of time working with the Secretary General and the  
8 Secretariat at NATO to increase -- to work with national  
9 armaments directors to increase the amount of production we  
10 can do.

11 Senator Ernst: Well, thank you. I appreciate that,  
12 and I am glad that we do have partners that are stepping up  
13 and assisting. They understand how significant this is and  
14 what could happen to all of us if Ukraine falls.

15 Oftentimes Americans are very short sighted. You  
16 know, what is our immediate need today? What is our  
17 immediate want? But I think there are very long term  
18 repercussions to our country should Ukraine fall.

19 And I think we need to keep our eyes open as we are  
20 looking to the future and what will happen if we continue  
21 to allow countries like Russia, like China, like Iran, like  
22 North Korea, to continue to spread around this globe and  
23 the pressures it puts on our own nation. So, I -- thank  
24 you for being such a great leader in this fight.

25 I know that in the lead up to the Russian invasion of

1 Ukraine, the intelligence community did declassify a number  
2 of reports which shed light on Russia's true intentions.  
3 And it was a very proactive approach, and I am I am really  
4 thankful for that. And it helped us counter a lot of that  
5 Russian disinformation that was being pushed out there.

6 And we still see a lot of Russian propaganda. Can you  
7 speak to how various information sharing programs are  
8 assisting us in pushing back against some of the common  
9 security challenges that are faced by Europe and our  
10 friends?

11 General Cavoli: Yes, ma'am. Absolutely. First of  
12 all, in terms of collection, you know, the variety of ways  
13 we collect, we have to -- we rely on access and  
14 geographical access to -- other countries in order to be  
15 able to collect information.

16 Nations have been very generous with us, and not just  
17 allies but partners as well, in allowing us to operate with  
18 and from their countries. That has been invaluable.  
19 Frequently that leads to very high level and detailed  
20 information sharing programs. We have allies who have  
21 accesses that we do not, and we have accesses that they do  
22 not.

23 And so, it is very much mutually beneficial. The last  
24 thing I would say, ma'am, is that the interaction with  
25 Ukraine and their security services has provided us a vast

1 amount of information as well.

2 Senator Ernst: Well, and I will yield back my five  
3 seconds, Mr. Chair. But thank you both for being here  
4 today.

5 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Ernst. Senator  
6 King, please.

7 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before  
8 beginning my questions, I would like to ask unanimous  
9 consent to submit to the committee a graph which represents  
10 the contribution by GDP of the various countries that has  
11 been updated by the Kiel Institute.

12 [The information referred to follows:]

13 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman Reed: Without objection.

2 Senator King: Thank you. What this graph shows is  
3 that, in fact, Senator Wicker made the point, we were 15th  
4 in the in the world in terms of contribution as a  
5 percentage of GDP.

6 It is actually more like 29th now in according to  
7 updated data from this past January, and it is interesting  
8 to look the countries, the contribution.

9 The number one is Estonia, then Poland, then Latvia.  
10 I don't think it is any coincidence that the two out of the  
11 first three are countries that border Russia, and they  
12 understand what the risk is. I commonly hear on the street  
13 in Maine, why are we doing this?

14 Putin isn't really going to keep going. And my  
15 response is, ask the Finns. General Cavoli, what is the  
16 level of anxiety in Eastern Europe about Putin's intentions  
17 beyond Ukraine?

18 General Cavoli: Very high, Senator. Very high. You  
19 are correct, I agree, it is reflected in the number of  
20 donations they have given. So Eastern European countries  
21 have emptied their pockets for Ukraine.

22 Many countries in Europe share that, and the  
23 contributions from nations in Europe are very significant.  
24 Some of them have given 100 percent of what they have in a  
25 given category. One nation has given 100 percent of its

1 mobile artillery.

2 Another nation has given all of its jet fighters and  
3 all of its tanks. Another nation has given 40 percent of  
4 its high end air defense systems. So, these are  
5 significant contributions.

6 Senator King: So, the idea that the United States is  
7 the only person carrying the burden here is just absolute  
8 nonsense.

9 General Cavoli: That is correct.

10 Senator King: And it is -- you know, when Switzerland  
11 is giving more to the cause than the United States in terms  
12 of percentage of GDP, I think that makes a statement.  
13 Cyprus, countries, just going down the list, Sweden,  
14 Croatia, Hungary, Finland, Romania. These are the  
15 countries that know Russia and that is why they are in so  
16 deeply in this conflict. Is that correct?

17 General Cavoli: Yes.

18 Senator King: And going down some of the other  
19 arguments that I hear, Ukraine can't win. It really  
20 appears to me that this is a battle between industrial  
21 capacity and being able to supply weapons. Russia has  
22 vastly increased its capacity to generate, for example,  
23 artillery ammunition. Can the Ukrainians win if they have  
24 sufficient material to carry this fight?

25 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Senator. They have the

1 skill, but most importantly, they have the determination to  
2 accomplish their goals. They need external support until  
3 they are able to generate their own industrial production.

4 I agree with you that in a long war like this, it is  
5 in large part a matter of industrial production, of output.  
6 Once that output is achieved, the side with the greater  
7 determination will win, and that would be Ukraine.

8 Senator King: And if we fail to pass the supplemental  
9 and essentially walk away from our commitment to Ukraine,  
10 that is exactly what Putin wants. Is that not correct?

11 General Cavoli: Oh, absolutely, Senator. Because we  
12 are now in critical areas, munitions especially, their main  
13 provider -- without our help right now, they will not be  
14 able to stay in the fight.

15 Senator King: And the Russians are -- have an active  
16 disinformation campaign to convince our political system to  
17 essentially support Putin's war, isn't that correct?

18 General Cavoli: Senator, the Russians maintain  
19 extremely active disinformation programs. They always have  
20 and they always do, but they are in overdrive right now and  
21 we know that definitively.

22 Senator King: Thank you very much, General. Your  
23 testimony is very important. General Van Ovest, I am  
24 afraid I don't have a lot of time, but one thing you -- as  
25 you were testifying, I was writing, do we have adequate



1 logistics for conflict in the Pacific?

2 And you said we are at alarming levels. Perhaps, for  
3 the record, you could give us more detail on the dangerous  
4 level if there is conflict in Pacific, because it is all  
5 going to be all about logistics, and I am very concerned  
6 about the decline of the sealift capacity. So, I am out of  
7 time, but if you could give us that on the record, I  
8 appreciate it.

9 General Van Ovost: Yes, certainly. I take it for the  
10 record.

11 Senator King: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator King. Senator  
13 Scott, please.

14 Senator Scott: Thank you, Chairman. Well, first of  
15 all, thanks to both of you for being here. Thank you for  
16 your service. It is a tough time in the world. Scary  
17 time. So, General Cavoli, can you just talk about our  
18 troop posture in Europe?

19 And, you know, when I first came up here, the -- I was  
20 at the Munich security conference, and Germany basically  
21 said they are not going to meet their 2 percent. They  
22 don't have any interest in meeting the 2 percent. They are  
23 not going to ever meet their 2 percent. They didn't care  
24 about meeting their 2 percent.

25 We still have a lot of our allies in Europe, they are

1 not willing to meet their 2 percent. And so, they are  
2 completely dependent on our troops. So, do you think we  
3 have troops in the right places, or do you -- how do you  
4 deal with the fact that you supposedly have these allies  
5 that say they care about their own defense, and they  
6 wouldn't actually in theory come to our defense, but they  
7 are not even willing to invest even the 2 percent that they  
8 are investing.

9 General Cavoli: Thanks, Senator. Obviously, an  
10 extremely important question. So, there is, there remains  
11 a gap between say and do in parts of the alliance.  
12 However, that gap has been closing over the last couple of  
13 years.

14 In 2014, there were three nations that met 2 percent.  
15 Last year there were 11 nations that met 2 percent. This  
16 year there are 20 as of today, who meet 2 percent. Norway  
17 just dropped a letter declaring its intention to close that  
18 gap by June.

19 And I believe there will be three or four more before  
20 June of this year who meet 2 percent. That is not  
21 everybody, though. That is not everybody.

22 Senator Scott: Not the biggest ones.

23 General Cavoli: Some of the biggest ones. And they  
24 should meet 2 percent, and we encourage them every day to  
25 meet 2 percent. The Secretary General is extremely active

1 in that regard. And I believe they will, but they need to.

2 Senator Scott: When you look at the map and you look  
3 at where, you know, the Soviet Union is located, and then  
4 you look at where our troops are, does it make sense where  
5 our troops are? I mean, should they -- should we have  
6 troops closer to maybe in Latvia and Lithuania or Estonia  
7 rather than so many troops that we have in Germany?

8 General Cavoli: Sure. So, we have troops in Estonia  
9 and Latvia and Lithuania and Romania and Bulgaria and  
10 Hungary and Slovakia and Poland, sir.

11 So, we do have troops and those. Specifically, the  
12 troops that we surged for after the invasion, they all went  
13 to the front, as did large parts of the organizations that  
14 are already located in Europe.

