

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON STRATEGIC THREATS,
ONGOING CHALLENGES, AND NATIONAL DEFENSE
STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Thursday, December 5, 2019

Washington, D.C.

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7 U.S. Senate

8 Committee on Armed Services

9 Washington, D.C.
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11 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:38 a.m. in
12 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James M.
13 Inhofe, presiding.

14 Committee Members Present: Senators Inhofe
15 [presiding], Wicker, Fischer, Ernst, Tillis, Cramer, Scott,
16 Blackburn, Hawley, Reed, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal,
17 Hirono, Kaine, King, Heinrich, Peters, Manchin, Duckworth,
18 and Jones.
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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM OKLAHOMA

3 Chairman Inhofe: Our meeting will come to order.

4 The Senate Armed Services Committee meets today to
5 receive testimony on strategic threats, ongoing challenges,
6 and the National Defense Strategy. We will be talking a
7 lot about the National Defense Strategy, and we have
8 already kind of acknowledged that is something that is kind
9 of rare. We had the top leadership of the Democrats and the
10 Republicans agreeing on certain things that have to be into
11 the NDS and we have adhered to it, and it has served us
12 very well.

13 2 years ago, the National Defense Strategy, NDS,
14 shifted America's military focus to the new era of great
15 power competition. 1 year ago, the NDS Commission report
16 provided a bipartisan blueprint for effective
17 implementation of the NDS.

18 These documents demand tough choices to achieve urgent
19 change at significant scale. We must reshape our military,
20 reform the Department of Defense, and recommit to
21 strengthening alliances and attracting new partners. This
22 is exactly what our National Defense Authorization Act is
23 designed to do.

24 The good news is we have made progress toward this
25 goal. The bad news is that we have got a long ways to go,

1 especially as we look ahead to the fiscal year 2021 budget
2 request. When it comes to tough choices, we have heard a
3 lot from the Pentagon leaders about what they are doing to
4 implement the NDS. I would like to hear more about what
5 they are not doing, what missions have been cut or are now
6 a lower priority than they were. In fact, I will have one
7 question at the time for questions of both of you on that
8 subject.

9 We have also heard a lot from the Pentagon leaders
10 about prioritizing China and Russia, but with 14,000 troops
11 deployed in the Middle East since May, we must ask if the
12 urgency is once again overweighing the importance.

13 I would comment on this. It is true that 14,000
14 troops have been over there, but this article that came out
15 I think yesterday saying an additional 14,000 troops is
16 something I had not heard. And, Senator Reed, I actually
17 talked as recently as this morning to the Secretary of
18 Defense who denied this. But we will ask for some
19 clarification on that from the witnesses today.

20 I would like to hear from the Department about how it
21 is prioritizing Russia and China. Prioritizing Russia and
22 China means making tough choices about where we stand our
23 forces in the world. Not every theater can be prioritized.
24 But as we right-size our posture in theaters like Africa
25 and places that have not had adequate attention in the

1 past, we have got to keep a lot of these things in mind.

2 Defining an acceptable level of risk is never easy.
3 People do not understand. When you talk about risk, you
4 are talking about American lives, and you have got to face
5 the risk as these decisions are being made.

6 NDS implementation is not just a job for the Pentagon.
7 It is a job for Congress. The defense authorization and
8 appropriations bills are critical to resourcing and
9 overseeing the implementation of our strategy whether it is
10 recovering readiness, modernizing our nuclear arsenal,
11 investing in cutting-edge technology, or making sure our
12 troops and their families live in safe housing.

13 We had a very large hearing just I think a few days
14 ago on this issue. I think it might have been the largest
15 one I have ever attended or chaired anyway on the housing
16 issue. And it is a serious problem. That is one more
17 reason that we have got to get on with our defense
18 authorization bill. We have got some solutions to these
19 problems that we have to get started on.

20 As we speak, Congress has failed to pass the defense
21 authorization and appropriations bills on time. The NDAA
22 is being held hostage to partisan politics. Worse yet,
23 most remaining issues have nothing to do with defense.

24 China is not waiting for us to get our act together.
25 China is increasing their military spending. You know,

1 during the last 5 years of the Obama administration using
2 constant dollars, we actually reduced our defense
3 appropriations by 25 percent. And at the same time, China
4 was increasing by 83 percent. People are shocked when they
5 find that out. But it is a fact, and it is something we
6 are going to have to deal with.

7 So let us get real. If we are serious about competing
8 with China and Russia, we have to show that our democracy
9 can give our troops what they need and when they need it.

10 And finally, the Pentagon and Congress need to do a
11 better job of including the American people in this
12 conversation. During the Cold War, I think we did a good
13 job during the Cold War, and we had people fully aware of
14 the problems that we were facing, and they were
15 controllable problems. But the people were aware of the
16 threat that we were facing. It has been my personal
17 experience that that is not true today, and that is one of
18 the areas where we need improvement.

19 Senator Reed?

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

3 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr.
4 Chairman. I join you in welcoming our witnesses. Let me
5 also thank the chairman for scheduling this important
6 hearing to review the strategic threats and ongoing
7 challenges to our national security. Today's hearing is an
8 opportunity to hear from our military leadership about how
9 the Department is implementing the National Defense
10 Strategy, or NDS, to meet these threats and challenges.

11 The NDS marked a shift in our strategic priorities
12 from a focus on counterterrorism operations in the Middle
13 East and South Asia to prioritizing the long-term strategic
14 competition with Russia and China. The NDS called for
15 increased investment in the strategic competition with
16 near-peer competitors while moving to a more resource-
17 sustainable approach for countering North Korea and Iran,
18 defeating terrorist threats, and winning the conflicts in
19 Iraq and Afghanistan.

20 The Department has begun to shift its focus to these
21 strategic competition issues, but much remains to be done.
22 As the independent, nonpartisan National Defense Strategy
23 Commission assessed, the Defense Department and White House
24 have struggled to clearly state how the United States will
25 prevail in this strategic competition and still lack a

1 whole-of-government approach for countering our adversaries
2 in gray zone operations below the level of traditional
3 military conflict. In addition, the administration's
4 impulses to alienate allies and embrace authoritarian
5 strongmen have undercut our military's ability to pursue a
6 coherent defense strategy and have undermined U.S. national
7 security interests globally.

8 In the Middle East, there is a clear disconnect
9 between the objectives stated in the NDS and our recent
10 actions in the region. Despite the NDS shift to a more
11 resource-sustainable approach to threats posed by Iran and
12 counterterrorism, we have deployed more than 14,000 troops
13 to the region since May. In the case of Iran, the
14 administration has pursued a so-called maximum pressure
15 campaign that has only succeeded in isolating us from many
16 of our allies, made conflict more likely, and given Iran
17 cover to violate constraints placed on its nuclear program
18 by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Furthermore,
19 Defense Department efforts to consolidate counterterrorism
20 gains by the anti-ISIS coalition have suffered a major
21 setback as a result of the administration's hasty
22 withdrawal of U.S. forces from a Turkish-declared safe zone
23 in northeast Syria and abandonment of our partners in the
24 Syrian Democratic Forces.

25 With regard to Russia, the National Defense Strategy

1 stresses that one of our greatest military advantages is
2 our alliances and partnerships, particularly NATO. A
3 bipartisan, overwhelming majority of the Senate has
4 endorsed the fundamental value of NATO to U.S. national
5 security interests. Yet, the President's failure to
6 recognize the security benefits of these transatlantic ties
7 and his diversion, for example, of European Deterrence
8 Initiative funds to pay for the wall along the U.S.
9 southern border has caused some of our allies to openly
10 question the reliability of the United States as we go
11 forward.

12 Turning to Asia, the National Defense Strategy
13 identifies China as our most challenging long-term
14 competitor. China's global economic and military expansion
15 will challenge U.S. primacy in the decades to come. We can
16 no longer assume we will have economic leverage over China,
17 yet I fear we are not developing the tools of statecraft to
18 adequately address the significant national security
19 implications of China's economic rise.

20 Even in Western democracies, the space to criticize
21 Chinese aggression and human rights violations is
22 narrowing. China is willing to punish any country that
23 criticizes its authoritarian and coercive activities,
24 whether it is the ethnic cleansing of Muslim Uighurs in
25 western China or political interference in Taiwan and Hong

1 Kong. In addition, we are spending pennies on the dollar
2 compared to China's multi-billion dollar propaganda
3 campaign to whitewash its behavior in the public sphere.

4 We need to be working with likeminded allies and
5 partners to push back on China's coercive behavior, human
6 rights violations, and predatory economic tactics targeting
7 the sovereignty of its smaller neighbors. And we have to
8 work much more closely with our partners, particularly in
9 the Pacific with Japan and Korea, rather than engaging, as
10 we are at present, in discussions about increased burden
11 sharing and other aspects of our relationship.

12 Again, let me thank our witnesses for their service and
13 for their testimony today, and I look forward to their
14 testimony.

15 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

17 We will now hear from our witnesses. Try to keep your
18 remarks down to about 5 minutes because we want to have
19 time for all of our questions to be asked. And we will
20 start with you, Secretary Rood.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN C. ROOD, UNDER SECRETARY OF
2 DEFENSE FOR POLICY

3 Mr. Rood: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member
4 Reed, other members of the committee. Thank you for the
5 opportunity to testify before you today.

6 I look forward to discussing DOD's efforts to
7 implement the National Defense Strategy, or NDS, in an era
8 of great power competition and addressing your questions,
9 along with Lieutenant General Allvin.

10 I have a longer statement, Mr. Chairman, that I ask be
11 included in the record, and I will just summarize it here.

12 Chairman Inhofe: Without objection.

13 Mr. Rood: The fundamental problem we face today, as
14 identified in the NDS, is the erosion of U.S. competitive
15 military advantage vis-a-vis China and Russia while
16 continuing to address threats from rogue regimes like Iran
17 and North Korea and violent extremist organizations like
18 ISIS and al Qaeda.

19 It is critical that we continue our work to reverse
20 this trend, to regain our competitive advantage, but
21 especially in high-end warfare. Doing so will ensure the
22 United States can continue to deter aggression and coercion
23 from those that would seek to supplant the United States
24 and challenge the free and open international system that
25 supports our freedom and democracy.

1 The NDS remains the guidepost for our Department.
2 Secretary Esper and his management team are taking action
3 to reinforce the strategy and his predecessor's efforts by
4 structuring and overseeing implementation efforts within
5 the Department to focus on great power competition and
6 warfighting today and tomorrow. We are actively assessing
7 the threat environment and our progress towards NDS
8 priorities and refining our planning and resourcing
9 efforts.

10 To this end, the Department recognizes it is one piece
11 of a larger puzzle. The DOD supports interagency partners
12 to contest China and Russia's malign diplomatic,
13 informational, economic, and military efforts to undermine
14 global security and reshape the rules-based international
15 order in their favor. This endeavor is dependent on
16 cooperation with allies and partners to ensure regional
17 balances of power remain favorable.

18 The Department's primary job is to provide combat-
19 credible forces to deter war or to win, should deterrence
20 fail. Bolstering our military's deterrent capability is
21 therefore job number one.

