

SELECTED WORKS OF

**General Joseph Francis Dunford, Jr.,  
USMC**

NINETEENTH CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

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# **General Joseph Francis Dunford, Jr.**

## **USMC**

NINETEENTH CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

1 OCTOBER 2015 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2019



Joint History Office  
Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Washington, DC ♦ 2023

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## FOREWORD

This volume is published under the auspices of the Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It presents material drawn from the public record of General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., as the Nineteenth Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1 October 2015 through 30 September 2019.

The text presents in chronological order representative samples of speaking engagements and interviews, congressional testimony, published articles, and white papers to illustrate the multitude of issues and audiences addressed by General Dunford. The reader will see the general's tenure marked by a complex and volatile security environment involving not only the continuing war in Afghanistan, but also conflict with other violent extremist organizations, increased competition with Russia and China, and a variety of other security challenges. General Dunford saw these threats evolving to cross traditional boundaries between regions, domains, and functions. As a counter, he developed the concept of global integration to allow American military forces an ability to rapidly and flexibly shape the environment and respond as necessary. He also oversaw the creation of a separate armed service to exploit the domain of space in order to maintain the nation's advantage in that domain. More importantly, he understood that America's strength in confronting these myriad threats derived predominantly from America's network of allied and partner countries.

In addition to appreciating the security challenges that marked the second half of 2010-decade, the reader also will witness General Dunford's deep pride at serving his country, particularly as a Marine. The general firmly believed his job was to serve the men and women in uniform he represented at the highest levels of government, ensuring they had the tools, guidance, and support needed to carry out their assigned missions.

Selection of this volume's content was the responsibility of Lieutenant Colonel Steven Heinlein, US Air Force, and Mr. Christopher D. Holmes, contract historian and colonel, US Air Force (retired), both of the Joint History and Research Office. Mr. Holmes also edited the manuscript and prepared it for publication.

The editorial treatment of the texts adheres to the style guidelines found in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, seventeenth edition. Remarks, speeches, and interviews have been lightly edited for conciseness and consistency. Previously printed pieces appear as they did in the original publications, with the exception that typographic errors have been silently corrected and editorial additions and clarifications have been made using square brackets.

This volume is an official publication of the Joint History and Research Office, but inasmuch as the text has not been considered by the Joint Chiefs, its contents do not represent the official position of the chairman or the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Washington, DC  
April 2023

DAVID B. CRIST, PHD  
Executive Director  
Joint History and Research Office



## BIOGRAPHY

Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on 23 December 1955. While attending Saint Michael's College in Vermont he enrolled in the U.S. Marine Corps' Platoon Leaders Class program. Upon graduation in 1977, he received a bachelor's degree in political science and was commissioned a second lieutenant. Following basic and infantry officer training at Quantico, Virginia, he reported to Company K, 1st Marine Regiment, at Camp Pendleton, California. There he led rifle and weapons platoons before serving as the company's executive and then commanding officer. In 1980, after completing the U.S. Army's Ranger School and commanding Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, he was assigned as aide to Lieutenant General Stephen G. Olmstead, who then commanded III Marine Amphibious Force in Okinawa, Japan. A year later, he was posted to the Officer Assignment Branch at Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC) in Arlington, Virginia. In 1985, after completing the Amphibious Warfare School at Quantico, and also earning a master's degree in government from Georgetown University, Captain Dunford commanded Company L, 3d Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Later, he was the Plans and Training Officer at 2d Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company.

As a field grade officer, beginning in 1988, Major Dunford served as Marine Officer Instructor for the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps detachment at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. Three years later, he then distinguished himself as a Commandant of the Marine Corps Fellow while attending the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. Following graduation in 1992, earning a master's degree in international relations, soon to be Lieutenant Colonel Dunford joined the Commandant of the Marine Corps' Staff Group and later became General Carl E. Mundy's senior aide-de-camp. He rejoined 6th Marine Regiment in 1995, serving a year as executive officer before taking command of 2d Battalion. Next, after completing the US Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1999, Colonel Dunford proceeded to the Pentagon for his first tour on the Joint Staff. Following an initial assignment as Executive Assistant to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he became Chief of the Global and Multilateral Affairs Division of the Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate (J-5). In 2001, he assumed command of the 5th Marine Regiment at Camp Pendleton. Two years later, during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, he led Regimental Combat Team 5 as it spearheaded 1st Marine Division's three-week drive from Kuwait to the outskirts of Baghdad. For his service, he received the Legion of Merit with combat distinguishing device.

Colonel Dunford subsequently served as 1st Marine Division's Chief of Staff and – following selection for promotion to Brigadier General – Assistant Division Commander during stability operations in Iraq in 2004. A year later, he began the first in a series of three Washington, DC, staff assignments: Director of the Operations Division within the HQMC's department of Plans, Policy, and Operations (PP&O), next as Vice Director of the Joint Staff's Operations Directorate (J-3), and then, after advancing directly to Lieutenant General, as

HQMC's Deputy Commandant for PP&O. This was followed in 2009 by command, concurrently, of I Marine Expeditionary Force and US Marine Corps Forces Central Command. Upon receiving his fourth star in October 2010 he took on the mantle of Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. Next, in February 2013, he assumed concurrent command of US Forces Afghanistan and the International Security Assistance Force, led by the North American Treaty Organization (NATO). Then, on 17 October 2014, he became the thirty-sixth Commandant of the Marine Corps.

A year later, on 1 October 2015, General Dunford became the nineteenth Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The United States and its allies at that time faced a suite of ongoing strategic challenges: Russian and Chinese adventurism, nuclear proliferation in North Korea and Iran, and violent extremism in places like Syria and Afghanistan. These were familiar threats, but escalating rivalries signaled a return to the great power competitions of the past. He worked with NATO members to contain Russian aggression, supporting the alliance's 2016 decision to adopt an Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltic states and Black Sea, as well as its 2018 Readiness Initiative.

Meanwhile, North Korea continued to jeopardize stability in the Western Pacific by conducting nuclear and missile tests in 2016 and 2017, including the launch of its first intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the continental United States. General Dunford supported efforts to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula through diplomatic and economic pressure, but stressed that military options remained available in case those should fail. Iran likewise undermined stability in the Middle East. He agreed that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action did little to curtail the regime's malign activities, but acknowledged that the agreement had delayed the development of a nuclear capability and failing to adhere to signed agreements would lessen others' willingness to collaborate.

During Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, the campaign to drive the Islamic State (ISIL) from Iraq and Syria, General Dunford concurred with the use of aerial interdiction to dismantle the enemy's infrastructure and warfighting capability, and to advise, equip, and train regional partners to liberate occupied territories. In Afghanistan, where the United States continued to lead NATO forces during Operation RESOLUTE SUPPORT, he cautioned that insurgents there remained a threat to US interests and recommended a sustained commitment.

To keep pace with 21st Century warfare, General Dunford introduced Global Integration, a broad initiative to implement mission command at the strategic level, with the Joint Staff taking an active role in synchronizing operations worldwide. To that end, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 specified that the Chairman is to provide advice "to the President and the Secretary on ongoing military operations" and advise "the Secretary on the allocation and transfer of forces among geographic and functional combatant commands, as necessary, to address transregional, multi-domain, and multifunctional threats."

General Dunford relinquished his responsibilities on 30 September 2019. One month later, after more than forty-two years of commissioned service, he retired during a ceremony on board the historic USS *Constitution*, moored in Boston Harbor.





## SERVICE RECORD

### Promotions

2LT	08 Jun 77
1LT	08 Jun 79
CPT	01 Feb 82
MAJ	01 Jul 89
LTC	01 Sep 94
COL	01 Oct 99
BG	01 Jan 05
LTG	08 Aug 08
GEN	23 Oct 10

### Dates

### Assignments

	From	To
Student, The Basic School, and then the Infantry Officer's Course Quantico, VA	1977	1978
Platoon Commander, Executive Officer, and then Company Commander, Company K, 3d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, Camp Pendleton, CA	1978	1980
Aide, Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force, Okinawa, Japan	1980	1981
Administration Officer and Head, Reserve, Retention, and Reenlistment Unit, Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC), Washington, DC	1981	1984
Student, Amphibious Warfare School, Quantico, VA	1984	1985
Company Commander, 3d Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, Camp Lejeune, NC	1985	1987
Operations, Plans, and Training Officer, 2d Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, Camp Lejeune, NC	1987	1988
Marine Officer Instructor, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA	1988	1991
Student, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Medford, MA	1991	1992
Commandant of the Marine Corps Staff Group, HQMC, Washington, DC	1992	1992

Senior Aide-de-Camp to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, HQMC, Washington, DC	1992	1995
Executive Officer, 6th Marine Regiment, 2d Marine Division, Camp Lejeune, NC	1995	1996
Commanding Officer, 2d Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, Camp Lejeune, NC	1996	1998
Student, US Army War College, Carlisle, PA	1998	1999
Executive Assistant to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Of Staff; Chief, Global and Multilateral Affairs Division, Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate (J-5), Joint Staff, Washington, DC	1999	2001
Commanding Officer, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, CA	2001	2003
Chief of Staff, 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, CA	2003	2004
Assistant Division Commander, 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, CA	2004	2005
Director, Operations Division, Plans, Policy and, Operations, HQMC, Washington, DC	2005	2007
Vice Director, Operations Directorate (J-3), Joint Staff, Washington, DC	2007	2008
Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations, HQMC, Washington, DC	2008	2009
Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force; and Commander, US Marine Corps Forces Central Command, Camp Pendleton, CA	2009	2010
Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, HQMC, Washington, DC	2010	2013
Commander (concurrently) of NATO International Security Assistance Force-Afghanistan and US Forces- Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghanistan	2013	2014
Commandant of the Marine Corps, HQMC, Washington, DC	2014	2015
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC	2015	2019

### **Principal US Military Decorations and Qualifications**

Defense Distinguished Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster)  
Navy Distinguished Service Medal

Defense Superior Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster  
Legion of Merit with Valor Device  
Defense Meritorious Service Medal  
Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star  
Navy & Marine Corps Commendation Medal with 3 Gold Stars  
Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal  
Combat Action Ribbon

Ranger  
Parachutist



# 2015

## SELECTED WORKS

### **Remarks at the Change of Responsibility Ceremony as the Nineteenth Chairman Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Virginia September 25**

Good afternoon. Distinguished guests, family and friends, once again, thank you for joining us today. Mr. President, Secretary [of Defense Dr. Ashton B.] Carter, thank you for those kind words, but more importantly thank you for your leadership and for your trust in me in selecting me as your principal military adviser.

Before I begin, I'd like to once again draw your attention to the men and women in formation today. They not only look superb, but, as Secretary Carter said, they represent more than 2 million members of our total joint force. Many of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines are forward-deployed. Some are in harm's way. As we enjoy today's ceremony, I'd ask you to keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers as well.

In addition to the many special guests and senior officials who were mentioned by name as the ceremony began, I'd like to thank our family and friends for making the effort to join us. I'm particularly appreciative that my brothers and their families are here, along with Ellyn's sister, her brothers, and their families.

I'd also like to single out my mom and dad, who are here. I became a Marine because of my dad, and any success that I've had in uniform was a result of my mother's discipline and exacting standards. So, mom and dad, thank you.

More importantly, I want to recognize my wife, Ellyn, and our children, Joseph, Patrick and Kathleen. Without their love and support over these many years, I wouldn't be standing here today. And, Ellyn, thanks for your willingness to continue to serve our men and women in uniform and their families.

Mr. President, I know I have big shoes to fill. We're all indebted to General Marty Dempsey for his extraordinary leadership, commitment and service. On a personal note, for many years he's been a great friend, mentor and role model. Deanie has been with him every step of the way, and she's been a tireless advocate for military families even as she raised three soldiers of her own. The Dempseys depart active duty today with well-earned admiration, appreciation and affection from all soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, to include the Dunfords. Marty and Deanie, thank you for what you have meant to those of us in uniform and our families. You are what winning looks like.

It's a deep privilege to have the chance to continue that legacy of leadership. It's an honor to follow in the footsteps of Admiral Mullen, General Pace, General Myers and the other distinguished chairmen who, on their watch, demonstrated decisive leadership, extraordinary commitment, and a strong moral compass. In the days ahead, I'll draw strength from their example. And I look forward to serving with my fellow Joint Chiefs, combatant commanders and other senior leaders in our government as we tackle the challenges on our watch. I see several

chiefs of defense from around the world here today. I look forward to working with you and further developing our relationships.

It's customary for the incoming officer at events like this to be brief, so I'll close by simply saying how humbled I am for the opportunity to represent our men and women in uniform. They are a true national treasure. My focus in the coming days will be to provide them with the leadership and the support that they deserve.

God bless you all, and Semper Fidelis.

**Message to the Joint Force**  
**Washington, District of Columbia**  
**October 2**

I am honored and humbled to represent you as the 19<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Our Nation has the most professional and capable military force in the world because of you-our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Civil Servants. I want to begin by thanking you for who you are and what you do. Every day, in every task, you answer the Nation's call and you deliver.

Today, we face a complex and volatile global security environment, with a wide range of challenges. We will meet those challenges. We must also be ready to meet tomorrow's challenges. To ensure we maintain a flexible, versatile, and adaptable force today and tomorrow, I will focus on three key areas as I begin my time as Chairman:

*Restore joint readiness.* Our fundamental responsibility to the nation is to be a ready force.

*Improve our joint warfighting capability.* We must maintain the ability to deter potential adversaries. When deterrence fails, we will deliver joint forces that can fight and win.

*Develop leaders for Joint Forces Next.* The future operating environment will place new demands on leaders at all levels. Our leaders must have the training, education and experience to meet those demands.

In the weeks ahead, I will engage with leaders at all levels and will provide my strategic direction to the Joint Force in greater detail. I look forward to your input as an important element of shared understanding and trust. Know I welcome your continued inputs and ideas to help advance our joint force and lead us through tomorrow

**Excerpts from an Interview with Reporters about Iraq Trip**  
**Aboard a Military Aircraft**  
**October 21**

**Dunford:** [As] I told you, I came over here to just get a perspective of the campaign, first through the lens of the Israelis and their support from a regional perspective, and from a long-term partnership perspective. So that was less about counter-ISIL than it just made sense, if you're going to the Middle East, to stop there on the way over and talk to them.

General [Martin E.] Dempsey had maintained a pretty close military-to-military relationship with them. You know, and you guys heard me say that even in the times when we've had some differences of opinion, as you always do, the military-to-military relationship never really suffered. So that being the anchor point with Israel really kind of makes sense. I wouldn't probably characterize it as the foundational element, but it's a foundational element in the relationship with Israel. So getting started with the mil-to-mil, establishing the first relationships

so that someday, if I had to pick up the phone, I got a face with a name and those kinds of things was really important.

And then again, they live in the neighborhood, so to speak. So listening to the challenges from their perspective is going to open up your eyes. I thought that was really helpful.

The Jordanians – clearly one of our most important partners in the region. They’ve really made a great contribution to the counter-ISIL fight. Don’t quote me on the numbers because – someone can get them for you – but I think they’ve flown 350 strikes, which if I’m not mistaken is more than any of the other coalition members combined almost. You know, if that’s important to you, we could verify the facts. But they really have tried to lean into it. Having a credible voice in the region that can talk to the issue with a position of moral authority is kind of important.

Back to the theme of wanting to see what the region looks like and getting different people to share their perspectives. Looking at the world through Jordan’s lens is different than Israel’s, and certainly different than the U.S. You’re almost triangulating as you try to get your arms around pretty complex problems, with multiple layers is what we’re dealing with.

Simultaneously you’ve got the Iran malign influence, you’ve got the counter-ISIL fight, you’ve got Russian involvement in the Middle East, you’ve got states that are unraveling – you know, the states that were designed 100 years ago. Everybody agrees on the challenges, generally, but they don’t agree on the prioritization of the challenges or how to deal with the challenges. And so again, getting the Jordanian perspective is good.

Once again for a military-to-military relationship, General [Mashal Mohammad] Zaben’s been there six years. In fact, both General [Kenneth F.] McKenzie and I had a relationship with him initially when I was at Marine Forces Central Command, my last six months in that job. In 2009, I guess, was his first couple months in the job, so I at least met him before, although I didn’t have a close relationship with him. A guy who’s been there for six years obviously has a lot to offer. So we really had a good session in the morning with he and Prince Faisal, who’s the king’s brother, and then we went and had a larger meeting with the king – that’s a large meeting with about eight or nine of us. Then the king brought me back for initially a one-on-one for a little while, and then he brought Faisal and the chairman back in and we had a conversation again. That was really pretty helpful.

Then today, you can look at one day out of – you know, the trip was too short. We couldn’t have crammed any more into it, when you look at it. Today was really characteristic of the whole trip.

We started with [Masoud] Barzani and his leadership team up in the north, and got a chance to talk about operations up there and where they thought they were. I don’t know what you did when we were up there, but – we can talk in more detail – but it was fairly encouraging in terms of how they felt about the support they were receiving. That’s been an issue, and I suspect I’ll be asked about it in testimony next week. I was asked about it in the confirmation hearing. They did identify a need for ammunition resupply because they are conducting operations at a higher tempo recently, but generally seemed satisfied with the relationship and what they had to get the job done. And very positive in the sense that we were trying to get an operations center up there in the north that would integrate the Kurdish forces – the Peshmerga – and the Iraqi security

forces so that when operations in the north, particularly Mosul, were conducted, there was integration. He supported that, so that was pretty positive.

Then I had the chance to catch up with Ambassador [Stuart E.] Jones and General [Sean] MacFarland just for a few minutes before – because we were a little bit late for the Barzani meeting. But then flying back, I had a chance to catch up with them, so that was helpful...were you in that at all?

**Q:** No.

**Dunford:** That was a good meeting, and what we really talked about was kind of three big issues: command and control of Iraqi forces; a way to vet or integrate the police, the PMF, the Iraqi security forces; and then coalition support. We spoke about that at length. We spoke about Sunni mobilization – getting the Sunnis trained, equipped, and those kind of things. And then we talked about the Russians.

What I did do is I talked them through our relationship with the Russians to date – the fact that we had a memorandum of understanding that we signed between General [Lloyd J.] Austin and his counterpart in Moscow. Then we'll establish a communications link between the Air Operations Center in Qatar and Moscow to deal with safety. We very much emphasized that this was not to coordinate operations, it wasn't to deconflict, but it was to assure safe operations in the region. Obviously some of the flights being close to Iraq, so it does affect Iraq and Syria when you're flying jet aircraft. You have to look at it as a single area. So we had that conversation. I told them that we had no plans to coordinate right now or cooperate with the Russians in conducting operations, and we had made it clear to the Russians that we're continuing to do what we're doing. I just wanted him to know that.

After the minister of defense, we went to see the prime minister, [Haider al-] Abadi, and that was also a very good meeting. I think you all know his background. I think everybody agrees that if there's anybody that can pull it off from a leadership and intellect perspective, he's the guy, so getting his perspective was really important. I shared with him my perspective on some of the more important things that we have to do to move the campaign forward. We did talk about the integration of Iraqi forces –that whole command-and-control issue, talked about the tribes as well, the minister of defense. Also talked about the Russian issue with the prime minister, just to make sure –this really was an opportunity to probably reinforce, I would say, more than anything else the messages that Ambassador Jones and General MacFarland would have been delivering anyway.

So that was basically it. So you know, I'm going home. I feel like I've got two notebooks full of things to think about. I wouldn't say I'm going home with anything that I absolutely didn't know before I left, because we, and General MacFarland particularly in Iraq, and they write great reports. And so we stayed pretty current every day.

But, gosh, when it comes to context, even a short visit is no substitute for context, and is also no substitute for hearing it – you know, when you get it – when you ask questions about certain issues, instead of getting it secondhand, thirdhand, getting the ambassador's quote from the minister of defense who spoke to somebody else, you can say, Minister, can you talk to me about this issue, and get their perspectives about this. That was all pretty helpful.



In terms of the campaign – and I want to be careful how I characterize this because I’m thinking out loud on record, which is always a dangerous thing to do, but I’m going to do that. So kind of where do I think we are. I think what I would say are positive things and then areas where I think we have to work.

You know, on the broader side of things, we were here, gosh, only three or four weeks ago. There was no movement at all in and around Ramadi and there was no movement up towards Baiji. We were concerned about coordination between the Kurds and the Iraqi security forces, kind of what was going on. Today, up in the north the Kurds have really started to conduct operations against the lines of communication that extend really all the way over to Raqqa in Syria, through Mosul and down – and then down towards Irbil. And so operations to kind of make life difficult for ISIL, was kind of encouraging. They have it on the map, we can walk through it. They have taken back not an insignificant amount of ground from ISIL. So ISIL, in the aggregate, has lost ground up there in the north.

Then, when you look at operations in Baiji, that was absolutely encouraging because a week ago we were hearing that they were going to start doing things, and they have had some pretty good success up there in Baiji. They’re now holding ground and have kind of secured some of the oil infrastructure and so forth up there. So that was, I thought, fairly positive.

In Ramadi – and we’ll get the exact numbers, Greg [Myre]. I didn’t save the sheet, but the numbers of – I think it’s probably relevant – the numbers of Sunni that have been trained and armed and those kinds of things. But it’s about 6,000 in Anbar Province. We’ll do a fact check on all this so that just because I am giving you without knowing. I think that we’re trying to grow to about 8,500 and there’s somewhere north of 6,000 right now just in Anbar Province for some of the Sunni. Police, I think they were looking for 16,000 and they’re at about 11,000 or 12,000 now. The important point about the police is that’s the stabilization force for Ramadi. So, again, fact check the numbers, but we’ll tell you kind of where they are in progress.

That was encouraging to me because clearing Ramadi is one thing – and we can talk about how long they might take to do that and so forth – but we all know from experience you got to have a plan for stabilization afterwards. And so very encouraging that they really know that, and the prime minister – and I think seriously the defense minister, too – both seized with understanding how they’ll deal with places like Ramadi after operations. They’re kind of working through that.

So more movement than we have seen before – movement that I think we can take a look at and say, OK, how do we reinforce success now? How do we take a look at what resources we might provide the Iraqis to move forward? Because I think - in my perspective - but my perspective always was that we would support the Iraqis where we could have operational strategic consequences, not just doing their job day today, but where you could really sit back and say, look, we want confidence in the campaign, we want momentum, and there’s certain things that have to be done to get that confidence and moving the campaign. So that would be what I would call reinforce success. So we wouldn’t substitute capability to clear Ramadi. We wouldn’t substitute capability to secure Ramadi after it was cleared. But if they had a plan to secure Ramadi and they had a plan to stabilize Ramadi, then we could take a look at where capabilities that we might provide them might reinforce.

I won't talk to you about the details of those capabilities today. But to me, it's the full range of consideration where you say, OK, what can we do to get momentum? What can we do to help them – if they really do have this planned fight and it gets to police, what can we do to help?

One thing we know is we want to try to create pressure against ISIL across Iraq and Syria. There's several places that we want to do that. We want to do it up – if I go clockwise, you obviously want to see what we can do to cooperate with the Turks along the Turkish borders. Raqqa is a stronghold of the enemy, so we want to at least isolate that and limit the enemy's movement there. And then conduct strikes in Syria to degrade the enemy, disrupt the enemy in Syria. So that's a piece of it.

We want to make sure we have progress in Iraq, and that's seen in a couple of different ways up in the north, and we described that. Baiji was one of the areas that we knew. Defending Baghdad – clearly that's the most important ground in Iraq, and that is the main effort. They maintain a pretty robust presence in Baghdad. It's relatively secure. Then Ramadi being another area.

The other piece of it is really making sure that we anticipate where the second- and third-order effects of operations are going to be so we ensure our partners are prepared to deal with that. That's the refugee problem plus forcing ISIL into what we've all referred to as the coldest corner of the room. So if you start operations in one area, you shouldn't start operations in an area until you anticipate what's going to happen to the enemy and then make sure you're in a position to deal with that. I think that's where the Jordan piece comes in, it's talking to the Jordanians.

So as I go around in a 360, that's kind of conceptually what we're trying to do. What was useful about the trip is I think we now have probably a detailed concept for what to do in each one of those major areas, and starting to get a general appreciation for what do we have to do to increase the prospects of our success in each one of those areas. That's really what we'll be working on now.

So it isn't a change – by no means is it a change of strategy. It's taking the concept, which has always been to create pressure, but now taking advantage of what I see as some opportunities and see what we can do. I think that's kind of the good things.

So what are the things I saw that I really think we need to focus on? One is this issue of command and control in Iraq. That's an issue.

I probably should make it easy on you and start clockwise again, so let's start in Syria and then I'll come back to Iraq. The SAC and the YPG – we need to learn more about these guys. We need to work with them. We need to identify what's going to make them successful. That's going to be time-consuming, so there's no instant solution to credible partners on the ground in Syria. We've got to work on that a little bit. But again, talking to General [Michael K.] Nagata yesterday – I think you all know him – that was a helpful conversation, some of his folks. Then today talking to General MacFarland and his guys to get an appreciation for the timing and sequencing and so forth and some of the things we need to know.

Kurds, it's really a question of equipping and making sure that they had ammunition and they weren't going to run out of logistics and so forth. So that was a helpful piece there.

When I was starting to talk about a minute ago, the command-and-control issue, I think, for us is one that really is really important. Both the prime minister and the minister of defense

agreed with that, they appreciated that, and they agreed to sit down with their leadership and General MacFarland and Ambassador Jones and see if they couldn't come up with an organizational construct that would better integrate all of the organizations that are conducting operations. That will help us to provide support. In other words, if we had one person to talk to that could speak with authority about the campaign as it integrates the police, it integrates the soldiers, it integrates the PMF, it integrates the Sunni tribes, that's kind of what we need.

**Q:** And the Peshmerga?

**Dunford:** And the Peshmerga. You know, in other words, a common operational picture of Iraq in one commander who, on behalf of the Iraqis, can talk to the coalition about where do we go. Because a key to success in this business is being able to anticipate, and you can only anticipate if you really have a common understanding, common objectives, common sense of time and space. That's an area that I think we need some work in.

The Sunni tribes, I mentioned some progress, but look, that needs to get done. They need to be paid. They need to have their weapons. They need to be out there conducting operations, and the Sunni need to see that. That's really important. The physical manifestation of the government's commitment to be inclusive is following up on this program that was agreed to.

So certainly from an expressed commitment perspective, both the minister and the prime minister appreciated how important that was. They expressed commitment to follow up on some of the things that needed to be done. I've seen progress even since we were here just a few weeks ago, just in terms of the numbers trained and so forth. So that was encouraging.

The other piece, just in all honesty, is [this] a hard fight. It's a complicated fight, and there's a lot of things that make it complicated: multiple actors in the region, multiple members of the coalition, a lot of things going on at the same time. I went clockwise just in the counter-ISIL fight, but you want to sweep a little bit more broadly you've got to go down to Yemen and talk about what the Saudis and the UAE and others now are doing down in Yemen, and you've got to talk about an overlay of Iranian malign influence across the region, and you've got to talk about the Shia-Sunni dynamic that's in the region. You've got to talk about the states that are having the form that they have had for a hundred years starting to be blurred – that might be a way to put it right now – and how does that all kind of wash out here in the coming months and coming years? Those are all challenges that we have to deal with.

But the one thing I have for me is it's kind of clarity on the major elements of the campaign that I need to pay attention to, that I need to ensure that I have metrics that I can follow, that I can make sure that I can articulate to our leadership what it is we're trying to do, how we're trying to do it. You know, one thing I'm going to steer clear of is talking about time limits. I'll just tell you right up front, there's no a time limit. We can't set the bar and consider time a success. And so, the challenge for me with you, and the challenge for me with really the American people more broadly –

**Q:** Right, because we're an impatient people.

**Dunford:** You know, this is a tough, tough fight. How do you articulate success? Look, a year ago, ISIL was making progress unchecked. So I'm not trying to put lipstick on a pig here, right?

I'm trying to be honest about where we are. But the momentum of ISIL was stopped. They have lost ground. Ground gives them legitimacy. They've lost ground.

President Barzani put it very well. He said, the myth of Daesh [Arabic name for ISIL] has been checked. The myth of them being invincible and being on a roll has been checked. There's a degree of confidence when we went up – in both places – but there's a degree of confidence in the – in the Kurds that, OK, we know how to beat these guys. We've reestablished our lines and even taken some ground. So we know how to beat these guys. I think down in Baghdad, I think there's an appreciation for the need to integrate capabilities.

If they do integrate capabilities – and Baiji was an example where it was Iraqi security forces were in the lead, PMF were following in trace, following support is what we call it, and the coalition was providing air support. And they saw that. And it worked. And so they want more of it. So if there's a lot of work to be done, and I'd be the first to say there's a lot of work to be done, there's at least a framework within which to understand the problem. I think at the start to give the right organizational construct, the right sequencing of support, the right command and control to kind of take it from where we are right now. So that's my, in a nutshell, three days.

**Q:** Well, can we maybe just address Russia for a second?

**Dunford:** Sure. So this was encouraging to me. I talked about the technical piece. And I said, hey, I'm in uniform. What I want to tell you is that we can't conduct operations if the Russians are operating in Iraq right now, simply. Whatever political discussions are going on, they're going on. But today, I said it will make it very difficult for us to be able to provide the kind of support you need if the Russians were here conducting operations as well, providing air support, whatever the case may be. It will diminish our defense.

The prime minister said, absolutely there is no request right now for the Russians to support them. There's no consideration for the Russians to support them. The Russians haven't asked them to come in and conduct operations. So I said, Minister, I'm going back to my leadership, and I'm going to say I spoke to the minister and he said, no, the Russian's aren't going to be conducting operations. To me, the prime minister said he told them the same thing.

So that's actually news. That will be a key part of our report going back, is that both the prime minister and the defense minister said that they recognize the partnership, the relationship with the United States was the critical relationship that they needed to deal with the common threat. And so that was the coalition more broadly. Please don't get me in a bad place here. When I talk, it's the coalition more broadly. But the U.S.-led coalition is what – because they do appreciate what everybody else is doing too.

**Q:** But did you think that was a risk, going in?

**Dunford:** No, I didn't, because I heard it second hand that it wasn't a problem. But I would say it was an area that I wanted to confirm, would be the way I'd put it. I wanted to confirm that the reports that we had were accurate, that the prime minister was committed to the relationship. Because, look, he said a couple weeks ago – at least, he was reported to have said, that I would welcome Russian strikes.

That obviously creates some angst. How's that all going to work? We don't have a relationship right now with Russia in the context of Iraq. So how are we going to do that? I told him how problematic that would be from a military perspective. Very quickly I said, look, we get that. You're a partner, and so on. So, no, I wouldn't say it was a concern. But, look, it's a 40-weight issue, right? So it was an important issue, if not an issue that I was concerned about, if that makes sense.

**Q:** So a quick follow-up on that. So on Russia, what are they providing Iraqis? Is it an intelligence coordination cell?

**Dunford:** Yeah, the defense minister said today it hasn't stood up. In other words, he said they have not done anything right now. It has been characterized as an intel sharing place where at least the Russians and the Iranians there – don't quote me on this because I don't [have] any more than you do – but for the Syrians – I haven't seen the Syrians, no one acknowledged the Syrians – but that's out in the open-source. So when that came up he said, well, they haven't – I forget how the minister said, but they haven't to this day done one thing or anything. But then the other piece that came up was there is Russian equipment in Iraq.

**Q:** In Iraq. The Iraqis have a lot of groceries from them.

**Dunford:** So it's from the regime. It's very reasonable that there'd be some kind of a need to get parts and equipment that was compatible with the gear that they have. So that came up in dialogue. To be honest with you, I found that to be a reasonable discussion.

**Q:** I want to change topics now. I want to follow up on one of your questions about – sounded like you were hinting at your helping with the spotters who, you know, are across the border.

**Dunford:** No, I wasn't. I absolutely wasn't.

**Q:** So we're adding the ability?

**Dunford:** No, what I really want to do is I don't want this to get down at this point. I don't want my guys thinking this way and I don't want anyone else thinking this way - to go merrily down to JTACs or something - because to me it's about capability. It may be as simple as methods. It may be timing. It might be different ways of doing what we're doing.

But here's the fundamentals, I think, of what we're doing. We're providing fire support, right? We're providing training. In some cases, we're providing advice. So those are the three deliverables. So, you know, combat power where appropriate, training where appropriate, advice where appropriate. But what I told the team was, open the aperture. How do we do that most effectively? What types of fliers do they need? When do they need it? What's the best way to deliver it? And what effect can we achieve when we deliver it?

I think what I tell you is that I don't want to go back looking at it from a capabilities perspective, looking at it from a desire to be aggressive in generating momentum in a campaign, generating confidence in a campaign, and then making recommendations where I think that we can make a contribution either in a better way than we're doing it right now – or always better – but, a different way than we're doing it right now, or maybe more of what we're doing. So it

could be more of what we're doing or something different, but it would be focused on capabilities as opposed to – often, just if I could switch up for a minute.

The whole conversation about JTACs is maddening to me. That doesn't have anything to do with anything. I will just tell you, from a military perspective, JTACs will not help us be more successful in the campaign right now. It isn't about JTACs. If we put guys on the ground, it's helping to make sure that operations are integrated, it's helping to make sure we can anticipate logistical needs so they don't get an operational pause, just have a situation where it's an intelligence.

The fourth element of that would be maybe we would be in one situation or another and we could provide better support. But we have operation centers. We have our guys in those operation centers. We have aircraft with eyes. We've got UAVs that are out there. We can drop bombs and we can drop them effectively. I would not put a JTAC in there unless it was a U.S. person who can do all the things I just described. People keep saying, well, if we had JTACs they'd make more progress. No, because for a while we were providing a thousand meters of air support, they were moving 50 meters. I can provide 2,000 meters of air support, they're still moving 50 meters. So there's something else going on here and it's not that.

Unfortunately, in the Congress, in the media, because it's an easy thing to understand, that became the coin of the realm. It's like T&E has been synonymous with success in the campaigns. T&E was never going to be decisive in the campaign. It was of nine-lines of efforts, one of 45 elements in one line of effort. It became synonymous with the campaign. JTACs has been synonymous with progress. It's much more of a complicated nuance than that. So would I provide JTACs? Not for tactical success. Would I put U.S. forces on the ground or make a recommendation, more properly, to put U.S. forces on the ground? If I thought it would have operational, strategic significance and help the Iraqis reinforce success, I would do it. I wouldn't do it to substitute capability. I wouldn't do it because they're losing. I would do it because they put together a plan that can be successful. We can help the pace, the tempo, of that plan.

**Q:** Like forward advisers maybe?

**Dunford:** It could be. I'd like to leave it for today as we're going to look at a wide range of things that we can do to help the Iraqis generate momentum and reinforce the successes that they're starting to have.

We're seeing Iraqis now put plans together and have some limited tactical success. So my question for the leadership when I left tonight was, OK, guys, I want you to think hard about this. What do you recommend to our senior leaders that we kind of now seize this opportunity? You know, maybe some people would have characterized it as stalemate a while ago. I'm not willing to say that. How could it be a stalemate? ISIS has lost ground. The Iraqis are doing some things.

Does that mean we're within days or hours of victory? No. This is a long, hard slog. But what it does mean is we're not moving fast enough to create the perception of momentum and generate confidence in the campaign. So how do we increase the pace?

**Q:** Sir, I just wanted to follow up on that because you did talk about reinforcing success.

**Dunford:** Right.

**Q:** It sounds like you're coming away from this trip with a sense that potentially this is an inflection point in the sense that momentum may have shifted.

**Dunford:** Right. I believe that. Here's the important reason why. It's the psychology of the Iraqis in a sense for the leadership, and our guys on the ground to be honest with you. Part of success is being able to see success. You've got to be able to image your way through it. What is it we're doing? How is what we're doing every day going to contribute to some objective down the road? That's no different than if you're going to hit a golf ball or something.

What I would tell you – why do I think that we're at an important transition point, inflection point if you will, is, number one, my instinct was the Kurds can kind of see what needs to be done and they've learned a little bit here over the last year. And so they're willing to get after it, and the Iraqis the same way. They're willing to take a look at the last year and say what has gone well, what hasn't gone so well, and what might we do to move forward.

The proof is in the actions, not in the words. But the rhetoric couldn't have been more positive in terms of, OK, we're going to work together. We appreciate what you're doing. I didn't get any, boy, you're not providing enough support to us or any of those kind of things. They identified things that they would like. I mentioned the ammunition. The Kurdish leadership talked about, hey, we've been conducting a lot of ops; we need some ammo. General MacFarland is already working on it. They haven't delivered it all. They've identified two thirds of what they need within theater. It's not just a question of moving it. A third of it, they've got to go find it. But that's what the logisticians are for.

I don't want to come off as saying, hey, everything's fine. By the same token, I do want to convey a message that, hey, I actually – I can see what we have to do. I'm just encouraged by feeling like I know what we need to do to support the commanders here that support the Iraqis as anything else. I mean, that's the critical piece. I can see how now our campaign will come together. Which is not to say that someone else couldn't have done that some time ago. But I'm new. So I can have all kinds of briefs in the world, but I come out here today and, again, just kind of finishing touch to have just the second time out talking to that same group of leaders. I just feel better about understanding what we have to do in the coming days and weeks.

**Q:** And aside from the Kurds asking for some more ammo and your asking your staff to take what you have perhaps opening the aperture for are there any ideas the new prime minister that, say, actually come close to what you're looking for, which is a strategic inflection point, as opposed to just –

**Dunford:** Yeah, I think it's fair to say the prime minister certainly senses that. Particularly I think the Baiji operation has been a confidence booster because, again, they've seen how all the pieces come together and be successful. They've also taken some critical terrain in and around Ramadi – and we went through the map. They actually have moved in around Ramadi and kind of tightened the noose, so to speak.

I'll tell you what, I was very impressed with the director of operations that gave us the brief. I mean, he had a pretty good handle. What was good was he swapped notes with the U.S. folks and everything. What the prime minister was saying at a strategic level, what the three-star was saying at the operational level, and what we talked about in private were all roughly the same.

There was one area that they talked about, probably that they would be willing to have more help, and they've been one of the most important forces, but the CTS. The prime minister reasserted his or reaffirmed his confidence in the performance of the CTS. He said, hey, we want to work closely with your folks to make sure the CTS continues to get the training and support it needs.

Again, that's an example of reinforcing success. The CTS has been the most reliable force. And yet, despite the fact they're reliable, he said, hey, you know, maybe a little bit closer cooperation in making sure that CTS has what they need. General MacFarland took that as a task and we'll do that. That'll be, again, one of the areas where I would characterize that as the perfect kind of support we want to provide – is you've got something good, that's the horse they want to ride, and how do we make it better?

**Q:** Was that like more training or equipment, all of the above?

**Dunford:** Yeah, more training because they've got to continue to generate new forces, right, and they have combat losses for equipment and so forth. I think it's two things. It's sustainment. The other piece is force generation and training – training being not only entry-level training, because they do get new guys coming in and they're willing to have some help there, but also as guys come off the line and they learn some things, the counter-IED capability, which I spent quite a while talking – before heading to see the prime minister I had about a 45-minute delay. I spent the whole time with the head of CTS. I think his biggest challenge – no surprise to any of us – on the fight over all these years – is the counter-IED fight. So counter-IED equipment and replacement for vehicles they've lost and so forth is a key area that they want.

**Q:** Nothing's changing in Iraq. What about Syria? We know the Russian role is changing the situation.

**Dunford:** Yeah, same with Syria. The basic framework with the Russians is the same. We have the safety rules set up. That CAOC is region-wide. The CAOC that's in Qatar is General Austin's Air Operations Center for the entire region. They're managing the airspace over Syria and Iraq so the safety procedures that have been put in place with the Russians and the communications procedures that have been put in place with the Russians are equally applicable in Syria. The same basic framework is safe operations. We're going to continue to do what we were doing, unimpeded by the Russian presence is the kind of rules that went into it.

**Q:** But isn't that a concern, though? Strategically?

**Dunford:** Well, strategically there is. What I'm talking about today is what are we doing on the military side as whatever discussions on the policy side are taking place. So, we got to do things today. Meanwhile Secretary [of State John F.] Kerry, meeting with [Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey] Lavrov and those kinds of things, are ongoing, and other regional leaders. This is all happening simultaneously.

So is it a strategic concern? Of course it is. I mean, how does this thing end, right? What's going to be the transition plan from Syria? There's a number of people that I would describe at this point as stakeholders. It's not my job to say who's sitting around a table. But when it comes to stakeholders, the Turks are stakeholders. The Iraqis are stakeholders. Obviously the current



Syrian government is a stakeholder. The Russians are a stakeholder. Hezbollah's a stakeholder. The Iranians are a – now, whether all of you believe me – I'd rather that not be part of this interview because that's not my lane. But if all that's going to be somehow rationalized, we've got to figure out a way ahead in Syria.

So the strategic piece –I think you're dead on. You got to solve the Russian piece to understand the way it is in Syria. But we can't do things sequentially, we have to do things simultaneously. In the meantime, to mitigate the risk of miscalculation and continue to conduct operations, we have this basic technical framework within which to conduct operations. Sooner or later we'll have a broader strategic framework within which to conduct operations in the region, informed by whatever arrangements are made with the regional actors, Russia and Iran. Does that make sense? It's hard.

**Q:** Yeah, it's hard. I wonder can you carry out operations the same way you were doing when, you know, Russia is making major gains or striking moderate forces in the north?

**Dunford:** In the near term, yes, because the areas that they're largely operating in are not areas we were operating in. Now, on the ground. When they conduct strikes, we have good enough situational awareness that we can deconflict airspace. So, again, safety of flight. We can maintain separation. I'm not going to tell you that we might not have been attacking a target and how to abort a target because there's something there. What I'm telling you is the basic execution of the plan is going to continue.

I'm not going to tell you there's not going to be friction during the day and we might see a Russian flight and all of a sudden we might have to move 10 nautical miles away and then go back and do whatever we were going to do. That kind of stuff can happen. But that's not at the operational level. That's tactical level. At the basic operational level, cardinal direction of the campaign, we can conduct the operations we're conducting in the near term with the Russians doing what they're doing, I'm confident.

Eventually there is absolutely no question that there has to be a strategic framework within which our operations are being conducted. But today what are we trying to do? We're trying to disrupt ISIL. We're trying to generate momentum in the campaign. We're trying to get a proof of principle here to get these guys that we're equipping up in the north to where we can continue to do all that even as Secretary Kerry and others work on the broader Russian piece.

**Q:** Sir, just actually two real quick questions. The CTS sounds like something – that's very manageable – that can be done.

**Dunford:** Absolutely.

**Q:** I'm just curious, are you referring to this at the political level or at the military level?

**Dunford:** The military level.

**Q:** OK. When did they give you any idea of when they're going to deploy to?

**Dunford:** They're going to meet tomorrow. They're going to meet tomorrow with their leadership and General MacFarland. The prime minister personally is going to meet tomorrow to talk about it. He goes, we've got some structural problems, it's going to take a while to fix that. I

said, Mr. President, all we're trying to do right now is establish a single rule: Wherever two or more are gathered, one must be in charge. It's a fundamental principle of command and control. We just need somebody who is empowered by you to make decisions and to work with us so we can provide support across all of the elements in the Iraqi security forces. That's what we're trying to do.

Whether that'll be three days or four days for a solution, he was impressed enough with that being an issue that he was willing to make time tomorrow to talk to the ambassador and General MacFarland and bring his folks in and say, OK, I'm going to get after them.

**Q:** When Sergeant Major Battaglia retires, are you going to appoint or choose another senior enlisted adviser to the chairman? What are you looking for in that?

**Dunford:** Yes. I'm looking – it's easy for me. I'm looking for somebody that the soldiers, airmen, Marines and sailors will look to to say that's the epitome of senior enlisted leadership. That's somebody I want representing me back in Washington, D.C. That's someone who's got street credibility. That's someone who can inspire people. That's someone who's going to tell the boss things straight. That's what I want.

And you know what? There's going to be a lot of candidates that meet that criteria. There's no shortage of them. In fact, they're conducting interviews right now. I'll have the unenviable thing to do, just like I did when I picked the sergeant major of the Marine Corps last year. I sat down with five unbelievable candidates and three or four sleepless nights scratching my head going, OK, every single one of these guys is absolutely capable of doing the job. Which one's the very best?

So I'm pretty sure that the five or so that they nominate at the board and screening process, I can probably pick them blind and I wouldn't go wrong. So we're going to have a good guy. But we are going to pick one because I think it's really, really important to have that enlisted voice, you know, back in D.C. For me personally, I'm looking for that kind of relationship.

### **Remarks at the Marine Corps Ball Camp Lejeune, North Carolina November 7**

Marines. General [Robert B.] Neller, Mrs. [D'Arcy] Neller, General and Mrs. [Robert F.] Castellvi, Sergeant Major, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, you'd expect me to say it, but it really is an absolute honor for us to be here tonight, my wife Ellyn and I, and we've been looking forward to this for some weeks, mostly just to be back around Marines. For us this is actually home. This was our first duty station when we got married. This was the first place, the Goettge Field House that we went to a birthday ball when we got married, so it actually is great to be back down here.

We were reminiscing about the first birthday ball that we attended together in the Goettge Field House on the flight down here today. I remember who the guest of honor was. It was the CG of the Second Marine Division. I was a captain in the 3-6 at the time, and the guest of honor was Major General [Dennis J.] Murphy. I have no idea what he said that night, but I do remember that he was here. But what I most remember was that, unlike tonight, when they

dismissed the cake escort before the guest of honor provides remarks, that night the cake escort stayed up here and was at a position of attention during the guest of honor's remarks.

Then about halfway through his remarks, one of the cake escorts, whose knees were locked, started to stumble forward. And, yes, you can imagine what happened: he face-planted right into the cake, not making it up. There was a blood-curdling scream, and it was his spouse, who stood up from the table and came over to see if he was all right. General Murphy didn't break stride. He continued to provide his remarks. In fact, as I recall, they were fairly lengthy that night. He was completely unfazed by the Marine that fell into the cake. So I want to just tell you tonight I was very glad that we dismissed the cake escort before I provided remarks. I would also say that I will not take that as liberal license to go on and on with a long speech.

The first thing I want to do, though, is respect you all for what you've done over the past year. You know, for most of the year I had a front-row seat to II MEF and watched as you did Bold Alligator, watched as you did African Lion, watched as you sourced the Special Purpose MAGTF for Africa, watched as you sourced the Marine Expeditionary Units for unit deployments, numerous other exercises, focused on readiness and did all the things that the Marines should do. I just want to tell you that you should be able to look back tonight – and I hope you will – with pride in your accomplishments over the past year. I wanted to come down tonight, if I did nothing else, and just tell you how proud I am and how appreciative I am of what you've done over the past year.

General Neller recognized the spouses. There's a couple of other groups here that I would like to recognize. First is a number of Marines and veterans here no longer in uniform, and I'd like to ask them to please stand up. That includes my old boss, Colonel Casey Hardy. Those of us that are still in uniform are proud to follow in your footsteps. The other group that I'd ask to please stand up is the sailors that are here – the old chaplains, the RPs, and the corpsmen.

You know, I asked you to do that because I want to talk about the Corps and I want to talk about the values that represent our Corps here tonight. But I'll tell you, we've never gone anywhere without our sailors, and we never will. We want to make sure that they know everything I say tonight applies equally to them.

You all know we were just talking about – we saw a video, we heard the words – we're all here to observe a great tradition in our Corps, a tradition that we've actually observed – the first formal birthday ball was in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1925, and General [Gilder D.] Jackson was there that night. We do that to spend time with each other, to raise a glass maybe, and to reflect on what it means to be a United States Marine. We've already actually observed those traditions that are characteristic of tonight. We've cut the cake. We listened to General Lejeune's message, and we listened to the message of our current commandant, General Neller.

I won't make long speeches, as I referenced earlier. They're not part of this evening, but I would ask you to stay with me for a few minutes as we reflect on who we are, what we do and why we do it. When you think about it, as Marines we don't often think about those questions. Most of the time we're too busy being Marines to actually think about what it really means to be a United States Marine, and that's what nights like tonight are all about. They're about traditions.

A lot of times when you think about traditions you'll quickly reference the Blood Stripe and blue trousers of the noncommissioned officer. Those are traditions of our Corps. They're very important traditions and they help distinguish us to the outsider. But everyone that's here in uniform knows that the most important traditions of our Corps are not tangible. They're intangible. Of course I'm referring to things like courage, honor, commitment, loyalty, self-sacrifice.

When we think about those traditions, we most often think about individual Marines who embodied those traditions in places like Belleau Wood, or Guadalcanal, or Iwo Jima, Chosin Reservoir, Vietnam, Desert Storm, or most recently in Fallujah. I know that everyone here tonight has their favorite stories of the United States Marines who embody those traditions. Some Marines you've read about, some you've served with, some who are no longer with us, but tonight is the night we reflect on those.

What I want to do very quickly is just share a story of two Marines that, for me, capture the essence of what it means to be a United States Marine. The first one I'll speak about was referenced in a video earlier tonight, and I speak about him because it was 70 years ago that he fought in the Battle of Iwo Jima - John Basilone. What wasn't mentioned in the video, of course, is he first fought in Guadalcanal. When his platoon was about to be overrun at Guadalcanal, he single-handedly killed 38 Japanese with a machine gun and a pistol, saving his fellow Marines. He then later went on to receive our nation's highest award at Iwo Jima. He single-handedly reduced the bunker that had pinned down his platoon on the beach, and then later on was killed by a mortar round.

There's a lot more to John Basilone than the citation and the description of his courage, and I learned that in 1995. In 1995 I was invited to attend the 50th anniversary of the Fifth Marine Division, so 50th reunion of the Fifth Marine Division, who had fought at Iwo Jima. If you can imagine, as a lieutenant colonel, how excited I was to go up to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and spend time with what were about 350 or 400 veterans still alive at that time from the Battle of Iwo Jima. I wanted to go up there and be around them and listen to their stories, just have a sense of what it was like in that iconic Battle of Iwo Jima.

You can imagine when I went to the event, my disappointment when I arrived at the event and was assigned my table. It was way back in the corner of the room. When I walked up to the table it was just two women sitting at the table, and they were, at the time, I thought, very old. In truth, they were probably about the same age I am now, so I realize they weren't actually that old. So there were two women sitting there all by themselves, and so with a little disappointment I sat down and introduced myself.

I said, ladies, what's your connection to the Fifth Marine Division Association? They said their brother had fought there. I said, is he here tonight? They said, no, we lost our brother on Iwo Jima. I said, what was his name? They said, his name was John Basilone; have you ever heard of him? Of course I smiled and I said, ladies, there isn't a Marine that goes through Parris Island or San Diego or Quantico that hasn't heard about your brother. I said, it must have been awful sad to lose him so young. One of the sisters said, well, we just really think of him as still in the service.

I had known, obviously, about John Basilone that night, but one thing I'd always wondered about was, how did he make his way back to the Pacific after being a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient? In World War II, when you received the Medal of Honor they very seldom would send you back into combat. Typically you would come back, go on a war bonds war and actually break ground on the home front next and actually try to gain support for the war effort on the home front. But a Medal of Honor recipient would never be sent back into combat for fear that that individual would be lost.

And so I asked the sisters, hey, how did your brother ever make his way back to the Pacific? They said, when he came home he was absolutely miserable, and whenever he would hear about something happening to one of his fellow Marines, whenever he would read about his unit,

whenever he would get bad news from the front he would always feel like, if he had been there, things would have been a little bit different.

So for about two-and-a-half years he badgered his chain of command to get back into the fight. Of course they routinely said, thanks a lot but no; we're not interested in you going back into the fight. But finally they relented, and John Basilone, of course as we now know, went back and received that Navy Cross, the only enlisted Marine in World War II to receive both the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross.

Then I said to his sisters – I said, you know, your brother was one of the bravest Marines in history. One of the sisters said something that was actually, to me, pretty profound. She said, well, I suppose he was brave but, you know, mostly I think it was just all about that he loved his fellow Marines and he just really had a fear of letting them down. You know, that little phrase, to me, that sister really understood what it means to be a United States Marine. John Basilone was motivated by the love of his fellow Marines and the fear of letting his fellow Marines down.

The second Marine I'd like to introduce you to is a Marine I had the privilege to serve with in the Fifth Marines. His name is Timothy Tardif. He was a corporal squad leader. In a place called Baqubah he was in an assault amphibious vehicle. He was in the lead vehicle of a column, a rifle company column. No one was out front when they were on point. They got ambushed as they crossed the bridge. Tardif was ordered to dismount his Marines from the AAV, and assault into a position from which they were taking heavy machine gun and RPG fire. So he huddled his Marines behind the assault amphibious vehicle. He gave a quick, frank order and then led them across about 200 meters of open ground under a hail of gunfire until he got close to that building from which they were taking fire.

At that point the enemy threw a grenade that hit Tardif. He was really seriously wounded in his leg and bleeding profusely. The First Fire Team leader, a guy by the name of Martinez, came up to Tardif and said, hey, you need to stay down. Tardif refused to get medical care and continued to lead the squad. They were taking fire from a second building. They conducted another attack and made it across about 100 meters, 150 meters of open ground, seized that second building, and then began to move back towards their assault amphibious vehicle.

As he made his way back, he passed out from the loss of blood and the shock. The next thing he remembers is he woke up in a hospital in Germany. The doctor said, hey, Tardif, listen; I've got good news and bad news for you. The good news is you're going to go home. He said, the bad news is you're pretty seriously wounded and you're going to have a long period of recovery. There's a very high risk of infection, so we're going to have to watch that pretty carefully.

Tardif called his wife Alisha who was out in the West Coast as a school teacher. He said, hey, I'm on my way home. Then he slept for about the next 24 hours, heavily medicated for pain. Then he woke up and he started laying in his bed and started thinking about his fellow Marines who were still in Iraq. He called the doctor back in and he said, you know, I want to go back to Iraq. The doctor said, absolutely not; I already told you this is a pretty serious wound, high risk of infection. There's absolutely no way I can send you back to Iraq.

For the next two or three days, you know, about every six hours, Tardif would press the button and ask to see the doctor. The doctor occasionally came in and Tardif would give him the same deal: Hey, I need to get back to Iraq. Finally the doctor relented. He said, all right, I'll tell you what. I'll let you go back to Iraq if you promise to stay off your leg and keep it clean. Well, this had to be an Air Force doctor because the chances of Tardif, who was an infantry squad leader, staying off his leg and keeping it clean were exactly zero. But Tardif wasn't going to

argue and he borrowed a uniform from a corpsman and made his way back to Kuwait, and eventually, through a series of helicopter rides, made his way back up to our original CP.

We had no idea what had happened before this. We knew he was wounded, knew he was evacuated, knew he was coming back. We didn't know the story. He showed up at the CP and told the regimental sergeant major, hey, Sergeant Major, my name is Tardif and I'm a squad leader with 2/5; could you help me get back to my unit? So he went back down to his unit. We had put him in for a Silver Star, so we certainly knew about Tardif but had no idea of how he made his way back.

In any event, he went on to lead his squad in Iraq that summer of 2003 and eventually got out of the Marine Corps in October of 2003, receiving a Silver Star just before he got out. But that's not the end of the story. About a year later – by this time I was the assistant division commander – I got a phone call. The staff secretary came into my office and said, hey, sir, a recruiting station in Orange, California is on the phone and there's a staff sergeant who wants to speak to you.

So I got on the phone and the staff sergeant said, sir, I'm really sorry to bother you, but I've got this individual here at the recruiting station who's belligerent. He's very upset and he insists that he knows you and he needs to talk to you. I said, OK, put him on the phone. The next thing I hear is, hey, sir, this is Tardif. Remember me? I said, of course I remember you. You don't forget Marines like you. I said, what's going on? He said, sir, these guys up here at the recruiting station don't get it. My buddies are in the First Battalion, Fifth Marines. They're in Ramadi right now and I want to go back to active duty and I want to go straight to 1/5.

I said, Tardif, look, a guy like you, I'd really like to have you come back to active duty, but that's not the way it works. You need to go back to active duty, go through redeployment training. We'll assign you a unit. We argued back and forth. We debated a little bit. I won the debate. He came back to active duty. He didn't go to 1/5 but went to Third Battalion, First Marines. We had a deployment and – but by now he came back from deployment. I was the director of operations at Headquarters Marine Corps. About seven months later, eight months later the phone rings, and on the other end of the phone is now Sergeant Tardif. He says, hey, sir, I just wanted to give you a call, check back in, give you a SITREP. Well, I hadn't asked for a SITREP but it was good to hear from Tardif.

And so, he started telling me about his deployment, told me how he had worked for Iraqi forces, helped train them. Really, he thought that was a pretty good thing to do. But he said, hey, sir, the reason I called – and I knew there was a reason that he called; he was just working up to it. He said, the reason I called is that I would like to go back to Iraq for a year on one of these training teams and I just don't know how to do it. I thought you might be able to help me. I said, Tardif, how long have you been back? He said, sir, I've been back about seven or eight days. I said, and have you talked to Alisha about this? His wife. He goes, oh, yes, sir, she's good to go. Everyone in this room knows that's code for no, he hadn't actually done that.

But anyway, I ignored his request. In any event, you know, he made another deployment to Iraq, made a deployment to Afghanistan a few years later. I heard from him about six months ago he was out, he was out in Hawaii.

Why did I tell you about these two Marines? I mentioned already that, you know, Basilone, it's the 70th anniversary of Iwo Jima – Basilone. You've got to think about Marines who fought and died in that iconic battle, and Basilone I think is a great example. The other reason I just mentioned these two Marines is you get one Marine from the "Greatest Generation," another

Marine from the great generation of Marines that we have today. There's a message there that, you know what, we still make them like we used to.

The third reason why I talked about those two Marines is, when you think about it, they're both really brave, extraordinarily brave, both decorated for bravery, but the most important characteristics in my mind, when you look at Basilone and Tardif, are not the kind of qualities that you would just see on a battlefield. Because when you talk about the love of your fellow Marines and you talk about commitment to the mission, when you talk about self-sacrifice to your fellow Marines, those are qualities that apply whether you're in a battlefield or whether you're here at Camp Lejeune here this evening, and they absolutely typify those.

A final reason why I talked about those two Marines is because it's that their stories kind of resemble themselves. It's not a coincidence that the qualities and characteristics of John Basilone are very similar to the qualities and characteristics of Timothy Tardif. That's because generation after generation of Marines have passed on from one generation of Marines to the next those things that regiments hand down forever. You might have heard that term from John W. Thomas in World War I: such things as regiments hand down forever. Of course what he's talking about are things that Marines hand down from one generation to another, those intangible qualities that I spoke about earlier and those intangible qualities that are actually reflected in the behavior of John Basilone and Timothy Tardif.

So, Marines, before you go back and enjoy each other's company – and again, that's in large part what tonight is all about – I'd just ask you to spend a few minutes reflecting on those intangible qualities and more. Spend a few minutes thinking about Marines like John Basilone, Timothy Tardif, and the many that you have served with along the way, and particularly those who have fallen. Make a commitment tonight – and actually a recommitment tonight – to uphold those traditions on your watch and uphold the responsibility that we have to pass those traditions on to the next generation of Marines.

If we do that, the Corps will be strong hundreds of years from now. There will be a birthday ball here. Goettge Field House might get a facelift before then, but there will another ball here in Goettge Field – past is prologue. And the United States Marines that are sitting here will be very much like the United States Marines that are sitting here tonight.

Ladies and gentlemen, again, on behalf of my wife Ellyn and I, this has been an extraordinary experience to be down here, II MEF, tonight for your ball. I can't tell you how happy we are to be home in II MEF – but more importantly to have spent the birthday ball with folks like you wearing that uniform. And because you wear that uniform, I'm proud to wear this uniform. God bless you all. Semper Fidelis.

## **Excerpts from an Interview with Reporters**

### **Afghanistan**

### **December 8**

**Q:** Since this is your first trip to Afghanistan as the chairman, what are you hoping to accomplish here? And how is it different than your many previous trips?

**Dunford:** Sure. Well, the number one thing we want to accomplish while we're here is to thank the soldiers, sailors and Marines that are out here, let them know how much we appreciate what they're doing, let them know that we recognize the sacrifice that they're making, particularly during the holiday season, but also, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, let them know that

what they're doing actually matters. In particular, what I'd want to emphasize – it matters because I really fundamentally believe that our presence here over the last decade-plus has made a huge difference in the sense that al-Qaida has not been able to conduct an attack against the United States since 9/11. I truly believe that that's in large part due to the pressure that we have placed against al-Qaida here in the region. We continue to do that every day. So today, in conjunction with Afghan forces and our special operations forces here, we're keeping the pressure on al-Qaida.

**Q:** With the campaign update, every – we're essentially going into the nonfighting season, if that makes sense. What are they telling you on this?

**Dunford:** Well, yeah, a couple of things. I would describe the period we're going into as a period of a little bit lower operational tempo as opposed to nonfighting season. There will still be violence, and we know that the Taliban have every intention of trying to maintain that violence throughout the wintertime. There is a lull in the fighting, but it doesn't go completely away. But what we spent really most of our time speaking about is maybe the lessons learned from the campaign this summer and, more importantly, the work that remains to be done with the Afghan security forces. In particular we spoke about Afghan aviation capabilities, which is one of the areas that we're working on pretty hard. We also spoke about the logistics sustainment and then the future of Afghan security forces in terms of capability development.

**Q:** And the aviation?

**Dunford:** The aviation we talked about the – in fact, General [John F.] Campbell will be able to give you a deeper dive talking about what platforms are coming in, but we looked at the first of what called MD-530s helicopters. That was part of the program of record to help the Afghans have a close air support platform. Then there's the A-29, which is the fixed-wing aircraft, which will be fielded this year. I don't have the exact month, but I used to know all that. But they'll be fielding now through, I think, 2019.

**Q:** Twenty – OK.

**Dunford:** And there's, as I recall, 20 of those and then some MD-530s. Then we talked about the continued maintenance of the helicopters that they have in the inventory right now, the MI-17s and the MI-35s.

**Q:** And are they – is he pleased with them? Is he pleased with the way that it's going? Is it on track?

**Dunford:** It's on track in accordance with the plan. It's clearly not as fast as we want to be, but this is a complicated process. You've got to train the maintainers. You've got to develop the logistics infrastructure, and then you've got to field the aircraft. We had pilots training in the United States starting last September. So in September of 2014 they started to train and then started to deploy this year. And the MD-530s started to arrive in the spring. We just ordered those. In fact, that was one of the last things we did before I left, is we ordered the MD-530 helicopter, and they started to arrive this year.



So it's all coming together, but clearly we're all impatient, since we want things to be faster than they are. But it is being fielded in accordance with the timeline that we expected.

**Q:** It's been 14 years since the initial invasion. There's still very much a war going on, obviously, with Afghans taking up much of the fight. And obviously what happened in Kunduz alarmed a lot of people. So why should Americans be hopeful about Afghanistan right now? Why should they think that things will improve at this point?

**Dunford:** Yeah. Well, let me start with when I took command in March of 2013, we had over a hundred thousand U.S. forces here – over a hundred thousand. That's a little over two years ago. We have less than 10,000 that are here today. Those 10,000 now are enabling over 350,000 Afghan security forces. So when you look at that transition over that short a period of time and the fact that the Afghans – while it is a tough fight still, they have proven resilient. When ground has been taken, they've gone back and retaken that ground.

Work to do, certainly. Years to do it, certainly. But when you look at what's happened over the last couple years, I think that ought to be room to be encouraged, because our goal was to stand up the Afghan security forces and have them increasingly assume responsibility for their own security, and now, with the capabilities that we're providing to enable them – limited capabilities, by the way, that we're providing them; the Afghan forces are responsible for the security in Afghanistan. So that's the Afghan piece of it. But what's important from a U.S. perspective is, we need an effective counterterrorism partner in the region and an effective counterterrorism platform. We have risks here in the region against the U.S. homeland, our allies and our interests. Our partnership with the Afghan forces here, in my mind, is an insurance policy against attacks against the United States.

We have interests that we share in common against violent extremism with the Afghans, and they're doing increasingly more and more of that fighting. We certainly are still here with some capabilities, but we still have interests in this part of the region, and they're directly and inextricably linked to our protection of the homeland.

**Q:** And you mentioned the counterterrorism mission. The language that's been used to describe the mission here has shifted over the years. Do you think there's some worry about maybe confusion with the American people when you're shifting away from calling this a war, despite having troops in harm's way?

**Dunford:** Well, I don't know, because I still call it a war. I mean, there's still a war in Afghanistan. What we have shifted away from is a large presence of U.S. combat forces fighting that war. We've shifted to the predominance of the fighting being done by Afghan security forces, with some enablement by U.S. forces, and then we still conduct U.S. operations here in Afghanistan, partnered most often, but again, against common threats.

At least for me, I haven't heard anybody say that there isn't a war going on in Afghanistan. So I'd say there is still a war going on in Afghanistan.

**Q:** So you've remarkably successful against al-Qaida, but the Islamic State – what part are they telling you that they're playing here in Afghanistan?

**Dunford:** Yeah, that's a relatively recent phenomenon, ISIL-Khorasan Group. I wouldn't tell you that I could share with you what the numbers are and so forth. I think largely these individuals are some who have rebranded themselves. They were part of other organizations – the Taliban, perhaps some al-Qaida members. There is a clear linkage between the ISIL-Khorasan Group and ISIL core in terms of resources and communications and so forth. But we're watching that development very closely, and we have always said it's not about al-Qaida primarily, because that was the prime threat to the United States, but we have always said that there was a risk of violent extremism here in the region and that our presence was necessary to mitigate the risk associated with that violent extremism.

**Q:** Just piggybacking on that, because my colleague just came back from Nangarhar Province where he was with Afghan forces actually fighting IS or at least a group of insurgents who called themselves ISK. How does that affect strategy? Does that change the U.S. approach and presence here?

**Dunford:** So far, no. So far, no. We have had an opportunity – we always have an opportunity to go after groups that represent a threat to U.S. forces, and we're enabling Afghan forces, who are dealing with any threat to the Afghan state. So it's a different group, but it hasn't fundamentally changed the arrangement that we have with Afghan security forces nor U.S. operations.

**Q:** Have relations between the U.S. and Afghan government -

**Dunford:** Relations between the U.S. and the Afghan government are very, very strong. With the national unity government, they're very strong. The president has been vocal about his appreciation – I'm talking President [Ashraf] Ghani now – he's been vocal about his appreciation for the U.S. presence here. U.S. sacrifice has been publicly recognized by the Afghan government. And so I would tell you that the relationship between the U.S. government and the Afghan government now is very good. I think we recognize we have mutual interest in Afghanistan's success, and we're working towards that about as well as we have at any point in the campaign.

**Q:** Is it better than when you were here as commander under a different president?

**Dunford:** I would say that the relationship has matured in a positive direction.

**Q:** Does that carry over with Pakistan and the Afghans?

**Dunford:** Yeah, well, I think yes, and while still there are some challenges, President Ghani, when he came in, expressed a willingness to work with Pakistan, and the Pakistan government expressed an interest to work with Ghani. There's a lot of historical baggage between the two countries. There are some significant challenges that the two countries have to work through. But what I seen is a commitment by the leadership in both countries to work through those challenges. We certainly are going to, where we can, help them to come together and work – if they work together in the region on the threat, we have a much higher probability of success.

**Q:** And have you seen that on the battlefield?

**Dunford:** We have seen it to a greater extent recently than we had in years past – still not what we would want it to be, just being honest.

**Q:** And what are those shortcomings that still need to be addressed?

**Dunford:** Well, I think, one, integration of operations, complete sharing of intelligence and developing a common understanding of how the campaign ought to unfold. But on the positive side, we have Afghans now in Pakistan going through training. That was impossible when I was here. We tried to do that when I was here. It didn't work. We now have a willingness for Afghans to send Afghan soldiers over to Pakistan to training. Just as one example of the military-to-military engagement, General Raheel Sharif, chief of the army staff in Pakistan, has been here multiple occasions. General Campbell speaks to him once a month, and he can tell you more about that.

So the relationship bilaterally, which is most important between Afghanistan and Pakistan, is in a better place than it was in the past, and the relationship with the United States and Pakistan is at least as good as it's been in the past, if not maybe a little better.

**Q:** The number of the troop commitments here and the years that we're going to stay – that's been kind of a moving target. Realistically, what should the American people expect as far as how long we might have troops here?

**Dunford:** Yeah. You know, it's hard to predict the future, but my assessment is that what's really the most important thing is that we continue to put the pressure on the networks here in the region that pose a threat to the United States and the American people. We'll watch that very closely. I can tell you any recommendations I'd make in the future would be informed by the need to make sure that we mitigate the risk of those threats.

**Q:** This is a little off the subjects we've been talking about, but I've been doing some work with the translators, former U.S. military translators who are still in Afghanistan, and they've been stuck awhile waiting for their special immigrant visas. And some of them have had a lot of trouble with that and a lot of threats. What do we as a country and, you know, as a military owe these guys who are out there on the battlefield with our troops?

**Dunford:** Yeah. I think that any Afghans that are at personal risk or their families are at risk because of the contribution that they've made to the campaign – we owe them due diligence in processing their applications to come to the United States and to offer them an opportunity to be free of that danger that they're incurring as a result of their support to the United States. That's what I'd – you know, unequivocally.

