

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF
PAUL J. LACAMERA, USA,
FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL
AND TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED NATIONS
COMMAND/COMBINED FORCES COMMAND/UNITED STATES
FORCES KOREA

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Washington, D.C.

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(202) 289-2260
www.aldersonreporting.com

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2 USA, FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL
3 AND TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED NATIONS COMMAND/COMBINED FORCES
4 COMMAND/UNITED STATES FORCES KOREA
5

6 Tuesday, May 28, 2021
7

8 U.S. Senate

9 Committee on Armed Services

10 Washington, D.C.
11

12 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in
13 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed,
14 chairman of the committee, presiding.

15 Committee Members Present: Senators Reed [presiding],
16 Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King,
17 Peters, Manchin, Duckworth, Rosen, Kelly, Inhofe, Wicker,
18 Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Scott,
19 Blackburn, Hawley, and Tuberville.
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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 RHODE ISLAND

3 Chairman Reed: I would like to call the hearing to
4 order.

5 Good morning. The committee meets this morning to
6 consider the nomination of General Paul LaCamera to be the
7 next Commander of U.S. Forces Korea, United National
8 Command, and the Republic of Korea-United States Combined
9 Forces Command. General, I thank you for your continued
10 service and willingness to lead in this very important
11 position. I want to welcome your wife, Theresa, brother,
12 Michael, your son, Jack, your daughter-in-law, Amanda, and
13 your nephew, Mitchell. We thank them for their continued
14 support of your service to our nation over many, many years.

15 Your career spans nearly 36 years, with distinguished
16 service across multiple theaters and command experience at
17 all levels. You have most recently served as the Commanding
18 General of U.S. Army Pacific, an experience that will serve
19 you well in this new role.

20 North Korea has vexed U.S. administrations for decades.
21 Maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula must
22 remain a priority for the Department of Defense, though
23 solving the long-term challenges posed by North Korea will
24 require all elements of national power.

25 According to the 2021 global threat assessment provided

1 by the Director of National Intelligence, the intelligence
2 community assesses that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un
3 views nuclear weapons as "the ultimate deterrent against
4 foreign intervention," and, over time, intends to gain
5 "international acceptance and respect as a nuclear power."
6 The assessment also maintains that Kim Jong Un probably
7 "does not view the current level of pressure on his regime
8 as enough to require a fundamental change in its approach."

9 The Biden administration recently completed an
10 interagency review of our nation's policy towards North
11 Korea. The ultimate goal of U.S. policy remains the
12 denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, but senior
13 administration officials have explained that "we are not
14 seeking a grand bargain or an all-or-nothing approach."
15 Instead, the administration intends to pursue "a calibrated,
16 practical approach to diplomacy with the North with the goal
17 of eliminating the threat to the United States."

18 This approach will require smart and firm engagement
19 with the North Koreans, but, more importantly, it requires
20 coordination with our allies and partners in the region,
21 none more so than South Korea and Japan. The Biden
22 administration has already invested significant time and
23 attention to our relationships with both Japan and South
24 Korea in an effort to foster greater trilateral cooperation
25 and coordination on this issue and other issues of mutual

1 concern. I would note that the President has already hosted
2 Japanese Prime Minister Suga last month, and South Korean
3 President Moon is set to visit later this week.

4 China also has a role to play in addressing our mutual
5 concerns about North Korea, though it must decide what role
6 it wants to play. According to recent testimony by the
7 Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, China will
8 likely continue to balance international sanctions
9 enforcement with its overall objective of maintaining
10 stability in North Korea.

11 General LaCamera, I hope you will offer your views on
12 the partnership between the U.S., Japan, South Korea, and
13 other regional partners in addressing North Korea's
14 destabilizing activity and to what extent you believe there
15 are opportunities to more actively engage with China on
16 these issues.

17 As you know, the one key factor that makes the United
18 States military the greatest in the world is its people.
19 Our troops and their families around the globe serve with
20 remarkable selflessness, and those in Korea bear the burden
21 of service far from home as heavily as any. This has been
22 especially true during the past year, as Korea was an early
23 epicenter of the pandemic and has remained particularly
24 isolated ever since. Leading our uniformed personnel and
25 their families on the peninsula while ensuring that their

1 needs are met will be a tremendous responsibility.

2 Lastly, the highest priority of any military commander
3 is ensuring the readiness of the forces under their command
4 to perform their mission. I hope you will share your views
5 on how U.S. Forces-Korea can maintain readiness through
6 training and exercises with their South Korean counterparts
7 while avoiding miscommunication or an unintentional
8 escalation in tensions with the North.

9 General, if confirmed, you will lead U.S. Forces-Korea
10 at an incredibly consequential time. We thank you again for
11 your continued willingness to serve, and let me now
12 recognize the ranking member, Senator Inhofe.

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

3 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of
4 all, General LaCamera, we thank you for all of your service,
5 and I enjoyed meeting your family, and I am glad they are
6 here today so they know what you are going to be undergoing,
7 and the great job that you are going to be doing.

8 Since its release, this committee has used the 2018
9 National Defense Strategy and the bipartisan NDS Commission
10 report, the blue book, as the blueprint for our defense
11 work. Since 2018, I have been asking every senior defense
12 official, both military and civilian, whether the 2018 NDS
13 is still accurate and relevant, and important work, and
14 every one of them has confirmed that it provides a solid
15 foundation and priorities to help them advance our national
16 military interests. They told us that it accurately
17 reflects the strategic environment and, if anything, the
18 threats have gotten worse. General LaCamera, I will be
19 interested in your views.

20 One area we see things getting worse fast is in
21 Afghanistan. This last week a girl's school in Kabul was
22 bombed, and the lives of our Afghan translators, who help
23 protect our troops, will be in much greater danger after our
24 troops leave. This is, in part, because we abandoned the
25 conditions-based approach that Congress has supported for

1 the last decade. Instead, unfortunately, the Biden
2 administration has adopted a calendar-based approach that
3 trades real security for politics. I fear that we are
4 seeing only the beginning of an emerging humanitarian
5 disaster in Afghanistan.

6 General LaCamera, I understand from our discussion in
7 my office that Korea, we have another situation that can
8 either be condition-based or calendar-based, and that is the
9 transfer of wartime operational control. I look forward to
10 your views on that.

11 Admiral Aquilino, who is the new Commander of INDOPACOM
12 as of 30 April, told the committee just recently that the
13 United States and Republic of Korea Alliance is iron-clad
14 and it serves as a linchpin for peace and security in the
15 Korean peninsula, and I totally agree.

16 As I said last week on the floor of the Senate, a
17 strong military is the foundation of our alliances, and, in
18 fact, a strong military enables us to have strong alliances,
19 and as we see threats to our nation get worse, we need both,
20 not one or the other.

21 So I look forward to your testimony today and working
22 with you in the future.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

25 General LaCamera, please, your testimony.

1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL PAUL J. LaCAMERA, COMMANDER,
2 UNITED NATIONS COMMAND/ COMBINED FORCES COMMAND/UNITED
3 STATES FORCES KOREA

4 General LaCamera: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman
5 Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of
6 the Senate Armed Services Committee, I am truly honored to
7 appear before you today, and thank you for the opportunity
8 to testify, and more importantly, if confirmed, to continue
9 my service leading America's most precious resource. I want
10 to thank President Biden for nominating me to serve as the
11 Commander, United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command,
12 and the United States Forces Korea. Additionally, to
13 Secretary Austin and General Milley for their confidence in
14 recommending me to the opportunity to continue to serve our
15 nation.

16 There are too many people to thank for what brought me
17 here today, but there are a select few without their support
18 not only would I not be here, it would not be worth it. I
19 am joined here today by Theresa, my wife of over 35 years.
20 She is the mother of our four wonderful children and
21 grandmother of two. An Army brat, U.S. Military Academy
22 graduate, and Army veteran, Theresa is the heart and soul of
23 this operation, our true north, my strength, and the one
24 exercising civilian control of the military.

25 My son, Jack, a Navy veteran, now pastor, and his wife,

1 Amanda, who recently became a U.S. citizen, join me here
2 today. I have three daughters: Brianna and her husband,
3 John; Katie, and fiancé, Brandon; and Maggie are here in
4 spirit, and I have no doubt they will watch and provide
5 feedback as required. I am extremely proud of the adults
6 that they have become.

7 Representing our extended family are my sisters, Trace
8 and Caroline, my brother, Michael, and his son, Mitchell. I
9 am grateful for their tremendous support over the many
10 years, especially during combat deployments.

11 In our families there are too many people and veterans
12 from World War I through Vietnam to our current fights, to
13 personally thank for their service and for their support and
14 selfless service. But I would like to recognize my sister,
15 Trace, also a Military Academy graduate, a retired Army
16 officer, and her late husband, Major General Bannister, for
17 their almost 60 years of total service, in peace and in war.

18 Most importantly, thanks to my parents, my mother,
19 Loretta, and my late father, John, whose love and support,
20 along with the values and discipline they instilled in me,
21 made me who I am. They were my first teachers of leadership
22 by example.

23 Final recognition goes to some of my personal staff
24 here with us. Without their dedication and professionalism,
25 along with countless others through the years, I would not

1 be here. It is an honor to serve with them every day.

2 Today the danger and complexity across the globe have
3 only increased. In the Department of Defense, China is our
4 pacing threat. Having spent the last 19 months as Commander
5 of the U.S. Army Pacific I am aware of the challenges
6 involved with competition and shaping the environment to
7 prevent crisis from escalating into conflict. I recognize
8 the need to maintain readiness, not just for conflict but
9 for competition, and to compete daily. Being ready to fight
10 tonight means maintaining capability and creating time and
11 space to enable the diplomatic process, preserving options
12 for leaders.