22 Since the NDS launch, the Department has made
23 significant progress to modernize and restore high-end
24 readiness in the joint force towards this purpose as
25 evidenced in the President's fiscal year 2020 budget

1 submission. For example, the fiscal year 2020 budget
2 requested \$14.1 billion to maintain our edge in space. The
3 administration also submitted a proposal to Congress to
4 establish the Space Force as the sixth branch of the armed
5 forces to focus and accelerate establishment of space
6 doctrine, capabilities, and expertise to outpace future
7 threats. With congressional approval, the Department also
8 created an operational command, United States Space
9 Command, focused on the daily operations of our space
10 assets and warfighters.

11 The President's fiscal year 2020 budget also requested
12 \$9.6 billion for cyber capabilities, which would be a 10
13 percent increase over the fiscal year 2019 budget, if
14 approved. We are investing \$3.7 billion in capabilities
15 for our cyber forces, including teams focused on stopping
16 cyber threats outside U.S. networks. Within the past year,
17 DOD has published a new classified cyber strategy. We have
18 completed the cyber posture review, which looked at our
19 gaps and shortcomings. And we have revamped our
20 authorities and continue to build out the cyber mission
21 force. And there are more examples that are in my written
22 testimony.

23 We must continue to balance this prioritization of
24 great power competition with ongoing operations globally
25 that affect military resourcing and readiness, including

1 the challenges posed by Iran, Syria, North Korea, and
2 terrorism. Investments along, however, will not deter China
3 and Russia. Great power competition also means DOD must
4 develop new concepts and organizational approaches for
5 force employment and design, posture, and warfighting.

6 DOD is building increased flexibility and
7 responsiveness into our global force posture, allowing us
8 to dynamically flow strategic capabilities to hotspots on
9 short notice.

10 The Department is also strengthening and leveraging
11 the U.S. network of allies and partners. This network is a
12 pillar of the National Defense Strategy and one of our
13 greatest strategic advantages. As our competitors seek to
14 advance their own revisionist view of the world, consistent
15 with their authoritarian model, we understand their
16 strategies involve isolating and trying to gain leverage
17 over countries through predatory approaches and
18 intimidation. In some cases, bolstering defense
19 relationships does necessitate hard conversations with
20 allies on things like burden sharing and targeted
21 capability development as we take steps together to address
22 shared challenges.

23 Our allies are stepping up their efforts. Just this
24 week, NATO announced that 2019 defense spending by allies
25 increased in real terms by 4.6 percent, the fifth

1 consecutive year of growth. By the end of 2020, allies
2 will have invested \$130 billion more than they did in 2016,
3 and this accumulated increase in defense spending is
4 projected by NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg to rise to
5 \$400 billion by 2024. As Secretary-General Stoltenberg
6 said, quote, this is unprecedented progress and it is
7 making NATO stronger. End quote.

8 In the Indo-Pacific, DOD is strengthening and evolving
9 U.S. partnerships. For example, with India, we are
10 committed to a common vision for a U.S.-India major defense
11 partnership that we will advance at the 2 Plus 2
12 ministerial on December 18th. We have agreed to expand
13 military-to-military cooperation and improve
14 interoperability, including by establishing a new tri-
15 service amphibious exercise, Tiger Triumph.

16 Additionally, no country in Southeast Asia does more
17 than Singapore to enable a U.S. forward presence in the
18 region. More than 100 U.S. ships and 800 to 1,000 U.S.
19 aircraft transit through Singapore each year.

20 In Vietnam, we are building a productive defense
21 relationship and overcoming the legacy of the Vietnam War.
22 Last year, the United States Navy conducted the first U.S.
23 aircraft carrier visit since the Vietnam War, and we have
24 also transferred a high-endurance Coast Guard cutter. And
25 Secretary Esper announced 2 weeks ago in Hanoi that the

1 United States would be transferring a second high-endurance
2 cutter to Vietnam.

3 DOD is also investing \$521 million over the next 5
4 years in programs like the Maritime Security Initiative to
5 build the capacity of our partners in the region, including
6 to conduct maritime security and maritime domain awareness
7 operations, and advance interoperability with U.S. forces.

8 So, Mr. Chairman, let me say in conclusion the NDS
9 represents a major shift. We still have important work
10 ahead of us to design a more lethal, resilient, and ready
11 force, solve tough operational problems, build a combat-
12 credible forward presence and work with allies and
13 partners. The NDS remains our guidepost, and we are
14 determined to deliver on its priorities.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you
16 this morning.

17 [The prepared statement of Mr. Rood follows:]

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1 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

2 General Allvin?

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1 STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL DAVID W. ALLVIN,
2 USAF, DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGY, PLANS AND POLICY, JOINT STAFF
3 General Allvin: Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed,
4 and distinguished members of the committee, good morning,
5 and thank you for the opportunity to appear before you
6 today. I appreciate the chance to update you on the global
7 strategic challenges and National Defense Strategy
8 implementation.

9 As the Secretary's National Defense Strategy details
10 the global strategic challenges and provides the guidance
11 for the entire Department, the national military strategy
12 describes how the joint force implements that direction.

13 In addition to addressing our great power competitors,
14 it provides the joint force with the guidance that
15 crosswalks the mission areas of assuring and strengthening
16 allies and partners, competing below the level of armed
17 conflict, deterring conventional attacks, deterring
18 strategic attacks, and responding to threats. And great
19 power competition remains the joint force priority,
20 demanding that we make planning, force employment, force
21 development, and force design decisions that ensure long-
22 term U.S. competitive advantage against the revisionist
23 powers of China and Russia.

24 The joint force is addressing these challenges by
25 focusing on building a more lethal force, modernizing our

1 key capabilities and strengthening our alliances and
2 partnerships. However, the joint force must remain
3 postured to respond to more than just those priority
4 challenges. For example, the dynamic threats within U.S.
5 Central Command AOR jeopardize the regional stability and
6 demand focus as well.

7 Dealing with these threats has resulted in the
8 reallocation of some resources within the year of
9 execution, with potential ripple effects on readiness
10 across the future year's defense program. This creates a
11 strategic tension between our response to emergent threats
12 and our ability to sustain investments in the future
13 readiness and that competitive advantage. Addressing this
14 tension is a continuous and dynamic endeavor.

15 Underpinning the joint force's approach to this
16 strategic environment of today and tomorrow is the
17 foundation of global integration. Simply put, the
18 character of war is changing. Adversaries operate across
19 regions and domains and they seek gaps and seams that they
20 can exploit to gain asymmetric advantage. On the joint
21 staff, we are adapting our processes and our products to
22 adjust to this reality, and we are working closely with the
23 OSD staff to ensure that our efforts are complementary and
24 mutually support the implementation of the National Defense
25 Strategy.

1 With the support of all the services and all the
2 combatant commands, we have completed three what we call
3 globally integrated base plan reviews and are currently
4 conducting a fourth. These reviews look beyond just the
5 typical single contingency plan and view the potential
6 conflicts from a global perspective, accounting for the
7 global nature of the threat, as well as understanding the
8 activities outside the main conflict area that will compete
9 for resources.

10 With the completion of each review, we have
11 incorporated lessons learned into the Department's NDS
12 implementation efforts and identified tasks to improve
13 readiness on a global scale. In his role as the global
14 integrator, Chairman Milley remains focused on capturing a
15 comprehensive review informed by the combatant commanders
16 and the joint chiefs so that he may provide military advice
17 to Secretary Esper and the President that reflects the
18 global nature of the threats and the inherent tensions that
19 exist across geographic boundaries and time horizons.

20 Once again, thank you for the opportunity to speak
21 today, and I look forward to answering any questions you
22 may have.

23 [The prepared statement of General Allvin follows:]

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1 Chairman Inhofe: Well, thank you both.

2 In my opening remarks, I referred to the 14,000 in
3 what I believe was an erroneous article in a newspaper. Do
4 you want to clarify that for us, Secretary Rood?

5 Mr. Rood: Yes, Senator. That is an erroneous item.

6 First, we are observing Iran's behavior with concern.
7 As you know, in recent months they have conducted some
8 attacks on shipping, on the Saudi oil facilities, and on an
9 American UAV. We continue to see threat reporting that
10 concerns us as well.

11 We have deployed 14,000 troops over the last 6 months,
12 many of those on ships and air bases and other things in
13 the region. So the Secretary and others are continuing to
14 look at that threat picture and have the ability to
15 dynamically adjust our force posture, but we have not made
16 a decision to deploy an additional 14,000 troops.

17 Chairman Inhofe: Okay. That is clarification. We
18 had a lot of calls on that, and I appreciate that.

19 To both of you, we know that some of the missions will
20 have to be scaled back and some programs will be cut, but
21 they need to be the right missions and the right programs.
22 We do not want a repeat of the past where we cut programs
23 like the F-22 and ever since then, we knew that we made a
24 mistake, and we gave up long-range artillery only to
25 realize our mistake years later.

1 So can you give us specific examples of missions or
2 programs that DOD has already either scaled back or are
3 planning to scale back in the future?

4 Mr. Rood: Senator, as you know, we are investing
5 additional resources in new areas of investment. I
6 highlighted some of those in my prepared testimony, written
7 testimony, for things like hypersonics, artificial
8 intelligence, directed energy.

9 There are some older legacy systems where the
10 Department has made decisions -- the services have made
11 decisions not to pursue them. For example, last year in
12 the budget request, the Navy chose to move forward with new
13 aircraft and retire older ones, F/A-18C and D models as an
14 example. The Navy made a decision not to move forward with
15 additional Nimitz class and instead to look to the future -
16 - Nimitz class carriers I should say. And there are other
17 examples like that in the Army and Air Force where
18 decisions were made for older legacy systems to purchase
19 fewer of them or to phase them out in favor of newer
20 capabilities for the future.

21 Chairman Inhofe: You know, this is a little off
22 subject, but it is closely related. And when I look at our
23 general, I recall the time that you were the commander of
24 Altus Air Force Base, and right down the road at Fort Sill,
25 we were undergoing all kinds of problem at that time. The

1 Crusader -- I will never forget. We were all prepared,
2 ready to do. Oh, it is going to be good. We spent \$2
3 billion. Wham. It was axed. Then the Future Combat
4 System came up. Same thing. In fact, you were there at
5 the time, not that you had anything to do with it because
6 you were next door. But nonetheless, that was \$20 billion.
7 But that is the kind of thing that we have to make sure it
8 does not happen again. Hopefully, we learned the lesson.

9 We cannot keep up business as usual with our
10 competitors, especially China because of the threat of
11 changing so quickly. For example, few predicted the spread
12 of China's overseas military presence starting in Djibouti.
13 Prior to that, most of the activity began within the city
14 limits there of China. This is where everything was
15 starting. It was Djibouti, the first time that actually
16 they started such an effort in a foreign country. Now that
17 has spread all the way down as far south as Tanzania and
18 other places.

19 Then you skip over and you see what they are doing at
20 the same time in the South China Sea. We had a group of
21 us, some of us up at this dais, that were over there
22 observing when they first started all of the building of
23 the islands and these things.

24 You have to wonder where they come up with all these
25 resources. How can they continue to do this all over? A

1 lot of times people who are adverse to supporting a strong
2 defense will come up and they will talk about how China and
3 Russia together do not spend half of what we spend over
4 here. But the biggest expense, as we all know, is end
5 strength. It is our people. After last week's hearing on
6 how we are taking so much of a concern over our people,
7 they do not have that problem. They give them a gun and
8 say go out and kill people.