**Q:** Are you – have you been involved at all in –

**Dunford:** I have in specific cases. In other words, when some specific cases have been brought to my attention, I've tried to make sure that it had the visibility to the U.S. Embassy and the State Department, where that work is done. Several times in testimony I've made statements similar to the ones I just made to you about our obligation to take care of these people. A couple of whom worked directly for me, and they're good people. They are already U.S. citizens, but they're people who have been over here as translators for many, many years.

**Remarks at the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman Change of Responsibility and Retirement Ceremony**  
**Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Virginia**  
**December 11**

Distinguished guests, general officers, senior enlisted leaders, family members, ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for being here as we mark the change of responsibility between Sergeant Major Bryan Battaglia and Sergeant Major John Troxell, and as we take the time to recognize Sergeant Major Bryan Battaglia's extraordinary 35 years of service.

General Dempsey, our 18th chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is here along with his spouse Deanie. As I mentioned to him earlier today, you may not recognize General Dempsey now as rested and as young as he looks today. He looks a bit different than he did on September 25<sup>th</sup>, the last time that I saw him. Sir, it's great to have you back for a visit.

General Dempsey served as the presiding officer for Sergeant Major Battaglia's retirement and will make remarks in a few minutes. But I would also like to begin by personally thanking Sergeant Major Battaglia for all he's done on behalf of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines and their families.

Sergeant Major Battaglia, you're a leader, you're a warrior, and you're a man of character. Today, as you complete your act of service, you have what every leader would want to have. You have the admiration, the appreciation, and the affection of your fellow Marines, soldiers, sailors, and airmen. And that includes the Dunford family.

You should also have the satisfaction that comes with making a profound difference in the lives of a legion of men and women who are proud to call themselves Battaglia-trained.

I'd also like to recognize Mrs. Battaglia. Lisa, thank you for all you've done to support Bryan throughout his career, but more importantly, thank you for what you've done on behalf of our military families as a mentor, a role model, and an advocate. You've also had a lasting impact on the many lives you've touched along the way.

While we're saying farewell to some who epitomizes what it means to be a senior enlisted leader, we're welcoming another leader with an extraordinary record of service.

A few weeks ago, before we announced that Sergeant Major Troxell would serve as the third senior enlisted advisor to the chairman, a reporter asked me about the criteria for selecting Sergeant Major Battaglia's replacement. I said it's pretty straight forward. I'm looking for somebody with a wide range of experience and proven track record as a leader, a teacher, a mentor, and a warrior. I'm looking for someone who could stand before soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines and inspire confidence. Someone our enlisted men and women could be proud to have represent them. I was looking for someone who'd provide advice with candor. And to be honest with you, I was looking for someone who was exactly like Sergeant Major John Wayne Troxell.

Sergeant Major Troxell comes to us having served as command sergeant major for General [Curtis M.] Scaparrotti for the past five years at the First Corps, the ISAF Joint Command in Afghanistan, and most recently at the United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command and United States Forces Korea.

General Scaparrotti has described Sergeant Major Troxell as the "best command sergeant major he's observed in his 37 years of service". Pretty high praise from one of the most respected

leaders we have in uniform today. And apparently General Scaparrotti is also one of the most demanding. Sergeant Major Troxell tells a story of receiving a phone five years ago; it was a pretty short phone call. All he heard was, "Congratulations, pack your stuff, you're going to Afghanistan in a week."

Sergeant Major Troxell, I hope you noticed that when I called you in November, I gave you three weeks to report here as the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman, so life is looking up.

Sergeant Major Troxell also gets high marks from other senior leaders who observed him in the years, and I've had a number of generals call me and support his selection. But perhaps more importantly, I've had a great deal of unsolicited input from Sergeant Major Troxell's peers who universally consider him the right leader to be the senior enlisted advisor to the chairman.

John Wayne Troxell is a competent warfighter. He's deployed to combat five times. He made a combat jump into Panama, he served in Desert Storm, two tours in Iraqi Freedom and Operation Freedom in Afghanistan.

And like others who have served in combat, he refers to those tours as the most gratifying, [even if] they were the most difficult.

His leadership was particular evident when he served as the sergeant major for the Fourth Brigade, Second Infantry Division. During a 15 month deployment in Iraq in the time of the surge, his Stryker brigade lost 54 soldiers while another 500 were wounded.

The corps commander at the time described Sergeant Major Troxell as the best command sergeant major in the corps and attributed the brigade's ability to endure a particularly difficult deployment to his battlefield presence, his endurance, his charisma, and his tactical expertise. His character reflected in the brigade's performance under the most challenging combat conditions.

John Wayne Troxell sets the example. He hasn't scored under the 300-point maximum in the PFT in over 32 years; he has the fitness, energy, and stamina of service members half his age. He's stated that his priority is to be physically, mentally, and emotionally ready for any challenge he may encounter. And he's challenged those under his leadership to do the same.

When he was the armor sergeant major at Fort Knox, he gathered senior NCOs for several grueling and now legendary 36-hour "mangudai" survival exercises to remind them of the demands placed on soldiers in combat, and the NCO's responsibility to lead from the front. He, of course, was leading them throughout the exercise. He's also a man of character and integrity. If he tells you something, you can take it to the bank.

Sergeant Major Troxell is as much brain as he is brawn. Throughout his career, he's found innovative ways to improve retention, maintenance, safety, fitness, and proficiency of his units. He's been particularly focused on NCO development. He's enhanced the professional military education of his subordinates at every duty station. Most recently established the Backbone University to educate mid-level NCOs and petty officers to enhance interoperability in Combined Forces Command/U.S. Forces Korea.

Sergeant Major Troxell clearly has what it takes to serve as senior enlisted leader. He's passionate about taking care of people, and his proven track record as team builder, a gifted communicator and a warrior speaks for itself, and that's why he's here this afternoon.

Sergeant Major Troxell's spouse Sandra shares his passion for our men and women in uniform and their families. She's been by his side for 32 years, devoting much of her time volunteering in support of programs that support service members, spouses, and their families. She's experienced the challenges of military life that will allow her to relate to families across the Joint Force. As Sergeant Major Troxell assumes his new responsibilities, I know Sandra will

continue to be a strong advocate and member of the team. And I want to welcome you to the team as well. The Troxells have three sons and two grandchildren who all live back in Washington state, and not able to make it for the ceremony, we know they're here in spirit as well.

In closing, let me once again thank Sergeant Major Battaglia and Lisa for decades of selfless service. On behalf of the men and women of the Joint Force, I wish them fair winds and following seas in transition.

**Excerpts from Interview with Michele Flournoy at the Center for New American Security  
Next Defense Forum  
Washington, District of Columbia  
December 14**

**Flournoy:** You know, it is hard to believe that CNAS is approaching its 10-year anniversary. We have dedicated ourselves to try to shape and elevate the national security debate, and to growing the next generation of national security leaders. Hopefully you've seen evidence of both of those aspects of our mission today. A dominant pillar of our research and action agenda at CNAS is to prepare the intellectual capital for the next administration. As you all know, less than a year from now there will be a president-elect, a new commander in chief preparing to take the oath of office. From the fight against ISIL to a resurgent Russia to the rise of tensions with China, the next president will – the inheritance will be daunting, and there will be little time for introspection as he or she faces a plethora of challenges.

But thankfully, the next president will inherit also the best-trained, best-led, best-equipped military force in the world. Though the budget pressures that we have talked about today and the pace of operations will remain incredibly challenging, we are privileged to have the quality of men and women who serve, and who volunteer to bear the burdens of keeping us safe and secure here at home. We're incredibly lucky to have selfless, professional military leaders who have devoted their lives to shaping and sustaining our armed forces.

General Joe Dunford is one of those selfless military leaders. He spent decades leading U.S. Marines at every level of command, including in combat. He spent 22 months of his life in Iraq, where he earned the moniker of "Fighting Joe." Then he subsequently, as you know, served as the NATO commander of the ISAF forces in Afghanistan. He was called back to Washington, D.C. to become the commandant of his beloved Marine Corps, and all too quickly the nation called him again to become the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He has a reputation as a no-nonsense leader, a straight shooter with no ego. If you were to look up the military professional, that term in the dictionary, Joe Dunford's picture is what you would see. So I take a lot of solace from the fact that Joe Dunford will be the chairman through the coming transition, and will act as a key point of stability and continuity, vision and wisdom during that period.

We are so thankful here that you made it back from the Pentagon and meeting with the president this morning to share your thoughts on how the U.S. military is confronting today's challenges while preparing for a complex future. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the 19th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joe Dunford.

**Dunford:** Hey, thanks, Michele, and good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. You'd expect me to say it, but I really am honored to be here and glad to be here. One, I appreciate the flexibility on the scheduling. I think I was supposed to be on about an hour ago. But we did have an unexpected visitor at the White House this morning, and I'm probably about 10 minutes away from finishing that up and coming over here.

I've been the chairman for just about two months now. Although I've had plenty of opportunities to excel on the Hill and a number of other venues, this actually is – and why I say I'm glad to do this – this actually is the first time that I'm going to share, in a venue like this, my thoughts about the current security environment, but probably perhaps more importantly what I think the implications of the current security environment are for the joint force. So I'll share that with you, and spent a bit of time thinking through that yesterday in advance of coming here.

As I look around, I see a bunch of familiar faces and friends that are here. I think the process of being introspective and trying to put my thoughts together to come over here probably was useful to me. When I look around the room, the question-and-answer period will probably be useful to me as well. So regardless of what you get out of my prepared remarks, I'll get a lot out of being over here today. And it was very, very helpful.

I looked at the agenda, and I'd like to commend Michele and the team for what you've been talking about here today. To be honest with you, I wish I could have been here for the sessions this morning. The issues that you have been talking about, it won't surprise you, is exactly the issues that we're spending a lot of time speaking about on the Joint Staff. I think I've got some plants out here someplace, at least I hope I do, and if so I'll be able to get some feedback.

I was asked to spend a few minutes addressing what was described as my agenda and my priorities for my time as the chairman, and I'll try to do that, and I'll really do it in two parts. First, I'll kind of talk about the current fight. That does consume my time and will consume much of my time, whether I serve two years or four years. I expect that the current fight – and by that I mean, of course, the counter-ISIL fight and more broadly the fight against violent extremism and the remaining fight in Afghanistan – and then shift a little bit to some other challenges we have and really use Russia, China, Iran and North Korea as a lens to look through to say, what are the implications for other challenges we may have in terms of capability development. So that's kind of how I'll lay out my remarks.

At the end, I have probably what I think are two or three – there's many, but two or three of the major implications. When I look at the current fight and I look at those future challenges, I've laid out what I think are probably two or three of the major implications, which really will reflect now in my priorities. There are certainly many more, and we can talk about that however you want to.

Let me start with a quick comment. Michele talked about the fact that we have the most well-led, well-trained force in the world, and I really do believe that. I just came back from a trip on Thursday. I had a chance to go through European Command, AFRICOM, as well as United States Central Command, you know, saw a large number of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, great spirits. It probably won't surprise you to hear me say that the closer I got to the fight, the more spirited they were. They're pretty focused on what they're doing. They're pretty proud of what they're doing.

But I bring that up front because I don't actually take that for granted. The one thing I'm mindful of as I come into the job is we have been running pretty hard for a long period of time. Many of the young men and women that I spoke to over the past week are still deploying at what we call a one-to-one deployment to dwell. So they're home and deployed about an equal amount of time. Quite frankly, what I said to them as I spoke to them is I actually can't see a time in the near future where that dynamic is going to change. In other words, if our requirements continue to be what I believe they will be and the force structure stays about what it is today – and I think that's probably a fair assumption – we're going to be running pretty hard for some time to come.

And so joint readiness is very much on my mind. I won't go through that with you today. I'm not going to spend a lot of time talking about joint readiness. But I would tell you that I do view readiness slightly different than I did as a service chief. I still, as the chairman, look at the traditional metrics associated with train, organize, and equip, and unit readiness. But I also look at readiness through the lens of, do we have the right inventory of capabilities and capacities to do what must be done, whether benchmarked against an old plan or other crises or contingencies. Then the third element of readiness that I look at from the perspective that I have today is our posture of the force to actually respond in a timely manner to crises and contingencies. So those are kind of, from my perspective, the three things I'm paying attention to. Again, Michele and I both spoke about the people piece of it, but those other two parts of it are important to me in terms of readiness.

We're actually in the process now of reframing what we call joint readiness. One combatant commander, as we had this discussion about a month ago, described it as comprehensive joint readiness. But whatever we end up calling it, actually after the first of the year we are reframing readiness a little bit just to make sure that our dialogue on a day-to-day basis captures what I think are all the elements. It isn't just, again, the readiness of our individual units and the parts and pieces. It's making sure that we have the right inventory, and also making sure that on a day-to-day basis we're postured to be ready to respond in a timely manner. So all those things are there.

Let me transition to the current fight. The fight against violent extremism is clearly our most prominent challenge, and that includes the current fight against ISIL, al-Qaida, and all of the associated movements. While ISIL is clearly a transregional threat, our current focus for military operations is against core ISIL in Syria and Iraq. I suspect most of you in this room are familiar with the nine lines of effort of our overall strategy, and it has things in it such as governance, intelligence, finance, messaging and foreign fighters. I won't spend a whole lot of time speaking about those. There is a military dimension to all nine lines of effort, but there are two lines of effort that are focused specifically on the Department of Defense and military capabilities in particular. That's really what I'll talk about.

The first of those is we conduct strikes to kill ISIL leadership and fighters, to interdict their lines of communication, and deny them their sources of revenue. The second critical element to the military campaign is to develop and support effective partners on the ground to seize and secure ISIL-held terrain.

Conceptually, right now, the military campaign is designed to put pressure against ISIL across Syria and Iraq simultaneously. But there's clearly differences on the ground as we



execute, and I know you all appreciate that. But let me just say up front that I am not satisfied with our progress to date, and I won't be until ISIL is defeated.

I also want to say something because maybe the media would suggest otherwise from time to time. But I want to make it clear that within the framework of international and domestic law, our policies and our end state, I don't personally feel at all inhibited in terms of making recommendations to the president, and we will continue to do that. As Michele mentioned, we just came from a National Security Council meeting this morning. The president and the Cabinet were there, but we also had General [Lloyd J.] Austin there, as well as General Votel. We provided a campaign update. Again, I've been in the job two months, but every meeting we've had on this particular issue has concluded by, OK, what more can we do? What other ideas do you have that you want to put on the table that we can have a discussion? So I can assure you I will be as aggressive as I can be in making those recommendations, and that's certainly what the president has led me to believe he expects, as well as Secretary [of Defense Ashton B.] Carter.

Let me shift a little bit to Syria. Without a partner on the ground, Syria obviously has presented the most difficult challenge over the past year. And success in Syria requires working with our Turkish partners to secure the northern border of Syria that has been a challenge. It requires us supporting vetted Syrian opposition groups that will actually do what I mentioned earlier – they will actually take the fight to ISIL and seize the ground that's currently held by ISIL. And then conduct strikes not only against ISIL's command-and-control infrastructure, but as well their sources of revenue. You might have seen over the past several weeks we've had a fairly concerted effort – it has been ongoing for months, but a fairly concerted effort over the past several weeks because of the intelligence that we've developed to go after the oil infrastructure. But there are other elements of their revenue that we'll continue to go after here in the coming weeks.

To be more effective, quite honestly, we need better human intelligence, and we need to better enable those vetted Syrian opposition groups that I mentioned – again, those groups that will take the fight to the enemy on the ground. We're in the process of doing that. To be quite honest with you, I will not go into detail on how we're doing that in this venue. But in terms of further developing our human intelligence and setting ourselves up – posturing ourselves, if you will – to provide better support to those groups that are on the ground fighting against ISIL, that actually is our focus here in Syria.

The political transition, clearly, in Syria is going to have a lot to do with our long-term success. But in the meantime, we're going to focus on getting after ISIL's military capabilities, reducing the control of the terrain that they have, and also disrupting their ability to conduct external operations. So that's actually what we're trying to do.

In Iraq, we have a partner on the ground. But the relationship is obviously complicated by several factors, to include the political landscape, sectarianism, and Iranian influence. Success is going to require us to develop the capability of Iraqi security forces and Kurdish forces, and also enable their operations with intelligence, advisers, logistics, and combined arms support. We're doing all of that to some degree right now. I expect we'll do more of that in the coming weeks. I think you've probably seen some of that unfolded in the secretary's recent testimony, in the testimony that he and I did together in the House Armed Services Committee a couple weeks ago.

But very mindful of the complex challenges that we have right now. Certainly, as I mentioned earlier, not satisfied with where we are until we're defeating. We are encouraged by recent operations in Baiji, recent operations with the Peshmerga in Sinjar. We're encouraged by even what's happened in Ramadi – after months and months of what seemed to be very little progress, there is some significant progress right now. So a number of things on the ground are developing opportunities.

Again, why do I highlight the positives? Because the theory to case in the campaign is that what we will do is a large number of things as we pressure ISIL across Syria and Iraq. And where we find that we're having some success, we'll reinforce that success. I think we have started to see that again in these recent operations that have been conducted. To me, those operations that I mentioned actually are indicative of what is actually possible in the future. And we'll continue to try to reinforce those.

Moving forward, we'll be aggressive in other ways to do that, look for opportunities, and more importantly to increase the tempo and the effectiveness of our partners. I know, again, looking around the room – and I looked at the list of folks that are here – there's a lot of folks in the room who have a lot of ideas about the counter-ISIL campaign. There's a lot of folks most everywhere that have ideas about the counter-ISIL campaign. In all sincerity, I will tell you I'm at the point where I'm not confident we have all the ideas, and so I do listen to that, and I read, and engage in the ongoing dialogue.

But if you have other questions –I didn't want to come in and spend time giving you a campaign update; I want to get to the implications. But I did want to at least frame what we are trying to do in Iraq and Syria, and maybe that'll help prompt some questions.

And while the fight against ISIL dominates the headlines, we continue to face an enduring challenge of extremism in South Asia as well. From my perspective, the constant pressure that we have put on al-Qaida since 9/11, operating from Afghanistan, is one of the most important reasons why we haven't had another 9/11. I believe that the continued threat – we have not eliminated the threat – actually requires us to maintain an effective counterterrorism partner and a platform in Afghanistan for some time to come. While the focus has been on al-Qaida to date, I think you all know that's it further complicated now by the growth of Islamic State Khorasan, which has declared itself in Afghanistan and Pakistan region. So it's even become more complicated. There had already been, obviously, several extremist organizations operating in that area that provided a network for al-Qaida to leverage. But now most recent we also have the Islamic State there.

The president's decision to leave 9,800 in Afghanistan into next year I think does provide us an opportunity. It provides us an opportunity to continue to grow Afghan security forces, Afghan national security defense forces, as well as demonstrate our continued commitment to the region. The [Afghan President Ashraf] Ghani administration is fully supportive of what we're doing, to include the conversation I'm having with you in terms of what are we trying to do together. We're trying to develop an effective counterterrorism partnership with Afghanistan, which is what Ghani's very supportive of, and then obviously from that partnership have a platform from which we can advance our own interests in the region. I think we have common objectives with the Ghani administration. That's a positive.

This summer highlighted, however, that the Afghan security forces have a ways to go. That's particularly in the areas of logistics, intelligence, aviation, special operations capability, and then what I have more broadly called ministerial capacity – just the ability of their Ministry of Interior, their Ministry of Defense to have the wherewithal to provide the support, the training, the sustainment of their security forces. So we certainly still have work to do.

Also, a critical part of the campaign moving forward is the continued commitment of the international community in terms of resources. Right now we're reliant on commitments that were made in Chicago and Tokyo, and those all run out here in 2017. So very important, this summer there will be a meeting in Poland, and on the agenda will be to resource the Afghan campaign both from a development a security forces perspective through 2020. Watching that development this summer is going to be very important in terms of how we move forward.

Ultimately, from my perspective, the key variables that are going to affect the campaign are the Afghan-led reconciliation process, a strengthened relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and then also the resilience of the Afghan government. Again, you all I'm sure have seen in the media President Ghani has had some challenges with the government. He's grinding through that. But the national unity government that's been in place since last September, pretty difficult political environment inside of Afghanistan. We are certainly doing all we can to support the maturation of that government. But the resilience of that government is certainly going to be one of the indicators of success.

The threat from violent extremist networks is certainly, again, the one that has dominated much of my time over the past two months, and certainly dominates the news on a day-to-day basis. But in addition, we have a number of challenges from state threats as well, or state challenges I guess is probably a better way to say it.

Former Secretary of State – I think you all have heard the expression – Secretary of State [Henry A.] Kissinger said this is the most dynamic and complex security environment that he has seen since World War II. I got to tell you, after about 60, 70 days in the job, I'd have a hard time arguing with him. I think I probably agree with that assessment. But what I would like to do is maybe just describe the behaviors and the capability development of those four actors, and again, then get into a little bit of a discussion on, as I look at that, what really is the "so what."

Despite its declining population and shrinking economy, Russia has made significant investments in its military capabilities. And you know, on Saturday morning I picked up *The Washington Post* and I read *The Washington Post*, and in *The Washington Post* was a summary of Putin's announcements last week: new intercontinental ballistic missiles, new submarines, new airplanes, new conventional capabilities, all fielded over the past year. We're also obviously closely watching Russian developments in space, and in cyberspace as well. I think when you look at Russian capability development, you have to look at it in the context of what they have done recently in Crimea and in the Ukraine, and what's going on in Syria. So that kind of frames Russia from my perspective.

Moving on to China, we emphasize in our China policy opportunities to cooperate, and I think that's a sincere position that our government has. We also – and we get paid to do that – closely watch their developments of their military capabilities and their behavior in the South China Sea. While the Chinese are typically fairly opaque about military capability development, it's pretty clear to us that they're continuing to invest in a large conventional capability – a

growing navy, increasingly sophisticated air force. We also see their advancements in space, in cyberspace in particular. In the South China Sea, we do view their activity as destabilizing right now. While we exercise freedom of navigation routinely – and that assures, from my perspective, our allies and partners – it certainly hasn't done anything to turn back what Admiral [Harry B.] Harris has called the Great Wall of Sand that's being built by the Chinese in the South China Sea.

In order to spend more time on the implications in question and answers, I'm going to quickly skip through my perspective on Iran and North Korea. I think you all are familiar with, certainly, their behavior. And I would just note that we see similar trends – ballistic missile development cyber capabilities – and then obviously North Korean aspirations for nuclear capability are all things that we kind of look at.

So when I look at all this in the aggregate – and that is, when I look at the current challenges associated with violent extremism and I look at those other challenges that I just referenced – I think there's a number of implications. I'll touch on a few.

The first implication, for me, is foundational. Probably self-evident, but we need a balanced inventory of joint capabilities that's going to allow us to deter and defeat potential adversaries across the full range of military operations. We don't have a luxury to have a choice between a force that can fight the current fight against violent extremism and one that can deal with that full range of challenges I spoke to earlier.

A second implication is the need for us to consider how to most effectively use the military instrument of national power to address today's challenges in areas that have been characterized as the gray zone or perhaps even in cyberspace. I believe we need to develop more effective methods to deal with challenges like Russia's little green men or Iranian malign influence. Our traditional approach kind of views things as we're either at peace or at war. That may not necessarily be the case for our adversaries; they live somewhere in between. From my perspective, we need to spend some time on that particular issue. Again, there's a full range of instruments available to our nation to deal with these challenges. I necessarily now am just focused on our military instrument. But I do think we need to think more about how to wield the military instrument in these areas called a gray zone. Quite honestly, when you look at cyber, clearly we have challenges in cyber, not only to protect ourselves but also the development of offensive cyber capabilities. Cyber deterrence is an area where we probably need to spend some time on. I know Admiral Mike Rogers is doing that, and I certainly will do that over time. We also need to develop a framework within which cyber threats – you know, the attribution issue, the managing escalation and hardening ourselves are all areas that I'd also mention.

But let me get to what I think is probably one of the most significant implications of our current challenges, and that's the high likelihood that any conflict that we have will be transregional, multi-domain, and multifunctional. I'll explain a little bit about what that means.

When I look at information operations, cyber capabilities, space and counter-space capabilities, ballistic missile technology, they have all affected the character of the modern battlefield. We see such capabilities fielded by both state and non-state actors. They're going to look for ways to harness those so that they can avoid our strengths and exploit our vulnerabilities.

The current fight against extremism is clearly an example of a transregional fight, but let me give you another example that maybe highlights what I'm trying to get at here. If you would have thought about the Korean Peninsula some years ago, you would have thought about a conflict that we would have hoped to isolate on the Korean Peninsula. And then, as the North Koreans developed ballistic missile capability, well, obviously that started to affect other regional actors, such as Japan. So no longer could you hope to isolate a conflict on the peninsula. As you start to look at intercontinental ballistic missile technology, cyber capabilities, space capabilities, information operations and so forth, it's pretty hard to see how even a regional conflict on the peninsula would actually be anything other than transregional, multi-domain and multifunctional.

From my perspective, our current planning, our organizational construct, and our command and control is not really optimized for that fight. So when I look at how we're going to fight, the character of the fight in the 21st century, and I look at how we have typically approached things, which is obviously through a regional approach – and quite honestly, it may surprise you or you just hadn't thought about it this way – the lowest level of integration in the Department of Defense really is the Secretary of Defense. You know, we use collaboration and cooperation in support of supporting relationships between combatant commanders. But in terms of true integration – in other words, decision-making authority that integrates a fight across a region, across a domain, or across a function – it's really the Secretary of Defense. And so that is an issue that actually – in terms of what's on the top of my inbox, that's an issue that I'm really taking a look at hard, because if you believe what I believe and you do look at the nature of the fight today, even against violent extremism, and then look at the nature of what the fight might be against peer competitors in the future, I don't think we'll be able to be as responsive, I don't think we'll be able to generate the tempo, I don't think we'll be able to frame decisions and act in a timely manner as much as we should unless we make some fundamental changes, again, to our organizational construct – the way we plan, the way we develop strategy, and then as importantly our command and control. We had a good discussion with the combatant commanders about that a few weeks ago, and we are doing some things now.

You know, I think this will be an issue, by the way, that will come up in the Senate Armed Services Committee hearings about Goldwater-Nichols [Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986]. I think we'll see more of this issue come up in the coming months. In the meantime, we're within the authorities that we have today, doing some things to mitigate that challenge, because this isn't a future challenge, this is now. So we need to do some things even today to mitigate that challenge. But I also think making some fundamental changes will better posture us for what I have described as the character of war in the 21st century.

Again, I don't suggest – in fact, would argue to the contrary – the nature of war I wouldn't argue has changed, but the character of war – highlighted by those capabilities and functions that I spoke about earlier and what our peer competitors as well as – as well as non-state actors would have – the character of war is actually pretty dynamic. I think our organizational construct, command and control needs to be changed in order to respond to that. I'm not going to suggest a solution today, but merely to frame the problem.

I'll stop there to allow for time to question. I think I was on for about 15 minutes. Again, what I hoped to do is just kind of seed the ground for the Q&A session, the issues that you want

to speak about. Again, as I divide my time and I start thinking about my priorities, I can't help but be immersed in the close fight. But at the same time, one of the things that we really want to have a mind towards is capability development for the future.

And balancing that – to be honest with you, if you ask me, well, what's your number-one challenge that you expect to confront in your time in the job, the number-one challenge is balancing the requirements of the current fight with what we need to do to make sure we're ready for tomorrow, you know, in the context of a fiscally constrained environment –trying to make sure that we're doing that, and in the meantime making sure that we're not only adapting for today, but we're actually innovating for tomorrow. I don't know what Secretary [Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert O.] Work spoke about this morning, but I suspect he talked a little bit about innovation this morning. Again, I draw a distinction between those two words. The adaptation is the things we're doing right now with the wherewithal that we have, and to me innovation is when you're looking really for a fundamentally different way to do things in the future – disruptive, if you will. We've got to be able to do both of those things.

**Flournoy:** Thank you, General. I'm going to ask you to join me in the chairs here and we'll have a few Q&A back and forth, and then we'll open it up to the audience. Thank you again for sharing your insights, and I'm very glad you were able to escape from the Pentagon and come over and join us after all.

I wanted to pick up where you left off, which is talking about how the nature of warfare is changing, how in the future we're going to see transregional scenarios, multidimensional, multi-domain, and raising the question about, you know, are we organized, is the C2 right. And I don't want to try to push you towards premature answers, but can you give us a little bit of your thinking about what kinds of alternatives and options, or what kinds of questions should we be asking ourselves?

**Dunford:** Before getting into execution, I think the first thing I'm seized with is the planning. Today, our planning construct, we develop regional plans. When you were the secretary, you aggregated those regional plans. We don't start with necessarily, for example, a strategy to take a look at Russia. If we are involved in a conflict with Russia, it's not going to unfold like the old plans that we necessarily develop to get after the physics of war. I mean, there is a science of our business, and the old plans help inform the science. But if you're going to look at a challenge like Russia, it's not going to be isolated to whatever old plan that you would think about.

And so, from the very beginning, when you think about challenges, I think our old plans need to be born with the view that it will be a transregional, it will be a multi-domain, it will be a multifunctional – again, domain: sea, air, space, cyberspace; functional could be ballistic missile defense and actual capabilities, just to make sure that we're clear on how I'm using the words. So the first thing is, in terms of strategy development, I think it needs to be informed by the assumption I just made. That is certainly an assumption that I'm willing to have people challenge, but it's my assumption today that it would be very difficult for any conflict to be isolated to a region. So when we think about potential adversaries in the future, I think we need to think about a strategy right up front that takes into account that it is, in all likelihood, going to be fought in that way.

Then, in execution, if you think about any scenario where there's ballistic missiles involved, you've got the COCOM from which they originate, you have the COCOM through which it passes, and you have the combatant commander of the United States Northern Command who would be responsible for the consequences. Now, I don't want for a second to leave you thinking that today we can't make all that work. It absolutely works. But that's one thing that's going on in a series of a hundred things that are affecting multiple combatant commanders simultaneously.

And so from my perspective there is probably an organization – it isn't so much authorities, by the way. Some people have suggested – this is not the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff saying we need a general staff and I need more authority, all right? That's not actually what this is about. But I do believe that there needs to be a staff that has a perspective of all the combatant commanders, that can actually provide the Secretary of Defense with a common operational picture, that can actually frame decisions for the Secretary of Defense that do involve multiple regions simultaneously, and can do that in a timely manner. Of course, that's not – as you well know, that's not currently what the Joint Staff is designed to do. So I do think – in other words, this is all about the Secretary of Defense. It's all about the national command authority. It's all about making decisions in a timely manner.

And by the way, I do think, if you look back at nuclear command and control, it's instructive because we did get it right with nuclear command and control. I mean, nuclear command and control is a very effective way for the president to make decisions in a timely manner. I think that now – you know, the complexity of nuclear command and control in the '60s was not replicated by traditional conventional fights. But now I think you see some of the same complexity that we saw in nuclear command and control in other fights, and so we need a better way to get after it.

**Flournoy:** No, that's very helpful, very helpful. We spent a lot of this morning talking about the secretary's innovation agenda, and I think there's a lot of, you know, support for the intent and the desire to move forward, the need. But we were really wrestling with some of the, you know, how do you actually do this. One of the things that really struck me when I was in the Pentagon is what I've come to call the tyranny of consensus – that sometimes the overarching objective becomes what can we all agree on as opposed to how do we come up with the best options or alternatives to solve a given problem. I'm wondering, from your perspective, do we have enough space or have we created a space to really have the competition of ideas that's going to be necessary to innovating our concepts, or how we approach different warfighting challenges? And if not, what more can we do to do that?

**Dunford:** What you say resonates a lot with me. The worst thing we can do for innovation is centralize innovation. That's the worst thing we can do. And so, as I've been involved in the conversations, the thing that I've argued for is what you want to do is you want to incentivize innovation. One way you incentivize in our department is resources, right? So resources can help incentivize innovation.

I do think that there needs to be an overarching view of what we're going to need in the future in terms of – I'll talk now from a joint capabilities perspective – you need kind of an overarching vision that's laid out there to inform innovation. It doesn't limit it, but it informs it. I mean, there are problems that we can see, and you want to solve those problems. There might be

other things that find out along the way that allow you develop a disruptive technology or do things in a fundamentally different way, but there's a combination of testing things and then finding out what's in the art of the possible, and also going after a process that's specifically designed to solve certain problems.

But I really do believe that one of the things we need to be careful of – and I think some people think the more that we bring the services together to work on this, the better off we'd be. I'm exactly in the opposite place. I think that allowing the services, and particularly their laboratories, their organizations, and then some of the other even non-department think tanks and so forth – MIT, the universities that we have relationships with – but if we could incentivize innovation and then figure out a way in the front end to kind of cast a net over it so we know where it all is and we can leverage it, and then on the back end actually be in a position to harvest it, we'd be in good shape.

So there's two areas where I think we need to centralize it. One, lay out a vision, what is it we're trying to do. Then, on the back end, you try to figure out a way you can harvest all those good ideas. What happens in between ought to be to the max extent possible decentralized.

**Flournoy:** The human capital dimension of this is important. We heard some ideas this morning about Force of the Future – which, I think, again, people are interested in hearing more about, don't fully understand exactly what it is yet, not sure what problems it's trying to solve. And yet, I think there's a general sense that the all-volunteer force needs a new iteration if we're going to be able to recruit and develop and develop the leaders and have the retention that we need for the future. So how are you thinking about the human capital dimension of the future force?

**Dunford:** I'm going to answer that from a service-chief perspective because that was something I grappled with even before coming into this job. First of all, one point that I make is the current force, from my perspective, is not broken. That was not a gratuitous remark I made in the beginning of my remarks. I fundamentally believe we are recruiting and retaining an incredibly high-quality force. When you think about young Americans, I think it's somewhere between two and three young men and women in the United States of America are actually qualified for military service amongst the demographic. So we're getting a good cut of people.

But when I looked at the organization of the Marine Corps from a service chief perspective, 67 percent of the United States Marine Corps, for example, is on their first enlistment, and about 49 percent of the Marine Corps is lance corporals and below. So it's a very young force, and designed to be such. But then I looked at F-35 mechanics, cyber capabilities, some of the things that really do require years and years. And I call it – for those of you who read the *Outliers*, I called it 10,000 hours of repetitions, right? So what is it you need to have to achieve excellence in an occupational field like cyber, or to be someone that can actually handle equipment that's as complicated as an F-35 or some of the other technology that we have today. Some of that takes a combination of training, education – so training, how to do something; education, how to think – and then experience to 10,000 hours of repetition.

That causes me to move the needle in the force in some select areas to the right. Currently we kind of have a pyramid structure across the department. So in my mind it isn't just Force of the Future slapped onto the entire department, it's looking at what is it that we need to have in each one of our occupational fields at each grade, both in the civilian force and in the military



force. How I defined it is I said let's look at the force next, let's look at each individual requirement, let's define what 10,000 hours are for that particular position, let's go out and recruit to that 10,000 hours, and let's develop now a training and education and an experience path that will allow you to get to that point in time where that person has the wherewithal to do the job, achieving excellence – in other words, a plan that's optimized for it. To me, what Force of the Future ought to be is it ought to be a plan that optimizes the human capital for challenges that we're going to face in the future.

It shouldn't start with an overall approach where we say, OK, here's all the rules we want to have in the department. It ought to start with a clear-sight picture of what it is that we need individuals to look like if they're performing certain functions and then go out, starting with the recruiting, to get the right people.

There's some other things that I think we can do in terms of, we've always measured physical fitness. We've always measured mental aptitude. I think measuring psychological resilience and so forth is another area that probably is something we ought to have a discussion within when we think about the force next.

I guess I'd summarize it all up by saying, number one, to me Force of the Future is about being very specific about the requirements we need and the young men and women we're going to have in the future, identify those requirements, and start from cradle to grave to grow the force that needs to be. I do think there's a certain amount of maturation in the force, and I consider maturation a combination of those three things I spoke earlier – about training, education and experience equals maturity. I think the force will be a little bit more mature simply because some of the things that we are doing today – 10,000 hours of what might have been a fight – conventional fight 20 years ago is different than the 10,000 hours we'll need for that transregional, multi-domain, multifunctional fight of the future.

**Flournoy:** Another, obviously, human capital issue that's been in the news of late is the secretary's decision to open up all career specialties in the military to women. Obviously, he had the benefit of hearing a wide range of views as he made that decision, including some dissent. It wasn't without controversy. You've stated, look, the secretary's made a decision, now it's time to implement. Can you say something about how that implementation happens in a way that's most productive and most constructive?

**Dunford:** Oh, absolutely. First of all, what happened over the past couple of years was, in areas where we didn't have standards, we now have those. It wasn't because the organizations were so inept that they didn't have standards. It's because we made certain assumptions when it was an all-male population and occupational field. We trained people and we didn't have to necessarily screen them beforehand because about 98 percent of them could do it. That's kind of how we did business.

But in terms of implementation – and I have provided some input to the secretary that he's alluded to for implementation – I would frame it along these lines. Number one, we have to look at combat effectiveness. I don't think anyone's suggesting anything other than that. But we've got to make sure we're clear on the standards in each occupational field and we have a path to have people that meet those standards filling those fields.

I do think we also needed to take a look at the health and welfare of our people. I realize that some people, including some people in this room, were dismissive of some of the issues brought up about injury, physical injury. But, in my mind, there's a real issue there with the physiology, and so we need to figure out exactly how we can go about mitigating that. I think it would be irresponsible for me as a leader to know that right now, given what we do, we have twice the likelihood of having an injury in one part of the population than another and just say that's the price of doing business. I don't think we'd want to do that.

The other thing we want to do is make sure that this at the end of the day is about talent management. We have to be a lot more, in my mind, precise about taking the universe of people that we have available to us and putting them in occupational fields where their specific talents can best be leveraged, and that they have a high probability not only of successfully completing their first enlistment, but a high probability of being available for that pool from which we will draw, competitively, for the future.

I think the secretary's guidance is pretty clear on implementation. He certainly has tasked me with sitting with him as we do that. I think doing that in a deliberate, responsible way is going to be a way that we actually can do what he wants to do, which is make the force better.

**Flournoy:** Switching gears a little bit, one of the panels we had this morning spent a lot of time talking – thinking about deterrence in this new context of greater competition between the U.S. and Russia and China and so forth, a kind of period of great power competition. You talked a little bit about posture. As you think about our posture in Europe, our posture in the rebalance in Asia, are there things that you think we need to be looking at that maybe haven't been on the table in the past 10 years in terms of deterrence in particular and reassurance of allies?

**Dunford:** Sure. So I'll oversimplify the dialogue that's taking place, maybe even a debate that's taking place, in various parts of the department, and frankly, probably in the journals as well. That is some people think that the most effective way that you can deter an adversary is to have a capable force that episodically exercises and demonstrates its capability, but it largely builds up readiness back at home. There are others who would argue that, no, that wouldn't be effective – that in order to not only to deter potential adversaries, but to assure our partners and allies, you need to have an effective presence that's forward.

I think that's obviously a theory of the case in terms of the Pacific rebalance. We've said that in order to advance our national interests in the Pacific, in order to support our economic – or in order to provide the security within which our economic interests can be advanced, we want to be present in the Pacific. I feel the same way about other regions, and particularly in Europe, where I believe that not only do we have to have the capability to respond with whatever the contingency requires, but on a day-to-day basis we need to be visible, we need to be seen, we need to be there where the enemy knows that our response time provides us with a competitive advantage. So I fall probably closer to the "we need to be forward" [side].

To the specific point that you asked, that's why I do support increased rotational forces into Europe so we have on a day-to-day basis more physical presence that's there. Again, I think it's really two things. It's not only deterrence, but it's assurance as well. And then also clearly making sure – back to my theme of joint readiness – that the reservoir of joint capabilities in the

aggregate is sufficient not only to be out there on a day-to-day basis deterring, but you actually can provide the capability necessary to fight and win.

**Flournoy:** I'm going to ask one more question and then we're going to turn to the audience, so please be thinking of your questions for General Dunford. One of the issues that's come up in the reform hearings on the Hill has been the sort of growth of the staffs, the headquarters staffs. I think OSD is now about 5,000 people. Joint Staff is about 4,000. Cocom staffs total about 38,000. You add in the defense agencies and you get to a total of nearly 240,000 people. Now, there's a lot of good and important and essential work that's going on there, but there's also a sense that the level of duplication and bureaucracy has grown.

You're two months in. You've spent most of your career in the field. Coming back into the Pentagon, what's your sense of the headquarters, whether there is an opportunity for de-layering, streamlining, adding some additional agility back into the system?

**Dunford:** Sure. I was raised with if you have a problem, you should start solving it in ever-increasing concentric circles around your own desk, right? I'll probably maybe just talk about the Joint Staff initially. I do think that some of the discussion about the Joint Staff is probably fair. Now, the 4,000, by the way, that represents what used to be the Joint Forces Command and is now an extension of the J7 and the Joint Staff. So in all honesty, there hasn't been a huge growth of the Joint Staff over time.

Having said that, the Joint Staff over time, for a variety of reasons, has begun to do things that I think we can probably walk away from. I will tell you, my priority for the Joint Staff is to focus on the strategy, is to focus on supporting the combatant commander. It's force development, capability development, joint force readiness, those core areas. Some of the things that need to be done, I hesitate to say those right now because there's people that are actually sitting in jobs and I want to do this right. Probably we'll do this sometime after the first of the year where I can actually look at people and say, look, it isn't what you're doing – you're doing a great job – but we're going to divest ourselves of these functions because – well, I guess I can say this: to date, I have not had a Tank, a meeting with the Joint Chiefs, on what I would describe as a Title 10 issue, and I don't intend on doing that except in very extraordinary cases.

I'll give you an example: the pay raise. The pay raise came up and I provided my input as to what I thought the pay raise would be. I talked to the Chiefs and I say, look, if you all think we need a Joint Chiefs position on the pay raise, that's fine, but you have a vehicle to provide your input through your service chief – through your service secretary that then goes to the secretary of defense. So unless there's an extraordinary reason for what I call a Title 10 issue, we won't have Joint Chiefs positions. In my mind, we'll spend our time establishing positions on the current fight against ISIL, what our way ahead ought to be in Afghanistan, what our strategy ought to be in dealing with some of those other challenges we spoke about.

But over time – again, I won't be critical – but the demands of the Joint Chiefs have been driven by others. So they've said, well, we want a Joint Chiefs position on this or that. Well, that requires a staff to actually help the chairman to form a position. Those are some of the things that have happened over time. But despite the fact that people will say the organization isn't capable of making changes itself, in terms of using the principle of alignment in divesting ourselves of

things that we don't think we need to do that are then either duplicated up in OSD or down in the service secretaries, I'm all in favor of doing that.

With regard to the COCOMs, I think we need to be careful in the discussion that says the COCOMs aren't warfighters that's been laid out there. What I don't want us to do – and I'm willing to take a hard look at this, wargame it, and be critical – be critical in our thinking about it, but I don't want us to take the last 14 years of what we have described as war – and it has been war – and then project that out for the next 15 or 20 years. We need to think about some of those challenges I spoke about in my remarks and make sure that, when we talk about what the combatant commanders do or don't do, we talk about what they will do or don't do across the range of military operations and not just narrowly focused in the fight against ISIL, where we have concluded that joint task forces, of which I commanded one – joint task forces solve all the problems for the combatant commander. I don't believe that's the case.

If you think about what I said a minute ago about transregional, multi-domain and multifunctional, I don't know how we'll call somebody at the four-star level that's responsible for a geographic command anything other than a warfighter. That doesn't mean we can't make some changes in our Unified Command Plan. It doesn't mean all the combatant commanders have to exist in their current form. It doesn't mean the Joint Staff has to exist in its current form. I just want to make sure that we have the right framework within which to make recommendations and to have a debate, and we don't just take the last 14 years and say, well, a-ha, this is what they've been doing for the last 14 years, so automatically that's what they'll be doing over the next 15 to 20 years.

So I guess – I have read what you've written, Michele, and I read so many of your testimony. I do think the numbers are out there and we need to take a hard look at it. In personal experience, a bigger staff isn't always necessarily a better staff.

I am now growing into the staff that I have. You know, I was much happier as a colonel, where I actually knew everybody on my staff. I mean, honestly, you have a personal relationship with them and you move at the speed of heat. When you have a larger staff, it's much more difficult to convey your intent. It's much more difficult to come up with a process within which you can make decisions – frame decisions and make decisions – and much harder to have a big staff. I think most of us would instinctively want to have a smaller staff; it's just got to be aligned to the functions that have to be performed.

I think that's the work that we have to do really pretty quickly because Senator [John S.] McCain's running pretty hard. And no, and I think I have an obligation – honestly, I have an obligation to provide best military advice and inform that dialogue. It doesn't mean, as in the case of Goldwater-Nichols, the – you know, the department's position at that time wasn't accepted. I'd like to think right now that we're willing to be as innovative as anybody else is. It doesn't mean that we'll have all the good ideas, but I certainly will be receptive to those. I'm not fighting to hang onto what we have today; I just want to make sure that we spend 80 percent of our time trying to solve the problem for tomorrow and then 20 percent of our time developing the wire diagram and talking about how big we ought to be. That would be my only appeal, really, in this debate, is to do that.



# 2016

## SELECTED WORKS

**Article from *Joint Force Quarterly* (National Defense University Press)  
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“From the Chairman: Our Force and Our Fight”**

During my first 90 days as Chairman, I have engaged Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and Coast Guardsmen at all levels. I am confident that our nation has the most professional and capable military in the world. The Joint Force has proved effective and resilient throughout years of combat, kept the homeland safe, and advanced our national interests across the globe. Every day, in every task, our men and women in uniform deliver.

But we should expect no credit tomorrow for what we did yesterday. We must continually adapt to meet current challenges and innovate to develop the capabilities we will need to win future fights. As we do that, we will focus on improving our joint warfighting capability and joint readiness and developing leaders who will be the foundation of Joint Force Next. This contribution to *Joint Force Quarterly* is intended to provide some initial thoughts regarding these three priorities.

In the months ahead, my intent is to use this space to share thoughts about where we are headed, while generating an open dialogue that will allow us to fully leverage the insights and ideas of leaders across the Joint Force.

### **Improving Our Joint Warfighting Capability**

The strategic landscape is characterized by complexity, uncertainty, and rapid change. While the nature of war is enduring, the character of war today is extraordinarily dynamic. Information operations, cyber, space and counterspace capabilities, and ballistic missile technology are among the true game changers on the modern battlefield. Both state and nonstate actors are constantly looking for ways to harness such capabilities in order to avoid our strengths and exploit our vulnerabilities.

This dynamic has significant implications for how we will fight, and makes it probable that future conflicts will most often be transregional and fought across multiple domains and functions. Driven by this assumption, one of my highest warfighting priorities is to improve our ability to integrate joint capabilities in a transregional, multidomain, and multifunctional fight. From my perspective, our current organizational and command and control constructs are optimized neither for the current fight nor for the challenges we will confront in the future. Whether we are confronting state or nonstate actors, we must be able to quickly and decisively bring to bear the full weight of the Joint Force. Collaboration and cooperation across regions, domains, or functions is not enough. We must achieve true integration. The Joint Staff will lead an effort to further frame and tackle this challenge.

### **Joint Readiness**

A ready Joint Force is one that can effectively meet the steady-state requirements of the combatant commanders, deter our adversaries, and respond decisively in the event of a contingency. A comprehensive approach to joint readiness requires that we focus on the traditional metrics associated with unit readiness while also assessing and adjusting our posture to deliver joint capabilities where it matters, when it matters.

The Secretary of Defense, supported by the Joint Staff, determines the right inventory of Service capabilities and capacities to meet our national security requirements across the range of military operations. The Secretary also determines how the force is best postured to support our defense strategy. The Services, in turn, must focus on ensuring that units are properly led, trained, organized, and equipped. When assessing joint readiness, we must consider all three of these elements.

One combatant commander has suggested the term comprehensive joint readiness to describe a holistic view of the relationship between unit readiness, the Joint Force inventory, and the posture of the Joint Force. This is how we will define joint readiness in the future. We will refine our readiness processes and metrics to ensure that we maintain the right balance of unit readiness, the right inventory of joint capabilities, and the optimal posture in support of our defense and national military strategies.

#### **Develop Leaders for Joint Force Next**

The men and women of the all-volunteer force are our true competitive advantage and greatest asset. The future operating environment will place new demands on leaders at all levels. To best prepare our future leaders for success, we must continuously assess and refine our leader development. The Joint Staff will lead an effort to define the qualities and characteristics of the leaders we will need in the Joint Force Next. This study will inform how we will select, train, educate, and manage the talent of tomorrow's leaders.

#### **Our Mutual Responsibilities**

Meeting the challenges of today's dynamic and demanding operating environment while preparing the Joint Force to win future fights will be a team effort. To be successful, we must harness the intellect, insights, and innovative ideas from men and women across the Joint Force. I have an obligation to encourage and energize the dialogue. We all have an obligation to contribute—it is our force and our fight. In closing, it is an honor to serve as your Chairman, and I look forward to hearing from you.

#### **Excerpts from Interview with Media in Stuttgart Stuttgart, Germany January 4**

**Q:** You talked recently about the need to look at how the Joint Staff is structured, COCOMs are structured, I think to include perhaps how the COCOMs are aligned geographically. I'm curious, and there's been a lot of conversation about AFRICOM over the years. And most recently retired Admiral Stavridis was before Congress talking about perhaps merging EUCOM and AFRICOM. As you look at how COCOMs are structured, is this something that you would consider? I mean, you know, is part of your view that perhaps we should go back to Africa being part of EUCOM?

**Dunford:** OK, just so you know, the broader issue for me is what is the right organizational construct to deal with the challenge we're going to have in the 21st century. It's based on an important – I'm going to come to your question, but it's not a simple question. The issue is, number one, my assumption is that most regional conflicts are going to quickly become transregional. And most conflicts will be multi-domain, right – sea, air, space, cyberspace, and so forth – and then multifunctional, meaning ballistic missile defense, conventional capabilities.

You look at the full range of what's going to happen. We need to make sure that in the context of transregional, multi-domain, multifunctional conflicts we have the right command and control construct in place to integrate joint capabilities and support rapid decision making by the secretary of defense. That's the most important – that's what we're really talking about. That's the strategic discussion that we're having about command and control. Now, a subset of that would be what do we need in each region to advance our interests in that region across the range of military operations – from day-to-day operations to potential conflict.

And so the real question is not should we merge AFRICOM and EUCOM. The broader question, and it's a question I am willing to ask and will ask is, are we properly postured today for what we expect to be the challenges we will face tomorrow globally. A piece of that has to be looking at the folks in the geographic combatant commands, looking at the Joint Staff, all of which feeds decision making by the national command authority and the president and the secretary of defense.

I wouldn't want [to get into the question of] should we consolidate NORTHCOM and CENTCOM – or, NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM, and EUCOM and AFRICOM, and reduce the numbers of people in headquarters staffs. The question we are asking is, no, what's the optimal command and control construct to facilitate operating in an environment where I make that assumption, again, a transregional, multi-domain, multifunctional conflict. Does that make sense? That's an important point to make because what I don't want to be quoted on at this point is saying I would open up – I would consider EUCOM and AFRICOM merging.

What I would want to be quoted on is saying, look, we're going to look broadly at the unified command plan and agree as a team to make sure that we make recommendations to the secretary of defense and subsequently the Senate Armed Services Committee for changes that will allow us to move forward. This was 20 years ago we came up with the construct we're living with right now. And so, I think it's a good time to look at the nature of war doesn't change, but the character of war changes. Our command and control construct needs to keep pace with the character of war.

#### **Excerpts from Interview with Tom Philpott, *Military Officer Magazine* January 13**

**Philpott:** Well, sir, I thought I'd start with asking you about the current fight. We've been at it an awfully long time. How's it going against ISIS both in Syria and Iraq? Then I'll ask you about Afghanistan.

**Dunford:** Yeah. No, I just came back last week. I had a chance to go through Germany with European Command, Africa Command, and then down into Turkey, an important part of the



fight, and then spend some time in Iraq. While I was in Iraq, I went to Baghdad as well as al-Asad, up to Irbil, and then saw some of the training that's going on in and around Baghdad. So I really wanted to get a cross cutting of the folks that are doing advise and assist, and the ones that are doing kind of the building partnership capacity, two of the missions that were there, as well as get an update on the air campaign and the support that we're providing.

Here's my assessment as where we are. First of all, we put together a coalition of over 60 nations. Twenty of those nations are actually providing forces in the fight. What the design of the campaign that was really developed by United States Central Command under General Austin's leadership was to put pressure on the enemy across Iraq and Syria. That, of course, required us to develop ground forces. You alluded to a long time. It took some time to pull all that together.

Over the last year in particular we've trained a number of effective – so I'll talk Iraq first and then maybe Syria second – we've trained a number of effective Iraqi forces. My perspective coming back from the trip is that at the operational tactical level they now have momentum for the first time. That's happened over the last couple of months. Also, was impressed – I'd been there in October. The psychology of the Iraqi forces has also changed over the last couple months, where now they're approaching the future with a degree of confidence I just simply didn't see a couple months ago. I think some wins under their belt have actually resulted in that sense of confidence.

First, they had some operations up the Tigris River Valley towards Baiji. So they've driven the enemy north of Baghdad. We also have had the Peshmerga have success up in the north in reducing the amount of ground that ISIL held. Of course, most recently, we saw the enemy pushed out of Ramadi. Although there's still some fighting remaining in Ramadi, probably some weeks clearing still in and around the Ramadi area and certainly in the entire Anbar province, and we still have Mosul as an operation that's some months ahead, again, my perspective is that the Iraqi security forces now are starting to come together.

They're approaching the future with confidence, and they've had some success. I think, more importantly, we have learned with our Iraqi partners how to most effectively integrate coalition capabilities with the Iraqi ground forces. Some valuable lessons learned in the Ramadi campaign that will be carried forth to the Mosul campaign.

In Syria, it was a little bit more difficult. We didn't have any ground forces to work with. We didn't have a government to work with. We really started from scratch a little over a year ago, in fits and starts. What our guys did on the ground is incredibly difficult. They had to go out there. They had to develop relationships with people, assess their ability to fight, vet them, get them trained and so forth. That takes some time. We've changed our methodology a couple times as we've had some lessons learned.

Right now, what we're doing is supporting large groups of vetted Syrian opposition forces that are willing to take the fight to ISIL. In Syria now we've seen some progress as well in northern Syria, taking back ground that ISIL held. Now, a force that is willing and able to start driving down toward Raqqa, which is the capital of ISIL in Syria, and moving towards isolation operations. What we're starting to really see now together is the complementary nature of operations in Syria and Iraq. It's not two separate places; it's the same. We're starting to see the operations that have taken place in Syria simultaneous to the ones in Iraq, start to limit the enemy's freedom of movement and flexibility.

So a lot of fighting to be done. Not underestimating the challenges ahead. But were I to have had this conversation the first week I was in the job, it would have been a different conversation. The last three months have truly been a difference. I won't call it a major turning point in the war, I mean, I'm more cautious than that, but I would tell you, again, for the first time since really 14, 15 months ago, I'm confident that we have the momentum against ISIL. The ground ISIL has is more limited. The pressure that we put on them and the decisions that we've forced them to make in multiple locations are starting to have an effect.

**Philpott:** General, excuse me, the end game. In a war on terrorism there really isn't one. I guess we'll continually fight terrorism for decades, I presume. But what's the appropriate end game with ISIL? They have a vision of a caliphate. That requires land and a capital and so forth. If the end game is to drive them out of all areas in Iraq and Syria, how long would something like that take, given our current approach?

**Dunford:** Sure. First of all, what are we trying to do? We're trying to defeat ISIL so that they cannot pose a threat to the homeland, to the American people, or our allies. That's what we're trying to do. In order to do that, we're doing two things. The military piece of the strategy – we're denying the enemy sanctuary. We're denying them the ability to establish a caliphate in places like Iraq, and Syria, Libya, and elsewhere. At the same time, we're growing the ability to local security forces to then in an enduring basis deny that sanctuary. We got to help them up front and then deny it.

So in Iraq the solution is tailored to each location within which ISIL is found. As an example, in Iraq we're working with a government that's a partner. They've provided us access. Our goal is to help enable the government of Baghdad to establish the security and stability in Iraq within which ISIL will not find itself welcome. So that's what we're doing.

In Syria, we're trying to put enough pressure on ISIL as the political transition process takes place so that we have leverage in the political transition. So what we want to do is we want to make sure that we keep ISIL on the run and work towards defeating them, knowing that the long-term solution in Syria actually is a political solution and that our actions on the ground will inform the results of the political solution.

In a place like Libya, [it's] pretty complex right now in the sense that we have a new emerging Government of National Accord that was just agreed upon in the United Nations. That's going to bring together the two major parties that are in Libya. We'll work with the new emerging Government of National Accord, offer them support to help enable their forces, again, to provide security in Libya and make sure that it's not hospitable to ISIL. In the meantime, we'll take whatever actions we have to take unilaterally to make sure the American people and the homeland are safe. So counterterrorism strikes, at the same time we'll look towards building partnership capacity in Libya.

So I think, Tom, to summarize, each location where ISIL is located is going to require a different solution. There's not a one-size-fits-all. But at the end of the day, we want to make sure they don't have the ground to establish a caliphate. We want to make sure we undermine the narrative and expose ISIL for what they really are, and especially to young people who may have at this point been inspired by young people, to let them know the truth about ISIL, and then make

sure that the nations that have a challenge with violent extremism have the wherewithal both from a governance perspective and a security perspective to deal with that challenge.

**Philpott:** Great, sir. And I guess when you're out among the troops, one of the factors they talk about is the Russians being in the area, I know we've talked about it quite a bit for this interview already, but can you put in perspective their role and how it complicates your mission in Syria?

**Dunford:** Sure. I mean, first of all, Russia is not as helpful as they have advertised, in the sense that their priority has not been against ISIL. That's not been what they've been doing. We don't share the same objectives in the region right now as Russia does. We have been able to establish an agreement with them to ensure the safety of our people, both in the air and on the ground. That was established with a memorandum of understanding in October. Frankly, I've been pleased with the implementation of that memorandum of understanding. That has enabled us to continue to prosecute the campaign as we intended.

I've had a conversation with my counterpart in Moscow, General [Valery] Gerasimov, to talk about the memorandum of understanding. There have been several discussions that have taken place at the deputy assistant secretary three-star level here in the building, again focused not on coordination and cooperation, but focused on making sure that we have safety of our personnel as they fly. I think the procedures and the processes that are in place are sufficient to facilitate our prosecuting the campaign. But again, what we would like to see from Russia is a focus on violent extremism, and specifically counter-ISIL, as opposed to other organizations that in some cases we find helpful.

**Philpott:** Yeah. And Afghanistan, can I ask you for a bit of a primer on where we stand there?

**Dunford:** Sure, sure. Maybe just a little bit of historical context. I took command in Afghanistan in February of 2013. At that time – so that's just three years ago – there was over 100,000 Americans in the force at that time. You know, people forget that. It's gone by pretty quickly. Now there's 9,800 Americans. In 2013, we were providing security in Afghanistan. We were in the lead. Since that time, fairly quickly by the way – I mean, a couple years is quick – we've transitioned all security responsibilities to the Afghans.

There's no question that they've been in a tough fight. But what General Campbell characterizes it as they've been resilient. In other words, they've taken some hits but they've kept fighting. They do have some capability gaps. Specifically, we know they still have a shortfall in aviation capability, special operations capability, intelligence, logistics, and then what I would call more broadly ministerial capacity. In other words, their minister of interior, minister of defense, the ability to sustain an army and a police force.

On the positive, we have transitioned to full Afghan security forces control. That took place in June of 2013. We've had successful elections, political transition. Iraqi forces have been resilient in a pretty tough fight still against a determined enemy in the Taliban. Those remaining challenges are the ones that the Resolute Support mission, under General Campbell's leadership with NATO support, is designed to fix. We still got a long ways to go in Afghanistan. But, again, I think we're pretty clear on the things that need to be done. That's what the troops are getting after every day.

**Philpott:** And do you think that we can safely draw down and not endanger the success you've had there in Afghanistan, the size of our support?

**Dunford:** Yeah. With regard to that, I think a little bit of context. The most important thing about the campaign in Afghanistan is that we haven't had another 9/11 from the region as the result of our presence there, and the constant counterterrorism operations that have been conducted since that time. What we have in the form of Afghanistan is a counterterrorism partner today, and then a country from which we can conduct counterterrorism operations in the region.

In making a recommendation of what the force ought to look like in the future, my recommendation will be informed by what is the level of effort necessary to allow the Afghans to continue to be successful partners in dealing with the security challenges in the region, specifically those challenges that affect the United States. I think we got to see how the summer unfolds. We have a plan right now. The plan's based on assumptions. If those assumptions don't obtain, then we'll go to the president with a recommendation, because what the president's given us also is an end state. We'll make a recommendation based on our best military advice on how to achieve that end state.

**Philpott:** The end state being that they're able to sustain their operations on their own and that we can –

**Dunford:** And that our interests in the region are addressed.

**Philpott:** Can you talk, General, a little bit about the pace of operations today and the challenges that you're having, and your concerns that there might be a mismatch between the demands your forces versus what resources you have?

**Dunford:** Sure, yeah. Well, Tom, first of all, our men and women are running pretty hard. They have been for a long period of time. I, even as a service chief, constantly look for the signs of wear and tear, and the signs that we're heading in the wrong direction. I've been pleasantly surprised – you want to talk about resilience? I've been pleasantly surprised by the resilience of the force, the continued commitment of the men and women.

As I've gone around, I always tell people – some people say I have a hard job because you're back here in D.C., and you're dealing with some of the difficult issues, and you're dealing with congressional testimony and so forth. But it's actually a pretty easy job, because what I've been doing in the last three months is going around visiting soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, getting pumped up. Then all I have to do is come back and tell their story, which is actually pretty easy to do.

But I do have concerns, particularly in some of the occupational field. I met some airmen, for example, in Djibouti that do personnel recovery. I said, hey, how long have you been deployed? Well, sir, I'm on a four-month deployment. How long were you home before this deployment? Well, I was home four months. When was your deployment before that? Well, it was four months before that. What about before that? It was four months before that.

So they're on what we call a one-to-one deployment-to-dwell ratio. They're gone as much as they're home. Now, I'll tell you, when I looked in their eyes and I talked to them, and I think I sniff out BS when I see it, they're fine with that. They're happy doing it. But I also know from personal experience that both from a training perspective and from a family perspective, you can

only maintain that rate for so long. So I am concerned about some occupational fields in particular that are stressed. There's certain aviation community members. There's personnel recovery. There's engineers. I mean, there's all kinds of occupational fields that are running a little bit harder than others.

The other thing you worry about is training for response across the full range of military operations. When you're in that one-to-one deployment-to-dwell, you're necessarily singularly focused on preparing for the deployment. That's appropriate. But we have other responsibilities. To borrow a Marine term, we talk about the need to fight in every kind of place and the need to respond across the full range of military operations. One of the costs of the high operational tempo we've had over the last few years is what we call full-spectrum readiness. We're in the process of trying to rebuild that right now. So that's probably kind of the balance of my concerns.

**Philpott:** Are you able to rebuild it now? In other words, I know this was an issue that your predecessor General Dempsey was concerned about. We've got to reset and get the full spectrum readiness. Are you making gains in that, or are you just paddling?

**Dunford:** No, I would say that we are building back full-spectrum readiness. We are making progress. The progress is slow. Most of the services project that out over years, not weeks or months. But they're going to recover readiness over the next several years. Everyone's kind of targeted where will you be in 2019, 2020 is the target that we've been working on in the department. In some cases, services feel like they'll be where they want to be by that time. In other cases, services have identified certain areas where even with three or four years on the current trajectory with the current resources, the current operational tempo, they won't necessarily be where they want to be. I think it's a journey not a destination to make sure the joint force has the readiness it needs.

**Philpott:** How about resetting the equipment and the platforms that you need? We're using a heck of a lot of aircraft, I guess, there over in the mission against ISIL and supporting the Afghan troops. And we wore out a lot of equipment in Iraq and so forth. Where are we in resetting the force?

**Dunford:** Tom, not as far along as we would want to be. You talked about the current operating environment. One of the challenges we've had to make, particularly in the context of sequestration in 2013 and reduced budgets, is to really have a couple things you have to be attentive to. You obviously got to compensate your people. You got to maintain readiness of the forces to meet the current deployment. You got to sustain your infrastructure and then you got to modernize the force. We had to make some tough choices in those areas. We focused necessarily on making sure that our young men and women that are going to be deployed have the wherewithal to accomplish the mission. That was job one – readiness of forces next to deploy.

Where we saw then the risk, in addition to the area you mention in terms of modernization of equipment, we saw the risk of readiness of our units at home station. We probably spent a little bit less than we would want to in maintaining our infrastructure. Then our modernization accounts, the force for tomorrow, also was an area where we underinvested. So we're going to have to come out of that trough here in the next couple years.

At the macro level, I would describe probably the most difficult challenge in the area that we're discussing right now is balancing today's fight with sufficient investment in both intellectual capital – it's not just about things and money – but the intellectual capital and the investment modernization profile that will allow us to have the joint force next be as capable as the one we have right now. I feel pretty proud of the force that we have today. It's certainly proving capable of meeting the challenges that we've had over the last several years. But the challenges we'll have tomorrow are going to be different. And so we need to make sure that we're equally attentive to being ready tomorrow.

**Philpott:** Right. Your last response sort of sets up the rest of the interview, because those are the areas I wanted focus on. Before I leave the operational tempo issue, the impact on the individual warriors and their families – you said when you looked into these Marines' eyes you can see that they are committed to the mission and they get quite a bit of professional satisfaction, I'm sure, out of it. But what's been a strain on the families? And is that – long-range, will that cause problems, or we've been at war so long doing some operational fight somewhere that families are used to it?

**Dunford:** Yeah. I will tell you, I don't underestimate at all the challenge in our families. As much as I've talked to young soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, particularly young ones, and found them to be very committed to what they're doing and very happy about how busy they are, I've also talked to some mid-grade senior enlisted leaders, some mid-grade, field-grade officers who are now in their fifth, sixth, seventh deployments. I talked to some families, some spouses and so forth, that have highlighted the challenges that the last decade have brought.

We are concerned about that. I'm concerned about the mental health of the force. I'm concerned about the mental health of our families. I'm concerned about the ability to have balance to where, yes, you're focused on the mission, you're out there doing what must be done, but as a guy who's been married for over 30 years, as a Marine with a family, I'm also aware that you've got to make sure you have some balance and you're attentive to your family and so forth as well. Sometimes your spouse needs a little bit of help.

Making sure we get to a sustainable deployment-to-dwell ratio is, I think, one of the objectives of all the service chiefs, and certainly a concern of mine, because I think that the force is in good shape right now, but we ought not to assume that we can maintain the current level of operational tempo without paying a cost.

**Philpott:** And you're keeping the people that you need to keep right now, and you're recruiting the people you need to recruit?

**Dunford:** We are. Another area, though, I would tell you, never complacent about that. It's not just a bumper sticker to say that the foundation of the force is our people. Recruiting and retaining not just the right numbers, but the right quality of people, is absolutely the key. I am satisfied today, as I look at the quality of force that we are recruiting and retaining, a high-quality force.

There are signs of challenges. One thing you watch is the delayed entry pools of our recruiting services. When you have young men and women that are signing up to come in and it's taking eight, nine, or 10 months to get to the recruit training you're in pretty good shape.

When you're signing people up 30 days before they ship to recruit training, well, you're starting to have some challenges. What we've seen in some areas is that we have probably a little more difficulty recruiting than we had a couple years ago. But it isn't a crisis yet. We're still meeting all of our goals. But it's one of those areas, I think, as a leader, you really pay attention to. It's job one.

**Philpott:** Right. You spoke of those particular units that are – the pace of operations is really quite extreme. Do you see the force – the level of the force being affected by that? Would you like more of those communities to grow in the years ahead? And do you have the structure of the force to accommodate something like that?

**Dunford:** Yeah. You know, one of the things you got to do, when you talk about force structure – and again, this both as a service chief and now as the chairman – I would only want to have as much force structure as we can ensure a high level of capability. You got to have the balance and the compensation and the infrastructure, the equipment, the training – all those things. I don't see the force growing, certainly in the near future. Our focus now is on capability. When I look at the budget, the capabilities and capacities that we require, what it takes to sustain those capabilities and capacities, you know, increased force structure is not there.

What we're really focused on is making sure that we meet our day-to-day demands at a level that is sustainable. We work pretty hard on that. Without going into a lot of detail, it's kind of the allocation process of forces. Each of the service identifies their inventory of forces that are available for deployment. When they make that recommendation, it's informed by what they describe as a sustainable level of deployment-to-dwell. I think that's how we get after the operational tempo issue, is we just have to make some hard calls. We've got to prioritize and allocate in a way that meets our requirements, but at the same time allows us to have that sustainability.

**Philpott:** Sir, there was a budget deal that was made that gave some relief to the sequestration. Do you have a sense that the leadership both in the administration and in Congress will loosen the screws on the defense budgets going forward? Or are you going to be fighting through your next two or four years with budget battles or sequestration?

**Dunford:** Well, first, I mean, I thought the current two-year budget was helpful. Most importantly, it provided us with some predictability, which we haven't had, and it addressed most of our requirements. But as I mentioned earlier, we have some investments that we didn't make over the last few years that we need to catch up on. We still have some readiness challenges we have to deal with. We still have a significant rate of operational tempo, all of which requires forces and so forth.