13 I am aware of the most sacred trust given to me to
14 prepare our servicemembers to fight and win in the most
15 dangerous piece of ground, the last 100 meters. This
16 remains a critical period in Northeast Asia and in Korea, as
17 we face persistent challenges with the development of
18 nuclear land advanced missile systems, cyber capabilities,
19 asymmetric and military technologies. The foundations for
20 success is a strong and effective integrated deterrent
21 posture that brings to bear the unique capabilities and
22 capacity of the entire joint, interagency, and combined
23 community.

24 If confirmed, I intend to capitalize on the trust built
25 with senior military leaders in the region while commanding

1 U.S. Army Pacific, maintaining the trust of ascending states
2 and my interagency colleagues, and most importantly, build
3 on the trust and bonds forged with national treasure over
4 second decades with our Korean allies.

5 As my predecessors have done, I endorse the four
6 longstanding United Nations Command, Combined Forces
7 Command, and United States Korea priorities: sustaining and
8 strengthening the alliance, maintaining the armistice,
9 transforming the alliance, and sustaining the force. These
10 priorities remain relevant, but if confirmed, as any
11 incoming commander does, I will make adjustments based on
12 new facts, changes in the environment, and putting guidance
13 from my leadership and ROK partners, and my own observations
14 to keep our alliance iron-clad. I will keep this committee
15 informed.

16 Katchi Kapshida. We go together. The ROK-U.S.
17 alliance remains the cornerstone of stability and security
18 in Northeast Asia, and that partnership continues to grow
19 through economic cooperation, mitigating threats to regional
20 stability, and fulfilling our commitments to allies and
21 partners in the region.

22 Finally, I would like to recognize General "Abe" Abrams
23 and his wife, Connie, for not only their leadership on the
24 Korean Peninsula but also their lifetime of dedicated
25 service to our nation. I wish them well in their next

1 chapter.

2 I am deeply honored for this opportunity to command one
3 of the most vital regions of the planet. Thank you for
4 considering my nomination, and I look forward to any
5 questions you may have.

6 [The prepared statement of General LaCamera follows:]

7 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General. As is
2 customary, there is a series of questions which each nominee
3 must respond to. Please respond to the questions as I ask
4 them.

5 Have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations
6 governing conflicts of interest?

7 General LaCamera: Yes, Chairman, I have.

8 Chairman Reed: Have you assumed any duties or taken
9 any actions that would appear to presume the outcome of the
10 confirmation process?

11 General LaCamera: No, I have not.

12 Chairman Reed: Exercising our legislative and
13 oversight responsibilities makes it important that this
14 committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate
15 committees of Congress receive testimony, briefings,
16 reports, records, and other information from the Executive
17 branch on a timely basis. Do you agree, if confirmed, to
18 appear and testify before this committee, when requested?

19 General LaCamera: Yes, Chairman, I do.

20 Chairman Reed: Do you agree, when asked before this
21 committee, to give your personal views, even if your views
22 differ from the administration?

23 General LaCamera: Yes, Chairman, I do.

24 Chairman Reed: Do you agree to provide records,
25 documents, and electronic communications in a timely manner

1 when requested by this committee, its subcommittees, or
2 other appropriate committees of Congress, and to consult
3 with the requestor regarding the basis for any good-faith
4 delay or denial in providing such records?

5 General LaCamera: Yes, Chairman, I do.

6 Chairman Reed: Will you ensure that your staff
7 complies with deadlines established by this committee for
8 the production of reports, records, and other information,
9 including timely reporting to hearing questions for the
10 record?

11 General LaCamera: Yes, Chairman, I will.

12 Chairman Reed: Will you cooperate in providing
13 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional
14 requests?

15 General LaCamera: Yes, Chairman, I will.

16 Chairman Reed: Will those witnesses and briefers be
17 protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

18 General LaCamera: Yes, they will.

19 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much.

20 Well, General, I will say I have had the privilege of
21 knowing you since you were a lieutenant colonel, commanding
22 a battalion in combat, and you have had an impressive career
23 with selfless dedication to the country, and an extremely
24 aggressive attitude of protecting the soldiers that serve
25 underneath you, and I compliment you for both of those

1 activities.

2 Your new assignment in Korea is going to be a
3 significant challenge -- I think you recognize that -- and I
4 believe you are well prepared for it. One of the things
5 that has been happening over the last several years, because
6 of political dynamics, has been the curtailing of training,
7 particularly operational training with troops in the field.
8 In your opinion, how should we balance the need to maintain
9 readiness for our forces, which I assume include large-scale
10 exercises with our efforts to engage North Korea, and do you
11 believe we are striking the right balance?

12 General LaCamera: Chairman, I believe I know General
13 Abrams uses size, scope, volume, and timing right now. I
14 will take a look at that. In my current previous, and in
15 previous positions, I have used, you know, live, virtual,
16 and constructive. I think as we trade spaces we give up
17 certain things, turning those dials on live, virtual, and
18 constructive training to make sure that we can train at the
19 right levels, to make sure that, you know, from the squad
20 leader on up to the general officers, understand what they
21 can do.

22 So if we can't do it live, that is obviously the gold
23 standard, I will continue to work, if confirmed, to do it
24 virtual and constructive, to make sure that we are meeting
25 the standards and ready to fight tonight.

1 Chairman Reed: Are there limitations in terms of
2 access to training ranges and airspace, in your view right
3 now?

4 General LaCamera: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Currently right
5 now, in my current position we are bringing Apache pilots
6 off the Peninsula to train back in the United States, based
7 on limitations with training, training ranges.

8 Chairman Reed: And are you prepared to open up that
9 issue again with your South Korean counterparts, and see if
10 we can minimize that?

11 General LaCamera: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Every time I
12 meet with the ROK CONGEN in Honolulu, and I just recently
13 met with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of the ROK
14 military, and we had this discussion.

15 Chairman Reed: Thank you. In March, the United States
16 and South Korea agreed to a new 6-year Special Measures
17 Agreement that increases South Korea's contribution to the
18 course of stationing U.S. forces in the country by
19 approximately 14 percent, and negotiations over this
20 agreement, as you know, were a significant irritant over the
21 last several years. Do you support the new Special Measures
22 Agreement?

23 General LaCamera: I do, Mr. Chairman, waiting on the
24 ratification by the Koreans.

25 Chairman Reed: Are the ways, outside of the Special

1 Measures Agreement, that South Korea provides support to
2 U.S. forces in the country? Again, my perception of some of
3 the [inaudible] was it was just reduced simple to, you know,
4 you have got to pay us money, not other contributions that
5 the South Koreans made. Can you cite some of those
6 contributions?

7 General LaCamera: Yes, Mr. Chairman. General Abrams
8 has moved his headquarters. They are in the process of
9 moving his headquarters down to Camp Humphreys. The
10 construction, the housing, and the buildings that are
11 housing our soldiers, the barracks, headquarters, et cetera,
12 were built by the Republic of Korea. That is one example.

13 Chairman Reed: And there are others, I presume, too.

14 General LaCamera: Yes, there are.

15 Chairman Reed: Just my final question is just a brief
16 view of the security situation on the Peninsula.

17 General LaCamera: Mr. Chairman, I mean, it appears
18 quiet, given all the other things that are going on. But I
19 have no doubt that the adversaries to the north are -- you
20 know, he is trying to preserve his country and he is trying
21 to preserve his legacy. So I think General Abrams, and, if
22 confirmed, one of the things I will have to monitor is his
23 combat capabilities, both conventional nuclear and
24 unconventional, that pose a threat to our mission.

25 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. Again, thank you

1 for your distinguished service, and thank you to your family
2 for being with you every moment. Thank you.

3 Senator Inhofe, please.

4 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I mentioned
5 in my opening statement the NDS, and I am going to quote
6 now, keeping in mind that this was actually in print in
7 2018. Quote, "North Korea seeks to guarantee regime
8 survival and increase leverage by seeking a mixture of
9 nuclear, biological, chemical, convention, and non-
10 conventional weapons and a growing ballistic missile
11 capacity to gain coercive influence over South Korea, Japan,
12 and the United States." Now that was in 2018. And when
13 asked the NDS accurately assesses the current strategic
14 environment in the INDOPACOM, the new commander, Admiral
15 Aquilino, said, quote, "The 2018 NDS provides a candid
16 assessment of the strategic environment," and I take that as
17 a yes.

18 General LaCamera, do you agree that the 2018 NDS
19 accurately assesses the environment with North Korea and
20 sets the right priorities for our national security?

21 General LaCamera: Senator, I do. However, as you
22 know, there are other things that happen in other combatant
23 commands, and if confirmed, my responsibility will be to
24 make sure that as things happen and resources are modified,
25 that I will have to identify the risk and have that

1 conversation with my boss on where that risk is and who is
2 going to buy it.

3 Senator Inhofe: Our chairman brought up the idea about
4 the concern that I have had all the time, about the training
5 limitations, and you answered the question. But which way
6 is that trend line going? Are we going to be able to handle
7 those limitations that are quite obvious now?

8 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. We currently have,
9 but as time goes on, you know, I will, if confirmed,
10 continue to monitor to make sure that we stay within the
11 band of excellence of readiness, and then have candid
12 conversations with my ROK counterparts on making sure that
13 we can train.

14 My concern isn't just for U.S. forces. If we are
15 having challenges, one of the things, if confirmed, I will
16 be looking into is how does it impact others' ability to
17 train, and where does that put the mission at risk.