9 So, anyway, that is something of a great concern, and
10 I know that you are concentrating your efforts there and
11 that is justly where you should be doing that. Thank you
12 for that.

13 Senator Reed?

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

16 And as the NDS has indicated, Russia is now one of our
17 major peer competitors. And some of the most sophisticated
18 techniques they are using are hybrid warfare, not direct
19 conventional conflict, but hybrid warfare. And the most
20 relevant example of that is the 2016 election. We have had
21 three independent analyses: our intelligence community, the
22 bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee, and also the
23 Mueller report concluding that there was sweeping -- in the
24 words of Mueller -- sweeping, in a systematic fashion,
25 involvement of Russia in hybrid operations with the intent

1 of affecting the outcome of our election. Indeed, the
2 public reports in 2018 based upon National Defense Act
3 authorization, CYBERCOM took offensive actions to disrupt
4 these operations.

5 So one issue, though, that has come kind of recently
6 into focus is whether or not the 2016 election was
7 interfered with in the manner described by the intelligence
8 community. Secretary Rood, do you concur with the
9 intelligence community, the Intelligence Committee of the
10 Senate, and the Mueller commission that this was done in a
11 systematic way with the purpose of disrupting our election?

12 Mr. Rood: Senator, the intelligence community
13 concluded that Russia had an effort to influence the 2016
14 elections, as you know. As I have testified before, I have
15 no reason to question the intelligence community's
16 judgment. I did not serve in government at that time, but I
17 assume that their conclusions are accurate and endorse
18 them.

19 Senator Reed: And also it prompted in some respects,
20 given our authorization, the activities of CYBERCOM before
21 the 2018 election. Is that accurate?

22 Mr. Rood: Yes, sir. As you know, prior to the
23 midterm elections last year, the various organs of
24 government, led by the Department of Homeland Security, had
25 a concerted effort to protect those elections from outside

1 interference. The Defense Department played a much larger
2 role than in the past, led by Cyber Command. And while the
3 particulars are classified, I would say we made no secret
4 of that prior to the election we were going to do that.

5 And one of the areas I find quite satisfying is if you
6 look back in all of our memories of how did we regard those
7 elections, we regard them by the results. That is the main
8 thing everyone is focused on. And there is a reason that
9 the results happened without interference, and we are very
10 proud of the work of the United States Government to ensure
11 that.

12 Senator Reed: And the Department of Defense is
13 prepared or anticipating that the Russians will be engaged
14 in this 2020 election.

15 Mr. Rood: We certainly hope they will not do that,
16 but we are prepared for that eventuality and we are
17 engaging with our other interagency partners to provide
18 capability.

19 Senator Reed: Let me turn to Syria now. The Defense
20 Intelligence Agency made an assessment, in their words,
21 that ISIS has exploited the Turkish incursion and
22 subsequent drawdown of U.S. troops from northeastern Syria
23 to reconstitute its capabilities and resources both within
24 Syria in the short term and globally in the long term.
25 That is one conclusion.

1 Second conclusion. ISIS will likely use the security
2 vacuum in northeast Syria to target the West because it
3 will likely have more time and space to plan attacks and
4 provide support to its 19 global branches or networks.

5 And finally, their conclusion. Absent
6 counterterrorism pressure in Syria, ISIS would probably
7 have an opportunity to regain control of some Syrian
8 populations and be better postured to launch external
9 attacks and expand its global footprint.

10 Again, Secretary Rood, do you agree with those
11 assessments by DIA?

12 Mr. Rood: Yes.

13 Senator Reed: And is it adequate the residual U.S.
14 presence that we have in country to thwart those
15 aspirations by ISIS?

16 Mr. Rood: Well, time will tell, but where we are at
17 right now is we have made some adjustments, as Secretary
18 Esper and others have noted. We have a residual presence
19 there. As he mentioned yesterday, about 600 troops will
20 stay.

21 A key thing to mention, Senator, is our campaign in
22 Syria is by, with, and through our Syrian Democratic
23 allies. And there we are working very closely with those
24 partners to improve their capabilities, and counter-ISIS
25 operations are underway. But our key strength of our

1 effort will be the degree to which we can enable our
2 partner force to continue those activities backed by U.S.
3 and other allied capabilities. But we do intend to
4 continue the Defeat ISIS mission, sir.

5 Senator Reed: Just a final question, as my time
6 expires.

7 One of the factors that was introduced by the
8 withdrawal was at least discussions between the Syrian
9 regime and the SDF Kurdish forces for some if not
10 cooperation, at least the less antagonism. Let me put it
11 that way. Have you sensed that the SDF is in play, i.e.,
12 between the Syrian regime supporting them and continuing
13 working with us?

14 Mr. Rood: We are aware that the SDF has been engaging
15 in dialogue with the Syrian regime. They have told us
16 about that. That is part the benefit of the partnership is
17 that they are open with us. That is a matter for the SDF
18 to make their own decisions, and after all, these are
19 people who are from Syria. They live in Syria. They were
20 born there, raised there. Their self-identity is as
21 Syrians. And so it would be natural that they would want
22 to live in a Syrian state.

23 From our perspective in the United States, our
24 partnership is about the defeat of ISIS with those folks.
25 But we are aware of and understand that they are having

1 this type of dialogue with the Syrian regime.

2 Senator Reed: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Fischer?

5 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 Mr. Secretary, the National Defense Strategy
7 Commission's report recommended between a 3 and a 5 percent
8 annual real growth in defense spending would be necessary
9 to adequately resource the NDS. That report was released
10 about a year ago, and since then we have passed a budget
11 deal that keeps defense spending essentially flat between
12 fiscal year 2020 and fiscal year 2021. Also, we are still
13 on a continuing resolution almost a quarter of the way
14 through the fiscal year. And we still do not have a
15 defense authorization bill.

16 First, do you believe that we will be able to meet the
17 goals of the NDS on flat budgets?

18 Mr. Rood: We are planning for a situation that we are
19 likely to face with flat budgets as our planning
20 assumption. Obviously, additional funds make it easier to
21 do things than fewer funds, but the administration
22 understands there are a number of things in play. And so
23 what we have been allocated from the Office of Management
24 Budget and others is a certain portion of the overall
25 federal budget, and we are planning for something that will

1 be flat.

2 Senator Fischer: And will the goals be met of the NDS
3 within the time frame of it?

4 Mr. Rood: Well, that is the challenge before us. And
5 you mentioned continuing resolutions. That is one of the
6 things that makes it much more difficult. In addition to
7 having to live in this present case at \$19 billion at the
8 continuing resolution level below last year's funding
9 level, it is also highly disruptive to the planning and
10 operation and substantially reduces, by the time you are
11 done with the year, the purchasing power of the government.
12 \$100 does not buy \$100 worth of products at the end of the
13 year if provided later in the fiscal year and with the
14 disruption caused by CRs.

15 Senator Fischer: I know the Department is looking to
16 generate savings by reorienting resources away from
17 activities that do not support NDS. Is that correct?

18 Mr. Rood: That is correct. We are trying to
19 emphasize the priorities in the NDS much more substantially
20 than those that are lower priority items. And one of the
21 virtues of the NDS is it does make hard choices.

22 Senator Fischer: Can you talk about the role that you
23 play in that effort? Is there policy direction that guides
24 determinations about whether missions or activities support
25 the NDS?

1 Mr. Rood: There is policy guidance that has a bearing
2 on that, although I am certainly not the only stakeholder
3 that has an influence on that in the Department. There are
4 quite a few officials that play very substantial roles.

5 Senator Fischer: Has that been given to the services
6 and the combatant commands on how they should prioritize
7 their activities?

8 Mr. Rood: Yes, from the Secretary of Defense I would
9 add, Senator, not from me individually. The Secretary of
10 Defense each year promulgates guidance that my office takes
11 the lead in preparing for him for those resource
12 allocations.

13 Senator Fischer: And that will be true of the fiscal
14 year 2021 budget as that is being built as well?

15 Mr. Rood: Yes.

16 Senator Fischer: Looking at the realities of revenue
17 and making tough decisions on how we can even implement the
18 NDS?

19 Mr. Rood: Yes.

20 Senator Fischer: General Allvin, can you talk about
21 the Joint Chiefs' role in this process?

22 General Allvin: Yes, Senator. So the Chairman really
23 gathers the inputs from the combatant commands as they
24 understand through the National Military Strategy with the
25 guidance of the NDS on how they would execute those

1 priorities and the requirements that they have. The Joint
2 Chiefs also heavily participate, as they have feet in both
3 camps, understanding the organize, train, and equip in
4 their Title 10, but understanding the requirements of the
5 combatant commands.

6 Now, there is an extensive series of dialogues that go
7 through. You probably heard of the tanks. We have a tank
8 process. It is a bureaucratic process that terminates with
9 the Chairman, with the Joint Chiefs, and all of the
10 combatant commanders discussing those priorities in the
11 context -- those combatant command priorities in the
12 context of the overall National Defense Strategy. When we
13 talk about global integration, as I mentioned in my opening
14 comments, this is why it is critical for the Chairman to be
15 able to have that comprehensive view so when he makes a
16 recommendation to the Secretary, it really is understanding
17 the entirety of the NDS and some of those hard choices the
18 secretary already alluded to. So there is a strong
19 advisory role and a continuous dialogue with the Joint
20 Chiefs.

21 Senator Fischer: And as we move forward and look at
22 really the importance of having that joint command between
23 all of our services in dealing with the challenges we face
24 in this world, I hope you will all come before this
25 committee and stress the needs that we have for the

1 resources in order to meet those challenges. Thank you.

2 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Shaheen?

3 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 And thank you, Secretary Rood and General Allvin, for
5 being here and for your service to the country.

6 During the NATO meetings this week, President Trump
7 suggested that one of the biggest threats to the world is
8 nuclear weapons. At least that is what I inferred him to
9 say. And he mentioned that Russia wants to make a deal on
10 arms control.

11 What is DOD's position on the extension of the New
12 START treaty, which could be done any time before it
13 expires in February 2021 just by mutual agreement without
14 needing to come back to Congress?

15 Mr. Rood: Senator, at DOD we work in support of the
16 broader government approach on this area. And as the
17 President said, his desire is to negotiate a nuclear arms
18 deal with both Russia and China that would limit arsenals.
19 And so we have been in support of that broader objective
20 and the State Department takes the lead there.

21 With respect to your question on New START, of course,
22 it expires, as you mentioned, in February of 2021. So we
23 do have some time until that time. And in accordance with
24 the terms of the treaty, it may be extended by mutual
25 agreement of the parties, no need to renegotiate the

1 portions of the treaty, simply to agree on the period of
2 time from 0 to 5 years that it would be extended by mutual
3 agreement.

4 Senator Shaheen: So why would we not want to go ahead
5 and extend New START before it expires and allow ourselves
6 the time to continue to negotiate with China, with some of
7 the other issues that we would like to bring into any new
8 arms control agreement, which will take a significant
9 amount of time? As I remember the negotiations around New
10 START were over 2 years' long. So why would that not be
11 beneficial to the United States? Because it would continue
12 not just the opportunities it gives us for transparency to
13 look at the verification pieces that are part of New START
14 with what Russia is doing but also to try and keep the
15 weapons limits at what they are today under the treaty.