This is a two-year deal. Sequestration is still looming out there. So we'll be watching very closely the political process to see if there can be a long-term agreement. But what we need is not just two years of predictability but long-term predictability to make informed decisions about how we allocate our resources to get to where we need to be. So, no, I think we're a long way from the end zone on the budget.

**Philpott:** You mentioned the need to balance. One of the concerns the Joint Chiefs have had, including your predecessor, is the amount of money that was going to compensation versus your other pies.

**Dunford:** Sure.

**Philpott:** We've had retirement reform this past year. Now they're looking at TRICARE reforms. What's your perspective on the adequacy of compensation today and the need to, perhaps, slow down the growth of that compensation?

**Dunford:** Sure. First of all, let me say, because I mean it, our young men and women are not overcompensated. The primary reward of their service right now is anything but financial. I don't think they're getting paid too much. I also believe very strongly that we cannot support a plan that would cause them to lose buying power. In other words, that's the thing that I, especially in this year's budget, was most protective of, is I wanted to make sure that I could stand in front of a theater or a formation of young men and women in uniform and go, look, this year's pay raise is going to allow you to maintain the buying power you had last year. That actually was the primary factor in forming my recommendation.

I am well aware, from having dealt with this now for some years, of the challenge we have in balancing compensation with all the other challenges we have. By the way, I think when you talk quality of life and compensation one of the most important things we have to make sure is that we have the training, the equipment, the leadership in place to bring our folks home alive and to accomplish the mission. That's a piece of it. So, when I look at compensation I look at it holistically.

I stand in front of spouses and family members and I say, hey, here's the deal: My recommendation informs this with regard to your pay raise, but I want to make sure that we have this much money over here so I can provide you with the training, equipment, the protective equipment, all those things you need to go to war and bring your loved one home alive, and that they have the competitive advantage over any enemy that we would face. That's an important piece of it as well. But I can tell you that the percentage of the budget that compensation takes up, and particularly what medical care takes up, we've got to fix that.

We've got to fix that because increasingly – if you take a look at the Marine Corps, the one I'm familiar with – if you take civilian personnel and military personnel, nearly 70 percent, about 68 percent of the budget, is just on compensation. It's on paying for people. That leaves very little for operations and maintenance, for training and exercises and so forth, and for modernization and taking care of infrastructure. My perspective is, yes, we have to balance within the department, you know, compensation. We've got to make sure that we have sufficient investments across the board. But we can't lose sight of the fact that the most important thing, as I said earlier, is to have recruiting and retaining high-quality people. That's most important.

Compensation has to meet something like that. I won't go any longer now in an interview, but you know, I describe the conversation that needs to take place around a table, where the young sergeant is sitting there with his spouse and they're writing the pros and cons of military services. The cons we can come up with them right away – how much you're gone, how hard you're working, how much you get paid and so forth. The pros are you believe in what you're doing, we go to good schools and we have good housing, the medical care is – that balance sheet,



that conversation needs to result in our best sergeants saying: You know what? I'm going to stick around.

**Philpott:** Sir, I wanted to ask you about women in combat. It looks like – well, the service has been directed by the defense secretary to open all combat positions to women. But he has emphasized that the standards should not decline. What you need in the job should be – what the women who want to be in those jobs meet those standards. You have General [John F.] Kelly, as he's departing, said that, well, he thinks that in time you can't help but relax those standards as the pressure mounts to make sure you have some women in your units. I think that was about the thrust of his – how do you view the women in combat issue? Is it going to be something that you will need to work at hard in the coming months, or is it a policy you can really adopt?

**Dunford:** Sure. First of all, I'd like to emphasize that women have been in combat for a long, long time. We had women in combat at least in Vietnam. In fact, I think we had two Silver Star recipients in Vietnam. So they – women – have been in combat a long time. That's not what the debate's been about.

The debate has been about a small number of occupational fields that have not been integrated with women to date. And so the secretary said to do that. But when he said to do that, he did emphasize, number one, we would implement in a way that maintained combat effectiveness. We would implement in a way that addressed the health and welfare of each individual man and woman in uniform. And we'd implement it in a way that leverages fully the talent across the joint force.

So I think General Kelly's warning is certainly one that we need to be attentive to. But I actually view it as my responsibility. The secretary has tasked me with helping in lead the effort in implementation. I will tell you that I will very much in the recommendations I make to him be focused on those three areas: the combat effectiveness, the health and welfare of our people, and talent management. The one thing that has happened over the last two years as a result of this endeavor has been we have now standards in all the occupational fields. Each of the services was tasked with developing standards – you know, gender-neutral standards – that will allow combat effectiveness to be maintained. Now it's a question of ensuring that we maintain those standards.

**Philpott:** And you don't have the same concern that he does, that the lethality of the individual units might be impacted long term?

**Dunford:** Well, look, I do, Tom, if we don't implement in a way that takes into account those three factors. What I'm saying is I think I have a responsibility in my current position not to allow that to happen. That's a responsibility I take pretty seriously.

**Philpott:** Sir, my last question is I'm interviewing you the day after the State of the Union address. The president said in response to some of the negative portrayals of America's might versus allies like Russia – I mean, possible opponents like Russia. So he said that our budgets – our defense budgets are healthy, they equal – they surpass the next eight countries. I don't want to project any feelings on you about that, but it must have made you wince a bit. And I wondered if you wanted to provide some context to that argument that would make you more comfortable in this current tight budget environment.

**Dunford:** Look, my job is to work with the service chiefs and those in the building to identify the requirements that we have to build the joint inventory of capabilities and capacities necessary to implement our national strategy and protect our national interest, and then to make recommendations on a budget that will allow us to do that. I'm going to continue doing that. I think that our budget must be understood in the context of us being, you know, frankly, the indispensable partner around the world. We're the indispensable partner in NATO. We're the indispensable partner today in dealing with the fight against ISIL.

We're a leader and we have responsibilities that are global, and so our budget is informed by that, as is the size of our force. So I think what's important is absolutely what the president said is true. I think at the end of the day, my job, as a leader in uniform, is to benchmark the size of the force against what we're being asked to do and make sure that there's a balance between the two.

**Philpott:** Right. And right now, the balance is?

**Dunford:** Well, what I said is we can implement the strategy at the level of budget we have right now. As I look out at some of the trends, there are areas where we're losing our competitive advantage. There are areas where Russia, China, Iran, North Korea are making investments that will require for us to continue to address those, even as we meet the current operational requirements.

And so, much like I would say that I don't think our people are overcompensated, I don't think at the end of the day the aggregate resources available to the department are too many. Are there areas where we can be more efficient and be more effective in allocating those resources? We shouldn't rest until we're satisfied that that's the case, and we probably should never rest. But having said that, I think that we still have areas that are going to require continued investment in the future.

## **Remarks at US Southern Command Change of Command Ceremony Doral, Florida January 13**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, once again, thank you for being here as we mark the transfer of authority from General John Kelly to Admiral Kurt Tidd.

The change-of-command ceremony is a time-honored military custom that ensures a seamless transition of authority and responsibility. In effect, changes of command are actually more about continuity of command than they are about change. Tomorrow morning just like this morning, Southern Command is going to wake up with commitment to the mission and trust in their leadership. Changes of command are also an opportunity to take stock of the command, and I'd like to begin by talking about the men and women of the Southern Command and their international and their interagency partners.

When General Kelly assumed command, he got the team together and he outlined four priorities: conducting humane and dignified detainee operations, countering transnational organized crime, building partner capacity, and planning for contingencies.

He also challenged the men and women in the command to expand our level of cooperation in the region and increase the training opportunities with our friends across Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

Today, as General Kelly completes a hand-off with Admiral Tidd, I can tell you that the command has attacked those priorities with a degree of professionalism, commitment, and competence that makes us all proud.

Let me start by talking about the men and women of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. As General Kelly testified before Congress, and these are his words: “those young military professionals who stand duty day and night there do so in the most unforgiving of circumstances. And they do so with professionalism and discipline, with honor and courage.”

Taking care of detainees is about keeping dangerous people off the battlefield while respecting human rights and reflecting our nation’s character and values. And that’s what JTF Guantanamo does every day.

Another of the command’s important priorities is addressing the threat posed by transnational organized crime. This is a global challenge that has wrought particular havoc on many of our nations in the Southern Command area of responsibility, and we see the effects particularly in the drug trade.

Stemming the flow of illicit drugs requires a coordinated and collaborative effort among nations and agencies. Operation Martillo is a model example of how the Southern Command provides leadership and makes a difference.

In a typical operation, Joint Interagency Task Force-South might learn of a suspicious vessel off the coast of Panama, a Customs and Border Protection P-3 surveillance aircraft might be tasked to find and fix the vessel in international waters, and when the vessel realizes it’s being tracked, it typically begins a sprint to Panama’s territorial waters, dumping bales of cocaine along the way, a Coast Guard cutter with DEA agents onboard gives chase and seizes the drugs, while Panamanian law enforcement officials intercept the vessel and arrests all those on board.

You know, in another area of responsibility, that kind of coordination and cooperation might be considered remarkable, but at the U.S. Southern Command, it’s just another day.

In the last few years, Operation Martillo has netted more than 600 metric tons of cocaine and marijuana and denied \$8 billion of revenue to criminals.

The team here in Miami and across the region demonstrates the same degree of responsiveness and coordination in preparing for natural disasters and other contingencies. Multinational exercises like Panamax, Fused Response, and Integrated Advance ensure that the Southern Command is ready to respond to a wide range of crises and contingencies from an attack on critical infrastructure, to mass migration, to a natural disaster.

Under General Kelly’s leadership, the support to counterterrorism efforts in the region reflects the same proactive approach. SOUTHCOM, the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and our regional partners aggressively exchange intelligence, conduct counterterrorism exercises, and coordinate operations to bring terrorists to justice.

A constant theme in all that the Southern Command does is partnership, and SOUTHCOM's engagement through humanitarian and civil assistance programs, defense institution building, and human rights initiatives helps partner nations strengthen governance and development ... professionalize their military and security forces, and increase their ability to respond to crises.

Close and continuing engagement with partner nations throughout the Caribbean and Central America and South America makes a difference, and I can look at the representatives in the audience here today to make the point that we're all stronger when we work together.

With SOUTHCOM's partnership, Colombia has become a force for regional stability by improving its security, strengthening its governance, and improving its economy. Brazil has played a commanding role in Panamax, and our security forces worked together in preparation for the successful 2014 World Cup and the upcoming 2016 Olympics. Honduras is making real progress in security, human rights, and drug trafficking. The Dominican Republic now supports an operations center to integrate regional security efforts. Chile is working to build effective cybersecurity institutions, Peru has made great progress in improving its maritime interdiction capability, and Nicaragua is part of the multinational effort to secure the Panama Canal, and I could go on at length.

Suffice to say, that the small number of men and women here at the United States Southern Command make an extraordinary difference in developing a deep partnerships and relationships here in the area of responsibility that truly make a difference. Pound-for-pound, I can't think of another organization that is more effective. For the last three years, that performance is a reflection of General John Kelly's leadership.

Now I've known General Kelly as a fellow Marine, a mentor, a warrior, and a leader, and most importantly as a friend for over 35 years. As Marines say, we have served together in every clime and place, I can claim to know him pretty well. And I can also tell you that this morning, that his preference would be to focus on remain on the command because that's the kind of servant leadership that he has demonstrated for over four decades.

John, I'll mostly honor your request. But let me say that John Kelly is the epitome of a senior military leader and a United States Marine. Today, I'm actually having difficulty thinking about serving without John Kelly on my flank.

His mettle has been tested in the most challenging and difficult of circumstances. This morning, I could talk about his visionary leadership as a major at our infantry officers course, I could talk about his combat leadership in Iraq, and I could talk about his diplomacy here in his most recent assignment.

But let me focus on what General John Kelly is most proud of. He is a decisive, engaged leader whose passion for the mission is equaled by his compassion and concern for every man or woman who has ever served with him. There is a legion of men and women in every service who are proud to say that they served with John Kelly and that they are Kelly-trained.

John, you depart the United States Southern Command today with what you really want to have and what we all want to have when we go over the side, and that is the admiration, the

appreciation, and the affection of those with whom you've served ... and let me just tell you that includes Joe Dunford.

Beyond all that, General Kelly is a man of character, a husband, and a father. Kate is here today to represent the family, Karen is back unpacking boxes in Woodbridge, but she's been with him every step of the way. Karen is the daughter of a Marine, the wife of a Marine, and a Marine mom, but she's a lot tougher than a Marine, and John would be the first to admit the role—the important role she played here at Southern Command and throughout his career. I know Karen is here in spirit along with John, and I also know Robert is looking down on his dad today with extraordinary pride.

And though we are saying farewell to an extraordinary commander, we also have the good fortune to welcome aboard another exceptional leader. Admiral Tidd comes to the United States Southern Command, as the Secretary said, from the Joint Staff where he was our primary representative to the Secretary of State. He's commanded at every level and he was the obvious choice to command the United States Southern Command.

He not only brings a depth of expertise and experience, but also the love and support of his family. To his wife, Eileen, and daughters, Katy and Jackie, welcome and congratulations to you as well, because I think as Kurt would admit, he would not be here today without your love and support.

Admiral Tidd is no stranger to the area of responsibility having commanded U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and the United States Fourth Fleet. He knows the leaders of the region, the importance of relationships throughout the hemisphere, and the range of missions SOUTHCOM conducts. His command experience and tactical expertise is extensive and he is the United States Navy's "old salt," which means there's no other officer serving in the United States Navy today that has held the surface warfare qualification longer than Kurt Tidd.

He's also a visionary and an innovative leader. Most importantly, he is a leader. He's someone who takes people first and again, will focus on those relationships that make the United States Southern Command so special. I'm confident that SOUTHCOM will continue to succeed under Admiral Tidd's leadership, and I look forward to serving with him in the years ahead.

Once again, it's been an extraordinary honor to be here as my good friend goes over the side and as Admiral Tidd assumes responsibility. And now, perhaps, the most important thing I can do all day is to introduce my good friend and extraordinary leader, a United States Marine, a warrior, General John Kelly.

**Excerpts from Interview with Colonel Oliver North**  
***War Stories with Oliver North***  
**February 3**

**North:** General, you and I first met on the battlefield in 2003. We did an interview then. We did an interview the day that you were promoted to two stars here in the States, and then another

interview in Afghanistan. So you've got probably more experience in this war than anybody I know. What has changed over the course of those years between 2003 and now?

**Dunford:** If anything, I think the world is actually more complex and volatile than it was in 2003. We certainly had challenges then. We were dealing with an insurgency in Iraq, an insurgency in Afghanistan, certainly dealing with the challenge of al-Qaida.

So I think, if anything, today is a much more complex and volatile security environment than it was in 2003. In 2003, we were dealing with an insurgency in Iraq, one in Afghanistan. We were dealing with al-Qaida. Today we're probably dealing with a more virulent strain of extremism in the form of ISIL. We're also dealing with state challenges in China, Russia, North Korea and Iran, much more complex than they were a decade ago.

**North:** There are some who say that ISIS is just one of these franchises from hell of radical Islam – it's not really any different than Boko Haram or al-Qaida or any of the others, those are just trade names for the same thing. Is radical Islam the real enemy, or is it just ISIS?

**Dunford:** No, I think it's radical – it's extremism in any form. It's extremism that challenges the American homeland, challenges the American people, and presents a risk to the lives of our partners and alliances as well.

**North:** When you look at what ISIS is, today it's not just in Iraq or Syria, it's spread to Yemen, it's spread to Libya. Is it something that can be contained and defeated?

**Dunford:** It can be defeated and it will be defeated, Ollie. It's going to require a couple things. First, it's going to require us to deny sanctuary, wherever it happens to be. It's going to require us to build the capacity of our partners so they can provide security within their own borders. It's going to require us to cut off their resources, to cut off the flow of foreign fighters, and to undermine the credibility of their narrative.

**North:** If I look at that credibility, that narrative, part of it is they've got territory. They call it a caliphate. They've got a guy who describes himself as the caliph, al-Baghdadi. What's the definition of victory in this fight?

**Dunford:** The definition of victory is where we can get to the point where they cannot plan and conduct operations against the American homeland, they can't threaten the American people, they can't threaten the lives of our partners and our allies, they don't have sanctuary within the confines of places like Iraq and Syria, and that local security forces can actually provide the security necessary to keep them from regenerating.

**North:** When you and I were in Iraq back in 2003, we were running literally thousands of airstrikes every day or two. We're not doing anything close to that right now. Should we be?

**Dunford:** No. We're taking decisive action wherever we have the intelligence that leads us to be able to conduct effective attacks. It's not a question of the number of attacks, it's a question of the number of targets. And how ISIL is operating in and around the people in places like Mosul and Raqqa obviously limits our ability to conduct strikes.

**North:** When I look at the adversary, Russia being now on the ground at Latakia and at Tartus with combat forces and with aircraft, with support forces, that complicates this fight, does it not?

**Dunford:** It absolutely complicates it. I mean, the bottom line with Russia is we do not have shared objectives in the region. Our focus is on destroying ISIL. Their focus is on propping up the corrupt regime of Assad.

**North:** There's a hope that some kind of political accord can be worked out regarding the governance of Syria. Is that a false hope?

**Dunford:** I don't think so. I think what we're doing on the ground is to set the conditions for an effective political transition. Although it's nascent, we have a process that started in Geneva just this week to work through that. I don't expect that that's going to be resolved anytime soon. But quite frankly, to have stability and security in Syria and to address this is going to require addressing the grievances associated with the civil war in Syria, so a political transition's going to be critical to our long-term success.

**North:** If the press reports are right, there's something in the neighborhood of 10 to 14 million refugees that have now fled not just from Syria, but from all over the Levant, all over the southern tier of the Mediterranean, Africa. Is there something our European allies can be doing to help protect them better from this flood of refugees? It's a catastrophe.

**Dunford:** Well, first of all, the large burden of the refugees has fallen on our European partners, and they are dealing with that both financially and socially across Europe. One of the things I think we can do collectively, though, is more decisive operations in places like Iraq and Syria, and where ISIL has spread. That's really the focus of the secretary of defense and I right now, is to build the effective coalition that's going to be necessary for us to address the conditions on the ground, which is obviously going to reduce the flow of refugees.

**North:** Do we have allies in the Middle East that will help us – not the Europeans, not NATO, but allies in the Middle East that can be helpful to us in this fight?

**Dunford:** We do and we're encouraging them to do more. But we have some allies that are doing a great deal. Jordan has been a good partner in this fight. Israel has been a good partner in this fight. The United Arab Emirates has been a good partner in this fight. We obviously deploy forces from Turkey; they have been a partner in this fight. Other allies in the region have also made a contribution. Again, we're focused on trying to get them to do more now because we think they're a key part of the solution.

**North:** Is this solution going to require tens of thousands of American troops on the ground in either Syria or Iraq?

**Dunford:** My perspective is that long-term success is going to require effective indigenous forces on the ground for long-term stability. But I do believe that U.S. capabilities – unique U.S. capabilities are going to be equally important for us to be successful.

**North:** I note you left out Turkey and Egypt in your list of allies in this, yet Turkey is a NATO ally. Are they doing all they need to do?

**Dunford:** Turkey has done quite a bit more over the last few months. We think they can do more, and we're working very closely with them to get them to do that. Egypt is dealing with ISIL in the Sinai. We're working very closely with Egypt as well. Also they're taking some constructive action as ISIL starts to expand inside of Libya as well.

**North:** The elephant in the tent is Iran. The Iranians have now got the accord that they've been asking for years. They're getting billions and billions of dollars from the Europeans and from the United States that had been sequestered by the sanctions. Is that going to be helpful to this cause?

**Dunford:** Look, before the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was signed, we had malign influence by Iran throughout the region. After the agreement has been signed, we still have malign influence by Iran across the region. Addressing that malign influence is going to be required in order for us to have stability and security in the Middle East.

**North:** Is that something that can be achieved – I understand this is not in your purview, but is that something that can be done with diplomacy, or do we have to back that up with some kind of strength?

**Dunford:** I think there's a diplomatic aspect of it, there's an economic aspect of it, and there's clearly a military dimension to dealing with the malign influence of Iran.

**North:** If we look at the broader picture of the Middle East and what's happened out there since you and I were together in 2003, it's clearly a less stable part of the world today than it was then. Take us forward 10 years, and where do we stand in this? Are we still in this fight?

**Dunford:** I believe we are still in this fight a decade from now. It's been described as a generational challenge to get after the underlying conditions that have given rise to extremism. I like to think that 10 years from now where we'll be is we'll be in a position where we will have more capable partners in the Middle East to deal with the security challenges within their borders. We will certainly have rolled back ISIL by that time. There will be other forms other strains of extremism that'll creep up across the Middle East that we'll have to deal with. Those will exist until the underlying conditions that give rise to it are addressed.

**North:** Is there a danger of U.S. forces, even the United States broadly, being caught in a crossfire between Sunni and Shia Islam?

**Dunford:** You know, frankly, less concerned about us being a crossfire than I am in ensuring that we make a contribution to providing a stabilizing influence in the region. I frankly think that American leadership and American presence in the region mitigates the challenges associated with sectarian violence.

**North:** And yet, the Baghdad government is clearly in the pocket of Tehran.

**Dunford:** You know, I'm not willing to say that. I've made several trips there over the last couple months, and I think Prime Minister [Haider] Al-Abadi is trying to assert his independence. He clearly has a difficult challenge. There is a strong Iranian influence in Iraq. There's no question about it. I think the government, as it stands up and gets stronger, will be more resistant to that influence by Iran, and I frankly think that's where the United States can



help. We can help develop effective governance in Iraq and harden them from the influence of Iran. I think it's in our interest to do that.

**North:** Al-Abadi, who was meeting with his ministers here in the last few days – let me rephrase that. Al-Abadi's challenges go beyond simply the sectarianism. It's also economic. The decreasing price of oil is obviously affecting their ability to even pull together part of the country, much less all of it. Is that something that you see going away as a problem?

**Dunford:** I don't. The prime minister has raised that. He's raised that with our leadership, even in his conversations with our president, vice president and secretary of defense recently. Not only are we providing military assistance to Iraq, which is critical for them to deal with ISIL, but we're also providing development assistance and economic assistance that's helping them deal with that challenge.

**North:** The United States military is smaller today than it was when we went to war in 2001. Are there concerns that we're not going to be able to meet the challenges with a much smaller military than we had before?

**Dunford:** We're going to meet the current challenge against violent extremism. Of that there is no doubt. As I look at it, the challenges associated with some of the state actors that I talked about earlier – the Russia, the China, the North Korea and Iran, and the challenge that presents; when I look at the cyber challenges, the space challenges, the undersea warfare challenges, the ballistic missile challenges; clearly, we're looking at the capabilities of the joint force to make sure that we're not only right-sized for the fight we had yesterday, but we're ready for the fight we're going to have tomorrow.

**North:** I recently returned from Kurdistan. It appears to me that, since 2014 with the ISIS invasion of Iraq, the Kurds are the only ones who have consistently beaten ISIS at every turn. And yet, they complain – and I think with some legitimate reason to do so – that we're not giving them the support that they need. In fact, they're standing next to U.S. vehicles that they captured from ISIS that we had given to the Baghdad government. Should we be doing more to help the Kurds?

**Dunford:** Well, first, I have also visited with the Kurds a number of times recently, and I would tell you we are getting the support that they need in the current fight to them. We're doing it through the Iraqi government because what we're looking for in the long run is a multi-sectarian, unified Iraq. We think that that's the best prospect of success. Some people point to that as something that's a challenge, that's difficult. I think it is. But frankly, as I look at the future, absent a multi-sectarian, unified Iraq, the challenges that we have today will be that much greater in the future. So I think it's important that we work through the central government of Baghdad, but that we ensure that the support that's intended for the Peshmerga actually gets there. I think we're doing that.

**North:** You just said something that many people would contend with, and that is that you're going to have an Iraq – and, I suppose, a Syria – that still has the same borders, and that still have functioning states. And yet, some people say that's just about impossible.

**Dunford:** Look, I would not for a second understate the challenges associated with coming up with a political solution either in Iraq or Syria. But specifically with Iraq, as I look at it – and I look at the Kurds, the Shia and the Sunni – some type of governance that is inclusive of those three groups is the best prospect of stability and security in Iraq, and so that's our focus right now. If at some point in the future I think that's impossible, then the best military advice that I'd provide to our president would be informed by that. But right now I think we're better off focusing on that objective and working towards that objective than giving up and assuming that it can't happen.

**Excerpts from Statement to the House Armed Services Committee on the Fiscal Year 2017  
National Defense Authorization Budget Request  
Washington, District of Columbia  
March 22**

**Congressman Thornberry:** General Dunford, I got -- I saw an open letter, I don't know, signed by several dozen retired military, other notable names that the time was right to relook at Goldwater-Nichols of 30 years ago. And that we needed to be serious that significant changes were in order, although they did not detail what those changes should be, by the way, in the letter.

So, I want to ask you, your view is -- I know there is a fair amount of interest about examining and perhaps modifying the Goldwater-Nichols' requirements. Please, tell me where you think we are on that, if it needs to happen, and then suggestions you may have?

**Dunford:** Thanks, Chairman. First of all, I do think there is an imperative for reform at this time, and I think it's a result of a change in the character of war. The basic nature of war, in my estimation, doesn't change. The character of war has changed. By that specifically, I mean that most of the crises and contingencies that we have today, immediate with trans-regional, they cut across multiple combatant commands. They're multi-domain: sea, air, space, cyberspace, undersea. And they're multi-functional: ballistic missile defense, special operations, strike capabilities and so forth.

That has changed the nature of integration of the joint force, and frankly, the requirements for the secretary to make timely decisions in a trans-regional, multi-domain, multi-functional fight. So, I think the more fundamental areas that we need to look at for change with regard to Goldwater-Nichols is number one, making sure that the secretary does have the ability to make decisions in a timely manner, and making sure he does have the ability to integrate the joint force in that trans-regional, multi-domain, multi-functional fight.

It also requires, in my estimation, the Joint Staff to take a different approach to strategy, and to ensure that we write strategies for the problem sets we spoke about today. So, it isn't just an aggregation of operations plans if you're dealing with a Russia or a China, but you have a strategic framework within which those operations plans are met. I think the national military strategy needs to be refined in order to provide that framework, within which all plans are developed.

Then the final piece of that and execution is the secretary's ability to prioritize and allocate resources in a timely manner for a fight that is ongoing in multiple combatant commands at the same time. So, from my perspective, as we think about reform, we should focus on the character of war, and what reforms are necessary to make sure we can fight in the 21st century. What I have alluded to are some fundamental changes in warfighting in the 21st century that I think we can reinforce and optimize the joint force's ability to meet with some very fundamental changes. And I'm prepared to make those recommendations to you, Chairman.

**Excerpts from Remarks at the Center for Strategic and International Studies  
Washington, District of Columbia  
March 29**

The advertised theme this morning is “Meeting Today’s Global Challenges”, and I thought I’d begin by outlining what we see is the main challenge as a result of the changing character of war today and into the future.

Let me start with a quick comment about our men and women in uniform. Since assuming my current assignment in October, I’ve had the chance to get out there with a lot of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. I would tell you, after 14 years of war, well-known fiscal challenges and uncertain security environment, they’re running pretty hard to meet our operational requirements, maintain our equipment and prepare for the future. But they remain incredibly focused and committed. It shouldn’t surprise you that the closer that I get to the fight the more spirited I find our young people are.

I say all that because I don’t actually take it for granted. I believe we need to closely monitor our recruiting, our retention, our deployment-to-dwell rates, and other key health – other indicators of the health of the force. Some of our folks are still on a one-to-one deployment to dwell ratio, that is they’re gone as much as they’re home. Without a change in either our requirements or our force structure, we’re going to be sustaining a high level of operational tempo and running hard well into the future. Again, the force has proven to be remarkably resilient, but I would tell you there are signs of wear and tear that we’re watching pretty closely.

There’s also challenges with our equipment wear and tear that we need to address if we’re going to maintain our competitive advantage. Over the last several years, we’ve exceeded the planned miles in our vehicles, hours in our aircraft, and usage on other equipment. This has happened concurrent with deferred modernization as a result of the fiscal environment. While I’m not going to talk about it much today, one of my three priorities is joint readiness, which at the end of the day is the foundation for our responsiveness to provide viable options to the national command authority in the event of a crisis or contingency.

It’s about the flexibility for us to transition from one crisis to another. It’s about the resilience of our infrastructure and our joint capabilities. For me, at the end of the day, readiness is about maintaining our competitive advantage and never finding ourselves in a fair fight. As you’ll see from the remainder of my comments, I don’t think we can take that for granted.

Former secretary of state, national security advisor, and current CSIS trustee Henry Kissinger, oft-quoted now as saying that this is the most complex and volatile security

environment since World War II. I would tell you this morning, you're not going to get an argument out of me. Although the institutions and the structures that have underpinned the international order for the last several decades remain largely intact, the U.S. is now confronted with simultaneous challenges in Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and, of course, violent extremism.

The threat from Islamic violent extremism is certainly the most pressing challenge we face right now, but before I offer my thoughts on where we are and where we need to go against ISIL, al-Qaida and other groups, let me briefly discuss the capabilities and the behaviors of the state actors that I mentioned. While I'm humble about our ability to predict the future – and I think if nothing else that's what my years in uniform have probably instilled in me, is a degree of humility about our ability to look at the future – when I look at those challenges, I think they form a useful lens to inform the capabilities and capacities the joint force needs to have.

So I don't say that these five challenges are the only ones that we may expect in the future, but in my mind when you look at the aggregate challenges – the five I mentioned and the threats associated with those challenges – to me it's a useful framework, again, to inform what we need to do in terms of joint capability development, what we need to do in terms of innovation. You will also see this year that it also informed our priorities for investments. So that's really what we use these five challenges to do.

First, the Russian military presents the greatest array of threats to U.S. interests. Despite declining population, shrinking economy, Russia has made a significant investment in military capabilities. Putin has recently fielded a wide range of systems to include new intercontinental ballistic missiles, aircraft, nuclear-powered submarines, tanks, and air defense systems. We've seen some of Russia's more modern conventional capabilities on display in Syria, and we're closely tracking Russian developments and actions in space and in cyberspace.

Russian capability has to be viewed in the context of their saber rattling, it's got to be viewed in the context of what others describe as gray-zone activity in places like Georgia, Crimea, and the Ukraine, and their expressed and demonstrated capability to project power in multiple regions simultaneously. So when we look at Russia, we think of not only their capabilities, but those three things. Its actions to threaten NATO cohesion and undermine the international order. Their military modernization and doctrinal development aim to neutralize our traditional competitive advantages and limit our strategic options.

With regard to China, our policy emphasizes opportunities to cooperate, but frankly we're closely tracking their rapid military modernization, their expanded presence in Asia, and their increased military presence outside of Asia. While Chinese military investments, capability development and intentions are opaque, it's clear they're investing in a manner that balances requirements for large conventional forces, a growing navy, an increasingly sophisticated air force, and advancements in nuclear, space, and cyberspace.

These developments over time could erode our competitive advantage in Asia. They certainly will challenge our ability to assure access in a fight. In the South China Sea, Chinese activity is destabilizing and could pose a threat to commercial trade routes. While our exercise of freedom of navigation provides some assurance to our allies and partners, it hasn't stopped the Chinese from developing military capabilities in the South China Sea, to include on territories where there is a contested claim of sovereignty.

In order for me to discuss the current fight and spend some time on the so what of the trends that I see in the security environment, I won't spend a lot of time on North Korea and Iran this morning, except to note the trends in ballistic missile development and in cyber capabilities. We've also seen North Korea's focus on improving its nuclear capability. I would add that Iranian malign activity across the Middle East is certainly something we pay keen attention to.

Meanwhile, the fight against violent extremism continues to be, for obvious reasons, on page one above the fold. While ISIL is clearly a transregional threat, and we're always looking for opportunities to address the wider challenge, our focus to date has been on core ISIL in Iraq and Syria. I suspect most of you are familiar with the nine lines of effort and our overall strategy that cover areas such as governance, intelligence, finance, messaging, and foreign fighters. While there's a military dimension to all nine lines of effort, the military campaign is really focused, at the end of the day, on two critical elements.

The first, being strikes intended to kill ISIL leadership and fighters, degrade their military capabilities, interdict their lines of community, and deny them sources of revenue. The second critical element is to develop and support effective partners on the ground to seize and secure ISIL-held terrain. Conceptually, the military campaign is designed to put simultaneous pressure on ISIL across Iraq and Syria, but there's clearly differences on the ground in application. Without a clear partner on the ground, Syria has presented the difficult challenge.

Success in Syria requires us working with our Turkish partners to secure the northern border of Syria, supporting vetted Syrian opposition forces who are willing to fight ISIL, and conducting strikes to attack core ISIL's command and control, sources of revenue, while disrupting their ability to plan and conduct external attacks against the homeland, our partners, and our allies.

Our primary partners on the ground, the Syrian Democratic Forces, have been successful in recovering a large swath of ground in northeast Syria. I'll call them the SDF. The SDF's recent operations in the town of Shaddadah effectively severed the last major artery that connected Raqqa and Mosul. Over time, the size of the Syrian Democratic Forces, and specifically the Arab component inside the Syrian Democratic Forces, has grown. Our focus right now is on continuing that trend to grow the capabilities of the Syrian Democratic Forces, and specifically the Arab component of the Syrian Democratic Forces.

While not universally implemented, the current cessation of hostilities has allowed some humanitarian assistance to get through. The Geneva process for political transition in Syria has started, albeit pretty slowly. One of the concerns I guess I would mention – not in my prepared remarks – with regard to Syrian Democratic Forces, is that as I speak about growing the Syrian Democratic forces and the Arab component, one of the things we're particularly sensitive to is Turkish concerns about Syrian Democratic Forces and the Arab component.

So we're carefully managing that aspect of the campaign. It's very difficult because, again, Turkey has significant concerns about the linkages of the SDF with other Kurdish elements that are viewed as terrorists, and Turkey clearly concerned about the intentions particularly on the Turkish border in north Syria. Managing that aspect of the campaign has perhaps been part of the most complex part of the campaign.

With respect to Russian activity in Syria, there is absolutely no doubt that they stabilized the regime and they have put themselves in a position to influence the political solution. We're

still really assessing what the real meaning of their state of withdrawal is – or, more importantly, what the impact is going to be. It's just been a matter of a week. But on balance, – this is what I believe – on balance, the pressure we put on ISIL in Syria has degraded their capabilities, limited their freedom of movement, and reduced their resources.

In Iraq we have a partner, but the relationship is complicated by the political landscape, sectarianism, and Iranian influence. Success requires supporting the development of Iraqi and Kurdish security forces and enabling their operations with intelligence, advisers, logistics, and combined arms capability.

While very mindful of the complex challenges we face in the campaign, we're encouraged by developments in places like Baiji, Sinjar, and Ramadi, and now most recently in the western Anbar province. To me those operations actually indicate what's in the art of the possible. We've also been more effective – as our intelligence is developed over time, we've been more effective in conducting strikes against ISIL's leadership as well as going after their resources, particularly in the oil industry.

Moving forward, we're going to look for ways to reinforce success as the Iraqi security forces and Peshmerga prepare for operations in Mosul, which we think is a strategically significant operation. We'll seize every opportunity to increase the tempo of Iraqi security force operations, and most importantly their enduring effectiveness. I know a number of you probably have questions about the counter-ISIL campaign. Some of you probably have some advice for me in the counter-ISIL campaign, and I'll look forward to hearing that in the question-and-answer period.

While the fight against ISIL dominates the headlines, we also continue to face an extremist challenge in the homeland and our interests in South Asia. From my perspective, the constant pressure we've put on al-Qaida in that region over the past 14 years has prevented another 9/11, but the threat has not been eliminated. Of course I'm talking about largely the Afghanistan-Pakistan region.

The continued threat requires that we maintain an effective counterterrorism partner and platform in Afghanistan. And while the focus has been on al-Qaida, we've certainly seen recently the rise of the Islamic State in the Khorasan and we're also dealing with that. That's further complicated the situation in Iraq – in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The mission we've performed is designed to further enable Afghan security forces. It's also to demonstrate our enduring commitment to the region.

The good news is President [Ashraf] Ghani's administration is fully supportive of a U.S. and NATO presence and is an opportunity to strengthen the long-term strategic partnership that we're going to need to achieve our common objectives. I think, as most of you know, that's a significant change from his predecessor and has made it – as difficult as the circumstances are in Afghanistan, the relationship with the government in Afghanistan has made it much easier for us as we move forward, certainly much easier for us to identify common objectives.

Last summer highlighted, though, that the Afghan forces continue to need our support to build their capacity, specifically in areas like logistics, special operations, aviation capability, what I'd call broadly ministerial capacity. There is no question about it; there is much, much work to be done in those areas. That's really the focus of what's called Resolute Support, which

is the NATO mission that's ongoing right now, which is focused on training, advising, assisting, and developing Afghan capability in those specific functional areas.

The commitment of the international community to Afghanistan's future is also important to success, and in particular the funding for the Afghan security forces. This year there will be a NATO conference in Poland in the summer. One of the key issues that will be addressed is continuing international support both from a development perspective but – again, in the context of my comments this morning – most importantly from an Afghan national defense security forces perspective, funding that will push the horizon out for the Afghan forces out past 2020, which I think is very important.

One of the things I think that's inhibited campaign progress is always kind of almost a Y2K effect every year. You know, whether it's 2013, 2014, 2015, psychologically it's had an adverse impact on our Afghan partners. What we're really hoping to do with the NATO conference this summer is push the horizon out where the Afghans can focus on further developing our governance, addressing the capability gaps that exist that I mentioned without having to worry about what's going to happen on December 31st of whatever given year it happens to be next year, 2017.

The current challenge of violent Islamic extremism and the potential challenges associated with developments in Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran have a number of implications for the joint force, and I'll talk about a few of those from my perspective.

The first implication is foundational. We need a balanced inventory of joint capabilities that are going to allow us to deter and defeat potential adversaries across the full range of military operations. We actually don't have the luxury of choosing between a force that can fight ISIL and one that has a modern nuclear enterprise, robust cyber capabilities, robust space capabilities, conventional and special operations capabilities. We, as the United States, have to have a complete inventory of balanced capability.

In the current inventory, from my perspective, it doesn't have the kind of depth that I would like it to have. In getting the balance right in addressing the lack of depth in areas like ballistic missile defense, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and certain logistics-enablers, frankly I think is going to be probably one of the biggest challenges during my tenure. We're going to be doing that while modernizing a nuclear enterprise.

In this crowd I probably don't need to say much about the fiscal challenges that we have experienced over the last few years. Frankly, although the bipartisan budget act is going to get us through fiscal year 2017, we still have \$100 billion of sequestration looming over us and a wave of modernization requirements – again, I mentioned it earlier today – that we have deferred over the last several years. All of that will kind of come together. At the same time, we're trying to get out of a fairly significant readiness trough. Managing that over the next few years I think, again, will be a significant challenge.

The second implication is the need for us to continue to think about how to most effectively use the military instrument and national power to address today's challenges. I think we need to develop more effective methods to deal with what we've seen of Russian behavior in Georgia, the Crimea, and the Ukraine, or Iranian malign influence across the Middle East or Chinese behavior in the South and East China Sea.

Our traditional approach is either we're at peace or at conflict. I think that's insufficient to deal with the actors that actually seek to advance their interests while avoiding our strengths. As an aside, I don't find the current phasing construct for operational plans particularly useful right now. If you think about it, we bend authorities and capabilities according to where we think we are in a phase. Our adversaries, or potential adversaries, or our competitors, they don't actually – they don't actually find themselves limited by that same framework.

Just as an example, if you think about the threat, we gathered all the combatant commanders together last fall. We said: Hey, in your area of responsibility, what phase is your adversary in? I won't get specific here. I'm not trying to make headlines in that regard. But what phase – and consistently the combatant commanders said: Well, I think our adversary is in phase 2, or our adversary is in phase 2 ½.

What that means is the actions that they are taking on a day-to-day basis, whether it be in what's been described as the "gray space" – I call it competition with a military dimension short of a phase 3 or traditional conflict, but the activities that they're taking with regard to employment of cyber, unconventional capabilities, space capabilities, information operations are absolutely not associated with what we would call phase zero shaping. And so we've got to kind of work our way through that. We also need to develop a framework within which to deter cyber threats and obviously attributing threats, managing escalation, and hardening ourselves against cyberattacks are all areas that require more work.

I think one of the most significant implications of the current trend is the high likelihood that any future conflict will be transregional, multidomain, and multifunctional. This is a marked shift, in my perspective, from conflicts in the past. Information operations, cyber activities, space and counterspace, and ballistic missile technology have made the character of war today much more dynamic and complex, in my assessment, than it has been in the past. We're going to see such capabilities fielded by both state and non-state actors. Conflicts are very quickly going to spread across multiple combatant commanders, geographic boundaries and functions.

You know, the current fight against ISIL is certainly recognized as transregional, but to maybe put a little bit of context in the comments that I just made, if you thought about a North Korean contingency maybe 15 years ago you could have imagined a North Korean contingency isolated to the peninsula. North Korea develops ballistic missiles. It now involves a region. Today, if you think about a conflict with North Korea, you have to quickly factor in not only ballistic missiles, intercontinental ballistic missiles, cyber capabilities, space capabilities, in addition to the traditional conventional threat that we confronted on the peninsula.

So again, when I talk about multidomain – sea, space, cyberspace, undersea – when I talk about transregional – if I talked about a Korea scenario right now, I can quickly talk about the Pacific Command, Northern Command, Strategic Command, and obviously Cyber Command as a subset. That's just immediately, and that's if nothing else is going on in the world at the same time. So when we look at that, from my perspective, our current planning, our organizational construct, and most importantly our command and control is actually not suited to that character of war and we need some significant changes. This gets into the area of defense reform.

Today we're regionally focused. We rely on kind of what I describe as cooperation and collaboration between combatant commanders. We have supported and supporting relationships, and that's all worked well for decades. But if you think about it, the secretary of defense is the



decider and is the integrator in the department, and he's the lowest level at which integration – actually full integration – takes place amongst the combatant commanders.

If you think about how I described the character of war, and you imagine the secretary of defense trying to make decisions in that environment, clearly I think we owe him better in terms of command and control, a better framework within which to make decisions in a timely manner based on the character of war we see today and, as importantly, a better process for the prioritization and allocation of resources in real time when you're dealing with the kind of challenges that I've described. Again, not only in isolation, but my assumption and the thing I think we should plan for as military leaders, we should plan for some of those happening either on overlapping timelines or simultaneously. We've got to make sure that we're prepared to be able to do that.

Although we'll make some recommendations in the coming weeks to Congress, we're already moving out within our authorities to make some fundamental changes to be able to address those challenges I discussed. I expect we'll hear more of that as Chairman [Senator John S.] McCain and Chairman [Congressman William M. "Mac"] Thornberry work through defense reform in the coming weeks.

I am absolutely confident in our joint force today, in our ability to deal with today's challenges, but I'm also mindful that you actually get no credit tomorrow for what you did yesterday. What today is all about is making sure that we continue on the path of joint capability development; we continue to adapt the force to meet today's challenges. Some of the challenges we have today are not challenges we have foreseen and so we need to adapt, but also we need to be focused on how we innovate, to make sure that tomorrow's force, perhaps doing things in a fundamentally different way, is prepared for the challenges of 2020 and beyond.

**Remarks at the US Special Operations Command Change of Command Ceremony  
MacDill Air Force Base, Florida  
March 30**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and most of all, the men and women of the United States Special Operations Command, it's an honor to be with you here today as we mark the transfer of command authority and responsibility from General Joe Votel to General Tony Thomas.

A change of command is a time-honored tradition, and though we use the word 'change', I say that days like today are more about continuity of command than they are about change of command.

Tomorrow morning, just like this morning, the men and women of the United States Special Operations Command are going to wake up across the globe with commitment to the mission and trust in their leadership. Changes of command are also an opportunity to take stock of the command; a rare opportunity to reflect on the importance of the mission and the accomplishments of the organization. I think it's particularly important to do that in this command because seldom does the Special Operations Command look back or rest on its laurels.

So I'd like to begin by just spending a few minutes to talk about the men and women of the Special Operations Command and their international and interagency partners. It's a fact that much of what we do in the Joint Force depends on the capabilities and expertise of the Special Operations Command. That's not news to this crowd. You understand just how critical special operations are to the global challenges we face, and you know how much of the burden special operations have shouldered over the past 14 years of war.

When General Votel arrived at SOCOM, he established five priorities: readiness, global synchronization of SOF activities, establishing and improving partner relationships, innovation, and the well-being of the force and the families. These tenets have enabled the force of 70,000 "quiet professionals" to carry out SOCOM's mission with a degree of professionalism, commitment and competence that makes us all proud.

Today's a typical day with 10,000 members of the command deployed or forward stationed in more than 80 countries around the world, and as we know, many of them are in harm's way. Whether directly taking the fight to the enemy or they're building partnership capacity, our special operators are force multipliers and enable the geographic combatant commanders to do what must be done.

Operation Gallant Phoenix is a perfect example of the alignment between Special Operations Command and the geographic combatant commanders. Its mission is to stem the flow of the more than 30,000 foreign fighters from over a 100 different countries that have joined ISIL. Gallant Phoenix was established in direct response to a request by General Austin. And today with a relatively small number of personnel, it's producing significant strategic effects.

That, of course, is the SOCOM model. It's also the SOCOM way to innovate. Gallant Phoenix has generated several innovative and successful approaches to include the exploitation of social media to support military objectives. Gallant Phoenix also highlights another SOCOM core competency: the ability to establish networks which drive collaboration and coordination across our geographic combatant commands, our interagency partners, and our international partners.

The value that SOCOM places on relationships reflects in the audience here today. SOCOM has representatives from 17 nations in its headquarters staff and it's placing its people in 15 different nations. That sort of collaboration has enabled SOCOM to lead the charge in enabling the Department of Defense to more effectively address the character of war in the 21st Century.

Today's challenges are most often transregional, that is they cut across multiple combatant commands simultaneously; and multi-domain, that is they involve the sea, the land, the air, undersea, in space, and in cyberspace; and multifunctional, that means they involve a wide range of joint capabilities from special operations to conventional forces to ballistic missile defense. Meeting the dynamic of complex challenges we face today and we're going to face in the future requires greater speed in decision making and a much greater degree of integration than we experienced in the past. I won't go into it too much in detail today except to say that over the past several months under General Votel's leadership, the command has attacked this particular challenge and point the Joint Force in a position to significantly improve our warfighting capabilities.

SOCOM has developed a framework for a specific transregional challenge, that is for transregional terrorists and violent extremist organizations. But as importantly, the work that

they have done here is going to inform the other challenges that we deal with—Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea. SOCOM has been able to do that because of the quality of people in the command and the connective tissue that they have across all combatant commanders in the form of the theater special operations components. They are uniquely postured to help us get after this critical task.

I think General Votel said it best when he said that SOF's value to the nation lies in its global perspective and local influence, its networked approach, its service integration, and its discrete actions and unique capabilities. But he's going to be the first one to tell you that it's the men and women of Special Operations Command and their families that make it all possible. The emphasis that the command has placed on the preservation of the force and the family task force reflect the priority General Votel places on our special operators and their families. No one knows better than the men and women of SOCOM that SOF missions and responsibilities come at a cost.

SOCOM has been a leader in ensuring that the programs and the services that address the sacrifices and stress experienced by our forces and families are in place. Promoting strong minds, strong bodies, and strong families has become part of the SOCOM DNA. I could go on at length, but suffice it to say, the United States Special Operations Command simply delivers whatever the task and regardless of the conditions.

For the last 19 months, that performance has been a reflection of General Joe Votel's leadership. Joe has served the men and women of Special Operations Command with the same degree of competence, professionalism, passion for the mission, and compassion for people that has characterized his nearly four decades in uniform. He's done what every commander has done. He's recognized the capabilities of his people, given some clear guidance and a vision, and unleashed them to achieve their full potential. He leaves SOCOM with, I think, the best gift any commander can leave with, and that is the admiration, the appreciation, and the affection of the men and women that he's been privileged to lead.

Joe hasn't been alone in this journey. I would tell you that his team at home is as strong as any special operator. I want to take this opportunity to thank Joe's wife Michelle and their sons Scott and Nick for their sacrifice and support, and I also want to thank Joe and his family for their willingness to continue serving. The good news is that he's going to be out of a job for about 90 minutes, and we're going to march him down the street and put him back to work. Michelle, that's absolutely delightful to you, and I know you're very happy about that. Sometime in the next week or two, you'll actually move.

While we're saying goodbye to a great commander, the special operations bench is deep, and we've got the good fortune to have another exceptional leader taking command. He's no stranger to the men and women of Special Operations Command or the mission.

Tony Thomas is a proven combat leader with a wealth of experience and tactical expertise. He's also a strategic leader who has the intellect and vision to take the command to the next level. I've had the privilege of serving with Tony in combat and of calling him a friend. I would just tell you that I think the men and women of the Special Operations Command could not be in better hands.

I also want to thank his wife, Barb, and their sons Tony and Michael. We know Tony's achievements to date are a testimony to your love and support and we heard about that at the promotion just a few moments ago.

In closing, let me just say that it is an honor to join you here today and I look forward to working closely with General Thomas here at Special Operations Command and continuing to work closely with General Votel as he moves down the street to United States Central Command later today. But before General Votel takes the trip down the road, we're going to recognize him for his outstanding service here at the United States Special Operations Command and at this time, I would ask for you to publish the order.

**Remarks at the US Central Command Change of Command Ceremony  
MacDill Air Force Base, Florida  
March 30**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and most of all to the men and women of United States Central Command, it's an honor to be here today as we mark the transfer of authority and responsibility from General Lloyd Austin to General Joe Votel. As I mentioned earlier this morning at the Special Operations change of command, days like today are more about continuity than they are about change. We're changing leadership at the Central Command, but the men and women in the command will remain in the attack. They're not going to miss a beat in the performance of their mission.

Today we talk a lot about the complexity and volatility of the security environment, and for our geographic combatant commands, there's no shortage of demanding challenges. But there is no other geographic combatant command that has been asked to do more and no other combatant command that has done more over the past several years than the United States Central Command.

To the members of the CENTCOM team, I want you to know that your contributions have been recognized and appreciated. I know you recognize that from the Secretary's remarks. We've asked a lot of you, and you've delivered. And I'd like to quickly take the opportunity to highlight some of your accomplishments.

As General Austin says, what you do at CENTCOM is hard government work. When you're responsible for a part of the world that consists of places like Iraq, Syria, Iran, Yemen, Egypt, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Lebanon, you never know what kind of crisis or challenge you're going to wake up to in the morning. To bring all that to life, a typical day in CENTCOM involves conducting strikes against ISIL leadership and resources; supporting partners on the ground in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Yemen; and conducting naval operations in the Gulf to ensure freedom of navigation. It involves conducting multilateral exercises to improve our interoperability and develop partner capacity in the region that spans from Egypt to Pakistan. And while the CENTCOM team is doing all that, planning for a wide range of crises and contingencies across the area of responsibility. If you're on the CENTCOM team, the days are long and busy, and that's typically six or seven days a week.

But it's not so much what CENTCOM does that's remarkable, it's how they do it. I don't believe I'd get much of an argument if I said that the current fight against ISIL in Iraq and Syria is as complex as any fight we've ever had militarily or politically.

It was just a few months ago that there was little good news and all the pundits were saying that all was lost. But fortunately, the CENTCOM team wasn't listening. They were too busy developing ways to push back on the enemy and gain momentum. They were too busy developing and maintaining a coalition of over 60 nations. They were too busy fighting for intelligence, improving a targeting process, and building the capacity of our partners. They were too busy incorporating the lessons learned during the first year in the fight and making the necessary adjustments to win.

Today, while much work remains to be done, the dialogue about ISIL in Iraq and Syria is much different. Today we talk about coalition forces having the momentum. We talk about the effects of over 11,000 strikes that have killed key ISIL leaders, degraded their command and control, limited their freedom of movement, and significantly reduced their resources.

Today we talk about the fact that more than 40% of ISIL-held ground in Iraq has been retaken by Iraqi Security Forces and the Peshmerga. We talk about indigenous forces in Syria retaking 18,000 square miles. We're able to say all that as a direct result of the commitment, the professionalism, the competence, and the courage of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines of the United States Central Command. When many others were wringing their hands on the sidelines, the CENTCOM simply tightened their chinstraps and drove on. The results speak for themselves.

Though ISIL dominates the headlines, it's one of the many tasks for the CENTCOM team as the Secretary has addressed. Last year alone, CENTCOM executed more than 50 bilateral and multilateral exercises consisting of naval, air, and land assets from 14 partner nations.

CENTCOM continues to oversee the fight in Afghanistan where we maintain a coalition of more than 14,000 NATO forces which includes 10,000 U.S. forces. Over the past three years, CENTCOM planned and executed a drawdown of over 100,000 forces and hundreds of forward operating bases and outposts, and I believe that's an operational and logistical feat that will be studied in classrooms for many years to come.

CENTCOM's also providing support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen to support a partner and check the influence of al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. Every day, CENTCOM is taking action to counter-align Iran's malign influence to include bolstering the capabilities of partners in the region. All that is simply an overview of the heavy lifting that goes on in Tampa and across the CENTCOM area of responsibility every day.

For the last three years, the extraordinary performance of the United States Central Command has been a direct reflection of the extraordinary leadership of General Lloyd Austin.

I've known General Austin for over 17 years. Thirteen years ago this week, he was on my flank in combat. He's been a role model, a mentor, a boss, a friend, and occasionally—and Lloyd, if you remember this, I was working for you in Afghanistan—you've been my chaplain.

For me, Lloyd Austin is the epitome of a military leader. Humble, selfless, courageous, and committed. As someone recently said, Lloyd Austin has earned the reputation as someone people want to follow into battle. For the last three years, he's been an inspiration to the thousands of men and women of Central Command, operating under the most challenging of circumstances.

But what he has done at CENTCOM is simply another chapter in the 40-year career of a soldier who has lived by the West Point motto “Duty, Honor, Country.”

As he completes his last assignment, he leaves behind a legion of men and women and that includes Joe Dunford in that category, who are proud to be Lloyd Austin’s friend.

Now everything I just said is sincere, it comes from the heart. But Lloyd is not actually my favorite Austin. I want to recognize his wife, Charlene, who’s been with him every step of the way, a passionate advocate for military families. Charlene, thanks for your extraordinary sacrifice and support, and I would tell you that Ellyn and I are proud to call you our friend.

Fortunately for CENTCOM and the nation, we don’t have to look far to find another superb leader to take the helm at CENTCOM. General Votel, as the Secretary said, knows the mission, he knows the region, and he has the experience and credibility to take the command forward.

When it came time for the Secretary to pick Lloyd’s replacement, as we heard a minute ago, it was a short conversation. This is one of the most demanding assignments in the military at a very critical time. That required a special leader, and we have that leader in Joe Votel. Once again to Michelle, Scott, and Nick, thanks again for your sacrifice and support. Michelle, to you in particular, you know at times like this, many people say ‘congratulations.’ Ellyn and I more often say ‘thank you’ than ‘congratulations’ because we appreciate that it is a rare opportunity to have command, especially as something like United States Central Command, but we’re also mindful of the extraordinary sacrifice that a family makes when someone like Joe assumes these responsibilities. We know that couldn’t have happened without a conversation that took place probably over a glass of wine late one night when he said, ‘hey this is what’s going on’ and ‘can I?’ Thanks for saying ‘yes.’

Once again, ladies and gentlemen, it’s an honor to be here to thank General Austin for his service and mark the transfer of authority to General Votel. Now it’s my distinct honor to introduce my friend, a warrior, a leader, and at the end of the day, someone who defines what it means to be a soldier, General Lloyd Austin.

**Remarks at the Military Child of the Year Gala  
Pentagon City, Virginia  
April 14**

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. You expect me to say it, but it’s an absolute honor for my wife Ellyn and I to join you here this evening on such a special night.

The first thing I want to do to John Pray and the Operation Homefront team is to say thanks. I have the privilege of saying thanks on behalf of all of the men and women in uniform for what you do for our military families. You know what I like about the way this organization characterizes what we do for military families? They don’t help families get through the sacrifice. They don’t help families deal with the challenge of military lifestyles. They help families thrive in that environment. There is a difference.

I think when we see this evening’s award recipients we won’t see people that have somehow survived the sacrifices of the military lifestyle. We’ll see people that have had challenges in their own life that actually go far beyond the challenges they confronted in a military lifestyle. We’re

going to see young people who have actually thrived. I can't put a price tag on what that means to us in support of the Operation Homefront.

John [I. Pray, Jr, Brigadier General, USAF, retired], you had just about everybody else in the room stand up earlier this evening except for you and your team. What I'd ask now is for all of those that are part of Operation Homefront to please stand up and just let us say again, on behalf of all men and women in uniform, thank you.

John said that I would somehow try to put into words what this organization means to those of us in uniform and maybe to describe a little bit about military families, and to tell you the truth, as I was preparing to come over here, I actually couldn't come up with the words myself to be able to get really at the heart of what it means to me, especially a military family.

I could, like Mike [Moeller, United Technologies, Presenting Sponsor] did, share some of the similar stories about our own family – you know, over three decades married, raised all of our children in the military – and I can tell you the stories about changing high schools senior year and worried about whether they were going to get into college, and all the things that our military children put up with. But what came to mind is one of my favorite stories that for me actually captures the essence of what it really means to our military to have strong families, the foundation of the military.

I think those of you who have been around people in uniform know that we all like to compare ourselves frequently to the Spartans, right? You meet people in uniform and we always talk about the Spartans because the Spartans were, in their day, the most confident, the most feared warriors in the world, for the world as it existed in that time. There's more to this story of the Spartans than just that. Part of that came from a book I read a few years ago called "Gates of Fire." Some of you have read that particular book.

The book tells the story about the Battle of Thermopylae in 490 B.C. At that time, thousands of Persians were attacking the Greek city states, and the Greek city states couldn't actually get organized and they were about to be overrun. Finally the king of Sparta had to make a pretty tough decision. He said, look, I'm going to have to pick 300 warriors to go up to the pass at Thermopylae – with what we call today mission orders – and tell them nothing more than, hey, get up to that pass and stop the Persian horde and let us have the time that we need to get organized for a much more effective response.

When you read the book, you really don't know how the king came to select those 300 warriors, for most of the book. You think, well, he probably picked the warriors that had experience. But he had thousands of warriors in that army to pick from that were experienced. You might have said, well, they were the ones that were most proficient in the arms of the day, the sword and the shield. But again, he had thousands that had proven themselves in combat to be proficient. You might have said, well, was it volunteers? Once again, he had many, many more volunteers than just the 300 that he had.

You don't find out how he selected those 300 warriors until the end of the book. There's an exchange that takes place between the king and a woman. The woman comes up to the king – this is after the battle now and all but one, the one who allegedly wrote the story, has perished. She said, you know, you chose 300 warriors, and from my family – and you had thousands to pick from, but from my family you picked my husband and you picked my son, the only males in

our family, and they're both gone. Why did you ask our family to sacrifice so much when so many others didn't sacrifice at all?

The king paused and he said, I knew that this was going to be a long fight and I knew I was going to have to ask our people to make great sacrifices. The reason I picked those 300 is because of the strength of their families, because of the strength of their spouses and the strength of their children. I knew what I needed [are] families that would set the example for the other families, so that for years to come our nation would be able to be mobilized and do what has to be done to protect our freedom.

Ladies and gentleman, that little anecdote to me tells me that, one, that king was pretty smart and he recognized that the strength of his army and really the strength of his nation, the foundation, was those families, the support structure that those warriors and the example that those families would set for Sparta in the tough days that were sure to follow, in his mind.

But I also think that what was true in 490 B.C. is no less true today. Today I will tell you that we ask our young men and women in uniform to do a great deal, and particularly after the last 14 years I think it's fair to say the folks in this room certainly don't need me to remind you of all that we've asked from our families – great sacrifice – some of the folks that have made that sacrifice sitting in this room here this evening. You know, both Gold Star families and others who are wounded are here tonight to represent those who have made such great sacrifices.

I would just tell you that the resilience of our families. In particular, what we recognize and what we honor tonight, the resilience of our children, is absolutely what has allowed us to do the things that we have asked our force to do for these 14 years, or frankly during the time that the singer has just mentioned, World War II, whether it be Korea, Vietnam and so forth. The strength of the U.S. armed forces, the strength of our nation is, in fact, in many ways, our military families. That's what Operation Homefront celebrates.

Frankly, I can tell you from personal experience there is no way that I would be standing here today, 39 years of active duty – there is no way that I would still be doing this if our children hadn't had the resilience to deal with the military lifestyle, if Ellyn and I didn't think that we could move our children from place to place and from school to school and that somehow they'd figure out a way to adapt and become young adults and be contributing members of society. Had we not thought we could do that in the military, we would not have been able to make the choices that we made.

Tonight, ladies and gentlemen, we're recognizing some children who have demonstrated those qualities of resilience, who have not just gotten by in the military lifestyle; they have thrived with the challenges associated with the military lifestyle. They have thrived. That's what we recognize today. For Operation Homefront to support that kind of young person who sets the example for all the rest of us, I can't put a price tag on it and can't tell you how much, John, that we appreciate that.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, again, for Ellyn and I, a tremendous honor to be here this evening, a tremendous honor to be here to recognize the young people that are going to quickly follow me here on the stage. For all those here from Operation Homefront, and as importantly, all those who support the mission of Operation Homefront, please once again, on behalf of those of us in uniform, accept my sincere thanks and gratitude for what you do, because we are able to do what we do because you do what you do. Thank you very much.



## **Excerpts from Interview with Media in Iraq**

### **Iraq**

**April 22**

**Dunford:** I'll be ready to take your questions and probably jump right into that, but I'll just share with you my perspective. It really is informed by I came here last August in preparation for this job. I came here in October, right after I started the job. I came here in January a second time. And then here. So four times since last August.

What I've been telling the Marines and the soldiers is that since last August, the narrative was that there was inevitability in ISIL's success in Iraq, the confidence of the Iraqi security forces was really low. You will recall that up until even May of last year, ISIL had been continuing to grab ground and so forth, and we were kind of in a hold pattern for Operation Ramadi. So Iraqi security forces had been around Ramadi – and you both followed that – all three of you followed that – had been around Ramadi for really months, and the big question was, when are the Iraqis ever going to get into Ramadi, and so forth. So that was kind of August.

To be honest with you, if you look at the media – and you can go back and check this – I think if you looked at 10 articles, you would have found 10 negative articles in terms of the prospects for any kind of success in Iraq, and particularly negative about the Iraqi security forces, and negative about our efforts to grow Iraqi security forces and the prospects for us growing them. So that's kind of the baseline for what I'm going to tell you now because I am not unmindful of the challenges, nor am I going to blow sunshine.

But what I will also tell you that when I look back at last August and I look at now, there's a couple of things that are indisputable to me. Number one is that, you know, ISIL/Daesh holds far less ground than they held last year. Number two, we've had a significant impact on their resources, and we know that from how much they're able to pay their fighters and how much support they're able to provide their people. Number three, we have had a significant impact on a number of their senior leadership. And number four, their freedom of movement has been significantly limited over the year, and the number of foreign fighters that are able to get in now has been reduced since last year.

Then the other thing that's indisputable is the Iraqi security forces have gone from, hey, when are they going to start doing something to now having secured Ramadi and having now secured most of Hit, and then moving out to the Euphrates River Valley and working in Anbar Province. Then they've moved north up the Tigris River Valley, and there are forces now south of – I mean, I saw your reporting. You can characterize it the way you have, to say, you know, kind of the sky is falling and they're all held up and U.S. plans have been thwarted; I look at it as, OK, they're now in and around, south of Makhmur, and starting to establish positions that will eventually lead to operations in Mosul – eventually, some time to come. So that, to me, is the trajectory that we're on.

You saw as well as I did, and you've already covered it, so I'll answer questions about it and we'll comment on it. Look, I've been in this business a while, and I know where the Iraqi security forces are and where they're not, and I know what needs to be done at this point to

enable them to be successful. But that's what we're doing. We're filling in the gaps and the Iraqi security forces are doing the fighting. We didn't fight for them in Ramadi and we didn't fight for them in Hit, and with two exceptions we didn't bleed for them. They've been bleeding – they've been bleeding themselves and conducting operations.

From the outside, we can talk about political challenges in Baghdad, but at the end of the day – and I'll share it with you – we had –and I'd be happy to talk about this – we had a meeting with Prime Minister Abadi last night, and in terms of the level of cooperation and his willingness to accept our support and work with us, we have a partner in Baghdad. He not only has accepted the forces that we had, but he accepted and increase in forces for operations, and the collaboration was pretty positive.

Frankly, we spoke last night about the need for cooperation with the Kurds. I was able to deliver a message today to Prime Minister – President [Massoud] Barzani that Prime Minister [Haider al-]Abadi last night committed to us that he would work with his folks to get a plan developed for Mosul right away, and that he would consult with President Barzani soonest to make sure that, you know, all the key stakeholders agreed upon the plan. You guys have kind of covered some of the challenges already, so I'm not going to do that. I would typically do that, but I'm not going to do that. What I'm trying to provide is context for all the other things that you might have seen. Now I'm happy to talk in more detail about any of those things.

**Q:** Yeah, I think it's undeniable that the momentum is behind you. The story was just reflecting some of the hang-ups before you get – before Mosul, because, as you know, there's just a tremendous amount of anticipation for that operation.

**Dunford:** I think if you had talked to a wider number of people or even reported a wider number of conversations you had, yes, I mean, a number of those units, brand new. Brand new, and some of those leaders not good. Then you can look at other leaders, like the brigade that just left, probably not as strong as the brigade that's there now.

I'll be honest with you: I was impressed with that brigade commander yesterday, because I asked him a lot of questions and he answered them, to the degree of understanding that he should have as a brigade commander. Now, did he tell me things that were concerning? Sure. Did they have all the parts blocks they need for the T-72s? No. Did they have parts blocks for the BMPs? No. Did they have ammunition that they need to conduct training on those systems? No. Did they have a lot of guys that really haven't yet become proficient in those systems, and is the training period fairly compressed for the complexity of the tasks those guys have to perform? No question about it. Which is one of the reasons why we want the advisers that are with them to continue to move on when they leave the training, to continue training in their forward operating bases for another six or eight or 10 weeks.

I guess what I would say is that, look, there are definitely challenges, and Mosul's not going to be tomorrow. There are real political issues to work through in the coming weeks. Sequence-wise, to give you a sense of where I think we are, first there has to be what President Barzani described today as a plan for the day after Mosul, right? So it's a plan for the day after Mosul, and I think that's a good way to put it. You know, I would have said, how do we solve the political transition problem, but I like the way Barzani put it: the day after Mosul.

So Barzani needs to know, what's the day after Mosul? Some of the PMF that are there need to know what's the day after Mosul, and Prime Minister Abadi needs to articulate what the day is after Mosul. They all have to kind of come together and the Sunni have to be enfranchised in the future of Iraq. There's no question about it. There's got to be some accommodation for Kurdish interests with the central government in Baghdad, dominated, obviously, by the Shia.

I don't think that's new news. We've all known that, if we were going to get to a multi-sectarian, unified Iraq, that – and I, having spent a fair amount of time in the Anbar Province in a previous life, I fully appreciate the need for the Sunni to feel like there is a future for them in Iraq, and that the government will take into consideration their interests, and that they will be beneficiaries from good governance in Baghdad just like everybody else is. So that has to happen. Not all of that has to happen before Mosul, but there has to be at least an agreed-upon grand vision as the detailed plan for Mosul is written. The detailed plan for Mosul has to be written in the context of the day after, and the day after what everyone thinks.

So those are the first two things that'll happen now, and what was very promising last night is Prime Minister Abadi said I recognize that consultation with the Kurds is important, and I recognize that the Kurds will have a role in any plan to secure Mosul. I think that's a recognition – now, that's what he said. Now let me shift to my interpretation. I think that's a recognition of both the political and the military imperative of involving the Kurds. You know, the political imperative, from the perspective of this –looking for a multi-sectarian, unified Iraq when this is all over, and the military imperative from very, very capable forces supported and equipped by coalition forces over the past several months that are absolutely going to contribute and are necessary to be successful in Mosul. That's kind of step one.

Step two is now the agreed-upon campaign plan. Then, the continued generation of forces, which you saw a piece of yesterday, and setting the conditions. I would just tell you this: there's not going to be one day when we say, OK, operations in Mosul. It's already started. You know, when people say to me when's it going to start, if you envision it as a noose that's going to be tightened over time, we're tightening it – tightening it today with positioning forces, we're tightening it today with strikes, we're tightening it today with targeted strikes against leadership, we're targeting today by going after the resources, and we're targeting it today by trying to limit – we haven't fully stopped it, but we're disrupting the movement of Daesh/ISIL forces between Iraq and Syria, and from the capitals of Raqqa and Mosul, and from the ability, then, to resupply themselves. I think you all have seen the kind of disaffection inside of both Mosul and Raqqa. We're talking really Mosul, but the disaffection inside there as people increasingly are concerned that one, that they're not getting enough food and supplies and so forth; and number two, probably as importantly, the people are kind of looking at this going, OK, there's got to be something better than this going on. And so I think that's a piece of it.