18 Senator Inhofe: Yeah, and that has been our concern.

19 I had one last question. South Korean President Moon
20 wants to accelerate the transfer of wartime operational
21 control to a bi-national command led by a South Korean
22 general with a U.S. deputy. The current arrangement is that
23 in the event of war, South Korean soldiers would be under
24 the bi-national command led by a U.S. general. In your
25 opinion, should transfer of wartime operational control to a

1 South Korean-led command be condition based or calendar
2 based, and why?

3 General LaCamera: Senator, the conditions-based OPCOM
4 transfer should remain. It is bilaterally agreed upon, and
5 I believe that it should remain as a conditions-based
6 approach. And we need to be prepared to respond. The
7 agreement, my assumption is that as they came to this
8 bilateral agreement they analyzed, identified the risks, and
9 this was the best way to reduce that risk, and I support it.

10 Senator Inhofe: Well, I think most of us support the
11 condition based, and this is something that has worked in
12 the past.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Inhofe. Now I would
15 like to recognize, via Webex, Senator Gillibrand -- excuse
16 me, via Webex, Senator Hirono.

17 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you,
18 General, for your service as Commander of U.S. Army Pacific.
19 You have been doing a good job there, and I suspect that
20 your confirmation will enable you to do a good job in your
21 new position.

22 As a part of my responsibility, with all the committees
23 that I sit on, I ask the following two initial questions,
24 which I will ask of you.

25 Since you became a legal adult, have you ever made

1 unwanted requests for sexual favors or committed any verbal
2 or physical harassment or assault of a sexual nature?

3 General LaCamera: No, Senator, I have not.

4 Senator Hirono: Have you ever faced discipline or
5 entered into a settlement related to this kind of conduct?

6 General LaCamera: No, Senator, I have not.

7 Senator Hirono: General, the 2019 Missile Defense
8 Review identified the Homeland Defense Radar Hawaii, HDRH,
9 as a requirement for deterring and discriminating against
10 inbound missile threats from an increasingly capable North
11 Korea. Congress appropriated \$133 million for fiscal year
12 2021 to keep its development on track.

13 General, do you consider HDRH as a part of the region's
14 layered missile defense system to protect Hawaii and the
15 Lower 48 from long-range missiles from Korea, especially in
16 light of North Korea recently warning of an impending, and I
17 quote, "crisis beyond control"?

18 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, I do. I believe that
19 it is part of a multi-echelon, many capabilities approach to
20 defending not only Hawaii but the Lower 48, and Alaska.

21 Senator Hirono: Thank you. In a recent report, a
22 group of experts opined that U.S.-ROK alliance continues to
23 serve as an essential tool for pursuing mutual interests in
24 Northeast Asia and beyond. This was echoed in a statement
25 made by Secretary of State Blinken in a speech at the U.S.

1 Embassy in the Republic of Korea, in which he said, "We must
2 weave together broader coalitions of allies and partners
3 because the more countries with complementary strengths and
4 capacities that can unit to achieve shared goals, the
5 better, and there is clear benefit to strong alliances in
6 the region, and it will be important to continue to build on
7 the existing relationships as well as develop new ones."

8 And I know that you stated that you wanted to make sure
9 that we create the space for diplomacy. I completely agree
10 with you.

11 I am interested in how you would incorporate
12 initiatives to bring together allies in the region to
13 achieve shared goals. Specifically, if confirmed, how would
14 you continue to develop relationships in the region to build
15 greater collaborations between U.S. forces and our allies?

16 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, thank you. As stated
17 in my opening statement, you know, I have been able to build
18 trust with our partners and allies in the region, as the
19 U.S. Army Pacific Commander, and I will continue to use that
20 trust built. And in wearing one of my hats as the U.N.
21 Commander, I believe there are opportunities there.

22 I have had engagements, both bilateral with the
23 Republic of Korea, and then just recently, I know General
24 Milley had a face-to-face meeting with both Japanese CHOD
25 and the Republic of Korea CHOD. And so using our partners

1 and allies in the region, I will look for those
2 opportunities and work with INDOPACOM going forward.

3 Senator Hirono: Especially, I think we need to do what
4 we can to improve the Japan-ROK relationship, because there
5 are historical reasons why this relationship between those
6 two countries, two important allies for us, is not what I
7 hope it could be. But, if confirmed, do you see a role that
8 you could play in strengthening the trilateral -- that would
9 be Japan, South Korea, and U.S. -- and the Japan-South Korea
10 relationship, and what would you do, specifically, to foster
11 that communication and relationship between South Korea and
12 Japan?

13 General LaCamera: Senator, I would build on the things
14 that we have already done. I have already had engagements
15 in my current position to talk multi-domain operations and
16 cross-domain operations with the Koreans and with the
17 Japanese, and I would seek other opportunities going
18 forward, whether in theater or back in the continental
19 United States, those multilateral training opportunities at
20 our great training ranges that we have in the U.S.

21 Senator Hirono: General, generally I would say that
22 the mil-to-mil relationship among the trilateral countries,
23 that is a -- maybe the word is not "easier," but that
24 relationship is stronger than the diplomatic one. So would
25 you be working closely with Secretary Blinken to have more

1 of a whole-of-government approach to fostering better
2 relations between the South Koreans and Japanese?

3 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. My experience as the
4 Chief Officer of Security Cooperation, as part of a country
5 team, I look forward to working the chargé and with my other
6 interagency colleagues to continue to move forward over.

7 Senator Hirono: Mr. Chairman, I think my time is up.
8 I am not sure. Is it?

9 Chairman Reed: Yes, ma'am.

10 Senator Hirono: Thank you very much.

11 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Hirono. Now I would
12 like to recognize, via Webex, Senator Fischer.

13 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General,
14 could you talk about the importance of our nuclear
15 deterrence commitments to the U.S.-ROK alliance and the
16 value of bomber overflight missions in terms of deterring
17 adversaries, and also reassuring our allies?

18 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. The bomber overflight
19 missions are part of the nuclear triad, and I think it is
20 one way that, using all three and not just the nuclear but
21 the conventional deterrents, that is extremely important to
22 demonstrate our commitment to the alliance on the Peninsula.

23 Senator Fischer: And what do our allies think of that?
24 Have you had conversations with them?

25 General LaCamera: I have not. Senator, I have not

1 specifically, in my current position, had any conversations
2 discussing nuclear deterrence with our partners and allies.

3 Senator Fischer: Thank you. In recent years we have
4 seen significant additional investment, and that has been
5 made to improve our missile defenses on the Peninsula and
6 address shortfalls in munitions and ISR. What is your
7 assessment of the progress that has been made, and are there
8 other capability gaps that concern you at this point?

9 General LaCamera: Senator, I know that General Abrams
10 focuses a lot on force protection. I think early warning
11 systems are extremely important. C4ISR is extremely
12 important on the early warning and then the focusing on the
13 training and readiness. If confirmed, I look forward to
14 getting over there. I have a good understanding of the Army
15 position. What I lack is the true visibility on the
16 remaining part of the Joint Force.

17 Senator Fischer: From what you know at this point, do
18 you think that there is sufficient ISR on the Peninsula?

19 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, I do.

20 Senator Fischer: I would like to get some of your
21 impressions on the 1251 Report. The report's primary
22 purpose is to enhance capabilities necessary to deter China,
23 and I assume many of its investments would also enhance
24 deterrence on the Korean Peninsula. Would you discuss the
25 interrelationships there and what elements you see as having

1 particular application to improving deterrence towards North
2 Korea?

3 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. I think
4 oversimplification of China's role on the Peninsula and in
5 the region may get us in trouble. I think they play a role
6 in both the North and the South. China uses all the
7 elements of national power -- diplomatic, information,
8 military, economic. They have used it successfully in
9 putting pressure on our ROK allies. And I think, based on
10 my previous comment of working with my interagency
11 colleagues, it is extremely important for me to understand
12 the levers that they are pulling, because I don't think it
13 is necessarily going to be a military that will have impact
14 on the security situation.

15 Senator Fischer: And my last question would be that I
16 know that U.S. Forces Korea has established some unique
17 partnerships with industry and academia and innovation hubs
18 within the DoD enterprise, such as DIUx and DARPA. What are
19 your view on the tools that are available to commanders to
20 develop and field these innovative solutions to emergent
21 problems within the AOR, and do you see these partnerships
22 continuing to play a significant role?

23 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. I think we also need
24 to use all elements in national power, and I will operate
25 within the ethics rules to ensure that we maintain those

1 conversations, we are thinking about things differently, and
2 we are looking at multiple ways to confront the threats on
3 the Peninsula.

4 Senator Fischer: Thank you, General. Thank you, Mr.
5 Chairman.

6 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Fischer. Now let me
7 recognize, via Webex, Senator Gillibrand.

8 Senator Gillibrand: I was really glad to see your
9 dedication to diplomacy on the Korean Peninsula, and we all
10 agree it is the route we should be pursuing for a safer
11 Korean Peninsula and Pacific region.

12 Of course, as often the case with diplomacy, the devil
13 is in the details. Do you have a position on whether we
14 should be pursuing a large-scale, comprehensive deal with
15 North Korea, or if we should seek incremental agreements
16 that lead us towards denuclearization?

17 General LaCamera: Senator, I believe that that is
18 really between the Secretary of State, and if asked, I will
19 provide my best military advice to the Secretary of Defense
20 and the INDOPACOM Commander as we go forward.

21 Senator Gillibrand: But you don't have any advice or
22 guidance right now.

23 General LaCamera: Not at this time. No, Senator.

24 Senator Gillibrand: So it is been a few years since
25 the Sony hack and North Korea's ransom of Sony's

1 intellectual property. Your testimony indicates North Korea
2 should still be considered a significant cyber threat. In
3 the last few months, we have seen attacks that have made
4 Sony's hack pale in comparison. Your written testimony
5 indicates that North Korea continues to be a significant
6 cyber threat. Do you believe you will have adequate cyber
7 resources to counter these threats, and if not, do I have
8 your commitment to let Congress know what resources are
9 lacking and how we can fix it?