16 Mr. Rood: Well, Senator, if the United States were to
17 agree to extend the treaty now, I think it would make it
18 less likely that we would have the ability to persuade
19 Russia and China to enter negotiations on a broader
20 agreement. China has not participated in these similar
21 arms control agreements, as you know, in the past.

22 We do retain time until February 2021. To state the
23 obvious, today it is 2019. And so there would not need to
24 be a lot of negotiation required if there was a decision by
25 the United States and Russia to extend the treaty, just

1 merely agreeing on the time period.

2 Senator Shaheen: But Russia has also suggested that
3 they are interested in doing that, and if we are both
4 interested, then we could work together to try and bring
5 China in. So I will not ask you to respond again because
6 you have indicated your position on it. But it just seems
7 to me like it would make sense for us to give ourselves
8 more time to negotiate, and the suggestion that we cannot
9 extend it I think is sort of a red herring.

10 But I want to go to South Korea and Japan. Would you
11 agree that those are our two strongest allies in the Far
12 East?

13 Mr. Rood: I would agree they are very strong allies
14 in the Far East.

15 Senator Shaheen: Reports have suggested that the
16 administration has asked for more than a five-fold increase
17 in payments from South Korea in the special measures
18 agreement negotiations and that one of the things we have
19 seen -- I think there is some suggestion that there is a
20 correlation -- is that it has produced some demonstrations
21 in South Korea against the United States and our continued
22 presence in South Korea. And there are reports that if we
23 cannot agree on the cost sharing negotiations, that the
24 Pentagon may pull out a brigade from Korea.

25 Can you comment on that? Is that accurate? And what

1 is your assessment of the situation there?

2 Mr. Rood: Senator, on the point you made about
3 potentially withdrawing troops, Secretary Esper addressed
4 that in public remarks within the last few days stating
5 that that is not accurate and that is not something that we
6 are planning to do.

7 With respect to the negotiations, there are
8 negotiations. I would point out they are led by the State
9 Department on a special measures agreement, the next
10 version of it. And while the specifics of it I will not go
11 into in a public forum, in open forum, it is fair to say
12 the United States is asking our allies to increase the
13 portion of the burden that they bear.

14 But I do want to hasten to add the Republic of Korea
15 has been a close and longstanding partner of the United
16 States. We enjoy a very good, very close military-to-
17 military relationship. That is very, very important to us
18 in the Pentagon, in the United States to preserve the
19 vitality of that as the Koreans like to say. And it is
20 very unique, as you know, to have a combined command
21 between the ROK forces and U.S. forces. And they are the
22 ones with much larger forces on the Korean Peninsula. And
23 so as our Korean colleagues like to say, the saying of the
24 command is we go together, and that is our approach.

25 Senator Shaheen: Well, I am glad to hear you say that

1 and appreciated your remarks in your opening statement
2 about the importance of our allies to helping to ensure our
3 national security. I think it would be disappointing if we
4 could not reach an agreement with South Korea on the
5 sharing of the cost of keeping troops there and supporting
6 security both for us and for South Korea.

7 Mr. Rood: I fully agree and I believe it is the
8 Senate custom to say I associate with those remarks,
9 Senator.

10 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Ernst?

13 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 And gentlemen, thank you very much for being here
15 today.

16 This is a very important hearing. As we know,
17 America's place in the world is being threatened, of
18 course, by our peer adversaries, and they have spent
19 decades studying us, studying our behaviors. All the
20 while, they have been able to modernize their forces and
21 continually improve their own warfighting doctrine.

22 So it is really incumbent that we do everything we can
23 to maintain our military and our technological edge, and I
24 would like to focus in a little bit on that through my line
25 of questioning. As we are doing that, the technologies

1 that I would like to focus on, things that I have been very
2 interested in, of course, artificial intelligence, making
3 sure that we are acquiring the right systems, and of
4 course, making sure that while we are doing that, we are
5 also eliminating waste and protecting our taxpayer dollars.
6 That will be important as we move forward because we
7 struggle in Congress with things like this year, passing
8 the National Defense Authorization Act and getting a
9 spending bill for the Department of Defense approved and
10 passed. So we do have to get that done. We owe that to
11 our service members.

12 So I would like to start again by discussing some of
13 these issues and tying them to spending. I have said over
14 and over again, we can be both a defense hawk and a fiscal
15 hawk. I think that is really important.

16 Now, Mr. Rood and General, you have discussed some of
17 the programs that the services are cutting back on. You
18 mentioned the F/A-18 Charlie and Delta, the Nimitz class
19 carriers, and other legacy systems. But are we seeing any
20 obstacles to doing that, retiring legacy systems? And I
21 would like to focus a little bit on our inability to pass a
22 spending bill and how that ties to a continuing resolution.
23 How can we retire legacy systems when we cannot invest in
24 the new types of technologies that we need? We cannot
25 start new programs.

1 Mr. Secretary, could you address that please?

2 Mr. Rood: Well, Senator, you are exactly right. That
3 is one of the substantial problems with continuing
4 resolutions, particularly if they extend for continuing
5 periods of time, because hard decisions are made on
6 different budget choices. And believe me, that is a very
7 vigorous debate inside the Pentagon. But to get to the
8 point where hard decisions are made to retire older
9 systems, to begin moving forward with new systems, you are
10 prohibited from doing it, as you know, in a new start under
11 continuing resolutions.

12 Secondly, the delay in time in the fiscal year, if the
13 money is approved, let us say, at the halfway point of the
14 fiscal year, from the time that we complete then the
15 apportionment of it within the executive branch to the time
16 it reaches the program manager to get to the right vendors
17 to do the work, there is a substantial time lag, which
18 reduces the amount of time to actually do the
19 transformation to do the work. And this is why I say it
20 reduces the purchasing power of the United States
21 substantially.

22 We every day in the Defense Department write thousands
23 of contracts, thousands of change orders. Each and every
24 time there is a change to those funding authorities,
25 contracting people like a giant machine are churning out

1 things to accommodate for each and every one of those
2 changes. It is an enormous amount of work that is
3 disruptive. And so predictable, stable funding is quite
4 valued.

5 Senator Ernst: Yes. It sounds like we put you in a
6 very difficult position when we cannot get these spending
7 bills done.

8 General Allvin, again, talking about things that I
9 think would improve efficiency within the DOD, things like
10 artificial intelligence, quantum computing, our near-peer
11 adversaries like Russia and China have really focused on
12 those types of technologies.

13 Can you talk a little bit about where we can see cost
14 savings if we were to use things like artificial
15 intelligence?

16 General Allvin: Senator, I think a couple examples
17 come to mind, but I think I would also like to talk a
18 little bit about the actual warfighting advantages, which
19 is significant.

20 Senator Ernst: Please do.

21 General Allvin: On the savings part, obviously there
22 are certain things we are doing, whether it be in the
23 entire intelligence scheme of things where there are man-
24 hours that are being committed to analyzing things that
25 perhaps through recognition software and other algorithms

1 can do the things that machines can do that can limit the
2 humans to do the things that only humans can do through our
3 cognitive domain, which would save massive amounts of
4 resources and time and human resources.

5 But also with respect to the capabilities that it
6 provides, you mentioned in your opening, Senator, that they
7 have spent decades studying what we have done. And so when
8 we look at where our adversaries are going, they are trying
9 to take advantage of doing things early before we can take
10 our forces and get ready to deploy in a very decisive
11 operation. So speed is key. So the idea that artificial
12 intelligence can aid us in decision speed and in execution
13 speed, it puts us inside of their decision loops and puts
14 them on the horns of dilemmas with decision paralysis, if
15 you will. That is very, very key because this 21st century
16 warfare that we are leaning into with these two competitors
17 is going to be largely about who can generate speed, tempo,
18 and agility and resilience. And that artificial
19 intelligence and some of these other capabilities are part
20 and parcel and central to that proposition.

21 Senator Ernst: Outstanding. Exceptional response,
22 General.

23 Thank you very much, gentlemen.

24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Heinrich?

1 Senator Heinrich: Secretary Rood, did I hear you
2 correctly that our counter-ISIS, our Syria strategy is by,
3 with, and through our partner force?

4 Mr. Rood: Yes.

5 Senator Heinrich: The administration abandoned our
6 partner force. I do not understand how you can say that
7 with a straight face. How did it impact our strategy to
8 stand down as the Turks pushed our Kurdish allies out of
9 northern Syria?

10 Mr. Rood: Senator, what I would say to you is, as we
11 speak, we are continuing our partnership with the Syrian
12 Democratic Forces and, in fact, in recent days have
13 conducted combined operations.

14 Senator Heinrich: How has that impacted our
15 credibility as we stood down while Turkish forces pushed
16 our allies out of northern Syria? Did it positively impact
17 our strategy in the region?

18 Mr. Rood: What I would say to you is that we have
19 maintained our relationship with the SDF. When the Turks
20 were preparing to conduct their military operation into
21 Syria -- I want to be clear -- we discouraged the Turks
22 from taking that military --

23 Senator Heinrich: Was that effective?

24 Mr. Rood: Well, I would say, Senator, the Turks began
25 threatening to do that incursion a year ago, and we engaged

1 in this sort of discouragement. And so it was effective
2 for much of the year, but ultimately --

3 Senator Heinrich: I would make the point that if this
4 is how we treat our allies, that it sends a very dangerous
5 message to our allies and our partners in the region if
6 this is how we stand up for them when the chips are down.

7 Lieutenant General Allvin, I could not agree more with
8 what you said about artificial intelligence. So one of the
9 things I am concerned about is given the theft of
10 intellectual property that we have seen from some of our
11 near-peer competitors, how does the Pentagon make sure that
12 the things that we develop to get inside those decision
13 feedback loops, that those do not simply get stolen
14 particularly when open source algorithms are put on the
15 Web, that we do not develop the leading-edge technology and
16 simply see that adopted by our competitors.

17 General Allvin: Senator, I can speak somewhat to that
18 I think because largely it becomes a relationship between
19 us and the defense industrial base. So I do not know if
20 the Secretary has anything to add to this, but it really
21 becomes understanding this relationship about what is there
22 in the commercial industry that in and of itself maybe does
23 not qualify as classified, but when it is aggregated with
24 others, can put together pieces that in the aggregate can
25 be classified.

1 I know that within the Department with the DOD CIO and
2 our Joint Staff J-6 working very hard to understand where
3 those gaps might be to work with policy on how we may be
4 able to work with the other elements of OSD to be able to,
5 when we interact with industry, have them have a better
6 understanding of the part that they play in the whole where
7 they may be unwitting or certainly not malign in their
8 intent, but that their activities, when put together with
9 other activities, generate that threat. That is something
10 we have been seriously working on.

11 I do not know if the Secretary has anything to add to
12 that.

13 Mr. Rood: Only that, Senator, as you know, there is a
14 Joint Artificial Intelligence Center that the Department
15 has stood up headed by a three-star general that has the
16 primary responsibility for this. And the challenge you
17 mentioned is one of the things that they are certainly
18 trying to address.

19 Senator Heinrich: It seems to me that the place we
20 should be moving fastest with regard to AI today is
21 imaging. You know, when you have a human being looking at
22 images for hours and hours, it gets harder and harder for a
23 human to focus, whereas when AI looks at images, it is
24 clear that it actually learns and gets better over time.