I think what we're going to see in the best of circumstances will be the Iraqi forces continue to move up towards Mosul and they continue to kind of tighten the noose around Mosul. Over time, they squeeze tighter and tighter and tighter, and eventually they make their way into the city, and eventually Mosul is secure. But it's going to take some time. Then there's another really key thing that has to happen, so that's kind of the next phrase. Now they also have to identify the police and the stabilization funds to be available for afterwards. This is incredibly difficult and complex. This is a million people. You know, you see numbers from 900,000 to 1.2

million that are inside of Mosul right now. Complex urban terrain. A very, I think, determined enemy, long time to prepare, IED belts that are out there. This is going to be a tough fight.

**Q:** What about the will to fight issue? I mean, I know that, you know there's the potential for – forces who are touched directly by coalition trainers; it sounds like their morale is a lot better. But you know, it's going to be a pretty large force, and presumably that'll include a whole mass of Iraqi troops. Are you still worried about that issue?

**Dunford:** Well, I mean in the aggregate, yes. I think that the will to fight is important, and I'd say two things.

Number one, this is about correlation of forces. I think the will of the Daesh/ISIL forces is suspect right now, and we have pretty good evidence that that's the case.

Number two, I think that any good commander is going to put those forces in that can handle the job that they've been assigned. There are CTS forces, there are other brigades that are more mature, have been together for a longer period of time, more combat-tested, that are more capable, and then there are newer forces or less capable forces. I think it's going to be up to the commander to make sure that he employs those forces in accordance with their relative capabilities and limitations.

So, yeah, there are units that have higher morale than others, and the CTS clearly more capable than most other Iraqi forces, although we're encouraged by those forces that have two things going for them. One, we've had a chance to equip them and train them. Number two, they've had a chance to become experienced.

I mean, even yesterday there is almost a tale of two cities with different battalions. One battalion commander whose forces did fight in Ramadi, he actually had the vehicles that were down in Ramadi with him, and his company commanders and a number of his senior guys had all fought in Ramadi. So, they feel pretty good. Then another battalion commander I spoke to, zero guys that had been in the battalion before. This poor guy, his challenge – and so I made a joke with him, because he actually seemed a pretty impressive guy. I said, hey, you know what the reward is when you're in the army? You know what the reward is for being a good guy? He kind of looked at me. I said, they give you something hard to do. They give you something harder to do than you had before. So this guy's got kind of a hard job to do.

But, look, there is no question that – I'm a big guy on the psychological factors and the human factors, and saying that that's the difference between winning and losing. When do you win? You win when the other guy thinks he lost. War is a clash of wills. At the end of the day, this is a clash of wills between Iraqi security forces enabled by the coalition and Daesh/ISIL. Whoever's will is the strongest is going to, in the end, be successful. I think you've zeroed in, in my mind, on probably one of the central, critical issues.

I do think that there are some units in the Iraqi security forces whose morale is higher than others. Part of the thing that improves Iraqi morale – and I talked to a bunch of Marine artillerymen tonight – part of the thing that improves Iraqi morale, number one, is good leadership. Where you have good leaders, you see higher morale than others. There are some leaders that are not as good as others, no question about it.

What also make the morale high is when they're in a fight and there's coalition aircraft and there's artillery that provides support, so they know that they're going to have the support

they need and they know they're not alone in the fight; their spirits are lifted. I mean, you guys have been covering the war for a long time, and you know what it's like when soldiers see air weapons teams over their shoulder. They can hear rotor blades and they know that there's rockets, and then they know there's close air support and know there's artillery fire, and that'll make a difference for the Iraqi forces over time. That's one of the other things we bring to the fight.

Also, I think that additional training is going to help lift them up. That's why, you know, General [Sean] MacFarland said something that is absolutely true: what the Iraqi leadership needs to do is – those guys either need to be fighting or they need to be preparing to fight, they need to be training. Those are the only two things they can be doing now the next several months.

**Q:** Sir, when you first got on the aircraft today, you talked about awarding four Purple Hearts to Marines at Firebase Bell.

**Dunford:** This was a personal thing. When offered the opportunity to go out and give these guys Purple Hearts, I actually did it at the gun position, right where Staff Sergeant [Louis F.] Cardin was killed and where they received the Purple Heart. All the years I have not awarded anybody a Purple Heart actually on the ground where they received the Purple Heart. Because we're in an isolated place where there still is some danger, we didn't have a big formation, so I went to talk to each one – there's four guns and four gun crews. So I went to each gun crew separately so we didn't amass a lot of people. But in this particular gun crew, for the Marines that had been wounded and received Purple Hearts, we started with a formation.

Then I just talked to them and kind of told them what the mission was and why I thought it was important, and frankly just thanking them. You know, and I got an expression, how do you show your support? By your physical presence. I mean, so I don't know how else to do it. I'm not articulate enough to do it, so you got to kind of – you got to be there, and look them in the eyes and tell – or, as I described it to them, look them in their running lights and say, hey, thanks for what you did today

Staff Sergeant Cardin was the section chief. This young sergeant now, who was the II MEF Marine of the Year last year, stepped up to be the section chief. Pretty tough, burly looking guy. When I was giving the Purple Hearts, and I saw him out of the corner of my eye when I was talking about Staff Sergeant Cardin, you know, his eyes were all welling up. When I finished I said, hey, listen I really appreciate you taking care of these guys. You know, they're counting on you. I know Staff Sergeant Cardin's kind of looking down and he knows – he would be doing what you're doing, which is merely tightening his chinstrap and getting on with it the day after, and I appreciate you doing that.

And he goes: Sir, there is nothing I'd rather be doing right now than doing this right now. I'll take care of it, kind of thing. It was really as I told these guys, I know I got to spend a lot of time doing what I have to do, but sometimes it's nice to do what I like to do. It was good. And so we went to each one of the four gun positions and then visited some of the Marines that are out on security. What are they doing? They're literally in a fairly isolated place, and they're the only ones in this particular location of some Marines and some soldiers. They're in a position to provide artillery support to the Iraqis.

But as importantly, and as I told them, one of the reasons why our advisers out there are confident, they don't turn around wondering if someone's got their 6:00 because they know, figuratively speaking, if somebody crosses a handset and says: Hey, I'm in trouble right now. I need some help. They know Echo Battery, which is these guys – Echo Battery is going to – they're already on the guns. We're on the guns 24/7. Doesn't matter what the weather is. Echo Battery is there. They're going to get fires. We're going to get it on time, we're going to get it on target.

I just wanted to tell them kind of the role they played. I talked to them about Mosul, and I said, hey, why – and we kept them there longer, though. Their Marine Expeditionary Unit is returning home. They'll be home on the 28th of April. These guys are staying late. That was another reason you kind of want to go there and talk to them and say: Hey, thanks for sticking around for several more weeks. We wouldn't have asked you to do that if it wasn't important that we keep the momentum.

Notwithstanding the challenges, our perspective is that the momentum has swung, and when you get to this point, my experience tells me, once you got somebody in a headlock, you don't tell them go. It's important that we keep pressure on them, we keep pushing and pushing and pushing that, at whatever the pace is that the Iraqis can sustain. It's their fight and it's their momentum, but we want to make sure that whatever we're doing enables them to maintain the momentum that they can sustain to make sure that the enemy is reacting to them, instead of them reacting to the enemy.

I think that's what fair to say is different from a year ago, is that a year ago everybody was reacting to ISIL. Now, ISIL is reacting to the Iraqi Security Forces. We want to make sure that that continues. I don't take that for granted, because we're dealing with a very adaptive, determined enemy. As soon as you become complacent and you think, OK, this is breaking our way, that's probably the most dangerous time, is when you start thinking that way. And so I don't think that way and I don't think the Iraqis are thinking that way. But at the same time, you want to be confident in the outcome. I think that's what's different too, is the Iraqi Security Forces, at least the leadership level, the degree of confidence they have – it's striking to me how much different it was than October.

**Remarks at the Graduation Ceremony for Boston College High School Class of 2016**  
**Boston, Massachusetts**  
**May 22**

President [William J.] Kemeza, ladies and gentlemen, and most of all the class of 2016 ... you'd expect me to say it, but it's an absolute honor to be back at B.C. High and to participate in this year's commencement ceremony. I'd like to begin by recognizing those here from the class of 1966 who are celebrating their 50th reunion. I'd also like to recognize my classmates from the class of 1973 who are here, particularly our principal Mr. Steve Hughes, who has done so much for B.C. High and the thousands of young men fortunate to have been exposed to his leadership.

There is another special group of people here today and that's the proud parents of the graduating class. I'd ask the moms and dads in the audience to please stand. I know some

members of this year's class have lost parents along the way, and we especially miss their presence on days like today, but I know they are here in spirit.

As I was preparing my remarks, I had occasion to reflect on own my experience at B.C. High. One particularly clear memory is the first speech I ever delivered. It was the final requirement for Father [Robert] Sheridan's speech class my freshman year. I was assigned to memorize and deliver a portion of Lincoln's Gettysburg address. I reported to class completely unprepared and proceeded to perspire and stumble through the lines.

I was relieved when the ordeal was over and quickly returned to my seat – at that moment, I was ready to put speech class behind me and not very concerned with my grade. I also thought that I would find a way to make it through the rest of my life without giving another speech.

But Father Sheridan had another idea – he followed me to my desk, smiled and assigned me to prepare another speech for the next class. I learned a valuable lesson and was better prepared and more confident for round two. Father Sheridan was one of the many members of the faculty and staff here at B.C. High that had a positive effect on me even if I didn't recognize or fully appreciate it at the time.

Mr. [James] Autio, Sister [M. Evangeline] Chiasson, and Mr. [Richard K.] Gross also left a lasting impression on me. Junior year I missed months of school due to back surgery and they routinely came to my house to tutor me and ensure that I didn't fall behind.

Father [Hubert F.] Cunniff, Father [David J.] Leo, Father [Edward F.] Donahue, and Brother [Charles J.] Finn were among the many, many others that demonstrated commitment, extraordinary generosity, patience, and a sense of humor in guiding me along the way.

The names have changed, but in the years ahead, I'm sure that those of you in the class of 2016 will look back at the faculty and staff here at B.C. High with the same admiration, appreciation, and affection that I have for those that were here in my era.

Because it truly is the faculty and staff that makes B.C. High so special, so I'd ask the class of 2016 to join me in recognizing today's faculty and staff.

I mentioned that I clearly remember that first speech I had to deliver at B.C. High, but one speech I don't remember at all was the speech at my commencement in May 1973. In fact, I had to do a bit of research to find out that our speaker was the current Secretary of State John Kerry. At the time, he was just getting started in his political career. Today, Secretary Kerry and I routinely attend the same meetings, so later this week I'll have to come clean about my failure to remember what I'm sure was an inspiring speech.

Notwithstanding the quality of the commencement address, my mind was miles away from B.C. High when I sat where the class of 2016 is sitting today. I was thinking about moving on to college, what I was going to do for the summer, and just about anything other than what was going on during the ceremony. I suspect many of you here today are in a similar place. So with that in mind, I've challenged myself to say something this morning that's relevant to those of you who are graduating, something that you may actually remember, at least until tomorrow.

I'm going to accomplish my mission by sharing a few thoughts on selfless service. And I'm going to ask you, the class of 2016 to accomplish your mission by staying with me for just a few minutes, and perhaps be a bit more attentive than I was at my own commencement.

It should come as no surprise that I would choose to talk about service this afternoon. As you are well aware, it's expected that a B.C. High graduate will leave Morrissey Boulevard prepared to serve as a man for others.

By coincidence, it was just two months after I graduated B.C. High that the then-Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Pedro Arrupe, used the expression "men and women for others" in articulating what graduates of Jesuit schools should be. While Father Arrupe coined the phrase, the idea has been at the core of Jesuit identity since the founding of the Society of Jesus.

When I graduated from B.C. High, I had certainly been exposed to the concept of being a man for others. My uncle was a Jesuit and I listened with interest as my advisor, Father [Francis H.] Belcher, my algebra teacher, Father [Alfred J.] Hicks, and my English teacher, Father [John L.] Mahoney shared stories of their service in Baghdad during the 1960s.

These were men who took a vow of poverty and completely dedicated their lives to service of faith, service of the poor, service of justice, and service of education.

Fathers Belcher, Hicks, and Mahoney were in Baghdad in 1968 and taking great personal risk when the Jesuits were expelled after a bloody coup d'état by Saddam Hussein and the Baath socialist party.

In 2003, I gained a better appreciation for the impact these men had on others when I found myself on the streets of Baghdad. As my Marines established a protective perimeter around Baghdad University, I was approached by an excited group of Iraqis asking me if I knew the Jesuits. When I told them I was educated by Jesuits, they proudly took me to the Jesuit house where Fathers Belcher, Hicks, Mahoney and others had lived in 1969.

For several hours, we exchanged stories about our Jesuit educational experience, and the lessons we were taught. We spoke of men who made a difference in our lives. It was an incredible experience—30 years after high school and thousands of miles from home in an Islamic country, I was witness to the impact of men for others with a B.C. High connection.

Perhaps because of those extraordinary examples, when I sat where the class of 2016 is sitting, I viewed the idea of living as a true man for others as a worthy goal, but perhaps a standard that few could obtain. Maybe not something an ordinary man could achieve.

Quite frankly, to me at the age of 17, their level of commitment seemed unattainable. But upon reflection, I didn't grasp the full meaning of the concept. Sure, I met my B.C. High requirement for volunteer service at the little house here in Dorchester, but I hadn't fully connected the dots on the broader meaning of a Jesuit education.

What I have come to appreciate over the years is that living in accordance with the Jesuit ideal, and answering God's call to service can take many forms. I've been fortunate to know many B.C. High graduates who have found a way to selflessly serve others. Their examples have informed my own continuing journey to live a life of service and true meaning.

One of my personal heroes who embodies self-less service is in the audience today, Captain Tom Kelley class of 1956. I know most members of the class heard Captain Kelley speak last fall, and I'm sure many have taken the time to read about Captain Kelley on the memorial wall.

After graduating from B.C. High in 1956, Captain Kelley went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Holy Cross and a commission in the U.S. Navy. Several years later, he was in command of 8 riverine boats and a few dozen American sailors in South Vietnam.



On June 15th, 1969, he was leading his unit when a call came to extract a U. S. Army infantry company from the marshy waterways that his unit patrolled. While loading that company aboard his boats, one of the craft's ramps became stuck, making both the boat and a vehicle being loaded on it immovable. At about the same time, an enemy force on the opposite side of the river began delivering a withering barrage of automatic rifle and rocket fire against Captain Kelley's force.

Recognizing that the boat with the stuck ramp was in grave danger, he maneuvered his own boat to the front and put himself directly in harm's way to shield his men and the soldiers being evacuated. Then young Lieutenant Kelley was subsequently hit by shrapnel to the face, head and eyes and knocked to the ground by explosions, but he continued to lead his men until the enemy was repelled and the infantry company had been extracted. For his selfless leadership and for risking his own life to save others, Captain Kelley received our nation's highest award for bravery: the Medal of Honor. Captain Kelley, sir, would you stand and be recognized?

Exactly forty years after Tom Kelley departed B.C. High, Brian McPhillips received his diploma. It was mentioned in my introduction that Brian was one of my lieutenants in Marine Regimental Combat Team 5 during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. Many of you will recognize the name, and again, I hope you have taken the time to read about Brian on the memorial wall.

Brian was born in Concord and lived in Pembroke. His dad had served as a Marine and inspired Brian to military service. Brian went on to graduate from Providence College. After graduation, he was commissioned as a Marine second lieutenant.

Less than 3 years later, he was serving in Iraq. During the march to Baghdad in the spring of 2003, after one of the other lieutenants in Brian's tank battalion was severely wounded, Brian volunteered to assume his duties knowing it was the most demanding assignment for a lieutenant in the battalion. Instead of riding in a heavily armored tank, the assignment called for being in a thin-skinned Humvee at the point of a column of over 20,000 Marines.

The unit Brian volunteered to lead was shaken by the loss of their lieutenant days earlier. The leadership had to consider their ability to stay on point with few effective alternatives. But Brian had a superb reputation in the battalion as a lieutenant who knew his stuff and took care of Marines. He quickly earned their confidence and inspired them to press on.

Brian and his men were tasked to find and fix the enemy and to locate civilians who might otherwise be caught between us and the Iraqi army. Brian's task was to protect civilian non-combatants and keep our Marines alive. In short, he was performing his duty in a manner consistent with the just war doctrine of Thomas Aquinas.

On April 4th, 2003 Brian was killed on the outskirts of Baghdad while living up to Jesuit values, leading his Marines from the front and serving as a protector of the innocent.

One of the reasons I shared these particular stories this afternoon is because I've made a personal commitment not to let the sacrifice or valor of men like Tom Kelley or Brian McPhillips be forgotten.

But that's not the primary reason why I recall their stories to you this afternoon at commencement. What's most important about their examples is not that they served in uniform or that they were courageous, and it was not how Brian McPhillips died that makes his story

relevant to you. The stories of Tom Kelley and Brian McPhillips would be appropriate to share even without recalling the events of June 1969 or April 2003.

As a leader, Tom Kelley had a reputation for putting the needs of his sailors ahead of his own and for being someone special long before and after that fateful day in Vietnam. He was and remains a man of character and faith. Following two decades of service in uniform, he continued to serve first as a civilian in the Department of Defense and later as the Massachusetts Secretary of Veteran's Affairs.

He established a reputation as a humble and selfless public servant. His focus was on employment, housing, and medical care for veterans and their families. He was a powerful advocate for the unemployed, homeless, and those suffering the visible and invisible wounds of war. Today, he continues to serve others and strongly advocates to educate children who have lost their parents in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Similarly, even before coming into the Marine Corps Brian McPhillips was known as a man for others. He was a great son and older brother, a man of strong faith and conviction, a volunteer in the community, and someone who was always more focused on the needs of his Marines than he was on taking care of himself. Like the class of 2016, he performed many hours of volunteer service while at B.C. High and continued to do so after graduation.

Now, on the surface, the examples of Tom Kelley and Brian McPhillips may seem to reflect a degree of commitment as unattainable to the class of 2016 as the examples of Fathers Belcher, Hicks, and Mahoney seemed to me in 1973.

There is no doubt that their heroic actions were extraordinary. Additionally, few here are going to serve in the United States military or be in a position to make the ultimate sacrifice for our nation or for your subordinates.

But if you reflect just a bit on these two examples, I hope you can see that their actions and their influence transcend their particular profession or demonstration of physical courage.

I don't believe Captain Kelley would mind me saying this, but he is, and Brian McPhillips was, like most of us gathered here today, an ordinary man. But they were able to accomplish extraordinary things in life because of their self-less service. In my judgment, they both lived a life completely consistent with the words of Father Arrupe and the Jesuit tradition.

Their examples highlight the point I made earlier when I said that living the Jesuit ideal and answering God's call to service can take many forms.

My message to the class of 2016 is that being a man for others is not abstract or an overly-high standard that only a few extraordinary individuals can attain. It's not something that requires the total commitment of a Jesuit or a Medal of Honor recipient. It's something that can be achieved in many ways and in any walk of life.

In fact, it's something that every B.C. High graduate should expect to attain. If history is any indication, in just a few years, members of the class of 2016 will be found all over the globe. Some will become doctors, others leaders in industry, government, or education, some will serve in uniform or follow a non-traditional path that is inconceivable as we gather here today.

So I'll close with a simple request to each member of the class of 2016, from one B.C. High grad to another. Go forth and chase your dreams without forgetting the cardinal direction you established while here at B.C. High. Regardless of where life takes you, commit to selfless service, to being a part of something bigger than yourself. Have the moral courage to stand up

for what's right and just, take the time in your daily life to serve in a way that matters and that works for you. In the end, perhaps inspired less by the specific actions of Father Belcher, Father Hicks, Father Mahoney, Captain Kelley, or Brian McPhillips, but more by their spirit, be a man for others.

Once again, thank you for the privilege of joining you today. God bless you in all of your future endeavors, *Ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, and *Semper Fidelis*.

**Remarks at the Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony  
Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia  
May 30**

Good morning Mr. President, Secretary [of Defense Ashton B.] Carter, distinguished guests, and most importantly, to the Gold Star Families who are here. It's an honor to be with you today on this hallowed ground.

As we pause this morning and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedom and security of our great nation, thousands of men and women continue to serve on active duty around the world. Many in harm's way.

This morning, while we remember and honor the fallen, I'd ask you to keep those still serving in your thoughts and prayers as well. Today's generation of soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coastguardsmen is probably following in the footsteps of an unending line of American citizens who have answered the call to duty.

Since George Washington cobbled together an army, over 40 million Americans have served the colors to ensure the citizens of our nation can live their lives and raise their children in freedom and peace. Some supported the birth of the revolution, more recently others have answered the call to confront terrorism. The story of the 40 million who have served is the story of our nation.

Along the way, more than one million Americans have given the last full measure. Over 100,000 in World War I. Over 400,000 in World War II. Almost 40,000 in Korea. Over 58,000 in Vietnam. And over 5,000 have been killed in action since 9/11.

These statistics are compelling, but they don't begin to capture the enormity of the sacrifice. For the loss of each individual brings untold anguish and grief. Those statistics represent sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, good friends. Those statistics represent children who grew up without their mothers and fathers. Those statistics represent lives shattered, hopes and dreams never realized.

Today is a reminder of the real cost of freedom, the real cost of security, and that's the human cost. But I don't believe our focus today should be on how these men and women died.

It's how they lived that is important. It is how they live that makes us remember them. In life, these individuals chose to be something bigger than themselves. They chose to accept hardship and great personal risk. They were people who truly embodied the most important values and traditions of our nation. If we truly want to honor the fallen from all of our conflicts, if we truly want to give meaning to the sacrifice, we'll do something in addition to marking their graves with flags and flowers. Each of us will leave here today with the resolve to strengthen our commitment to our nation and the values for which it stands.

If we walk away from today's ceremony reminded that the cause of freedom requires sacrifice, if we walk away with a renewed sense of commitment to our values, if we walk away

reminded how important it is to defend those values, then I would offer that those that were taken from us prematurely will be able to look down and know that we truly remember them. More importantly, those that were taken from us prematurely will be able to look down and know that their lives had meaning.

On behalf of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coastguardsmen and that we are privileged to lead, thank you for bringing meaning to the sacrifice to the missing and fallen. Thank you for remembering.

**Remarks at the National Defense University Graduation Ceremony  
Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, District of Columbia  
June 10**

Under Secretary [Patrick F.] Kennedy, General [Frederick M.] Padilla, distinguished guests, and most of all to this year's graduates. You'd expect me to say it, but it truly is an honor to be here to celebrate a significant milestone in your career.

Having said that, I was listening to General Padilla, and on the one hand he said that you were the best and the brightest, and on the other hand, he said 'you did it' as though he was surprised that you did it [Laughter]. I'm actually not sure which to believe. [Laughter]. But I will be gracious today—it is your day—and I'll believe you really are the best and the brightest, and it's not a surprise that you finished.

I would like to begin by recognizing the many international fellows that are here and the civilians from across the United States government and industry. My experience tells me that those of you who are here will go back and become future senior leaders in your countries and in your organizations. I know for a fact that you have enriched the educational experience here at the National Defense University, so thank you.

There's another special group that I'd like to recognize and that's the many family members that are gathered here today, in particular, the spouses.

It's not lost on me that at this stage in your life, your graduates could have retired and moved on to a second career. Instead, they chose to advance their professional education and by doing so, incurred another commitment to service.

They couldn't have made that decision without your support, and I realize that. I just want you to know that your support is recognized, it is appreciated, and for those of you that are graduating, I just ask you to help me in recognizing the spouse and the families that have provided the support that allowed you to make it. [Applause].

You know, General Padilla spoke about the faculty and staff and there are a number of things that contribute to the National Defense University's success. But it really is the faculty and staff that are the center of gravity, and I'd ask the class of 2016 to once again help me and recognize

the individuals that really do make the National Defense University world-class. For the faculty and staff, I'd ask that you just please stand up. [Applause].

You know, I'm mindful that commencement ceremonies are not about long speeches. I know that most of you are in a hurry to get to your next duty station, some of you have TMO this afternoon, many others are living in a hotel right now, and I'm almost gathering the fumes from your exhaust, I mean many of you have left your vehicles running in the parking lot, [laughter] and you're just waiting for the ceremony to be over before you make the great escape.

But to that point, how many of you are going to the Joint Staff? Your vehicles should actually be running in the parking lot because, you know, since you're already here, we got the welcome aboard set up for you at 1700 this afternoon, and be back at it tomorrow. It's all about taking care of people.

I won't go long, but as you prepare for the challenges of your next assignment and frankly the next chapter of your careers, I wanted to leave you with a few thoughts about something that I've grappled with throughout my career, and particularly, in my last few assignments.

I want to talk about adapting to change in the profession of arms. And I think that the comments I would make would be equally applicable to those members of the interagency, U.S. government, and the civilians who are here as well.

You know I've thought about change a lot in particularly when I came into my current assignment over the last couple of months, specifically our ability to anticipate to recognize and to adapt to change. I've also thought about how rapidly the pace of change has been accelerating. As most of you know, 2016 marks 100 years since the Battle of Verdun, a battle that claimed over 500,000 lives. Verdun provides a pretty good case study, in my estimation, for change.

Recently I opened up a few books and refreshed my memory on the circumstances surrounding the battle. I had occasion to do that as I was getting ready for Memorial Day. As I read, I reflected on the senior leader decision-making throughout the war: the tactics, the techniques, the procedures that were used, and frankly, the character of war in 1916.

I was reminded and struck by how slow decision makers were on both sides to adapt during the war, or to actually grasp the significance of changes that were clearly evident some years prior to that during the Russo-Japanese War. New weapons were fielded on the eve of World War I, but the implications really weren't fully appreciated, tactical and doctrinal development lagged, and the price for that delay was high: 10 million in uniform—10 million—were killed during the war, a figure that's unfathomable to us in the 21st Century.

To some extent, you can say the same thing about World War II. For example, while the German blitzkrieg reflected their appreciation for the potential of armor supported by close air support,

the dominant thinking about western armies was that the tank really was just a support for those forces that were on the ground.

Men like [John Frederick Charles] Fuller and [Basil Liddell] Hart had trouble getting traction with their new ideas between the wars, and I know you spent some time this year talking about change, but there's no shortage of individuals who had great ideas throughout history, whose great ideas weren't recognized during their lifetimes.

Frankly, as I look back at change in the 19th and 20th centuries, it was typically really only effected after a failure in war; that was the primary driver of change in the past two centuries.

You might think all that is history and that we're a lot more adaptive today than they were in the 19th and 20th Century. I'm going to share with you today, I'm not sure that that's actually true.

I want to just share an anecdote about an article that was written by a captain by the name of Wayne Sinclair. In the article, Wayne explained that the threat posed by small homemade bombs offered a radical transformation in the way that we should think about transporting ground forces.

He noticed trends in explosives and vulnerabilities in our ground vehicles could potentially put our troops at risk. He even pointed to a promising solutions by the South Africans and others in his article.

You could say that he was actually one of the godfathers of the MRAP. The problem is that he wrote his article in 1996, and we didn't actually make the changes until 2006.

Wayne went on to serve in Iraq and he rode in the very MRAPs he had called for, but not before the IED nearly brought the world's most advanced fighting force to a halt.

The moral of the story is probably pretty clear to you, there's no substitute for taking a clear-eyed look at the threats we'll face, and asking how our force has to change to meet them. There is no substitute for leadership that recognizes the implications of new ideas, new technologies and new approaches and actually anticipates and effects those changes, actually affects adaptation.

So my first point to you this morning is not to leave your intellectual curiosity and openness to new ideas behind when you depart the national defense university. Don't be complacent. As leaders, create an environment within which innovation, the questioning of conventional wisdom and creativity are not only allowed, but actually encouraged. And assume you don't have all the answers.

You know, I frequently talk about the relationship between confidence and experience in my career. When I was second lieutenant, I would tell you that my level of confidence was

somewhere up here [gestures high]. I would look at my battalion commander, looked at him conducting his job, and said, 'you know, that doesn't look that hard. I can do that.'

And of course, my level of experience is down here. In all sincerity, I would tell you today, after 39 years of active duty, my level of experience is arguably up here, my level of confidence today to have all the answers is way down here someplace. I'd ask you to remember that too as you leave and as you engage with your organization, as you listen to new ideas, you've got to be open to those ideas and not immediately be dismissive because you have more experience. Having more experience doesn't necessarily give you a corner on all the good ideas inside your organization. As simple as that is, I just offer you guys food for thought as you leave the school today.

You know I mentioned that the cost of responding slowly in the 20th century was quite high, but back then, there were actually opportunities to recover if we got it wrong. Despite a slow start, the allies certainly adapted their tactics throughout World War II and eventually they emerged victorious.

However, I wouldn't assume that future conflicts, we would have the same opportunity to recover.

I say that because, again, the pace of change in my estimation has rapidly accelerated. And in many ways, the nature of the changes has brought an even more profound impact on our profession.

As I look back on my own career, there is a big difference in the pace of change in the first 25 years than there has been in the last 14 years.

When I was a lieutenant, I used the same cold weather gear that my dad had used in Korea in 1950, 27 years earlier—and I don't mean the same kind of gear, I mean we went to the warehouse, dug it out, and it was the same gear. [Laughter]. The radios that we used, this is again my lieutenant days, PRC 25 uncovered radio from Vietnam. The jeeps would have been familiar to World War II veterans, and to be honest with you, so would the tactics.

Despite incremental development in weapons and the dawn of the nuclear age, I think a lieutenant from World War II or Korea would have been very comfortable in the exercises I participated in as a lieutenant.

But now, there are very few things that have changed—very few things that have not changed since I was a lieutenant. I was actually reminded of this in 2008.

[Aircraft flies overhead]. Fred, you should have told the President to sit tight while I was speaking. [Laughter]. You know, I thought he worked for me, but actually, now I know he doesn't. [Laughter].

But, you know, to this theme of change, it really struck me. I went to visit a platoon in 2008. The platoon commander and his 80 Marines were 40 miles from the nearest platoon on their left, 40 miles from their nearest platoon on their right, and about an hour by helicopter from the battalion command post. To give you some perspective, my appreciation of time and space when I was a lieutenant was a rifle company attacked on a 1500 meter frontage—I'm sorry, defended on a 1500 meter frontage and attacked on a 300 meter frontage.

So you think about time and space in 1977, 2008, pretty significantly different.

The Marines in Golestan were wearing protective equipment and driving vehicles that would have been unrecognizable to infantry Marines or soldiers just five years before 2008. That's how much change had taken place in that period of time.

The platoon could receive and transmit voice, data, and imagery from a satellite—a platoon could do that! In 2003, inside of a division of over 20,000, we had 4 systems that could actually do that.

The platoon in Golestan was supported by HIMARS which can put precision fires out to over 60 kilometers. When I was a lieutenant, we relied on the 105, had a max effective range of about 11,000 meters. I don't want to offend any artillerymen here, but I would tell you that the word 'precision' was not in our lexicon when we talked about the 105.

Today, similar changes can be seen across the joint force, and the changes have implications—perhaps, more profound implications—at the operational and strategic level as well as the tactical.

I think one of the most significant implications and trends in the current security environment is the high likelihood that any future conflict will be trans-regional, cutting across multiple combatant commands; multi-domain, involving land, sea, airspace, cyberspace; and multi-functional, information operations, cyber capabilities, space capabilities, and ballistic missile technology have made the character of war today extraordinarily different.

We'll see such capabilities employed by both state and non-state actors that are looking for ways to harness them in order to avoid our strengths and go after our weaknesses.

Clearly, the current fight against violent extremism is one example of a trans-regional threat.

North Korea further highlights the point I'm trying to make about the trans-regional nature of conflict today. You know, there was a time in the Korean peninsula, and many of you might have been there early in your career, where when we thought about a conflict on the peninsula, we thought about largely a land and a sea war on the peninsula that could actually be isolated to the peninsula. Then the North Koreans developed ballistic missiles, and suddenly other regional



actors now would be involved. So it's no longer a conflict just on the peninsula, but it's also a conflict that involves regional actors so it's really a theater crisis as well as just on the peninsula.

As the North Koreans have developed intercontinental ballistic missiles and cyber capabilities and pressed to develop space capabilities, now you have a conflict on the Korean peninsula that truly is trans-regional, and my estimation, it involves at least one sub-unified commander and three combatant commanders instantaneously. Just think about if we have one or more similar conflicts ongoing simultaneously, how complex that would be.

It's clear that adapting to the evolving character of war in the 21st century is going to require significant changes to our planning, our organization, and our command and control constructs. And to be honest with you, we're already behind. We're already behind in adapting to the changing character of war today, in so many ways. I suspect I'm not the first one to talk to you today and emphasize that you're serving during a particularly dynamic period.

I know the oft-used expression, and I'd be surprised if we haven't used it here at school this year, it would be as Henry Kissinger just said, that this is the most volatile and complex security environment since World War II.

I would have to tell you, certainly I would agree with that, and in my career, I can't remember a time when the pace of change is even close to what we're seeing today. I believe that makes the need for change and the ability to anticipate change all the more important.

Those of you graduating today have to lead that change or we're going to find ourselves—and I don't mean in the distant future, I mean the not-too-distant future—we're going to find ourselves at a competitive disadvantage. That will be the cost of not recognizing what needs to change, and not affecting change in your organizations. Not adapting to the change of the character of war, and not thinking out to the future in an innovative way, and the difference between the two in my mind is adaptation is something that you do with what you have today and you do it better, and innovation, you look for disruptive ways of doing things in the future, a completely different way of doing business. I would argue again, our ability to do those two things simultaneously today is the difference between us having a competitive advantage in the future, and not having a competitive advantage. My horizon is not 10, 15 or 20 years from now, it's actually three to five years from now. That's, in my estimation, how urgently I believe we need to make some fundamental changes to how we're doing business.

I'd like to shift gears for a minute and just close by talking about something very important, an important aspect of our business and something that actually hasn't changed like the character of war, and that is the fundamental nature of war.

For all the talk of change and advancements in technology, war remains—and I know you spent no shortage of time thinking about it and talking about it this year—a violent clash of wills in an environment that is characterized by fog, friction, and chaos.

Because the fundamental nature of war hasn't changed, neither have the primary factors that lead to success on the battlefield.

Aside from the ability to adapt over the past 15 years, I think that any tactical successes we have had in place like Iraq and Afghanistan and other places has been because of the endurance, the courage, and commitment of soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, coastguardsmen, and civil servants, and that's both from our partner nations as well the United States, and as well as our interagency partners.

It's been their willingness to go out day after day to do what had to be done that made the difference. As you all know, that will to fight, that will to put yourself at risk, the willingness to put the needs of your buddy ahead of your own, it can't be quantified; it comes from intangibles.

You know, a Marine that fought in World War I coined the phrase for those intangibles "such things as regiments hand down forever".

Given the relative inexperience and the level of training of the Americans who fought in World War I, it was primarily those intangibles that carried the day post-Verdun when the United States entered the war.

My point is that we do need to adapt to change, and there is an imperative and I talked about that. But at the end of the day, we're not going to be defined by MRAPs, 5th generation fighters, DDG 1000s or cyber capabilities.

Those things—distinguish us to the outsider, they reflect what we look like in formation in the 21st century. But what we wear, what we shoot, what we drive and what we fly, that's not who we are. All of those things that I mentioned will change again in the future in ways we can't even imagine as we sit here today.

The foundation for what we've been able to do in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and the many ongoing operations in the last 15 years is actually no different than why we were able to survive and succeed in World War I despite the leadership's inability to recognize what needed to change, despite the leadership's inability to adapt during a war, there was still success.

We're able to do what we do today for the same reason we were able to do it during World War I, and that is because we're fortunate enough to lead individuals that have the will and the courage to endure and prevail, because they trust you and they trust themselves.

We're able to do what has to be done because of individuals—and I'm now talking about the leaders and the led—who have embodied our core values, and again, such things as regiments hand down forever.

So as you leave the National Defense University today with your diploma in hand, at least for those that will have diploma in hand [laughter]. In addition—and I'll know in a minute who you are—in addition to being prepared to lead, and to anticipate, and to adapt to change, in addition to cultivating an environment within which innovation can flourish, I'd ask you also to remember to lead your organization in a manner that fosters those intangible qualities which make the difference; which made a difference in the past and will make a difference in the future along with the challenges we have to deal with.

Be smart enough to know what has to change, and let those young Wayne Sinclairs flourish inside your organization, but also recognize what aspects of our profession shouldn't change, those aspects of our profession which will allow us to endure, to deal with the enduring nature of war.

Thanks again for the honor of joining you here this morning. It really has been an honor and I'm encouraged, and I would say this in all sincerity, there are times particularly in my current assignment when I can become a bit despondent with all the challenges we face. There are no shortage of challenges.

But the thing—and it sounds trite—but it is absolutely sincere, the thing that gives me confidence that we will actually overcome those challenges is the quality of the force and this class and the students we send to the National Defense University every year are reflective of that quality and you are, in fact, the reason I have confidence that we will adapt, that we will make the changes necessary, that we will innovate for the future, and we will lead the young men and women that we're fortunate enough to lead in a manner that instills in them those same qualities that have allowed us to be successful over the past 100 years of war.

God bless you all, and all the best.

**Remarks by Ambassador Samantha Power, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and General Joseph F. Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
New York City, New York  
June 17**

**Power:** Thank you, so much. And thank all of you for being here today at this important event. Let me in particular thank the United Kingdom for its leadership in convening the upcoming Defense Ministerial Meeting in London, and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, who has spearheaded this effort to dramatically increase the quantity and quality of peacekeepers made available to the United Nations.

Let me begin with a quote from our incredibly distinguished guest, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph F. Dunford. It is from a speech that the General delivered last week, at the commencement ceremony of National Defense University, which has helped shape generations of the United States' leaders in national security. The quote is as follows: "There's

no substitute for taking a clear-eyed look at the threats we'll face, and asking how our force has to change to meet them. There is no substitute for leadership that recognizes the implication of new ideas, new technologies, and new approaches, and actually anticipates and affects those changes, actually affects adaptation."

General Dunford's presence here today is testament to how the United States – and in particular our military – is not only recognizing the evolving threats that we all face today, but also adapting so that we can effectively meet them. His presence here today marks the first time in history that a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has spoken at the United Nations. First time ever. That reflects the understanding by the United States military – and in particular, by the General himself – of the critical importance of building multilateral coalitions to address 21st century threats; threats that, by their very nature, cannot be confined to within national borders, or effectively confronted by any one nation. This is a shift that General Dunford has experienced and practiced first-hand over his decades in service.

To give just one example of the value he places on the sacrifices made by our partners to advance our shared security – and a clear demonstration of his character: when General Dunford was serving in Afghanistan – first as a leader of U.S. and NATO forces, and then as commander of the International Security Assistance Forces and U.S. forces in Afghanistan, ISAF – he made a point of writing an individual letter of condolence to the family of every fallen soldier in that effort, regardless of what country they came from. He made sure every letter was personalized.

General Dunford has joined us today to speak, among other themes, on the crucial role of UN peacekeeping in addressing 21st century threats; and the need for all of our countries to follow through on the commitments we made at last September's transformative peacekeeping summit, which was convened by President Obama, and at which so many governments made important pledges.

It is the privilege of a lifetime to serve with General Dunford in the Obama administration. He is a leader known for his tactical and strategic intelligence, his humility, and his deep compassion. He has shown a unique ability to adapt to today's evolving challenges and threats, and we are so very grateful he is here with us today on this historic occasion. Please join me in welcoming him.

**Dunford:** Well, Ambassador Power, thanks very much for the introduction, and more importantly, thanks for your leadership while representing us here at the United Nations. I appreciate that. Under-Secretary [Herve] Ladsous, Under-Secretary [Atul] Khare, Ambassadors, General Messenger, General Maqsood [Ahmad], ladies and gentlemen, it's an honor to be with you here this afternoon. When Ambassador Power asked me to join you, I jumped at the opportunity, because I truly believe in the utility of United Nations peacekeeping. I'm particularly enthusiastic about our collective efforts to enhance the capability and capacity of the United Nations to respond to the growing demand for peacekeeping operations. Your commitment to maintain the momentum that we generated last September is reflected by your presence here today, and I want to thank all of you for being here and for focusing on this issue. I particularly want to echo Ambassador Power's comments about the United Kingdom, and their leadership. And Gordon [General Messenger, British Vice Chief of the Defence Staff], my good friend, your presence here says it all.

The current security environment has been described as the most complex and volatile since World War II – and frankly, I believe that. The challenges we face range from conventional conflict to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, from violent extremism to transregional crime, and the character of war has changed.

Today's challenges are increasingly trans-regional. The current fight against violent extremism is an example. We estimate that over 45 thousand foreign fighters from 120 different countries have come to Iraq and Syria. No nation today can turn away and consider violent extremism somebody else's problem. We have many examples of how the fight can follow us home from fragile states in the form of terrorist acts and the mass migration of those seeking to escape violence.

Similarly, today's conflict between states is not only transregional but also what we in the United States call multi-domain. That is, it involves simultaneous action on sea, on land, in the air, in space, and in cyberspace. We also see non-state actors involved in conflict that are able to leverage information, cyber capabilities, and sophisticated weapons. In addition to the complexity of conflict, we see increased volume. In 2014, nearly 60 million people were forcibly displaced from their homes by conflict, and the commission for refugees estimates that violence will displace over 40 thousand people a day.

Of course, I'm not suggesting that United Nations peacekeeping operations are a solution for all of that, but that brief description of the current environment highlights the growing need for multi-national cooperation in responding to conflict. No longer can conflict be considered something that is "over there." While the international community must develop a wide range of capabilities to respond to today's challenges, we already have a relevant and potentially very effective tool in the form of the UN peacekeeping. I firmly believe that UN peacekeeping can play a major role in dealing with the human suffering associated with conflict and by continuing to improve our collective security.

President Obama made that point last September when he said: "we know that peace operations are not the solution to every problem, but they do remain one of the world's most important tools to address armed conflict." Of course he's also directed the U.S. military to do more in support of UN peacekeeping operations and he's asked others to make a commitment to do the same.

Just as the character of war has changed, the nature of UN peacekeeping missions has changed. Today, two-thirds of all blue-helmeted peacekeepers are serving in active conflict areas, a trend that in my estimation is likely to continue well into the future.

A quick review of the ongoing peacekeeping operations highlights the wide range of conditions within which we're operating today: military and police forces under the UN flag are disarming violent rebels in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UN peacekeepers in South Sudan are delivering humanitarian supplies and protecting over 100,000 innocent civilians; the UN observer mission in Lebanon is actively monitoring the ceasefire agreement in a volatile and challenging environment. And as day turns to dusk in Mali, peacekeepers wearing blue helmets are providing people with the security they need to return to their communities while preventing the return of violent extremists.

I believe that these examples actually say as much about tomorrow's peacekeeping operations as they do about today's. And while we can be proud of what we have accomplished, we will get no credit tomorrow for what we did yesterday.

To be successful, UN peacekeeping missions today and in the future must be capable of defending themselves, protecting civilians, and carrying out their mandate in the context of a very dynamic security environment. In short, to meet what I believe will be a growing demand for more complex peace operations, we're going to need to adapt. Meeting the growing demand for a wide range of peacekeeping operations requires a robust set of capabilities and capacities. The needs are well known to this audience. They include: strong civilian and military leadership teams; staff capacity to design missions with clear objectives, end states, and measures of effectiveness; effective command and control; well-trained forces at the brigade, at the battalion, and at the company level; and appropriate enabling capabilities to include intelligence, air and ground mobility, logistics, counter IED capability, engineering, and medical capability.

Of course, the foundation of any mission is quality, disciplined people with the right skills. On this point, I'd like to highlight there's a growing need for women to serve as peacekeepers. During my deployments to Iraq and later as the Commander of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, I learned first-hand that women are an important part of an effective response to today's challenges. Women not only add to the capability of our own forces, they have a unique ability to connect with local populations in areas of instability.

As we move forward to increase the size and grow the capability of UN peacekeeping forces, we have to address the challenges that we've experienced in recent years. I think it's clear to all of us that the UN's record in this area has been mixed – and there's a lot of reasons for that mixed record, but chief among them is the hard reality that UN peacekeeping missions deal with some of the most challenging and protracted issues on the planet. But while many of the challenges are due to the nature of the conflicts, there's other challenges that should concern us all. Problems of ill-disciplined units conducting criminal acts, including sexual assault; problems with corruption and shortfalls in equipment cannot be blamed on the environment.

While the missions will always be hard, we have to address the challenges that are within our control. We have to do that because they threaten our collective legitimacy and our effectiveness. To much of the world's population, a soldier or policeman wearing a blue helmet and a UN patch represents their last best hope for safety and security, and we must work to ensure that image and hope isn't diminished.

Being candid about our challenges is not about finger pointing, addressing them is something that we have to do together. Today, I want to emphasize that U.S. military forces are prepared to be a part of the solution, from helping to develop the capacity of peacekeeping forces, to providing enabling capabilities, to assisting with reform. This is a personal priority for me, the United States' Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the entire U.S. Joint Force. The priority we place on UN peacekeeping operations is consistent with our view that these operations make an indispensable contribution to international security.

Finally, I'd ask that all of us leaving here today do so with the commitment to make the ministerial meeting in London a success. Of course, success implies that we'll maintain the momentum of the last year. Success implies that we'll meet the commitments we have made and

encourage new commitments. We will refine our efforts to reform and enhance the capability, capacity, and professionalism of our “blue helmets.”

Ambassador, ladies and gentlemen, thanks again for the opportunity just to share a few thoughts with you on UN peacekeeping operations. I hope my presence here today – and just those few words that I’ve shared with you – is a message of commitment from our country and from the U.S. military. Again, we firmly believe that these missions play a vital role in international security, and reform and adaptation will allow us to be more effective in the future and meet what we see as an absolutely growing demand for the kinds and capabilities that UN peacekeeping missions offer. Thank you very much.

**Article from *Joint Force Quarterly* (National Defense University Press)  
3rd Quarter 2016, Issue 82  
“Upholding Our Oath”**

As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I am honored to represent the extraordinary Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and Coastguardsmen who make up the Joint Force. Throughout my travels and engagements, I continue to be inspired by your professionalism, your commitment to defending the Nation, and your adaptiveness in encountering the security challenges our country faces.

Meeting the challenges of today’s dynamic and demanding operating environment while preparing the Joint Force to win future fights remain a team effort. This must remain our number one priority, and I continue to devote my time, focus, and energy to this effort. At the same time, as our country again prepares for a peaceful transfer of power to a new administration, I write to share my views regarding our mutual obligations as military professionals and rights as citizens during this election season.

**Our Values**

Every Servicemember swears “to support and defend the Constitution of the United States” and to “bear true faith and allegiance to the same.” This oath is embedded in our professional culture and underpins the values that shape and define our all-volunteer force. Beginning with General George Washington resigning his military commission, our deliberate and disciplined commitment to upholding the principle of civilian control of the military underpins not only our warrior ethos but also the expectations of how we conduct ourselves while in uniform.

**Our Responsibilities and Conduct**

As military professionals, our most important asset is the trust of and credibility with the American people. While we must always safeguard our professional integrity, extra vigilance is required during any political transition. Our individual and collective obligation during this election season is twofold. First, we must recognize that we have one Commander in Chief, and until authority is transferred on January 20, 2017, the Joint Force must remain clearly focused on and responsive to the existing National Command Authority.

Second, the Joint Force must conduct itself in such a way that the new administration has confidence that it will be served by a professional, competent, and apolitical military. This is especially important in the context of delivering the best military advice.

**Civic Participation**

Every member of the Joint Force has the right to exercise his or her civic duty, including learning and discussing—even debating—the policy issues driving the election cycle and voting for his or her candidate of choice. Provided that we follow the guidance and regulations governing individual political participation, we should be proud of our civic engagement. What we must collectively guard against is allowing our institution to become politicized, or even perceived as being politicized, by how we conduct ourselves during engagements with the media, the public, or in open or social forums.

### **Closing**

We are living in the most volatile and complex security environment since World War II. Whether confronting violent extremist organizations seeking to destroy our way of life or dealing with state actors threatening international order, threats to our national security require a Joint Force that is ready, capable, and trusted. To that end, I have a duty to protect the integrity and political neutrality of our military profession. But this obligation is not mine alone. It belongs to every Soldier, Marine, Sailor, Airman, and Coastguardsman.

Thank you for joining me in honoring our history, our traditions, and the institutions of the U.S. Armed Forces by upholding the principle of political neutrality. It is an honor to serve as your Chairman, and I look forward to hearing from you.

### **Remarks at the US Africa Command Change of Command Ceremony**

**Stuttgart, Germany**

**July 17**

Ladies and gentlemen, and most importantly to the men and women of the United States Africa Command. It's an honor to be here as we make the transfer of authority between General Dave Rodriguez and General Tom Waldhauser.

I'd like to begin by recognizing Command Sergeant Major [John Wayne] Troxell, Command Sergeant Major [Darrin J.] Bohn, and the other senior enlisted leaders that are gathered here this morning. Thanks to who you are and what you do. More importantly, thanks for representing the true backbone of the joint force, our noncommissioned officers. And Command Sergeant Major Bohn, today is your last day at the United States AFRICOM as well. I'd like to thank you for your leadership. I'm looking for you, Sergeant Major. There you are.

I'd also like to acknowledge the many leaders here representing the U.S. government interagency, our allies and our regional partners. Thanks for your presence. Thanks for your support. And thank you for your long-standing cooperation. We're all stronger because of our friendship and our shared commitment.

Today's ceremony formally recognizes the transfer of command. But AFRICOM's vital role remains unchanged. So I'd like to say the changes of command are actually more about continuity than they are about change. Tomorrow morning, just like this morning, the men and women of AFRICOM will wake up with complete commitment in the mission and trust in their leadership.

Change of command ceremonies also offer a great opportunity to reflect and take stock of an organization's accomplishment. And so I'd like to take just a few minutes to talk about the command. To say that the United States AFRICOM command's mission is dynamic and challenging would be an understatement, but as General Rodriguez has said, where there's great



challenge there's also great opportunity. African economies, populations and influence continue to grow, while the continent's military forces, security institutions, governments – development and security of Africa offers disproportionate benefit to Africa, to Europe, to the United States. That's what makes the mission of the United States Africa Command so important.

That said, I don't have to tell the men and women in this audience that AFRICOM has a tough job. In partnership with 53 African nations, the command tackles challenges that range from Ebola to countering violent extremism. From defense institution building, to countering illicit trafficking and piracy. The responsibilities of AFRICOM highlight both the complexity of today's security environment, and the demand for a capable, flexible, and responsive joint force. For the last three years, AFRICOM has been just that, an exceptional joint team and core element in the highly effective combined interagency team.

To the men and women of the United States Africa Command, I want you to know that your contributions are both recognized and greatly appreciated. We've asked an awful lot of you, and you've delivered every time. In fact, aside from this morning's ceremony, today is really a typical day in AFRICOM.

As we gather here, joint special operations forces are working closely with African Union partners to combat Al Shabaab in Somalia. Members of the team are training Cameroonian partners on counter-IEDs, and enabling Nigerians to improve their logistics and border security. In Niger, AFRICOM is training specialized units for countering violent extremism. In Libya, AFRICOM has conducted strikes against threats to the homeland and our regional partners.

All these efforts contribute to both regional security and the fight against transnational terrorism. In the Gulf of Guinea, sailors are building partner capacity to counter illicit trafficking and piracy. In South Sudan, AFRICOM is responding to the most recent crisis, protecting the U.S. diplomatic presence and providing a source of stability. Across the continent, National Guard state partnerships are deepening our relationships and enhancing our interoperability.

Ladies and gentlemen, I could go on at much greater length about this superb team's contributions. Suffice to say that the men and women of the United States Africa Command are making a difference. And for the last three years, AFRICOM's performance has reflected the visionary leadership of General David Rodriguez. I've known and admired Rod for over a decade, and had the opportunity to watch him lead in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and in the Pentagon. As a warrior and as a strategic thinker, General Rodriguez is without peer. His service as a combatant commander is the culmination of a career spanning over 40 years.

Rod has led at every level in his career, has followed the arc of history. He was a rifle platoon leader in the Army, rebuilding after Vietnam. He was a company commander in Germany, prepared to defend Europe during the Cold War. He was a plank owner in the 75th Ranger Regiment, as the Army grew its vessel operations capability. He shaped the evolution of Army doctrine in the 1990s. And since 9/11, Rod's been on point, taking the fight to violent extremism.

Through it all, he's earned a reputation for being a soldier's soldier – candid, competent, a no-nonsense leader with rock-solid character. Most importantly, Rod never takes credit for himself. When asked what he's most proud of as the AFRICOM commander, he's quick to highlight the work of this team's African, European, and interagency partners. He consistently looks for opportunities to recognize the performance of others, a character trait that's been reflected in his entire 40 years of service.

Of course, Rod hasn't walked this journey alone. He's had great support on the home front. To Rod's wife, Ginny, thanks for sharing your husband with the Army and with our nation.

You've served side-by-side with Rod for the last 34 years, and you work as a fierce advocate for military families, and a valued mentor and role model for countless military spouses. It's greatly appreciated.

You made 22 moves, you've had five deployments, and that's the long ones. I'm not counting all the short ones. You've raised four children, often by yourself. I'll just tell you this morning, Ellyn and I join the many military families that you've touched along the way in saying thank you. You got a lot of fans out there, the Dunfords included. But also, to Amy, Melissa, David and Andrew, who aren't here today, thanks for sharing your dad.

In a few weeks, we're going to honor the Rodriguezes' four decades of service at a formal retirement ceremony, but for now, Rod and Ginny, please know that as you prepared to depart AFRICOM and our active ranks, you do so with the admiration, the appreciation, and the affection of thousands that you've touched along the way, the Dunfords included.

Fortunately, for AFRICOM and the nation, we didn't have to look far to find another superb leader to take the helm at the United States Africa Command. I can assure the men and women of AFRICOM that in General Tom Waldhauser, you're getting the best our nation has to offer. I've known Tom since we were lieutenants together in the same battalion. Since those early days, Tom's leadership, his character, and his vision were clear. He quickly garnered a reputation for balancing and exacting demand for excellence, with a genuine care for his Marines and his troops. He led from the front at every level in the Marine Corps, and served the joint force with distinction.

He's known as one of the most operationally competent leaders we have in our force today. He led the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit in the early days after 9/11, planning, executing, and conducting operations in Pakistan, Djibouti, Afghanistan, and Iraq. He commanded a division of Marine Expeditionary Force in Marine Forces Central Command. He demonstrated strategic vision as the commanding general of the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, where he helped shape the next generation of Marine Corps doctrine and concepts. For the last three years, Tom drove the development of the capabilities and leaders the joint force will need in the future.

For almost 40 years I've admired Tom as a fellow Marine, a warrior, and a leader, and most of all as a friend. To Tom's wife, Gail, thanks for your sacrifice and support and your friendship, Gail. In particular, thanks for agreeing to share Tom for just a few more years. I know you've been here for less than 48 hours, and another of a number of countless moves. I also appreciate the sacrifice of Amy, Kate, and Mark, who aren't here, but I know they're here in spirit. So, Gail, welcome to AFRICOM.

Once again, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being here as we recognize AFRICOM's accomplishment under General Dave Rodriguez, and we welcome General Waldhauser aboard. At this time, it's my honor to introduce a warrior, a leader, a soldier's soldier, and a man that I am proud to call a friend: General Dave Rodriguez.

**Remarks at the Air Force Association Air, Space, and Cyber Conference  
National Harbor, Maryland  
September 21**

Thanks, Scott [Van Cleef, chairman of the Air Force Association Board], for the introduction, and more importantly thanks for all you in the Air Force Association do for advocating for airpower and our Air Force. Secretary [of the Air Force Deborah Lee] James, you're here this

morning, and you've got our Air Force through an incredibly challenging and dynamic period. Thanks for your leadership.

And, General [David L.] Goldfein, the Air Force is lucky to have you as their chief. Your reputation as a warrior is well-known. The story of you being shot down in Serbia, getting back in the fight the next day is well-known. But I just heard yesterday, as I was preparing to come over here, the rest of the story. I understand that each year, on the anniversary of you being rescued, you actually bring a bottle or a case – I'm not sure – of whiskey back to the unit that rescued you. Last night, I was just telling you, at 2330, as I was thinking about what to say and I was looking at my neighbor, General Goldfein, I thought, you know, at some point – he's not flying combat operations anymore, but at some point in the next four years he's actually going to need to be rescued. No, you are, you are. But when you do, I want you to call me first and I want you to know, I'm not Hawk Carlisle; I don't drink scotch. Irish whiskey Midleton is my preference.

Larry Spencer's here, my old wingman, from the vice squad. In fact, Hawk is here as well. My old wingman from the vice squad, Larry, you're out there somewhere. Thanks for your leadership. It was good to see you this morning.

To the airmen in the room, I'm a few days late, but happy belated birthday. Thanks for fighting, flying and winning for the last 69 years. If you're an airman, give yourself a round of applause. [applause] For all the senior leadership that's gathered here this morning, I won't recognize you all by name, but it's great to join you.

Hey, you would expect me to say that it's an honor to be here, and it is. I mean that sincerely. Probably more importantly, I'm humbled every day to represent the airmen that are in the audience, as well as the other 2 million soldiers, sailors and Marines that are in the joint force.

This morning, what I thought I would do is just share some perspectives on how I see the strategic landscape, but probably more importantly talk a little bit about what I believe the implications are for the joint force based on the current strategic landscape; and then, in the process of doing that, maybe just share with you a few thoughts that I had from an outside-looking-in view of the United States Air Force.

Before I do that, I want to talk a little bit about the readiness of the joint force today. You know, this week you've been spending a lot of time discussing our challenges as a nation and the challenges that you face as an Air Force. The chief last week testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee with the other chiefs on readiness. And I would say, when we gather at venues like this and when we testify before the Senate Armed Services Committee, it's absolutely appropriate that we do so with candor. I want to tell you upfront that I fully associate myself with the comments that the chief made before the Senate Armed Services Committee, and the other chiefs, and I'll have the opportunity to reinforce those as soon as tomorrow morning. So I look forward to that.

That said, and in all candor, I think there's something we need to make sure we're clear on, and that is that the joint force – to include your Air Force – is the most capable, professional military force in the world. We can defend the nation. We can meet our alliance responsibilities. I'm confident that we maintain a competitive advantage over any potential adversary.

I think that's an important point that, again, in all of the discussion about readiness, that should not be lost. That point should not be lost on our enemies, on our allies, or more importantly on the men and women of the joint force. They should not forget that that is the case. We today maintain a competitive advantage.

All of the discussions we're having are about making sure we maintain that competitive advantage in the future. All of the discussions we're having are about making sure that, in the future, no soldier, sailor, airman or Marine ever finds themselves in a fair fight. That's what this discussion and dialogue is all about. It's not about we're broke. It's not about we don't have a competitive advantage. It's about the standards that we set for ourselves, which are incredibly high.

I say that fully appreciative of the fact that all the services are feeling the effects of an unstable fiscal environment over the last few years in an incredible operational tempo. It's particularly true in an Air Force – and I reflected on that in preparing to come over here – it's particularly true in an Air Force that really has not seen anything but combat operations since Desert Storm. I was trying to think about it. I don't think there's been a break since 1991 with airmen actually in harm's way. Today we still have – and you all know this – we still have units that are deploying at a one-to-one deployment-to-dwell ratio.

I was reminded of that recently in a visit to Djibouti. I had a bunch of personnel recovery airmen and had them in a school circle and was talking to them a little bit, and I said, hey, when was your last deployment? They said it was four months ago. I said, well how long – wait a minute, how long is the deployment you're on? Four months. How long were you home? Four months. How long was your deployment before that? Four months. They're on a repetitive cycle of four-month deployments, no end to that in sight.

Then, last week, I was out in Yokosuka, Japan, and I went aboard one of our early-bird guided-missile destroyers, the USS *Barry*, and over the past year they've been underway 70 percent of the time – 70 percent of the time. When you think about the maintenance and training requirements that are ongoing between periods at sea, they're running pretty hard, much like those personnel recovery airmen and many other – many other specialties in the joint force that, when they're home, they're running probably just as hard as when they're deployed because they're getting ready for the next deployment, or they're trying to train in some other skillsets that they haven't had an opportunity to train for either during their pre-deployment training previous or during a combat operation.

As much as I would want to make an opening comment about the strength of the force, I understand that puts stress on our people and our families. There are associated trends with that OPTEMPO and that fiscal environment that absolutely concern me.

For example, you're all familiar with one of the challenges we have in retaining pilots, and I'm sure the chief and the secretary spoke about that this week. Just in the Air Force, we're 700 short this fiscal year. From my perspective, when I look at the Air Force, the Navy and the Marine Corps, with fixed-wing pilots, it is almost a perfect storm: unrelenting operational tempo, the airlines are hiring, we've got an improved economy, and we have degraded readiness in home station, and then pilots are flying fewer hours, which actually chips away at how they feel about being an airman and how they look at the future and whether or not they want to decide to stay airmen. Those are things that we have to be attentive to.

Our equipment is also showing signs of wear and tear. We all know we've exceeded the miles on our vehicles, the hours on our aircraft. The readiness challenges have been exacerbated by delays in some of the major programs that we have – the F-35, the Nuclear Enterprise, certainly one familiar to airmen.

So I understand that we can't be complacent about today's competitive advantage. We have to restore our readiness. That means recruiting and retaining the right number of high-quality people, modernizing the force, delivering quality training, and catching up on the maintenance of some of our infrastructure that has been neglected for many years.

Doing all that's going to require making hard choices. It's going to require that we adapt the force that we have today to meet today's requirements. But probably as importantly, and maybe more importantly, it's going to require that we innovate – we identify disruptive ways to do things in the future.

In the end, we have to develop and maintain what I describe as comprehensive joint readiness. And for me, this is actually the deliverable for all of us in the joint force. We've got to deliver viable military operations to the national command authority during a crisis or a contingency, and we've got to maintain the flexibility to be able to transition from one crisis or contingency to another across the range of military operations. Again, we have to ensure that our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines don't ever find themselves in a fair fight. That's our collective responsibility. With your help, that's actually what I'll focus on for the rest of my tenure as the chairman.

I think most people here have heard the oft-used quote now by Henry Kissinger that today we find ourselves in the most volatile and complex security environment since World War II. After just about 12 months as a chairman, you're not going to get an argument from me about Henry Kissinger's quote. I certainly have seen that. Although the institutions and the structures that have underpinned the international order for the last several decades remain largely intact, the United States is now confronted by simultaneous challenges in Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, and violent extremism. Most of you have heard these referred to collectively as the four plus one, and we use that four plus one as a tool when we plan, when we assess risk, and when we make program recommendations.

That's not to suggest that I think that the four plus one is predictive. If I have learned anything in my time in uniform, it's the need to be humble about our ability to predict the future. But I have found that looking at the four challenges – really more properly looking at those four challenges as a lens through which to look at the joint force – is useful. It can actually answer one of the questions we always ask, which is ready for what? Ready for what? I think looking through that lens will help us answer that question. It can also inform our assessment of the joint capabilities and capacities that we have in the inventory today, the joint inventory today, and the inventory that we will require in the future. So, for me, I think – I find four plus one to be a useful benchmark.

My assumption – and this is important; and if during the question-and-answer period you don't actually believe this assumption, you have to challenge me on it – my assumption is that, if we take a look at those four plus one, and we build joint capabilities and capacities that can deal with the challenges associated with those four plus one or some combination thereof, in the future we will find ourselves with a competitive advantage against any adversary. So as we –

again, as we start to look at trends in capability development in those four plus one, we look at the current capabilities they have, we look at their organizational structure, when we look at the scenarios under which we might find ourselves confronting those four plus one, I think we'll be close to getting it right, even with a recognition that where we fight in the future may not have anything to do with those four plus one if past is prologue.

Let me start a little bit with Russia. The Russian military, from my perspective, does present the greatest array of threats to our interests. Despite their demographic and economic challenges, they've made significant investments in their military capabilities. They're also operating with a frequency in areas that we really haven't seen for over two decades. Over the past few years, we have seen Russia modernize existing systems that pose a direct threat to the United States and our allies. These include long-range conventional strike and nuclear capabilities. Russia is also focused on developing robust cyber, space, electronic warfare and undersea capabilities.

In my judgment, their operational capability and their capability development, coupled with innovative doctrinal and strategic approaches, are designed to do something that's pretty clear to me: they're designed to undermine the alliance – the NATO alliance, and they're designed to undermine the ability of the United States and NATO to project power.

In the Pacific, you know, our policy is to seek ways to cooperate with China. But from a military perspective, we're watching the militarization of the South China Sea and the expanding presence of China outside of Asia. While China's intentions and budget are traditionally opaque – very difficult to see exactly where they're headed – it's pretty clear to me the Chinese leadership has embarked on a significant program to modernize their nuclear enterprise, as well as their power projection, space, cyber, ballistic missile and air defense capabilities. Similar to Russia, China seeks to limit our ability to project power and to undermine the credibility of our alliances in the Pacific.

Just as an aside, when the Chiefs and I went through kind of the process of discovery over the past year to develop the National Military Strategy that I'll speak about later, you know, we talked about centers of gravity. I think now, from our collective perspective, our center of gravity as a nation really is our alliance and partner structure that's been built up over the last 70 years at the strategic level. At the operational level, it's our ability to project power. So those two things, in my judgment, are those that we draw our strength from: our alliance and partner structure, and our ability to project power. Again, I've just talked about China and Russia, and from my perspective, they recognize that as well as we recognize that fact, and they're focused exactly on that as they conduct capability development in their operational activity.

North Korea's unpredictable behavior and capability development also continues to threaten allies and potentially the homeland, and many of you in this room know that well. We've all seen their recent efforts to develop cyber capabilities, ballistic missile capabilities, and developments in their nuclear program. It's consumed an awful lot of time, I think fair to say, of senior leadership's time over the past few weeks.

The Iranian regime aims to establish itself as the dominant regional power in the Middle East. When I talk about Iran, I say, their major export is actually malign influence, and they're doing that as they modernize a broad array of maritime, ballistic missile, space, cyber and cruise missile capabilities.

Finally, we continue to grapple with the challenge of transregional violent extremism. That includes ISIL, al-Qaida, and all the associated movements. And of course, our primary effort in the recent months has been against core ISIL in Iraq and Syria.

Let me just take just a minute to maybe provide a perspective on the current fight against core ISIL. I suspect many of you are familiar with the nine lines of operation that constitute our national strategy, and they cover areas from governance, intelligence, finance, messaging and foreign fighters, so the full range of issues that would have to be addressed.

While there's a military dimension to all nine lines of effort in our national strategy, there's two specific areas that we have the lead on. The first is strikes to kill ISIL leadership and fighters, degrade their military capabilities, interdict their lines of communication, and get after their resources. The second is to develop effective partners on the ground and support their ability to secure ISIL-held terrain. Conceptually, the campaign is designed to put simultaneous pressure on ISIL across Iraq and Syria.

Of course, Syria presents for us the most difficult challenge. Success in Syria is going to require us to work with our Turkish partners to secure the Syrian-Turkish border. It's going to require us to work with vetted Syrian opposition forces who are willing to fight ISIL. We're also at the same time striking core ISIL's command and control, their sources of revenue, disrupting – and this is important, because it's our number-one priority – disrupting their ability to plan and conduct attacks against the homeland, which is our number-one focus.

With coalition support and our partners on the ground, the Syrian Democratic Forces, we've been successful in taking back a large amount of territory from ISIL over the past year. In recent months alone, the SDF's operations in Shaddadah and most recently in Manbij have really cut the line of communications between Raqqa in Syria and Mosul in Iraq, and also, as importantly, eliminated one of the critical nodes for foreign fighters and the flow of resources into and out of Syria, again, related to that external threat, which is our primary focus.

Over time, the size of the Syrian Democratic Forces, and the number of Arabs in those forces, have grown. For those who don't watch it very closely, the Syrian Democratic Force is largely a Kurdish force of about 30,000. And we have about 14,000 Arabs now that are associated with that force. To put that in some perspective, last year at this time we probably had a few hundred vetted Syrian opposition forces on the ground that we were supporting.

So there's been a significant growth – 30,000 Kurdish – 14,000 Arabs associated with them. Then 2,000 more vetted Syrian opposition that are actually working with us and the Turks along the Turkish-Syrian border. So the size of the force has grown. We're going to try to grow it even more, even as we balance Turkish concerns about our support for the Syrian Democratic Forces.

With respect to Russian activity in Syria, there's absolutely no doubt that that has complicated things and Russia has put itself in a position to actually influence the eventual political solution. Needless to say, recent events have complicated the situation with regard to Russia. I suspect many in this room, the chief included, will be working hard on that over the next few days.

To say that – you know, I had a group of chiefs of defense in Berlin on Monday to talk about the counter-ISIL campaign. I said, if we were tasked to lock ourselves in a room all day and develop a complicated scenario – a complicated political-military scenario, I don't think we

would have had the imagination to come up with the Syria scenario and the complications that we're dealing with as we deal with ISIL in Syria.

But on balance, I would say the pressure we put on ISIL in Syria has degraded their capabilities, it's reduced the territory they hold, it's limited their freedom of movement and reduced their resources. Probably, most importantly, I believe, we have started to chip away at the narrative – the narrative of inevitable success, the narrative of a caliphate. Much more work to be done.