15 The ones that are already assigned to Europe, I  
16 believe, is the ones you are asking me about, though. Guys  
17 like the Second Cavalry Regiment, 31st Fighter Wing and  
18 people like that. Those organizations routinely get  
19 deployed from their home station to other places to include  
20 to Central Command.

21 They are advantageous where they are right now because  
22 they are sitting on excellent infrastructure for training,  
23 readiness, and deployment. So those are the forces that I  
24 can move to unpredictable points of trouble, and they are  
25 centrally located on really good deployability

1 infrastructure, so it makes sense to me.

2           However, the center of gravity of where our combat  
3 force in Europe is, net has moved significantly Eastward.  
4 And that goes not just for USEUCOM, but that is true for  
5 the alliance as well.

6           Senator Scott: What about Poland? Are you going to  
7 get more troops in Poland?

8           General Cavoli: Sir, we got a ton of troops in Poland  
9 right now. They are someplace just shy of 10,000, which is  
10 up. As you know, we have a defense cooperation agreement  
11 with them. They will build us infrastructure.

12           They are in the process of building it right now. And  
13 as it comes online, we will push forces in there, up to a  
14 brigade combat team.

15           Senator Scott: So, the Air Force and Marines have  
16 done a good job planning and recapitalizing their reserve  
17 C-130 fleet, yet the Navy has even started to recapitalize  
18 their C-130 fleet. So, what do you think about that? Do  
19 you think it is a mistake? Is that -- are we -- we are not  
20 positioned properly with that?

21           General Cavoli: Sir, I am not really familiar with  
22 the topic, and I think maybe the service could answer that  
23 a little bit better. If you would like, I could take it  
24 for the record or defer to them, sir.

25           Senator Scott: I will ask them. Thank you. Thanks,

1 both of you, for your service.

2 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Scott.

3 Senator Blumenthal, please.

4 Senator Blumenthal: Good morning, General --  
5 Generals. Thank you very much for your service, and thanks  
6 for being here today.

7 I know that you have talked a bit about the impact of  
8 the failure to pass the supplemental on the prospects for  
9 Ukraine and the likelihood of failure if the supplemental  
10 isn't passed. I wonder if you could look ahead a little  
11 bit beyond this supplemental, and perhaps tell us in the  
12 longer range whether you think additional aid is necessary  
13 and what form it would take.

14 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. It will depend  
15 on production rates inside Ukraine and in other allies.  
16 So, as this hearing is -- has evolved, sir, I think it has  
17 become clear that really that level of industrial  
18 production is the key thing right now.

19 And nations have given a lot from existing stocks, but  
20 as those go down, production becomes more and more  
21 important, not just in terms of capital items like large  
22 end items like tanks and things, but also more importantly  
23 consumables like ammunition and missiles and things like  
24 that.

25 So, the rate of industrial production is going to be

1 the real answer to that question. How much more will be  
2 required to win, sir.

3 Senator Blumenthal: My understanding is that the  
4 attack last night, or maybe it was -- I guess it was last  
5 night in Ukraine, showed again the real dearth of air  
6 defense and the impact of the ongoing reign of terror from  
7 the skies. Is there not any possibility of right away  
8 providing more Patriot missiles, more air defense?

9 Since as I traveled around Europe and in Poland, there  
10 were a lot of Patriot missiles guarding sites, and  
11 obviously they need to be there, but I am just wondering  
12 whether, you know, three, four, or five of those Patriot  
13 missiles facilities would make a big difference.

14 General Cavoli: Certainly. You know, three parts to  
15 the air defense question, radars, launchers, and the  
16 missiles to shoot out of the launchers. We approach all of  
17 those sometimes together and sometimes in part.

18 Right now, the Ukrainians could use -- their launchers  
19 aren't the most important thing, the missiles are the most  
20 important thing, and we are soliciting those around -- the  
21 Office of the Secretary of Defense is extremely actively  
22 looking for Patriots right now. You are correct, the  
23 attack last night did -- was an illustration of why it is  
24 so important for us to keep funding.

25 Right now, the main source of high end interceptors

1 against ballistic missiles on high end cruise missiles is  
2 the United States, because we have the inventory and the  
3 production capability.

4 And therefore, that supplemental is so important.  
5 Without it, the attack last night, which included at least  
6 TU-10, TU-95 heavy bombers launching everything they had  
7 simultaneously -- an attack like that last night would go  
8 totally, almost totally undefended until machine guns tried  
9 to shoot down the cruise missiles. So, this is vital, sir.

10 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you. Separately, I am,  
11 chairman of a subcommittee of the Homeland Security  
12 committee called the Permanent Subcommittee on  
13 Investigations, which is conducting an investigation of  
14 American chips, semiconductors, parts and components that  
15 are commonly found in Russian missiles, drones, and I am  
16 sure you are familiar with this issue.

17 President Zelensky on my last trip, the chairman was  
18 with me, literally handed me a folder of photographs and  
19 charts showing the different components in Russian  
20 ballistics, drones, and missiles. And we had a hearing  
21 yesterday in the Homeland Security committee showing how  
22 porous our export controls are.

23 And we have had a hearing and that has come to our  
24 attention showing how American companies, four or five in  
25 particular, are selling goods with these parts and

1 components that then find their way into Russian munitions.

2 Is that your experience, and do you have any  
3 suggestions for us as to what can be done about it?

4 General Cavoli: So, we work that very hard in the  
5 interagency, sir. I don't have specific suggestions for  
6 how to do it better, but I can tell you that it is  
7 absolutely critical.

8 If the current war is a competition of production, our  
9 ability to handle the Russian threat in the future is going  
10 to depend on us being able to constitute forces faster than  
11 they can. Part of that is preventing them from  
12 constituting forces quickly.

13 And to the extent that they are using components that  
14 should be sanctioned and banned, it is regrettable, and we  
15 need to fix it, sir.

16 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you. Really appreciate  
17 your answers to my questions, and to my colleagues, and  
18 your very excellent service to our nation. Thank you.

19 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator  
20 Blumenthal. Senator Tuberville, please.

21 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good  
22 morning. Good morning to both of you. General, since the  
23 Crocus massacre -- I guess that was in Moscow. Somewhere  
24 around there. They have picked up -- Russia has picked up  
25 their pace in Ukraine. Is that correct?



1           General Cavoli: Yes. I am not sure it is a  
2 consequence of that though, but yes, sir.

3           Senator Tuberville: Yes. With Secretary Blinken  
4 coming up a couple of weeks ago basically saying that  
5 Ukraine will be in NATO, I am sure that didn't fly too well  
6 in Russia.

7           So, it is obvious to me, just being in all these  
8 meetings and hearings, not just you, other people, we are  
9 getting ready to go to war with Russia.

10          Have we got a game plan for that, for how many people  
11 we are going to need on the ground, young men and women  
12 from United States when this war starts?

13          General Cavoli: Sir, we have standing operational  
14 plans around the globe for a variety of problems and I --

15          Senator Tuberville: How many do you think it is going  
16 to take for us to beat Russia, because Ukraine can't beat  
17 Russia --

18          General Cavoli: Can I take that in closed session,  
19 please, sir?

20          Senator Tuberville: Yes. Okay.

21          General Cavoli: Thank.

22          Senator Tuberville: What about the budget? \$60  
23 billion is going to be a drop in the bucket to the American  
24 taxpayer. We are \$35 trillion debt. What is this going to  
25 cost us? I know you all have surely put the numbers to

1 that, of our conflict versus Russia when this all starts.  
2 Have we done that?

3 General Cavoli: Sir, the number I would have to talk  
4 in closed session about also. But I agree, if we were to  
5 go to war with Russia, it would -- the money we are  
6 spending in Ukraine would be a drop in the bucket.

7 Senator Tuberville: Yes. Where are we going to get  
8 our energy from when this starts? Because they don't have  
9 any in Europe. The Saudis, I don't know whether they are  
10 going to help us out. We are going to back to Ukraine, I  
11 guess.

12 I mean, Iran, because we are not pumping the oil and  
13 gas that we need. Where are we going to get our fuel for a  
14 war like this?

15 General Cavoli: Sir, that is outside of my area of  
16 expertise, but I am sure I can get you the --

17 Senator Tuberville: Do we have enough right now, you  
18 know, to get a war started on the ground there for our  
19 troops?

20 General Cavoli: Yes, we do, sir.

21 Senator Tuberville: Okay. Who is Turkey going to  
22 fight with when this war starts between the United States  
23 and Russia?

24 General Cavoli: Turkey will fight with the alliance  
25 is my prediction. But all nations have their sovereign

1 right to make that decision when the time comes.

2 Senator Tuberville: Hungary?

3 General Cavoli: The same.

4 Senator Tuberville: You think most everybody else  
5 will stick with us in this fight?

6 General Cavoli: I do.

7 Senator Tuberville: Everything that I read over the  
8 past few months is most of the militaries in the -- in NATO  
9 are boutique militaries. Do you agree with that?