25 How effectively are we employing the kind of

1 artificial intelligence that is straightforward that we
2 know works, particularly with regard to imaging, so that we
3 can save those human eyes for when it really matters?

4 Mr. Rood: Senator, I know that that is one of the
5 things that has been looked at and work is underway. I
6 have to say it is beyond my area of responsibility.

7 I will say, though, on your general point, you are
8 exactly correct. I began my career as an imagery analyst
9 in the intelligence community and literally spent all day
10 looking at images. And I can say every time I discovered
11 something new, the first thing I did, after I got the aha
12 moment, was go back in time because I was certain I had
13 missed it before to see where I had been able to find that
14 because I was taught in school -- you probably were too --
15 to find a trend, you need at least three points to draw a
16 straight line. And so by the time the third or fourth one
17 registered in your mind that there was a pattern of
18 activity, I went backwards. So artificial intelligence
19 holds substantial promise.

20 In terms of your specific question as to how much work
21 the Department is doing in that area, we would have to
22 check with the JAIC folks and others to get a response to
23 you, sir.

24 Senator Heinrich: I would appreciate that. Thank
25 you.

1 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Scott?

2 Senator Scott: Thanks to both of you for being here.

3 We all watched over the last -- I think it started in
4 this summer -- the protests in Hong Kong, and then Congress
5 rightfully passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy
6 Act. And then I guess the first thing that Communist China
7 has done since is not allow our Navy vessels into Hong
8 Kong.

9 How do you think any of those actions, what the
10 protest did, the President's signing of the bill, and
11 China's actions with regard to not allowing military ships
12 into Hong Kong -- how is that going to change the dynamics
13 in that part of the world?

14 Mr. Rood: Well, I will start, and General Allvin, if
15 you have anything to add, please do.

16 With respect to the port visit by a U.S. carrier and
17 others, we were disappointed that the Chinese indicated
18 that they would not allow for that in Hong Kong. But I
19 would hasten to add this is not the first time that we have
20 experienced this. The Chinese Government periodically over
21 the years has either allowed or not allowed port visits
22 that we have requested by our naval vessels. So in that
23 sense, it was not noteworthy in its denial. But
24 nonetheless, we obviously made the request and we would
25 like to conduct those visits.

1 I think we are watching, all of us, with concern what
2 is going on in Hong Kong, and certainly the President was
3 supportive of the legislation passed by the Congress or he
4 would not have signed it. And so the concern that we have
5 about seeing the aspirations and the rights of the people,
6 their respect is certainly strong. Now, I would hasten to
7 add it is the primary mission of the State Department that
8 they have taken a lead on that, but we in the Defense
9 Department are watching that very carefully.

10 Senator Scott: With regard to Taiwan, what should we
11 be doing that we are not doing to make sure we continue to
12 support them so hopefully China will not take any military
13 action against Taiwan? What else should we be doing that
14 we are not doing, and how else can we be supportive? And
15 is there anything Congress should be doing to be supportive
16 of Taiwan?

17 Mr. Rood: Certainly consistent with the Taiwan
18 Relations Act, we are continuing to provide armaments and
19 other training to our colleagues in Taiwan. That remains
20 an important area to deter potential attack to support, as
21 the Taiwan Relations Act identifies, the legitimate defense
22 needs of the people in Taiwan. And so we continue with
23 that activity in addition to the work directly with the
24 Taiwan authorities. Of course, we in the Defense
25 Department are doing a number of things in and around that

1 region to make clear that, for instance, freedom of
2 navigation must be continued to demonstrate our resolve to
3 deter aggression and to be present for our allies, Senator.

4 General Allvin: I fully agree with Secretary Rood. I
5 would say for balancing out the last point, which really it
6 is not so much about Taiwan itself -- obviously, Taiwan is,
7 as Secretary Rood said -- we are acting in accordance with
8 the Taiwan Relations Act. But really in the region, the
9 activities that we are doing in the region -- this is
10 really part of the competition, understanding that the
11 freedom of navigation in the internationally recognized
12 waters. This is, by the way, not only just the United
13 States. This is part of working with allies and partners
14 to show that this is an international norm that we are
15 reinforcing. And this is this competition of the ideas of
16 there is a rules-based order and there is the other. And
17 so with INDOPACOM, with Admiral Davidson leading INDOPACOM,
18 leveraging not just at Taiwan but in that surrounding
19 region, that this is an area against which a free and open
20 Indo-Pacific is important. Taiwan is just one element of
21 that understanding. It could be a hot button issue for the
22 Chinese, but also there is a Taiwan Relations Act that we
23 are supporting.

24 Senator Scott: Do our naval vessels visit Taiwan just
25 like they visit Hong Kong?

1 Mr. Rood: Not on a regular basis, but we have had
2 them visit there before.

3 Senator Scott: Does it make sense to, when China says
4 we cannot go into Hong Kong, make sure that we have the
5 same -- take those vessels and have visits to Taiwan to
6 show support of Taiwan?

7 Mr. Rood: We always evaluate where -- and I will say
8 that "we" being typically the Indo-Pacific Command
9 leadership -- as to where would be an appropriate stop for
10 crew rest, for port visits and those type of things. I do
11 know if, General Allvin, you want to add anything.

12 General Allvin: This is probably getting into Admiral
13 Davidson's business, but to the Secretary's point, there is
14 a broad range of issues, whether it is the refueling and
15 refitting, the capability for the port to be able to accept
16 it, et cetera. So acknowledging your point, Senator, that
17 there is sort of a diplomatic message that could be sent, I
18 think there is also a practical concern about leveraging
19 those port visits throughout the theater.

20 Senator Scott: Thank you.

21 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Peters?

22 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Secretary Rood, the United Nations Convention on
24 Certain Conventional Weapons reached a general agreement
25 that meaningful human control over lethal autonomous weapon

1 systems is necessary. With these systems that may be
2 impossible to understand how engagement decisions are made,
3 as I believe you know, the software and algorithms of these
4 systems are proprietary information, and other nations are
5 unlikely to disclose information to prove that there is
6 meaningful human control involved in the deployment of
7 them. And we have concerns about that because if you take
8 the human out of the loop, you may achieve significant
9 tactical advantage in a battle situation.

10 In November, Secretary of Defense Esper confirmed that
11 China is exporting drones to the Middle East that they
12 claim have lethal autonomous capability. The Chinese
13 company Ziyang markets the Blowfish A3, which is basically a
14 helicopter drone armed with a machine gun. Ziyang quotes --
15 this is their quote: autonomously performs more complex
16 combat missions, including fixed point timing detection,
17 fixed range reconnaissance, and targeted precision strikes
18 in an autonomous fashion.

19 So my question to you, sir, is do you believe that
20 there would be benefits -- or what would the benefits and
21 pitfalls be of entering into some sort of arms control
22 agreements to establish transparency and ensure that our
23 adversaries do, indeed, have meaningful human control over
24 these lethal autonomous weapons?

25 Mr. Rood: Senator, certainly as you know in the way

1 that we are approaching pursuit of more autonomous
2 systems -- and they are not all for lethal purposes as
3 discussed. For example, Senator Heinrich had a very good
4 example of one that is analytic in nature. As artificial
5 intelligence proceeds, it is very important that we
6 maintain our ethics and maintain our standards, and that is
7 the approach we have tried to take within the Defense
8 Department and how we are approaching that. Our leader of
9 the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center has the lead for
10 that, but in discussing this with him and listening to him,
11 I believe that that is the principles that are being
12 applied by us in the Defense Department.

13 Separately led by the State Department, the United
14 States does engage in dialogue with other countries. You
15 mentioned one of the fora at the UN where these kinds of
16 conversations are had because it is an emerging field and
17 we do think it is important that there are certain global
18 standards and ethical approaches that we try to promote.

19 Senator Peters: So you agree, though, taking a human
20 out of the loop does give a technical advantage to that
21 weapon system because of the speed of action?

22 Mr. Rood: I would not say that in all cases. For
23 instance, I saw some demonstrations in industry where land-
24 based robotic systems set to do things were easily out-
25 foxed by their human counterparts because they were doing

1 things as programmed very rapidly or trying to adapt, but
2 the humans still had the edge on them. So I would not
3 agree in all cases that that is the case.

4 But you cannot postulate a future and we will both see
5 together what AI could become where that could be a bigger
6 concern.

7 Senator Peters: That is a very realistic future. I
8 mean, you are talking about capabilities today which I
9 think people would agree. But this future is coming at us
10 a lot quicker than most people realize.

11 You alluded to the fact that an international
12 agreement may be something that we should look at. How
13 would such an agreement be enforced, and what are the
14 contours of that agreement as you are thinking that
15 through?

16 Mr. Rood: Well, I want to be clear and clarify. I
17 think there is definitely a value in these conversations in
18 these international fora to try to establish certain
19 standards. I do not know whether that would necessitate
20 itself into some internationally binding agreement or
21 something of that nature yet. Again, that would be
22 something that would be led by our State Department. But I
23 do understand your point about maintaining our ethics and
24 the human dimension of how our approach to conflict to use
25 of force is applied, if I am understanding you correctly,

1 Senator.

2 Senator Peters: Lieutenant General Allvin, I would
3 like you to weigh in as to how you think these lethal
4 autonomous weapons, as they develop in the years ahead, may
5 influence our views on doctrine and the future of legacy
6 weapons in this rapidly changing environment.

7 General Allvin: Yes, Senator, I will try and be brief
8 because that is not only fascinating but hugely important
9 topic about how we move forward with our doctrine in the
10 context of these advanced weapons.

11 Obviously, as the Secretary alluded to, there is a
12 renewed emphasis on the ethics of it, as these become from
13 human in the loop to human on the loop to that sort of a
14 trajectory. I think our doctrine is going to need to
15 adjust to understanding the increased speed. It is about
16 speed -- part of it. Part of it is about speed. But the
17 Secretary's point, if it becomes just speed for speed's
18 sake, you may not have accuracy. So that is where the
19 humans come into understanding the operational strategic
20 impact of tactical speed.

21 And so I think our doctrine needs to be more
22 sophisticated as we move forward understanding that that
23 decision speed is also key, not just execution speed, the
24 ability to understand the second and third order impacts of
25 this. And one can imagine, as these advanced weapons are

1 being developed, leveraging big data and algorithm
2 development for better decision-making, not decision-making
3 in lieu of a human, but presenting information for better
4 human decision-making faster.

5 So I think we should be ready for the speed of
6 everything increasing, but not be sacrificing some of those
7 fundamental law of armed conflict and ethical pieces that
8 are always going to be inherent in warfare.

9 Senator Peters: Thank you.

10 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Blackburn?

11 Senator Blackburn: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 And thank you all for being here.

13 I want to circle back, Secretary Rood, to the "Wall
14 Street Journal" article and chat about that for just a
15 second because I represent and when I was in the House,
16 represented Fort Campbell. And as you know, the 101st has
17 been deployed more than anybody else as we have faced these
18 challenges in the Mideast. And what the "Journal" reported
19 was that this was being considered, not that a decision had
20 been made. So I would like some clarification from you on
21 that.