Our focus now in Syria is operations in Raqqa, which is decisive terrain for the physical caliphate and really the one remaining critical node for external operations inside of Syria. In Iraq, the situation, as you well know, is complicated by the political landscape, sectarianism, and Iranian influence. Success there is going to require that we continue to develop Iraqi and Kurdish security forces and enable their operations with intelligence, advisors, logistics, and combined arms support.

While mindful there are complex challenges we face in Iraq, I'm encouraged by the growth of Iraqi security forces, the growth of the Peshmerga, and their success in places over the last year in places like Ramadi and Fallujah, and the western Anbar Province, and more recently in the area that surrounds Mosul. They've actually gained a significant amount of momentum. To me, those operations actually are indicative of what's in the art of the possible.

Moving forward, and I think you've seen this in the media and some of you are either just returning from a deployment, perhaps, or going on deployment, we're focused on Mosul. Just as an aside, we assess today that the Iraqis will have in early October all the forces marshalled, trained, fielded, equipped that are necessary for operations in Mosul. The timing of that operation now is really just a function of a political decision by Prime Minister [Haider al-] Abadi. We will be in a position to provide whatever support, whatever reinforcement those forces need in order to be successful.

Again, I guess I'd wrap it up by saying I think it's indisputable that over the past year we have gained the momentum, we have taken back significant territory, we have limited the enemy's freedom of movement, we have been able to get after some of the leadership, and we have chipped away at their resources. You know, there's many reasons why I can tell you that we've had success over the past year, but it's worth noting – and I say this not to pander to the crowd – but it's worth noting that the critical enabler of the counter-ISIL strategy has been air power. Since 2014, airmen have provided air interdiction, ISR, close air support, humanitarian assistance, and global reach to the campaign. It's been air power that has had the most devastating effect on the leadership, resources, and freedom of movement of ISIL. It's also been the most important factor in supporting our partners on the ground.

But victory in Raqqa and Mosul won't be the end. Figuratively speaking, it's the day after Mosul and the day after Raqqa that actually makes the difference. Of course, that's figuratively speaking for we're not going to be successful in defeating ISIL in either location unless the basic issues of governance are addressed. That will be how ISIL is defeated in the end in Iraq and Syria. But we will have done our part for the military to set the conditions where that can take place.

Of course, we still have to deal with ISIL and other transregional threats from Southeast Asia to West Africa. As you know – again, many of you involved in that – we do have forces



deployed in West Africa. We're currently supporting operations in Libya. We have forces deployed conducting counter violent extremist operations in East Africa, as well as Afghanistan. And we're doing a significant amount of partnership capacity building in Southeast Asia.

So the joint force – I mentioned the counter-ISIL fight to give you an update. That's front page, above the fold. But the joint force is clearly decisively engaged in dealing with violent extremism. It is a transregional threat. And we are globally deployed to deal with that transregional threat.

The challenge of violent extremism, and those four state threats, challenges, that I mentioned earlier, have a number of implications for the joint force. The first implication, in my view, is foundational. That is, we need a balanced inventory of capabilities with sufficient capacity that allows us to defeat and deter potential adversaries across the range of military operations.

As a nation that, by definition, has to think and act globally, we don't have the luxury between choosing a force that can fight ISIL and one that can deter and defeat a peer competitor. Nor do we have the luxury of choosing between meeting our current operational requirements and developing the capabilities that we need to meet tomorrow's requirements. I think getting that balance right, getting that balance between meeting our current requirements and our future requirements, will frankly define, for all of us, the next few years, and probably one of the more important non-operational challenges that we have as a team.

In this crowd, I don't really have to say much about fiscal uncertainty. I suspect that's been the topic of discussion here over the last couple days. I guess what I'd say is the bipartisan Budget Act, it might get us through FY '17, but we still have \$100 billion in sequestration looming. Again, to airmen, I don't have to talk about the bow wave of modernization requirements that confront us in the future. We also have those readiness challenges I mentioned earlier in each of the services, and particularly in the Air Force, that are going to take some years to address. I think predictable and sufficient funding is going to be important. Look, I'll carry that message tomorrow to the Senate Armed Services Committee, and the chief carried it last week. But we're going to have to do more than buy hardware to get out of the trough that we're in. We're going to have to expend some intellectual capital and develop disruptive, innovative ways to meet our requirements.

The example that I use whenever I go around – I say, you know, since 2003 we have increased the ISR capability, capacity available to the combatant commanders by 1,200 percent. Since 2007, we've increased the numbers of ISR platforms over 600 percent. Today when we sit around with the operations deputies, the J3s of the world, and the combatant commanders, we're meeting somewhere less than 30 percent of their ISR requirements. That is a challenge we cannot buy our way out of. I think we're going to have to think really hard about how do we collect, how do we analyze, and how do we disseminate information at the tactical, operational, and strategic level to feed decision making.

The problem we're confronted with is not how can we afford to buy more Predators. The problem we're confronted with is not how do we expand the enterprise as we know it. The problem we're confronted with is making decisions and ensuring that our leadership and our airmen have the information that they need to make decisions. So we just need to make sure, as we go forward, and we start thinking about prioritizing and allocating resources, that we're

actually shooting on the right target. Again, to me, shooting on the right target is decision making and not more Pred[ator]s.

I hope that is music to the ears of our airmen because, again, we've come to you time and time again to increase capacity. We'll increase 30 more caps, I think, across this FYDP. That'll take us from 60 to 90. Then we'll be at 34 percent of what the combatant commanders say they need. Secretary James, I don't think that's probably the path that we want to be on. There's a lot of other examples. I guess my real point is that the path we're on is not going to get us there. To paraphrase Winston Churchill: Ladies and gentlemen, we're out of money, we have to think.

Second implication is the need for us to consider how to most effectively use the military instrument of national power to address today's challenges. I believe we need to develop more effective methods to what we've seen of Russian behavior in Crimea, the Ukraine, and Georgia, what we've seen of China in the South and East China Sea, what we see out of Iran across the Middle East. Each of those nations in different ways fully leverages economic coercion, political influence, unconventional warfare, information operations, cyber operations, to advance their interests.

And they do it in a way that they know we don't have an effective response. I refer to that dynamic as adversarial competition with a military dimension short of armed conflict. I'll say it again – adversarial competition with a military dimension short of armed conflict. I describe it that way, not as gray zone or hybrid, because those words all have baggage. The fact of the matter is I'm trying to zero in again on what exactly are we seeing. We are involved in adversarial competition with those state actors. There's a military dimension to that adversarial competition, but they, unlike us, are able to integrate the full range of capabilities that their states possess to advance their interests. Again, they're doing it in a way that kind of mutes our response.

Our traditional approach, where we're either at peace or at war, is insufficient to deal with that dynamic. For that reason, I don't find the current phasing construct that we have in our operations plans particularly useful, because that causes us to bend certain activities, certain authorities, and certain capabilities in a way that reflects that we're either shaping or we're fighting. I think, at least the chief was probably around last year when we had all the combatant commanders assembled down at Quantico for just kind of a review of where we are globally.

At the time, General [Philip M.] Breedlove was still the commander of the European Command. And I said: Phil, what phase are you in EUCOM right now? You know, and he kind of looked at me. And he said, well, we're in phase zero. I said, what phase do you think Russia is in right now? He paused. And he said, well, they're probably in two or two and a half. Then, I asked Admiral [Harry B.] Harris the same question. I said, what phase do you think China is in? And he said, well, they're probably in about phase two.

So my question is, how long can our adversaries that are competing with us be at phase two or two and a half and we remain at phase zero before we find ourselves at a pretty significant disadvantage from a posture perspective? I think we also, and clearly, again, this crowd knows, we need to develop a more effective framework within which to deter cyberattacks, attributing threats, managing escalation, and, probably as importantly, hardening ourselves against cyberattacks are all issues that require more work.

One of the most, to me, significant implications of all that I've spoken about today is that any future conflict is going to be transregional, multi-domain, and multifunctional. I think that's a marked change from how we fought in the past. Information operations, cyber activities, space operations, and ballistic missile technology are all part of what has fundamentally changed, in my view, the character of war in the 21st century. We're going to see such capabilities fielded by both state and non-state actors. They're going to look for ways to harness those capabilities in a way that exploits our vulnerabilities.

Conflicts are going to quickly spread across combatant command geographic boundaries and domains. The current fight against violent extremism is an example of a transregional threat. But if you consider just for a minute North Korea, I think that really highlights the point I want to make. You know, back in the 1990s, we had a regional strategy. We had an assumption that if there was a conflict on the Korean Peninsula, it would probably be isolated to the Korean Peninsula. We would deal with it with air power and we would deal with it with ground forces, but we could contain the conflict to the Korean Peninsula.

Then the North Koreans developed ballistic missile technology that began to threaten their neighbors. Of course, over time, they developed not only ballistic missile technology, but intercontinental ballistic missile technology, cyber capabilities, trying to develop anti-space capabilities. Very quickly, I think you can see, that a conflict on the Korean Peninsula would very quickly involve General [Vincent K.] Brooks on the Peninsula; Admiral [Harry B.] Harris, the commander of the Pacific Command; General [Lori J.] Robinson, our commander of Northern Command; Admiral [Cecil D.] Haney, Strategic Command; Admiral [Michael S.] Rogers, Cyber Command. And that's just the joint commanders. You know, General [John E.] Hyten sitting here, he certainly would be engaged in that. So I think you start to see the complexity of a conflict just in North Korea. I think it makes the point, as well as violent extremism, that the conflicts that we are going to confront today very quickly, very quickly become transregional and multi-domain.

So, in that context, I personally don't believe that our current planning, our organizational constructs or our command and control are optimized for the current fight. I think the chief mentioned to me earlier that you spoke about that a bit yesterday. Today our planning construct is actually focused on that regional strategy we had in the 1990s. So today, if we buy into the assumption that any future conflict be transregional and multi-domain, it makes sense that our strategic framework would change, and we're working on that right now.

Today in operations as well as kind of planning regionally in execution, we rely on cooperation, collaboration, support and supporting relationships between combatant commanders. That, in my view, is not the same as integration. What really is required is global integration. If you think about it, the secretary of defense is the lowest level of integration in the department across the combatant commanders from an authorities perspective. For that reason, we're going to do a couple of things to address this. First, this year's National Military Strategy for the first time in many years will be a classified document. The intent is to build a framework within which we can address these four-plus-one challenges and the five domains that we are dealing with and the many functions associated with that so that we really have thought through, not just from policy to specific operations plans, but truly step back at the strategic level, and between policy and operations plans provided a strategic framework.

One of the things I've said to the staff many times is, the aggregation of operations plans isn't necessarily a strategy. That'll be very unsatisfying if you go back to what I said was one of the key deliverables at a joint force, which is to deliver viable options to our National Command Authority in the event of a crisis or conflict. Pulling an old plan off the shelf will be an unsatisfying exercise at zero-one when the enemy does something exactly not related to the old plan that you have spent so much blood, sweat and tears developing.

From my perspective, you go back to, and I think it was George Marshall, but somebody once said, and it's wise words nonetheless, that, you know, the value of plans is in the planning. So by expanding the way that we develop our approach to the Russias, Chinas, Iran and North Korea, the idea really is to expand the intellectual capital that we're expending on those problems, expand our thinking and open up the aperture to the options that might be available to our National Command Authority in a crisis.

Without going into great detail, we're also taking a hard look at our command and control and will be moving forward in a way that allows us to provide the secretary of defense with a better ability to command and control and to integrate the joint force.

Just as an aside, sometimes when I talk about command and control for the joint force, people start to twitch and they start to envision large screens with blue force trackers, and now the secretary of defense is going to be paying attention to all of the icons on the wall, and that's command and control. No, command and control is making sure the secretary of defense has a common understanding of the fight with the combatant commanders. Command and control is a dialogue that takes place between commanders and the secretary so that when he has to make decisions in a timely manner, he has what I describe as the court sense necessary to make those decisions quickly and effectively. That's what command and control is. I would focus more on the "command" word than the "control" word when I had that discussion. They're not synonymous; they're two separate words. And so, I have found the first few times I spoke about this, people started again to get nervous. They said, oh, when we talk about global integration, we're talking about now micromanagement of the secretary of defense is going to start to move tactical formations on the map. No. What I'm speaking about now is, if you can imagine that Korea scenario I mentioned and who believes that that would be happening in isolation in the world for the United States. So when the secretary convenes his commanders and he's got them all up on a screen, today what he would have is a cacophony of voices all sharing their perspective from the Pacific Command, from the Northern Command, from Cyber Command, STRATCOM, European Command, AFRICOM. They're all asking him to make decisions and they're all providing him input.

What I'm suggesting to you is, given the speed of war, given the changed character of war in the 21st century, that's not going to set our National Command Authority up for success. So we're really, as a matter of priority, in addition to providing a strategic framework within which we can address tomorrow's problems, we're really focused on command and control as well.

Now maybe just to close out, just to share just a few comments about the Air Force. From my perspective, this is not a news flash, but sitting where I sit, the biggest challenge that the secretary has, the biggest challenge the chief has is that today all of the legacy capability in the United States Air Force is required. We're asking for all of it. We actually have more requirements than you have inventory. And we're asking it to simultaneously transition to

develop the capabilities that we need for tomorrow. You know, that's a pretty significant challenge. And, you know, of course, the F-35 and the A-10 are just one of many examples where you have that tension between trying to take a platform offline and use that hedge space to grow new capability, and at the same time that legacy capability is required. It's just hard to get there from there.

We're also asking to modernize long-range strike capability in the nuclear enterprise at the same time we're asking you to invest more in cyber and in space. So the next few years, the secretary, the chief, the leadership are confronted by some pretty tough decisions. I'm going to look for ways to help as the secretary and the chief reshape the Air Force as you fly.

But the only advice I'd give you today is the advice that I kind of share with my staff from time to time. When you're trying to solve problems, I'd say, hey, look, you can't afford to have any of the three Ps: You can't be parochial, you can't be possessive, and you can't be pedantic. None of the three Ps, because that will be the quickest way for us to actually get it wrong.

When you think about it, I think it's fair to say airmen have always thrived by looking at tomorrow and not yesterday. I don't think there's ever been a time when that kind of thinking has been more appropriate. So I'll close by telling you that I have absolute confidence that you're up to the challenge. From my experience, airmen have always been driven by excellence.

But sometimes when we think about the Air Force, we think of hardware; it is also intangibles. I came across a quote from General [Carl A.] Spaatz who said it best, you know, this gets at the intangibles, "We considered ourselves a different breed. We flew through the air and other people walked on the ground, it was as simple as that." I'm a guy that's spent my life walking on the ground, but I actually get that because what he was really saying is, whether it's air, space or cyber, you thrive where there is no precedent and you step forward where there isn't any predecessor. You do that with pride, you do it with energy, you do it with effectiveness. And that's exactly what I know you'll do in the coming years.

In the end, you're always going to find a way to fly, you're always going to find a way to fight, you're always going to find a way to win. And that's why I'm proud to be on the team with the United States Air Force.

### **Address to Gold Star Families at a Memorial Fall River, Massachusetts September 27**

Gold star families, elected officials, Representative [William R.] Keating, Mayor [Jasiel F.] Correia, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, thanks for inviting Ellyn and I to be with you here this morning. You'd expect me to say it, but it really truly is humbling to be here to recognize the families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our nation. I want to begin by thanking Mayor Correia and the citizens of Fall River for opening your community to this memorial, and for your commitment to remember the families and for those who have fallen.

Of course, much of the credit – as has been mentioned – much of the credit goes to the organizing committee. I know that Bruce Aldrich, Steve Sammis, and Lisa Rodriguez would be the first to say there were many other people involved. But it takes leadership, it takes drive, it

takes commitment, it takes energy, it takes persistence. And you three had it. So I think it's worth, once again, recognizing Bruce, Steve, and Lisa.

You know, as a native of Massachusetts, I'm really proud of how we remember the fallen. Looking over to the side here at David McPhillips, who's mentioned, his wife Julie, gold star parents. Representative Keating and I were just about a month ago in Pembroke, Massachusetts, where we dedicated two plaques in the Pembroke Town Hall to Brian McPhillips and Matthew Bean. Brian was a young Marine who was killed in Iraq, and Matthew was a young soldier. Those two plaques will stand there in the town hall, and remind the elected officials of service above self, which is a good message.

But it's more than just the memorial in Massachusetts that make me proud. It's the way we take care of those that are serving today, and the way that our veterans are taken care of when they come back home. It's been mentioned, but I will tell you I believe it, Massachusetts sets the standard. I'm a Marine today, because of the culture of service and the tradition of service in the state of Massachusetts. The motto of the Marine Corps, and there's enough Marines here to know that, it's Semper Fidelis, Always Faithful. That's exactly what the people of Massachusetts have been – always faithful to their sons and daughters who serve.

I'm also proud that the tradition of service continues today. As we gather here today, there's thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen that are around the world. Many of them are in harm's way. A number of them are Massachusetts veterans. I know this morning as we remember the fallen, we also keep them and their families in our hearts and prayers.

When honoring fallen service members, I'm often humbled by in the inadequacy of words. I'm reminded of a letter that Abraham Lincoln wrote to a woman named Lydia Bixby, after he learned that she had lost five sons in the Civil War. And she was a gold star mother from Massachusetts. Lincoln's words are particularly meaningful here at this morning's dedication. So, if you'll permit me, I'd like to read from Lincoln's letter. I think if you listen to the words in Lincoln's letter, you'll get a sense for what I wish I could say as eloquently as President Lincoln did.

He wrote this in 1864, after three long years of civil war: Dear Madam, I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the adjutant general of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and the lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice on the altar of freedom. Yours, very sincerely and respectfully, Abraham Lincoln.

Cherished memory, solemn pride, costly sacrifice – that's what I want to convey to you today we remember our sons and daughters, our dads and our moms, our brothers and sisters, our friends and how they lived. Today we remember Harold Larrabee, who was a chief torpedoman who fought with the Navy in World War II, and whose children Betty, Gilbert and Barbara are with us here today. In 1941, Harold Larrabee had already served 20 years in the Navy and

retired. But when he heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor, he immediately drove to the naval base in New Haven, Connecticut and reported for duty.

Seventy-five years later, Betty, Gilbert and Barbara's memories of their father are as vivid as ever. One of the things they remember most is their dad coming home from work in his white sailor uniform each day. When the time approached for Harold to arrive home from work Betty, Gilbert and Barbara waiting on the front porch, straining to see him coming up the sidewalk. When their dad finally appeared, the three of them raced from the porch and threw their arms around him as he swept them up and carried them inside.

In November of 1942, Betty, Gilbert and Barbara's mom received a telegram notifying them that their dad was missing in action. Still, they held out hope, assuming that he'd be found. In those days, that was not an uncommon occurrence. For days after receiving the initial report, the three of them took their places on the front porch every evening, looking to see if their father would come up the walk again in his crisp, white uniform. But he never did. Harold Larrabee was killed aboard the USS *Barton*, sunk in the first naval battle at Guadalcanal, on November 13th, 1942.

For Betty, Gilbert and Barbara, Harold Larrabee was more than just a torpedoman who valiantly fired torpedoes at point-blank range against Japanese destroyers. He was the kind of father who covered his kids with kisses as he carried them in the house, and who fretted over the small details of family life, even when he was thousands of miles away in the south Pacific.

Betty, Gilbert and Barbara, this memorial is for you and for all the children of the fallen servicemen and -women. It recognizes the birthdays your dad wasn't able to attend, the weddings when someone else gave you away, and the grandchildren that you never got to meet. We remember your father's life, and we honor your strength and leadership in caring for gold star families across generations.

Today, we also remember Dick Murphy, a Marine rifleman who served in Vietnam and whose brothers Brian and Tom and his sister Maureen are with us here today. Dick was a peacemaker, who protected his younger brothers and sisters from bullies. He marched in the Norwood Senior High band, played football, and ran track. He was a big, gregarious guy, who planned to follow his father's footsteps and become a police officer. Underneath the picture in his senior yearbook the school staff wrote: He doesn't shrink from hard work and he doesn't worry about tomorrow. It was a fitting description.

In 1967 Dick volunteered to serve in the Marine Corps. After boot camp, he was assigned to the 3rd battalion, 4th Marines, and deployed to Vietnam. In January 1968, he was wounded during the Tet Offensive. While recovering, he spent time entertaining Vietnamese children aboard the hospital ship that he was recovering on. In April he was wounded yet again, but he stayed with his unit. Then for the next two months, Dick's company was in near-continuous combat.

During one fight, Dick found himself in a pitched battle. His company was in the center of an enemy attack near Qang Tri, South Vietnam. When the two-hour firefight finally subsided, Dick led a team to sweep the perimeter of the unit they were in. As he and his unit moved outside, he and four other Marines lost their life to an enemy sniper. He died on 15 June 1968. He was 20 years old. One of 10 children, the son of two Marine veterans of World War II, Dick's faith, courage and bravery left a lasting impression on his brothers and sisters. Five would go on

to serve as Marines. Four would serve as policemen. This is the legacy of Dick Murphy's life. He was a man for others.

So, Brian, Tom and Maureen, this memorial is for you, and for all the siblings who have lost their brothers and sisters. It recognizes the pain of getting taken out of school to be told that your big brother has been killed. It recognizes the bike rides to you to the cemetery to visit your brother's grave, the milestones you weren't able to share. We remember Dick's life and honor your family's strength in continuing to serve in spite of loss. Today we remember all the young men and women who gave their lives from cities across the state and from conflicts through our history.

We remember the 10,265 sons and daughters of Massachusetts lost in World War II, like George Brulee, who played every position on the baseball field in the flats of Holyoke, and Ben Bottoms, who loved the sea, and was smitten with Olga the first time he saw her.

We remember the 866 sons and daughters of Massachusetts who gave their lives in Korea, like Harold Downes, who taught his children to swing a golf club and took his son out for skates in the wintertime and John Nolan, who worked two jobs in Corky Row right here in Fall River to provide a better life for his family. His daughter, Lynn Miller, is here.

We remember the 1,331 sons and daughters of Massachusetts lost in Vietnam. Like Joe Dunn, who played handball in the park until the second school bell rang, and Pamela Donovan, who served in her parish and cared for her classmates.

We remember the 10 sons of Massachusetts lost in Lebanon, like Michael Devlin, who loved taking photos and painted the bandstand for halftime marches at football games. His mother Chris is here. Chris has been a tireless advocate for veterans since 1983. She's probably as responsible as anyone for the Beirut Memorial that's in Boston, Massachusetts.

We remember both sons of Massachusetts lost in Grenada – Philip Grenier, who led his church youth group, and Dinesh Lal Rajbhandary, who captained the Lexington High soccer team.

We remember the one son of Massachusetts lost in Panama, John Connors, who recited Homer and cracked jokes with his friends.

We remember the seven sons and daughters of Massachusetts lost in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, like Scotty Finneral, who played baseball, football, and wrestled.

We remember the 48 sons and daughters of Massachusetts lost in Afghanistan, like Matthew Rodriguez, who pampered his pickup truck and planned to marry Julia. His parents, as we heard, Rod and Lisa, and other family members are here today. And Robert Barrett who wrote poetry and loved playing with his infant daughter. His parents, Paul and Carlene, are here. And Danny Vasselian, who was always on the go, the life of the party.

We remember the 77 sons and daughters of Massachusetts who lost their lives in Iraq, like Jennifer Harris, who begged her dad to take her sailing and proudly directed the Swampscott High marching band. And Ben Sammis, who dreamed of flying as a 10-year-old boy and the Eagle Scout with a great sense of humor. His mom and dad are here, Steve and Beth, his brother Adam, and other family members.

Today we remember how each one of these young men and women and all the others remembered by this monument touched our lives. We remember their service, their humor, their friendship, and their love. Today we especially remember the extraordinary sacrifice of the



moms, the dads, the wives, the husbands, the sons, the daughters, the brothers and the sisters, and the friends they left behind. Today, most importantly, we remember to never forget.

Ladies and gentlemen, again, as a son of Massachusetts, to come here today and to be with you as we remember the sons and daughters of the state who made the ultimate sacrifice but, again, as importantly, as we remember the families who have given so much, given so much – for me to be here with you today and particularly to be here with the gold star families is humbling. In all sincerity, there isn't any place – many people have said to me today thank you for coming. There isn't any place else I would be today except here with you.

God bless you all, and Semper Fidelis.

**Article from *Joint Force Quarterly* (National Defense University Press)  
4th Quarter 2016, Issue 83  
“Strategic Challenges and Implications”**

I have previously written in this column to share with you the areas where I am devoting my time and focus: joint readiness, joint warfighting capability, and the development of leaders for the future. I have also shared with you my thoughts regarding the imperative for the Joint Force to remain focused on and responsive to the current National Command Authority.

That responsiveness underpins healthy civil-military relations and is the hallmark of the Profession of Arms. I now write to share with you how we are channeling these priorities and professional focus into execution.

**Joint Readiness**

One of my priorities is joint readiness, which, from my perspective, is an ongoing engagement with the President and Secretary of Defense to provide timely and viable military options that, in the event of a crisis or contingency, are responsive to the desired policy endstate objectives of the National Command Authority. I also consider flexibility (transitioning from one crisis or contingency to another across the range of military options) and resiliency (sustaining what the Joint Force is doing) as part of joint readiness. Underlining the principles of responsiveness, flexibility, and resiliency is ensuring that our men and women never enter a fair fight.

**Strategic Challenges**

Many of you have heard me talk about five strategic challenges: the four potential state competitors of Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, and the nonstate challenge of violent extremist organizations. We colloquially refer to these five challenges as the 4+1. But these challenges cannot be the only ones we plan against. I am humble about our ability to predict the future, so I use the 4+1 as a planning construct. Bench-marking the Joint Force against one of these challenges or two of these state challenges simultaneously, along with violent extremism, helps inform our assessment of the current inventory of current joint capabilities and capacities. Looking at the trajectory of capability development in the context of the 4+1 also informs priorities for joint capability development. I assume that if we build a force that can deal with the challenges associated with the 4+1 today and in the future, we will have a Joint Force that can respond to the unexpected and that has a competitive advantage against any potential adversary.

**Implications**

The five strategic challenges have a number of implications for the Joint Force. The first one is foundational. We need a balanced inventory of joint capabilities that allow us to deter and defeat potential adversaries across the full range of military operations. As a nation, we do not

have the luxury of choosing between a force that can fight the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and one that can deter and defeat a peer competitor. Nor do we have the luxury of choosing between meeting our current operational requirements and developing the capabilities we need to meet tomorrow's requirements. Getting that balance right—between current requirements and future requirements—will probably be one of the most important non-operational challenges we have as a team over the next few years.

The second implication is the need for us to more effectively employ the military instrument of national power to address the challenges Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea present. Each of these nations, in different ways, fully leverages economic coercion, political influence, unconventional warfare, information operations, cyber operations, and military posture to advance their interests. This is competition with a military dimension that falls below the threshold that would trigger a traditional and decisive military response. And since these countries compete in ways that mute our response, they continue to advance their interests at the qualitative and quantitative expense of our own.

The third implication, and to me one of the most significant, is that we have a mandate to keep pace with the character of war in the 21st century. While the nature of war—the violent clash of political will—has not changed, we should expect that any future conflict is going to be transregional, rapidly crossing the boundaries of geographic combatant commands; multidomain, simultaneously involving combinations of land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace operational domains; and multifunctional, including conventional operations, special operations, ballistic missiles, strike, cyber, and space capabilities. Not only will the pace and scope of future conflict be accelerated, but we are also going to see these functional capabilities fielded by both state and nonstate actors who will continually look for ways to harness those capabilities to exploit our vulnerabilities. Therefore, the fourth implication is the need for greater strategic integration in the future, both in our strategy development and in our decisionmaking processes. The intent is to build a framework within which we can address these 4+1 challenges across the five operational domains with which we are dealing and the many associated functions. By expanding the way we develop our approach to Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, we are working to expand the intellectual capital that we are expending on these challenge sets, with the intended result of opening the aperture of viable and timely options to our National Command Authority. The next version of the National Military Strategy is being written to support this endstate.

### **Strategic Integration**

To increase strategic integration in our decisionmaking process, the Joint Staff and I are working on how to better organize ourselves and organize information from across the Joint Force to better facilitate National Command Authority decisionmaking in a timely manner. We need to give the President and Secretary of Defense the right information on a routine basis so they can have real-time ability to see the fight; to visualize in time and space the opportunities to seize the initiative; and to better identify potential opportunity costs. Over time, as we successfully help the Secretary of Defense to see the Joint Force better, it will inform the assessment process to make recommendations for the prioritization and allocation of resources across all the combatant commands. In short, we are working to develop the conditions to exercise mission command at the strategic level.

What drives me, and what motivates our Joint Staff team, is the changing character of war. How do we get more agile? How do we frame decisions for our senior leadership in a more effective way? Just like every other endeavor in our profession, it begins with a common understanding of the threat, and a common appreciation for the capabilities and limitations of the

Joint Force, and then a framework within which we could make real-time decisions that will most effectively employ that force.

It remains an honor to serve as your Chairman, and I look forward to hearing from you.

# 2017

## SELECTED WORKS

Article from *Joint Force Quarterly* (National Defense University Press)

1st Quarter 2017, Issue 84

“The Pace of Change”

The ability of the Joint Force to anticipate, recognize, and adapt to change—and to innovate within a rapidly changing environment—is absolutely critical to mission success.

As I reflect back on four decades of service in uniform, it is clear that the pace of change has accelerated significantly. Few things illustrate this more than when I compare my experiences as a lieutenant to those of today’s young officers. As a lieutenant, I used the same cold weather gear my dad had in Korea 27 years earlier. The radios I used as a platoon commander were the same uncovered PRC-25s from Vietnam. The jeeps we drove would have been familiar to veterans of World War II and, to be honest, so would the tactics. Despite incremental improvements in weapons and the dawn of the nuclear age, a lieutenant from World War II or Korea would have been comfortable with the exercises I participated in during the 1970s. My infantry company still attacked two-up and one-back on a 300-meter frontage and defended across 1,500 meters. If things were not going as planned, I could quickly find my subordinate leaders, look them in the eye, and make the necessary corrections.

This is not the case on today’s battlefield. In fact, there are very few things that have not changed dramatically in the Joint Force since I was a lieutenant.

I was reminded of this several years ago when I visited a Marine lieutenant in Afghanistan. It took nearly an hour by helicopter to travel from the battalion headquarters to his outpost in Golestan, in Farah Province. This platoon commander and his 60 Marines were 40 miles from the adjacent platoons on their left and right. His Marines were wearing state-of-the-art protective equipment and driving vehicles unrecognizable to Marines or Soldiers discharged just 5 years earlier. They were supported by the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, which provided precision fires at a range of 60 kilometers. The standard for me as a lieutenant was a 105-millimeter cannon at a range of 11 kilometers. Moreover, the platoon at Golestan received and transmitted voice, data, and imagery via a satellite in real time. Compared to my experience as a regimental commander in Iraq just 5 years earlier, this was hard to believe. When we crossed the line of departure in 2003, there were only four systems in an entire Marine division that provided that capability.

Similar examples can be found across the Joint Force. New technologies are fielded faster than ever before. Leaders at lower and lower levels utilize enabling capabilities once reserved for the highest echelons of command. Tactics, techniques, and procedures are adapted from one deployment cycle to the next.

This accelerated pace of change is inextricably linked to the speed of war today. Proliferation of advanced technologies that transcend geographic boundaries and span multiple

domains makes the character of conflict extraordinarily dynamic. Information operations, space and cyber capabilities, and ballistic missile technology have accelerated the speed of war, making conflict today faster and more complex than at any point in history.

While the cost of failure at the outset of conflict has always been high, in past conflicts there were opportunities to recover if something went wrong. In World War I and II, despite slow starts by the Allies, we adapted throughout both wars and emerged victorious. The same was true in Korea. Today, the ability to recover from early missteps is greatly reduced. The speed of war has changed, and the nature of these changes makes the global security environment even more unpredictable, dangerous, and unforgiving. Decision space has collapsed and so our processes must adapt to keep pace with the speed of war.

The challenge we face with North Korea highlights this point. There was a time, not long ago, when we planned for a conflict that might be contained to the peninsula. But today, North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile, cyber, and space capabilities could quickly threaten the homeland and our allies in the Asia-Pacific region. Deterring and, if necessary, defeating a threat from North Korea requires the Joint Force to be capable of nearly instant integration across regions, domains, and functions.

This means more than just fielding cutting-edge technologies that ensure a competitive advantage across all domains—something we must continue to do. Keeping pace with the speed of war means changing the way we approach challenges, build strategy, make decisions, and develop leaders.

As we approach challenges, we can no longer consider capabilities such as information operations, space, and cyber as an afterthought. These essential aspects of today's dynamic environment cannot be laminated on to the plans we have already developed. They must be mainstreamed in all we do and built into our thinking from the ground up.

The Joint Force must also develop integrated strategies that address transregional, multidomain, and multifunctional threats. By viewing challenges holistically, we can identify gaps and seams early and develop strategies to mitigate risk before the onset of a crisis. We have adapted the next version of the National Military Strategy to guide these initiatives.

Our decisionmaking processes and planning constructs must also be flexible enough to deliver options at the speed of war. This begins with developing a common understanding of the threat, providing a clear understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the Joint Force, and then establishing a framework that enables senior leaders to make decisions in a timely manner.

Underpinning our ability to keep pace with the speed of war are adaptive and creative leaders. In today's complex and dynamic environment, the Joint Force depends on leaders who anticipate change, recognize opportunity, and adapt to meet new challenges. That is why we continue to prioritize leader development by adapting doctrine, integrating exercise plans, revising training guidance, and retooling the learning continuum. These efforts are designed to change the face of military learning and develop leaders capable of thriving at the speed of war.

Adaptation is an imperative for the Joint Force. The character of war in the 21st century has changed, and if we fail to keep pace with the speed of war, we will lose the ability to compete.

The Joint Force is full of the most talented men and women in the world, and it is our responsibility as leaders to unleash their initiative to adapt and innovate to meet tomorrow's challenges. We will get no credit tomorrow for what we did yesterday.

**Remarks at President Barack H. Obama's Farewell Ceremony**  
**Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Virginia**  
**January 4**

Mr. President, Vice President [Joseph R.] Biden, Secretary [of Defense Ashton B.] Carter, distinguished guests, thank you once again for joining us as we pay tribute to our commander in chief and the Obama family.

Mr. President, I have the distinct honor today of representing your soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen. As you know better than most, those men and women are busy. Thousands are deployed across the globe. They're meeting our alliance commitments and deterring potential adversaries. They're taking the fight to the Islamic State, al-Qaida and other extremist organizations. They're maintaining freedom of navigation. And they're defending us from threats in space and in cyberspace.

Throughout your time in office, we've often heard you express your appreciation for their service and their sacrifice. But this afternoon, Mr. President, I want to express our appreciation for your leadership and honor your service as our commander in chief for the past eight years.

Mr. President, we've been at war throughout your tenure. That's a period longer than any other American president. Throughout those years, you've always been there for us. You were there in the Situation Room where I personally witnessed your thoughtful and careful deliberations when ordering our young men and women in harm's way. You were there visiting the force wherever it was deployed, ensuring that our men and women had the guidance and support necessary to get the job done. You were there on the holidays, meeting with troops and calling them around the world to simply say thanks. You were there when our wounded warriors returned home to heal. Your constant visits to Walter Reed were without fanfare or ceremony, but always marked with heartfelt words, hugs from moms, and more often than not a few lunges and pushups alongside those who were trying to recover. Finally, Mr. President, you were there at Dover Air Force Base to receive the remains of the fallen, and you were there to visit them at Arlington.

I could go on, but let me share a few sentiments from the men and women that you have touched as a leader.

Lieutenant Colonel Will Phillips sent this message: "Mr. President and First Lady, thank you both for your tireless dedication to our nation. President Obama, you've set an example for us all as a statesman, a father, and a husband."

Corporal David Dennis who's currently deployed to Iraq, told me how much he appreciated your call on Christmas Day to say thanks for his sacrifice and service. Sergeant Major [John] Troxell and I, by coincidence, met with him a few hours after your call, and he was still pretty pumped up after that call. I was a bit disappointed because, after your phone call that morning, a visit from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and his senior enlisted leader actually didn't carry much weight.

Major Matt Lampert made the following comment about your hospital visit: "When I met the president, I was just regaining the ability to walk. I had some days that were tough and some days of doubt. But shaking hands with President Obama and having a conversation with him was something that will stick with me forever. Given the responsibilities that he shoulders, President Obama's thoughtfulness and common touch were pretty inspiring."

Master Sergeant Keith Norris described what your support for educational benefits as a senator and as a president has meant to his family: “If it wasn’t for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, my wife and I could not have afforded to send our children to college. My oldest son just graduated, and I’m excited he’s on track to be commissioned in the United States Air Force. While I wish he was going in the Army”—you may have figured out that he’s a master sergeant in the Army—“While I wish he was going in the Army, I’m incredibly proud that he’ll be the first military officer in my family’s history.”

Chief Warrant Officer Nate Powell commented on the impact of your support to military spouses: “Like most public school teachers, my wife doesn’t earn that much, but she loves being a teacher. Because of the Military Spouses Residency Relief Act that President Obama signed into law, my family saves thousands of dollars a year that it would otherwise have to pay, just because she has chosen to move with me across state lines from duty station to duty station.”

On the lighter side, Captain Alex Lowe who’s an Air Force flight surgeon, is also apparently a big fan. He said, “I’m glad to have started my service under such a charismatic and cool commander in chief, who can also play ball and sing a mean Al Green.” I can’t witness that, Mr. President. I’ve not had the opportunity to see that in the Situation Room. But I’m going to take Captain Lowe’s word for it.

Mr. President, on behalf of Lieutenant Colonel Phillips, Corporal Dennis, Major Lampert, Master Sergeant Norris, Chief Warrant Officer Powell, Doc Lowe, and all of our men and women in uniform, we recognize and appreciate your service, your sacrifice, your commitment to the force, and your leadership.

Of course, just as military families serve, so has the Obama family. While unable to join us this afternoon, Mrs. [Michelle] Obama and Mrs. [Jill] Biden’s creation of Joining Forces has made a lasting impact in significantly expanded veteran job placement and educational opportunities. The first lady’s legal advice and tireless advocacy has also benefited military working spouses, making careers more transportable for spouses who move every few years.

In fact, the entire Obama family has served, and it would be impossible to sum up all their contributions this afternoon. So, in closing, I’ll simply say, Sasha and Malia, thanks for sharing your mom and dad with us and the nation. Mrs. Obama, thank you for improving the lives of our families and veterans, and thanks for representing our nation with such class. And, Mr. President, thank you for being a commander in chief that we have been proud to follow.

On a personal note, sir, thanks for your confidence in me and in all of the senior leaders who have had the privilege to serve on your watch.

**Remarks at Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter’s Farewell Ceremony  
Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Virginia  
January 7**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us as we pay tribute to our 25th secretary of defense. In particular, I want to welcome Secretary Carter’s family: his wife, Stephanie; his daughter Ava, his son Will, and Stephanie’s mom, Mrs. Virginia Manuel. I also want to recognize Congresswomen [Jackie] Speier and [Jane L.] Harman, Chairmen [Howard P. “Buck”] McKeon and [Richard G.] Lugar, Attorney General [Loretta E.] Lynch, Secretaries [Penny Sue] Pritzker, [Robert A.] McDonald, [Jeh C.] Johnson, [Maria] Contreras-Sweet, as well as our former secretary of defense, Secretary [William J.] Perry, and last but not least our deputy

secretary, Mr. Bob Work. I'd also like to thank the other senior leaders across the department, our service secretaries, our service chiefs, the combatant commanders, our senior enlisted leaders, and others that are here. Your presence speaks volumes about the man we're here to honor.

Ladies and gentlemen, you'd expect me to say it, but it is an honor to represent our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines as we recognize Ash Carter's contributions as our secretary in his nearly four decades of public service. While it'd be impossible to do justice to Secretary Carter's career in just a few minutes, it's not hard to capture the qualities that have allowed him to make such an extraordinary impact. Secretary Carter is a man gifted with a keen intellect. I've never served with someone so quick to identify the key elements of complex issues. He's a visionary. While most of us struggle to tackle today's challenges, he's always been someone who could look around a corner and see where the department needed to be in the future. He has an extraordinary work ethic. In every position he's held, he set the pace. And I can tell you from personal experience, it was fast. He's a man of action. Despite his many years at the department, he was never driven by process or protocol. His impatience with red tape is legendary. He's known for getting things done and demanding the same of others. Or perhaps most importantly, despite his passion for accomplishing a mission, he's a compassionate leader who invests in people, and he's never forgotten that they are our most valuable resource. In the end, and most importantly, Ash Carter is a leader.

While I've heard those qualities have been evident since his early days in program analysis and evaluation, and his time as the assistant secretary for international security policy, I've seen them myself during his time as the undersecretary for acquisition, technology and logistics, as the deputy secretary, and most recently, as our secretary. I'll share a few examples that highlight the significance of Secretary Carter's contributions.

In 2009, he initiated the Warfighter Senior Integration Group, known as the SIG. It was a new organization that integrated the department and cut through the bureaucratic processes and delivered urgent capabilities and resources to the warfighter when and where they were needed. Many of us who are gathered here saw the impact of that initiative as commanders. With one phone call from Baghdad or Kabul, we could get immediate results in solving problems to save lives and enable battlefield success. I believe it's fair to say that no leader at the strategic level has played a more significant role than Secretary Carter in fielding the vehicles and equipment that have assisted our troops in meeting the challenge of improvised explosive devices in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Secretary, it would be hard to overstate the impact of your actions in saving lives and limbs. A lot of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines came home because you cared and because you decisively engaged.

As our deputy, Secretary Carter spearheaded the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative, a bilateral relationship with India that invigorated technological cooperation and collaboration between our countries. It was bold, it was innovative, and it was about getting things done, and it was all just another day's work for Ash Carter.



Perhaps nowhere has Secretary Carter's qualities as a leader been more evident than in the fight against ISIL, al-Qaida, and associated groups. He's been instrumental in building a 67-member coalition and implementing a military campaign that has significantly reduced ISIL-held territory, degraded ISIL's capabilities, limited its freedom of movement, reduced its resources, and stemmed the flow of foreign fighters in the region. With his energy, commitment and impatience, he also mobilized action across the U.S. government to put ISIL on a path to defeat.

Secretary Carter has been a key leader in our nation's rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region. On his watch, the U.S. military continued to adopt and foster and support expanded engagement that enhances our responsiveness within the Pacific Command.

Despite focusing on his clearly articulated priorities, he also tirelessly traveled throughout all of our regional commands, coordinating and collaborating with our partners and allies, and along the way building strong, meaningful and lasting relationships across the globe. And thanks to his vision, we're better postured to meet tomorrow's challenges.

He's been a fierce advocate for innovation and for modernizing of nuclear, cyber and space capabilities. He's never taken our competitive advantage for granted. He worked tirelessly to bridge the gaps between defense and private sector. We've been lucky to have a leader that makes us, in his own words, "think outside the five-sided box."

Despite the diverse and demanding responsibilities as secretary, he never lost sight, as I mentioned earlier, of our most valuable resource: our people. His commitment to our troops was evident in his quiet weekend visits with our wounded. He and Stephanie were known to the hospital staff and the wounded warrior families as regulars. One of our liaisons at the hospital recalled that the staff was always tapping their watches because he stayed too long. He was always comfortable sitting down, looking them in the eye, and connecting with the wounded and their families. He never rushed a visit.

We also saw the focus on people in his Force of the Future initiatives, which were designed to improve the quality of life and professional development of those currently serving, while making sure we're postured to recruit and retain the force the department will need tomorrow.

Finally, Secretary Carter has never forgotten our solemn responsibility to remember the fallen. As one Gold Star spouse recalls, his first act as the secretary was to go to Arlington section 60 in the snow with Stephanie to visit Private First Class Chris Horton and the others we lost in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Carters have been back many times.

As the visits to Arlington highlight, Secretary Carter wouldn't be the leader he is without incredible support at home. You can't talk to him for more than five minutes without talking about his family, and that starts with his wife, Stephanie.

Stephanie, we're grateful for your support. Secretary Carter always refers to you as his perfect wife, and I know that he means that. You balanced your own career with passionate support for our men and women in uniform and their families, and you have made a difference. After a recent visit by you and the secretary to Afghanistan, we met with a unit that had lost

soldiers in a suicide attack. This is what the commander wrote. And, Mr. Secretary, this puts in perspective where you fall in the chain of command. “As much as I treasure the engagement with Secretary Carter, it pales in comparison to the hug I received from Mrs. Carter. Soldiers don’t think much about what a hug will do. But when Stephanie walked toward me with open arms, I forgot I was in Afghanistan, far away from the people I love. I forgot about being a commander for one minute, and I felt like a person again. It was really special and something I’ll never forget.”

Stephanie, on behalf of all of those you’ve touched along the way, and those you have hugged, Ellyn joins me in saying thanks, you’ll be missed. (Applause.)

Ava and Will, I know your dad’s work and his service to this country has meant time away from you, so thank you for your sacrifice and thanks for sharing your dad with the nation. I know you’re as proud of him as he is of you.

Let me close by saying that if someone retires from the naval service, we refer to it as going over the side. Secretary Carter, as you go over the side, you have what every leader would want to have. You have the absolute admiration, appreciation, and, yes, the affection of those with whom you served. That certainly includes Joe Dunford and all the other assembled senior leaders that are here today. You should also know the satisfaction that comes with making a profound difference in the department, for the nation, and in the lives of the legion of men and women who are proud to say that they’re Carter-trained.

Mr. Secretary, in the end you’re what winning looks like. Thank you, sir. We’ve been proud to follow.

**Excerpts from Remarks at the Brookings Institution Event on Global Threats and American National Security Priorities  
Washington, District of Columbia  
February 23**

**O’Hanlon:** Well, good morning, everyone, and welcome to Brookings. My name is Mike O’Hanlon with the Foreign Policy Program. I have the extraordinary honor today of welcoming the 19<sup>th</sup> chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, to Brookings for a conversation that will begin up here and then include you in this period between 10 and 11 today. Happy spring to all of you on this 70-degree day in Washington.

There’s been a lot going on in the world. I’ll begin with the fact that, just to prove how nice of a guy he is, General Dunford, even though I’m a Georgia guy, has not taunted me about the outcome of the Super Bowl yet. He’s about the least-obnoxious Patriots fan I’ve ever met. In addition –

**Dunford:** I was actually waiting for a larger audience. Why would I waste that?

**O’Hanlon:** He’s a native of Boston, as you might have gathered. He grew up there, went to Boston College High School and Saint Michael’s College, and then Officer Candidate School. Joined the Marine Corps after college graduation. He’s a Marine infantry officer by background and profession. Commanded at all different levels throughout his career, including the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine

Expeditionary Force. As many of you know, he's had four jobs at the four-star level, including commandant of the Marine Corps, commander in Afghanistan, and now, again, 19<sup>th</sup> chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I could go on, but I think a lot of you would rather hear from General Dunford. So, before we get into questions and discussion, please join me in welcoming the chairman to Brookings.

**Dunford:** Thank you.

**O'Hanlon:** So, General one of the things that I've really benefitted from as an analyst trying to make sense of the world is your framework for thinking about threats, the 4+1 frame. I think many of you – most of you undoubtedly know it, but it's a straightforward, simple frame that there are four major countries we have to worry about – Russia, China, North Korea and Iran. There's also one transnational threat, which is probably a combination of ISIS, al-Qaida, and broader Salafism or whatever term you want to use. I wondered if you could just do a quick tour for us of the world. You've been in Azerbaijan recently, meeting with the Russian chief of the general staff. You've been dealing with these 4+1 sets of problems for a year and a half now as chairman. I wonder if you could describe a little bit about how those four threats plus the one have evolved, how you take stock of them right now.

**Dunford:** Sure, yeah. First, Mike, maybe just give you a little background on what that framework is and what it isn't. I mean, last year – just like in every endeavor, you need to benchmark yourself against something. And so last year, as we were trying to decide what our priorities would be moving forward for joint force development, as we were trying to assess the risk that we were currently had in meeting our national security objectives, we came upon looking at the four state threats that you talked about – Russia, China, Iran and North Korea – and violent extremism. It's important to say that we didn't look at that as a predictive tool. In other words, that wasn't to imply that we were going to fight Russia, China, North Korea. We're in a fight against violent extremism. But what we believed was that if we prepared the joint force to deal with one or a combination of those challenges, we would have the right amount of capability and capacity to deal with most assuredly was the unexpected.

What I tell people is that if there's one thing I've learned in 40 years of active duty, it's a degree of humility about our ability to predict the future. So the one thing I know is that what we'll deal with in the future is probably not one of the 4+1. But again, when you look at the capabilities represented by those 4+1, and particularly today violent extremism, it gives you the full spectrum of challenges we may face. So what I tell our folks is, look, you have to buy into the assumption that if we build a joint force benchmarked against those – against that 4+1 framework, we'll have in it the inherent capability, responsiveness and flexibility to deal with the unexpected. It's probably important to stipulate that.

So what do we see? When we looked at Russia, we saw Russia modernizing their nuclear enterprise; full range of maritime capabilities; modern conventional capabilities; cyber capabilities; space capabilities; and then, within the maritime category, even improvements in their undersea. We also see operational patterns that really we haven't seen since I was a captain aboard an amphibious ship in the mid-1980s in terms of where Russia is deploying to and the nature of their deployments.

The other thing we see when we look at Russia, of course, is that I believe that we do have a competitive conventional advantage against Russia. I think Russia knows that, particularly if you look at the aggregate political, military and economic capabilities of NATO. And so what do they do? They operate below what I call the threshold of conflict. I describe it as adversarial competition that has a military dimension that falls short of conflict, where they employ

unconventional operations, information operations, cyber, certainly a military posture aspect of it, economic coercion, political influence to advance their objectives. And so that's what we see.

At the end of the day, I think in doing all that what they seek to do is undermine the credibility of our ability to meet our alliance commitments with NATO and then the cohesion of the NATO alliance would be an objective when we look at Russian activity. You've heard the term anti-access/area denial. When we look at many of their capability developments, the implications of those developments are that it would limit our ability to move to Europe or then operate within Europe in the context of a NATO – in the NATO response.

Similarly, so I don't take too much time, when we look at China we see the same types of capability development we see in Russia. Certainly, tracking Chinese investments is a bit more opaque than Russia, but we still see a full range of capabilities, many of them oriented to keep us from moving into the Pacific theater or operating freely within the Pacific theater during a crisis or contingency.

Clearly, with Iran, similar capabilities in this anti-access/area denial range, obviously more focused on the Straits of Hormuz as opposed to more broadly, as China and Russia's capabilities are.

Then most recently in North Korea, clearly we see now a combination of both intercontinental ballistic missile capability as well as an effort to put a nuclear warhead on that intercontinental ballistic missile. So North Korea not only threatens South Korea, not only threatens the region, but now presents a threat to the homeland as well.

Probably the most important thing when we look at the implications, the first one is that we need a balanced inventory of capabilities and capacities. As a nation that thinks and acts globally, we can't afford to focus on one area or the other. And so, again, that 4+1 gives us the full range of challenges we may face, to include the current challenge against violent extremism.

The other point that we can perhaps explore more in other questions is that when I look at those challenges, each of those five, it tells me a couple things about character of war in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. One is that virtually any conflict we'd be involved with would be in all domains – sea, space, air, land, cyberspace. The second is that it would be transregional, meaning it would cut across multiple what we call our geographic combatant commands, but global regions. I can't imagine any conflict that we'd be involved with in the future being narrowly focused in one region; it would have transregional implications right away, and then multifunctional.

So I think, again, when we look at those 4+1, it helps us understand what priorities we need to have for joint force development, because we not only look at where we are today but we look at their capability development, we look at our path of capability development. At the end of the day it's all about ensuring that we maintain a competitive advantage that will allow us to advance our interests, and so that's what we use that framework for.

**O'Hanlon:** Excellent. That's very helpful. I was going to follow up on a couple of those specific issues or threats and then look forward to letting others share in the privilege of asking you some questions. So, before I ask about Russia, though, and the Trump administration's emerging Russia policy, which I think is a complicated, multifaceted issue, I just want to give you a chance, I think, to reaffirm what I think I heard last week from the Munich Conference – Vice President [Michael R.] Pence, Secretary [of Defense James N.] Mattis. It sounded like the United States stands fully behind its Article 5 commitment to its NATO allies at this time. Is that a fair reading?

**Dunford:** Yeah, I think it's pretty clear the administration – Vice President Pence, Secretary [of State Rex W.] Tillerson, Secretary Mattis have all reaffirmed our commitment to NATO over the past week. And I certainly –in terms of where I spend my time, we're at least once a quarter meeting with all of my chief of defense counterparts as a group. And then throughout the rest of the year, probably 40, 50 percent of my time is with allies and partners, a large chunk of it with NATO. So, I don't think there's any question about our commitment to NATO.

But equally important were the messages that were delivered, and this is what shouldn't be lost in translation. Yes, we're committed to NATO. Two other points. One is burden-sharing and the administration asking for more equitable burden-sharing, particularly meeting the commitments that were made in Warsaw for each of the nations of NATO, to meet the 2 percent of their gross domestic product in defense. Then the third area, which is also important and something we've been working on pretty hard even before the transition of administrations, is to make sure that NATO continues to transform to be relevant to the security challenges that we confront today and tomorrow as opposed to the security challenges we confronted yesterday. That, of course, in NATO terms, they talk about it as 360 degrees, meaning we not only meet the state challenges that NATO might face but also the non-state challenges that have manifested themselves in terrorist attacks or immigration or other destabilizing activities that we know have had broad political and economic consequences in Europe.

**O'Hanlon:** So if I could, General, I wanted to ask you about the Trump administration's Russia policy. And I say this actually with some appreciation that President Trump is trying to improve the tenor of U.S.-Russian relations, even though that's going to be very hard and his two predecessors had the same ambition when they came into office. But if I were to just take a number of the snapshots in the policy right now, we've heard Mr. Trump want to get along with President Putin. We also have, however, the backstory of what happened last year in our elections. We then have a number of other comments. U.N. Ambassador [N. Nikki] Haley has said that there will be no lifting of sanctions on Russia as long as the Crimea issue and more generally the aggression against Ukraine continue. We heard a clear statement on that. We heard, I think, something similar from Secretary Tillerson last week. Secretary Mattis has said there won't be any military-to-military collaboration, but he was saying that at the same time that you were in Azerbaijan, meeting with General [Valery] Gerasimov, trying to establish at least military-to-military contact. I think I know how this all fits together, but I'd rather hear it in your words, recognizing it's a work in progress. In fairness to any administration, one month in it's pretty hard to come up with something that's a cohesive, coherent Russia policy. But love to hear you describe it as you –

**Dunford:** Yeah, first of all – and I'll talk to the military dimension of the relationship with Russia. First of all, for those who don't know, there's a law in place right now that prevents us from having military-to-military cooperation. So there's legislation in the NDAA that prevents that.

I started many months ago, so you should understand my meeting with my Russian counterpart last week was not in the context of any kind of a change in policy and had nothing to do with administration. It really was – and it would be hard for conspiracy theorists to believe this, that the day I met with Gerasimov, that Secretary Tillerson was meeting with the foreign minister, and General Mattis was speaking at NATO was coincidence. But it truly was.

I began in December of 2015 a dialogue with my Russian counterpart on the telephone. We had wanted to meet for some time, and for a variety of reasons I had an opportunity to actually

meet in January. I had to cancel that meeting because it was actually the day that the president came to the Pentagon for the first time, and so I canceled the meeting in January and then we rescheduled it for last week.

My purpose in meeting with my Russian counterpart was to make sure that we mitigated the risk of miscalculation and we opened up lines of communication that would be effective in the event of a crisis contingency. I think at a minimum our military-to-military relationship should be able to do that. You know, from my perspective we should have mil-to-mil communications with every nation. It runs the range of what I just described – mitigate the risk of miscalculation, open lines of communication in a crisis, which can be useful – all the way up to relationships designed to develop interoperability and latent capability to integrate to respond to mutual challenges. In the case of Russia, it's in the former category, which is I wanted to make sure we mitigated the risk of miscalculation and opened lines of communication. The only other area where I think we have some discussions is to say where are there areas of mutual interest where our actions can address those mutual interests. But I wouldn't use the word "cooperation." That was not something we discussed last week, nor is it something I've been directed to do. I would, in the context of Syria as an example, talk about deconfliction.

So we have mil-to-mil engagement now with Russia in areas where we're enforcing treaties. People are familiar with that. On the ground in Syria we have communications with the Russians, and the primary purpose is to protect our airmen and our folks on the ground and make sure we have a safety channel open to deconflict in an increasingly complex, crowded area in Syria where operations are ongoing. One of the areas that we looked at is making sure that the current safety channel that we have with the Russians, the current communications link that we have between our Air Operations Center and the Russian operations center in Syria, is robust enough to mitigate, again, risks to the safety of our airmen and our people on the ground.

So right now that's kind of where we are with Russia. I think it's important for people not to read into the military-to-military communications any more than what I've just described. That's what it is. Again, what's most important is I am restricted by law from cooperating with the Russians at the military-to-military level, which is completely different from a communications channel to do the things I just described.

## **Remarks at the Dedication of the Chosin Few Battle Monument Quantico, Virginia May 4**

Hey, ladies and gentlemen, and most of all to the veterans of Changjin Lake campaign, better known here as the Chosin Reservoir. It's truly an honor to be here with you today as we honor those who served at one most historic and iconic battles in our history. Today we remember Marines from the 1st Marine Division, soldiers in the 7th Division of the United States Army, British Commandos from 41 Commando, and those who supported them all from the air.

General [Richard E.] Carey spoke about the overwhelming odds that they faced against the Chinese force many times larger – four, six, eight, 10, but significantly larger – in a battle fought over the toughest terrain and under the harshest weather conditions imaginable. And, with Ambassador [to the United States Ho-Young] Ahn and Minister Park [Sung-choo, minister of South Korea's Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs] and General Jeong [Kyeong-doo] here today, we're also reminded of our deep friendship with the South Korean people, and our

decades-long alliance. Katchi kapshida, we go together. We went together in 1950. I can assure you, Minister, Ambassador, we go together in 2017 as well.

This afternoon I could attempt to expand on General Carey's remarks, and talk about details of the battle. I could share stories that I only know from history books about extraordinary soldiers and Marines who fought bravely at the reservoir, and conducted a breakout that's been described as one of the most glorious chapters in Marine Corps history. I could also mention that the Marines who fought at Chosin were part of a generation of Marines that literally saved the Corps from extinction.

In 1949, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time, Omar Bradley, thought there was no reason to be a United States Marine Corps. But after Pusan and Inchon and Chosin, no one any longer questioned the need for United States Marines. In 1951 and '52, when the Congress defined the Marine Corps as the nation's force in readiness and as it remains today, it was with the veterans of the Korean War on their mind.

But I would like to talk to you on a much more personal level about the meaning of the Chosin Reservoir. While recognizing the contribution of others, to include the great soldiers of the 7th Division, I'd like to be a bit parochial and focus on the influence and the legacy of the Chosin Few on me and the Marines of my generation, and on the generation of Marines to come. It's no exaggeration to say that I'm a United States Marine because of the Marines who served at Chosin. In all sincerity, any success I've had as a Marine has been as a result of attempting to follow in their very large footsteps.

On 27 November 1950, my dad celebrated his 20th birthday. He was a private first class, carrying a Browning automatic rifle, serving with the Baker Bandits of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. He'd also been with the company at Naktong, Inchon and Seoul. After spending the day in the attack, dad and his fellow Marines dug in on one of the ridges that General Olmstead spoke about, surrounding Yudam-ni. They spent the night in close combat as three Chinese regiments of the 79th Division attempted to annihilate the 5th and the 7th Marines. Many of the enemy that night were able to infiltrate Marine lines, but the Marines held and the Chinese suffered a large number of casualties.

As I was growing up, my dad never spoke about what happened on this birthday in 1950, or in the weeks that followed. He never spoke about the horrors of close combat or the frostbite that he and so many of his fellow Marines suffered on their march to the sea. I was in the Marine Corps probably seven years before we actually had a serious conversation about his experiences in the Korean War. But from the earliest age, I was aware of the pride that he felt in being a United States Marine, in the pride he felt in having fought with Marines known as the Chosin Few.

It'd be much later in life before I fully appreciated what it meant to be a United States Marine, but by elementary school I was telling people that I wanted to claim the title of Marine and follow the example of my hero, that BAR man from Baker 1/5. I'm very fortunate today that he's here with us. I'm still trying to get over the bar that he set many, many years ago. Dad.

In 1977, I was commissioned and graduated from The Basic School here at Quantico and later reported, as General [Stephen G.] Olmstead said, to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines. After almost three years at Camp Pendleton, I was about to depart active duty when I got those orders to Okinawa, Japan. I decided to take those orders, but I was absolutely determined that when I finished my tour in Japan I was going to get off active duty. I was a reserve officer from the platoon leader's class. I never came in expecting to make Marine Corps a career.

It's a longer story, but when I did get to Okinawa I was assigned as the aide to the commanding general of what was then 3 Marine Amphibious Force, and he was also dual-hatted as the commander of the 3rd Marine Division. Like me, that general had spent time in the 3rd Battalion, First Marines, but in his case, it was as a PFC in Bloody George Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, at Chosin Reservoir. That general, of course, was General Olmstead. And, of course, he's also right here today.

I would tell you, to a young lieutenant, there was something very different about General Olmstead – his character, his sense of calm, a father's concern for his Marines, a focus on assuring they were well-trained, well-led, and ready for combat. He knew what they might have to experience. Treated me like a son, and during that tour in Okinawa I began to think about staying in the Marine Corps for a career. I wanted to serve long enough to be a leader with confidence, and with compassion, and the influence of General Olmstead, that veteran of the Chosin Reservoir.

While it was those two individual Marines that are responsible for my joining the Marine Corps and remaining in the Corps for a career, all the Marines that fought at Chosin influenced the Corps that I have proudly served. The legacy left by the Chosin Few is captured in a replica of Charles Waterhouse's painting, which is etched on the front of the monument. If you look at your programs, you'll see on a center panel – General Carey spoke about earlier – we'll see it later here this afternoon. I've had a print of that painting in my office for over 20 years. It was given to me by my staff of noncommissioned officers when I left the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines because they knew of the special affinity I had for the veterans of the Chosin campaign.

I've spent my career trying to live up to what is captured in that print. When I look at it, the first thing I see is a period of instruction. I see Marine air overhead in the scene, and I'm reminded of the power of the air-ground team and the importance of integrating combined arms. I see Marines who, despite the conditions, wouldn't leave their supplies or equipment to the enemy. I'm reminded that Marines take care of their gear and there's supply discipline in their DNA.

When I look at the print, and I see officers and NCOs encouraging their Marines to persevere, seemingly oblivious to their own discomfort. I'm reminded that Marine leaders lead from the front and put the needs of their Marines behind their own – ahead of their own. Sorry. I see wounded Marines being carried by their fellow Marines and treated by corpsmen. I'm reminded that Marines don't ever leave anyone behind. I see Marines on the high ground at over watch, and I'm reminded of the importance of tactical proficiency and brilliance in the basics.

But when I look at the print more carefully, beyond the physical acts being performed by the Marines and sailors, I see the real legacy of the Chosin Few. I see reflections of the entangled qualities that John W. Thomason, a Marine from World War I, described as such things as regiments hand out forever. Of course, I'm talking about the courage, the will, the sacrifice, and the extraordinary enduring that Waterhouse captures in the faces of the Marines that he painted, which is appropriately titled Band of Brothers.

To this day, every Marine at graduation from boot camp or The Basic School learns about the Marines and the legacy of the Chosin Few. Since those days in November and December of 1950, generations of Marines, including Joe Dunford, have sought to honor that legacy while walking in the very large footprints of the Chosin Few. I've personally seen reflections of the Chosin in my own experience.

I've seen reflections of Chosin during a particular tough battle in Iraq, when 86 Marines in the same battalion were wounded and refused to report their injuries for fear that they'd be



separated from their buddies. I've seen reflections of Chosin in one of my young corporals, who was evacuated to Germany with serious injuries, only to trick the doctor into releasing him so he could literally hitchhike back on Marine aircraft to return back to his squad.

Beyond Marines, I've seen reflections of Chosin in the soldiers of 1/3/2 infantry that fought, once again, with the 1st Marine Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, when I was the chief of staff of the division. I've seen reflections of Chosin every time I visit Walter Reed to see our wounded warriors, who don't ask for anything except for an update on their buddies and how they can return to the fight.

And so today, as we gather to dedicate a monument in your honor, I want the veterans of the Chosin campaign to know that the spirit of the Chosin Reservoir remains very much alive in our corps today. That spirit's with our men and women currently deployed in harm's way in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and in Syria. It's being instilled right now as we gather at Parris Island and San Diego, and a few miles up the road at Camp Barrett. And it's going to be the foundation of our success for many, many years to come. The monument's going to play a role, General Carey, as you alluded to, in making sure that that spirit remains alive.

I'm pretty confident that when Marines come and they look at that center panel and they look at the other panels around that monument, they'll have the same feelings that I have as they look at it. They'll know what it means to be a Marine in a physical sense and the confidence that represent Marines. But more importantly, they'll know about those intangible qualities that have been passed down from your generation – you, the Chosin Few – to the generation of Marines that are here today – that legacy of competence and courage.

Let me close by simply saying that the pride that Marines in uniform today have in wearing this uniform comes simply from knowing that Marines, like those at the Chosin Reservoir, those Chosin Few, wore the same uniform. Ladies and gentlemen, it would be difficult – it would be impossible for me to describe what a tremendous honor it is for me to be here today with men like General Carey, men like General Olmstead, General [Philip D.] Shutler, and so many other veterans of the Chosin Reservoir. I can assure you that today we will still continue to try to get over that bar that you set – that very high bar that you set – and take care of the Corps and take care of the legacy that you left behind.

God bless you all. And Semper Fidelis.

**Commencement Address to St. Michael's College Graduation  
Colchester, Vermont  
May 14**

Let me start with Father Doherty. Father Ray, thanks for those words. But more importantly, thanks for over six decades of service as an Edmundite, and before that as a United States Marines. It's actually very humbling to be here with you. And for the record, you do outrank me.

President [John J.] Neuhauser, ladies and gentlemen, and, most importantly, to the Class of 2017, you'd expect me to say that it's an honor to be with you, but it really is. I'd like to begin by joining President Neuhauser and others in thanking the family members that are with us, as well as the faculty and the staff that are here and the mentors that have invested so much over the years. I know that your support has made it possible for each of the graduates that are sitting out here today to have accomplished all that they have accomplished. I know you're very proud, as am I.

Several people have mentioned Mother's Day. To avoid getting in trouble at home I want to join those that have recognized Mother's Day. In fact, what I think I'll do is just ask all the mothers that are here to please stand up and be recognized. I know that some of us have lost our moms along the way. I know they're in our thoughts and prayers as well today. I also want to take just a minute to offer my personal condolences for those that are being remembered today. I know there's some empty seats out here in and amongst the St. Michael's community. I know that they and their families are in our thoughts and prayers as well.

As I prepared my remarks this past week, I reflected on my own graduation from St. Michael's 40 years ago. I know that probably sounds like ancient history to the Class of 2017, but I actually remember quite a bit of detail from my graduation. That morning, prior to commencement, I was one of two students that was commissioned in the Marine Corps. I can still remember taking the oath of office in Elliot Hall, being surrounded by friends and family, and just the sense of promise that was there that morning.

I remember walking across the graduation ceremony, surrounded by my classmates, and just like there was as I watched you parade in here this morning, there was just a tremendous amount of excitement in the air. I also remember our commencement speaker. It was Senator Margaret Chase Smith from the state of Maine. By the time I graduated, she was an iconic figure. The speech she gave in 1950 had been recognized as one of the most significant speeches in U.S. Senate history.

Unfortunately, I'm not sure I heard a word that Senator Smith said to my class that morning in 1977. I made that comment about a year ago. And the Margaret Chase Smith library over the past year sent me a copy of her remarks from the speech. I read the remarks. I actually missed a very powerful message of value and ethics. But by the time she spoke on my graduation day, my mind was miles away from Winooski Park. I had enjoyed my four years at St. Michael's, like you. Developed many important relationships in my life.

But I was ready to move on. Mentally I had already made the break from my college phase of life. I suspect there's more than one or two of you out there that have – that probably share that sentiment. So, with that in my mind, I challenged myself to say something this morning that's actually relevant to those of you who are graduating, something that you may actually remember at least until tomorrow morning. I'm going to accomplish my mission by sharing just a few thoughts about leadership, and ask you, the Class of 2017, to accomplish yours by staying with me for just a few minutes. I promise it will be. Maybe just be a bit more attentive than I was at my commencement speech.

I chose to talk about leadership this morning because I believe we should expect leadership from graduates of an institution founded by the Society of St. Edmund, a group committed to serving others. We should expect leadership from men and women who graduate from a college that emphasizes social justice. We should expect leadership from graduates of a school that consistently ranks as one of the best liberal arts colleges in the nation. In fact, I remember the words of President [Edward L.] Henry and Father [Francis] Gokey here in 1977. When they were asked, why St. Michael's part of their answer was, and I quote, "Because we don't train students for followership, for jobs that may become technically obsolete. St. Michael's aims to give you sound thinking, creativity, resourcefulness, self-assurance, universal skills in any profession, in any age." I think their words were as true in 2017 as they were in 1977.