10 General Cavoli: I am not sure what a boutique  
11 military is, sir --

12 Senator Tuberville: All a shadow of what it used to  
13 be. Haven't been preparing.

14 General Cavoli: Yes --

15 Senator Tuberville: In terms of --

16 General Cavoli: Sure, I would agree with that. For  
17 instance, the U.S. Army is now 450,000. When I joined it,  
18 it was 785.

19 Senator Tuberville: Yes. So, with Ukraine fighting  
20 right now as they are, do we have any count of numbers of  
21 how many soldiers that they have actually fighting, that  
22 they have in their military against Russia?

23 General Cavoli: Yes, absolutely, Senator.

24 Senator Tuberville: Do you have a number of that?

25 General Cavoli: Yes, it is between 900,000 and 1

1 million right now.

2 Senator Tuberville: Ukraine?

3 General Cavoli: Yes, sir.

4 Senator Tuberville: How about Russia? How many do  
5 they have deployed within Ukraine? Not on the borders, but  
6 how many do they have deployed in Ukraine?

7 General Cavoli: Inside the country, 470. Outside the  
8 country, more. And then they have the rest of their  
9 military.

10 Senator Tuberville: Yes. My understanding is after  
11 the massacre, that they have been growing at 40,000,  
12 soldiers a month that are volunteering for the military.  
13 Is that pretty good Intel or not?

14 General Cavoli: I am tracking 30,000, but yes.

15 Senator Tuberville: 30,000. So, growing more than it  
16 was -- more than it was before the massacre. Is that  
17 correct?

18 General Cavoli: The size of the Russian military is  
19 bigger today than it was when the war started, and it is  
20 bigger today than when the massacre started, yes.

21 In fact, I think what you are pointing to is they have  
22 initiated their annual spring conscription, Senator. That  
23 is -- they do that every spring. This year they did  
24 150,000, they announced that they intend to take in under  
25 the draft. That is right about average for a spring

1 conscription.

2       The difference is, this year they are offering those  
3 conscripts after one month of service, the option to sign a  
4 contract, get paid, in exchange for being able to be sent  
5 to Ukraine to fight.

6       Senator Tuberville: Yes. Do you feel a sense of  
7 urgency in our supply chain now, of building the munitions  
8 that we need? Because they have not been there. I know in  
9 my State of Alabama, there has not been a lot of sense of  
10 urgency of building javelins and things like that. I mean  
11 we are building them as fast as we can, but there is no  
12 sense of urgency.

13       General Cavoli: Sir, I sense an increased urgency in  
14 demand. I can't speak to whether there is an increased  
15 urgency in the base itself to produce.

16       Senator Tuberville: Thank you, General.

17       General Cavoli: Thank you sir.

18       Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator  
19 Tuberville. Senator Kelly, please.

20       Senator Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with  
21 Senator Tuberville's remarks about building the munitions  
22 that we need. I mean, it is critical that we restock our  
23 supplies of the munitions that we have shared with our  
24 Ukrainian allies.

25       And we have depleted stockpiles and the -- by passing

1 the emergency supplemental, we have an opportunity to  
2 resupply our forces with new munitions, some of which could  
3 be made in Alabama. I think what I don't agree with is the  
4 definitive language about, we are getting ready to go to  
5 war with Russia.

6 I don't feel that is the case. And using language  
7 about when this war starts. My view is that we should do  
8 everything we possibly can to avoid going to war with a  
9 near peer adversary like Russia or China. It is not in our  
10 best interest to do that.

11 So, General Cavoli, first of all, thank you for your  
12 service. I am interested to hear just a little bit more  
13 about what you feel the best way in Europe right now is for  
14 us to avoid a conflict with Russia.

15 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. And yes, I  
16 agree. My job is to deter, both in my NATO role and in my  
17 U.S. role, my primary job is to deter aggression and to  
18 avert a war, not to fight one. Now, there is the paradox,  
19 of course, that historically we deter by preparing, you  
20 know, *Si vis pacem, para bellum*.

21 And we are certainly prepared militarily to fight  
22 whoever we need to. How to do it? First of all, by  
23 training. But secondly, I think inside the alliance, the  
24 most important way to deter is by doing it together.

25 And so, the comments from members of the committee

1 about the lamentable fact that some very wealthy nations  
2 inside the alliance are not yet spending what they should  
3 be is an important fact and we have to close that, because  
4 we have to have a capable alliance that will fight  
5 together.

6 The alliance fighting together is far greater than the  
7 sum of its parts, because of the political unity and the  
8 representation of such a mass of humanity and its will.  
9 So, it is -- the most important thing is for us to deter as  
10 part of an alliance, and that alliance has to be fit in  
11 order to do that.

12 I have been charged by the North Atlantic Treaty  
13 Organization to make the operational force of the Alliance  
14 fit, fit for the purpose of collective defense, of large  
15 scale defense of Europe. We are well along on that. We  
16 have produced the plans necessary, the requirements  
17 necessary, and we are going through the process of getting  
18 nations to fulfill those requirements.

19 I believe that that process is one of the things that  
20 has stimulated at least 10 additional countries to meet 2  
21 percent this year compared to last year, because they have  
22 a list now, they have a blueprint. This is how to get  
23 ready.

24 This is the things we need to do to get ready. And  
25 they can bring tangible things back home to the political

1 leadership and say, these are the things we need to go by.  
2 So that is what we are doing to get ready and that is, I  
3 think, the best way to do this, sir.

4 Senator Kelly: And what is the best thing, the most  
5 appropriate thing that we can do here as members of  
6 Congress right now to deter -- to continue to possibly  
7 deter Russian aggression into another country?

8 General Cavoli: I think the first thing is to  
9 continue the discussion about the malign intent of Russia,  
10 sir. I think it is important for the members of the U.S.  
11 Congress to recognize the malign intent of Russia and to  
12 talk about the malign intent of Russia.

13 That is the principal thing to do. After that,  
14 funding the various different programs that we have and  
15 authorizing us to do certain things will be necessary, but  
16 I think the primary thing is to help us all recognize and  
17 keep our eye on the real threat.

18 Senator Kelly: And how significant is the emergency  
19 supplemental in the list of things that we could do to  
20 deter Russia?

21 General Cavoli: It is vital. I think, if Ukraine  
22 fails, and Russia succeeds, it will be a big setback for  
23 deterrence. Russia will be emboldened. They will be  
24 geographically in a better position from a military  
25 perspective.



1           So, there are many things that will be damaged in our  
2 ability to deter. One of the things that would be damaged  
3 in our ability to deter is, it is likely that the number of  
4 nations who want to side with us could shrink.

5           And so, I think it is absolutely imperative for all of  
6 those reasons.

7           Senator Kelly: Thank you, General. And Mr. Chairman,  
8 I have a question to submit for General Van Ovost on  
9 maritime security. Thank you.

10          Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Kelly. Senator  
11 Budd, please.

12          Senator Budd: Thank you, Chairman. And thank you  
13 both again for being here. General Van Ovost, the collapse  
14 of the Francis Scott Key Bridge, horrible, but it  
15 highlights the larger issue I think that we need to  
16 address, and that is how a single piece of destroyed  
17 infrastructure can shut down multiple modes of  
18 transportation.

19          If I am not mistaken, a number of critical military  
20 supply ships are stuck in Baltimore harbor, in addition to  
21 road traffic that has been diverted. So how resilient are  
22 our ports of embarkation, and for instance like in North  
23 Carolina, military ocean terminal Sunny Point, in the event  
24 of a conflict, and if our adversaries should decide to  
25 conduct cyber-attacks or sabotage infrastructure?

1           And then, if you would follow that up with how we can  
2 be helpful here, securing these critical nodes.

3           General Van Ovost: Yes. Thanks for your question.  
4 As I mentioned, we cannot do without the substantial  
5 private infrastructure here in the United States, roads,  
6 rails, and seaports. With respect to the Francis Scott Key  
7 Bridge, a tragic event, and but we think about how do we  
8 recover very quickly and the fact that we had a few ships  
9 that were essentially blocked in. But that is why we have  
10 so many ports.

11           We can afford to lose a port and some capacity. We  
12 can't afford to lose them all. So we do many efforts to  
13 ensure the resiliency of the ports. We work directly with  
14 the port managers on all of our strategic ports, on our  
15 alternative plan should there be problems there, as well as  
16 in a state of emergency, how would we use their resources.

17           But it also comes to the fact that those -- some of  
18 the ships that were behind the lines that couldn't get out,  
19 actually, we wouldn't use them anyway because they are in  
20 such a state of disrepair, that we wouldn't call upon those  
21 ships.

22           It goes back to how old these ships are and how we  
23 need to continue with the recapitalization program, which  
24 is one of the number one things we can do here, is to  
25 assure the readiness of the force, not just the capacity,

1 the credible capacity to fight in the contested  
2 environment.

3 Senator Budd: Thank you. Slightly different topic.  
4 In your opening statement, you argued for the need for a  
5 supplemental, correct. General Van Ovost?