22 Are you considering sending 14,000 troops to the
23 Mideast? Are you considering sending a smaller number of
24 troops to the Mideast? Are you not considering this at
25 all? And should I be completely shocked if I were to wake

1 up one morning in the near future and hear on the news that
2 we are deploying a significant number of troops back to the
3 Mideast? And if this were under consideration, where would
4 you be pulling those troops and resources from in order to
5 meet that obligation?

6 Mr. Rood: So, Senator, with respect to the "Journal"
7 article, as mentioned, the Iranians -- we are watching this
8 situation where the Iranians both have conducted attacks in
9 recent months, and we are concerned about the threat stream
10 that we are seeing. And I would note I am going to come
11 brief the committee in closed session in a week on that
12 very topic where we have offered that and obviously in
13 closed session can go into much greater detail for you.

14 But with respect to that threat situation, we are
15 concerned about what we are seeing.

16 Senator Blackburn: So you are considering it.

17 Mr. Rood: Yes. What I would say to you is there a
18 dynamism both to the threat situation, and there needs to
19 be a --

20 Senator Blackburn: Is 14,000 the correct number, or
21 is there a lesser number?

22 Mr. Rood: The Secretary of Defense has not made any
23 decisions to deploy additional troops.

24 Senator Blackburn: Okay. So it is being considered
25 and you are looking at additional troops.

1 And then where would you move those from? Would you
2 reposition troops that are currently deployed, or would
3 this be a cut in dwell time that would cause some of our
4 troops to be deployed?

5 Mr. Rood: The Secretary of Defense is consistently
6 and continues to evaluate with the advice of others what
7 the appropriate number of forces to be deployed to the
8 Middle East is. He has not made a decision --

9 Senator Blackburn: So you are saying we should not be
10 shocked and get a surprise announcement between now and a
11 briefing in a different setting in the next week or so. Is
12 that correct?

13 Mr. Rood: I would respond differently by telling you
14 that we are evaluating the threat situation, and the
15 Secretary, if he chooses to, can make decisions to deploy
16 additional forces based on what he is observing there.
17 That said, we have not made those decisions yet.

18 I would just answer your question even more directly.
19 Based on what we are seeing with our concerns about the
20 threat picture, it is possible that we would need to adjust
21 our force posture. I think that that would be a prudent
22 step depending on what we observe because our objective is
23 to deter Iranian aggression. And deterrence is not static.
24 It is a very dynamic activity. It is not as though it
25 stays at a certain level at a certain point in time. And

1 so we will need to make dynamic adjustments to our posture.

2 In terms of your question, Senator, as to where forces
3 would come from, of course it depends on the nature of the
4 forces. A number of those, roughly half of those that have
5 been deployed, the 14,000 in the last six months have been
6 on naval vessels, cruisers, destroyers, carrier battle
7 groups. Others have been air assets. For example, in the
8 recent months, we have been asked to deploy additional
9 fighter aircraft squadrons to Saudi Arabia for that
10 purpose. Bomber squadrons. A lot depends on the nature of
11 the forces.

12 And as you mentioned, the 101st has been terribly
13 busy, has been a very highly deployed unit. And so I
14 certainly resonate with your concern.

15 Senator Blackburn: Thank you.

16 I recently was in Africa, and I had the opportunity to
17 be in Mogadishu and also in Djibouti. And I have a series
18 of questions I had wanted to ask, and I will submit these
19 for the record because I am about out of time. But I do
20 have questions about our approach to security cooperation
21 on the continent and how that may need to change to
22 prioritize strategic competition as we look at the presence
23 of China and Russia there. And I will submit those for the
24 record and yield back my time.

25 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Hirono?

1 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Secretary Rood, would you agree that China's goal is
3 to be the top military force in the world?

4 Mr. Rood: Yes.

5 Senator Hirono: So what is Russia's goal as you note
6 in your testimony as it continues with its litany of
7 destabilizing activities across the world, which in many
8 cases result in a loss of innocent lives? So what is
9 Russia's goal if China's goal is to become the top military
10 force in the world?

11 Mr. Rood: I am not sure they share the same goals or
12 agree with each other on many things, Senator. But the
13 short answer, I think that Russia's objective is to be a
14 substantial player. They would like to return to as much
15 of the influence as they held during the Cold War in the
16 Soviet Union period of time as they could. And they do
17 wish to exercise a level of influence in order to affect
18 the affairs of state in certain parts of the world or at
19 least to exercise a veto in certain cases over what
20 different countries are doing.

21 Senator Hirono: And Russia's goal and its efforts to
22 be the destabilizing player -- that is not particularly
23 good for our own national security. Is it?

24 Mr. Rood: No.

25 Senator Hirono: You noted in your testimony that we

1 knew that Turkey wanted to go into northern Syria to push
2 the Kurds out. As long as the U.S. troops were there, it
3 stayed Erdogan's hand, but the minute the President says we
4 are withdrawing our troops, Erdogan made his move. So I
5 think there is a definite cause and effect there.

6 And while we like to think that the kind of decisions
7 that are made as to where our troops will be deployed or
8 where they are leaving will be done in some sort of a
9 rational way, that is not always the case I think with this
10 President.

11 So even if Secretary Esper had provided reassurances
12 that we will not be withdrawing troops from South Korea, if
13 the President wants to do that, I do not know what you all
14 are supposed to do about it. So it is an ongoing concern
15 as to the decision-making process regarding what our
16 military does or it does not do.

17 The Department faced some criticism when it omitted
18 the mention of climate change in the National Defense
19 Strategy, and the Chief of Naval Operations in 2009 created
20 a task force on climate change to make recommendations for
21 policy and strategy to address climate change because it is
22 real and it is having an impact worldwide.

23 So in January 2019, the Worldwide Threat Assessment
24 was released, identified climate change as a major threat
25 to national security, and in January 2019, again a GAO

1 report identified military installations most threatened by
2 climate change, three of which installations are in Hawaii.

3 So aside from these multiple reports, what is actually
4 being done on the policy side to address these threats?

5 Because policy changes should drive implementation actions.

6 Mr. Rood: Sure. And things like military
7 installations are a different under secretary. Under
8 Secretary for Personnel and Resources, as well as the Under
9 Secretary for Acquisition and Sustainment often take the
10 lead in issuing that policy, Senator.

11 But that being said, in terms of your other question,
12 is there an impact on military installations and do we need
13 to plan for that, absolutely. As climate change occurs, we
14 must adapt to those realities in order to continue to do
15 the military operations that are our missions.

16 Senator Hirono: My time is running out.

17 So at least on our own military installations that
18 have seen some devastating impacts of climate events, that
19 is happening.

20 But what about things like our violent extremist
21 organizations taking advantage of water insecurity and food
22 scarcity to gain influence? We are moving into the
23 worldwide arena now. Or has drought, combined with
24 incompetence, led to water shortages of Venezuela, and how
25 has that influenced stability there? And how is water

1 scarcity influencing both partners and adversaries in the
2 Middle East and North Africa? So there are all these kinds
3 of events that are linked to climate change going on
4 worldwide, and what are our policies with regard to those
5 concerns?

6 Mr. Rood: Well, certainly as you mentioned, resource
7 scarcity and competition for resources and using resources
8 as a natural resource, food and other things as a weapon is
9 one of the things we sometimes see violent extremist
10 organizations or terrorist groups do. We also see nations
11 compete over this, and this produced a lot of tension.

12 And so certainly it is a part of our policy approach
13 to consider how do we address those underlying security
14 concerns and in many cases try to engage in diplomacy,
15 again led by the State Department typically, on those
16 activities such as -- I was just in Egypt. As an example,
17 Egypt has real concerns about this with their neighbors
18 right now.

19 Senator Hirono: I am glad you mentioned -- if I may,
20 Mr. Chairman. I am glad you mentioned diplomacy because
21 that is part of the -- we need to have much more of a
22 robust effort not just on the military side. But many of
23 our ambassadorships are not filled. They are being filled
24 by people who are political appointees with little
25 diplomatic experience or experience in the countries to

1 which they are sent. So that is not very helpful at all.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Hawley?

4 Senator Hawley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Secretary Rood, I have to confess that you have
6 confused me in your responses first to the chairman and
7 then to Senator Blackburn. I think you just said to
8 Senator Blackburn that the Pentagon is considering sending
9 additional troops to CENTCOM. Now, that confuses me
10 because the Pentagon spokesperson said last night in direct
11 response to me that the Pentagon is not considering sending
12 additional troops to CENTCOM.

13 So let me ask you again. Is the Pentagon considering
14 additional troops to CENTCOM?

15 Mr. Rood: Senator, we are always considering changes
16 to our force posture not only in CENTCOM, but in other --

17 Senator Hawley: So the Pentagon spokesperson, in
18 responding to me last night publicly, misspoke. Is that
19 what you are saying? Let me just read to you what she
20 said. She said, to be clear, the reporting about the "Wall
21 Street Journal" report is wrong. The U.S. is not
22 considering sending 14,000 additional troops to the Middle
23 East. But you just told Senator Blackburn that that is
24 under consideration. And that was in direct response to
25 me. So I would like a direct answer. Are you considering

1 it or not?

2 Mr. Rood: The direct answer I would give you,
3 Senator, is that we are always considering and, in fact,
4 based on the threat situation in the Middle East, are
5 watching that. And as necessary, the Secretary of Defense
6 has told me he intends to make changes to our force posture
7 there.

8 With respect to that statement by the spokesperson, we
9 have not made a decision to deploy 14,000 troops.

10 Senator Hawley: Well, that was not what she said,
11 though. So you are telling me now that she misspoke.

12 I think at this point, it would be helpful to hear
13 from the Secretary on this issue, and I would like to hear
14 from him today on this issue. I assume that he signed off
15 on the official spokesperson's comments, direct public
16 comments last night to me which she repeated over and over
17 again and you have directly contradicted here this morning
18 multiple times. So I think some clarification is in order,
19 and I would like to have it. I would like to have it in
20 public because the Pentagon has now made multiple
21 contradictory public statements. Can we do that? Can we
22 get that done today?

23 Mr. Rood: I will talk to the Secretary of Defense
24 about that.

25 But I do want to say, Senator, I would not agree with

1 your characterization that I have directly contradicted the
2 spokesperson.

3 Senator Hawley: Well, how can that be the case when
4 she says the United States is not considering sending
5 additional troops to the Middle East, and you just said
6 that you are?

7 Mr. Rood: I believe her statement was we are not
8 considering sending 14,000 troops.

9 Senator Hawley: I am sorry. What is your testimony
10 then? Your testimony is different from that? Because you
11 just told Senator Blackburn that that is under
12 consideration.

13 Mr. Rood: For example, Senator, there is not some
14 pending document with the Secretary of Defense that states
15 deploy 14,000 troops. Do you approve? Yes or no? I am
16 not trying to be argumentative, sir. I am just trying to
17 point out there is dynamic security situation in the Middle
18 East, and it is a custom that we do -- and we did not do it
19 just because of recent events -- where we regularly
20 evaluate the appropriate number of --

21 Senator Hawley: All right. Well, I am hearing what
22 you are saying, but there is a pretty direct contradiction
23 here. You are telling me, have told me, have told Senator
24 Blackburn that this is under consideration, and the
25 Pentagon spokesperson said last night that it is not. So I

1 will let you all circle up and talk to one another and then
2 issue a public statement today clarifying this, preferably
3 from the Secretary.