10 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. In part of my
11 preparation for testimony I believe we have what we need,
12 but if confirmed, I look forward to getting on the ground
13 and identifying what those issues are, and yes, I will
14 provide this committee the information.

15 Senator Gillibrand: Unfortunately, President Trump's
16 negotiations were unsuccessful after some encouraging signs
17 in 2018. One of the chips he gave up was our training
18 exercises with ROK troops. Since 2018, our large-scale
19 theater exercises have been held virtually. Due to the
20 pandemic, those exercises were virtual again this year.
21 However, President Biden has indicated that next year's
22 exercise may be in person. Do you have any position on the
23 importance of these exercises generally, and whether or not
24 they should be virtual or in person? The ROK conscription
25 forces are usually for a term of less than 2 years. Does

1 this set up a dynamic where missing even one year's worth of
2 exercises set back our readiness, and if not, should we view
3 this as a potential option for cost saving?

4 General LaCamera: Senator, you know, I know General
5 Abrams and team, and as part of U.S. Army Pacific, we did
6 participate in CCPT. One, if confirmed, I will get the
7 opportunity potentially to exercise that, and that will give
8 me a good understanding of just where they are in the
9 process.

10 To your comment on the conscription and the turnover at
11 the lower level, if confirmed, I look forward to getting on
12 the ground and just seeing what their troop capabilities
13 are. We have turnover in our formation. Focusing on the
14 basic threat at our tactical levels is extremely important.
15 So I think it is really a multiple-layered question when you
16 talk tactical level and operational level, which will be the
17 focus at the general officer staff level. But I look
18 forward to seeing where they sit when it comes to the
19 tactical level.

20 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
21 Chairman.

22 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator
23 Gillibrand. Now let me recognize, via Webex, Senator
24 Rounds.

25 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General,

1 first of all, thank you for your many years of service to
2 our country and for agreeing to continue that service as
3 Commander of USFK.

4 General, as we discussed during our call last week, an
5 issue that concerns me is the recent talk about a potential
6 reversal of U.S. land mine policy. I am curious about how
7 you see this issue, and would appreciate you discussing the
8 precautions our field commanders take, our usage of self-
9 destruct and self-deactivate technology, and how a change in
10 policy would impact our deterrence efforts and our ability
11 to win on the battlefield in Korea.

12 General LaCamera: Thank you, Senator, for the
13 conversation the other day. The land mines, I mean, I don't
14 know the exact number but I know that the Demilitarized Zone
15 is protected by land mines. And as we discussed in our
16 phone conversation, land mines without observation and
17 coordinated with some kind of overwatch, you know, does
18 create hazards. It will allow the enemy to penetrate if
19 they could breach through, but also, as discussed, it
20 provides an opportunity -- it puts the local civilian
21 population at risk.

22 It is a very integrated defense right now. If
23 confirmed, a change in policy would create risks that I
24 would have to come back and identify how we would mitigate
25 it in other ways.

1 Senator Rounds: Thank you, sir. I would also like you
2 to talk a bit about logistics, the distance involved and
3 rearming and maintaining, and the possibility that if the
4 worst happens in Korea you may be in competition for
5 resources with another theater of operations. Can you talk
6 a little bit about the seriousness of this and what the
7 different possibilities are that we may very well face with
8 regard to the logistical challenges?

9 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. In my current
10 position as the Commander of the U.S. Army Pacific, one of
11 my responsibilities is to set the theater. We spent a lot
12 of time and effort talking about sustainment, but I would
13 argue that it is not just set the theater when it comes to
14 sustainment, and medical as a subset of that, but the other
15 warfighting functions of intelligence, fires, et cetera,
16 going forward.

17 So I have a very good working knowledge of what that
18 is. My eighth theater of support commander has made great
19 inroads in that piece. I do recognize there will be
20 competition with others, but I also recognize that there is
21 capability not just on the Peninsula but in Asia, and we
22 have to look at other ways of how we would get our
23 resupplies, our logistics.

24 Senator Rounds: Thank you. And, Mr. Chairman, I am
25 pretty close to my time. I will yield back at this time.

1 Thank you.

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

3 Now let me recognize Senator Kaine, please.

4 Senator Kaine: Mr. Chair, Ranking Member Inhofe, and
5 General, I look forward to working with you. I have been on
6 the committee for 9 years, and discussions about Korea kind
7 of have a Groundhog Day sensibility about them. We see the
8 cycles of provocation by North Korea, we get engaged,
9 provocations kind of abate, and then it seems like if we
10 turn our attention elsewhere, almost as if to get our
11 attention provocations ratchet back up.

12 And I have been thinking about President Moon's visit
13 to President Biden, and just thinking about would there be a
14 way to kind of break out of the cul-de-sac that we are in.
15 So let me throw an unusual idea on the table, that might
16 have been considered, but then I want to ask your military
17 opinion about the military dimensions of it.

18 The armistice to end the Korean War was entered into in
19 July of 1953, between China, the U.S., and North Korea.
20 South Korea did not sign the armistice. It was a cessation
21 of hostilities, and the idea was that there would then be
22 the negotiation of a peace treaty. That has never happened.
23 So we are nearly 70 years past the armistice in a cease-fire
24 but without a peace treaty.

25 North Korea uses that, that there has never been a

1 peace deal, and South Korea didn't sign the armistice, and
2 there are troops amassed on our border. They use that to
3 sort of create a mythology in North Korea about the need to
4 be overly militarized, because the war could start again any
5 minute. There is not a peace deal. South Korea didn't even
6 sign the armistice.

7 What if the U.S. and South Korea were to just declare
8 we are not at war with North Korea, we have no desire to be
9 involved in hostilities with North Korea, we have no desire
10 to get any of North Korea's territory. Our only desire is
11 to live in peace with North Korea. The U.S. presence in
12 South Korea is as a valued security partner, to help South
13 Korea deal with whatever security challenges it faces.

14 From a military standpoint, a declaration of that kind
15 would not limit the U.S.'s ability to carry out the mission
16 that it is currently carrying out in South Korea, would it?

17 General LaCamera: As a U.S. Forces Command, I don't
18 believe it would, Senator.

19 Senator Kaine: And as far as you know, from a military
20 standpoint, the U.S. has no desire to be engaged in
21 hostilities with North Korea, does it?

22 General LaCamera: No, Senator.

23 Senator Kaine: And from a military standpoint we have
24 no desire to annex or take North Korean property or land, do
25 we?

1 General LaCamera: My understanding, Senator, is that
2 that is not our policy at this time.

3 Senator Kaine: And I think these things, what you have
4 stated, are elements of U.S. policy for a very long time.
5 We don't want to be in hostilities. We don't have evil
6 designs to, you know, help anyone, ourselves or anyone else,
7 take over North Korean territory. The notion that we are 70
8 years into a cease-fire without a peace deal, the peace
9 negotiation with North Korea is very complicated, as we
10 know. But why can't we just, with South Korea, declare we
11 are no longer at war with North Korea, we have no hostile
12 intent. We only want to live peacefully with all of our
13 neighbors. It would seem if we would do that we might
14 reverse some of the polarities that North Korea uses to gin
15 up this notion that war could start again any second. They
16 would still not like U.S. presence in South Korea. We would
17 still want to get them to denuclearize. But we would be
18 negotiating not as adversaries, you know, at the brink of
19 war, but we would be negotiating as sovereign nations trying
20 to solve problems.

21 And I guess I am just wondering whether there is
22 something that can be done, that the U.S. and South Korea
23 could do together, without playing Mother May I with North
24 Korea. Is there something we could do together that would
25 take away the North Korean narrative of a cease-fire but no

1 peace deal and a war that could begin any minute? And I
2 recognize, from your answer to Senator Gillibrand, that some
3 of these are in the diplomacy space, not in the military
4 space, but I think your testimony on the military dimensions
5 of it are accurate. We don't have any desire to be in
6 aggression with North Korea. We don't have a desire on
7 their territory. We would obviously want there to be peace
8 on the Peninsula.

9 I hope that maybe that President Biden and President
10 Moon might contemplate whether a change in diplomatic
11 approach, such as that, could break a logjam that has been
12 persistent for nearly seven decades. And I thank you for
13 your service, your testimony today, and I yield back, Mr.
14 Chair.

15 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Kaine. Let me
16 recognize Senator Cotton via Webex, please.

17 Senator Cotton: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General,
18 thank you for your service. Congratulations on your
19 nomination to this important post.

20 Earlier this year you said, on a panel, and I quote,
21 "Our daily focus is on competition. We have got to be ready
22 to respond in crisis and we have got to be prepared to win
23 in conflict." I want to thank you for those comments. It
24 is increasingly rare that we hear senior military leaders
25 talk simply about winning in combat, so I want to commend

1 you for those comments and keeping your focus on the
2 military's primary mission, which is fighting and winning
3 our nation's wars.

4 And I want to start with a question about our number
5 one threat and competitor, China. Can you please explain
6 again to the committee how you believe the Chinese role, or
7 how the Chinese view the role that North Korea plays in
8 U.S.-China relations?

9 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, and thanks for the
10 time last week. I think North Korea is another arrow in the
11 quiver or another lever in their diplomatic, information,
12 military, economic levers that they would pull. What I
13 don't have, and maybe in a different setting can talk about,
14 is, you know, what are the things that they are doing to
15 maintain pressure or to get KJU to do things for them.

16 Senator Cotton: What do you think is a greater
17 irritant to the Chinese Communist Party -- the presence of
18 nuclear weapons in North Korea or the presence of American
19 troops in South Korea?