6 General Van Ovost: Correct.

7 Senator Budd: Here is what I am trying to reconcile.  
8 For the third year in a row, I see that you didn't submit a  
9 single unfunded requirement. Why was, even though it is  
10 required by 10 U.S.C. 222(a), why are you asking for  
11 supplemental and then yet didn't submit unfunded requests?

12 General Van Ovost: Certainly. Supplemental is  
13 critical for the Department of Defense. And for U.S.  
14 Transportation Command, it is critical because we have not  
15 been reimbursed for funding associated with the events  
16 after October 7th in the Middle East, and that is eating  
17 away in our reserves.

18 And those reserves are there, our working capital fund  
19 is there to be able to respond at a moment's notice to meet  
20 our nation's most critical priorities. So that is -- that  
21 is associated with authorization to spend transportation  
22 funding in that area.

23 With respect to the unfunded list, we worked very hard  
24 with the Department of Defense to balance the resources to  
25 meet today's rigorous requirements and to be able to

1 transition into the future, and this budget directly  
2 addresses our recapitalization requirements, it begins to  
3 address our contested logistics requirements, to include  
4 posture forward and cybersecurity needs.

5 Senator Budd: Thank you, General. General Cavoli,  
6 last week, Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell, he said  
7 that Russia had almost completely reconstituted its  
8 military. Do you agree with that assessment, and what can  
9 you tell the committee about the current state of Russia's  
10 conventional and industrial capacity? If you speak broadly  
11 here in as many details. And also, in the closed session,  
12 if you could add to that.

13 General Cavoli: Yes, absolutely, Senator. I will add  
14 to it in the closed session, first of all, but Generally  
15 speaking, Russia has been working extremely hard on  
16 reconstituting its forces. And they are being quite  
17 successful, especially in the ground forces.

18 So, the attrition that they have suffered so far has  
19 been very significant, but it has been localized. It has  
20 been mainly in the ground forces. They lost a couple  
21 thousand tanks in the ground forces. They lost as many as  
22 75,000 killed from the ground forces. But they have  
23 replenished those. They have got tank production going on.

24 They have got tank refurbishment going on. And they  
25 have got tank repair going on. And they have managed

1 -- they still have as many tanks functioning inside Ukraine  
2 as they introduced at the beginning of the war.

3 Senator Budd: So, if you look at Generally their  
4 capacity in February of 2022, as a percentage 0 to 100,  
5 where would you say they are today? If there were 100 in  
6 February 2022 and it has been diminished, and then they  
7 have reconstituted according to Kurt Campbell, where are  
8 they now?

9 General Cavoli: Numbers of soldiers have --

10 Senator Budd: Just in total capacity.

11 General Cavoli: Well, that is a really hard thing to  
12 do because --

13 Senator Budd: Are they back where they started, or  
14 are they more, are they less?

15 General Cavoli: They are little bit behind where they  
16 started, but not by too much, sir. But it is really hard  
17 to give a numerical an answer to something like that. I  
18 could go, you know, function by function, or I could go arm  
19 of the service by arm of the service and give you a good,  
20 rich answer that gave you a good feeling.

21 But the overall message I would give you is, they have  
22 grown back to what they were before. They have got some  
23 gaps that have been produced by this war, but their overall  
24 capacity is very significant still, and they intend to make  
25 it go higher, Senator.

1 Senator Budd: Thank you both. Chairman.

2 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Budd. Senator  
3 Peters, please.

4 Senator Peters: Mike issue there, so. Over here.  
5 Well, welcome, both of you. Thank you for your service.  
6 General Cavoli, the State Partnership Program has an  
7 incredible history of building trust and capability with  
8 important allies over the past 30 years. I know you are  
9 well aware of that.

10 Two key Arctic allies, Finland and Sweden, will soon  
11 join the State Partnership Program to be paired with  
12 National Guard units. These State partners will certainly  
13 play a critical role in integrating these countries into  
14 NATO. And in particular, I would argue that pairing Sweden  
15 with an experienced EUCOM partner like the State of  
16 Michigan National Guard would facilitate a seamless  
17 transition into NATO.

18 But my question for you, sir, is with us in mind, how  
19 is EUCOM planning to take advantage of the expansion of the  
20 State Partnership Program into both Sweden and Finland?  
21 And are there certain capabilities that would be  
22 particularly helpful to you as you think about this  
23 expansion?

24 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator, for the great  
25 opportunity to talk about the State Partnership Program.

1 You would have to look pretty far and wide to find somebody  
2 who is a bigger fan of State Partnership than I am.

3 In fact, Rob Abernathy, my Command Sergeant Major  
4 here, routinely visits those troops and goes back to the  
5 States to talk to their senior leadership about this  
6 program. It is vital. It is expanding, as you point out,  
7 but not just among our allies.

8 As you know, the State Partnership Program has been  
9 vital to our ability to bring partners into the alliance.  
10 And to take countries that didn't consider themselves to be  
11 partners and make them partners. This has been especially  
12 valuable lately. Austria has become a State partner this  
13 year, a nation that has had a post-World War II tradition  
14 of neutrality.

15 So, it is a big step forward in terms of their  
16 understanding of their responsibilities for collective  
17 defense. You can't just sit in the middle of a bunch of  
18 safe countries. You have to be part of that. Switzerland  
19 also.

20 In fact, this morning I received an email from  
21 Ambassador Miller telling me that Switzerland had sent its  
22 letter to me asking me to endorse their State Partnership  
23 request, and I have talked to Dan Hokanson about that, and  
24 I think we are going to go forward with that.

25 Specifically with regard to Finland and Sweden,

1 Michigan and the various other States have very broad based  
2 capabilities, and we would just like them to continue to  
3 pull Sweden and Finland toward the alliance.

4 As you know, both of those militaries are quite  
5 capable and, you know, they don't need coaching on this or  
6 that. They just need continued partnership, Senator.

7 Senator Peters: Yes. Great. Thank you, General.  
8 General Van Ovost, as you know, contested logistics and  
9 sustainment during a potential conflict is clearly a  
10 significant challenge for our forces in the Indo-Pacific.

11 And despite our forward position units, pre-positioned  
12 stocks and regional allies and partners, our ability to  
13 refuel, rearm, and repair under fire will be severely  
14 tested in any conflict. In preparation,

15 I believe that we would argue we need to do more  
16 exercises like Talisman and Saber with large scale  
17 sustainment rehearsals and major fuel offloads to test our  
18 contested logistics. So, my question for you, General, is  
19 what role does TRANSCOM play in rehearsing contested  
20 logistics as part of large exercises?

21 And is it your intent to make sure that logistics  
22 plays a central role in all future major exercises,  
23 particularly in the Indo-Pacific area?

24 General Van Ovost: Yes, thanks for that question,  
25 Senator. Across the entire joint deployment distribution



1 enterprise, we have seen how everyone has mobilized to  
2 support our partners, like Ukraine, with fuel, ammunition,  
3 equipment, supplies.

4 And so, when I think about the lessons we have learned  
5 in the Middle East and in Europe, we are absolutely  
6 translating them out into the Indo-Pacific. With respect  
7 to posture, you see multiple posture initiatives in the  
8 Indo-Pacific.

9 Forward stationing of equipment. More resilient bases  
10 that we are using and seaports, as well as more fuel  
11 forward, and an ability to distribute that fuel forward.  
12 So again, this is not merely about moving supplies forward  
13 like we have done with unfettered access.

14 We work very closely with our allies and partners to  
15 ensure that we have multiple resilient ways to come at the  
16 problem to ensure that our geographic Combatant Commands  
17 will be successful in any future fight.

18 Senator Peters: Right. Thank you, General. Thank  
19 you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Peters. Senator  
21 Mullin, please.

22 Senator Mullin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And to the  
23 both of you all, thank you so much for taking the time to  
24 come visit with us. I know it is important to us, and I  
25 know we give you an important mission to carry out every

1 day. And I don't take it lightly that you take the time to  
2 come up here and visit with us. General Van Ovost, is that  
3 how you say it?

4 General Van Ovost: Van Ovost.

5 Senator Mullin: Okay. I am sorry. We don't  
6 pronounce it that often. I am from Oklahoma. I understand  
7 you are familiar with Altus Air Force Base, and we really  
8 appreciate that. They speak very highly of you.

9 You know, as someone who has commanded various aspects  
10 of manning, training, equipping, and mission of air  
11 mobility, I just want to know, are you getting what you  
12 need from the Air Force to carry out that mission still?

13 General Van Ovost: Thank you. First of all, Altus is  
14 a really important base for us. It is the home of mobility  
15 of all of our training. And, of course, you have our  
16 assets there to include our new KC-46, which is really  
17 critical when I think about transitioning and the future of  
18 air refueling in that type of airplane.

19 So, I support the Air Force. We are on a journey to  
20 try to ensure that our assets are able to communicate, they  
21 have battlespace awareness, and they are survivable in the  
22 environment where we are expected to go into.

23 And so, as we as we embark upon that journey, we are  
24 providing the requirements to the Air Force to ensure that  
25 we can continue to maintain credible capacity.