One of the qualities that all great leaders share is moral courage. It's been alluded to early this morning – the ability to think for yourself and the willingness to do the right thing, regardless of the consequences. I didn't appreciate it at the time, by that characteristic defined

my commencement speaker, Margaret Chase Smith. In part, to pay her back for my inattentiveness in 1977, I'd like to share a little bit about her story. She was born in 1897. She was the first woman to serve in both houses of Congress, and only a handful of women served in the House when she joined in 1940. For over a decade, she was the only woman to serve in the Senate as the result of winning a general election. She was a trailblazer with many admirable qualities, but it was the moral courage that she demonstrated in 1950 that established her as a truly extraordinary leader.

In 1950, the nation's confidence was shaken by financial trouble, the loss of China to communism, and Russia's success at developing an atomic weapon. In that context, the political opportunist, Senator Joseph McCarthy, took advantage of what Senator Smith called the four horsemen of fear, ignorance, bigotry, and smear. McCarthy had embarked on a wide-sweeping anti-communist crusade that unfairly called into question the patriotism and the integrity of many good Americans. He literally destroyed lives and careers with rumor and innuendo. While many disagreed with McCarthy's unfair character assassinations and broad-sweeping accusations, very few in the nation had the courage to take on Senator McCarthy. It was actually a pretty dark time in our nation's history.

Then, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1950, Senator Margaret Chase Smith took to the Senate floor and delivered a speech that she declared as a declaration of conscience. For many reasons it was a bold step for her to take. She was a very junior senator from the same party as McCarthy. At the time, McCarthy was very popular here in New England. As the only woman in the Senate she was under extreme scrutiny in a period when many believed that women had no place in politics. When she delivered that speech, Senator Smith was well-aware that she was risking her reputation and her political career. But she looked at the evidence behind McCarthy's accusations and concluded that what he was doing was wrong and harmful to our nation.

To give you some sense of what she was experiencing at a time, there's a train that runs underneath the Capitol building. That morning, before she took to the Senate floor, she actually found herself on the small little train that moves from one building to another with Senator McCarthy. McCarthy had some hint of what was going to happen on the Senate floor that morning. He got right up in her face and said: Senator, I understand you're going to give a speech on the Senate floor this morning. Is there anything that I should know?

So Senator Smith moved to the Senate floor alone, and she took on Joseph McCarthy. After her speech, through her example, others began to speak out, and the dark chapter of McCarthyism was eventually closed. Senator Smith knew what it meant to be a leader. She knew that being a leader meant doing the right thing, even when it was hard. In her own words, the right thing is not always the popular or the easy thing. Standing for right when it's unpopular is the true test of moral courage.

Graduates of St. Michael's Class of 2017, future leaders, you won't all have a moment in your lives as consequential as Senator Smith, but you'll have moments when standing for right is hard. When that moment comes, I'll just ask you to remember the example of Senator Margaret Chase Smith, who stood right here 40 years ago speaking to the Class of 1977.

Another quality that I've found in great leaders is a commitment to serve something greater than yourself – a passion and a willingness to serve others. Here the words of Christ offer inspiration. "The son of man didn't come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." Few represent that ethos better than Father Maurice Ouellet, an Edmundite priest who played a critical role in the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. As a 13-year-old growing up

here in Vermont, he watched a home movie of Edmundite priests serving African-Americans in Alabama, and he felt a calling.

After finishing seminary, he was posted to Selma, Alabama, and he spent his days doing what any priest would do – visiting people in their homes, caring for the sick, and offering mass. He and his fellow Edmundites opened up the Good Samaritan Hospital and educated African-American children in the parish school. By the early 1960s, Father Ouellet had earned the trust of African-Americans in Selma. When civil rights leaders came calling, he linked arms with them, viewing their struggle as a natural extension of his service to the community. He offered his parish as a gathering place and a training ground for volunteers. He spoke out against injustice and he called on Christians from across the country to join the fight for civil rights.

In doing so, Father Ouellet became a target for those resistant to change. He was hauled before a grand jury and accused of being a communist. He received menacing phone calls in the middle of the night, and he endured repeated threats against his life. But none of that could keep him from answering his call to serve. He continued to care for the sick in their homes and in the hospital. He worked as a handyman offering free repairs to those ignored by local businesses. And he used his position to call for equality. In 1965, when civil right leaders rallied in Selma to plan a march to Montgomery, Father Ouellet welcomed them with open arms. When peaceful marchers were beaten on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, dozens of wounded found sanctuary and care at the Good Samaritan Hospital. And Father Ouellet himself, recovering from kidney surgery, got up out of his hospital bed to help those who had been injured that day.

As protestors reorganized, Father Ouellet worked behind the scenes and coordinated a nationwide response that brought literally hundreds of priests, sisters, ministers, rabbis, and laymen from 26 states to Selma, Alabama. In the end, the bravery and conviction of African-Americans and those who marched with them turned the tide on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1965. A triumphal procession of 25,000 Americans shortly afterwards arrived on the steps of the Capitol in Alabama. Five months later, as we all know, the Voting Rights Act was passed, providing protections sought by those who marched on Montgomery.

But as the nation celebrated their victory, Father Ouellet felt the sting of loss. His archbishop was angered by Father Ouellet's vocal and visible role in the civil rights movement, and he removed him from his parish. Demonstrating what it means to be a truly great leader, Father Ouellet maintained his commitment to serve others, even through his final sermon at Selma. Rather than give in to bitterness and disappointment, he concluded with these words: All we do we must do with love. As a person and an individual, I matter very little. However, the church matters, and matters a great deal. That's what it means to have a passion for serving others and remembering, as a leader of consequence, it's never about you.

Graduates of St. Michael's Class of 2017, future leaders, few of you are going to be called upon to serve in a time such as Father Maurice Ouellet or to make such a great personal sacrifice. But most of you will lead in industry, education or in public service. I hope when you lead you remember the story of Father Ouellet, if only to remember that when you are a leader, the greatest call is to serve those you lead.

Now, those of you who may be still with me and probably having a hard time identifying with these examples. You may have actually taken a deep gulp and wondered if being a leader requires the courage of Margaret Chase Smith or the selflessness of Father Maurice Ouellet. But in all sincerity, if you sit here this morning with those concerns, I don't share them. I say that because what I've learned in my 40 years of service in uniform is that extraordinary leaders are actually ordinary men and women who make a commitment to excellence. Leaders are men and

women who dig down deep and do what's right, even when there's a voice inside of them to say: Take the easy way.

I don't share your concerns, because I look at the generation of St. Michael's graduates who sat right where you sit this morning and have gone on to be leaders of consequence in a wide range of endeavors. Several examples I'm honored to be up here on the stage with this morning – Loung Ung is a human rights activist, Brian Lacey in the creative arts, and Senator Patrick Leahy in the United States Senate, and Tracy Ramano, a leading marine biologist.

Now, in the interest of time, I didn't describe this morning the challenges that currently face our nation. But from a security perspective alone, I think it's fair to say the challenges we face today are as complex and difficult as any we've faced since World War II. The pace of change is unprecedented. Navigating in the days ahead is going to require leadership. Your generation of leadership is going to play an increasingly important role. Our education system, our military, the public and the private sector all need strong value-based leadership. As graduates of St. Michael's, I really believe you are uniquely capable of providing that leadership.

So I'll close by just making a simple request: Regardless of where life takes you, have the moral courage to do what's right, even when it's tough. Commit to being something bigger than yourself – whether it's in your professional life or your personal life. Remember the ethic that was instilled here in St. Michael's and bring that forth with you as you go on with your life. And in the end, perhaps inspired by the story of Margaret Chase Smith or Father Maurice Ouellet, be a leader of consequence.

To the St. Michael's community, to the Class of 2017, to the families that are here today, particularly to the faculty and the staff at St. Michael's College, it's been an extraordinary day for me to be literally back home here at St. Michael's and to have a chance to look at your faces, look at the proud faces of parents that are here, and to be part of such a big day in your lives. I wish you all the best as you go forward to be leaders of consequence. God bless you all. And, as Father Ray said, *Semper Fidelis*, remain Always Faithful. Thank you very much.

## **Remarks to U.S. Air Force Academy Graduates Colorado Springs, Colorado May 24**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It's an absolute honor to be here today and join in this special day. Secretary [of the Air Force Heather A.] Wilson, thanks for that introduction. But, more importantly, thanks for your willingness to come back and serve as our secretary of the Air Force. I know I speak for all the Academy grads and all of our airmen to know that they're very, very happy to have one of their as flight lead.

To General [David L.] Goldfein and Chief [Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O.] Wright, thanks for your leadership. I would just tell you, and I think you all know, we have exactly the right team in General Goldfein and Chief Wright leading our Air Force into the future. And, General [Michelle D.] Johnson, I'd also like to speak about your leadership just for a minute, both here at the Academy and throughout your distinguished career. I feel fortunate to have served as your wingman in a previous assignment, and to have watched you in action. I know today that we're going to talk a lot about the performance of the cadets out here. We're going to talk about how great the United States Air Force Academy is. It's all the better for having had your leadership here over the last few years. Thanks, Michelle.

Most importantly, to the Class of 2017. You know, I know today caps what's been a busy week with various events to recognize your accomplishments. I'm sure you're feeling pretty good at this point. And you should. Four years ago, you accepted a challenge to attend the Academy. Based on your performance in high school, you could have done many other things. You could have taken the easy way. But you didn't. You came to Colorado Springs and you challenged yourself physically, mentally and academically. From yellow footprints to Jacks Valley, from recognition to Saturday morning inspections, you've had early mornings, late nights, and tough training. And due to sequestration, you even survived the great toilet paper shortage of 2013. An extraordinary accomplishment in and of itself.

On a serious note, you've accomplished a great deal, and you deserve to be congratulated. But I'd also, as Secretary Wilson did, I'd also like to thank you for answering the call to service during a very challenging time. The world changed when you were about five years old. We've been at war now for almost 16 years. I'm sure you accept your commissions today with your eyes wide open to the challenges ahead. To that point, today there's more than 100,000 airmen standing watch around the world. Many are directly supporting combat operations. They're joined by thousands more soldiers, sailors and Marines. As we conduct this ceremony, and as you leave here today, I'd ask you to keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

While those of you graduating today should be proud of what you accomplished, I'm also sure that you recognize you didn't get here by yourself. Secretary Wilson spoke about it, General Johnson spoke about it, you had your support of your families. They were there when the challenges here at the Academy brought a slight bend to your knees, and they inspired you to get through tough times. Appropriately enough, a minute ago you stood up and you said thanks. I would tell you right now, as I look out, I think I have the best position in the stadium because I'm able to look out there and see the proud faces of your parents, your brothers, your sisters, your grandparents – all here today to recognize your achievements.

I also want to recognize, once again, the faculty and the staff. They've worked hard over the last four years to teach, to coach, to mentor you. They also have a reason to be proud today. I think the most important thing that the faculty and staff at the Academy does here, they show you what right looks like. I will tell you, that's exactly what they have done. They have shown you what right looks like. I'd ask you once again to please recognize the faculty, the staff, the mentors that have allowed you to be here today.

Graduates, today marks a critical inflection point in your lives. As graduates of the Academy, and men and women heading off to be leaders in our Air Force – and a few of you in the Army, Navy and Marine Corps – your priorities are going to change. After today, the focus is not on you anymore. It's not about your GPA, your MPA, or your PEA. It's not about the superintendent's pin on your uniform. And it's not about your accomplishments on the athletic field.

After today, your success is seldom going to be measured by what you as an individual can achieve. Most often, it's going to be about what your squadron achieves. It's going to be how you inspire those you lead to excellence that really matters. I know you appreciate that point, because for the last four years while you've been studying aerodynamics, learning how to write code, or beating the Naval Academy on the football field – it pains me to say that – Everything you've done has come down to this: You've answered the call to lead in our Air Force.

Now, I've been in your shoes. Although, as the secretary mentioned, I was commissioned 40 years ago this week, I can actually clearly recall my own graduation, and how anxious I was on that day – like I'm sure you are – to get on with the next phase of my life. I wasn't interested at

all in what my graduation speaker had to say. I'm going to assume, and I think safely – I'm going to assume that many of you share the same sentiment. But before you move on to tackle the challenges ahead, I just want to take a few minutes and just share with you a few personal thoughts on leading in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The first point I'd make is that to be successful, individuals being commissioned today have to be flexible. Flexibility's not only the key to airpower, flexibility is a key attribute for you as a leader. When you drive out the south gate this afternoon, you need to do so with a willingness to embrace and to lead change. In some very fundamental ways, the environment which you're going to lead is going to be quite different than the one that confronted Lieutenants Wilson, Lieutenant Goldfein, and Lieutenant Dunford. Perhaps one of the most striking differences affecting the professional of arms today is the pace of change. Secretary Wilson alluded to that.

In my own career, I can't think of a time when the pace of change has been even close to what it is today. When I was a lieutenant in 1977, we used the same cold weather gear my dad had used in Korea 27 years earlier. And I don't mean the same type of gear. I mean the same gear, dug out of a warehouse that had been used 27 years earlier. Our radios, our rifles and our machine guns were from Vietnam. The Jeeps would have been familiar to World War II veterans and, to be quite honest with you, so were the tactics.

Today, Marines are wearing protective equipment, employing weapons, driving vehicles and flying aircraft that would be unrecognizable to Marines that got off active duty just a few years ago. Our command and control systems have completely changed battlefield geometry on the ground. Today, similar challenges can be found across the joint force. These changes have implications. They have implications at the strategic level, the operational level, and the tactical level. But for most of you here today, it's the pace of change in the United States Air Force that's most relevant.

If I'd been commissioned as a pilot in the Air Force in 1977, I'd have navigated with paper maps, not GPS. I'd have calculated bomb angles with a grease pencil on the glass of my cockpit, communicated only line of sight, and dropped unguided bombs. The basic technology in 1977 hadn't changed in decades, and there wasn't much of a conversation about space and cyberspace. Today, while recognizing that we've fallen behind in modernizing some of our platforms, the Air Force that you are joining is much, much different than even a short time ago.

In the past few years, the world's greatest air force has tripled the number of remotely piloted aircraft. It's leaped forward with advancements in space, command and control systems, cyber capabilities, stealth, and precision capabilities. The Air Force has fielded the fifth-generation F-22. It's now fielding the F-35. And those are platforms that aren't just going to improve how we fight. Those are platforms that are going to transform how we fight in the United States Air Force and across the joint force.

The pace of change is not going to stop when you graduate. By the time that you make major, the United States Air Force is going to look much different than it does even today. That said, if you remain flexible, and consider your experience here in the academy merely the beginning of a lifelong pursuit of education, you're going to be capable leading that change and adapting to new and unforeseen challenges.

I want to shift gears for a minute and talk about an aspect of our profession that hasn't changed through the years. What hasn't changed is that the military profession, at the end of the day, is about people. The primary difference between success and failure on and off the battlefield has historically been about the human. It's been about the human, not about the hardware. In fact, notwithstanding all the changes in our profession that I highlighted, I believe

you can primarily attribute any success that we've had in the battlefield and our history to the actions of individual sailors, soldiers, airmen and Marines.

Their willingness to go out day after day and do what must be done has made the difference. That willingness didn't come from doctrine, techniques, or new weapons systems or equipment. The will to endure when the mission is tough, the willingness to put yourself at risk, to put the needs of your wingmen ahead of your own, all that comes from intangibles. A World War I Marine described those intangibles as, "such things as regiments hand down forever." In this venue, I'd ask you to think about them as such things as squadrons hand down forever. Of course, I'm referring to qualities like courage, honor, commitment, loyalty, and selflessness.

To illustrate the point I'm trying to make, I'd like to quickly share two stories of ordinary airmen who accomplished extraordinary things. Some of you might know the name Richard Brims. He's buried here on the Academy's grounds, and his story lives on the Plaza of Heroes, right over near Doolittle Hall. But in June of 1971, he was sitting exactly where you're sitting today. Dick was a likeable and athletic kid. He grew up in an Air Force family. After a year at college, he attended a prep school, eventually becoming part of the Class of 1971. As a cadet, he was known as his sense of humor. On graduation day, he and a few of his classmates borrowed the eight-foot sign – you know, that sign that says now leaving the United States Air Force Academy? Well, he and his classmates borrowed that sign and it was actually right here at graduation. I'm telling you this today – not yesterday – so that we don't repeat that offense.

Just four years after his graduation spirit mission, Lieutenant Brims was a mission-qualified CH-53 pilot stationed in Thailand. In May of 1975, two weeks after the fall of Saigon and the end of the Vietnam War, Cambodian soldiers of the brutal Khmer Rouge seized the merchant ship, SS *Mayaguez* in the Gulf of Thailand. The U.S. responded immediately with a joint team. Lieutenant Brims' squadron was dispatched to support a battalion of Marines to rescue the ship and the crew of 39. The plan called for the Marines to be inserted in a nearby island named Koh Tang. It was heavily defended by Khmer Rouge, armed with heavy machine guns, grenades, rockets, and missiles.

But Lieutenant Brims successfully landed his Marines under fire, and then he remained in the landing zone to evacuate five wounded Marines. While he was refueling back in Thailand, things went from bad to worse on the island. Eleven helicopters were lost to enemy fire, leaving only three to extract the more than 200 Marines who were still on the island. Despite intense fire and near-total darkness, Lieutenant Brims returned to the landing zone twice. The enemy was so close and so numerous at one point that those crew that weren't manning machine guns actually pushed the windows out of the helicopter and were engaging the enemy around the helicopter with small arms.

On his last trip, Lieutenant Brims made three unsuccessful attempts to land. The Marines on the island, they tried to wave him off. They said it was too dangerous for Lieutenant Brims and his crew to come back. But he wasn't about to abandon those Marines. On his fourth attempt he landed. He loaded 27 Marines. He held his position under fire while one of his crewmen ran to a tree line to grab two other Marines who were still putting down a suppressive base of fire to allow the evacuation to take place.

Dick Brims was awarded the Air Force Cross for his actions that day on Koh Tang, and he's justly remembered as a hero. But that hero sat right where you are today. He walked the same halls and he studied the same subjects. He's the same guy that was pulling pranks on graduation day. He was an ordinary airman who did extraordinary things. Ladies and gentlemen, Dick Brims was killed on a training mission in 1986, but we're honored to have today his widow with



us, Mrs. Christina Brims, who's right over here to my right. I'd ask you to please recognize her. Christina, please stand up.

You know, what Lieutenant Brims did was over 40 years ago. But you actually don't have to open history books to find ordinary airmen doing extraordinary things. The second story I just want to share with you is about a major by the name of Alex Hill. Alex is not much different than most of you. He grew up in Tacoma, Washington. He wrestled and he ran cross-country. He lived in the shadow of his grandfather, a retired Air Force master sergeant, and his father, a retired Air Force officer. In 2006, he earned his commission and he went to pilot training. He married his college sweetheart, and today they've got two beautiful daughters.

Last November, Major Hill was in Afghanistan commanding an AC-130 gunship called Spooky 43. One day, he and his 13 crewmembers were providing overwatch for a team of 55 Americans and Afghan special operations forces. The ground team was ambushed, quickly surrounded. Within minutes, those folks on the ground took 20 casualties. Major Hill and his crew jumped into action, and they began firing on the enemy, mostly within 40 meters of friendly forces. By any definition, danger close. Their actions allowed the ground force to recover the wounded, but it didn't stop the enemy attack. So the ground controller cleared them to fire within 25 meters. And then again within 15 meters, getting closer and closer to the troops on the ground.

The crew shot so many 105-milimeter rounds that the guns started to overheat, risking a detonation inside of the aircraft. With the situation desperate, Alex decided to continue firing despite the risks. After an hour of intense fighting, Major Hill and his crew were down to just eight airburst round 105s. Due to its lethality, this particular round is normally shot hundreds of meters from friendly lines. But with the ground force still in grave danger, and no other alternative, Major Hill decided to engage with that round. They loaded the breech, and engaged the closest enemy group – 12 meters from the friends that were pinned down. That's the closest distance ever recorded by an AC-130. And that annihilated the enemy formation with a single shot.

Major Hill and his crew returned to base to rearm and refuel, and then they went back to support. By now, it's broad daylight. In total Spooky 43 fired 21 danger close missions that day, and saved over 50 lives on the ground. That's an impressive team performance. You can look it up and read about it on the internet. But what you won't read is that this was the first deployment for four of the crew members and, amazingly, the first combat mission for one of them. You won't read that one of the sensor operators missed a crew brief that day, the major let him go off and join a video teleconference, which was actually the memorial service of one of his fellow airmen. You're not going to read that one of the load masters was being treated for combat stress because he had a close encounter with a surface-to-air missile one year prior in the very same area that that action took place.

You won't read that when Major Hill landed to rearm and refuel, he put his hand on each and every one of his crewmen, he looked them in the eyes to see were they OK. He also asked them, do you want to go back? Can you go back? None of them hesitated. They all went back. Major Hill's crew performed that day, not because he was a major, but because he was a leader with a warrior ethos, a leader that was technically and tactically competent – of that there's no doubt. But most importantly, a leader that trusted and cared for his airmen. He earned their trust in return. Today Major Hill is still out there doing extraordinary things.

Now, those of you that are still with me may have a hard time identifying with an action that took place 40 years ago, or combat conditions that perhaps most of you haven't yet experienced.

You may actually have taken a deep gulp and wondered if you possess the courage of Richard Brims or the leadership of Major Hill. I understand that. The day I was commissioned I had the same thoughts run through my mind. Am I good enough? But in all sincerity, as I stand here with you today I don't share those concerns. If my experience makes me confident of anything, it makes me confident of the product we produce here at the United States Air Force Academy. It makes me confident in you, even though we just met.

I don't share your concern because I'm absolutely confident that you will measure up to the task at hand. You will lead change, and you will inspire your airmen. But don't get me wrong, I'm not for a minute understating the complexity of today's security environment, nor the challenges that you're likely to confront as leaders. Your predecessors have done truly remarkable things. But if you think carefully about the stories that I shared, the qualities reflected in Lieutenant Brims and Major Hill weren't actually unique to the battlefield. It wasn't mostly about courage under fire that distinguished Lieutenant Brims and Major Hill.

The primary reason your predecessors were successful was because they recognized that it wasn't about their individual actions or their individual capabilities. It was about the Marines on Koh Tang Island. It was about the special operators on the ground in Afghanistan. It was about the crew in that AC-130. Your predecessors knew that individual competence, intellect, and physical skills – they're all actual part of the sticker price of being an officer. You're not getting any more credit for that after today. You're not going to get any more credit for that. It's a given. Your predecessors knew that it was about leading from the front and instilling esprit in their units, a bond of trust within their crews, and a commitment to excellence and to the mission.

Your predecessors knew that to be successful you have to combine the passion that you've developed here at the United States Air Force Academy for our profession with compassion and sincere concern for every individual you will be fortunate enough to lead. Your predecessors knew that if you took care of your airmen, they're going to take care of you, and they're going to get the job done.

So in these final moments of your four-year journey, I'd ask you to remember that what's going to distinguish you as a leader is not your ability to develop cyber tools, fly a Joint Strike Fighter or maintain a satellite constellation. We expect you to do all that. You're graduates of the United States Air Force Academy. What's going to distinguish you as a leader is your personal example, your ability to create an environment in which those intangible qualities I spoke about, those qualities that are passed down from one generation of airmen to the next – your task, what will distinguish you as a leader, is your ability to create a climate within which those qualities flourish.

Once again, as I look at our newest leaders, I've got confidence – great confidence in our Air Force, great confidence. I have great confidence in you. And now, graduates, it's time to lead. God bless you all, and good luck.

**Remarks at the National Memorial Day Observance Ceremony  
Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia  
May 29**

Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, Secretary [of Defense James N.] Mattis, distinguished guests, and most importantly to our Gold Star families, it's an honor to join you this morning in remembrance and reflection. Since the founding of our republic, more than 42 million Americans

have stepped forward to serve their country in uniform. Their story is one of selflessness, it's one of courage, and it's one of shared commitment. But their story is also one of extraordinary sacrifice.

More than 1 million Americans who have answered the call to duty gave the last full measure of their devotion so their fellow citizens could live in freedom and raise their children in peace. Today we honor the fallen from battlefields that serve as waypoints in our history: Saratoga to Gettysburg, Belleau Wood to Midway, Chosin to Ia Drang, and Korengal Valley to Fallujah. Today we reflect on the enormity of the sacrifice. We reflect on the hopes and the dreams never realized.

Today we also reflect on the sacrifice of the families left behind – the anguish of parents, spouses, siblings and friends; the sadness of children growing up without their fathers or mothers. And we know that for the families every day is Memorial Day.

But today we also reflect on what's most important about the men and women we honor: We reflect on how they lived. They were people who stood for something larger than themselves. They were people who embodied the most important values and traditions of our nation. They were people who understood that what we have in our country is worth fighting for. And though they were taken from us prematurely, they were people who touched our lives. They were people who made a difference.

Today, if we truly want to honor the fallen from all of our conflicts, we'll do something more than mark their graves with flags and flowers. We'll do something more than deliver remarks and reflect for just a few moments. If we truly want to give meaning to the sacrifice of those who have given all on our behalf, each of us will leave here today determined to find, in some small way, a method of serving our nation and our communities in their honor. If we do that, then I would offer that those of us who were taken from us prematurely will be able to look down and know that we truly do remember them.

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen that are still in uniform, thank you for remembering.

**Excerpts from Remarks at the National Press Club Newsmaker Luncheon with Jeffrey Ballou, News Editor, Al Jazeera Media Network  
Washington, District of Columbia  
June 19**

**Dunford:** Jeff (Ballou), thanks. Ladies and gentlemen, thanks very much. It is good to join you here today. I appreciate the flexibility of the club in rescheduling. I canceled at the last minute in April, which I typically don't have to do, but as you can understand, sometimes that's required, and had to do that. I'm actually glad that it was a relatively slow news weekend. So I come in on a Monday. There's probably not many questions and not much you're interested in, and there's certainly nothing controversial that I could address today, so you know, I feel very comfortable. So, with that, Jeff, I'll turn it over to you.

**Ballou:** OK, we'll just go right into the questions. We just had a very tense shoot-down of a Syrian jet by U.S. forces. And we had a very ominous statement from Russia that plays into the whole deconfliction agreement between the countries essentially saying: Anything west of the

Euphrates, we're shooting down. What's your reaction to that? Have there been any developments? Do you have any updates on where that stands? Is deconfliction gone?

**Dunford:** First of all, we worked very hard on deconfliction, and it's important to point out why. For the last eight months, we worked on deconfliction with the Russian Federation, the pro-regime forces through the Russians. The purpose was to make sure that our air crews were safe, to make sure our personnel on the ground were safe, and to make sure we could prosecute the defeat ISIS campaign in Syria, which is the reason why we're in Syria.

That has worked very well over the past eight months. We have worked through a number of issues with the Russian Federation. We have an effective link between our operations center in Qatar and the Russian Federation on the ground in Syria. That link is still ongoing here this morning; when I left the building this morning, we've still been communicating over the last few hours.

I, like you, saw in the open-source some reporting from Moscow, which I won't address right now; I would just tell you that we'll work diplomatically and militarily in the coming hours to re-establish deconfliction.

The Russian Federation has indicated that their purpose in Syria, like ours, is to defeat ISIS, and we'll see if that's true here in the coming hours because all of our operations in and around Raqqa and southern Syria are designed specifically to get after ISIS. We have agreed in the past – that is we and the Russian Federation, the pro-regime forces – that operations that the coalition was conducting in Syria were effectively degrading ISIS' capability. We'll work to restore that deconfliction chain in the next few hours.

**Ballou:** So are you confident that U.S. forces won't be shot down?

**Dunford:** I'm confident that we are still communicating between our operations center and the Russian Federation operations center. I'm also confident that our forces have the capability to take care of themselves.

**Ballou:** OK. Because some people have been writing in some of these early questions, I mean, did Russia effectively declare World War III?

**Dunford:** Yeah, honestly, Jeff, I think the worse thing any of us could do right now would be, you know, address this thing with hyperbole. An incident occurred. We have to work through the incident. We have a channel to be able to do that. I think it's going to require some diplomatic and military engagement in the next few hours to restore the deconfliction that we've had in place. Again, the deconfliction that we've had in place is in our mutual interest because it allows us to address what at least pro-regime forces have indicated is our common enemy, ISIS.

**Ballou:** Have you been in touch with your counterpart in Russia?

**Dunford:** I have not as of yet this morning. I have met with my Russia counterpart twice this year, and we've communicated maybe another five or six times.

**Ballou:** Which also leads to what's the situation in Raqqa going to be when it's all said and done? Who's going to control it? You've got a number of questions about how that recasts the situation in the region.

**Dunford:** Sure. First of all, we're supporting the Syrian Democratic Forces in seizing Raqqa. That's a force of about 50,000, of which about 20,000 or 25,000 are Arab and the balance are Kurdish. Even as we support their efforts to seize Raqqa, there's an ongoing effort led by the

State Department to put together a governance body so that as soon as Raqqa is seized, there is effective local governance. That governance will leverage Arab leaders who are from Raqqa. We'll also work on establishing a security force made up of local personnel so that there is stabilization efforts that'll follow the seizure of Raqqa.

**Ballou:** Let's move around the region a bit. Iraqi Kurds have announced that they are going to hold an independence referendum on September 25th. What would that mean for U.S. interests in the Middle East? Should the U.S. support it?

**Dunford:** Look, our stated objective at this point is a stable, secure and sovereign Iraq. We're supporting the Iraqi security forces in defeating ISIS inside of Iraq. I think the issue of the Kurdish referendum is one that will have to be worked out between President [Massoud] Barzani and Prime Minister [Haider-al] Abadi and the Iraqi people.

**Ballou:** Going back to – the question also becomes, in the earlier things about Russia and Syria and whatnot, that whether or not you have to relocate or strengthen the security even more at the Tanf training base to be prepared for other regime attacks. They keep saying it's defensive strikes only against the regime, but when does this cross the line into war with the Syrian government?

**Dunford:** Yeah, I think it's important to point out that the incident that took place this weekend followed a combined arms movement of pro-regime forces. Subsequent a SU aircraft flew into the area. We made every effort to warn those individuals not to come any closer. And then the commander made a judgment that there was a threat to the forces that we were supporting and took action. The only actions that we have taken against pro-regime forces in Syria – and there have been two specific incidents – have been in self-defense. And we've communicated that clearly.

**Ballou:** Back to Afghanistan. Do you foresee adding the 4,000 troops that – there was a lot of discussion about whether or not there have been additional forces allocated to Afghanistan. Has that decision been made? How many troops are going? When are they going? And how is that going to unfold?

**Dunford:** Sure. Let me see if I can probably answer that question and a few others that haven't been asked about Afghanistan right up front. First of all, no decision has been made with regard to the deployment of additional forces in Afghanistan. One decision that was made by the president was to delegate that decision to Secretary Mattis in terms of forces that would be on the ground. But also – and this is what's important and probably has been under-reported – is that Secretary Mattis' decision about additional forces in Afghanistan will be made in the context of a broader strategy review for South Asia that is ongoing and is expected to report back probably sometime in the middle of July.

So when Secretary Mattis makes a decision about force levels, which he will clearly communicate with the president and the secretary of state. In fact, the guidance – the direction that he's received is to do that in conjunction with the secretary of state. When Secretary Mattis makes that decision about force levels, you can expect that he'll communicate that in a broader context – again, specifically the context of that strategy review. So, it won't be just about Afghanistan. There are number of independent variables that bear on the problem inside of Afghanistan across the region, and we'll be prepared to talk about those as well when we talk about force management levels.

The reason why this number, 4,000, has been raised is there is a request by the commander to thicken the advise-assist effort in Afghanistan. In other words, he's identified areas where he believes additional forces could make the adviser effort in Afghanistan more effective. There is also an outstanding requirement for forces that the commander asked for from NATO last year. That's what you've also heard him talk about publicly. We're short about 3,000 from the stated NATO requirement for forces in Afghanistan. So that's where the numbers come from. But again, what I'd emphasize is that any decision on numbers is going to be done in that broader context.

**Ballou** And speaking of strategy, Senator [John S.] McCain came out swinging this morning – you have to give him credit - he's doing it to both Democratic and Republican presidents and Congress and controlled Congresses – about whether or not there is a strategy for Afghanistan. And he's asking, where is it? When is it going to be delivered? Where is it headed? What's your take on that?

**Dunford:** Well, Secretary Mattis and I had the opportunity to appear before Chairman McCain and the Senate Armed Services Committee last Tuesday. When he raised that question, Secretary Mattis said that, number one, we agree that Afghanistan is not where we want it to be. We have spent the last couple months discussing where it might go in the future. He, as I will today, indicated to Chairman McCain that sometime in the middle of July, we'll have that strategic review complete. We certainly will consult with Chairman McCain and the other members of the Congress as the coming weeks go on and then when the secretary makes a decision about resourcing for the military dimension, realizing that there is broader issues that have to be addressed in the diplomatic and economic areas.

**Ballou:** Which raises the question of the authorization of use of military force again. How much lobbying, if you will, is happening between you and the Congress? Or how is the dialogue unfolding in terms of eventual actual passage of an authorization for the use of military force? And how is that going to be applied?

**Dunford:** Yeah, Jeff, I mean, I haven't lobbied, but I've been asked several times in testimony what my thoughts were on the authorization of use of military force. For those of you who don't know, we're relying now on the 2001 authorization of use of military force that was after 9/11. It was modified in 2002.

What I have said is that we have all of the legal authority that we need right now to prosecute al-Qaida, ISIS, other affiliated groups. But my recommendation to the Congress was that they pass an authorization of use of military force. I thought one of the more important things is that our men and women that are in harm's way would see a clear and unmistakable support from the American people through their Congress. That's what I believe right now would be very positive if Congress would pass an authorization of use of military force.

Again, I haven't lobbied for that effort. I'm precluded in law from lobbying. But when I'm asked in testimony, as I have been now several times, I'm certainly able to answer that question. What I have focused on is the message that we'd be sending to those people who are actually making the sacrifice that what message would be sent if Congress would authorize of use of military force. It would reinforce I think the message.

**Ballou:** So what do you say to an American voter who's deciding whether or not they're going to voice an opinion to their member of Congress about – who might be skeptical that thousands of

more U.S. troops could be deployed and a slightly tweaked strategy might break the stalemate in Afghanistan or other parts of the region? After billions of dollars that have been spent and everything that's been done, is there a sort of a fatigue that's out there? How are you going to convince the American people that this is going to be a necessary thing if you decide to deploy thousands of troops to the region for Afghanistan and if you have to escalate your involvement in Syria?

**Dunford:** Yeah, I think it's important that the conversation about Afghanistan take place in the context of our vital national interests in South Asia and South Asia as a whole. There are two very simply that I would talk about in public.

One is the remaining threat from terrorist organizations in South Asia who have expressed a desire to have another 9/11 in the United States and conduct attacks. There's about 17 different groups of the 20 that we've globally identified as terrorist organizations – 17 of them operate in the South Asia area. Continuing to put pressure on those groups I believe is critical and vital to our national interests. I would also argue that the pressure that those groups have been under for the last 15 years has been what has prevented another 9/11. The other interest that we have in the region is preventing a regional conflict in South Asia.

So again, when the strategy comes in, it's less about what's happened over the past 16 years than it is about what are our national interests today in South Asia, what is the context within which we are pursuing our national interests in South Asia in which the diplomatic, economic and military campaign plan is necessary for us to protect and advance our national interest in South Asia. I don't believe it's useful to have a conversation about where we've been, how much money we've spent or how long we have been in Afghanistan. What's most important is articulating to the American people their interests in that region, why does it matter here in the United States – we owe them that, we should be able to articulate that when we roll out the strategy – and what is it that we're doing, again, not just militarily but diplomatically and economically, to advance our interests. That's the conversation we'll be prepared to have.

**Ballou:** So what's the endgame in Afghanistan and in Syria? And what's your prediction for new costs in U.S. lives, if that were to happen?

**Dunford:** Yeah. What I would say is from a military dimension, to be clear about what is it we're trying to do, we're trying to support our partners on the ground and driving the level of violence down to where local security forces can actually deal with security challenges with a minimal amount of international support. We're trying to do that from West Africa to Southeast Asia because what we're dealing with is a transregional threat. One of the manifestations of that transregional threat is in Afghanistan. But again, it extends from West Africa to Southeast Asia. And in all cases, that's the broad design of our strategy is to support local forces in actually addressing those security challenges. Some need more support than others, but the methodology is consistent across that transregional threat.

**Ballou:** To what degree does that involve pressuring Pakistan?

**Dunford:** Well, I think Pakistan is a key to Afghanistan and its security. And ensuring that Haqqani does not have sanctuary in South Asia, making sure the Taliban don't have sanctuary in South Asia, making sure there's a secure border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is critical, making sure there is effective political and military relationships between Pakistan and Afghanistan, that's one of the interdependent variables that's going to allow us to be successful.

**Ballou:** Let's talk about – going back to Syria, can you talk about the role that Iran is playing in Syria? Is it increasing? Particularly through Hezbollah.

**Dunford:** Yeah. I mean, Iran is playing an unhelpful role in Syria and elsewhere in the Middle East. Some of you may have heard me describe it this way before: I think their major export is malign influence across the Middle East. And so again, Iran, unlike the United States and the coalition, is not focused on ISIS inside of Syria. Iran is focused on propping up the regime that committed atrocities in a civil war. From my perspective, addressing the grievances of the civil war in Syria is going to be necessary for us to have peace and stability and no longer have a sanctuary for violent extremism.

**Ballou:** Staying in the region: Are you concerned about any long-term implications of the current Gulf crisis on regional security? And has the crisis affected U.S. military operations in the region? I think you said something last week on Capitol Hill that your operations are relatively unaffected, but with Turkey sending troops in and the army – U.S. Army – bringing troops around Qatar, what's happening in terms of operations with CENTCOM right there in the middle of the country that's at the center of this?

**Dunford:** Sure, I mean, and I think most people know, but the reason why we watch Qatar – among the many reasons we watch Qatar so closely is that's where our combined air operations center is located. That's where the preponderance of aircraft has support, our current campaign against ISIS is located. So it's pretty significant. That's also the location of the forward command post for the United States Central Command.

What I would tell you is, has there been friction associated with what's ongoing, the political challenges between the GCC and Qatar? Absolutely. But what I said last week remains true in that we have continued to be able to operate, even through that friction.

**Ballou:** And what – are you playing any sort of diplomatic role in trying to resolve the issues, working in concert with Secretary [of State Rex W.] Tillerson and so forth?

**Dunford:** Yeah, we obviously worked the military-to-military lane, and we're continuing to do that and supporting Secretary Tillerson. But I think, Jeff, you answered the question well. This is primarily Secretary Tillerson's lane right now to resolve this issue between the GCC and Qatar and come up with a negotiated solution to the challenge that addresses the issue.

#### **Article from *Joint Force Quarterly* (National Defense University Press)**

##### **3rd Quarter 2016, Issue 86**

##### **“Maintaining a Boxer's Stance”**

Any coach will tell you that the first step in training a fighter is developing a “boxer's stance,” the foundational posture from which all offensive and defensive movements flow. A good boxer's stance conserves energy while keeping the fighter balanced, protected, and ready to throw quick, powerful punches. Between fights or between rounds, any assessment of a fighter's performance must begin with the stance. While the Joint Force remains the most capable military in the world today, adversary investments, a decade and a half of continuous combat operations, and years of budgetary instability have eroded our competitive advantage and reduced our ability to project power where and when needed. As a nation that thinks and acts globally, the United States does not have the luxury of choosing between a force that can fight nonstate actors, such



as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and al Qaeda, and one that can deter and defeat adversaries possessing a full array of military capabilities.

We also cannot afford to choose between meeting today's operational requirements and making the investments necessary for tomorrow. Because we do not know when, where, or under what conditions the next fight will occur, the U.S. military must maintain a boxer's stance—with the strength, agility, and resilience required to fight and win against any potential adversary. Maintaining this stance requires us to develop and advance the capabilities, posture, operating concepts, and human capital necessary to assure our allies and partners, deter adversaries, compete on a day-to-day basis, and, when necessary, respond across the spectrum of conflict.

The first element of an effective boxer's stance requires us to develop and maintain a balanced inventory of joint capabilities and capacities. As a result of sustained high operational tempo and an unpredictable fiscal environment over the last several years, we now face readiness shortfalls and a bow wave of modernization requirements across the Services. This challenge is particularly acute within the nuclear enterprise, which is why we are actively recapitalizing platforms in each leg of the nuclear triad to ensure that our deterrent remains safe, secure, reliable, and effective continued investments in space and cyberspace capabilities allow us to deny adversary objectives, impose costs on those who conduct attacks, and ensure resiliency across all domains. We are also investing in power projection capabilities that allow us to deliver the right force at the right time. These capabilities are essential to overcoming an increasingly lethal array of integrated air defense systems, ballistic and cruise missiles, unmanned aerial and subsurface vehicles, and advanced aircraft, all of which are enabled by adversary electronic warfare capabilities. Other shortfalls and modernization requirements can be found across the Joint Force and getting the right balance of capabilities remains one of our most pressing non-operational challenges.

Second, an agile and resilient stance requires us to prioritize and allocate resources geographically to effectively manage the risks posed by our five priority strategic challenges: Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and violent extremism, which includes organizations such as ISIS and al Qaeda. Setting the globe correctly not only balances risk, but it also assures our allies and partners, optimizes our ability to respond to crisis, and improves our resilience across domains and warfighting functions.

The third element underpinning our boxer's stance is the family of joint concepts that propose new approaches to address compelling operational challenges. Informed by national strategy, joint concepts articulate a vision for deploying, employing, and sustaining the force in the years ahead—in short, they guide how we will fight on tomorrow's battlefields. By offering educated judgments about future military challenges, joint concepts play a significant role in defining future requirements and addressing gaps in our existing approaches and capabilities. As such, they guide our priorities for capability development and innovation.

Two interdependent activities, exercises and experimentation, help to bring joint concepts to life. Throughout history, military exercises have served to reduce uncertainty, increase readiness, and refine and test new concepts. Recognizing the complexity of today's strategic landscape, we are reenergizing and reorienting the joint exercise program to develop a shared understanding about the array of threats we face, collectively assess our preparedness to respond to contingencies, and uncover vulnerabilities in our operational plans and concepts. We are complementing and reinforcing this effort through joint experimentation. Experimentation done in concert with exercises, wargames, or simulations can yield significant military capabilities, as demonstrated by the U.S. Navy's experimentation with aircraft carriers in the 1920s and U.S.

Army air-mobile exercises leading up to Vietnam. This kind of innovation— in both our concepts and our material capabilities—is what will allow us to identify and leverage fundamentally new ways to counter tomorrow’s threats.

Finally, we understand that human capital is the ultimate hedge against future uncertainty and that the men and women of the Joint Force are the foundation upon which our boxer’s stance is built. While war will always be chaotic and violent, its character is changing rapidly. Consequently, we must invest in adaptive, innovative, and critically thinking leaders who can thrive at the speed of war in the 21st century; it is no longer enough for leaders to simply be experts in a particular functional area. Given the complexities of today’s fights, leaders must also be wise enough to recognize when short-term tactical and operational gains may be at odds with long-term strategic imperatives. Accordingly, we are refocusing on how to best select, train, and educate the Service members who will lead tomorrow’s Joint Force.

By the time this article goes to print, many of you will have seen the Service chiefs, combatant commanders, and I offer our annual testimony before Congress. While senior leaders help guide the force, it is up to every Soldier, Marine, Sailor, Airman, and Coastguardsman to think through the challenges of tomorrow. The Joint Force’s true competitive advantage comes from the quality of men and women we have in the force today. Maintaining our advantage and ensuring that we never send Americans into a fair fight is our shared obligation. Consequently, your ideas matter, and I am counting on you to contribute to this dialogue.

**Excerpts from Remarks at the Aspen Security Forum Tank Talk with Andrea Mitchell,  
Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent, NBC News  
Aspen, Colorado  
July 22**

**Mitchell:** Can the U.S. envision a future where the Taliban rules in certain parts of Afghanistan?

**Dunford:** You know, Andrea, the political solution in Afghanistan has to be an Afghan-led solution for it to be successful. How the Taliban are accommodated politically in Afghanistan is in my view an Afghan decision to make.

**Mitchell:** Fair enough. Has the president given his commanders a timeframe for an exit strategy? Does he, when you talk about Afghanistan, talk about whether he hopes the war could end in his first term or the amount of years --

**Dunford:** I think there's a lot of lessons learned I think from our experience over the last decade and a half and I think one of the things is that when you put artificial timelines on things they seldom obtain. And so the major conversation we have now are: what are the conditions under which we can transition our mission? Here's what I would tell you. Any place that we have national interests or vital national interests, we're going to have an enduring diplomatic and enduring economic and enduring military presence. What's going to change over time is the form of that diplomatic, economic and military presence.

So certainly the president wants to know what are the conditions where you start to change the form of your military presence. But I think we've all argued very strongly that putting artificial timelines on it is not good. If you talk in Afghanistan, it's not good for the confidence of the Afghan people. It actually causes hedging behavior in the region as well. It actually undermines our cooperation with Pakistan. If they don't believe that we're going to be there long

enough to establish stability and security inside of Afghanistan, then their behavior and their level of cooperation is going to be affected by that hedging.

**Excerpts from Remarks at a Press Conference with General Brooks in South Korea**  
**Seoul, Republic of Korea**  
**August 24**

**Dunford:** Yeah, thanks. Hey, ladies and gentlemen. Good to see you. Good to see you again, in some cases, and good to be here with my friend, General [Vincent K.] Brooks. We just spent a day with our Korean partners. I'm en route to China and stopped here first, obviously, to see our friends and our allies, the South Koreans. In some cases, to say goodbye to a good friend, General Lee Sun-jin, who is my counterpart, has been my counterpart for two years. Been a great friend. He's finishing up in two days. So I had a chance to spend some time with him, and also to meet some of the new leadership.

My primary message today, obviously, was the strength of our commitment, the ironclad commitment that we have to the alliance. I shared some thoughts about the common challenges that we're dealing with right now, obviously. I'll wait for your questions on North Korea. We spoke about that. Then in the interests of transparency, I wanted to make sure they understood the purpose of my trip to China and the messages that we would be delivering when we met with the Chinese counterparts. So there's a lot of you. So with that, we'll open it up to questions. And thanks for being here.

**Q:** Hello, General. I'm a reporter with the *Korea Herald*. And my question is that if there is a clear sign of North Korea firing off a missile towards Guam, will the United States carry out a preemptive strike on the North? And how would you react if North Korea did fire the missile? Is there any possibility that the United States will take military action in response, such as taking out the sites where the missile was fired?

**Dunford:** Yeah, I think what's important is not to confuse military action with policy. What we would do in the wake of an attack on Guam or missiles being launched towards Guam is going to be a decision, at the end of the day, that's going to be made by the president of the United States. He's going to make that in the context of our alliance. Our job – General Brooks and I – our job is to make sure that our leadership has options available to them to properly respond. I can tell you, there's two things that we're clear about. One, our responsibility to defend against an attack. And, two, our requirement to make sure that we have a decisive response in the event of an attack.

**Q:** Thank you, Generals, for doing this. Today there was an op-ed by Secretary [James N.] Mattis and Secretary [Rex W.] Tillerson. They mentioned that South Korea's new government is moving forward with the deployment of THAAD against the threat. And they commended South Korea's decision to deploy this purely defensive capability. Can you talk a little bit about your discussion with President Moon [Jae-in]? Did you talk about deploying those final four launchers? Are they – have they committed to do that? And to you, General Brooks, how long would it take to get those four launchers up and running once you've been given the green light?

**Dunford:** Yeah, Carla [Babb, Voice of America], we did not speak today about the specifics. General Brooks has been engaged with our Korean friends for weeks about the details of the

additional systems. As you know, that was an alliance decision, to put THAAD into South Korea. There's a number of technical issues that have to be addressed before it's fully deployed. We're working through those right now, but we didn't talk about the specific timeline. Maybe General Brooks has something else to add, but I think that's generally where we are.

**Brooks:** Yeah, Carla, what I would add to that is this has been a process we've followed with the South Korean government the whole time. This was an alliance decision and it's an alliance replacement for the U.S. Marine system. The South Koreans make it possible for us to in-place the system. We've moved at a good clip with them, at a good pace with them the whole way, and will continue to do so. It won't take us long to get ready. This is a mobile system. Once we're in place, it won't take long for us to be up and integrated. Remember we already have defenses in place. So we're adding four additional launchers to those that are already in place. There are two that are already in place.

**Q:** What are your thoughts about a possible military option in North Korea and if the U.S. decides to take a military action, will Seoul be notified prior to that action?

**Dunford:** Well, first of all, somebody referenced – and if you haven't seen it, I would recommend you get it – the article that Secretary Mattis and Secretary Tillerson wrote today, I believe it was in *The Wall Street Journal*. That article clearly outlines U.S. policy right now, which is a diplomatic and economic pressurization campaign to address the possession of nuclear weapons in North Korea. That's our primary focus. So from a military perspective, even the military dimension today is directly in support of that diplomatic and economic effort. We are seeking a peaceful resolution to the crisis right now. That's an important message.

I wouldn't speculate on what military actions might be taken under what conditions. Again, that'll be at the end of the day a political decision. But I can tell you that all the decisions that we make and all the discussions that we have are in the context of our alliance.

## **Excerpt of Remarks at a Press Conference with Chinese President Xi Jinping**

**Beijing, China**

**August 24**

**President Xi Jinping:** General Dunford, I'm very glad to meet you here, welcome you to visit China. You are the first senior U.S. military general to visit China since President Trump came into office. I know that in spite of the short period of your visit, the visitor program is quite comprehensive. I know that you have already had meeting with General Fang Fenghui, chief of the Joint Staff department of the CMC, and General Fan Changlong, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission, and also Mr. Yang Jiechi, state councilor. And you can talk with on a wide range of issues. You also visited northeastern China and visited our troops. This reflects that our military-to-military relations has made a substantial step forward.

When I exchanged views with President Trump on international relations, we both agreed that our military-to-military relations constitutes an important component of our state-to-state relations. Therefore, promoting the constructive relations between our two militaries is very important for us to deepen the relations between the two countries. Therefore, both President Trump and me attach great importance to the development of our mil-to-mil relations and committed ourselves to further promoting the bilateral cooperation. I think the exchanged views between you and the Chinese side has deepened understanding between the two sides. And I'm

also very glad to see that during the visit the two sides signed the framework document for the Joint Staff Dialogue mechanism. I would like to express my congratulations to you.

**Dunford:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. It's a tremendous honor that you would take the time to receive me here today. Since the time we arrived on Tuesday evening – or, Monday evening, my delegation has been treated with tremendous hospitality and respect. As you indicated, I think we had a very productive dialogue with General Fang. And we were able to sign the Joint Staff Dialogue Mechanism, which will help move us forward on military-to-military relations. We both know that you and President Trump are committed to our improvement in military-to-military relations. And we have approached with great commitment, candor. And we certainly want to deliver results. In addition to the meetings that we conducted, I truly did enjoy the opportunity to visit with your soldiers in the Northern Command.

### **Excerpts from Interview with Media at the Conclusion of China Trip**

#### **China**

**August 24**

**Staff:** General Dunford's had a busy schedule and his busy schedule continues today. So, General, if you'd like you can start with an opening statement.

**Dunford:** Sure. Yeah, I won't take too much time. I know you want to get to your questions. I'm finishing up three days here in China now. The first day was a series of meetings led by General Fang Fenghui and I. This was a follow up to what's called the Diplomatic and Security Dialogue that was established in Washington, D.C. back in May. So General Fang Fenghui and I participated in that dialogue. During that dialogue, he invited me to come to Beijing to follow up on that dialogue.

So that's what I did this week. That was the first day. The second day I went up to Shenyang to visit the Northern Command. Had an opportunity to watch some of the soldiers do a combined arms exercise, and then had a chance to exchange some ideas with General Song [Puxuan] of the Northern Command as well as have lunch with some of the troops, which was a good day overall. And then continuing today with some senior-level engagements with the Chinese.

The primary purpose of my visit really is just to continue to develop military-to-military relationships. The first and primary reason for those military-to-military relationships is to mitigate the risk of miscalculation and manage issues where we have some friction, but also to look for opportunities where we can cooperate and reduce some of that friction. So that's really what the last three days have been about.

I guess what I'll do up front is say what was the deliverable. When we spoke back in May, we discussed the possibility of establishing what we're calling the Joint Staff Dialogue Mechanism, which is really at the senior level of the Joint Staff back in Washington, D.C., and the Joint Staff here in China, in an exchange – a routine exchange, so that we can get more in detail on some of these issues that involve the military-to-military relationship. Over the last two months, we worked on some terms of reference for that kind of joint staff military dialogue. And on Tuesday – you guys have to help me out, whatever the day was before yesterday – whatever the day was before yesterday –

**Q:** Tuesday.

**Dunford:** Tuesday? See? We signed that agreement. And the first Joint Staff Military Dialogue will be held at the three-star level in Washington, D.C. this November. Again, that's just a

formal now military-to-military mechanism within which we'll handle a wide range of issues. So we were pleased to sign that this week. I would say that's probably the biggest deliverable other than continuing to advance a common understanding of a wide range of issues, some of which we agree with each other, and some of which there's a degree of friction. So, with that, I'd be happy to take your questions.

**Staff:** So what I'd like to do is for those of you who are here, based here, can you just – when you ask a question, let the general know who you are. But we'll go ahead and start with Gordon [Lubold, *Wall Street Journal*] since the general knows who he is.

**Q:** Chairman, off – a question off-topic. As you know, the four chiefs have come out and denounced racism and intolerance. Can you – I shudder to think I'm asking the question – but can you unambiguously denounce racial intolerance as the others have?

**Dunford:** Hey, look, Gordon, I have. I've been traveling. So I've been following just in bits and pieces what happened in Charlottesville. First of all, I'm very saddened by the events in Charlottesville. And saddened particularly by the loss of life of that young lady who, as I understand it, was hit by a vehicle. But I can absolutely – I've seen the chiefs' tweets. I can absolutely and unambiguously tell you that there's no place – no place for racism and bigotry in the U.S. military or in the United States as a whole. I think the chiefs' statements were important. They were speaking directly to the force and to the American people. To the force, to make it clear that that kind of racism and bigotry is not going to stand inside the force. And to the American people, to remind them of the values for which we stand in the U.S. military, which reflective of what I believe to be the values of the United States.

**Q:** Just one quick follow up is, were you aware that they were going to come out and do that before they did?

**Dunford:** I wasn't, Gordon, nor do I expect to be. I mean, I've been on the road really with very limited communications this week. I think you all have been tracking my schedule. I almost haven't had two minutes between first thing in the morning until late in the evening. So I've fallen far behind on email and phone calls. But in the normal course of events, I wouldn't expect them to – looks to me like each one of them individually felt compelled to communicate on the topic. And I wouldn't have expected them to come to me. You know, quite frankly, I'm late in responding perhaps, but only because I've been in Beijing and not really decisively following the developments over the weekend

## **Remarks at Pentagon September 11th Remembrance Ceremony Pentagon, Virginia September 11**

Mr. President, Mrs. [Melania] Trump, Secretary [of Defense James N.] Mattis, members of the Cabinet, distinguished guests and, most importantly, to the family and friends of the fallen and to those gathered here who survived the attack on the Pentagon, good morning. It's an honor to join you as we pause to reflect all those who lost their lives on September 11th, 2001. At this ceremony, we're particularly mindful of the 184 who died here in the halls of the Pentagon and aboard Flight 77.

Sixteen years ago, when terrorists attacked the Pentagon, the World Trade Center, and as they attempted other attacks in Washington, DC, they did so with a sense of purpose. They were attacking symbols that reflect our way of life and our values. The terrorists believed that these attacks would shake our commitment to those values. As President Bush said hours after the attacks, the terrorists thought they could frighten us into chaos and retreat. But, they were wrong. Instead of retreat, the tragedy of 9/11 produced in us an unyielding resolve. Instead of hopelessness, our mourning turned into action. We have strengthened our commitment to the idea that the freedom of many should never be endangered by the hatred of a few.

So this morning, as we recall the events of 9/11, it's appropriate for those of us still serving to remember and honor those who died, those who continue suffering from injuries, and those left behind. But, if we truly want to honor those remembered today, each of us will walk away from this ceremony with a renewed sense of commitment to our values and the cause of freedom. Each of us will walk away from this simple ceremony reminded that the war is not over, and that further sacrifice will be required. And, each of us will walk away with resolve to strengthen our personal commitment to protect our family, friends, and fellow citizens from another 9/11.

It's now my privilege to introduce someone who has spent his life demonstrating personal commitment to protecting our values and our way of life, our secretary of defense, the honorable James Mattis.

**Statement at Canadian Embassy Reception to Honor the U.S.-Canada Partnership in Defense  
Washington, District of Columbia  
September 13**

**Dunford:** Thanks, gentlemen. Let me first add to General [Jonathan H.] Vance's comments about his Excellency. Governor General, sir, you're finishing up seven years, multiple trips to the United States. That small college that you refer to not by name, Harvard University, where he was a star hockey player. Sir, I just would tell you, you got a lot of friends here that admire you tonight. Thanks for all you've done to advance our relationship.

Mr. Ambassador, Mrs. [Kerry] Vance, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to join you here tonight. You know, after the listening to the ambassador and the governor general and General Vance, I'm reminded of something that my friend, General Vance, and I heard a few months ago at a NATO meeting. We go to these NATO meeting and they last a long time. There's now 29 members in NATO. At each meeting everyone feels obligated to say something. And, Jon, you'll remember this, when one of our counterparts stood up, late into the day, and said: Ladies and gentlemen, everything that needs to be said has been said, but not everybody has said it.

I feel a bit like that when we talk about the relationship between the United States and Canada. I certainly couldn't say it any more eloquently than my good friend, Jon Vance, the governor general, and the ambassador. But I would just say this: 18 months ago, we did an internal defense review. We developed a new strategy. We had all the senior military leadership in town, all of our four-stars. One of the questions we asked, we said: Hey, what is it that makes the United States of America unique? What is it that allows the United States military to actually protect our America, our homeland, and our way of life?

It may not surprise you to find out that what we concluded as a group was that it was a network of allies and partners that we had built since World War II. So it's not a matter of convenience, it's essential. But, Jon, as you said, we have no more close ally than we have in Canada. No place else, by the way, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, there are Canadians protecting Americans. There is no other ally that I can say that about. In fact, when I saw the three planes flying over the capital a few minutes ago and I didn't know what they were, I said: Thank God we have NORAD, so they'll figure that out.

But let me just close by saying that in addition to just recognizing our close partnership tonight, I appreciate very much that you're taking the time to recognize Colonel [Jeffery] Stewart and Major [Jessica] Harmon, two individuals that actually epitomize the close relationship that we have. So thanks very much for doing that. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for being here. And your Excellency, once again, thanks for all you have done to advance our relationship.

**Article from *Joint Force Quarterly* (National Defense University Press)**

**4th Quarter 2017, Issue 87**

**"Allies and Partners Are Our Strategic Center of Gravity"**

This August, I was in the Pacific to consult with our South Korean and Japanese allies about the threat from North Korea. In September, I was in Europe for the 178th North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Military Committee in Chiefs of Defense Session. In these meetings, as in all my interactions with senior political and military leaders around the world over the last 2 years, one thing was abundantly clear: The United States is widely considered to be an indispensable nation, critical to the maintenance of the international order that has brought us and our allies relative peace and extraordinary economic prosperity since World War II.

While U.S. global leadership is the product of much more than our military capabilities, the competitive military advantage we possess is vital to our national power and the role we play on the world stage. A primary enabler of that competitive advantage is our worldwide network of allies and partners that has developed since World War II. That is why the National Military Strategy, published last year, identifies the network of U.S. alliances and partnerships as our strategic center of gravity.

That is not just a diplomatic platitude—it's doctrinally sound. According to Joint Publication 5-0, Joint Planning, the center of gravity is the source of power that provides moral or physical strength, freedom of action, or will to act. At the strategic level, our network of alliances and partnerships does just this. At the operational level, our center of gravity is the ability to project power when and where necessary to advance national interests; that power projection is enabled by allies and partners. Both strategically and operationally, then, allies and partners underpin the Joint Force's ability to execute the National Military Strategy.

Allies are nations with whom we have formal defense agreements for broad, long-term objectives. These can be bilateral—as with Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines—or multilateral, like those that include Australia, New Zealand, and Thailand in the Pacific, and our 28 Allies in NATO. Partnerships are structured around narrower objectives and may be less enduring, but they are no less vital. In every case, these relationships are based on common interests and common purpose.



At the strategic level, alliances and partnerships serve to enhance legitimacy, improve deterrent capability, and expand our access. Coalitions enhance our legitimacy by demonstrating unity of purpose in the international community. We attract allies and partners when we use our military power to defend a rules-based international order; the coalitions themselves then stand as evidence that our objectives are greater than our narrow self-interest. This unity of purpose also increases our deterrent capacity by demonstrating to potential adversaries that any aggression will be countered not only by the United States, but also by a coalition. And allies and partners expand our reach by providing access to air and sea ports, guaranteeing transit rights and allowing the forward positioning of both manpower and materiel.

Operationally, this access allows the Joint Force to rapidly and flexibly project power across the globe, effectively cheating time and space. In a fight-tonight world of transregional, multifunctional, and all-domain threats, this advantage cannot be overstated. Because our allies and partners live where we do not, they can deepen our intelligence, increase situational awareness, and provide the cultural acuity we lack. Standing alliances like NATO also provide ready-made command and control structures that expedite the formation of broader coalitions and enable enduring mission support. And, critically, coalition members increase available combat power: whether they contribute maneuver units or niche-enabling capabilities, allies and partners share the burden and make us more effective.

These benefits are not hypothetical—they are key to how we have operated for the last 70 years and how we are operating around the globe, across the range of military operations today. After the attacks on the Nation on September 11, 2001, NATO invoked the collective defense provision in Article 5 for the first time and, in its first operation outside of Europe, immediately brought the strength of the Alliance to bear against al Qaeda. Sixteen years later, NATO is still leading Operation Resolute Support in Afghanistan, where 39 nations are contributing more than 13,000 troops.

Today, we are taking the same partnered approach to defeating the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria: we rapidly assembled a coalition that now stands at 69 nations, 28 of whom are contributing troops in Iraq and Syria. Progress there has been substantial and sustainable, even with a modest U.S. footprint. Bilateral relationships are equally key to other challenges around the globe; at the high-intensity end of the spectrum, our planning for military options on the Korean Peninsula would be vastly more difficult without the contributions of our Japanese and South Korean allies. And it is the strength of those alliances that have deterred conflict thus far, contributing to decades of stability and prosperity in the Pacific.

As effective as our network is, we should always strive to make it better. The changing character of war in the 21st century demands a networked response from like-minded allies and partners across the globe, from intelligence-sharing through planning and execution.

A fundamental step in expanding and empowering the network is improving information and intelligence-sharing. This is true across the range of military operations, but especially in the fight against violent extremist organizations; it takes a network to defeat a network. Within this network, we need to cultivate a bias for sharing. Shared intelligence leads to shared awareness that informs plans. If we want our allies to fight with us, we should invite them to plan with us from the start. That requires transparency at all levels, in every phase of operations.

In the execution phase, interoperability is the key to coalition operations. We must continue to pursue technological interoperability with our allies at all levels, from the strategic to the tactical. Just as important, we need to enhance the human dimension of interoperability through combined exercises that test shared doctrine and refine operating concepts so we can fight

seamlessly with our allies. Above all, Joint Force leaders at all levels must ensure that our military-to-military engagements are nested with globally integrated strategies and campaign plans that protect and strengthen our strategic and operational centers of gravity.

Since World War II, the U.S. military has maintained a competitive advantage thanks in large part to our network of allies and partners. Today, we fight side-by-side with our allies and partners in the Middle East, and we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with allies in Europe and the Pacific. Given the nature of the threats we face today and the challenges we are likely to face in the future, I cannot imagine a scenario in which the United States would not be standing alongside allies and partners across the globe.

**Statement to the Senate Armed Forces Committee  
Washington, District of Columbia  
October 3**

Chairman [Senator John S.] McCain, Ranking Member [Senator Jack] Reed, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to join Secretary [James N.] Mattis in providing an update on the South Asia strategy.

In recent months, our commander in Afghanistan, General [John W.] Nicholson, has described the current condition in the country as a stalemate. Secretary Mattis has testified that we are not winning, and members of this committee have made similar statements.

The situation has developed since the NATO mission in Afghanistan transitioned to an advisory effort. Since January 2015, we have advised and accompanied Afghan special operations units at the tactical level, but our advisory effort for conventional forces has generally been limited to the Afghan corps and institutional level. We also reduced the aviation, artillery and intelligence support provided to the Afghan forces.

This construct did not provide Afghan conventional forces with the support they needed to succeed in combat operations. My military assessment is that we drew down our advisory effort and combat support for the Afghan forces too far and too fast. As a result, the Taliban expanded territorial and population control and inflicted significant casualties on the Afghan army and police, while the campaign lost momentum.

Last spring, Secretary Mattis directed the department to conduct a detailed failure analysis to identify the root causes for the lack of progress in Afghanistan. And he directed we provide targeted solutions. Informed by these findings, our commanders developed, and Secretary Mattis approved, a new operational approach to break the stalemate and bolster Afghan capabilities.

The new approach supports the president's broader strategy by expanding our advisory efforts to the tactical level, increasing the combat support we provide through our Afghan partners and enhancing authorities to our commanders.

We believe these adjustments will improve the ability of the Afghans to conduct offensive operations, defend critical terrain and reduce Afghan casualties. The emphasis is on providing effective support to the over 300,000 Afghans we have trained and equipped, so they can secure their own country.

Going forward, we will support President [Ashraf] Ghani's efforts to reorganize the Afghan forces, which will expand special operations units, while reducing less effective units. We'll also

continue our efforts to develop a capable and sustainable Afghan air force. And finally, we'll enhance and expand our own counterterrorism operations in the region.

By next spring, this approach will have our most senior, capable and operationally experienced leaders advising at the decisive point in Afghan operations. Their efforts will be fully enabled by the support and authorities needed for the Afghans to take the fight to the enemy. As we implement the strategy, we're also tackling corruption, the single greatest roadblock to progress.

Our military objectives for this new strategy are clear and they are achievable: Defeat ISIS and Al Qaida in Afghanistan and ensure other terrorist groups are unable to launch attacks against the homeland, U.S. citizens or our allies; further develop Afghan forces that are capable of managing residual violence with limited international support; support President [Ashraf] Ghani's effort to secure key population and economic centers; and provide an enduring counterterrorism partnership with Afghanistan to protect our shared interests in South Asia.

As Secretary [of State Rex W.] Tillerson has recently outlined, this entire effort is intended to put pressure on the Taliban and have them understand they will not win a battlefield victory, so they will enter an Afghan- led peace process to end the conflict.

Thanks again, Chairman, for the opportunity to join you today, and I look forward to your questions.

## **Remarks at the Chiefs of Defense Conference**

Fort Belvoir, Virginia

October 24

**Dunford:** It's helpful to begin this morning with just a brief review of what we concluded last year. Last year, we had a series of presentations and regional discussions. And the leaders present determined that a common approach, something that we called the military network, was necessary to defeat violent extremism. We also recognized that military efforts to counter violent extremism had to support the whole-of-government actions that address the underlying cause of terrorism. Later today, we'll have a discussion with Special Envoy [Brett H.] McGurk about the whole-of-government from a U.S. and coalition perspective of the Middle East that I think will inform throughout the conversation that we have this afternoon.

In the end last year, we had 18 conclusions. I won't cover all of those conclusions; instead, I think I'll begin with just a few of the highlights and you'll see those on slide two.

The first one is that we agreed on a long-term approach to countering transregional violent extremist organizations. The group understood that we face an enduring threat. We need an approach that's both effective and we talked about sustainable last year. We talked about sustainability from a military perspective, from a political perspective, as well as a fiscal perspective being the case in all of our countries.

The reason why, just some background of the conversation that took place when we made that first conclusion, was we recognized that the underlying governance issues, social issues and economic issues that feed terrorism will take many years – some people call this a generational fight – will take many years to address. So our military campaign has to be informed by that fact. This is going to have to be an enduring military campaign in support of whole-of-government approaches that will take, largely, a generation to address.

The conclusions also highlighted the importance of information sharing. When the violent extremists move fighters, financing and ideas at the speed of the internet, then the military network needs to be equally fast.

The group identified the need for local, regional and global efforts. The terrorists, of course, exploit local conditions to recruit, to train and to launch attacks, but they also possess the means to direct support and inspire violence globally. So while local efforts have to be supported by this global military network, equally, our transregional approach has to be informed by local efforts. Again, that's much of the reason why we've come together in this venue is to have a conversation about our global network, but also how that global network has to be informed by the unique perspectives sitting around this table. Each of us is dealing with this problem in one way or another.

The group also concluded that we had to maintain simultaneous pressure on violent extremist organizations wherever they emerged. We can't wait until the terrorists establish territory, as they did in Iraq and Syria. I think this includes and is particularly relevant as we meet here.