20 General LaCamera: Senator, I really can't answer for
21 the Chinese on what they think is a greater irritant. I
22 think both of them give the Chinese Communist Party reason
23 to pause, and I do know that the Chinese do not want them to
24 have nuclear weapons. I also know that they don't want us
25 in their region.

1 Senator Cotton: I want to turn now to the operational
2 plans on the Peninsula. What is your view of the role that
3 joint long-range precision fires play to support the OPLAN
4 on the Korean Peninsula, and how important is it that our
5 military continue to modernize and equip these forces with
6 next-generation combat arms?

7 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. The long-range
8 precision fires gives us, not just at the tactical level but
9 at the operational level, it gives us the ability to do
10 operational maneuver. And again, it gives us another all-
11 weather arrow in the quiver that we have to be able to
12 facilitate maneuver at various levels.

13 Senator Cotton: Thank you. And then finally, what is
14 your assessment of the status of the efforts to transfer
15 operational control to the Republic of Korea command
16 combined forces?

17 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. I know that General
18 Abrams is working with the ROK military on a day-to-day
19 basis to assist them in acquiring the capabilities and to
20 meet the bilateral agreement. If confirmed, I recognize
21 that one of the missions or one of the jobs I will have will
22 be to continue to assist them in moving forward, so that we
23 can achieve this.

24 Senator Cotton: Do you think we need to see large-
25 scale joint training exercises return to the Peninsula, to

1 be best prepared for the transition?

2 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. Training and
3 readiness is extremely important, and live training is a lot
4 better than the virtual and the constructive. But I
5 recognize that in negotiations, or that it is a potential
6 bargaining chip going forward, and my job will be to
7 identify that risk and then figure out a way to reduce it.

8 Senator Cotton: Good. Thank you, General.

9 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Cotton. Now let me
10 recognize Senator King.

11 Senator King: Thank you very much, General. Thanks
12 for being with us today. I want to just emphasis a point
13 that Senator Hirono made, and I know you are not in the
14 diplomatic business but in many ways you are. Helping to
15 foster the relationship between Japan and South Korea I
16 think is an important part of anybody's job that has a
17 responsibility in Korea. That relationship seems to be one
18 step forward and two steps back in recent years, and I hope
19 that that is something that you will work with your State
20 Department counterparts and your military counterparts in
21 both countries, because I think that is a very important
22 part of our strategic position and deterrent in the region.
23 Do you agree?

24 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, I do.

25 Senator King: I hope that that is something that you

1 can continue.

2 The other point that I think is important is that we
3 always talk about North Korea in terms of nuclear weapons.
4 That is the popular discussion here in the U.S., and by
5 "popular" I don't mean approved of. I mean common in the
6 press.

7 I was surprised, and to some extent shocked, driving
8 from Seoul to the DMZ how close it is, and one of the
9 concerns is that it would not take nuclear weapons, or even
10 missiles to inflict enormous damage on Seoul from the North
11 Korean border. And I understand there are artillery
12 batteries that are poised to do just that.

13 Talk to me about the conventional threat, particular to
14 the city of Seoul, that I think we should realize that this
15 isn't only a nuclear issue but there are some 25 or 30
16 million people at risk from conventional attack that could
17 be triggered at a moment's notice.

18 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, and I am very well
19 aware of that threat. As a major, I was stationed along the
20 Demilitarized Zone, within mortar range and artillery range,
21 and it was something that, I wouldn't say it kept me up at
22 night but it was a concern. And as you stated, the
23 conventional threat and their ability to put many rounds in
24 the air and create panic, just in the conventional side, is
25 concerning. And as you stated, it appears that Seoul is

1 growing to the north, even closer.

2 Senator King: Thank you. One of the things that
3 concerns me, particularly in a place like South Korea or the
4 South China Sea or Taiwan or Ukraine is the risk of
5 accidental war, of conflict which escalates out of control
6 in a hurry. One way to try to ameliorate that risk is
7 connections and communication links between potential
8 adversaries.

9 Do we have mil-to-mil contacts with the North Koreans
10 in order to be able to discuss something which may be an
11 accident, an unintended, low-level conflict, so that it
12 doesn't spin out of control?

13 General LaCamera: Senator, I am not aware of the exact
14 reduction. I do know that the Joint Security Area up at
15 Panmunjom is one way of communicating. But I am not fully
16 aware of all the capabilities and the communication links.

17 Senator King: I would hope that that would be
18 something you could look into, and, of course, talk to the
19 State Department, because if you look back through history,
20 wars often start by accident. The Guns of August. Nobody
21 thought that a single gunshot in Sarajevo was going to
22 plunge the world into the conflict that it did in World War
23 I. So one way, as I say, to ameliorate or mitigate that is
24 having pre-existing contacts, particularly on the mil-to-mil
25 level, where you can say, "Hey, that was not an intentional

1 incursion," or "That incident was a rogue individual." I
2 hope that that is something you might consider, because you
3 are going to one of the world's tinderboxes.

4 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, I will.

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

6 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator King. Now let me
7 recognize, via Webex, Senator Tillis.

8 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General,
9 thank you for being here. I have been in the Senate for 6
10 1/2 years now, and virtually every Senate Armed Services
11 hearing we have had China come up, and about 6 1/2 years ago
12 we were worried about their quantity countering our quality.
13 And now we see that they are still moving on quantity but
14 they are improving on quality.

15 So with that erosion, or the narrowing of the advantage
16 that the United States has, what are the things that you are
17 most concerned with, particularly as it relates to maybe a
18 reduction in defense spending, in this and possibly another
19 budget cycle?

20 General LaCamera: Senator, I think we have to think
21 about things differently. You know, to your quality and
22 quantity comment, we want to go after the arrow -- how about
23 we kill the archer, and how do we do that? There is, I
24 think, the multi-domain task force that we are currently
25 experimenting with. I think multi-domain operations gets at

1 that, and it is about, as we look at the joint warfighting
2 concept and other things, it is what are the things that we
3 need to do to create multiple dilemmas for our adversaries.

4 Senator Tillis: Something else I wanted to touch on.
5 I assume you have read, maybe even contributed to, the 1251
6 Report, that Admiral Davidson submitted. In his testimony
7 just a few weeks back, he cited a couple of budget
8 priorities -- the Guam defense system, AEGIS, a shore site,
9 the mission partner environment, which is a classified IT
10 system to communicate securely with partners and allies, and
11 upgrades to connect and improve our training ranges. Do you
12 share his concerns that these are priorities that, at least
13 at the time of that hearing, do not look like they are going
14 to receive the funding needed?

15 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, I do.

16 Senator Tillis: What are the consequences of letting
17 that slide to the right by 2, 4, or 6 years?

18 General LaCamera: Senator, it creates vulnerabilities
19 and risk, not just to our military formation, but to U.S.
20 citizens and our interests, and we have to identify other
21 ways to reduce that risk.

22 Senator Tillis: Another question that really comes
23 back from my Personnel Subcommittee hearing we had about a
24 week ago. The vaccination rate among really all levels in
25 the military seems to be relatively low, with the supply

1 there and limited takers. Do you view that as a potential
2 readiness threat, and what do you think that we need to do
3 to get more people to actually be best prepared to go to a
4 fight, if we have to have one?

5 General LaCamera: Well, Senator, given the status of
6 the vaccine it is a choice that our soldiers have to make.
7 I think it is incumbent upon commanders and leaders at all
8 levels to talk to our soldiers about this is just another
9 personal protective measure that they can take going
10 forward. We have dealt with non-battle injuries since, I
11 think, the first battle we ever fought, and I think COVID is
12 just another one of those things that we have to identify
13 and continue to look at ways to protect our formations.

14 Senator Tillis: I think with the numbers relatively
15 low, to me it is like so much other training to have them
16 best prepared. I view it as a threat now. Hopefully it is
17 going to get a little bit better. But I think it is
18 important that every level, from the top down, communicate
19 the importance of taking this threat off the table.

20 The last thing is just, what do we need to continue to
21 do to mold on and improve relationships between South Korea
22 and Japan? What sort of things do we need to do
23 differently? Are we moving okay, current course and speed,
24 or what more do we need to do to redouble our efforts and
25 make sure that that relationship between those two allies is

1 as strong as it can be, in a very important part of the
2 world?

3 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. We need to continue
4 to look for multilateral or trilateral training operations
5 to bring them together. I had the meetings in morning with
6 the ROK chairman and then the Japanese chairman, but before
7 I met with the Japanese chairman in the afternoon he had met
8 bilaterally with the ROK's, and I think we need to look at
9 ways to continue to bring them together, militarily.

10 Senator Tillis: General, thank you for your service.
11 I look forward to supporting your confirmation. Thank you,
12 Mr. Chair.

13 General LaCamera: Thank you, Senator.

14 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Tillis. Let me
15 recognize, via Webex, Senator Rosen.

16 Senator Rosen: Well, thank you, Chairman Reed, Ranking
17 Member Inhofe, for holding this hearing, and I would really
18 like to thank General LaCamera for his lifetime of service
19 and for testifying here today.

20 So, General, of course, a tremendous amount of your
21 focus in this role will be in combatting potential North
22 Korean aggression. China casts a large shadow on the Korean
23 Peninsula, as it does throughout the Indo-Pacific and
24 increasingly around the globe. So what issues do China's
25 Belt and Road Initiative, expanding Beijing's sphere of

1 influence throughout the region and beyond, create and
2 retaining and gaining allies in the Indo-Pacific that are
3 critical to the U.S. Forces Korea mission and the broader
4 needs of our military in East and South Asia?

5 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. I think we need to
6 understand the leverage that they have on the Korean
7 Peninsula and, quite frankly, not just our ROK allies but
8 our other partners and allies in the region, where they can
9 put pressure on partners and allies as we continue to try to
10 train west of the International Date Line.