1           Senator Mullin: Is there anything we need to be doing  
2 on our behalf from Congress to help with that?

3           General Van Ovost: Certainly, supporting the Air  
4 Force's budget with respect to modernization and  
5 recapitalization. It is just not of air refueling, but  
6 also of the airlift fleet. We have 275 strategic airlift  
7 aircraft, and we will consume all of that, should we have  
8 to go into a large scale combat operation.

9           So, the work done there to modernize those, and  
10 frankly, to think about the future and where we are going  
11 with that. So, we are supporting the Air Force as they  
12 look into the future of strategic airlift.

13          Senator Mullin: So, specifically dialing down on  
14 that, when we are looking towards possible conflicts -- and  
15 God forbid that actually happens, but, you know, we are  
16 doing what we can to prevent it. However, we need to be  
17 strengthened and preparing for it.

18          What is the biggest hold back. Is it the DOD defense  
19 contractors? Is it requirements? If is it regulations?  
20 Is it the slow flow of money? What is it that is the  
21 biggest hiccup?

22          General Van Ovost: I think the biggest thing, when  
23 you think about it, is the aging fleet that we have, and we  
24 have to modernize them to ensure that they can survive out  
25 into the future. So, you know, just looking at the

1 capacity, ensuring that it remains credible.

2 And that is -- it is an ability to fund it and have a  
3 stable funding that we know that we can count on to lay in  
4 those contracts to gain the capability.

5 Senator Mullin: Moving forward, if something comes up  
6 that we can be of assistance, please, holler at us and let  
7 us know how we can help. So, looking towards, you know,  
8 some of our biggest adversaries, especially in geopolitics,  
9 you know, China is obviously playing a big role in that,  
10 and ever strengthening their relationships with Russia and  
11 obviously Iran, how are we seeing that play out in Ukraine?

12 General Cavoli: Thank you very much, Senator. Yes,  
13 so we see direct military support from some of those  
14 countries that goes to Russia, and then the Russians employ  
15 that material in combat. A great example is the Shahed 136  
16 drone.

17 It is a one way attack drone. It was created by Iran.  
18 It was developed by Iran. It was produced by Iran. It was  
19 given to Russia. It was used with great effect. And Iran  
20 helped Russia build a factory for them in Russia, and  
21 Russia now produces them, and they call them the Geran-10.

22 And those are used. They were used early this morning  
23 to strike Ukraine. That is just one example. So, I could  
24 go into dozens of examples like this in closed session with  
25 you. Some of what we know about this is classified. But

1 some of it is very visible right out there, just like the  
2 136s.

3 Senator Mullin: Are you able to talk about the cost  
4 of what -- in this session, of what it costs them to  
5 produce one of those drones?

6 General Cavoli: Sir, I could probably talk about it  
7 in this session, but I don't have the money figure right  
8 off the top of my head. I can take that for the record  
9 gladly. But Generally speaking, the cost of the drones is  
10 far less than the cost of defending them, which might be  
11 your deeper question.

12 Senator Mullin: It is. The defense that we are  
13 using. And then plus, looking at what we are producing in  
14 the United States and the cost of what it cost us. Because  
15 obviously what they have is being, you know, fairly  
16 effective. And the cost ratio to me, I see that Russia is  
17 -- they are adapting.

18 And I don't -- I mean, we have got sanctions on  
19 Russia. I don't see that they are being effective. I  
20 would love to hear your comment on that. It seems like  
21 their economies growing. It said that their company is  
22 going to maybe grow by 2.4 percent, which is a full  
23 percentage higher than it was last year.

24 It seems like they have actually adapted to their  
25 techniques. And as you are saying, they are almost back to

1 full capacity. So, the sanctions we are having that we put  
2 on -- or not we are having-- that we put on Russia, are  
3 they -- do they seem to be effective?

4 General Cavoli: So, obviously this is outside my  
5 field of expertise, Senator, the sanctions, how they work,  
6 and how effective they are. In some things, as noted  
7 previously during the discussion today, there have been  
8 instances where clearly sanctioned components have still  
9 gotten into Russia weapons systems.

10 With regard to the overall cost ratios between, you  
11 know, the sorts of drones we produce and the sorts of  
12 drones that we see there, it is a complicated question. I  
13 am not the expert on it, but I can certainly talk to you  
14 about it.

15 Senator Mullin: Yes, sir. Absolutely. Thank you so  
16 much.

17 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Mullin. Senator  
18 Rosen, please.

19 Senator Rosen: Well, thank you, Chairman Reed, for  
20 holding this hearing. And, of course, I would like to  
21 thank and welcome General Cavoli and General Van Ovost, of  
22 course, for your commitment, your passion, your service to  
23 our country, and for being here to testify this morning.

24 So, General Cavoli, we are working to provide Ukraine  
25 with critical air and missile defense capabilities, and my

1 concern is that defense alone is not going to solve this  
2 conflict -- or win this conflict.

3 So can you speak to how the integration of additional  
4 long range systems would impact the operational  
5 effectiveness of Ukraine forces, and what strategic  
6 advances could these -- that these capabilities might  
7 provide them.

8 General Cavoli: Sure, Senator. The additional long  
9 range capabilities for Ukraine would clearly allow them to  
10 reach farther back and to hit and destroy systems that are  
11 shooting at them. Of course, you know, the Russians  
12 carefully measure the ranges of the things they believe are  
13 available to the Ukrainians, and then move their important  
14 stuff outside of that range.

15 The ability to move in and out of the farther range  
16 would be an important addition to Ukraine's capabilities.  
17 When we think about long range fires though, you know,  
18 there are really three components to effectiveness. The  
19 first is the range itself. The second is the precision  
20 with which it can strike. And the third is the  
21 survivability of the munitions so that you know it gets to  
22 the target.

23 And so, as Ukraine goes around trying to work on its  
24 longer range capabilities, they have a lot of drones, for  
25 instance, that they are using, longer range. They try to

1 balance those things and get the sweet spot for the given  
2 target that they are looking at.

3 Senator Rosen: Thank you. I just think offense is as  
4 important as defense.

5 General Cavoli: It is ma'am.

6 Senator Rosen: And speaking of offense, General, we  
7 are going to talk a little bit more about -- General  
8 Cavoli. We have multiple Generals here, excuse me. How  
9 are you working with CYBERCOM, because cybersecurity so  
10 important to provide that cybersecurity support to our NATO  
11 allies.

12 Particularly there are some nations with lesser  
13 capabilities, and we have -- they are vulnerable from these  
14 cyber-attacks from Russia, China, and Iran. And can you  
15 share to us the real value to the United States of the  
16 multilateral cyber exercises with our European allies, such  
17 as Locked Shields?

18 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Senator. You know, it  
19 raises an ancillary question, by the way. So, Tim Hawk at  
20 CYBERCOM runs a lot of that. I field all the Russia  
21 questions, it seems like, but there are so many people  
22 working on this problem.

23 Jackie -- I mean, I wouldn't be giving anything to the  
24 Ukrainians if it weren't for Jackie's splendid ability to  
25 deliver. Tim is the same with CYBERCOM. He sponsors and



1 co-sponsors with us these multilateral exercises that allow  
2 us primarily to illuminate vulnerabilities in networks, in  
3 our allies and our partners, and for the alliance's own  
4 proper -- you know, the networks we own as an alliance  
5 proper.

6 They are very, very valuable. But then we follow up  
7 with cyber protection teams that go forward and do what Tim  
8 calls hunt forward operations, and we help them defend  
9 their networks forward. It has been tremendously  
10 successful, not just with allies, but with partners as  
11 well, and with commercial enterprises.

12 As you know, a lot of our transportation works on  
13 unclassified systems, and they can be vulnerable. So, it  
14 is a very valuable thing, ma'am. Offensive stuff we could  
15 talk about in closed session, if you desire.

16 Senator Rosen: Thank you. And I fully support the  
17 idea that Jackies can deliver. So, General Jackie Van  
18 Ovost, welcome.

19 I want to ask you about logistic operations in the  
20 Pacific. Because from the Berlin airlift in 1948 to the  
21 chaotic evacuation of Afghanistan by air, history really  
22 has shown us the extensive resources that we really need to  
23 undertake a complex airlift operation, even in a relatively  
24 permissive environment.

25 So how is TRANSCOM, are you actively testing the

1 forces to conduct a long scale -- a large scale, prolonged,  
2 logistical operation? Should there be a blockade of Taiwan  
3 in the future, especially given the threats, we know  
4 regional threats in the Indo-Pacific?

5 General Van Ovost: Well, thanks. That is one of the  
6 key things we do in exercises around the globe, as well as  
7 in an Indo-Pacific. Scenario agnostic, our ability to  
8 deliver at a time and place of our nation's choosing is a  
9 strategic advantage.

10 I think about the differences between the Middle East  
11 and Europe and Indo-Pacific is we are going to rely more  
12 upon the airlift because of the, you know, the dearth of  
13 ground lines of communication.