4 Let me ask you this. You said earlier that you have
5 sent 14,000 troops already in the last 6 months. What have
6 those achieved in that theater in CENTCOM?

7 Mr. Rood: The purpose of the deployment of those
8 troops, sir, was to defer further Iranian aggression.

9 Senator Hawley: Has that worked in your estimation?

10 Mr. Rood: I think it has had a deterrent effect in
11 that we have not seen those type of attacks that Iran was
12 conducting before continue. And one of the things that we
13 were concerned about, sir, was potential planning for
14 attacks on American forces. And I would note we have not
15 had American forces attacked by the Iranians in that period
16 to produce deaths or casualties, things of that nature.

17 Now, I think where you are going is deterrence -- have
18 they been dissuaded? Have they been deterred to the point
19 where they no longer feel aggressive impulses towards the
20 United States or have those activities? And that is where
21 I mentioned in my testimony we are concerned about what we
22 are observing about the potential for further --

23 Senator Hawley: Actually what I am wondering about is
24 I just am wondering what the aims of deterrence actually
25 are, and I am wondering about the connection to all of

1 these troops. 14,000 is a lot. You said now that you are
2 considering sending maybe many, many more. I just am
3 wondering what it is exactly that we are aiming to deter,
4 question number one. Question number two, what the
5 connection is with this very large troop buildup. I do not
6 think I understand actually what our strategy is here.

7 Mr. Rood: Our strategy is to seek stability, to deter
8 further Iranian aggression --

9 Senator Hawley: When you say "stability," you mean
10 what? Stability of the region?

11 Mr. Rood: For example, the absence of attacks on
12 Americans --

13 Senator Hawley: Well, that is different. I mean,
14 regional stability and the absence of the attack on
15 American forces are two very different -- I mean, what is
16 regional stability exactly, and how would we aim to achieve
17 that?

18 Mr. Rood: Well, that has been a longstanding American
19 policy not just of this administration to promote stability
20 in the Middle East. And the absence of conflict, more
21 peaceful relations -- those are forms of stability. We
22 engage in stability assistance throughout the region. This
23 has been something that the United States has pursued again
24 not just during this administration. It is a longstanding
25 objective of ours.

1 Senator Hawley: Well, my time has expired. I would
2 just note that if our aim is to prevent all absence of
3 conflict in the region, then we are going to be sending a
4 lot more than 14,000 or 28,000 or 100,000 ground troops.

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 Chairman Inhofe: Senator King?

7 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 Mr. Rood, one of the very first things you said was a
9 deterrent capability is job one. I think you said our
10 primary strategy is deterrence, and if deterrence does not
11 work, to win.

12 Let me focus on a particular issue of deterrence that
13 I have been doing a lot of work on and am puzzling about,
14 and that is cyber deterrence and particularly cyber
15 deterrence, I would call it, below the threshold of
16 catastrophe. In other words, a cyber attack that disables
17 our entire electric I think everyone would agree deserves a
18 clear and unequivocal response.

19 What about a cyber attack that freezes the voter
20 registration lists in Florida a week before the election?
21 How do we deter those kinds of attacks? My sense is we
22 have had Sony, we have had OPM, we have had 2016 with very
23 little, if any, substantive response in that our
24 adversaries do not fear us, to put it most bluntly, in
25 terms of cyber attacks on this country. Give me some

1 thoughts about cyber deterrence? The National Commission
2 on the Defense Strategy last year said the U.S. is not
3 deterring its adversaries as effectively as it should in
4 cyberspace. I am realizing we are on a very limited time,
5 but give me a minute or so of your thoughts on that and
6 perhaps then you could follow up.

7 Mr. Rood: Yes, Senator. And I recall you raising
8 this with me during my confirmation visit with you, and it
9 is something you have been a leader on in pursuing this
10 type of activity.

11 I would say since that time you and I met 2 years ago,
12 we have put in place now a cyber strategy, and one of the
13 primary aspects of that is it calls about defending
14 forward. We will no longer wait for observing indications
15 of planning for an attack for an adversary to spring that
16 attack if they are doing the equivalent of stockpiling of
17 cyber weapons to deploy at a later date. We will not wait
18 to receive that attack in our networks and then try to deal
19 with it, but rather we will defend forward. And that is
20 one of the ways that we think we can deter by denial of
21 objectives.

22 You are exactly right. There needs to be, part of any
23 deterrence, the ability to impose costs on an attacker or
24 an adversary in order to dissuade them.

25 Senator King: The adversary has to feel there is some

1 risk in order to affect their calculus of whether or not to
2 attack. Is that correct?

3 Mr. Rood: Yes, and at risk can be both through cyber
4 means and other means. And that is part of our approach.
5 Where you mentioned some of the difficulties we are even
6 puzzling through that is, as you say, getting the right
7 threshold and thinking through questions of
8 proportionality, thinking through questions of how do you
9 produce the right effects, how do you evaluate the effects
10 essentially of your attack. We call it in the physical
11 world, if a bomb was dropped, bomb damage assessment. The
12 use of cyber tools evaluating the effect of those actions
13 and making sure that there is not collateral damage is also
14 quite important, sir.

15 Senator King: I appreciate that and hope that perhaps
16 we can follow up with this conversation because this is a
17 very important topic I believe.

18 A different question. General, are we adequately
19 confronting new threats, drones, swarms, hypersonics,
20 cyber? Here is an example, and it gets back to money. And
21 we are talking about how much we are spending. We are
22 spending twice as much as China and Russia combined. And I
23 take the chairman's point on that. But still, we are
24 spending 10 times what Russia spends. Putin can hire
25 12,000 hackers for the cost of one jet fighter. And I

1 think all would agree that what he did in 2016 was a pretty
2 effective attack on our country.

3 Are we putting our money in the right places in terms
4 of emerging threats? Hypersonics is a perfect example.

5 General Allvin: Senator, I would say that the last
6 two budgets started to move that way. And having the
7 National Defense Strategy as a touchstone, as sort of the
8 north star, it acts as sort of our conscience. So as we
9 look at the development of these systems, I think we are
10 headed in the right direction. Are we going fast enough?

11 Senator King: But it bothers me that we are spending
12 10 times what Russia is and they are the ones that are
13 fielding a hypersonic missile this year and we are 4 or 5
14 years away. How did we miss that?

15 General Allvin: I think we have a broader set of
16 global objectives that we need to achieve. So I think
17 there was also the focus that we have had over the past 20
18 years before the NDS, and we are transitioning into this
19 new prioritization on great power competition. I think
20 there are a lot of elements that we have within --

21 Senator King: Well, I think we have catch-up to do,
22 as I think you both testified. But I think the area of
23 technology and confronting emerging threats is a real area
24 where there has to be some good strategic thinking and
25 investments.

1 Final question for the record because I am out of
2 time. We have not talked about it here today. I am
3 concerned about the possibility of an emergent China/Russia
4 axis. They have been split apart for many years. I am
5 concerned that to the extent they decide to cooperate
6 against us as a common enemy, that can be a force
7 multiplier. So I am not asking for an answer now, but I
8 would hope you could give me some thoughts for the record
9 on the danger and what the intelligence tells us about
10 cooperation and coordination between China and Russia.
11 Thank you.

12 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Sullivan?

14 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 And, Mr. Secretary, General, thank you for being here.
16 I think you are doing a good job in a tough position. So
17 we appreciate this.

18 I think you see a lot of wisdom on this panel. My
19 friend from Maine always asks very intelligent questions.
20 I certainly agree with him on what he was just asking you
21 on cyber and this issue of deterrence. We have to make
22 sure that people fear us and have at the front of their
23 mind the fact that there will be costs.

24 I also agree with some of the comments earlier with
25 regard to allies. I think you do, Mr. Secretary. That is

1 one of our biggest strategic advantages in the world. We
2 are an ally-rich nation. Our adversaries, potential
3 adversaries, China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, are ally-
4 poor. Not many countries looking to join the North Korea
5 team or Iran team. So if you can just keep that in mind.

6 And finally, I do want to ask a question. Senator
7 Hirono talked about resources. You know, something else
8 that does not come up nearly enough is another area. I
9 would like your view on it quickly. I have a number of
10 questions for you.

11 We are now the world's energy super power once again.
12 We are the largest producer of natural gas, largest
13 producer of oil, largest producer of renewables. I think
14 this is a win-win-win for America. It is also good for the
15 environment since we have the highest standards of
16 producing energy in the world on the environment.

17 Can you just briefly tell us what that does for the
18 national security of our country? The media never reports
19 on that. It is a remarkable achievement that we are now
20 once again the world's energy super power. How does that
21 help our national security?

22 Mr. Rood: Well, Senator, as you very correctly point
23 out, we are, in the United States, in a very different
24 position than we were a few years ago.

25 Senator Sullivan: And we can dominate this sector for

1 decades. Correct?

2 Mr. Rood: Well, it is not my area of expertise, but
3 the things I have seen -- this will go for quite some time.
4 And the things that that has done to provide more energy
5 independence for the United States has just lessened our
6 reliance on oil from the Middle East, as an example,
7 sources from elsewhere.

8 Senator Sullivan: And Russia blackmailing countries
9 that we want to help like the Baltics and Ukraine.
10 Correct?

11 Mr. Rood: Energy is key to prevent blackmail. Energy
12 security is key to prevent having to take decisions that
13 you would not like. I think it is very important.

14 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask another question. You
15 know, I do not think this administration gets enough credit
16 on the National Security Strategy and the National Defense
17 Strategy. If you polled the U.S. Senate, I bet you would
18 have 95 Senators saying the general orientation of that to
19 refocus, reorient on great power competition with regard to
20 China is really, really important. And I think that that
21 is positive, the bipartisan support for the NDS that I have
22 certainly seen in the Senate.

23 One area I do want to talk about, not surprisingly,
24 where there has become a really big area of great power
25 competition -- Secretary Pompeo had a very good speech on

1 this in Finland on this -- is the Arctic. Mr. Secretary, I
2 am excited about you coming up to Alaska this weekend and
3 seeing America's Arctic because we are an Arctic nation
4 because of my State.

5 I am going to submit for the record -- just in the
6 last 3 or 4 months, these are the headlines from everything
7 from "National Geographic," "Newsweek," "Washington Post."
8 The West is losing the battle for the Arctic. Arctic melt
9 heightens U.S. rivalry with Russia on the northern front.
10 A thawing Arctic is heating up a new cold war. China is
11 mixing military and science to redraw the Arctic. I mean,
12 there is literally an article a week, almost a day. I am
13 going to submit this, Mr. Chairman.

14 [The information follows:]

15 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Sullivan: But I am a little bit worried the
2 Pentagon has been slow to the punch here. As I mentioned,
3 Secretary Pompeo is focused on it. This committee has been
4 very focused on it. You may have seen a lot of bipartisan
5 work, new Arctic strategy, the need for a strategic Arctic
6 port.

7 Can you comment on this? And what can we do to make
8 sure that aligned with the National Defense Strategy -- if
9 you look at our rivals, China, Russia, North Korea, one
10 thing they have in common is contested space in very cold,
11 mountainous, difficult climes. Our Navy cannot barely even
12 operate in the Arctic anymore. We used to be able to do
13 that quite well.