11 Senator Rosen: Well, you talk about our partners, and,
12 of course, with the event of a Chinese expansion towards the
13 Korean Peninsula, in the same vein as they are moving in the
14 South China Sea with Taiwan, how would you, if confirmed,
15 respond or advise the South Korean defense apparatus to
16 respond to any possible expansions?

17 General LaCamera: Senator, if confirmed, the best
18 military advice I would give them is to make sure that they
19 understand the risks that it provides to the security of
20 their own country, as the Chinese attempt to provide
21 influence and/or reduce the influence that the United States
22 has. I think it is my job to demonstrate that our way of
23 life and our alliance, it remains iron-clad and that we
24 remain the cornerstone, and the example, quite frankly, for
25 other alliances.

1 Senator Rosen: Well, I appreciate that. And so could
2 you speak broadly about any possible plans you might have
3 then on limiting Chinese defense and economic encroachment
4 on the Korean Peninsula?

5 General LaCamera: Senator, when it comes to on the
6 economic side I will consult with my State Department
7 colleagues on what those diplomatic and, quite frankly, the
8 economic arms are that they can use.

9 On the military side, you know, we have an alliance.
10 The three commands that I have been nominated for has one
11 mission, which is to defend the Republic of Korea, and my
12 focus will be to work with the ROK military to ensure that
13 we can defend them against any adversary.

14 Senator Rosen: Thank you. I want to talk about an
15 adversary that may be hard to detect but has tremendous
16 impact and often devastating impact, and those are our
17 threats of cyber threats -- cyber ransomware, cyberattacks,
18 blocking service, all of the kinds of things that we can
19 imagine. And we have seen, with SolarWinds and the recent
20 Colonial Pipeline attacks, they have awakened all of us to
21 just how vulnerable our systems are, and really the cyber
22 aggression that we are beginning to see, or continuing to
23 see from abroad.

24 That is one of the reasons I am working with Senator
25 Blackburn to invest more in our cyber resources, including

1 potentially creating new civilian cyber reserve for DoD and
2 DHS via bipartisan legislation we introduced last month.

3 And so can you talk a little bit about your cyber
4 posture and what you might do to really prevent and really
5 do that threat-hunting we need to stop any provocative
6 attacks on our systems.

7 General LaCamera: Senator, I will continue to work
8 with CYBERCOM, if confirmed in the position that I am going
9 to, on truly understanding what that threat is. And I think
10 the recent activities that have occurred should give all of
11 us pause on what those levers are and the damage that it can
12 do really in the non-kinetic space. And it is not just the
13 disruption. I think it is also the concern is ensuring that
14 we information assurance on the information being passed is,
15 in fact, accurate and true, and has not been modified.

16 Senator Rosen: Thank you. I couldn't agree more.

17 Mr. Chairman, my time is up. Thank you.

18 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Rosen.
19 Now let me recognize Senator Ernst, please.

20 Senator Ernst: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and
21 General LaCamera, it is great to see you again, and thank
22 you for your service to our nation, and that of Theresa's
23 and your families as well. Thank you for being here.

24 It is not lost on me, certainly, if those that are
25 watching, if they could see the right sleeve of your

1 uniform, the years of service that that represents, with you
2 serving away from your family in difficult circumstances.

3 And all of us want to make sure that we are recognizing that
4 sacrifice and the sacrifice of your family, so thank you.

5 Through your experience and record of success, many
6 years of success, you are superbly qualified and the right
7 selection to lead the United States Forces Korea into the
8 future. And I have just a few questions, and I am going to
9 go back and reflect on what Senator Hirono was leading into
10 as well.

11 In the strategic competition of our current security
12 environment, the Korean Peninsula is part of a larger
13 regional contest that encompasses all elements of national
14 power. And in your advanced policy questions you discussed
15 the various relationships that exist in the region, and
16 specifically the relationship between South Korea and Japan.
17 This is what Senator Hirono was discussing early.

18 What recommendations would you provide on how to move
19 forward with these relationships? If you could explain that
20 a little bit more in detail.

21 Chairman Reed: Yes, Senator. Thank you for
22 recognizing my family.

23 The military relationship is extremely important. If
24 confirmed, or in my current position now as U.S. Army
25 Pacific Commander, you know, I talk to U.S. Forces Command

1 Korea and U.S. Army Japan, to make sure that we have the
2 capabilities to support General Abrams. And I think we need
3 to look at other opportunities. We have the Security Force
4 Assistance Brigade that we can send to the different
5 locations to share tactics, techniques, and procedures. We
6 have the National Training Centers that we can bring them
7 too. We are developing an Arctic strategy. I think both of
8 them have cold weather environments and high altitude that I
9 think we could leverage back inside the U.S. Army Pacific or
10 even back in the Continental United States.

11 Senator Ernst: And I think that is important. We look
12 to reassure our allies and deter those competitors. So
13 employing our military and demonstrating through these
14 actions again is a reassurance.

15 Do you believe that through those actions involving our
16 allies, other nations, is there a way that we can project to
17 them that we are the partner of choice in the region, and
18 who would the other partner of choice be, and why is it
19 important they continue to come to us?

20 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. I think when you look
21 at it, our adversaries, whether it is China, Russia, North
22 Korea, Iran, or the violent extremist organizations, you
23 know, they are looking to change the international rules-
24 based order that, quite frankly, we have established and
25 helped enforce with both the Japanese and the Republic of

1 Korea and other allies and partners in the region. And I
2 think what we need to continue to demonstrate is that the
3 way we do business is the right thing, and we need to
4 continue to highlight how our adversaries are not operating
5 in those countries' best interests.

6 Senator Ernst: And certainly with China as being one
7 of those large regional competitors, oftentimes we find that
8 they are offering a bunch of goods, but then when the allies
9 get the bill of sale there are a lot of strings attached to
10 what they are selling.

11 So I really appreciate it. I know that my time is
12 running out. You did mention the SFAB, the Security Forces
13 Assistance Brigade. Can you talk a little bit more about,
14 just very briefly, their role in the region and how they
15 have been able to close some of the gaps that we have had.

16 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. In this region, their
17 interoperability has really been, not so much training
18 because the countries we work with, they are the experts in
19 this region in the environment. And so we are really
20 learning from them. But it is the interoperability and it
21 is the communication piece that allows us to be effective in
22 a fight.

23 Senator Ernst: Thank you. And my time has expired.
24 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you again, General. I
25 appreciate it.

1 General LaCamera: Thank you.

2 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Ernst. Senator
3 Kelly.

4 Senator Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General, it
5 has now been over 2 years since the U.S. and the ROK forces
6 have engaged in a large-scale joint-field exercise. I
7 participated in the joint exercise that was formerly called
8 Team Spirit, it has been 30 years or so, when I was serving
9 in the Navy in the Western Pacific, and I view these
10 exercises where our forces have the opportunity to work
11 side-by-side and evaluate our combined skills as a key
12 measure of our readiness for any conflict. What we learn
13 from these exercises should inform the structure of our
14 continued security partnership with South Korea.

15 In your view, do current large-scale exercises support
16 shared security goals, including the improved
17 interoperability of U.S. and South Korean forces? And, if
18 confirmed, would you advocate for the resumption of these
19 joint exercise?

20 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. They are extremely
21 important to build readiness. They are also extremely
22 important to allow that our soldiers, sailor, airmen,
23 Marines, Guardians, Coast Guardsmen, get an opportunity to
24 work with our ROK allies and see just how good they are. So
25 at the very low level, the tactical level, it is an

1 opportunity for them to build that trust between each other,
2 and then at the senior level, with turnover and everything
3 else, it is an opportunity for us to exercise and to learn
4 and to continue to build on lessons learned.

5 Senator Kelly: Do you see any other opportunities to
6 further strengthen our relationship, interoperability
7 relationship, in order to keep pace with any emerging
8 threats?

9 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. I mean, in my current
10 position we are going to bring ROK forces to the National
11 Training Center, and so at a much lower level we can build
12 that interoperability and see it at a small scale, and then,
13 you know, what does it look like at the larger scale. But I
14 think we need to continue to look for those opportunities,
15 whether it is a tabletop exercise or a simulation. But it
16 is that, again, building trust between servicemembers is
17 extremely important.

18 Senator Kelly: Yeah, it was invaluable at the time. I
19 remember doing a simulated CAST mission on the Korean
20 Peninsula with a U.S. Ground FAC and ROK forces as well.
21 And you don't want to be doing that for the first time when
22 it is real. You know, that has always been clear to me.

23 On another subject, general, when we spoke last week
24 you mentioned the asymmetric threat posed by the North
25 Korean Special Operations Forces, which adds a complexity to

1 an already unpredictable actor, North Korea. And the North
2 Korean Special Ops Forces, they have got a pretty large
3 force. And as someone who has commanded Special Ops Forces
4 yourself, can you speak to the unique threat that North
5 Korea's sizeable Special Operations Forces poses in the
6 unfortunate scenario that we enter into a conflict on the
7 Peninsula?

8 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. First of all, I
9 believe that all warfare is asymmetric. I am not looking
10 for a fair fight, and I am fairly certain my adversaries are
11 not. I think my experience in Special Operations gives me a
12 unique insight into what those threats are and how we could
13 defend against them, and more importantly, how could we take
14 offensive action against them to deter or to prevent them
15 from being able to do any harm.

16 Senator Kelly: Any sense for how capable, how well
17 trained they are?

18 General LaCamera: At this time I do not. I do think
19 that they view their people a little bit different as far as
20 -- think of it as a fire-and-forget weapons system. You
21 know, whereas we plan for withdrawal off a target on a raid,
22 I am fairly certain that they are not prepared to bring them
23 back.