14 And so, as we do analysis on the intra-theater  
15 movement necessary to get those supplies that will last  
16 tactical thousand miles, we are exercising sealift  
17 capacity, which is shallow draft sealift running  
18 essentially a network or below the network of airplanes,  
19 because it will fully consume our airlift fleet if we fly  
20 everything. So that is an important part of what we are  
21 exercising.

22 And things like Talisman and Saber, where we are  
23 moving around with ships and moving pre-positioned around  
24 is very important. Pre-positioning capability to include  
25 fuel forward is important, as well as ensuring resilient

1 ports and airports for defense and our ability to survive,  
2 essentially to aggregate to fight and disaggregate to  
3 survive and regenerate.

4 Senator Rosen: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr.  
5 Chairman.

6 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rosen. Senator  
7 Cotton, please.

8 Senator Cotton: General Cavoli, General Van Ovost,  
9 thank you both for your appearance. General Cavoli, you  
10 have been asked on occasion, to include by the chairman's  
11 very first question, about the lessons that other nations  
12 might learn from Ukraine, like China in particular, if  
13 America falters.

14 I agree with that because we underpin global stability  
15 and security if American will falters anywhere, the  
16 adversaries everywhere will take lessons from it. The one  
17 thing you haven't gotten asked about is what is happening  
18 right now in the Red Sea.

19 An outlaw gang of brigands and rebels is shooting at  
20 U.S. Navy vessels on a routine basis, dozens of times now.  
21 Now, fortunately, our air defenses have intercepted those,  
22 but that is the only thing that stopped our sailors from  
23 being killed.

24 Yet all we are doing is shooting down those drones and  
25 missiles in the air, or maybe when they are on the

1 launchpad. What lessons do countries like China, or for  
2 that matter, Russia, learn when we just let our sailors sit  
3 in the Red Sea and become sitting ducks for an outlaw band  
4 of rebels?

5 General Cavoli: Thanks, Senator. So, just to be  
6 clear, that is not my area of responsibility --

7 Senator Cotton: Not your area, but your comment is to  
8 Chairman Reed that people outside your area take lessons  
9 from what is happening there. So what lessons are people  
10 in your area take from the fact that, again, we are doing  
11 nothing --

12 General Cavoli: Sure. The lessons that European  
13 nations are taking from this --

14 Senator Cotton: That Vladimir Putin is taking from  
15 it.

16 General Cavoli: Well, I don't know what Vladimir  
17 Putin is taking from it, sir, because he has got his hands  
18 pretty full right now inside Ukraine, where he is learning  
19 some of the same lessons, right.

20 Senator Cotton: The lesson is that President Biden  
21 can be deterred from taking decisive action to protect our  
22 interest. For two years, he pussy footed around and didn't  
23 provide Ukraine what it needed to stop the invasion earlier  
24 and to roll it back, and now we are at this unsatisfactory  
25 moment in time.

1           Okay, let me come to that. So, Ukraine is a pretty  
2 big country compared to some countries. It is small  
3 compared to Russia. Some people say like, well, Russia is  
4 always going to win, Russia always wins because Russia is a  
5 big country. Is it the case in history that smaller  
6 nations always lose to bigger nations?

7           General Cavoli: No, it is not the case, especially if  
8 the smaller nation can make sure that they accomplish their  
9 objectives in the fight quickly. I think over time, as we  
10 see in history, as we see conflicts get protracted,  
11 typically that favors the larger nation.

12           Senator Cotton: I agree, that is why it was such a  
13 terrible mistake for President Biden to pussyfoot around  
14 for two years and not provide Ukraine the weapons it  
15 needed, when it could have had a decisive advantage. But  
16 it is not even case in Russia's history, right? Russia  
17 lost the Russo-Japanese War.

18           Russia lost the war in Afghanistan. I guess you could  
19 say Russia won the Winter War against Finland in 1939 and  
20 1940, but it got very little for an extraordinarily high  
21 cost. So, it is not the case that just because you are a  
22 bigger nation, you are fated to win a war against a smaller  
23 nation. But as you say, you have got -- the smaller nation  
24 has to be more nimble and aggressive, maybe take risks that  
25 it otherwise wouldn't.

1           One thing that Ukraine needs to do, therefore, in my  
2 opinion, is conduct more strikes against the facilities and  
3 the sites and the resources that Russia is using to wage  
4 this unprovoked war of aggression.

5           So, for instance, General Cavoli, what is the military  
6 value of striking refineries on Russian territory for  
7 Ukraine?

8           General Cavoli: The military value of that is  
9 producing a deficit in fuel available for the fielded  
10 force, that is for the combat force, someplace downstream  
11 of the strike, right. So, there is a time lag in its  
12 effect, Senator, as you well know.

13          Senator Cotton: And the military value of, say, of  
14 striking drone factories on Russian soil.

15          General Cavoli: The same. It has an affect -- it is  
16 a downstream effect, but of course, it has an effect.

17          Senator Cotton: The military value of striking the  
18 Kerch Strait bridge.

19          General Cavoli: That would have a downstream effect  
20 that took effect sooner.

21          Senator Cotton: Okay. The Administration has urged  
22 Ukraine not to launch these kind of strikes though. In  
23 your professional military judgment, would Ukraine be more  
24 likely to win or at least get a satisfactory outcome in  
25 this war if it was striking those sites and other sites

1 that right now are safe haven for Russia's military?

2 General Cavoli: So, I think Ukraine would be very  
3 well advised to strike the operational level targets that  
4 are supporting the fielded force. They have some urgent  
5 challenges right now on the front line, as we have spoken  
6 about.

7 The fighting is active along the forward line of  
8 troops. And so, those things that contribute most directly  
9 that have the shortest downstream effect right now, I think  
10 should be struck. Kind of feeding the wolf closest to the  
11 sled, I think is what they need to do right now.

12 Senator Cotton: Is it your military judgment that we  
13 should provide Ukraine with more and more variants of the  
14 ATACMS missiles than we have already?

15 General Cavoli: It is.

16 Senator Cotton: Okay. One final question on this  
17 small and large point, it has been reported that Russia has  
18 about a 3 to 1 advantage in artillery production right now  
19 over Ukraine. Is that accurate?

20 General Cavoli: No, sir. They have a 3 to 1  
21 production advantage over the North Atlantic Treaty  
22 Organization.

23 Senator Cotton: Ukraine and the good guys, let's put  
24 it that way. Okay. So, but isn't it also the case that  
25 Ukraine is destroying four Russian Howitzers for every one

1 that Russia destroys?

2 General Cavoli: Something about like that.

3 Senator Cotton: A pretty big mismatch. If you Russia  
4 can make three times as many big rounds that we all can  
5 make collectively, yet Ukraine is able to kill four times  
6 as many guns as Russia has, what explains that?

7 General Cavoli: What explains their ability to kill  
8 more? Because the Russians are not as precise in their  
9 targeting.

10 Senator Cotton: So, it is not just a matter of having  
11 a lot more stuff, although it is nice to have more stuff  
12 and we should certainly have more stuff and be able to make  
13 it faster. It is also that you got to be able to use it.  
14 Or to put it in simple terms, you have got to be able to  
15 hit the targets that you shoot at in a timely fashion.

16 General Cavoli: Of course.

17 Senator Cotton: Ukraine is doing that much more  
18 effectively than Russia is doing that.

19 General Cavoli: Typically, but not uniformly.

20 Senator Cotton: So, while the a 3 to 1 production  
21 advantage is unsatisfactory, it needs to be reversed. It  
22 is also not a sign that Russian victory is inevitable.

23 General Cavoli: There is no such thing as, you know,  
24 of inevitable victory, sir. If your question is, can  
25 Ukraine win this war? They can win this war. Can they win



1 it without achieving Russian levels of production? Sure,  
2 they can. But right now, they are in a very critical  
3 moment.

4 Senator Cotton: Well, what would be best is if we  
5 achieve Russian levels of production and we maintain the 4  
6 to 1 advantage on targeting. So, let's try to get there.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Cotton. Senator  
8 Schmitt, please.

9 Senator Schmitt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General  
10 Cavoli, thank you for being here. A couple of questions  
11 about NATO, and then I do want to ask about the Gaza pier.  
12 There was a lot of discussion today about lessons learned  
13 from the Ukraine war.

14 One of the lessons, I suppose that we could all learn  
15 is that our European allies in NATO have come very  
16 accustomed to us subsidizing their social welfare programs  
17 in Europe because they refuse to meet their 2 percent  
18 obligations.

19 There is only 11 countries that do it. And I think,  
20 you know, we represent American taxpayers, the United  
21 States, and that is who we represent. And I want to ask  
22 about that. So, what in -- so 2 percent is the target  
23 -- why is 2 percent the target. Why not 3 percent?

24 General Cavoli: Sir, because that is what was agreed  
25 to at Wales some years ago. Is it an appropriate target?

1 Is it an arbitrary target? I leave those questions to  
2 somebody else.

3 What I can tell you is that I know what the alliance  
4 needs to do to modernize and to get fit for its collective  
5 defense, its new purpose, its reestablished purpose in the  
6 wake of the invasion of Ukraine, and it is at least 2  
7 percent.