14 I am looking forward to having you up in Alaska like I
15 said. But can you talk about this and what your view is as
16 the top policymaker for the Pentagon?

17 Mr. Rood: Yes. First of all, I agree with you. The
18 United States is an Arctic nation. The Arctic is very
19 important to our future both militarily, economically, and
20 given the political competition in that region, we need to
21 be quite conscious of that. As you know, I am very much
22 looking forward to learning more when I am with you in
23 Alaska.

24 We have some substantial military capabilities or
25 military presence in terms of facilities, aircraft, air

1 bases, and so on in the region. Recently -- and I think it
2 was your provision, if I recall correctly, Senator,
3 required a submission of an Arctic strategy per the NDAA
4 which we provided to the Congress that discussed some of
5 our plans.

6 But our interests are in a free and open area of
7 commerce. And we are trying to make improvements in our
8 ability to operate in cold weather. Our colleagues in the
9 Coast Guard, not the DOD, of course, have an icebreaker
10 acquisition program, which we think is quite important to
11 that area. And I know our Navy is looking at ways they can
12 improve their activities.

13 I do not know. General Allvin, would you like to add
14 anything?

15 General Allvin: I would just pile on on the
16 importance. I mean, obviously our most valuable and useful
17 Arctic training, the cold weather training, is up there at
18 Fort Wainwright, et cetera. I think not only with respect
19 to the Arctic but the location of Alaska writ large as we
20 are looking at global competition, global challenges, if
21 you just took the globe from scratch, you would see Alaska
22 is very critical with respect to both of our great power
23 competitors. And so as we look forward to, we definitely
24 see not only the Arctic competition, but the geostrategic
25 position of Alaska as being actually quite important.

1 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Blumenthal?

4 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 We are commemorating now, as everybody knows, the 70th
6 anniversary of NATO. I assume you would agree that NATO is
7 important to our own strategic security. And the record
8 may reflect that you are nodding.

9 Mr. Rood: Yes.

10 Senator Blumenthal: It is such a self-evident truth
11 that nodding is the appropriate response.

12 [Laughter.]

13 Senator Blumenthal: But I am deeply concerned about
14 at least one of our NATO allies, Turkey. As you know,
15 there is currently no mechanism to remove NATO allies.
16 Disciplining a NATO ally certainly seems problematic. And
17 yet, what we have seen over the last year or so -- Turkey's
18 invasion into northeastern Syria slaughtering our Kurdish
19 partners, a moral revulsion, as well as a strategic
20 nightmare; the purchase of Russian S-400 surface-to-air
21 missiles greatly exacerbating tensions with the United
22 States, as well as with NATO partners, in fact, almost
23 making a mockery of our common strategic military
24 interests; the increasingly close ties between President
25 Erdogan and Vladimir Putin. All these actions seem to fuel

1 concerns about NATO as an ally.

2 I have introduced a bipartisan bill with my
3 colleagues, including members of this committee, Senators
4 Shaheen, Blackburn, as well as Senators Graham and Van
5 Hollen, who are members of the Foreign Relations Committee,
6 to impose strict sanctions on Turkey. The bill would
7 sanction Turkish political leaders, including the current
8 president, and sanction the military and energy sector, and
9 ban arms sales to Turkey.

10 Secretary Rood, would you support this legislation?

11 Mr. Rood: Well, Senator, first let me say I
12 understand your concerns, and we have been engaging with
13 the Turks about our concerns about a number of the things
14 that you mentioned. For instance, we continue to press
15 them to not move forward with the S-400 acquisition. It is
16 simply not compatible with an interoperable NATO. That
17 system is not, cannot, and will never been interoperable
18 with the rest of the NATO air defense architecture. And as
19 you know, interoperability is core to the ability of NATO
20 to operate effectively as a military alliance. And so we
21 have discouraged our allies in Turkey from proceeding.

22 It is their sovereign decision whether they wish to
23 proceed with that, but we have pointed out to them
24 sovereign decisions have consequences. And I have
25 personally been to Ankara to support the negotiation, the

1 ceasefire, that the Vice President and Secretary of State
2 negotiated. And when this topic comes up, we always point
3 out to them our expectation that if the administration did
4 not move forward with actions, the Congress would,
5 including sanctions.

6 Senator Blumenthal: Mr. Secretary, I appreciate that
7 that missile system is inoperable. Actually it is more
8 than inoperable. It is directly contradictory. It is
9 inconsistent with NATO's common defense. And that is the
10 reason why we are not selling the F-35 to them. It enables
11 them to shoot out of the skies the planes that NATO would
12 otherwise sell to them, otherwise use, that they would use.
13 But it is simply one more action by Turkey inconsistent
14 with their being a NATO ally.

15 And I just wonder what more we can and should be
16 doing. Sanctions is what our bill would do, and if it is
17 not sanctions -- and I am not going to cross examine you,
18 for the lack of a better word, on why you are not answering
19 the question about sanctions. I fully understand that
20 there are a lot of complexities here. What more can we do?

21 Mr. Rood: Senator, we remain engaged with the Turks
22 both at the highest levels. The President spoke to
23 President Erdogan, as you know, in recent days. The
24 Secretary of State is engaging very much with his
25 counterpart, and we have had people visiting Turkey. We

1 have not given up on this activity and persuading the Turks
2 of some of the disadvantages and why we do not think it is
3 in their long-term interest, nor ours, for them to move
4 forward with the S-400. But there are, as you mentioned,
5 other areas of concern in the relationship. It is a very
6 complex one.

7 And so we also are working with our other allies
8 within the rest of NATO -- many of them have the same or
9 very similar concerns -- and partners in the region who
10 also have those concerns.

11 I cannot sit before you today and tick off 10 specific
12 steps that would produce 10 changes in behavior,
13 regrettably. But it is something that we are really trying
14 to solve that and improve the relationship.

15 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

16 Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

17 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Duckworth?

18 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 I am very glad that we are having this discussion. I
20 do think that the NDS has been very useful in focusing the
21 energies of the Department of Defense and the rest of
22 government, this body included. You know, I look forward
23 to hearing more from the witnesses on how we can improve
24 upon the implementation of NDS. But I do think that there
25 are some blind spots within the NDS as it is, and I would

1 like to discuss how DOD will address these shortfalls.

2 So some of the deficiencies I notice are that the NDS
3 devotes significant space to addressing the need to build a
4 more lethal and agile force, but it spends very little time
5 addressing the vital resources that would be needed to
6 project power and sustain that power during a conflict,
7 things like railcars and transport ships.

8 Secretary Rood and General Allvin, would you support
9 developing a supplemental or addendum to the NDS that
10 focuses on developing resilient transportation networks and
11 logistic systems that can survive in contested
12 environments?

13 General Allvin: Senator, you certainly make a great
14 point about the centrality. The importance of
15 transportation and logistics is sort of a historical
16 redheaded stepchild. We cannot afford that. So, yes,
17 ma'am.

18 What I would say is that what we have done, largely in
19 response to the National Defense Strategy, is we have put
20 increased emphasis on the transportation piece. And I
21 think you noted that on the sealift, the Navy is looking to
22 how they might recapitalize for sealift to be able to have
23 a more relevant capability to project power.

24 I think you mentioned in contested environments how we
25 would make sure to protect our power projection. I will

1 tell you that in our readiness reviews for some of our
2 larger operations plans -- I talked about in my opening
3 statement about a global integrated base plan. We are
4 really looking at the real costs and real risks overall.
5 And that power projection -- for the first time I would say
6 in decades, we have looked at how one might project power
7 under contested environments. So things like identifying,
8 which I will not go into any more at this classification
9 level, but would be happy to follow up with you, things
10 about areas in which we would want to have physically
11 hardened and, of course, resilience in cyber in nodes and
12 ports, as well as understanding the potentiality for
13 attrition of those forces while they are being deployed
14 into theater.

15 So the idea that the logistics and transportation
16 enterprise is really starting to move up into a position of
17 importance I would say is a positive trend. And I think we
18 have been able to see those when we look at the larger
19 globally integrated base plan. So I would say that there
20 is attention being paid, and there is significant work
21 being done by U.S. Transportation Command, supported by our
22 Joint Staff J-4, about how would one look at which nodes to
23 harden, which capabilities, not only to get to the theater
24 but intra-theater as well. So I would say looking at it,
25 even though it is not specifically in pen and ink in the

1 strategy, there has been a lot of effort that reflects that
2 reality.

3 Senator Duckworth: Yes, but that is my point. It is
4 not in pen and ink, and that is a problem because it can be
5 overlooked. I mean, the Navy's Ready Reserve fleet is
6 nowhere near ready. And in fact, like over a dozen of
7 those ships have lost their Coast Guard safety
8 certification. I do not think we have enough railcars. I
9 do not think we have enough heavy lift or refueling. It is
10 not just oceangoing, but it is also air capability and
11 ground capabilities as well.

12 So are you saying that you do not think we need an
13 addendum to the NDS on moving forward to really focus on
14 these issues?

15 General Allvin: Well, Senator, I do not have an
16 opinion whether it should be in the NDS addendum. I do
17 absolutely concur with the fact that it needs to have
18 increased attention. I guess I am trying to convey that it
19 has more attention than one might think, that we actually
20 are identifying those as we speak. But I do not have a
21 particular opinion as to which product it should be in that
22 would ensure accountability for ensuring that those ideas
23 and those initiatives move forward.

24 Senator Duckworth: But I have not seen those -- a
25 similar level of investment in these capabilities. I see

1 the investments in things like long-range precision fires
2 and submarines and strike aircraft, all of which I fully
3 support. But what I have not seen is a corresponding rise
4 in investments in the less flashy but still critical
5 transportation and logistics systems. And I think that
6 this is going to lead us to a more lethal force, which is
7 good, but much more unsustainable and fragile in many ways
8 because we cannot sustain the lethality that we have.

9 So if you do not think that we need to write this
10 down, will you at least commit to reversing the trend and
11 try to align future budgets with all of NDS' aims,
12 including the logistical support, the sustainability and
13 the security of the logistics network?

14 General Allvin: Actually, Senator, that is certainly
15 part of the thought process. Actually when we look at the
16 entirety of what it takes to execute the National Defense
17 Strategy, that is part and parcel to it. And that is when
18 I mentioned these readiness reviews, they are designed to
19 suss out the specifics rather than just in general we need
20 more X or Y. Understanding which of those are the most
21 critical that we can put those investments in early on to
22 make the biggest difference the soonest is where we are
23 headed. So I guess I am trying to convey that we are
24 putting attention to it.

25 Senator Duckworth: I am not seeing it in the budget

1 request, though, and that to me is the ultimate. I mean,
2 you can say that all you want, but you still have over half
3 of your Ready Reserve fleet is over 40 years old, and most
4 of them are going to reach operational life within the next
5 15 years. You do not have enough tankers. You do not have
6 -- you cannot even transport stuff on railcars across
7 Europe in the way that we need to be able to. And how are
8 we going to be active in the Asia-Pacific region if we do
9 not have the capability? And I do not see that same focus
10 in terms of, hey, we need to spend money here like we do on
11 the F-35. As much as we love the F-35, how are we going to
12 support it?

13 I am out of time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman Inhofe: We are adjourned.

15 [Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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