24 Senator Kelly: Well, thank you, General. I look
25 forward to having the opportunity to vote on your

1 confirmation.

2 General LaCamera: Thank you.

3 Senator Kelly: I yield back.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Kelly. Senator
5 Tuberville.

6 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank
7 you, General, for your service, and your family, of what
8 they go through. Being a football coach 40 years and never
9 at home, it is hard to miss practices and all those things
10 that go on. But I can't imagine with the travel that you
11 have had over your lifetime, so again, thanks for your
12 service, and congratulations on your reappointment.

13 North Korea tested their first nuclear weapon in 2006,
14 first intercontinental ballistic missile in 2018, and
15 currently have long-range ballistic missiles in development.
16 Although steps were taken during the previous administration
17 to improve our relationship with North Korea, do you believe
18 that we have the defense mechanisms in missiles and assets
19 to defend the Korean Peninsula and Indo-Pacific, as we
20 speak?

21 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, I do.

22 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. What specific systems,
23 other systems, would you like to see, that you need,
24 everyday defense of the Korean Peninsula. What would you
25 think that you need? Wish list.

1 General LaCamera: A wish list. Senator, given what I
2 know that is on the Peninsula right now, it is to maintain
3 the early warning system, make sure that we have the C4I,
4 the ISR, the intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance
5 needed to be able to do it, not just the technical piece but
6 I think the human, and I think, if confirmed, when I get
7 over there I will take a hard look at what is needed, to
8 make sure that we can protect and defend the Peninsula.

9 Senator Tuberville: Let me ask you this question. Do
10 you believe that reimplementation of strategic patience,
11 adoption of a U.S. no-first-use policy and the sanctions
12 would deter North Korea in future aggression? Do you think
13 that would be a deterrent?

14 General LaCamera: Senator, it is hard for me to
15 comment on what would be a deterrent. I do believe he is a
16 rational actor. I do think that we need to make sure that
17 we are looking at all levers of the diplomatic, information,
18 military, and economic power that we have to continue to
19 deter him.

20 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
21 Chairman.

22 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Tuberville. Senator
23 Duckworth -- is she -- yes, Senator Duckworth.

24 Senator Duckworth: Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.
25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General LaCamera, I would like to

1 congratulate you on your nomination and thank you for your
2 35-plus years of service to our country, and I look forward
3 to meeting with you later this week to discuss some of the
4 biggest challenges facing U.S. forces in the ROK.

5 While we are closely watching the COVID-19 case rate in
6 Asia in order to protect our friends in the region, I am
7 currently planning to lead a bipartisan CODEL to the ROK and
8 Singapore with my colleague and fellow member of this
9 committee, Senator Sullivan. Our top objective for this
10 trip is to send a message that our commitment to Asia is
11 strong and bipartisan and that our presence in the region
12 will not waiver with changes in administration or control of
13 the Congress. We are prioritizing this trip and the chance
14 to engage extensively with the top leadership in South
15 Korea, specifically because this alliance is so important to
16 the continuation of a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

17 Of course, our forces in Korea play a pivotal role in
18 deterring North Korean aggression. But I do believe that a
19 sustained U.S. presence in Korea also sends a strong message
20 about our commitment to the broad Indo-Pacific for all of
21 our regional allies and partners. Furthermore, any improved
22 skills and coordination that develop during our bilateral
23 training with South Korea's military multiply when South
24 Korea participates in multilateral exercises with other
25 regional partners.

1 General LaCamera, of course U.S. Forces Korea must
2 never lose focus on the Korean Peninsula, but you noted in
3 your advanced policy questions that given the global role of
4 the U.S. military, and increasingly the international reach
5 of the South Korean military, opportunities are emerging for
6 alliance cooperation beyond the Korean Peninsula. Can you
7 please elaborate on these comments? What opportunities do
8 you see, and if confirmed, how would you encourage INDOPACOM
9 and our Korean allies to capitalize on these opportunities?

10 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, and I look forward to
11 our conversation. In my current role as U.S. Army Pacific
12 Commander, this is our year for Defender Pacific 2021. And
13 as we reach out to our partners and allies we look for
14 opportunities, multilateral. Those obviously need to be
15 engaged and negotiated with the host nations. But we are
16 all looking to our partners and allies and looking for the
17 training opportunity, whether a tabletop exercise, a
18 simulation, or live exercises. And we have got several of
19 those this summer.

20 Senator Duckworth: Thank you. I am particularly
21 concerned that our logistics and sustainment operations will
22 be highly vulnerable, in particular in a contested
23 environment. As you discussed in your advanced policy
24 questions, posturing a combat-credible force is key to
25 deterrence on the Peninsula, and a force is not combat-

1 credible if we can't realistically sustain it in a contested
2 logistic environment.

3 Ensuring that U.S. military services are fielding
4 sufficient logistics capability and capacity to meet
5 INDOPACOM and U.S. Forces Korea requirements is key.
6 However, I do believe that we need to consider additional
7 measures to reduce the burden on vulnerable supply lines,
8 such as prepositioning stock and leveraging our alliances
9 and friendships across the region to access critical
10 supplies.

11 General LaCamera, based on your past experience, what
12 is your assessment of our ability to sustain a combat-
13 credible force on the Korean Peninsula?

14 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. I share your
15 concerns, and in my current role as the U.S. Army Pacific
16 Commander responsible for setting the theater and working
17 with not just General Abrams but Commander INDOPACOM and the
18 other services, the Army is responsible for better than 50
19 percent of the common items.

20 And so we are looking for unique opportunities on not
21 just the preposition but what are the other things? We have
22 to continue to experiment, and that is what these exercises
23 allow us to do. Are there other ways for us to resupply?
24 What can we get on the local economy? And, quite frankly, I
25 don't think our adversaries will allow us to build the iron

1 mountain, so we are going to have to protect those assets
2 once we get there.

3 Senator Duckworth: Thank you. If confirmed, how would
4 you recommend we enhance our logistics capabilities to
5 ensure U.S. Forces Korea can fight tonight?

6 General LaCamera: Senator, if confirmed, we will look
7 at the stockage on the Korean Peninsula, I will look at the
8 capability of the Peninsula to be able to generate resupply,
9 and then look at the multiple avenues to allow that resupply
10 to occur, and to keep the lines of communication open.

11 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, General. I look forward
12 to supporting your confirmation.

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

14 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Duckworth. Now let
15 me recognize Senator Scott, please.

16 Senator Scott: Thank you, Chairman. General, thank
17 you for your service, and thank you for all the men and
18 women that serve with you.

19 Do you believe that the credibility of American
20 deterrence against Communist China's aggression has eroded
21 and continues to erode as China continues to greatly
22 increase its military strength and to threaten and
23 intimidate its neighbors?

24 General LaCamera: No, Senator, I do not. I think we
25 are in competition with them, and I think we compete with

1 them every single day. But I don't think that we can afford
2 to rest on our laurels. We need to continue to demonstrate
3 to our partners and allies that we are the partner of
4 choice.

5 Senator Scott: So if that is true, why is Communist
6 China so comfortable with their aggression against Taiwan,
7 because it seems like it has gotten worse. It hasn't gotten
8 better.

9 General LaCamera: Senator, I can't answer that
10 question. If confirmed, I will look at what that impact
11 would be against the Korean Peninsula and how it would
12 affect my mission.

13 Senator Scott: Thank you. In Admiral Davidson's
14 written testimony recently he wrote that the committee's
15 efforts to establish the Pacific Deterrence Initiative has
16 created the opportunity to regain the advance, but we must
17 remain diligent. From your perspective, do you see the need
18 for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative to prioritize efforts
19 to improve U.S. force posture and the ability to deter bad
20 actors in the Pacific, and do you believe we are on track to
21 do that?

22 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator, and I appreciate the
23 support that this committee has provided to this initiative.
24 I think it is extremely important to allow us to compete
25 every day.

1 Senator Scott: Do you think we need to be more clear
2 that we will clearly defend Taiwan than what we have been in
3 the past?

4 General LaCamera: Senator, I believe that is for the
5 diplomats and for the Secretary of Defense to answer that
6 question.

7 Senator Scott: Do you think if we were more clear it
8 would make it easier for you to be able to ensure that we
9 have a good deterrence against Communist China?

10 General LaCamera: I think, Senator, I mean, ambiguity
11 provides -- there are advantages and disadvantages. Clarity
12 also potentially boxes in commanders, and, quite frankly, I
13 think it boxes in policymakers also.

14 Senator Scott: Do you believe we are prepared to
15 defend Taiwan against Chinese aggression?

16 General LaCamera: In my current role as the U.S. Army
17 Pacific Commander, yes.

18 Senator Scott: Do you believe we currently have the
19 right forward posture in the Indo-Pacific we need to
20 accomplish the objectives of the 2018 National Defense
21 Strategy?

22 General LaCamera: I think, you know, Senator, COVID
23 has had impacts on our ability to operate west of the
24 International Date Line. We continue to look at unique ways
25 of maintaining that, building trust with our partners and

1 allies, but that has caused challenges for us. But we
2 continue to adjust and modify as required.

3 Senator Scott: If we didn't defend Taiwan, what would
4 happen to our ability to deter Communist China in Japan or
5 South Korea or anyplace else, Guam, whatever?

6 General LaCamera: Senator, it would just change the
7 facts bearing on the problem on how we operate in the Indo-
8 Pacific.

9 Senator Scott: Do you think we would continue to have
10 the ability to deter them against aggression against Japan
11 and South Korea and Guam, if we had not defended Taiwan
12 against Communist China?

13 General LaCamera: I think that is a question that our
14 partners and allies would have to answer, based on our
15 actions.