Again, as I mentioned last night, we didn't select this date on the calendar knowing that it would be at a point in the wake of Mosul and Raqqa where the physical caliphate in Syria and Iraq was no longer a credible message. But this actually presents us with an opportunity to think about what's next and what's next from a transregional perspective.

Finally, the group identified the need for a broad vision to address violent extremist organizations beyond Raqqa and Mosul. In some ways, I think it's been easier to focus politically on something like a campaign in Iraq and Syria and more difficult as we transition to the next phase of the campaign to maintain that same level of focus and pressure on the enemy. I think as the character of the threat changes – and I believe that's the point we're at right now, I call it an inflection point – the character of the threat is changing, we need to think about how we will adapt our approach as a collective body.

I think it's fair to say, as I look at those 2016 summary of conclusions, that we have made progress on many of those. I look forward to today being a catalyst for building momentum in the year ahead.

So as we go through today's discussion, I hope that we will have an opportunity for you to provide your lessons learned and your unique insight. When I looked around the room last night at the experience, the combat experience and the leadership experience in the room, it was clear to me that bringing these 75 countries together offers us a unique opportunity to truly understand in much more detail the challenges we face and the various perspectives that we offer in helping us to deal with it.

The other thing I want to do as we begin our time together is share a few thoughts on the enemy that we're facing.

When we developed our counter-violent extremist campaign in the United States, we made a number of assumptions; I've selected just a few. The reason why I put these assumptions up front is, any campaign to remain viable you have to continue to go back and review your assumptions, validate your assumptions and adjust as required. I put these out here today for discussion. You all have a copy of these in your binders as well. I hope if there are any assumptions here that you would disagree with or you would qualify, that may also help us to have a conversation later today.

First, we assumed that violent extremist organizations had to be addressed in the context of other security challenges we face. I mentioned last night in my opening comments that I

recognize that you have many other challenges besides violent extremism back at home. That's the case for the United States as well. So as we address violent extremism, we certainly do so in the context of the other security challenges, the other very real security challenges that we face.

We also assumed that violent extremist organizations are a long-term, transregional threat – that, of, course, being the theme of today's conference. Some have called this – and the word I used earlier was a “generational” fight. Whether it's generational or not, we know it's an enduring fight. We know it's going to be decades before we resolve the underlying conditions of this challenge. Again, that informs our planning.

We also identified the key enablers that allow violent extremist organizations to grow and to spread. We view foreign fighters' financing and the resources available for violent extremist organizations and their narrative or the message, what we call the three enablers that allow these groups to actually achieve transregional effects.

It is essential that we cut what I describe as the connective tissue. So if you think of these foreign fighters financing the narrative as the three enablers that allow groups to operate in West Africa, the Western Hemisphere, Europe, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, these three enablers connecting these groups, it's critical from a strategic perspective that we cut that connective tissue. The strategic framework that we have developed in our violent extremism campaign is designed to just do that, it's designed to cut the connective tissue between these various regional groups. Then, with support of local partners on the ground, dealing with those challenges that exist from a regional or a global perspective.

Because we know we're fighting a long-term fight and because we understand that violent extremist organizations are not the only challenge facing our nation, back to the theme of sustainability, you'll see what we have said is that our approach – and this is now a U.S. perspective, but I think it also reflects the perspective of many of you sitting here – has to be politically, economically and militarily sustainable. We assumed our approach was going to be one that had to be in place for many years and that had to adapt as time went on.

Finally, we assumed that we had to work with coalition partners, allies and local partners to be successful. I think our perspective is, and the fact that you're all here indicates that you would agree, no one nation, no one region or group of nations can deal with this challenge themselves.

If you go back to the original assumption that this is a transregional threat, that these groups are connected, from the Western Hemisphere and Southeast Asia, then a collective approach is necessary. We certainly view our success in securing our country as being dependent on the relationship that we have with those of you sitting around this table. We think the same is also true in terms of the security of your countries being dependent on the group that's sitting around this table here today. Again, we're encouraged that you would be here with us. So as we move forward, we have to assume that violent extremist organizations will adapt and our strategy must be equally adaptable.

Let me talk about progress to date. As we have executed the campaign in Iraq and Syria over the past two years, I think we've validated many of the assumptions that I just outlined. We learned a tremendous amount about how to fight violent extremist organizations. I want to just provide a quick review of the progress that the coalition has made in Iraq and Syria.

For the past two years, a coalition of 69 countries has put simultaneous pressure on Iraq and Syria. And the transregional networks that support them have also suffered a great deal. We've reduced ISIS territory by some 87 percent, removed over 180 key ISIS leaders from the battlefield, reduced the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq and Syria from a peak of about 1,500 a month to very close to zero, and we've drove down ISIS revenue to its lowest point since 2014.

More importantly, the coalition undermined the credibility of the ISIS narrative. I think that narrative at one point, when we think back to 2014 and '15, they said it was a physical caliphate being created in Syria and Iraq. And, of course, that narrative is not very credible at this point.

I do want to take a moment to highlight that while 69 countries contributed to the campaign, this was led by local forces. That reflects in the price that was paid in Mosul alone. If you think about the Iraqi security forces, more than 1,300 were killed, more than 7,000 wounded in Mosul alone. This is a burden carried by local forces.

Our counterpart and friend, General Othman [al-Ghanmi], is not here today obviously because he's back at home fighting the fight. But it's his forces that certainly carried the preponderance of the fight in Iraq as well as our partners did in Syria.

The challenge for this group, however, is that while success in defeating ISIS in Iraq and Syria is clear, it also means that the enemy is going to be forced to adapt and find other places for safe haven. In my judgment, this affects every corner of the globe.

As we move forward, I think there are some key lessons that we've learned here. And I want to go through them.

First is that we have to improve our information sharing. We've seen some great examples of this in recent months. The foiled plot in Australia, I think, demonstrates how capable we are when we share information with one another. But still, more needs to be done and that's largely what we'll discuss today.

We also need to leverage existing security institutions and bilateral and multilateral relationships. It's not our goal here as we sit around in the group of 75 to create new structures or new organizations. The idea is to connect those organizations, those multilateral organizations, those local efforts that already exist and make them more effective to achieve transregional effects. So we're not suggesting that we need to create another organizational body.

By sharing information and building off the relationships that already exist, we can empower the network to be more adaptive and more responsive. As operations in Iraq and Syria wind down, we've got to remain committed to cutting off the flow of foreign fighters leaving the area of hostilities. While we're making progress today – and you can see that more than 60 countries have laws in place to prosecute and penalize foreign terrorist fighter activities, 65 countries have prosecuted or arrested foreign fighters or their facilitators, and more than 30 countries use enhanced straddle screening measures – much more work needs to be done.

Let me just close by saying that we're going to have General [Michael S.] Groen now, our J2 from the Joint Staff, come up and share a perspective, an intel perspective on the global threat that we face. This is intended just to generate conversation. Each of you, I recognize, will have a unique perspective on the challenges that we face. Again, this morning's first two or three briefs, which will be just my brief overview, the intel brief and then the structure for the military network, all of that is designed to inform the dialogue and conversation we'll have throughout the rest of the day.

**Excerpts from Remarks at Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
November 30**

**Q:** Earlier this year you met General [Valery] Gerasimov. I was wondering if you could take us inside the room of that meeting?

**Dunford:** I can. I've actually met with him twice this year. We've probably talked about six or seven times. My thoughts on military-to-military relationships are I should have one with all of my peers, whether they're an adversary or whether they're an ally. And, you know, if you think about them as kind of a thermograph. Over here in the green you've got allies, you're developing interoperability, latent integration. And over here, you're at least mitigating the risk of miscalculation and maintaining effective lines of communication.

So I think Russia's closer to here than they are to here right now. The only thing I would tell you is he's been extraordinarily professional. Needless to say, most of the issues we deal with are really hard for us to come to agreement on. They're really hard. But he's been very professional. One thing he has done, that I have appreciated, is we agreed never to talk to the media after we're done to share the results of our meeting, because as soon as we politicize our engagement it's going to make it that much more difficult to maintain the lines of communication. Both of us realize the stakes and the importance of us maintaining that military-to-military interaction. So we haven't politicized it.

Areas of potential convergence, temporary deconfliction in Syria – which I honestly think is a success story over the last 15 or 16 months. It's increasingly difficult to execute on a day-to-day basis. Those of you who might have just come back from flying in the Middle East would know that. It's increasingly difficult. The battle space is more complex and more crowded than it was some months ago. So it's really hard. That's an area of convergence. An area that we're not going to agree on is Europe, is the Ukraine, and the activities in Crimea and so forth. So that's just a hard thing. In terms of NATO, you know, we're believers in it. We think politically, diplomatically, from a security perspective, that organization is critical to our national interests. So a strong NATO is something that I believe in. And it's not necessarily something that General Gerasimov would like to see. So that's a very big divergence.

I think ballistic missile defense is another area of divergence in terms of – I mean, one of the real burrs under the saddle with General Gerasimov and the Russians is Aegis ashore in Romania. So that's been a source of contention. Defining who terrorists are, we – this won't surprise you – we haven't necessarily come up with a common definition of who a terrorist is. There's a few things we mutually agree on, but by and large we probably don't think they're the same here.

I'll be honest with you, I have described, and I did in my confirmation hearing back on December 2015. I was asked in my confirmation hearing, you know, what's the most significant security challenge the United States faces? And I said, the nation that could – could – pose an existential threat to the United States is Russia. From a nuclear perspective, a cyber-perspective, an anti-space perspective. You know, and what I described as adversarial competition. So I don't view Russia as a nation right now that we can find a lot of room for agreement.

In Syria, I will do all I can to support Secretary [of State Rex W.] Tillerson, because on the vector – because that gave Russia – because I'll vector off into Syria for a minute, because I think it's important. Again, that probably talks about the relationship. In Syria, our leadership believes that there's not a political solution in Syria that doesn't involve Russia. We're going to try to kind of isolate that issue and work the Syrian issue with Russia, with the full knowledge that an alignment of our national interest and Russia's national interest is not possible. In my judgment, it's not possible.

So we'll try to carve that out and try to come up with a political solution, which needs to involve the Russians. From a military perspective, we use the word deconfliction – not cooperation, not coordination, but deconfliction. What that means is we take actions to mitigate

the risk to our pilots, our air crew. We take risk to mitigate the risk to our personnel on the ground, by in time and space, in with our respective military operations. That's all we're doing with the Russians right now. And to be honest with you, I believe that's the extent of what we can do.

I'm not as frank about that in public. Obviously, I'm not looking to create difficulties for – you know, it's not my job to be articulating policy in public and creating more difficulty for Secretary Tillerson. I'm supposed to be helping him with the military dimension, not creating more difficulties for him. So I make every effort to do that. But I'm not particularly optimistic that we can find many ways to align ourselves with Russia. I mean, just look around. I mean, in the economic sphere, in the political sphere, in the security sphere, I just think we have fundamentally different approaches.

So it's going to be a challenge for some time to come. The only good news, and I don't want to understate their capabilities for a second, is demographically and economically they have some challenges they have to deal with. I think it's fair at least to ask a question: Can they sustain the path that they're on right now? I don't want to underestimate them. I'm not saying they cannot. But I think it's a fair question.

Much different issue with China. If you look 10 years from now, in terms of the art of the possible, for Chinese capability development and their position in the world. I would say if you view China as ascendant, this is conventional wisdom, I think you can say that Russia, perhaps, in terms of its position, is really on the descent.



# 2018

## SELECTED WORKS

### **Remarks Following Award of the Knight's Cross Order of Merit Brussels, Belgium January 15**

Many of you have many other things to do – ambassadors, generals – and so I appreciate you taking the time to be here. Ambassador [Hans-Dieter Lucas], as you were speaking you made a couple comments that resonated with me. One of them is when you spoke about alliances. And same, that I recognize it was important to our country as well as to the greater good. What I was reminded of, and General [Tod D.] Wolters was there, and General [Curtis M.] Scaparrotti was there, when I came into my assignment here a little over two years ago, it was time to rewrite our U.S. National Military Strategy. Of course, we've rewritten, as you mentioned, our National Security Strategy. But we were going to write our National Military Strategy.

One of the things that military leaders do when you embark on an endeavor like that is you ask some standard questions. The most important question that we asked when we rewrote our National Military Strategy is: What is the source of strength of the United States in the world? What is it that makes us unique? It shouldn't surprise anybody here – of course, as only people in the training command and staff college can do, we probably spent weeks answering the question. It's actually a fairly obvious question and a pretty straightforward answer. We came to the conclusion that strategically what made the United States strong and what made us unique was the network of allies and partners that we have developed since World War II.

Of course, we no more important alliance, no more effective alliance, no more vibrant alliance than the NATO alliance. I'm mindful as well – after listening to the ambassador's comments – is that the only time we've invoked Article 5 was in the wake of the attack on the United States in 9/11. Which to me – if you want to talk about the value of the alliance, you don't need to use a lot of adjectives. All you have to use is one example of the benefit of being in the alliance.

And so, ambassador, thanks for your comments. I couldn't be more in alignment with your comments about the relationship between the United States and the alliance, and the important relationship between the United States and Germany. I'd like to talk about my friend [General] Volker [Wieker] for a minute, who it's been now more than five years that I've had the opportunity and privilege to call you a friend, and a mentor, quite frankly. During my time in Afghanistan, you were one of the chiefs of defense who helped me navigate the complex NATO system. I'd never served at this level before in a NATO environment.

Certainly, I had some education that was necessary for me to survive and be successful. I can tell you, the chief of defense of Germany was one was my valued mentors during those days, and helped me navigate the CJSOR process, the force generation process, and make sure that I

said the right thing when we met with CHODs, foreign ministers, and ministers of defense. I did trip a few times in the early days, and Volker helped me out.

But I'd also point to you, for all of the chiefs of defense and those of us in uniform, as an example of a selfless servant. I think many of you know here that General Wiekert is eight years into his assignment as the chief of defense. I'm only in my assignment a little over two years now – two or three years. I could not imagine six more years of doing this job. And so, when you get to the point that many of us are at, when you've served four decades, you do come to the point where you feel like you want to rebalance your life and you'd like to spend more time with your family, you'd like to reorient your priorities, because most of us in uniform – and certainly those in the foreign service and our diplomats as well – when you're committed to the kinds of missions we are committed to, all of your attention, all of your focus, all of your energy is towards those missions.

I know as a friend that some years ago you would have been able to call your career a success. You would have felt like you made a contribution – a unique contribution to Germany, you would have been able to move on and reorient your priorities. But you didn't do that for one simple reason, and that is because your country asked you to do that. Your country asked you to stay. I would argue that you have been a key driver of the excellent military-to-military relationship that exists between the United States and Germany.

What I would say with the ambassadors here, is clearly the relationship that the United States has with Germany is about a lot more than the military-to-military relationship. But the military-to-military relationship is a foundational element of that broader strategic relationship. The ambassador talked about the bumps and bruises that nations go through, even friends, even family. I thought as you made that comment that, you know, sometimes you have differences and you work your way through. But one thing you can always count on is the steady military-to-military relationship. Now for 70 years we've had that.

But we have particularly had that over the last 16 years of shared hardship in a combat environment. One of the things that I'm extraordinarily proud of in my time in uniform is the privilege to have served alongside the German Army in combat, and had a chance to watch them, the modern Bundeswehr that's been out there, and what you have done. When I think about the current challenges we face, not just those here in NATO and not just in the traditional deterrence and the mission of NATO, but also now projecting stability and peace in NATO. Which we'll spend some time speaking about here in the next few days.

Where we are, you are there alongside of us, whether it's Afghanistan as a framework nation, almost 1,000 troops to Iraq, over 300 in many other places that we serve. This award really is a reflection of the strength of our military-to-military relationship. I'm appreciative of what we're doing here today. We are recognizing not an individual, but the military-to-military relationship between our two countries, and the value that we place on that military-to-military relationship, and the knowledge that we have that that military-to-military relationship is one of the things that allows us to get through difficult times because we have common values, we have common vision of the world order within which we want our people to thrive. I think the military-to-military relationship keeps us on the straight and narrow, even when we have occasional disagreements.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, let me just say that to be recognized by Germany is a distinct honor for me, because of the admiration and appreciation I have for my counterparts in uniform in Germany, especially the chief of defense who has served, again, eight years as the chief of defense. He's the dean of the chiefs of defense. Without going on at great length, because the ambassador was kind enough to invite us to a reception, so I won't do that.

But I would say this. Over the last few years in two venues in particular, one the chiefs of defense, of course, meeting at 29, but also the smaller group where we have had 12 to 13 chiefs of defense meet privately once a quarter to talk about the common challenges of violent extremism, a voice of wisdom in the room, a voice of experience in the room, and someone who has come into the room trying to find a way to get things done, that's been you, Volker. That's been you. I think it's representative of the German forces.

I guess the last comment I'd make to that point is it's not just you when you're chief of defense. I've made this comment to you before. As a commander with at one point 50 nations inside the force represented. Certain nations, they will send individuals over and you don't really know until they get there really what kind of competence they have, what kind of experience they had, what they're going to be able to bring to the fight. So you try to get to know them. When you get a German colonel, when you get a German general officer, you know what you're getting. You may never have met that individual, but you know exactly what you're getting. You're getting somebody that has a vast amount of experience, professional military education, and an ethic – a work ethic and professional ethic that makes them a valued contribution from day one.

So in closing, Ambassador, thanks, again, for hosting today. Thanks for highlighting the importance of the relationship between Germany and the United States, the broader relationship between our two countries but particularly the military-to-military relationship. To my German friends here, not the least of which are Chief of Defense – the dean of the chiefs of defense, thanks for your friendship, thanks for your leadership, and thanks for making sure that on your watch, during your time as the chief of defense, we have become just that much closer. That's manifest in your willingness to send people to schools – the next generation of Americans and Germans who are working together, because there's about 500 of them in the United States right now going to school, developing the personal relationships and the common understanding that's going to allow us to be successful for decades to come. Thanks very much.

**Excerpts from Interview with Media**  
**Darwin, Australia**  
**February 6**

**Q:** Do you think there are concerted efforts underfoot to portray the U.S. as a declining power in the Pacific region?

**Dunford:** I do. I do. There's absolutely, I think in some corners, a concerted effort to portray the United States as a declining power. Obviously, I reject that. Sixty percent of the United States Air Force is here, Navy working towards that, all of our most capable platforms. I think if you look at the health of our alliances in the region, from Australia, where we happen to be today, to

Japan and Korea, heading into Thailand, Philippines and what we have just done to help the Philippines in Marawi, the physical evidence and certainly the physical evidence from a military dimension reflects anything other than a declining Pacific power. I mean, we have enduring interests here, we have an enduring commitment, and we have an enduring presence in the Pacific.

**Q:** And then just to follow up, I mean, is it something that you've during your time in Australia heard from allies, from partners, this narrative? Can you give us some examples of how that narrative is being propagated?

**Dunford:** Sure. We didn't talk about that with my Australian friends. We had a wide range of other issues that we discussed, and we didn't get into that.

I, obviously, see what you see in the media, the message and so forth. I think when you look at the United States – and you've heard me say, and I just said a minute ago – what is it that makes us the United States of America? It's the network of allies and partners that we have. And so if someone is trying to undermine the United States politically, diplomatically, and from a security perspective, the first target would be our network of allies and partners. And so I think when you see the message that the United States is a declining power, it's a deliberate effort to undermine the credibility of our alliances and our relationships in the region.

**Q:** OK. And China, the country, came up a lot during your discussions?

**Dunford:** A little bit. Less so this time. We spent quite a bit of time – simply because of transition, we spent quite a bit of time talking about violent extremism this week. Obviously, Australia a significant contributor both to our operations Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq, as well as in Afghanistan, but is obviously a key player in dealing with violent extremism here in the region as well and most recently in the Philippines. So we spoke about that.

We, obviously, spoke about Korea as well. A little less so China on this particular trip for no other reason, Tom, than those other issues were just – they were the topics that we came down to discuss. Keep in mind it's only been six months since I was in Sydney, and I see my Australian counterpart at least three or four times a year.

**Q:** So just to follow up on his follow up, if you're a nation out here you've heard the U.S. talk a big game about the pivot in the last eight years, and rightly or wrongly, not necessarily see a lot of meat on the bone. And now, the NDS is out and there's more talk of countering these peer competitors or one in particular out here. What do you say to some of these countries which are trying to figure out who to game?

**Dunford:** Well, yeah, let me just – Gordon [Lubold, *Wall Street Journal*], from a security perspective, again, what was described in the past as a rebalance, there is no dispute about a significant increase of capability here in the Pacific. P-8s, F-22s, F-35s, LCSes, the most modern systems we have, have been deployed here. I mentioned a minute ago moving towards almost 60 percent of the United States Air Force, 60 percent of the Navy, a significant part of the United States Marine Corps, and the Army increased its component to a four-star level a couple years ago. Level of exercises, I don't want to say highest ever; we'll go back and quantify it, but a very high level of exercises and interoperability. Force posture initiatives, from the one that we're

sitting on right now here in Darwin; to Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement inside the Philippines; with a platform of over 50,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines in Japan; 28,000 additional forces in Korea. Again, I don't think you can dispute the facts from a security perspective about U.S. presence in the Pacific, U.S. commitment in the Pacific, and U.S. capability in the Pacific. So people can say, well, there's not much there. The facts belie the statement. There is a lot here.

The U.S., most importantly, is absolutely able to meet its alliance commitments in the region. We have an alliance with South Korea. We have one with the Philippines. We have one with Japan. We have one with Thailand. We have one with Australia. Our force posture and presence here, and our level of readiness, and the level of interoperability that we've developed in all these exercises allows us to meet our alliance commitments and has contributed, again. If you describe why are we here and what is the end state of why we're here, it's underlining from a security perspective the rules-based international order that for the last 70 years everybody has benefited from. What we're doing now is we're modernizing our force, we're modernizing our presence in the region, and we're enhancing our relationships in the region to ensure that we have another 70 years of peace in the rules-based international order.

I mean, that's why we're here. That's why I've spent a lot of time in the Pacific since I've been the chairman. The secretary a week ago was in Vietnam and Indonesia. I'm here today in Australia. I'm here in Thailand tonight and tomorrow. I mentioned where we are in terms of allies and partners, but Guam is a platform as well. We're significantly enhancing the capabilities in Guam as we rebalance the force, and have what will be a more operational resilient posture overall in the region.

**Q:** But, sir, isn't this the case of values do matter? I mean the U.S. values in the old rules-based infrastructure, these allies that we work with believe the same things that we do.

**Dunford:** That's exactly right, Jim [Garamone, DOD News]. The network of allies and partners that we have in the Pacific, first and foremost what they want is that rules-based international order that has existed for the last several years. They don't want might to equal right.

They want there to be a set of international standards and norms that are enforced by the international community's collective coherent response. And so that's what our relationships here in the region are all about.

You know, I think the first question is there a message about U.S. commitment, U.S. as a waning power. That's what you're alluding to, you say, well, was there really a rebalance? Do we really have capabilities here in the region? No matter how you rack and stack it, you can look at any other place we are in the world, we don't have any greater capability than we have in the Pacific. There is no other nation – and you can take it in the context of our alliances and partners in the region – there's no other nation that has the military capabilities that we have here in the Pacific.

**Q:** Do we expect or do you expect to see over the next year more repositioning of forces, of capability, of –

**Dunford:** Not more repositioning. We're now finishing up the plans that were, you know, developed. Really, my first time here you heard me talk to the Marines. It was 2012. We signed

the agreement in '11, I came here in '12. These Marines have done a lot of moving around. This is – this is probably –

**Q:** Yeah, I didn't mean just Darwin, by the way. I just mean –

**Dunford:** No, but I was going to say this. What's going on here is characteristic of what's going on now in Guam, characteristic of what's going on on Okinawa. In other words, all the plans that were developed over the course of the last six, seven, eight years are now being developed, employed, refined, and so forth.

We had an original plan for the laydown of Marines here at Darwin. That plan's been refined. These Marines have just moved from one side to the other. In Guam, that's what I really am going to look at it, is just see where are we with regard to making progress in getting all the facilities up and so forth. It's probably been a year since I've been to Guam.

So there won't be a major reposturing of forces, but we're going to continue to refine the plans that we have, to include places like Singapore. There are places where we may not have permanently-stationed forces, but we have access agreements. And so those access agreements, we're always looking to expand those and we have expanded them over the last couple years. P-8s and LCSes down in Singapore, ship visits in Vietnam, ship visits recently in New Zealand, those are all reflective of the kind of activity that we have had in the last couple years and we'll continue to see.

**Q:** So tell us if people are not defense experts and they look at the numbers that you have here – 1,250, whatever it is, – how does that make a difference, that few people? How does that send a signal of strength?

**Dunford:** Sure, sure.

**Q:** Is this a tripwire? Is it a symbol? How does that work in military kind of terms?

**Dunford:** Yeah. What this allows us to do, really, first and foremost is to work with our allies here in Australia and in the region to develop the kind of interoperability that allows you to fight together in the future. And so that's first and foremost.

So, in and of itself, you could say, well, what's 1,200 Marines? Twelve hundred Marines represent an element of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force, which is 50,000 Marines that, when aggregated, are capable of doing whatever needs to be done here in the region. So they're merely a small piece of III MEF. The other thing is what I believe is I don't think there's any more powerful message or manifestation of commitment than the presence of U.S. forces. I'm not sure I'd describe it as a tripwire, but I certainly would describe it as a physical manifestation of a commitment when, one, the Australian government are willing to host U.S. Marines here and the United States sends Marines to live here for months at a time.

**Q:** In your discussions with the Australians, did they ask you about whether you're going to a preventative strike on North Korea? Can you –

**Dunford:** Sure. I've been asked by a number of people about a preventative strike, to include some Marines at lunch. My answer is always the same. Right now the military dimension of the problem is reinforcing Secretary [of State Rex W.] Tillerson's economic and diplomatic pressure

campaign. His diplomatic efforts are underwritten by credible military strength, and we're doing that.

In addition to that economic and diplomatic pressure campaign, we're deterring North Korea from a provocation or aggression. I would argue particularly with regard to deterring aggression and provocation, we've been successful since 1953, when the armistice was signed, in doing that. So our presence in the region is credible, and it has deterred action.

A separate issue, of course, is the development of nuclear capability and missile capability, which is what the economic and diplomatic pressure campaign is all about. Then the second piece of that is the president has made it clear to Secretary [of Defense James N.] Mattis and I that he expects a full range of military options. That's what we have provided to him and we continue to refine every day, so that if the president does decide to employ military force we'll have options available for him to do that. But again, the focus today is on diplomatic and economic pressure and the peaceful resolution of the challenge.

**Excerpts from Remarks at the Marine Corps War College  
Quantico, Virginia  
February 23**

So why global integration? Not because I woke up one day and said, hey, it would be nice. I'm not [advocating] maximum feasible centralized control. That's not what this is all about. It's about being relevant. So that's one reason why global integration, because we're identifying the character of war.

The second, which I think is a really important point, in the 1990s, certainly through the early part of 2000, we had a decisive competitive advantage over any potential adversary, a decisive competitive advantage. By and large, we had sufficient forces to distribute across the world and meet the majority of the combatant commands' requirements to a much greater degree than we have today. With the exception perhaps of ISR and SOUTHCOM, most combatant commanders were resourced at a level that allowed them to perform all of their tasks.

Over the last 15 years our competitive advantage has eroded, which makes the decisions that we make about prioritization and allocation of resources much more important. We don't have sufficient resources to just have kind of a bottom-up process where we spread the peanut butter out across the globe and achieve the right results. We actually have to think from the top down about our strategic priorities, and we actually have to think about risk in a fundamentally different way. So this is the other kind of imperative for global integration.

The third imperative for global integration, which is the assessments process they spoke about. If you take that point I just made about competitive advantage, it not only requires you, then, to have a much more sophisticated approach to prioritizing and allocating resources in real time today, but it also requires you to think much more carefully about capability development in the future. So when I look back, we stopped doing detailed assessments – you know, net military assessments – somewhere in the 1990s. And you say, well, why was that? We didn't need to do them. In other words, you could decentralize all of the acquisition processes and capability development processes; and on the backside we could take the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps; and we could put them in any scenario, integrate capabilities, and off you go. In other

words, the reservoir of capability from which you were drawing was sufficient that you didn't need to worry about it.

From a capability perspective, that competitive advantage I spoke about a minute ago has eroded. So the choices that you make about what are you going to invest in are fundamentally different today than they were in the past.

So the reason why we expose you – and I'm going to talk some other things, but the reason why we expose you to global integration is I kind of selfishly want to have a little bit of a conversation with you: One, does it make sense? Two, do you understand what was driving it? Then just get a little bit of feedback and questions from some pretty smart folks who just get exposed to it. But I wanted you to understand the why.

We can argue all day about whether or not we have the right approach. In fact, I just, immediately before coming in here, I found I'd have two hours of free time before coming in here. I had one of my predecessors, Admiral [Michael G.] Mullen in my office, and what was going to be 45 minutes was two hours. So that's just life. He came in, and the first thing that he said was – he's up with the Navy four-star conference, and he said, hey, this thing with integration, I heard you're going to be the global ops officer. I'm not sure, you know. I said, well, stop. Hold it. That's not what we're talking about here. It's more of the five and the eight with the three being a different way of doing what we've done in the past; in other words, a top-down strategic approach to global force management as opposed to bottom up. But we're not looking to run operations across the globe.

What we do is we support decisions that are being made in the execution of operations, and we provide the strategic framework within which those operations take place, but we're not the global J3. Since there's a guy who sat in my seat just once removed who immediately had that misperception, wherever he heard it, I sure don't want you to have that misperception.

But my real point is this whole thing of global integration – get past the word – is how do we as a joint force fight today, based on the challenges we are confronted with? How do we prioritize and allocate resources for the fights we confront, the challenges we face today? And how do we ensure that the path of capability development that we're on is the right path? How do we make the right choices? And if we aren't doing that in an integrated way – if we just completely decentralize the services to look at 2025 and say, well, this is what I think the Air Force needs and this is what I think the Navy needs, we're leaving it to happenstance that we'll actually have a joint force that can deliver what it needs to deliver on behalf of the nation. And we can't do that.

On the joint force as a whole, I'd just talk to you about competitive advantage. I could also talk about readiness. My overall line that I've used publicly, but I believe it privately – and this is a private conversation – is that today we do have a competitive advantage over any potential adversary. We do. It has eroded, and there are challenges associated with some of the high-end fights that we would have, but I believe at the end of the day we have a competitive advantage. We actually have conventional deterrence against the two state actors that were called out in the National Defense Strategy, China and Russia. I believe that.

I also believe that we can meet any of our alliance commitments. We can meet our alliance commitments, and I don't have any doubt about that.

Having said that, I alluded to a few years at war, I alluded to capability development of our adversaries – potential adversaries, and I alluded to the complexity of today's fight. So there are reasons for concern.



On the personnel side, we're recruiting and retaining high-quality people, but there are many areas in the force – pilots in the Air Force, cyber capabilities, several other areas – where we just need to think about different ways of getting new people and holding onto good people.

So, on balance, I have kind of a unique assignment right now. I really do have a pretty good opportunity to see virtually every element of the force, from a missile silo to a nuclear submarine to a brigade combat team, engage. On balance, the people will just – as they have for you, they blow you away, what they're doing, but you also become aware of the challenge they have. We have run people harder than perhaps is sustainable. I always, perhaps, compared it to rate of fire: cyclic, rapid, and sustained rate of fire. I think for a couple years they were at the cyclic rate, and most of the time we've been at the rapid rate, and we sure as hell haven't been at the sustained rate.

Why do I say that? I use one example. I went to visit the USS *Barry*. So this is before the [USS] *Fitzgerald* and the [USS] *McCain* incident, right? So they're on station off of Republic of Korea, and I got onboard the ship, and the CO was very impressive. She had been on the ship about 18 months. I like to think, as you probably do, you walk aboard a ship and you can kind of sniff out the command climate, you can see if the sailors – looking in their eyes, you can see what their attitude is. I mean, you get a good – and I felt, boy, this is pretty impressive, walking around. Then I talked to the sailors, and I said, hey, tell me about your deployment cycle. You know, where you been? They'd been underway – underway, at sea – 70 percent of the time the previous year. So when do you do the training? When do you do the education? When do you do the maintenance? Those kind of things.

So I could go on. I could talk about personnel recovery guys in the Air Force, and having them in a school circle and going, hey, when was the last time you deployed? Sir, four months ago. How about before that? Four months before that. How about before that? Four months before that. So what we all call 1-to-1 deployment-dwell ratio is ongoing. If you want to get into a little bit more of my thoughts on some of the aviation incidents, some of the at-sea incidents that we've had, we can talk about that in more detail.

I guess my summary of the force would be we are in good shape, but we've got some areas that need to improve. From a capability perspective, clearly in many cases we have had delayed modernization, and so we got legacy equipment there. Or in some cases, as I've said to Congress a couple of times, you're trying to distinguish between readiness and modernization. If you have only four tails out of 12 of your primary aircraft authorized, that's both a readiness issue and a modernization issue, right? So don't distinguish between operations-and-maintenance money and readiness and modernizing the force. This is where this bow wave of modernization comes from, is that we deferred decisions and we deferred investments for so many years that we now have kind of a bow wave of requirements in the department, which is not only a readiness issue but it's a competitive advantage issue, because it's a modernization issue as well.

All that's out there and needs to be addressed. My summary of that would be that in order for the chairman in 2025 to be able to say what I can say today, we need to approach things in a fundamentally different way. So I can say we have a competitive advantage. But if it was like this in 2001, it's like this in 2017, and the trends are going in the wrong direction, if you took the path of capability development of our potential adversaries and you take where we have been over the last couple years, you're on the wrong end of the curve. You have to go out five to eight years. The good news is that has been recognized, and I think you all have seen the top line and talk about that.

I can't help but be a skeptic. I've been around long enough to say, well, that's interesting; we now have an authorization of 700 billion (dollars) and 716 billion (dollars). To use the line out of the movie, "show me the money," right? I mean, when it's in our hand, it'll be there. But we will have to be very judicious and deliberate in using that money, and that's where that assessment process comes in. It's not just having money. It's making sure we make the right decisions and the right priorities in spending that money. Although it sounds like a hell of a lot of money, and it really is, we're in a trough that didn't take two years to get into, and we're not going to be able to buy our way out of it in two. So people are going to come to us in two years and they're going to say, look, I just gave you 700 billion (dollars) and then I gave you 716 billion (dollars); why isn't everything fixed? Trust me that conversation's going to happen. I'm already going to lay the groundwork this year by talking about how many years it's going to take for us to actually regrow the force. Hell, you can't even buy a Stryker in two years, right? I think it takes about three years. If you say I want one, you're not going to have it for three years. So that has to be in perspective.

I guess I don't want you to think I'm naïve about the challenges that you have left before this year or the ones that you will go back to. I do think a combination of quality people, the fact that we still do have a competitive advantage, and we now have made a case for the resources necessary to turn around the situation we're in gives me the opportunity to be a glass-half-full guy. I make no apologies for that. I probably wouldn't still be here if I wasn't a glass-half-full guy. But I am sincerely, based on that – again, while being realistic.

Let me just talk to you about the challenges we face. If you take a look at China/Russia, I won't go into great detail, but we certainly can in the question-and-answer and talk about the investments they've made in everything from the nuclear enterprise to maritime capabilities, space capabilities, cyber capabilities, land warfare. You name it, they've made investments.

When I think about Russia and China, I think about two things. First, I think about our source of strength at the strategic level being allies and partners, and I think about our source of strength at the operational level being the ability to project power when and where necessary to advance our interests. If you think about it, that's what makes the United States of America unique. It's the network of allies and partners, some represented in this room, that we have built up since World War II. At the operational level, in part leveraging the access that those allies and partners give us in the alliances or coalitions that can be put together with those allies and partners, our ability to project power literally anywhere in the world to advance our national interests.

We are not the only people that recognize our source of strength at the strategic level or at the operational level. At the end of the day, capability path aside for Russia and China, what we're really dealing with are two state actors that are trying to undermine the credibility and the coherence of our alliances, whether it be in NATO, whether it be in the Pacific. They're developing capabilities – I don't use the term "anti-access/area denial." It's a defensive mindset, in my view. What I say is, no, this is not about us overcoming A2/AD. This is about us projecting power. That's what this is about. They are employing anti-access/area denial systems to inhibit our ability to project power. But for us, it's not about overcoming A2/AD. That's a very self-limiting way to think about the problem. The problem set is: How do we ensure the ability to project power when and where necessary to advance our interests and meet our alliance commitments into the future? That's what we're trying to do.

Both China and Russia recognize that we have an overall conventional competitive advantage. This is why they've lived at the level of war they have, right, what some of you have

probably heard described as adversarial competition that actually falls short of traditional armed conflict, right? That's why they're doing it: we have conventional deterrence over Russia. But the prospects of Russia attacking the Baltics in the near future I would judge as very low. The prospects of them trying to interfere with the democratic process inside of Europe, the prospects of them using economic coercion or political influence or cyber operations to conduct – inside of Europe, that's very high. That's actually happening right now.

The same thing holds true with China. China is unlikely to conduct a conventional attack. What they are doing is death by a thousand cuts in the South China Sea, trying to affect the democratic process inside of Australia, trying to affect the democratic process inside of Singapore, inside of Malaysia, and so forth. That's what we're dealing with. So, when I look at China and Russia, that's kind of the nature of the threat. We have to make sure that we continue to maintain, you know, a safe, effective nuclear deterrence. That's job one for the Department of Defense. I think that's probably generally accepted.

We have to have conventional deterrence, so they need to be assured that anything that they would do in a conventional sense, the cost that they would pay on the backside of that would far exceed any potential gain that they would have by attacking. That's got to be the calculus.

Then we've got to become more effective than we are right now. We can talk about that. I'm sure you've spent some time talking about it this year. We've got to become much more effective at actually dealing with the kind of war that we're seeing every day or the kind of adversarial competition we're seeing every day to make sure that we can address that. Because what's happened is we have a nuclear deterrent. We have a conventional deterrent. They still are going to try to advance their interests. There is still competition going on. What they've done is found an area in which they can compete, and our response has been less than effective so far in deterring that kind of behavior and activity or imposing a cost on them that would cause them that would cause them to change their calculus. So that's just a couple of ideas about China and Russia.

### **Excerpts from Remarks at the Joint Staff Action Officer of the Month Ceremony Pentagon, Virginia March 3**

Hey, listen, there is nothing formal about this. The most important thing I wanted to do is just say thanks.

This is a story I tell. I remember when I was a division chief in J5, I don't think I saw the chairman, I don't know, once a year or something. We'd see his schedule and he's going to Korea and he's going to Africa and he's going here and there. I'm thinking, geez, the man goes all over the world and we don't ever see him, and he works here. I'm that guy. (Laughter.)

So what I really try to do is just find a way – and what I found out is if it's not a scheduled event, I don't have – you know, unlike any previous assignment, I've been a – (inaudible) – guy and I existed over time never having a schedule. So lieutenant colonel/colonel days, people try to tell you, hey, you know, it's not up to you, in all honesty. Well, I'm kind of a slave to the schedule now and there's just nothing I can do about it. It's just kind of what it is. Believe it or not, I

probably have less influence in this assignment than any other assignment in my career in terms of flexibility. You're into 15-minute increments, it's just the way it is.

What I wanted to do was find ways of just making sure you knew what you were doing down here that involves the organization was actually appreciated. Picking people as Action Officer of the Month – (inaudible) – period of time and made everybody a little bit better, was just one of the things I wanted to do. So that really is the genesis of this.

Then we started – I started doing it with breakfast, and that just turned out to be too awkward. First of all, everyone was sitting there looking at me – (laughter) – and so I said, OK, we're not going to do that anymore, that didn't work. We're just going to end up just having coffee. Because look at you, none of you are even drinking coffee, just sitting there. (Laughter.) And that's not the intent.

If I were to tell you the number-one things on my mind in terms of probability and severity of consequences, you know, time sensitive, believe it or not, as much as North Korea has been on my mind over the last year, I'm paying attention more to Iran and Israel and the Middle East today than probably any other place in the world.

When you look at the confluence of events, in the coming weeks, some of the decisions the president will make on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to the location of the United States embassy in Jerusalem to the Palestinian days of elections and Iran and so on, it's a pretty critical time. I think some of you are paying attention to the tit-for-tat that's going on beneath the surface between Iran and Israel right now. So far it's being managed. But, when you talk about escalation control, the word "control" is sometimes a dangerous word to use.

I think when it comes to Syria as a whole – I'll just say in that part of the region for a minute – there has been some ambiguity about where we're headed. I will just tell you right now, what we're walking away from – (inaudible) – is a decision, again, that's – (inaudible) – which is we will continue to support the Syrian Democratic Forces in Syria through the political process, whatever that may be. Obviously, in six months or something we'll take a look at where we are. Fortunately, the SDF now, after about three or four weeks, is reoriented and back in the fight. I think even those who aren't paying attention saw those announcements probably.

So, in terms of Syria, the plan right now is to continue to leverage the SDF and getting rid of the last areas that are being held by ISIS, continue to train local forces to provide stability in the areas that have been cleared, and work with the SDF through the political process.

And the west side of Syria, there is not a military dimension in there today. That is a completely [a] diplomatic/political piece, which is the way ahead for [Syrian President Bashar al-] Assad and Russia and so forth. So we're still singularly focused on a military dimension on the ISIS problem inside Syria.

With Iraq, we're really kind of being quiet about that right now because of the election coming up and the desire not to be an unhelpful influence in the upcoming election. There's probably somebody in here who's an expert at it, but in my judgment right now [Haider-al] Abadi has

probably the best chance of being elected. But the formation of the government is going to be very difficult when you look at the complexity of that whole – of Iraq's government and Abadi then having a majority that allows him to actually transition and have the authority and legitimacy he needs as prime minister. And so, in terms of our way ahead in Iraq, we're not making any decisions right now until that has been resolved.

I'm going to skip and get out of the Middle East here for a minute and really go over and talk about Korea. I want to talk about Korea in two contexts.

One is the Korea problem and kind of where we are, but I want to use the Korea example to talk about my perceptions on the changing character of war and how that affects you every day, and how it will affect you over the next, you know, couple of years if you're new here.

I say Korea because I think it's a case study for a lot of things. Out of this, I want you to think about the national security decision-making process and kind of how that works and the role of the U.S. military is supporting the decisions out of the White House. I want you to take out of this some thoughts about the character of war by using the Korea scenario as an example. And then the broader strategic issue of what happens with Korea. Those are the three things I want to kind of get at because I think they will help you in a lot of different ways.

First of all, how did we get to where we are? So it's February of 2017. We have the first NSC meeting in the new administration on Korea and the intel. So, the intel brief for Secretary [of State Rex W.] Tillerson, we all had – (inaudible) – that North Korea will never give up their nuclear weapons because they're inextricably linked to the regime's survival, and China will never cooperate in having North Korea give up their weapons because they value stability over – (inaudible).

That was the brief. Secretary Tillerson who was the secretary of state, sat back and said: So what would you like me to do? You know, in other words, if that's the brief, what are we supposed to do? Does that mean there's only a military solution?

Secretary Tillerson immediately said, look, I've read the intelligence, I've heard this, and I understand those two assumptions, but we're going to test those two assumptions. Because if those two assumptions are, in fact, valid, then we have very little decision space for the president in addressing this issue. I don't believe we've ever really fully tested it – I'm speaking now as Secretary Tillerson – I don't believe we've ever fully tested the theory of the case as to whether or not the international community can put sufficient diplomatic and economic pressure on North Korea to change their behavior. And I'm not sure that we have put sufficient pressure on China, using all the leverages that we have, to put pressure on North Korea.

Secretary Tillerson embarked on a path up the United Nations – (inaudible) – and it really is an unprecedented regime of sanctions, and frankly, has got the enforcement of those sanctions to a level that most people wouldn't have anticipated a year-and-a-half ago. At least to the degree that they are enforcing the sanctions they signed up to, China has been more cooperative than many people.

So we've had this diplomatic and economic pressure campaign. This is the important piece. It has been big D, big E, little M, and you can probably say big I to the extent that we're effectively – (inaudible). By that I mean, whether you see it or not, almost everything we've done in the Pacific since February of 2017 has been directly coordinated with the secretary of state. In other words, Pacific presence operations, freedom of navigation operations, rotational deployments, exercises, all those things have been discussed to make sure that what the military was doing was consistent with three objectives.

One is deter aggression and provocation from North Korea. Assure our allies and make sure we're providing our diplomats with a foundation of strength so they can advance the diplomatic and economic pressure campaign. We wanted to make sure that the rheostat was dialed up and down appropriately in support of the State Department, which is the way it's supposed to be. It's the way it's supposed to be.

The other thing I want to talk to you a little bit about is a conflict on the Korean Peninsula so that you kind of understand why I'm obsessed with global integration. So if a war broke out in the 1990s on the Korean Peninsula, there's a couple of things I want you to think about. Number one, that was the end of history, right, in the 1990s. We didn't have a peer competitor. Do you remember? You know, this is Fukuyama that wrote the book, and everybody was saying, OK, we have now a unipolar world, and it's the end of history, and the United States is the premier power across the globe. So that's number one.

Number two, the size of the force relative to our overall requirements, we had the ability in the 1990s, perhaps with the exception of SOUTHCOM, to meet a very, very high percentage of all the combatant commanders' bottom-up – (inaudible). So that's number two.

Number three is that if a conflict broke out on the peninsula, we [had] an operations plan that made an assumption that the conflict would be largely isolated to the peninsula and the immediate surrounds, but it would be a regional conflict that could be contained inside of the Pacific region. Again, certainly, some threats to Japan, but early days of ballistic missiles, early days of cyber, early days of anti-space capability. So we really are talking about sea/air/land conflict on the peninsula.

From a command-and-control perspective, what does that mean? It means that the U.N. Command, U.S. Forces Korea, and Combined Forces Korea, that U.S. four-star was a supported commander and basically we slewed the joint force to Korea.

A couple of things. We weren't that worried about what was going on outside of Korea at that point because it's the end of history and we're – you know, we're the only – there's no hot breath breathing down our neck, right? So we're not worried about that. And we have sufficient forces to fight the fight.

Now it's 2018 and a war breaks out on the peninsula. You think how it works is the first phone call I make: General [Lori J.] Robinson, how are we doing, shields up? Admiral [Michael S.] Rogers, where are you with protecting the network? General [John E.] Hyten, let me talk to you about space, let me talk to you about the nuclear enterprise. Admiral [Harry B.] Harris, where are

we with regard to the Pacific family of partners, particularly protecting Japan, the platform from which we project power? Eventually, I'll make my way to General [Vincent K.] Brooks and ask him how he's doing.

The other thing that's going on in the context of a fight on the peninsula today is immediately, instead of going to an OPLAN to execute in Korea, I'm now thinking about, as I draw down forces from the other combatant commanders, how are their missions being adjusted to reflect the resource levels that we'll be at when the Korean Peninsula conflict breaks out? We are actually managing now risk across the globe and we are actually fighting across the globe, because not only is Korea going on, it's not going on in isolation. There's opportunism you have to be concerned about with Iran and Russia. There's violent extremism; that's not going away. And, obviously, China doesn't have to do things that are strictly isolated to the Korean Peninsula. So, if you think about the 2+3 in a broader context, you're thinking about a much more complex world with Korea.

What does that mean? Number one, it means that if you buy in to what I've just said, you buy into every conflict involves all domains and every conflict involves multiple geographic regions. If you can think of one in the course of our discussion here today that doesn't, come at me. I'll talk to you [later]. (Laughter.) I mean it. But I do not have the imagination to come up with a scenario where all domains – whether we're leveraging them or the adversary has been, where all domains aren't involved in a future conflict, and where a conflict wouldn't have implications outside of a specific geographic region – not only because of the domain, but because of geography.

If that's the case, then, how adequate is it to have a plan on the shelf for Korea without actually knowing what you will do to manage your global requirements and responsibilities as that conflict is going on? And if the value of the plan is in the planning and developing common understanding, implicit communications, and so forth, then how valuable is a plan isolated to a scenario that is unlikely to happen? It's not very useful. In other words, are we ever going to have a conflict isolated to the Korean Peninsula where there isn't a threat somewhere else?

And so our plans have to be global campaign plans. Global campaign planning means nothing more and nothing less than if we execute a contingency we have to know the implications of resourcing that contingency and what adjustments we will make to manage risk elsewhere, with an assumption that that's not the only challenge that we'll be dealing with. We still have to protect the homeland. We still have to disrupt violent extremists. We still have to check opportunism from Iran and Russia, albeit with far less forces. But we have to still think our way through that. So that's number one.

In terms of decision-making, how much easier was it when the commander in Korea would tell the commander in the Pacific to tell the secretary of defense what he needed and they would just execute it? How much more difficult is it when something happens like that and on a VTC we have all of the geographic functional commanders in a cacophony of voices telling the secretary of defense what's going on in their respective area and identifying the decisions that need to be made, the resources that need to be divided to execute their responsibilities? No single person can do that without a lot of help.

So the first piece of global integration, the first implication, is our plans have to reflect the real world.

The second implication is that our decision-making process has to support the real world. Someone has to frame the key decisions that have to be made across the combatant commands for the secretary of defense. Someone needs to identify and provide the intelligence and information that supports that. Someone has to manage a process to make sure the secretary is in a position to make decisions at the speed of war, the speed of relevance. So, who is it? Look in the mirror. That's the second piece of it.

The third piece of it is global posture. As I mentioned, in the 1990s and really until today, the way we did this is each of the combatant commanders would get broad guidance from OSD. They would then develop theater campaign plans, and then they would submit requirements, requests for forces to support their campaign plans.

What is strategic about that? In other words, if we have a 2+3 National Defense Strategy with campaign plans and a National Military Strategy, if the NDS is the what and the NMS is the how, well, how could you possibly have a global force management process that's from the bottom up that resources theater campaign plans, particularly going back again now to the 1990s where you don't have sufficient forces to do that? There's no way you're going to be able to provide the combatant commanders everything they need on a day-to-day basis based on the requirements today versus what they might have been in the 1990s. So the third element is you've got to set the globe to optimize the laydown of the forces in support of the strategy and the outcomes associated with that strategy. That's why the global force management process is changing right now.

The fourth element that comes from all this is, whether you all knew that this was the way it was or not, is if I said to you, who prioritizes resources in the Department of Defense, everyone would get it right on a multiple-choice test. It's the secretary of defense. If I said to you, who actually drives force design – force development and force design – force development, you know, improvements in the force today to be able to fight in the context of the strategic landscape; force design, what we need tomorrow – who would you say? Because it's not the secretary of defense because the secretary of defense prioritizes today based on [year of] execution and the problem. They're saying the total obligation for the Air Force is X, the total obligation of the Army is Y, the total obligation for the Navy is Z, and off they go.

In the past, we used to be able to take what the services built, because they built enough of it and integrated it, and because we didn't have any hot breath on the back of our neck, the output would give us the competitive advantage. But that's not going to happen in the future because our competitive advantage has eroded. Unless we're very deliberate about the capabilities and the numbers of capabilities, the capacities that we have for the future, we are not going to just by coincidence end up with the force we need to be competitive in the strategic landscape that will greet us in 2025, 2030, 2035.



I wanted to just use the Korea example a little bit to talk about decision-making because I think immediately you can see the complexity of decisions for the secretary of defense if something happened in Korea, and I think immediately you can see how an all-domain fight changes the character of war.

Then if you think about those other things I spoke about – in the 1990s the end of history, relative resources versus requirements, the way that we prioritize and allocate our resources, the way we had sufficient resources and stable resources, that each of the services could build a fairly large inventory of capabilities and when you put it together no matter how we slapped it together we'd be able to kick anybody's asses out there – well, that's not actually where we are.

And so, when we talk about global integration and we talk about the misery I've inflicted on you by cross-functional teams and all the other things that we're doing, in the past the Joint Staff was responsible for – well, they still are, the number-one priority – providing military advice to the secretary of defense, the president, and the National Security Council. But we have taken on, without additional structure, the responsibility – not the authority, but the responsibility – to integrate the joint force. Not because I came in and woke up one day and said, hey, I want to have an initiative I can put my name on. No, I'm a steward. I mean, I'm going to be gone, someone else will be in here.

It's because the character of war has changed and the environment within which we interact as we're pursuing our national interests has changed dramatically. It's changed because of the fiscal environment. It's changed because of capability development in China and Russia. It's changed because of the speed of change. It's changed because of the systems and technologies that have been fielded. All those things have changed.

Our strategy in the 1990s was a regional strategy with really no significant threats to our vital national interests. I mean, the nuclear age still existed for sure, but the tensions were low enough to where the probability of occurrence was very low. Today, we legitimately have a 2+3, and all that is is a benchmark to evaluate ourselves against. It is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a predictive model that tells us where we're going to fight in the future. In fact, all it tells us – what it tells me – and if you don't buy this assumption, this would be a good one to argue about – is if we build a force that can deal with one or more of the 2+3 and we test the force against scenarios like the one I just described, whether it be a North Korea scenario or a Russian scenario, and our force is adequate both the capability and the size to deal with that, then we'll be capable enough to deal with what will be the unexpected down the road.

I would say this. I don't actually know completely the friction that's been associated with global integration. What I do – I'm not completely hermetically sealed – (laughter) – so I do understand there's some angst out there and in people's minds perhaps some ambiguity. That's why with small groups like this I want to just give you a chance to clean up some of that ambiguity.

But I am painfully aware that we're taking a 25 percent cut in personnel at the same time we're adding some pretty significant missions. And we just have to figure it out. I got it, you know. This is not things that we might want to do; these are things that we have to do.

What I always tell people is I think you understand it from where you came from. There's not very many soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, or civilians that are outside of Washington, D.C. who know what you do. To tell you the truth, there's not many out there that actually care. There isn't. You didn't care – (inaudible). (Laughter.) Whether you admit it or not.

But they actually have the right to expect that whatever it is we're supposed to be doing, that we're actually doing it. That's what this is all about. This is all about making sure we're setting the conditions for those folks that are out there to be successful. We set conditions by, number one, making sure that military advice is good and that the decisions that our leadership makes are informed by that military advice. That's job one in terms of how we [shape].

Job two is all those other elements of integration, from the prioritization and allocation of resources, to facilitating time of decision-making, to making sure that the capabilities that are in the hands of our men and women are the best capabilities they can be and they are fit for purpose, so to speak, in the context of the threat environment. Those are the four pretty important things. We don't get a choice to have – (inaudible) – on any one of those. We have to do those.

We'll have to figure out – we've made some changes. I mean, there was a complete function we got rid of last year, which was a function I was personally supportive of having on the Joint Staff, but it didn't meet our core mission, which we had 70 people involved, kind of outreach with some of the veterans organizations, some of the force health issues and those things. I said, look, those are primarily Title X responsibilities. Service secretaries and service chiefs already have those responsibilities. I need to recapitalize those 70 people to do what's on our mission-essential task list. It's not that I didn't care about those issues. In previous assignments, I've been decisively engaged on those issues. But we have to do what we can only do, and we have to do it well.

So all of you will only be here during a period of discomfort. I can't promise you anything other than that. I mean, eventually we will get to where we want to be, but this is going to be a five- to seven-year evolutionary process before we actually get to where we need to be, because there's going to be changes in the Unified Command Plan. There's going to be changes in staff.

My own advice to you, as you think about it in the future, is, I have seen people try to change the organizational construct first and then get after the business. It doesn't work. It doesn't work. The antibodies come out and, you know, it'll be stillborn. What we are doing right now is we are doing the work, and we'll let the form follow the function over time.

I'll just tell you what I told a couple of generals and admirals yesterday, because we were talking about organization to do this. I said, stop, I don't actually care. That's not my problem. I said you have to reorganize the J5 and you have the proper directives to reorganize the J5, working with the J3. Go do it. I don't care, just figure it out. Here's what I want you to do. Here's what we have to do. Optimize the force and the people that we have to get it done and assume you're not going to have any more.

**Q:** Well, one is more of a personal question. Like, what's a good book you've read lately, if you've had any time at all? And the other one is more substantial. That is, using AI to complete objectives, I guess, what's your thoughts on using it? And do you think it depersonalizes war?

**Dunford:** Sure. So a book I just read, and it took me a while to plow through it. My nightstand, maybe yours is the same way, I literally have probably 15 books on my nightstand. I've got about 15 more on my desk at home and then a stack at – I'm a serial buyer. (Laughter.) And I'm a periodic reader. And over time, that's actually a problem. And there is – if you haven't ever been – are you guys familiar with Eastern Market? Have you ever been to the used bookstore there? I'm like customer number two or one, or something. But there's a biography by Harold Johnson, who was the chief of staff of the Army during Vietnam.

There is a particularly meaningful section about three-quarters of the way in the book where he reflects back on his decision not to resign during the Vietnam War. In terms of civil-military relations and leadership responsibilities, I found it to be a pretty compelling biography. He also was a guy who [was in] the Philippines when it fell in World War II. He was a soldier, he was a young captain or lieutenant in the late 1930s. Then in World War II he spent a fair amount of time as a POW and then came back as the chief of staff of the Army.

He also is the subject of H.R. McMaster's book *Dereliction of Duty*. If you want a fully balanced view of the leadership in that period of time, I think you'd have to read both books, and you can kind of make your own conclusions. So I've read that. Now, for trying to fall asleep at night, I just read a Ken Follett novel. I try 15 to 20 minutes to try to clean my brain out. I don't know if you've ever read any of his stuff. I was just trying to think of the name, I just finished it about two weeks ago, but it's about the CIA guy who goes to Afghanistan in the 1980s. So it's actually pretty interesting.

He goes up and in the book, he's the guy that brokered the deal between the Sunni and the CIA to arm the opposition to the Russians. So it's actually a loosely a historical novel, which I kind of prefer, is historical novels, because then I feel like I'm doing something useful but I'm also relaxing. (Laughter.) And so we kind of do it. So those are probably two of the ones that I'm reading today.

**Dunford:** So this is an easy one. Who's read the *Outliers*? Anybody read the *Outliers*? OK. So this is interesting. This book has probably informed me about professional development more than any book I've read. It isn't what you directly get from the book. Like I said, it's only just going to take you a couple hours on a Saturday to read it. But basically, the thesis is that people who achieve excellence, it's a function of having 10,000 hours of practice.

He tells a story about, if you were born in January, for example, as opposed to December, you're a little bit bigger when you play baseball or hockey or, you know, whatever. And so what happens is you kind of get picked for the all-star team. What happens then is you actually play more games, you get more practice. What happens you get more games and more practice? You get picked to be on something else, you get more games and more practice. He's got a correlation between the kids that played hockey who are born in January and born in December, and then a correlation to NHL players and others that were born at a different time of year, just because of the way we start our kids off. He also talks about the Beatles and the Beatles

achieving greatness. They played seven nights a week in Germany and places in Europe in the early days when they were unknown. Again, 10,000 hours of practice.

Well, what influenced me about the book was I was starting to think about 10,000 hours of practice is kind of a notional idea. I said: What is it you want in your leaders at various levels? Then I unpacked it and said: Well, there's a certain amount of training, there's a certain amount of education, there's a certain amount of experience that you would want to have somebody in whatever given job you have. So, you're a petty officer and so forth, and you're in there, you're junior officers. And this, I think, applies to all of our members. If you really want to have a deliberate path towards developing the kind of skills and leadership at a certain level, you should be very clear on what is the path of training, how to do something; the path of education, how to think; and then the experience that you would need to be excellent. That's 10,000 hours to me.

What I want to do is I want to make sure that leaders have 10,000 hours of experience, whatever 10,000 hours means in a particular endeavor. Especially going out there now, again, and being responsible for development of your people, you thinking about what 10,000 hours means to your petty officers and making sure you go, OK, someone that has this particular assignment should look like this. Well, they're not going to look like that just because they show up and say I'm Petty Officer First Class Smith and I'm here to do this job. Left of reporting in, that soldier, sailor or airman, as the case may be, should have that path.

When I was a service chief, I took that idea and established a program of NCO development that was based on that 10,000 hours. And, lo, some of the manpower recalcitrance that delayed – (inaudible) – had come along when we went back and said: No, these are the things that to get somebody to year seven who really is the NCO that you want, this is the specific path that you want to put them on. You can kind of increase the odds that you will get something you'll like on the back side.

With regard to artificial intelligence, first of all, what applications can I see immediately that that would help us with? If you look at Project Maven, which is optimizing kind of the intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance that we have, there is a perfect example. The one that I'm personally engaged in right now – so who's in J3? So you know we're trying to use just data in a different way to come up with sourcing solutions faster. Well, the next step, if you haven't been in the meeting, is to get the best guy, supposedly – the best AI guy in the world. He's Finnish, so we're trying to get him a secret clearance. What I'm trying to do is take our OPLANs and actually run them a hundred times virtually before we actually put all the strategists in the room around the map board and start putting (inaudible).

So in my judgment, kind of doing that man-machine learning and so forth. That gets you to – I'll give you an example of what we're trying to avoid. We did a war game against Iran about eight or nine years ago. Everything took months of just trying to do that. We've got hundreds of people down in Milford, Virginia who do this thing. In the first 15 minutes, this retired general takes all the – (inaudible) – folks, and basically brings the United States Navy to a standstill and the plans begin to unravel. We shouldn't be figuring that out when 400 people have spent six months getting ready for that exercise. And we sure as hell shouldn't be figuring it out at the point of contact, right?

So I think there's tremendous utility in doing this. I don't believe that we should ever get to the point where the use of force has anything other than a man, figuratively speaking, in the room. Decision-making about engaging, in my judgment, is something that a human should do. I don't think there's a way to automate that that makes me comfortable. Now, I may be stuck in an early 21st century mindset. (Laughter.) Somebody may by 2050, 2060, or 2070 have a different view of that. But I think in the transition period, which is the period that we're living in today, I think there is tremendous utility in making people more efficient and supporting the decisions that people make. That's the utility, as opposed to replacing the people in terms of decision-making. Now, in terms of tasks, I'm not worried about tasks. But in terms of decision-making, I would be concerned if we're using AI to make decisions.

**Remarks at the 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion 15th Reunion Lunch  
Falls Church, Virginia**

**March 17**

Mrs. [Diana] MacDonald [mother of Lance Corporal Lance E. MacDonald, killed in action 25 June 2003], we won't ever forget your son. Nor will we forget the other Marines that we have lost along the way. I know they're very much here with us in spirit. I suspect your son would be very happy to be here with the Wolfpack this many years later.

I want to thank you as a team for a couple things. First, I think the one responsibility we all have is just to do our duty when it's our time to serve on active duty. You all learned an important chapter in Marine Corps history. I don't know whether you know it or not, but I would give you credit for keeping a lot of Marines and sailors alive. What I remember very well in 2003, with General [H. Stacy] Clardy, is when we crossed the line of departure into Iraq, we did not know very much about the enemy situation. We didn't know very much at all. You know, today, 15 years later, we've got all kinds of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems. We've got satellite communications – things we didn't have in 2003.

What we were doing, after offloading two squadrons of maritime prepositioned ships in 16 days, and at one point moving over 600 kilometers by the time you got to Samarra – 600 kilometers – what we were doing in effect was a movement to contact. The organization that was out there in front of the 1st Marine Division, 22,000 Marines, probably some, I don't know, maybe 4,000 or 5,000 vehicles in the 1st Marine Division at that point. But the organization that was on point most of the way was Wolfpack. Out there, developing the situation, finding the enemy, and making sure that we could do what we had to do to keep our Marines and sailors alive and accomplish the mission. I give you a lot of credit for that.

The other responsibility we have, I think, is we never leave a Marine behind. That doesn't mean just physically on the battlefield. It means forever, once we're Marines. The fact that you all have come together, and the fact that we have the folks over here that have helped us come together, is actually very important. General Clardy talked about the importance of reunions. As I was here a few minutes ago just watching the video and reflecting about reunions, I had four uncles who were Marines in World War II. My dad was a Marine in Korea. I had a great uncle that was in World War I, who was still alive when I was a kid.

We didn't ever get a chance to talk to him very much. He was very closed within himself, and never knew his story. Most of the Marines in those days would go home and they would just go back into the family – back into their family business or back into society. And they really had no one to talk to, because no one understands their story better than those that were with them. So I think the fact that you've come together now for the second time in five years, and I hope you'll continue to do that, I think is something that this generation is doing that's better than what we have done in the past.

It helps us to keep that responsibility of never leaving a Marine behind, even after we've left active duty, in many cases. We don't leave each other behind. We stay together. You were a family unit. You were tight. You were combat-effective in 2003. You were that way because you didn't have to worry about the men on your left and right, you didn't have to look behind to see if somebody was covering your six. You just knew that. You just knew that because there was a Marine or sailor to your left or right, and you knew you had your trust, and you could trust them. I would tell you, what I'm seeing here today is you still have those qualities some 15 years later.

I'm privileged to have had a front row seat to watch you in combat. I hadn't even thought about some of the things that I thought about in the last few minutes, after watching that video. The last time I thought about those chickens was 15 years ago. And for Rick Levinson, I'm very sorry that you got the bottom end of the pack there with the MREs. And you were whining about it as well. It's kind of unbelievable.

But, listen, I'm supposed to stay two to three minutes. I've already probably run over. All I wanted to tell you is I was incredibly proud to have served with you, to have served alongside of you, and to have watched you in action, both on the march up and then there's a few in the room I know that stayed in the summer of 2003, that operated up in northern Erbil as well in the summer of 2003. I had a chance to watch a young colonel be proud. But I have the same pride today that I had back in 2003, just looking out there and knowing that you are still United States Marines or sailors who served with the United States Marines.

Some of you have put on a couple pounds. Some of you have got a few gray hairs. Some of you don't have any hair. But down deep inside, where it really matters, you're still United States Marines. You're still taking care of each other. You're still doing what must be done. So God bless you all. *Semper Fidelis*. Thanks so much for the honor of being with you today.

**Article from *Joint Force Quarterly* (National Defense University Press)**

**2nd Quarter 2018, Issue 89**

**“The Character of War and Strategic Landscape Have Changed”**

Over the past two decades, the strategic landscape has changed dramatically. While the fundamental nature of war has not changed, the pace of change and modern technology, coupled with shifts in the nature of geopolitical competition, have altered the character of war in the 21st century. Advancements in space, information systems, cyberspace, electronic warfare, and missile technology have accelerated the speed and complexity of war. As a result, decision space has collapsed, and we can assume that any future conflict will involve all domains and cut across multiple geographic regions.

Today's strategic landscape is also extraordinarily volatile, and the Nation faces threats from an array of state and nonstate actors. Revisionist powers such as China and Russia seek to undermine the credibility of our alliances and limit our ability to project power. North Korea's efforts to develop a nuclear-capable, intercontinental ballistic missile now threaten the homeland and our allies in the Pacific. Iran routinely destabilizes its neighbors and threatens freedom of navigation while modernizing its maritime, missile, space, and cyber capabilities. Violent extremist organizations (VEOs), such as the so called Islamic State (IS) and al Qaeda, remain a transregional threat to the homeland, our allies, and our way of life.

These realities are why some have called today's operating environment the most challenging since World War II. At the same time, the U.S. military's long-held competitive advantage has eroded. Our decisive victory in Operation *Desert Storm* was a wake-up call for our enemies; they observed that our operational source of strength is the ability to project power where and when needed to advance U.S. interests and meet alliance commitments. This spurred dramatic tactical, operational, and strategic adaptations and accelerated modernization programs to asymmetrically counter our ability to project power.

All the while, budget instability and the challenges of a decades-long campaign against violent extremism adversely affected our own modernization and capability development efforts required to preserve—or in some cases restore—our competitive advantage. Additionally, the Joint Force lacks sufficient capacity to meet combatant command requirements. Over the past 16 years, we made a conscious choice to limit the size of the force to preserve scarce resources necessary for essential investments in immediate upgrades to critical capabilities. And requirements have not abated, as we assumed they would after major combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan ended. As a result, global demand for forces continues to exceed the inventory.

Finally, as a nation that thinks and acts globally, the United States cannot choose between a force that can address IS and other VEOs and one that can deter and defeat state actors with a full range of capabilities. We require a balanced force that can address the challenges outlined in the recently published National Defense Strategy and has the inherent flexibility to respond to the unexpected.

Advances in technology and the changing character of war require that our plans address all-domain, transregional challenges and conflict. In the past, we assumed most crises could be contained to one region. That assumption, in turn, drove regionally focused planning and decision making processes. Today, this assumption no longer holds true. Our planning must adapt to provide a global perspective that views challenges holistically and enables execution of military campaigns with a flexibility and speed that outpaces our adversaries.

We must also be prepared to make decisions at the speed of relevance. While the cost of failure at the outset of conflict has always been high, in past conflicts there were opportunities to absorb costs and recover if something went wrong. Today, that cannot be assumed, and our strategic decision making processes must adapt to keep pace. Senior leaders require routine access to synthesized information and intelligence to ensure their ability to see the fight in real time and seize initiative.

We must manage the force in a manner that allows us to meet day-to-day requirements, while maintaining readiness and the flexibility to respond to major contingencies and the unexpected. To ensure that the Joint Force provides viable options and is in position to execute when called on, our force posture must be optimized to strategic priorities and provide strength, agility, and resilience across regions and domains. To arrest and, in time, reverse the erosion of our competitive advantage, our force development and design processes must deliver a Joint Force

capable of competing and winning against any potential adversary. This future force must remain competitive in all domains, deny adversaries' ability to counter our strengths asymmetrically, and retain the ability to project power at a time and place of our choosing.