8 That is why the alliance at the last summit adopted  
9 the phrase floor, not a ceiling. I think over time, we  
10 will see our allies realize that it is -- at 2 percent it  
11 is inadequate for the cost, at least in the near and mid-  
12 term.

13 Senator Schmitt: Yes, I am glad that they make these  
14 pronouncements. But -- our allies and NATO allies. But  
15 they don't seem to ever meet the obligations.

16 And so, I guess, at what point, you know, when you  
17 only have 11 countries doing it -- and by the way, many of  
18 them fudge these numbers. They are not dollars related to  
19 military readiness.

20 And so, here we are now, the taxpayers are again being  
21 asked to spend another \$60 billion on top of the \$112  
22 billion. We have been told there could be another \$100  
23 billion request, although that is not reflected in this  
24 budget.

25 So, we don't really know. This is an ongoing war and

1 a blank check. And I believe my job is to try to find out  
2 what does victory look like and what is the cost going to  
3 be, because I feel like we are in this mode now where this  
4 dominates discussion but there aren't really a whole lot of  
5 details.

6 So again, I question whether 2 percent is even enough  
7 for our European allies. I don't think that it is. I  
8 think I hear you saying that, but we also only have 11 of  
9 them meeting those obligations. And again, I think those  
10 numbers are being fudged. I also, have come to learn that,  
11 is it your understanding that Hawaii is actually not  
12 included in Article V obligations under NATO?

13 General Cavoli: Sure. So, the number right now is 20  
14 are meeting -- 20 allies are meeting 2 percent as of June,  
15 they will be projected. Norway just sent the Secretary  
16 General a letter on Monday saying that and there are a  
17 couple more coming up.

18 But the point, Senator, your point that the rich  
19 countries of Western Europe that are not at 2 percent are  
20 in the wrong place, I agree with absolutely and  
21 fundamentally. But I would point out that the trajectory  
22 is moving very rapidly in the right direction, and it is  
23 doing that because our allies have learned the lesson of  
24 the invasion of Ukraine as well.

25 We still do need to close to say, do gap, however.

1 Yes, so, with regard to --

2 Senator Schmitt: Hawaii, if Hawaii is attacked by  
3 China.

4 General Cavoli: Article VI defines -- of the  
5 Washington Treaty, defines what the territory covered in  
6 the treaty is. South of the Tropic of Cancer is not  
7 included. So, French Polynesia is not in there. The UK's  
8 Pitcairn Islands are not in there.

9 Senator Schmitt: Hawaii is not in there --

10 General Cavoli: Hawaii and are not in there.  
11 However, Article IV gives any nation that has been attacked  
12 the right to call consultations with other nations and to  
13 say, I want you to do something about this. And Article V  
14 gives them all the same sovereign right to decide on that.  
15 It is just not automatic. But Article VI can --

16 Senator Schmitt: One would believe that our European  
17 allies would have no objection to Hawaii being included,  
18 correct?

19 General Cavoli: I would expect not. Article VI  
20 can --

21 Senator Schmitt: What about Guam?

22 General Cavoli: Article VI can be amended. The  
23 United States has never asked to amend it.

24 Senator Schmitt: Okay. I am deeply troubled by  
25 Macron's comments, I guess about a year ago, that Europe

1 doesn't need to be dragged into a war in the Pacific and  
2 follow the United States -- something to that effect. In  
3 America's strategic interest, China is by far and away our  
4 biggest threat. Do you believe that our NATO allies, if  
5 Taiwan is attacked, would join us in that cause?

6 General Cavoli: I believe that many of them would. I  
7 do not believe that NATO as an alliance has that purpose  
8 right now. It could adopt that purpose, but that is not  
9 part of the purpose.

10 Senator Schmitt: Is anyone in this Administration  
11 talking to them about that?

12 General Cavoli: Oh, this Administration talks a great  
13 deal to --

14 Senator Schmitt: About that specific issue?

15 General Cavoli: -- to our allies about being active  
16 in the Pacific. Are you asking is --?

17 Senator Schmitt: Well, I guess I will just close with  
18 this because I am out of time. I am very concerned that  
19 our NATO allies don't meet their obligations, depend on the  
20 generosity of the American taxpayer to a degree that -- it  
21 is very concerning to me.

22 And when you hear comments from the leader of France  
23 that they don't want to follow the United States into  
24 potentially a war in the Pacific, potentially with our  
25 chief adversary, China, that raises a lot of concern.

1           So, anyway, I appreciate your service and what you do,  
2 but again, I just don't think that our European allies have  
3 stepped up. Thank you.

4           Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Schmitt. Senator  
5 King requested additional time.

6           Senator King: One brief question. We talk a lot  
7 about air defense. Are there -- and perhaps this has to go  
8 to the closed session, are there directed energy air  
9 defense facilities in Ukraine? Because the bullet on a  
10 bullet is a very expensive way to defend.

11           Directed energy is a lot cheaper and I know there are  
12 systems now that are in development or actually in testing.  
13 Is that an option that we should be pursuing in terms of  
14 our support for air defense in Ukraine?

15           General Cavoli: It is an option that we could pursue,  
16 Senator. And your points about the cost ratios and the  
17 reload speed of directed energy is very -- you know, very  
18 important. It is obviously a big part of the future of  
19 missile defense specifically, and counter drone defense  
20 specifically.

21           There are some systems that we are working with out  
22 there. There are a lot of power problems, as you know,  
23 associated with still. We haven't fully realized its  
24 potential. With regard to Ukraine, it would be great to  
25 speak to you just a moment about that in closed session.

1 Senator King: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator King. And Senator  
3 Schmitt, for additional questions.

4 Senator Schmitt: Yes, thank you. Thank you, Mr.  
5 Chairman. I did not get to the Gaza pier, so I apologize.  
6 General Van Ovost, I do want to ask you, I know there has  
7 been discussion about this effort to -- this Gaza pier for  
8 humanitarian aid.

9 I have concerns, and I don't think they are alone -- I  
10 don't think I am alone in concerns about what that means  
11 for our American troops or personnel that would be engaged  
12 in this activity. What is your understanding of what this  
13 looks like?

14 What could be done -- if this is happening, what can  
15 be done to ensure that American lives are protected?

16 General Van Ovost: Yes, thanks. I think about what  
17 we do at Transportation Command, we provide transportation  
18 for these capabilities around the globe. We have exercised  
19 them. We do it almost every year.

20 As we bring all of the elements together to do joint  
21 logistics over the shore or even airdrop through  
22 humanitarian aid, we put processes, and we exercise these  
23 things. So, we have a great understanding of what it takes  
24 to build a pier and a discharge facility, and to offload  
25 and to move monitoring goods, because we have done this

1 actively for the Haiti earthquake in 2010.

2 So, when we think about the new, you know, what is the  
3 strategic environment associated with doing this in Gaza?  
4 Obviously, I forward that to the geographic Combatant  
5 Commander, to CENTCOM. So, we are working diligently with  
6 them on the planning. And I can tell you that force  
7 protection is our number one concern.

8 General Cavoli: And if I could add to that, Senator.  
9 So, obviously, with the transfer of Israel from the EUCOM  
10 area of responsibility to the CENTCOM area of  
11 responsibility, we get a combined effort there now.

12 So, the protection is combined between USEUCOM and  
13 CENTCOM, depending on which exact part of the operation we  
14 are talking about. Eric and I, about Eric Kurilla and I  
15 have been in very intense conversation about this.

16 More importantly, in our maritime components, we have  
17 been in very close planning on this. It is not without  
18 danger, but we know how to handle it, sir.

19 Senator Schmitt: Well, and I guess just to color in a  
20 little bit of detail to the extent. I know it has just  
21 been -- the Gaza pier has been certainly talked about, but  
22 what is your understanding of who is receiving the aid.

23 And I guess we have vaguely heard of NGOs, but again,  
24 this is in a very dangerous part of the world right now  
25 with a lot of people who don't like the United States of



1 America. So, I guess, what is your understanding of more  
2 the details as it stands today?

3 General Cavoli: Sir, so that part is inside General  
4 Kurilla's AOR, inside CENTCOM. And I know that this is a  
5 fast moving story as we go forward and I hesitate to give  
6 you a name.

7 Senator Schmitt: That is fine.

8 General Cavoli: I can refer to him for you.

9 Senator Schmitt: We will follow up on that. Thank  
10 you. Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

11 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Schmitt. I am  
12 informed that Senator Sullivan is on his way, but I have an  
13 additional question.

14 There has been discussion back and forth and a very I  
15 think useful one about what happens if the Ukraine  
16 government fails. And my sense, and I just ask for your  
17 opinion, General Cavoli, is that if we fail in Ukraine,  
18 Russia is more likely to conduct operations against other  
19 countries.

20 So, if we really want to diminish a potential conflict  
21 between NATO, United States, and Russia, succeeding Ukraine  
22 is a fundamental obligation, or --

23 General Cavoli: Sir, I agree. I think the biggest  
24 single change we can make in our deterrent posture for the  
25 better is for Ukraine to win.