16 Senator Scott: But you think we have enough forces
17 there today to be able to deter Chinese aggression?

18 General LaCamera: We have forced in place. I can't
19 answer for the President of China on whether or not he is
20 deterred or not.

21 Senator Scott: All right. Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
22 Chairman.

23 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Scott. Senator
24 Hawley, please.

25 Senator Hawley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General,

1 thank you for being here. Thank you for your service. You
2 have been asked, I have noticed, quite a few China
3 questions. I want to start there as well.

4 Do you agree with the Secretary's -- Secretary Austin,
5 that is -- his determination that China is the nation's
6 pacing threat? Would you agree with that?

7 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator.

8 Senator Hawley: So let me ask you, in light of that,
9 Beijing, we know, has spent decades developing the
10 capabilities required to try and seize control of Taiwan.
11 Senator Scott was just asking about that. We have been
12 told, on this committee, we have received testimony from
13 Admiral Davidson, among others, there is reason to believe
14 they may try that within the next decade.

15 My question is, how would that impact your force's
16 ability to deter North Korea, should you be confirmed to
17 this new position, and to defend themselves on the Korean
18 Peninsula, if China were to seize control of Taiwan, let's
19 say, and station their own forces there?

20 General LaCamera: Senator, it would all depend on what
21 resources I would lose and what risk is created to do that.
22 My experience on the battlefield has shown that resources
23 are not unlimited, and that commanders make decisions on
24 those. My responsibility will be to identify that risk and
25 present that back to the INDOPACOM commander, the chairman,

1 and the Secretary of Defense.

2 But the Republic of Korea forces are a very capable
3 formation, and we will just have to identify that risk, and
4 that is my responsibility, to provide that feedback back to
5 my bosses.

6 Senator Hawley: Very good. I want to ask you about
7 resources -- actually, why don't I just ask you now. I
8 mean, if North Korea, or if China, rather, attempted an
9 invasion of Taiwan, do you think that the North Koreans
10 might view that as a window of opportunity, and that we
11 might then find ourselves, if we were drawn into a crisis
12 with China, certain assets or resources that you might
13 traditionally rely on were no longer available, I mean, what
14 kind of a bind would that put us in if North Korea then
15 looked at that as a window of opportunity for aggression?

16 General LaCamera: Senator, I think North Korea will
17 have to weigh not just the U.S. piece but the Republic of
18 Korea's capabilities on their ability to move south. And,
19 quite frankly, the ascending nations of the United Nations
20 Command, et cetera, going forward.

21 Senator Hawley: On the South Korean piece, would South
22 Korea assuming greater responsibility for deterring the
23 North improve our ability to deter northern opportunistic
24 aggression in the kind of scenario I was just hypothesizing?

25 General LaCamera: Senator, I mean, they have complete

1 control of their military on a day-to-day basis, and again,
2 I think this is a calculus that the North Korean leadership
3 -- not just the North Korean leadership but Japanese, et
4 cetera, of how we would bring a formation, a coalition
5 together to maintain the stability on the peninsula.

6 Senator Hawley: Let me ask you about something
7 Secretary Austin said recently. He said that the U.S. and
8 South Korea, and I am quoting him now, "continue to make
9 progress toward the eventual transition of wartime
10 operational control to a South Korean-commanded future
11 combined forces command."

12 Now just so I understand it, that transition of
13 operational control would put U.S. forces under South Korean
14 command during a contingency with the North. Is that right?
15 Have I got that right?

16 General LaCamera: Yes, and my role would change to
17 become the Deputy Commander of the combined forces command.

18 Senator Hawley: So my question is, what would happen
19 if the United States found itself in simultaneous conflicts
20 with China and North Korea? Would this operational control
21 arrangement provide us with the flexibility we would need to
22 retask or reposition forces, if we found ourselves with a
23 simultaneity problem?

24 General LaCamera: My current understanding is yes,
25 Senator.

1 Senator Hawley: Very good. Are you concerned that
2 China might target U.S. forces in Korea as part of a broader
3 campaign to seize control of Taiwan, for example?

4 General LaCamera: I think it is an area of -- it is
5 their area -- I don't know how China defines their area of
6 operation, interest, or influence. I think that we would be
7 vulnerable, and if confirmed, I would take the necessary
8 steps to protect the force.

9 Senator Hawley: How would you plan to protect our
10 forces on the Peninsula in the event of such a contingency?

11 General LaCamera: Senator, hypothetically I would have
12 to look at what threats exist against that, and whether it
13 is the missile defense or local security. I think
14 everything is on the table, and we would have to take a look
15 at what those threats are and take action appropriately.

16 Senator Hawley: Very good. I may have another
17 question or two for you, though. I will give it to you for
18 the record. Thank you for being here.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Hawley. Let me
21 recognize Senator Sullivan, please.

22 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General,
23 good to see you again. Congrats on finishing up a really
24 important tour in the INDOPACOM region and your next very
25 important billet. And I wanted to commend you and then ask

1 some questions about our Arctic, cold-weather, high-altitude
2 operations. You played a really important role in the
3 Army's recent Arctic strategy. And, you know, when you look
4 at great power competition, oftentimes, at least in the last
5 several decades, Korea has been a key area of that. With
6 Russia, with China.

7 But it also, when you look at our great power
8 competition, the likelihood of some kind of conflict in a
9 cold-weather environment, whether it is North Korea,
10 somewhere in Russia, somewhere in China, Ukraine, these are
11 all things that I have been concerned, and I know you share
12 it, that we have lost that capability to have large-scale,
13 consistent military operations in these very difficult areas
14 in which to operate -- mountainous, extreme cold weather.

15 You know, we recently celebrated the 70th anniversary
16 of the Chosin Reservoir Battle last December, and that was a
17 very tough battle the Marines and Army took part in, in
18 Korea, with the Chinese, with the Koreans, 30 below zero.

19 Given the Republic of Korea's physical environment,
20 what is your perspective regarding the Army's Arctic
21 strategy and other forces in our capability to fight tonight
22 in those kind of climates?

23 General LaCamera: Thank you, Senator. Thanks for the
24 time and I trust you enjoyed your visit this past weekend.

25 As we have discussed in previous meetings, you know, we

1 have thought and operated at altitude and in cold weather in
2 Afghanistan over the last almost 20 years, but it is not in
3 the depth, as I said, in current position in the U.S. Army
4 Pacific. And the forces in Alaska, they were doing their
5 training center rotations in the wintertime, so we weren't
6 really getting the reps and sets that we needed to truly
7 understand what that capability is.

8 General Abrams and his forces, I mean the Koreans, are
9 born and raised on the Peninsula, so they truly understand
10 it, and they have that opportunity, so I have no doubt that
11 they are prepared. But it is the follow-on forces that we
12 need to make sure that they have the proper equipment and
13 training to be able to operate.

14 Senator Sullivan: How important is it that we not just
15 have the Army's Arctic strategy out there, and the Air
16 Force's Arctic strategy, and the Navy's Arctic strategy, but
17 to actually implement them. The Secretary of Defense, in
18 his confirmation hearing, said he would fully resource these
19 strategies. How important is it that not that we just fully
20 resource but implement what the Army has worked on? And I
21 think it is a very good beginning.

22 General LaCamera: It is important, given, in my
23 current role as the U.S. Army Pacific Commander, and the
24 different environments. We have been used to a very --
25 "stable" is not the right term -- but, you know, desert

1 environment, but Asia, the Indo-Pacific region has multiple
2 different environments, and our soldiers need to be prepared
3 to operate, along with our other servicemembers in the joint
4 force.

5 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask, I just hosted the
6 INDOPACOM Commander, Admiral Aquilino, in Alaska this
7 weekend. We were finishing up North Edge, which was a very
8 impressive exercise, over 240 aircraft and an entire Marine
9 expeditionary unit, and a NARG, an entire Navy carrier
10 strike force, and, of course, it highlighted some of the
11 forces in Alaska, the 425, the First Stryker Brigade, soon
12 to be over 100 fifth-gen fighters.

13 What force posture or capabilities do you think are
14 needed or missing in Alaska now that relate to your mission
15 on the Korean Peninsula? As you know, those forces are
16 probably some of the closest to the Korean Peninsula of any
17 we have in the entire region, regardless of where they are
18 on the International Date Line. Do you have a sense of
19 that, and the training capabilities that, as we are
20 restrained still on the Korean Peninsula, the ability that
21 was just shown by Northern Edge at JPARC and other places
22 could be phenomenal training for our forces on the
23 Peninsula, including the Koreans, including, heck, even the
24 Japanese, as they sometimes work together and red flag
25 Alaska.

1 General LaCamera: Yes, Senator. What we have in
2 Alaska could be used, whether it is the Strykers or the
3 Airborne Brigade that is up there.

4 Senator Sullivan: Used on the Korean Peninsula.

5 General LaCamera: Yes, sir. As we look forward to the
6 future on what the formation will look like, I think the
7 environment on the Korean Peninsula can help inform the Army
8 on any changes or modifications that they want to make.
9 That is for Alaska.

10 But I think in the Continental U.S. we have another
11 reach-back capability. I think it would be important to
12 bring them through Alaska to train for that environment that
13 they may face on the Korean Peninsula.

14 Senator Sullivan: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
15 Good luck, General.

16 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Sullivan.

17 General, thank you very much for your testimony, but more
18 than that, thank you for your service, which has been out
19 front, ahead of your forces, and as I said before, not only
20 your example but your dedication to the welfare of the men
21 and women who served underneath you is the highest, I think,
22 demonstration of the ethic of a military officer or
23 professional. We thank you for that and we look forward to
24 your confirmation.

25 With that, no further questions in order, I will

1 adjourn the hearing.

2 General LaCamera: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 [Whereupon, at 11:13 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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