1 Chairman Reed: And there has been comments about the  
2 contribution of our allies, but the reality is that in many  
3 other ways, which are absolutely critical to the success of  
4 Ukraine, our allies are far outpacing us in humanitarian  
5 assistance and absorption of immigrants, very costly  
6 programs.

7 But without those programs, essentially, Ukraine would  
8 not be able to concentrate on the battle. Is that  
9 accurate?

10 General Cavoli: Yes, absolutely, Chairman. The  
11 amount of humanitarian assistance, the amount of support  
12 for the electrical grid, which is under constant attack,  
13 and on and on.

14 The not inconsequential act of taking on board at  
15 least 4 million refugees for 2 years without a bump, these  
16 are important contributions. Some of them are less  
17 tangible, sir, but they are contributions.

18 Inside the military sphere, I really have to point  
19 out, there are some things that we provide a lot of. And  
20 in the aggregate, we are certainly providing an awful lot.  
21 But there are some things that are 100 percent provided by  
22 people other than the United States. Petroleum products  
23 for the use, the fuel for the force, 100 percent from  
24 allies, all of it.

25 Tanks, more than 90 percent of the tanks that we have

1 given to the Ukrainians came from allies, not from us.  
2 Fighter jets, 100 percent of them have not come from us.  
3 And I and I could go on and on.

4 So, it is really important for us to recognize the  
5 value of our contribution and to justify -- it is important  
6 for me to be able to justify to members and constituents  
7 the value proposition for America in these contributions,,  
8 but we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that our allies are  
9 contributing as well.

10 Chairman Reed: In fact, just my impression it might  
11 be yours, is that the European allies and NATO and other  
12 countries in Europe have far exceeded any expectations we  
13 had when this fight began. I am impressed, I think, in the  
14 terms of -- and it is for their own self-interest and self-  
15 protection, but it is --

16 General Cavoli: I agree with that, not just in terms  
17 of what they are giving to Ukraine and the support they are  
18 giving to Ukraine, but in terms of what they expect of  
19 themselves to contribute to the alliance. So, both of  
20 those tracks. It is -- I would never have guessed this in  
21 2021, Chairman.

22 Chairman Reed: I was in the same sense of disbelief  
23 as you were. So, let me recognize Senator Sullivan. We  
24 are trying to keep to five minutes. We have to adjourn at  
25 10:00 a.m..

1           Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Generals,  
2 good to see both of you. Thanks for your great work.  
3 General Cavoli, I want to dig into a little bit more about  
4 a couple issues. One is the extent to which the  
5 authoritarian regimes in the world who are all on the  
6 march, China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, are cooperating.

7           I am sure you are seeing this, but can you spell that  
8 out a little bit more? I mean, one of the things that I  
9 talk about with this national security supplement -- I  
10 don't even like calling it the Ukraine supplemental or the  
11 Ukraine aid bill, because it is actually not accurate.

12           The more accurate way to pick that bill is we have  
13 authoritarians all working together, clearly aimed at us.  
14 They hate us. And we need to be strategic in our response.

15           And we also need to recognize that our own industrial  
16 base has atrophied dramatically. It has. And so, I like  
17 to call this national security bill the Revitalizing  
18 America's Industrial Base Act, because 60 percent of it, 60  
19 percent of it goes directly into our ability, America's  
20 ability to produce weapons for us.

21           Everything from nuclear subs, which Xi Jinping is  
22 scared to death of, to one 55 millimeter Howitzer round.  
23 So, can you talk a little bit more about how these  
24 dictatorships who don't like us now, we don't like them,  
25 are all working together, and what that means in terms of

1 strategy.

2 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Senator. First of all, I  
3 think the way you have characterized this is spot on.  
4 These are not our friends. These are countries, these are  
5 regimes that wish us ill and are taking active measures to  
6 deliver us ill.

7 So, there is practical cooperation. There is  
8 practical cooperation on an economic level that. That is,  
9 China becomes Russia's salvation economically, right, by  
10 absorbing its gas output. Other countries --

11 Senator Sullivan: And oil -- and oil.

12 General Cavoli: Other countries do the same. There  
13 is direct military support, right. DPRK loads up train  
14 loads of artillery shells and sends in them, and those  
15 artillery shells are exploding over Ukrainian heads every  
16 day.

17 And on the earlier we discussed the creation of an  
18 Iranian based drone factory to reproduce the Shahed 136  
19 inside Russia. Those were exploding over Ukraine this  
20 morning early. So, it is very practical.

21 More distressing, though, is the fact that these  
22 countries seem to be forming an intensifying bond that they  
23 intend to use geopolitically to weaken our position in the  
24 world, which will inevitably hurt our own interests and our  
25 own citizens.

1           Senator Sullivan: Let me ask a related question. You  
2 know, you read about it in some commentators, actually,  
3 some of my colleagues have kind of come up with this new  
4 theory about deterrence being divisible.

5           Let me unpack that a little bit more. So again, with  
6 these authoritarians working together, you could have a  
7 situation where Putin rolls over Ukraine eventually, but if  
8 we don't provide any more military aid -- by the way, do  
9 you think that will happen?

10           I mean, if at the end of the day, the U.S. is pretty  
11 much right now, like, hey, sorry, we are going to build out  
12 our industrial base, which we need to do, but we are not we  
13 are not sending anything else to you. Good luck. What do  
14 you think happens?

15           General Cavoli: If we don't continue to support  
16 Ukraine?

17           Senator Sullivan: Let's say we stop -- a couple of my  
18 colleagues just want to stop everything right now.  
19 Nothing. What will happen?

20           General Cavoli: Sure. That is easy. They run out of  
21 155. They run out of air defense interceptors. And you  
22 know, as I said yesterday in the House, the side that can't  
23 shoot back loses.

24           Senator Sullivan: Okay. So, but there is this notion  
25 out there -- I don't think it really works with the facts

1 on the ground. I don't think it works with history. If  
2 you read it, I don't think it works at all.

3 But that deterrence is divisible. You can let Putin  
4 roll over Ukraine, but we are going to -- we are going to  
5 send that signal to Xi Jinping in the Taiwan Strait. We  
6 are going to be really strong with Taiwan. You think  
7 deterrence is divisible like that? Now, look, I don't  
8 think it -- no offense to President Biden, but I think it  
9 is not divisible at all.

10 His Afghanistan withdrawal signaled to the world that,  
11 hey, game on, let the authoritarian regimes role. What do  
12 you think about this idea that somehow deterrence is  
13 divisible? You can be weak in Ukraine, but still strong in  
14 the Taiwan Strait, particularly when all these  
15 authoritarians are working together?

16 General Cavoli: Senator, I think that every action or  
17 every inaction we take sends a message, and I think that  
18 people all over the world listen for that message. And  
19 those messages are always global. They cannot be sent to  
20 one audience at a time. So, I agree.

21 Senator Sullivan: My final question, General. You  
22 are an undisputed Russian expert. One thing that always  
23 kind of -- and I pressed the DNI on this. I don't  
24 understand why we don't do this. These are authoritarian  
25 regimes, one of the things that they are starting to do is

1 messing with our most precious institution and that is  
2 elections. We are a Republic -- a democracy. We elect our  
3 leaders.

4 These dictators would never stand for fair elections  
5 because they probably wouldn't win. Certainly, Xi Jinping,  
6 Putin, one of their biggest vulnerabilities -- the  
7 Ayatollahs in Iran -- is they fear their own people, but  
8 they come after us on elections with, you know, cyber and  
9 things like that.

10 Don't you think that if Putin is coming after our  
11 elections, trying to disrupt our elections, when he won't  
12 stand for election, we should do everything we can to  
13 counter by getting out all the information we have on this  
14 guy? I mean, he is one of the richest people in the world.  
15 Literally, he stole \$80 billion from the Russians.

16 We probably have the Swiss bank account numbers to  
17 where he has stashed all the money. These poor Russians,  
18 you know, are starving and drinking vodka for breakfast,  
19 and Putin steals from them. Shouldn't we get that out to  
20 the world the way Navalny did and say, you want to mess  
21 with our elections, we are going to let the people -- same  
22 with Xi Jinping, these guys are all corrupt.

23 Should we do that when they are messing with the most  
24 precious thing we have in America, our elections?

25 General Cavoli: Senator, if you don't mind, I will



1 leave that sort of strategy to civilian policymakers. But  
2 I would like to agree with you strongly that Putin fears  
3 open elections. He fears them in his own country, and he  
4 fears them elsewhere. He fears them, and he therefore  
5 seeks to undermine them.

6 And I also agree with your opinion that the -- that  
7 our elections, our ability to choose who governs us, our  
8 Government, by the consent of the governed, is the most  
9 precious thing we have in this country.

10 Senator Sullivan: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.  
11 Chairman.

12 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Sullivan. Thank  
13 you, General Cavoli and General Van Ovost for your  
14 excellent testimony. This will conclude the open session.  
15 We will reconvene at 12:00 noon in SVC-217 for the closed  
16 session and thank you very much.

17 [Whereupon, at 9:57 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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