Finally, we must further develop leaders capable of thriving at the speed of war—leaders who can adapt to change, drive innovation, and thrive in uncertain, chaotic conditions. The nature of war has not changed, and, in a violent clash of wills, it is the human dimension that ultimately determines the success of any campaign.

To address these imperatives, we are adapting our approach to planning, decision making, force management, and force design. These processes are interdependent and mutually reinforcing—intended to drive the changes required to maintain our competitive advantage. Over the past 2 years, we have made progress in each of these areas, but more work remains.

The National Defense Strategy establishes clear priorities for the Department of Defense, and the National Military Strategy is nested within to provide a global framework for the Joint Force to operate across regions, domains, and functions. We reoriented the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan to operationalize the strategy and developed Global Campaign Plans to provide a framework for planning an all-domain, transregional approach to the challenges outlined in the National Defense Strategy. These plans are designed to bring coherence to operations of all functional and geographic combatant commands.

The Joint Force is also improving how it frames decisions for the Secretary of Defense in an all-domain, transregional fight. This begins by developing a common intelligence picture and a shared understanding of global force posture, which then serves as a baseline to test operational plans and concepts through realistic and demanding exercises and wargames. By testing our assumptions and concepts, exercises and wargames provide senior leaders with the “reps-and-sets” necessary to build the implicit communication required to facilitate rapid decision making in times of crisis.

Our force management processes are evolving to support the objectives laid out in the National Defense Strategy. Setting the globe begins by allocating resources against strategic priorities—optimizing the way we posture capabilities globally to support our strategy, provide strategic flexibility, and ensure our ability to respond rapidly to the unexpected. Once the globe is set, we are applying the concept of Dynamic Force Employment to provide proactive and scalable options for priority missions while maintaining readiness to respond to contingencies. In a global environment that demands strategic flexibility and freedom of action, these adaptations enable the Joint Force to seize the initiative rather than react when faced with multiple challenges.

To ensure our competitive advantage, we are implementing a process for force design that provides the Secretary with integrated solutions to drive the development of a more lethal force. This process begins by assessing our ability to execute the strategy and compares our capabilities and capacities vis-à-vis our adversaries. Assessment findings shape the development of comprehensive materiel and nonmateriel recommendations that inform the Secretary's priorities for investment, concept development, experimentation, and innovation. This approach is designed to provide integrated solutions, across the Services, which ensure competitive advantage today and tomorrow. Finally, we are reinvigorating strategic assessments to support all these efforts. Assessments provide the analytic rigor to inform our ability both to meet the current strategy and to develop a future force that maintains our competitive advantage. A cornerstone of this process is the Chairman's Risk Assessment, which evaluates our current ability to execute the National Military Strategy and provides a global perspective of risk across



the Joint Force. And, in 2016, we published the Joint Military Net Assessment for the first time in 20 years—benchmarking the Joint Force against near-peer adversaries today and comparing our trajectory over the next 5 years. These assessments are essential to provide an analytic baseline for everything we do—from planning to force management and from exercise development to force design.

There is no preordained right to victory on the battlefield, and today the United States faces an extraordinarily complex and dynamic security environment. To keep pace with the changing character of war, we must globally integrate the way we plan, employ the force, and design the force of the future. If we fail to adapt, the Joint Force will lose the ability to compete.

**Excerpts from Remarks at the National Defense University President's Lecture Series  
Fort Lesley J. McNair, District of Columbia  
May 2**

**Q:** Sir, Captain Ali from Lebanon. My question relates to the support the United States has for allies and partners. Sometimes there are conflicting interests. I talk about the SDF in Turkey, about Qatar and Saudi Arabia. And how the United States manages to deal with this competition? Thank you.

**Dunford:** Hey, look, that's a great question. I'll give you a case study. So the question really gets at sometimes when we're doing things we have to be flipping priorities. And that's never been truer than Syria. In fact, if you took Webster's and you put the word wicked, you could just put a map of Syria next to it and there'll be the definition, from my perspective, of what we've been dealing with here over the last couple of years.

Our priority objective in Syria was to defeat ISIS militarily. Yet the force that we have been working with here for the last 18 to 20 months is of great concern to our NATO ally, Turkey. Balancing that has been very difficult.

Let me walk you through how we made the decisions we made, and then you can get a sense for how we balanced it. In the fall of 2015 – some of you were out there in the operating forces – in the fall of 2015, it would be an understatement to say that ISIS was ascendant. They occupied a significant part of Iraq. They occupied a significant part of Syria. They had a lot of the oil infrastructure. They were taxing people. Their narrative was that there was a physical caliphate being established in Iraq and Syria, and it had mobilized large numbers of disaffected young people to answer the call to jihad. That's when in excess of 45,000 foreign fighters from 120 countries all moved to Iraq and Syria.

We started a train-and-equip program in Syria with the Free Syrian Army. After months and months, we had trained about 75 individuals, and we probably had about 300, 400 people under arms fighting ISIS. To say that was inadequate would be an understatement. We kept working away at it, and we finally identified a partner in the form of what is now known as the Syrian Democratic Forces. It, by the way, is a force of about 60,000 and more than 50 percent Arab today but has a significant Kurdish component.

That force proved to be the only force that would actually fight ISIS, not fight the regime, because our policy objective was on ISIS. And actually, with the training and equipment that we provided, we affected it. There's probably some people in this room that are responsible for the growth of the Syrian Democratic Forces and the effectiveness of their efforts against ISIS over the past 18 months.

We've tried to work that. I personally went to Turkey 14 times between August of 2016 and this past December. I probably met with my Turkish counterpart – not probably – I have met with my Turkish counterpart more than any one of my other counterparts, and maybe in excess of 20 times since I've been in this job trying to manage the relationship.

The truth of the matter is that the only people who think there are simple solutions in places like Syria are what I describe as refugees from accountability. Those are people who don't actually own the outcome. In the real world, you've got to make the right choices and you've got to balance it. So what do we do?

This Sunday, once again, J5, Lieutenant General [Richard D.] Clarke – we all know him – he's getting on a plane. He's going over to Ankara to sit down and see if we can't work out an effective security arrangement that addresses our Turkish allies' concerns in northern Syria. He'll continue – and you probably saw in the newspaper – continue the SDF efforts against the remnants of ISIS in the Euphrates River.

There are no easy answers here. What we have committed to is that we will politically support the Geneva process. We will support all of the people inside Syria – Turkmen, Christians, Kurds, Arabs. We will do that. And we will work towards an arrangement in Syria that addresses the security concerns of our Turkish friends. It is a 9.9 degree of difficulty on a scale of 10 to be able to do that. But the alternative we had in 2015 – and I was in this job – the alternative we had to supporting the Syrian – what is now known as the Syrian Democratic Forces, at that time largely a Kurdish force – the alternative we had to deal with ISIS in Syria was no alternative. We had to manage it.

If you take a look at your own country, I think you know our relationship with the Lebanese Armed Forces is very important to us and we're supporting them. People in the United States would say, well, they're heavily influenced by Hezbollah in Lebanon. Why are you supporting the Lebanese Armed Forces? Our perspective is, no, the Lebanese Armed Forces is an independent organization, is important to the security of the region, is important to security in Lebanon, is our ally, and we're going to try to work in a very complex environment where Hezbollah and Lebanese Armed Forces exist there. We're supporting the Lebanese Armed Forces. Guess what. Our Israeli friends aren't particularly happy sometimes with our efforts in supporting Lebanese Armed Forces.

So most of the situations I'm dealing with fall in the category that you talked about. To be honest with you, each one of them is unique. Each one of them requires a tremendous amount of effort. If you go into this from understanding what I spoke about earlier – and then the most important thing we have is allies and partners – and your actions are informed by that, you will work through them. A degree of transparency, a lot of social energy being put into these problems, and continuing to work through the issue, and never quitting, never being tired of going to yet another planning effort, never being tired of sending your people back one more time to look at this thing from a different perspective helps move it along.

Many people – you just go back and do a media search of what people were saying in the fall of 2015 about our efforts in Syria. Just go back and look at the headlines, and everyone was saying this is a disaster; no way you should do this. Then you look at where we are today. For those people that – sending the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne with the 101<sup>st</sup> into Syria in 2015, we might be where we are today in terms of ISIS being on the run. We sure wouldn't be anywhere near transition.

So I don't have an easy answer for you other than to tell you that what you've identified is absolutely the difficulty of implementing policy in the military dimension of a policy, where

many of your priorities, if not your interests, are actually in tension with each other. I could probably spend the next 30 minutes just talking about the problems that you identified and open it up a little bit and talk about where we are in Iraq, where we are in Israel, where we are in Jordan, where we are in Lebanon, where we are with Turkey, where we are within Syria with the major stakeholders that are in Syria right now and how we're trying to manage that and come up with some effective outcome on the back side that makes strategic sense in the context of our interests. It's not easy. That's why you're in school so you can actually help me. In the back. Yes, sir.

**Q:** Good morning, sir. Lieutenant Colonel Mike Binetti from the Eisenhower School. Former Chairman Admiral [Michael G.] Mullen has said publicly, in *Forbes* Magazine and other press venues, that the national debt is the single greatest threat to our national security. This year is the largest defense budget in history, and the overall federal debt continues to grow. What responsibilities do you think you have as the chairman, along with the secretary of defense, in helping the nation to control the annual deficit and the overall federal debt?

**Dunford:** Yeah. Hey, look, it's a great question. I'm not going to be flippant. I believe what Admiral Mullen said was true in the sense that if we're not solvent as a nation, then we will not be who we are as a nation. So let's put that aside.

But let me say something that the secretary has said from time to time. Our nation can afford to defend itself. The 3.1 or 3.2 percent that we're spending on defending the nation is not what's caused us to be in the situation that we're in. I will tell you, from a uniformed perspective, my job is to articulate what we need to invest in to address the security concerns that we have in the context of those challenges that I outlined earlier.

I think it's fair for us, and we should be good stewards of the nation's resources. It's fair for us to be expected to be able to be auditable. There's no question about that. It's fair for us to be able to say that we're transparent and accountable for the resources that we have. That's all fair.

It's not fair to say that because we're spending 3.1 or 3.2 percent – and, by the way, at the height of the Vietnam War, it was about 8.5 percent. And there's got to be an expert out here. World War II, I think, was closer to 30 percent of the GDP in World War II. I don't think the argument should start with, well, you're spending \$716 billion on defense this year, and that's why we have this national-debt problem. I think that's an oversimplification of the problem. People who come in and preach that, I would take issue with it.

Again, I'd just go back to what – look at the environment. I gave you just a brief overview of the strategic landscape. You've spent the whole year studying it. We can afford survival. I'd make the same argument about the nuclear enterprise. People talk about how much the nuclear enterprise costs. It's job one in the Department of Defense, to deter a nuclear war. So if 6 percent of the budget at the peak is necessary for job one, so be it.

Again, I'm not making light of the deficit at all, and I do believe it is a national-security concern. But I think my job – I can't fix that. What I can do is provide military advice as to the capabilities and capacities our nation must maintain in order to deal with the challenges that we have. Then our political leadership can determine what risk to the nation they want to experience as a result of the changing level of investment from the recommendations we make. That's kind of where I'm at. Who else?

**Q:** Good morning, sir. I'm Colonel Shewanth [Kulatunge] from the Sri Lankan Army, Class of 2018. My question is with regard to China. You spoke about China, and you said that China is

adapting. What we see today is that China is using nonmilitary means, especially economic tools and means to gain great influence in Asia, as well as in Africa. So have you identified the risks, secret risks, involved in China's ability to gain great influence in Asia through economic means, and also ways of mitigating those risks?

**Dunford:** Sure. For those that couldn't hear, the question really was have we really taken a hard look at the risks associated with the Chinese and its economic influence and ways to mitigate those risks. The short answer is yes. Am I complacent about where we are? No. I mean, that is the challenge that we will be confronting, primarily in the next couple of days. But I want to make one point, first of all, on the military dimension, and then talk more broadly.

You have speakers that will talk about things like freedom of navigation operations. People ask me, why do you guys make such a big deal out of a pile of rocks in the South China Sea? What difference does it make? What's that pile of rocks all about? Why are you even paying attention to it? From a military perspective, even a military buildup in the South China Sea is a military problem, but it is a military problem for which there is a solution. So why are you all revved up all about it?

The number one issue goes back to what I spoke about earlier, and that is the rules-based order that exists in the Pacific. That's what's at stake with that pile of rocks is the rules-based order that we have all benefited from. By the way, China has benefited from that rules-based order over the past six or seven decades. Unless nations are willing to take a coherent, collective response to violations of that rules-based international order, we're going to do what we typically do when we're leaders. When we walk by something that's substandard and we don't correct it, what have we done? We have just set a new standard, and it's lowered.

A failure for the international community to take a coherent, collective response to violations of the rules-based international order means we have just set a new standard, and it's lower than what it was yesterday, when we don't act.

So with regard to China, there are many nations that have challenges reconciling the significant economic relationships they have with China with the security relationship they have with the United States. Not only is China leveraging their economic weight to try to make these nations make a choice, but China is also responsible for the narrative that says the United States of America is leaving the Pacific, is no longer interested, to which, when I look at it, 60 percent of the Navy, 60 percent of the Air Force, a significant part of the Army, 60 percent of the Marine Corps, is all assigned to the United States specifically. So militarily it's not there. Truly, from an economic perspective, we probably have some work to do in terms of an economic framework within which to advance our interests in the Pacific. That would be a fair criticism at this point, and we're working at it.

But I think the important thing for us with regard to China is each one of the nations in the region has to be assured – both our allies and others have to be assured of our enduring commitment to the Pacific. And so, on one hand, you can look at China and say all is lost. On the other hand, I look at India. I look at Australia. I look at Singapore. I look at Indonesia. I look at Vietnam. I look at South Korea. I look at Japan. I say I actually would rather be where we are than where China is in terms of allies and partners. If we can bring together in some coherent way those nations – and we are doing that, to some extent, now – then I think we can achieve a degree of balance and maintain the international order and rules-based international order that's in the Pacific.

That's probably an issue that next year, for example to write about, because I wouldn't argue that we've solved it, but I would argue that it certainly is the strategic challenge for our nation in the future, is managing China. Yes, sir.

**Q:** Sir, Lieutenant Colonel Walker, College of Information and Cyberspace. With Russia and China modernizing their militaries and being very active in cyberspace, are we developing the deterrent strategies from deterring them from interfering with our networks, military and government?

**Dunford:** OK, that's a great question. The question is, are we developing deterrent strategies. So let me start by saying what is it we're trying to do. Whether it be in cyberspace or in any other domain, we're trying to make sure that the message is loud and clear to China and others – Russia – that whatever they do, whatever they hope to gain by what they do, the cost that we will impose on them exceeds whatever benefit they expect to derive, right. So that's what we're trying to do.

When people say we don't have cyber deterrence, my response is we don't need cyber deterrence. We need deterrence. What those nations who may conduct offensive operations against us in cyberspace need to expect is that we will take advantage of the full inventory of diplomatic, informational, military, and economic weight of the United States' partners and allies and bring that to bear on any violation of our sovereignty or the sovereignty of our allies. That's what needs to be clear.

So the issue of cyber is, of course, more of what constitutes a cyberattack, attribution – those kinds of issues. To me the issue is not about the fundamental framework of deterrence. It exists against any violation of sovereignty. If you violate our sovereignty, if you violate the sovereignty of our allies, you will pay a cost that far exceeds whatever you thought you were going to gain by that violation. That just needs to be clear.

I agree with you. There is some ambiguity in that regard. When I first came into the job, to be honest with you, a number of people said, hey, you've got to think about cyber deterrence. Well, the first couple of months, hey, maybe I'm missing something, and I don't know what to do. But I don't know what – and eventually I came back to where I was when I started, which was, well, I don't really need cyber deterrence. We just need deterrence. We just need to be able to identify what constitutes an attack. That's a fundamentally political decision, right – when our political leaders here say we've been attacked.

We then need to be able to integrate all aspects national power and impose a cost on our adversary. Does that get to your question?

**Q:** Yes, sir.

**Dunford:** OK, thanks. Yes, ma'am? And by the way, if I've said something today either in my opening remarks or the questions, and I'm off base from your perspective and you haven't said anything, you've set a new standard and it's lower, too. Because I'm going to walk out of here thinking that I've said something brilliant and everybody bought it. So, please, if there's something that's kind of peering at you, we've got time to come back in.

**Q:** Sarah Percy-Cinnamon, College of Information and Cyberspace. In the context of your earlier comments about the Joint Military Net Assessment, and the pace of change, and the last several years of conversations about a new Goldwater-Nichols Act or any transformation of the – I hesitate to use the word transformation – but a change in the view via that way we do business. Can you share your thoughts with us on a little bit more of those topics?

**Dunford:** Yeah. Now, are you talking about changes as in the UCP, or what – help me out. Which area do you want me to kind of zero in on?

**Q:** Sir, in the context of the pace of change – and so in the fall we had a cyber beacon program where a company talked about do we disrupt ourselves in order to remain competitive? How should the DOD possibly change in order to maintain a force that is agile and resilient in the face of the changing character of conflict?

**Dunford:** Sure. Look, it starts with deciding what you want to be able to do, right? So when I look at the primary focus of the joint force, it isn't about anti-access/area denial. It's about we must be able to project power when and where necessary to advance our interests, today and in the future, so the number one, you know, source of strength we have is projecting power. So the context within which we're going to project power tomorrow is much different than today, and so if someone said to me, what is the number one issue right now in your inbox from a capability development perspective, I'd tell you it's the electromagnetic spectrum and electronic warfare. That's the first – so in terms of changing the force, by looking at these 15 competitive areas, looking at where we have challenges, looking at what we want to do and the environment within which we are going to do it, I think that's going to drive fundamentally the reordering of the way we prioritize and allocate our resources, and the capabilities that we invest in.

I guess it will be evolutionary. I mean, I can't tell you today where 2027 will be in terms of the relative apportionment we'll make to cyberspace, space and all those kind of things. But I can give you some of the things we would invest in. Number one, if you look at space, we built space with an assumption that it was going to be completely testing. And now we rely on it for our global positioning, we rely on it for targeting. Which would mean that to say we're dependent on space would be an understatement.

Space is going to change. We don't have the resilience in space to assure our access to space in war. It's not going to be a war in space. You're going to have a war, and there's going to be a space element to that war. So that's a fundamental change that we'll make in the joint force. In terms of owning the electromagnetic spectrum, if you look at one of the challenges we're having today across the board, it's people bringing down our UAVs, it's people preventing us from penetrating integrated air defense systems, and so forth, so we're going to have to make some investments in that regard.

If you look at enemy missile developments, our defensive systems against the current enemy capability are adequate. If you start to think about things like hypersonics – missiles that can go really fast – you start to think about hypersonics and so forth, you've got to change the way you do missile defense. You also have to change the balance between what you expect to defend and then your strike capabilities, and then you're going to have to deal with the aggregate threat that you face.

What I can tell you is that every single area across the joint force is going to have to change, informed by an all-domain fight in the context of a China-Russia – and I think primarily China. If you look out to China in 2030, 2035, we're going to have to make some fundamental changes to be able to do that. Something as simple as nuclear command and control. You know, there are some challenges out there today that have to be overcome to make sure that we have a credible deterrent in the nuclear command and control system that actually can survive.

So I guess my answer back to you is there's nothing that won't change. There's nothing that won't change, but what we need to be clear on is we're not just chasing hypersonics. We're not just chasing artificial intelligence. We're not just chasing more cyber. I mean, if we – if you think about it, right – if you look at things – capability areas, what is the ceiling for investing in

cyber today? What's the ceiling for investing in missile defense? What's the ceiling for investing in maritime, or strike capability, or special operations? It's infinite. It's infinite, and so what you've got to be able to do is you've got to be able to figure out how to horizontally integrate those capabilities to deliver an outcome; that outcome being our ability to project power, you know, against the threats we expect to face in 2030. Does that get at your question? If you were looking for something more specific, I wish I had it, but go ahead. Come back.

**Q:** Well – yes, sir. In broad terms, I mean, are there still some elephants in the room? I mean, when you look at potentially operating in the gray space more. You talked about projecting power. Are there futures that you may envision, or possible futures, where the maneuver forces will not be in the effort? Say, a battle of ideas, cognitive space?

**Dunford:** I am not dealing with a single problem right now where the military dimension or maneuver forces is the main effort today, so if you think about, you know, gray space, hybrid warfare – I call it adversarial competition below Level 1 conflict just so there's no baggage associated with the term. So I just call it what it is.

I look at that right now, and so – I mentioned earlier, what is that really? It's political influence, it's economic coercion, information operations, unconventional operations, and then military posture. There's a military dimension to it. For me today, if you say, what's the military dimension of it – one, it's our information operations; we contribute in that regard. We contribute in cyberspace. We contribute with our military posture.

What are we competing for in that gray space? We are competing for our relationships, our allies and partnerships. We're competing for the cohesion and the viability of our allies. So it's about traditional tasks which are to deter an adversary, to assure our allies, to compete on a day-to-day basis, to make sure that those relationships are solid, and then to make sure that you have the access and posture to respond in the event that deterrence fails.

I don't see those things changing, but I see the ways in which actually go about doing those things as they are changing – I mean, to tell you truth, if you are uncomfortable with change today, you're going to be uncomfortable for the rest of your career because all of those things are changing right now. Yes, sir. And then I'll come back to the hand over there.

**Q:** Sir, I'm Bryan Pope, Department of the Army, studying at the National War College. The discussion so far, as you've talked about assumptions, it just occurs to me, you net assessment, it seems we're assuming that the defense industrial base, our national innovation system, our education systems are going to be able to keep pace - we're going to develop the new capability that we don't even know we need yet – that we have the foundations from which to do it. Did your net assessments take that sort of set of ideas into account?

**Dunford:** Yes, well, it's a great question, and I know, broadly, at Eisenhower, particularly, you guys are taking a broad look at the problem set. The assessment we did is specifically a military net assessment, so it's not part of that. I wanted it to be a product that the rest of the government can access; in fact, what I've been trying to tell people on the Hill and in the executive branch is that we don't want to own the product. We want the product to stand on its own because it has analytic rigor. Then we want you to look at the so what, and then come up with what is our nation going to do about it. So, to be honest with you, I can't solve many of the problems that you just spoke about. What I can do is inform our leadership about the imperative of solving those problems because of the impact that it's going to have on our security.

Our joint –here's one thing I would just tell you, is what you need to be afraid of when you are in uniform – and for those coming to the Joint Staff, let me be clear on this – the military

dimension of the problem. It doesn't mean you don't care about all the other things, but there is a lane that you work, and you've got to actually be the expert in that lane, and you've got to address the challenges in that lane. Then you've got to inform the others who actually contribute to solving the overall problems that you spoke about.

But when I tell people what the nation must produce in order for us to maintain that competitive advantage, they're then confronted with some of the challenges that you spoke about, whether it be the education system and all those kinds of things. But to be honest with you, at the Joint Staff, I am working almost – you could accuse me of myopia, I suppose, if you want to, but the military dimension of the problem is the one that we're singularly focused on.

**Q:** Then, sir, to the third point: do you feel like you have government interlocutors in which to address those other concerns and they are backing you?

**Dunford:** Today it's difficult. Today it's difficult. You know, if you take a look at – and we'll settle down here now a little bit – but we've had some pretty good changes in the national security decision-making process. But more importantly, one of the challenges we have as a nation is the tyranny of the current operation, right? So if you look at what we're dealing with as a nation, the deep fights get sacrificed. People that really can help us in that regard I think are the Congress. We have had a dialogue with them about what needs to be done to maybe have a little bit better division of labor between today and tomorrow. But I think that problem has impacted us inside the U.S. military over the past decade. It certainly impacts the nation as a whole, as well. Unsatisfactory answer, I understand, but that's kind of where we are. All the way in the back.

**Q:** Hello, sir. You talk about the military conventional problem. We tend to focus on Phase 3 operations, with China expanding, with bases now in Africa and expected to be in other places. Is there things we should be doing differently through – about thinking about how we approach the zero through 2 before we actually get to engagement and combat operations?

**Dunford:** Hey, that's a great question because it gives me a chance to talk to you about how I think about phasing at the strategic level. I have put a stake in the heart of phasing at the strategic level because there's actually no such thing. Now let me explain. We do need phasing to do things like operational plans. Why? Because as I describe it, you've got to move planes, trains and automobiles. So there's the physics of our business and science of our business that requires you to think about things in terms of phasing.

But at the strategic level, if you think about it – when I talk about China and Russia, if we thought about ourselves in Phase 0, then by definition that would be peace, right? So in peacetime there would be certain authorities, certain capabilities, and certain activities that would be associated with peacetime. Then we would, if we went to war, break glass and pull out all those other authorities and capabilities and activities, meaning things like information operations that we might not typically associate with being at peace, or cyber operations that we might not typically associate with being at peace, and so forth.

Your question really gets at the heart of the challenge of operating in adversarial competition below the threshold of broad conflict, which is fully leveraging the government in thinking about how we employ the capabilities we have in a different way – not in the context of the world that we would want to be – which is peace – but the world that actually is – which is adversarial competition – which requires us to do things a little bit differently.



And so where does it manifest itself? I can't get into too much detail here, but we have a lot of arguments in the interagency right now about what cyber operations might be appropriate today. I guarantee you that the interagency process in Russia, in China, is dramatically different than the one that we have in terms of the autocratic, centralized decision-making and a willingness to accept risks in doing things that we would typically associate as being things you do in conflict.

So the short answer to your question is we do have to think about, particularly, cyber operations and information operations, and frankly, the military dimension of it is, when, where, and how we're engaging to achieve our interests in a given region. We've got to think about that in an entirely different way.

Strategically – I think about a year ago I asked the secretary to sign a letter that said that we don't think about phasing. I want to leave you with an example on this. In October – November of 2015, I had all the commanders together, and we had a map of the globe in a room that was even bigger than this room right here. We were talking about our laydown, and our posture, and where we were. I asked at the time, General Phil Breedlove, who was the commander of the United States European Command. I said, Phil, what phase are we in right now in Europe? He's the SACEUR, EUCOM commander. He said, well, we're in Phase 0. And I said, what phase are the Russians in right now? He said, well, they're probably in Phase 2 or maybe 2 ½. And then I – Admiral [Harry B.] Harris was there – still is; he's about ready to wrap it up. And I said, Harry, how about you? What phase are you in out there in the Pacific? And of course he had the benefit of – he's not necessarily smarter, although – and he said, well, we're at 2.75 out to China.

My point is that I think there's a broad recognition that that construct is no longer suitable for the challenges that we're facing. Again, at the operational level, we do need a way to think about the science of our business. At the strategic level, we should think about the interests that we have, the operating environment within which we are pursuing those interests, the tools that we have available to pursue those interests, certainly the consequences of employing those tools. But when we start to solve the problem, we have to have absolute clarity of what the problem is. We have to have the full range of options that might be available to us to address that issue, advance those interests in that context. Then, if we deselect for specific reasons, we do so with the full understanding of the impact in achieving the outcome. Does that make sense?

**Q:** Yes, sir.

**Dunford:** You know, as opposed to going into a problem saying, well, we're at Phase 0, so this is the discrete set of tools we have available to us. No, you're not in Phase Anything. You have a problem or an interest you have to advance. You have an environment within which you are advancing that interest. You have the full range of tools available to you, as a nation. Now figure out how to best integrate all of those tools to advance your interests. If you decide, for policy reasons, not to do something, the conversation you are having at that moment in time brings a degree of clarity in terms of what are you not able to do because you made a policy decision not to use a particular capability or to do something in a different way than you might have had you thought yourself in conflict.

But I do believe, right now, that thinking about it that way is critical. Otherwise, we'll be in a competitive disadvantage, and how long can you be in Phase 0 when your adversary is being at Phase 2, 2 ½ before you wake up one day and you don't like the world as it is? That's kind of where I'm at.

**Remarks at U.S. Military Academy Graduation Ceremony  
West Point, New York  
May 26**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It's an honor to be with you as we recognize the accomplishments of the class of 2018 and we witness the commissioning of our newest Army leaders. Congressman [Stephen A.] Womack, thank you for leadership here at the academy, but more importantly thanks for all you do for our men and women in uniform. Secretary [of Defense Mark T.] Esper, General [Mark A.] Milley--thank you both for your leadership and I know the soldiers in the crowd would agree with me that the Army of the United States could not be in better hands.

General [Robert L.] Caslen, thanks for the introduction but more importantly, Supe, thanks for your leadership at West Point the last five years and throughout your distinguished career. As you prepare to retire, know that you've left behind an extraordinary legacy--the most important legacy a leader can leave behind--and that's a legion of men and women that are proud to call themselves Caslen-trained and Mrs. Caslen, Shelley, I know you're out there somewhere, I want to thank you for the what you've done for the countless cadets, their families, and our Army families through over four decades of service and cadets.

The Supe asked you a minute ago to recognize your parents. I'm gonna ask you to please stand up and recognize your superintendent. He would not want me to do that but I got to tell you after years of active duty and all he has done to help shape and mold you for the future, I'd ask you to join me in recognizing the impact he's had on you. And most importantly, to the class of 2018: congratulations. I know today caps what's been a busy week of events to recognize your accomplishments and I'm sure you're feeling pretty good at this point, and you should.

Four years ago you accepted the challenge to join the Long Gray Line. You could have chosen an easier path, but you didn't. As General Caslen said, you faced that cadet in the red sash on "R- day" and, according to legend, there were torrential rains on that day. You survived Beast Barracks, plebe boxing, Camp Buckner and you were scrambled not once, but twice, and I understand that you were actually the last class to be scrambled. It wasn't easy, in fact I was told by the president of your class, it was so tough, you posted the lowest plebe grades of any class in recent history. And your class president told me that with some source of pride. But looking at you now, whether you're the honor grad or "the goat," you made it. Among you are scholarship recipients, world-class athletes, inventors and published authors.

As General Caslen said, we can't forget it was while you were here that the tide was finally turned in the Army-Navy game. You know, I thought that you would probably get excited about that, but I want to tell you, I've been the chairman now for three Army-Navy games. I'm two for three. Army has actually scored more points when I have sat on the Army side than when I sat on the Navy side. So the coaches, the twelfth man and the team may get some credit, but I'm taking a little bit of credit myself for what happened those two years.

On a more serious note, I want to personally thank you for answering the call to serve during a very challenging time. You chose to join an Army at war and to that point today there's more than soldiers actively supporting missions around the world. Many are in harm's way and they're joined by thousands more sailors, airmen and Marines and as we celebrate today I'd ask you to

keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers. This is also Memorial Day weekend and I'd ask you to be particularly mindful of those that have made the ultimate sacrifice and our Gold Star families. While those of you graduating today should be proud of what you've accomplished, I know that you recognize you didn't get here by yourself.

Appropriately enough the superintendent recognized the families as we began the program and I would tell you those of us sitting on the dais have the best seats in the house because we have the chance to look out at the faces of the parents, the grandparents, the siblings and the friends and their faces are beaming with pride and they should be. They played an important part in you sitting here today. But I'd also ask you to recognize the faculty and staff here at the Academy. You couldn't have the premier leadership experience in the world were it not for their efforts. Perhaps more importantly they have, over the last four years, shown you what right looks like and they have every reason to be proud of you today and I'd ask you to please recognize the contribution that the faculty and staff at the premier leadership institution in the world has had on you.

Class of 2018 you might find it hard to imagine but I've been in your shoes. Although it's been 41 years ago this week, I can clearly recall my own graduation and commissioning and how anxious I was to get on with the next phase of my life. I wasn't particularly interested in what the graduation speaker had to say you, and I'm going to make a bold assumption: I'm going to assume that many of you share the same sentiment that I had on my graduation day about the graduation speaker. So with that in mind I'm not going to go on long, but as you prepare for the challenges of Army leadership in the next chapter of your lives, I just want to leave you with a few thoughts.

First point I'd make is that the profession of arms is dynamic and to be successful, you have to anticipate and embrace the constant changes in the character war. Here at West Point, you've studied military history and you recall the price paid in the 20th century by armies that were slow to adapt.

One hundred years ago, leaders on both sides of World War I were slow to grasp the significance of emerging technologies and the changing character of war. The price for that delay was high--ten million in uniform were killed--a figure that's unfathomable today. To some extent, you can say the same thing about the eve of World War II. For example while a blitzkrieg reflected the Germans' appreciation for the potential of armor supported by close-air, major Western armies continued to the tank as merely an infantry support weapon and frankly, if we look back at change over the past century, most of the changes occurred after significant failure. But there were notable exceptions.

In the years before Vietnam, a small number of Army leaders considered how the helicopter might be employed to enhance mobility on the battlefield. Among them were men like Jim Gavin from the West Point class of '29, Hamilton Howze from the class of '30, and Hal Moore from the class of '45. Their ideas rapidly evolved from articles and briefings to the 1965 combat deployment of the first Cavalry Division - Airmobile. These soldiers drove innovation that combined emerging technology with operational concepts. They fundamentally changed Army maneuver. And their ideas remain relevant today. The moral of the story is that there's no substitute for taking a clear-eyed look at the threats we'll face and asking how our force will adapt to meet those threats. There's no substitute for leaders like Jim Gavin that recognized the

power of new ideas, new technologies and new concepts, and more importantly there's no substitute for leaders like Hal Moore with a bias for action and a drive to affect change.

For the class of 2018, I believe the need to aggressively lead change is going to be particularly important to you. I say that because everyone here on the dais knows that the pace of change and the speed of war has greatly accelerated and in many ways the environment that you're going to lead in is very different than the one that confronted lieutenants in 1918, in 1968, or frankly even in 2008. So regardless of where you find yourself serving in our Army, challenge yourself to be kind of leader that continues to think about, to write about, and to lead change. Bring your intellectual curiosity and the openness to new ideas that you established here at West Point--bring that with you forward in your days as an Army leader. Be inspired by those soldiers who pioneered air assault and the many others who have enabled the Army to adapt and win throughout our nation's history.

Class of 2018, earlier I mentioned how clearly I remember my graduation day and how disinterested I was in the speaker but there's something else that I remember very clearly about the day that I was commissioned. Like you, I had studied military history and I remember finding it difficult to identify with the exploits and the courage of those who went before me. I remember wondering how I would meet the expectations of my future platoon. How would I respond if I was called to lead them in harm's way or how would I deal with those tough leadership issues that we know we will all experience? I wondered if I'd remember anything that I had learned in school and you may be sitting here having similar thoughts.

You may wonder how you'll measure up to your predecessors: the Pattons, the Eisenhowers, or the Bradleys. Closer to home you may wonder how you'll measure up to some of the leaders who have influenced you here at West Point. Leaders like Major Nick Eslinger now teaching in Behavioral Sciences and leadership. As a platoon leader in Iraq he courageously risked his life to protect his fellow soldiers. Or Jill Rahon from the Physics Department. Jill had the presence of mind and courage to pull two fellow pilots from a burning helicopter before their rockets cooked off. Or Major Jake Miraldi from the Department of Military Instruction. Jake demonstrated exceptional competence and leadership while leading a Quick Reaction Force during some of the toughest fighting in Afghanistan. You may also wonder if you'll meet the challenge of leading in a period of great change and have the leadership and the drive of Hal Moore.

Well, you may wonder the most important question: Will you meet the expectation of your soldiers? But I've got to tell you, just like General Caslen mentioned a minute ago, when I look out at you I don't have those concerns. Don't get me wrong-- I'm not understating for a minute the impact that your predecessors have had or their accomplishments. What they did was remarkable. In the end, they took ordinary groups of young men and women and inspired them to do extraordinary things at places like Normandy, Ia Drang and Nuristan and that's certainly a big deal. But if you look at how these leaders succeeded I think you'll recognize the method. And you remember that the fundamentals of leadership are the most important aspect of our profession and they're a part of our profession that hasn't changed since President Jefferson founded this institution in 1802.

It's true that your predecessors like Lieutenant Eslinger, Lieutenant Rahon and Lieutenant Miraldi attacked their profession with energy and enthusiasm. It's true that they were smart, they were tough, and they were competent. And it's true that many of them demonstrated great

courage when called to lead in harm's way. But it's also true that the primary reason your predecessors were successful is that they recognize that after West Point, it was no longer about their individual capabilities. They knew it was about their team. They knew it was about instilling an esprit in their units and a will to fight in their individual soldiers. They knew it was about establishing a bond of trust between the leaders and the led. In the end they knew that character, competence, courage and commitment-- that's all part of the sticker price of being an Army leader. After West Point, you get no more credit for that-- it's a given. As a lieutenant you won't be wearing the star or the wreath on your uniform nor will you be displaying your athletic trophies. When you check into units, your soldiers will simply want to know that you'll lead from the front and you'll put their interests ahead of your own.

To paraphrase one of your more quotable predecessors, General George Patton: "Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men and women. It's the spirit of the soldiers who follow and the officers who lead that gained victory." Class of 2018 what I'm really reminding of this morning is something very similar to what the superintendent said a minute ago: if you take care of your soldiers, they'll take care of you. If you lead, they'll follow, and together you'll take the hill. Thank you, in advance, for taking care of the young men and women who'll proudly follow your lead. Thanks for carrying on the traditions of the Long Gray Line. God bless you. Semper Fidelis and Army strong.

**Interview by Jim Garamone, DOD News, on Global Integration**  
**Pentagon, Virginia**  
**May 29**

**Dunford:** When I think global integration, I think about it in terms of integrated plans, so global plans instead of regional plans. I think in terms of decision-making by the secretary of defense – you know, decisions about prioritization, allocation of resources primarily in a conflict. I think about it – and then the other pieces that you're familiar with, the global force management and then capability development. So those are the four main areas that, at the end of the day, I thought out integration needed to be improved.

It doesn't mean we didn't do global integration. It means that with the speed of war and the changed character of war it needed to be done in a much more aggressive way.

And you've heard me use the example, Jim, so stop me if – you know, in terms of the Korea example.

**Q:** Korea, yeah.

**Dunford:** You've heard that before. So if you think about making decisions in that context as opposed to, hey, there's a fight on the peninsula and the secretary has to allocate forces in support of that fight on the peninsula, that's a much easier decision to make than when you're dealing with a conflict that immediately has transregional implications, meaning multiple combatant commanders have requirements simultaneously. So if something happened today and the secretary has to make a decision, if something happens in Korea, he's going to get requests from General [Vincent K.] Brooks, he's going to get requests from Admiral [Harry B.] Harris for

General Brooks as well as for defending Japan, he's going to hear from NORTHCOM about what it's going to take to defend the homeland, he's going to talk to CYBERCOM about what it's going to take to defend the network and prepare for offensive cyber ops, and he's going to talk to General [John E.] Hyten up in Strategic Command about making sure our nuclear deterrent posture is set.

That is unlikely to be in isolation from what's going on today in dealing with violent extremism, in dealing with Russia, the wide range of missions that we have in the Gulf, to include the Iran – five, you know, challenges that the present: the nuclear challenge, the cyber challenge, the maritime, proxy challenge, and missile challenge. So, if the secretary has got to make decisions about Korea, he also has to make them informed by what's it going to take to effectively deter conventionally and nuclear Russia while Korea's going on. In order to deter, you have to have some credibility in your ability to respond. So you simultaneously now have to deter Russia, you've got to deter Iran, you've got to deter China from other things besides what's going on in the peninsula, and you got to deal with North Korea.

And the speed – (snaps fingers) – the speed of those decisions –

**Q:** Well, you know, that's something I got to ask you about because the speed of those decisions, I mean, how do you speed up a decision cycle like that? Is that something that you would reach into technology for? Is there –

**Dunford:** Well, I mean, part of it is identifying those decisions that have to be made by the secretary and properly framing those. So, left of a conflict, you've got to have a common understanding with your combatant commanders. You've got to develop the ability to implicitly communicate. You do that in exercises, particularly exercises where the secretary participates. And you rehearse, you know, similar scenarios. You can't anticipate what's going to happen in war, but you can try as best you can to replicate what you believe will happen in war and basically identify how you'll frame those decisions, what information and intelligence is necessary to support the secretary's ability to make those decisions at the speed of relevance, and make sure you're providing that on a day-to-day basis.

So what is required? When you say make decisions faster, what's required? One is intelligence, information. The other is a process that frames the core elements of key decisions and quickly gives those to the secretary so he can see all the decisions he has to make in full context.

**Q:** Boy, that is going to take a change in mindset as much as just a change in procedures, do you think?

**Dunford:** It is, and we started over a year ago changing the mindset by the exercises that we do. The secretary participates. I participate. The combatant commanders participate. By going through sets of reps, if you will, we're seeing the kinds of decisions the secretary would have to make in war. Again, no one can anticipate exactly how this thing – the twists and turns that will occur. But just like any training, down at the squad level all the way up to the secretary's level, training is designed to make you more effective in combat. And our planning is also – by developing global plans, we're framing a problem globally that is unlikely to be isolated in a given region.

How do you figure that? If you just look at Korea I just talked about, you can't have a plan for Korea unless you actually have the instructions that you're going to give to all of the other commanders as the Korea fight goes on. So, if we have a plan for Korea, we also need a supporting plan for all the other combatant commanders that will outline the specific tasks that we expect them to accomplish in the context of a major conflict on the peninsula and the resources that we anticipate them having available so we can quickly transition – (snaps fingers) – from where we are today to actually making Korea the main effort because we're going into a conflict, and we can quickly transition the rest of the globe, because there's going to be an immediate reprioritization and reallocation of resources to support the fight – a degradation of the resources available to the other combatant commanders with a commensurate adjustment in the mission. Does that make sense?

**Q:** Yeah, it sure does. And it's going to require – well, the Joint Staff is going to have to change immensely.

**Dunford:** So, to support the decisions, number one is you have to have absolute fidelity on where your capabilities are around the world and the level of readiness that they have. And so –

**Q:** Right, right, right. Do you have that now?

**Dunford:** We do. We started working with DIUx many months ago. We now have the ability for the major force elements that are distributed around the world to be able to identify where they are, what they're capable of, what their level of readiness is. When I say major force elements, that's a brigade combat team, a squadron, a wing, and so forth. OK, we've got to get all the way down to the signals intel team, the linguists, you know, the engineering capability and so forth. So the team has been working very hard to make sure that eventually we get all force elements loaded into this database.

But we can today visualize the reprioritization and reallocation of resources that would occur in a Korea scenario. We've rehearsed it once with all the combatant commanders. We'll rehearse it again with the combatant commanders and the secretary. So we are every day refining our plans for Korea. We've been talking about that.

**Q:** And I imagine you could tailor that if need be and give a series of options, if that makes sense.

**Dunford:** Right, absolutely. I mean, look, one thing hasn't changed. If some things changed, one thing that hasn't changed is the value of the plan is in the planning itself. So when I talked about a common understanding earlier, that comes from the planning process. It comes from the exercise program we have. It comes from the way that we exchange information with the secretary on a routine basis. At the end of the day that's the foundational element, is that common understanding and implicit communications. Absent that, you can't have – (snaps fingers) – operate at the speed of relevance or the speed of war.

**Q:** Are you going to have to – well, right now there is the J1, 2, 3, 4. There's a whole Napoleonic setup. Is that going to stay or is that going to change?

**Dunford:** I think it's going to change – I mean, it's going to stay. Below that we have cross-functional teams that were set up about 18 to 20 months ago, and that's where the integration of staff functions takes place.

**Q:** So that was mostly, if I'm not mistaken, with J3/J5 folks working together, J2, and then –

**Dunford:** No, no, no; 4, 7, 8 –

**Q:** – 4 to 8?

**Dunford:** Yeah. I mean, it depends on the problem set, but they're all represented.

**Q:** So you can pick and choose.

**Dunford:** That's right. Depends on the problem you're trying to solve. You got to put a cross-functional team together to solve a particular problem, you figure out who all the stakeholders are and they get proper representation. That's in that cross-functional team.

**Q:** And that's all done on the Joint Staff?

**Dunford:** That's all done on the Joint Staff, for the military dimension.

**Q:** OK. So what does a perfect solution look like?

**Dunford:** There isn't one. A better solution than we have right now are plans that do a better job of preparing us for conflict. If you went back to the old days and you said, OK, how did we do planning for the Korean Peninsula, we did a plan to either restore the 38th Parallel or some other political objective that might be in play. The plan for Korea today includes what we will do on the peninsula, as well as what we'll do globally while a conflict on the peninsula is occurring. That's a fundamentally different plan. So that's how all of our plans for Korea, China, Russia, Iran, and violent extremism are all global campaign plans, meaning they describe and visualize what the whole world will look like when this scenario is unfolding.

So that's one way that you can – and then the other thing we have done is we took those priorities and we changed our force management and allocation process. In the past when you had conflict and you assumed it was going to be isolated to a given theater, combatant commanders from the bottom up identified all the capabilities and the capacities, the amount of those capabilities they would need, and then we'd bring it up and we'd kind of cross-level across the COCOMs. What we did from fiscal year '19 is take the secretary's priorities, figure out what the right allocation of forces was against those priorities, feed that from the top down – then get bottom-up refinement from the combatant commanders, and then deploy the force, but deploy the force in a way that's consistent with kind of a boxer stance. Meaning you get the best posture not necessarily for any one problem set, but you get the best posture for what you believe is the most likely problem set and your ability to be flexible in responding to the unexpected. That's where the dynamic force employment comes in, where we will show different – you know, in other words, the exercises, the size of the exercise, all those things will be in a much more unpredictable basis in the future.

**Q:** OK. So the secretary talking about the deployments of aircraft carriers may not be the six months to a certain place. It's going to –

**Dunford:** Exactly right. Let me just tell you, it won't be.

**Q:** It won't be?



**Dunford:** It'll be unpredictable. It won't be on a pattern that the enemy or adversary can anticipate. That'll start right now this summer. You'll see things this summer that that people haven't seen before. And it will make news.

**Q:** Can I ask about the interagency?

**Dunford:** Sure.

**Q:** And how – what effect this will have on the interagency? Because it's going to have an effect on the – certainly the intel community. I would think with State, with, you know –

**Dunford:** Yeah. I think the biggest thing – when you develop OPLANs, you in the process of planning identify what are the conditions that have to be set for the military dimension of the problem to be effective. That puts the military dimension in context. Then we identify things that the rest of the interagency has to do. So, first, we start with political objectives. We start with the interagency input, right? Then it comes down and we develop the military dimension to solve that broader political objective. But in the process of doing that, we're informed by how we have to integrate with the State Department, how we have to integrate with the intel community, how we have to integrate with Treasury and others. So that would be our input into the interagency process as we look at problem sets like Korea, Russia, or China.

**Q:** And have – they've been briefed up, I'm sure, on this and how they – how they would participate in this?

**Dunford:** Well, we will bring them in –

**Q:** Bring them in as needed?

**Dunford:** Well, no. What we'll do is there's meetings in the interagency all the time on China, Russia, and so forth. What we are now – because of our planning process – we're prepared to participate in those meetings in a different way. In other words, this is a qualitative –

**Q:** And in a far different way. You're going to have – you're going to –

**Dunford:** – it's a qualitative improvement on the input that we're able to provide when we start looking at problem sets like this. So when I provide military –

**Q:** Do they have anything like this? Are they contemplating anything like this in the interagency?

**Dunford:** You'd have to ask [National Security Advisor John R.] Bolton. I don't know. The problem set they're dealing with is different, and the solution they're going to come up with is different too.

**Q:** Yeah. I got that. But I like the idea of those cross functional – I'm sure you do too, obviously. But I mean, and the speeding up of the decision space.

**Dunford:** Well, again, it's speeding up decisions. It's speeding up response by making sure that your global posture is aligned against your strategic priorities. Then an important piece of all this too is by looking – you know, the integration piece is also about the future, not just the current, right? So you're doing the global posture. You're doing the decision-making. You're doing the plans for today. You're informed by all that on the capabilities that you'll need tomorrow. So we have an assessment process too, so that the secretary – this is where integration comes in for the

secretary in terms of resourcing. Now the secretary, in the year of execution or for the POM gives a total obligation authority to the Army, Navy, Air Force, as the case may be. In the future, he will be much better equipped to articulate to each of the services the capabilities and the capacities that they'll need in 2027, 2028, 2029.

In the old days when we had a competitive advantage, decisive, over any potential adversary, you could allow everyone to go off and spend their money and you could integrate the capabilities on the backside, and in the end you would have enough. You'd figure it out. With peer competitors in an era of great power competition, you've got to be much more – I don't want to use the word precise – much more deliberate, in capability development, and specifically benchmark that against the best intelligence you have about the path of capability development of your adversary, informed by what you want to do in the strategic environment you expect to do it in, against the adversary you expect to see. That's what you have to do.

**Q:** And, sir, you're fond of saying you're never really going to fight alone, the United States reserves the right to be able to fight alone. But generally, we're not going to.

**Dunford:** That's right.

**Q:** What do allies – what role do allies play in all of this?

**Dunford:** We wrote the National Military Strategy releasable to 13 allies. They're involved in our planning. I think we've grown from four or five one-stars. We'll have – at the end of the summer we'll have 13 or 14 one-stars from other countries in D.C. We'll check the math, Jim, but we've gone way beyond Five Eyes in terms of inviting them to participate in D.C. That makes a difference. But it's very much this planning process is opened up to allies. It has to be.

**Q:** And is that on the front end, sir? You know, like, when you're making plans – you know, in the past we've made plans and asked allies to fit in.

**Dunford:** We, no, this is exactly the opposite of that, because we have written to release the document. We didn't write the document and then put it through a review process. We wrote it to release on the front end. So we knew when we wrote the National Military Strategy, and then pieces of the campaign plans that we were going to share these with our allies. There was an expectation we would. And so as we went through the process, we did it informed by the need to do that.

**Q:** Sir, if I were a Joint Staff officer, or a young officer coming to the Joint Staff for the first time, what would I be looking at coming in there? What would it change for me?

**Dunford:** Well, I mean, if you're new they won't know what it used to be, right? But I think what they have to understand is in an era of great power competition, you got to do things a little bit different. And our plans – if you have moved from an area where you had regional conflict to transregional conflict, if you've moved from sea, air and land to sea, air, land, space, and cyberspace, you got to think about war different – character of war – and you got to think about how you plan differently. Given cyberspace ballistic missile technology and so forth, the speed – it's easy to see how the speed of war has picked up. And so decision-making has to be a little bit tighter. So you'd walk them through that.

Then if you're dealing with five major challenges outlined in the National Defense Strategy, you can't afford to posture your forces informed by one or two. You've got to think about all of the secretary's priorities and make sure you get the posture right. Then, as I mentioned, if your competitive advantage has decreased over time and you are in an era of great power competition, then you've got to make sure that you're able to deal with today and tomorrow simultaneously. Even as you posture the forces that you have to deal with the threat and to be able to respond, you've got to figure out how to build the force you need for tomorrow. All that stuff, that's going to inform your exercise program, and your innovation program, and your doctrine development.

I mean, this isn't just about gear, right? It's about concepts and the doctrine as well.

**Q:** Right. Right. Europe's one thing. I mean, they all had tanks at the beginning of World War II, it's just somebody knew how to use them and somebody didn't.

**Dunford:** That's right. That's exactly right.

**Q:** All right. Sir, how does this change your job specifically?

**Dunford:** It doesn't change our authorities in the Joint Staff, but it does change our responsibilities. I'm not going to say there was never any integration. Of course, there's been integration in the past. But the secretary has designated the chairman as the global integrator for these functions I've just outlined. Now, in addition to provide military advice to the president, the secretary of defense, and the National Security Council, it's much more prominent. The responsibilities are much greater than they were in the past in terms of global integration.

That just requires a change in all of our processes and so forth. Again, if you take global force management in the past, that was typically majors and lieutenant colonels working at the COCOM level. COCOMs would submit it. The director of the Joint Staff would sit in a meeting with all of the ops staff and then the J3s of the world and J5s of the world. And they'd come up with a global force plan. This is a much more strategic look, where the secretary's getting a look at this thing on the front end, not the back end.

We're not presenting him with, you know, 12 inches of matrixes and saying: Mr. Secretary, we just need you to sign the GFMAP for 2019. No, Mr. Secretary, here's our understanding of your strategy. Here's the capabilities and capacities we have in the inventory. Here's our recommendation for posturing those forces against your priorities. And here's our appreciation of risk associated with the posture that we have just developed. So much more strategic dialogue.

That's one of the things that really started in the 1980s and developed into mission command. But the one fundamental change that started in the '80s, and this is just really a continuum of that, is senior leadership has to be engaged on the front end of a problem and throughout the process. We can't have processes that are absent senior leader direction and engagement and then expect the solution on the backside is going to meet strategic requirements and priorities. So the secretary's engagement early on in making sure we're benchmarking what we're doing in the processes against this strategy is really critical.

**Excerpts from an Interview with Victoria Nuland at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS)**

**Washington, District of Columbia**

**June 22**

**Nuland:** How do you think about implementing the National Defense Strategy?

**Dunford:** Yeah. Maybe first – I know there's a lot of industry leaders – define competitive advantage. There's kind of individual functional areas and then there's an aggregate competitive advantage, and approach it from both ends.

On the individual functional areas, what we did two years ago and we're now into the second iteration of this, we did a top secret look at ourselves through the lens of what we called 15 competitive areas. You can imagine what those are, right? Maritime capability, cyber capability, space capability, electronic warfare, land warfare and so forth. So we looked at ourselves.

We looked at the current capabilities of China and Russia, again, to the theme of a benchmark. We looked at where we were in those individual capability areas and where the Russians and the Chinese are today. Then we did the best we could through the intelligence community to project out where would China and Russia be five, seven, 10 years down the road.

Based on our investments planned, I mean real investments, not we didn't make things up, just based on the program as we knew and investments that we projected we would be able to make, where would we be five to seven years from now.

Now, I don't want to convey to you that I don't believe we have an overall competitive advantage today. We can meet our alliance commitments today, we can protect the homeland and we can protect our way of life. I believe that. But our competitive advantage in 2000, 2001, coming off the end-of-history decade in the 1990s was, if it was like this, our competitive advantage, and then as we had been focused on dealing with violent extremism over the last 15 years – and again, Russia and China having studied history and looked at our competitive advantage – that competitive advantage since 2000 has eroded. It's eroded in each one of those individual areas of competition that I defined. And, as importantly, what it's done is it's put China and Russia in a position to at least disrupt our ability to project power, in the case of Russia into Europe to meet our alliance commitments in NATO, and to project power into the Pacific to meet our alliance commitments and advance our national interests in the Pacific. So that's what's there.

So what are our focus areas to restore our competitive advantage? You know, if I had to list a couple of them is, one, we've got to deal with the cruise missile threat, the ballistic missile threat that the threat poses. That's got to be something. That's a combination of defensive capabilities and strike capabilities. Also, the electromagnetic spectrum is an area that is of particular interest to us and making sure that we can dominate the electromagnetic spectrum.

We referred to making sure we have a competitive advantage in all domains and that today is, you know, no longer just the traditional land, sea and air, but it now includes space and cyberspace. I cannot imagine any conflict, to include dealing with violent extremism today, that doesn't involve all domains. It doesn't necessarily mean that all domains are fully leveraging – all threats are fully leveraging all domains, but every conflict that we would have involves all domains.

So when we talk about restoring our competitive advantage, to me it starts with ensuring that we can project power when and where necessary to advance our national interests in addressing

those areas where capability development for the Chinese and the Russians have presented a particular problem in our ability to do that.

**Remarks at the 119th Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) National Convention  
Kansas City, Missouri  
July 23**

Hey, good morning, ladies and gentlemen.... And, Commander in Chief [Keith] Harman, thank you so much for the introduction and, more importantly, for your leadership over the past year. I also want to recognize, I'm sure, once again, one of Kansas City's native sons, Medal of Honor recipient Doc Ballard, my good friend over there. We meet at least once a year in Boston. It's good to see you, Doc. Thanks for all you have done in your 35 years of service, as well as your distinguished actions in Vietnam. It's also an honor to share the stage this morning with the other award recipients. Dr. [Barbara] Van Dahlen and Mr. [David] Goggins have made significant contributions to our veterans community. And I can tell you from personal observation that Command Sergeant Major [William F.] Thetford is the real deal. He's the absolute epitome of our senior enlisted leadership. And to all the veterans of foreign wars, the auxiliary around the world, and those still in uniform, thanks for what you do for our veterans, for our servicemembers and their families.

Each of the veterans here today represents the individuals who have had an impact on me along the way. I had seven uncles that served in World War II, and in 1950 my dad fought in Korea with the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. He remains a proud member of the VFW today. I grew up admiring what they did in uniform and what they did in their communities when they came home, and they inspired me to serve.

Those of you who served in the Vietnam generation were the big kids on the block when I was growing up. When I came on active duty in 1977, you taught me what it meant to be a leader. You were my instructors at officer candidate school, you were my platoon sergeants when I was a platoon commander, and you've been my mentors throughout my career. To those who served during the Cold War and during our most recent conflicts, I have served alongside you. I've remained in uniform for over four decades because of that privilege. Like your predecessors, you've carried the colors high on your watch.

Ladies and gentlemen, you'd expect me to say it, but I'm truly humbled and honored to join you here today at your national convention. It's also a distinct privilege to accept the Eisenhower Award on behalf of the men and women in uniform today. President [Dwight D.] Eisenhower's wisdom and his vision carved a path that the United States has followed for 70 years, and his legacy of service is an example that guides me today. Eisenhower actually wrote one of my favorite lines. When he was reflecting on his time in uniform, he said, "the old tactical textbooks say that the commander always visits his troops to inspire them to fight." But, Eisenhower observed, "I soon discovered that one of the reasons for my visiting the front lines was to get inspiration from the young American soldier. I went back to my job ashamed of my own occasional resentments or discouragements."

Now, I don't claim to have too much in common with the great Dwight Eisenhower, but in my current assignment I know exactly what he meant. I say that because I have the honor of representing the more than 2 million men and women who serve today. Over the past three years, I've the opportunity to visit with many members of the joint force and their families. Needless to say, it's the most rewarding part of my assignment.

In my travels I've met soldiers like Sergeant 1<sup>st</sup> Class Ivan Morera. He's a medic with the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group. Sergeant Morera lost his left hand in combat in Afghanistan and spent two years fighting to return to active duty. Today he's a fully qualified Green Beret and he continues to deploy.

I've met Marines like Corporal Adam Seanor. He's an artilleryman who supported operations near Mosul, Iraq, under Sergeant Major Thetford's leadership. I had the privilege of presenting Purple Hearts to Adam and members of his section at the battery position where they were wounded and their section chief was killed in action. After a direct hit by an enemy rocket, Adam and his fellow Marines quickly got the battery back in action because they knew that there were soldiers in Mosul that were counting on them.

I've met airmen like Staff Sergeant Dick Hunter. He's an Air Force combat controller who deployed three times to combat. Most recently he was on a combined team of Army and Afghan commandos who were ambushed on patrol. After the ambush, Dick Hunter heroically called in 31 danger-close missions to repel the enemy. Some were as close as 10 meters to his position. His actions were responsible for the medical evacuation of 20 soldiers and the exfiltration of his entire Special Forces team. This past October he was awarded the Air Force Cross.

I've met a lot of sailors like those aboard the USS *Monterey*, the most-deployed cruiser in the Navy. Several months ago, at the time I visited the *Monterey*'s carrier task force, the sailors had been at sea for 14 of the previous 24 months. Anyone who's ever been in the Navy knows what you're doing in the period of time between deployments. They were supporting the ISIS fight and maintaining freedom of navigation in the Gulf region. Despite an exhausting schedule, the sailors were spirited, they were focused, and they were committed.

These are just a few of the many men and women across the joint force who are providing a wide range of missions, from a watch floor in Colorado, keeping an eye on our airspace; to enhancing interoperability with our allies in Poland; to conducting counterterrorism operations against ISIS in Iraq, Syria, and Africa; and to standing the watch in Korea. To use a Marine Corps expression, your soldiers, your sailors, your airmen, your Marines, and your Coast Guardsmen are literally in every clime and place. In fact, as we gather here this morning, more than 300,000 Americans are deployed or forward-stationed in 177 different countries. Many of them are in harm's way, and I'd ask you to keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

It's because of what they are doing, and it's because of the quality in men and women that we are retaining and recruiting today, that I'm able to deliver the most important message I have for you this morning. I can stand here as your chairman and say with absolute confidence that today's armed forces can defend the United States and our way of life. I can say with absolute confidence that today's force can meet all of our alliance commitments around the world. And I can say with absolute confidence that the United States military has a competitive advantage over any potential adversary.

It's important that our allies and enemies understand that, and it's important that the American people understand that. You have a force that you can and you should be proud of. You know, Commander in Chief Harman alluded to it in his introduction: this fall will be the 17<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, and since 9/11 we've asked an awful lot of our men and women in uniform. To be honest, if you had asked me in 2001 or 2002 could an all-volunteer force maintain commitment over that period of time, could they maintain focus, would we still be recruiting and retaining high-quality people in 2018,

would our families be able to endure that sacrifice? I think I would have said back then, you know what, I'm not sure.

But today, if you go around and you talk to a soldier, a sailor, a Marine, an airman, a Coast Guardsman, you'll get a sense right away that we underestimated this generation. Today they are still focused, they are still committed, and the families are still enduring extraordinary sacrifice. When times are hard, just like their predecessors, just like those of you in this room – when times are hard, today's warriors simply tighten their chinstraps and drive on. They don't focus on strategy or policy; they just focus on taking care of their buddies and winning. I don't think that's a coincidence.

First, they're incredibly well-led, they're well-trained, and thanks to the president and to the Congress they have the resources necessary to do the job. But there's another very important factor behind the motivation of today's force. The men and women in uniform today, they don't have to look over their shoulder to check their six o'clock. They can focus on the mission because they know that their service is recognized and appreciated. They know that what they're doing is important. They also have confidence in knowing that if something happens to them in service, someone will be there to take care of their families. They know that when it's time to transition to civilian life, there will be someone to help them at that point as well. While we can always do better, no generation has deployed or returned home with greater support.

Much of that credit goes to those of you in this room. No organization does more for our veterans than the Veterans of Foreign Wars. No organization does more to ensure that our veterans are respected for their service. And no organization does more to ensure that our veterans and their families are recognized for their sacrifices on behalf of our nation.

Since 1899, the VFW has led the way in advocating for veterans. When a recently separated veteran needs assistance in finding a job or transitioning back to civilian life, the VFW is there. When a wounded serviceman or -woman requires help with prosthetics or assistance in cutting through bureaucratic red tape, the VFW is there. And when it's time for "Taps," the VFW is there, too.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me close by making a commitment to you. As long as the VFW is there, men and women like Command Sergeant Major Thetford, Sergeant 1<sup>st</sup> Class Morera, Corporal Seanor, and Staff Sergeant Hunter will continue to do what they are doing. As long as they keep doing what they're doing, we'll continue to be the land of the free and the home of the brave. Again, it's truly an honor to be with you this morning. On behalf of the men and women of the joint force, thank you for recognizing us with the 2018 Eisenhower Award and, more importantly, thanks for all you do. God bless you and Semper Fidelis.

**Statement at a Joint Press Conference Briefing with Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis  
Pentagon, Virginia  
August 28**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I'd like to begin by reinforcing the secretary's comments on Senator [John S.] McCain. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. As a naval officer and as a member of Congress, he was a life-long and tireless advocate for the men and women of the U.S. military. While we mourn Senator McCain's passing, we'll be eternally grateful for his distinguished service and his courageous example.

Before we take your questions, I'll highlight some the ongoing operations and exercises across our geographic combatant commands.

Our priority in the Indo-Pacific Command is supporting the State Department-led diplomatic and economic efforts aimed at denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. 28,000 U.S. military personnel are stationed on the peninsula, demonstrating our commitment to the alliance and deterring North Korean aggression. We're also conducting air and maritime operations to disrupt ship-to-ship transfers of fuel in violation of U.N. sanctions against the DPRK, and we're doing this in conjunction with allies and partners.

Across the Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. military forces work on a day-to-day basis with allies and partners to preserve the rules-based international order that's consistent with our interests. INDOPACOM also has exercise programs in 31 nations to train, advise and assist partner forces in internal security, counter-narcotics and counterterrorism operations.

In the Central Command, we remain focused on our mission in Afghanistan, the defeat-ISIS campaign in Iraq and Syria, and countering Iran's destabilizing influence across the region. Approximately 14,000 U.S. military personnel are deployed to Afghanistan as part of Operation Freedom Sentinel and NATO's Operation Resolute Support.

Our primary mission remains countering terrorist threats to the United States. Our forces, alongside forces from 40 NATO and partner nations, were also training, advising and assisting over 300,000 Afghan forces who were responsible for security in Afghanistan.

In Iraq and Syria, we're operating as part of a 77-member Defeat-ISIS Coalition. In Syria, 2,000 U.S. and additional coalition forces are working to enable the 50,000 Syrian Democratic Forces in clearing the remainder of ISIS in the Euphrates River Valley and then stabilizing those areas that have been cleared of ISIS. In Iraq, the priority is supporting Iraqi security forces to ensure that the success they've had against ISIS is enduring.

In the European Command, we're enhancing our alliances and deterring Russian aggression through enhanced forward presence and other forced posture initiatives. We also have a robust exercise and training program, enabled by the European Defense Initiative. This year, we've conducted 13 joint exercises in Europe in addition to a wide range of service-specific training and engagement.

In Africa Command, approximately 7,200 U.S. forces are supporting thousands more African military partners in providing for their own security and conducting counterterrorist operations against ISIS and al-Qaida affiliates. Our efforts include developing security forces in Somalia, countering ISIS in Libya and supporting partners in the Sahel and Lake Chad regions.

In the U.S. Southern Command, we're also working to deepen our security relationships and addressing regional challenges and threats. As the secretary mentioned, the U.S. Navy Hospital ship, *Comfort*, will soon deploy to relieve the pressure of increased population flows from Venezuela.

And finally, here at home the U.S. Northern Command has 1,600 DOD personnel and 33 aircraft working to suppress wildfires in the western states, while more than 2,000 Guardsmen are supporting Homeland Security on the southern border. The Northern Command also provides around-the-clock ballistic missile defense while Americans and Canadians from the North American Air Defense Command defend our air space.

Even while meeting today's requirements, the combatant commanders and the services are adapting and innovating. Our efforts include a series of globally-integrated exercises and experiments to help shape the force we'll need to fight and win tomorrow.



In closing, I believe you can see that your men and women in uniform are busy and we're very proud of them, but we don't do any of this alone. As the secretary said, we're grateful for Congress's support expressed in the bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act. And in all that we do, we work alongside our allies and partners, our source of strength. Thank you.

**Remarks Upon Receipt of 2018 Andrew J. Goodpaster Award  
Washington, District of Columbia  
December 11**

Ladies and gentlemen, it really is an honor for Ellyn and I to join you here tonight and, frankly, pretty humbling. Dr. [Robert] Havers and Mr. [C. Russell] Fletcher, thanks for this evening but, more importantly, thanks for what you do with the Foundation in keeping in the memory of General Marshall alive. We spoke earlier this evening about how important I really do believe that that it is. The values that General Marshall embodied are ones that, if we ever needed them, we need them today. I find that we need, what I described earlier to you, is a North Star in this particular time. And Mr. [Tony] Mathis, I want to get your speechwriter. He has a vivid imagination. I really do appreciate the kind words.

I would say this, there's many folks here from industry, but as you were speaking I was thinking about something I think about quite a bit, which is competitive advantage. One of the key elements of the competitive advantage that we have historically enjoyed has been the relationship between the Department of Defense and industry. Just yesterday, in an interview with *The Washington Post*, they asked me about some of the difficulty that we're having in partnering with some elements of industry. We don't have that problem with GE, and we don't have that that problem with the folks that are in here tonight. When we think about what our young men and women in harm's way need to have a competitive advantage, they need the intellectual capacity and the capacity of American industry. So thanks for what you do as well.

General [Richard A.] Cody, thanks for your words. You know, where I really got to see General Cody on active duty – never had an opportunity to serve directly with each other – I know him as the voice of God. The reason I know him as that, when I was a one-star and director of Marine Corps operations – this was 2005 – and to be honest with you, a lot of the processes and so forth that we take for granted today in terms of supporting our men and women in harm's way, they weren't in place back in 2005. So every Saturday morning we had a secure video teleconference with Army units all around the world. I represented headquarters Marine Corps. At the time, General Jim Loveless was bringing us all together to make sure that those who were forward deployed and those who were getting ready to deploy had the training, equipment, and all those things they needed to be successful.

General Cody was never in the room, but he was plugged in up in his office. About two or three times in a meeting the voice of God would boom into the room. At that time, the entirety of the United States Army came to a stop, because everybody heard, and General Cody gave God's voice. But what I saw during that particular time – you know, a combat veteran himself at that point – what I saw was an incredible passion to make sure that the system was moving to support our men and women in uniform. I watched them, and I learned a lot. The true test, I think, sometimes of a leader is not so much what you do in uniform, it's what you do when you take your uniform off. And General Cody was mentioned earlier, what he – the organizations he works for.

But the two organizations that he works for, one of them works very closely to help with the invisible wounds of war – the National Intrepid Center of Excellence. He's been a key part making sure that we had satellites out there across all of our organizations to take care of our men and women. But the other thing I've seen him be personally very passionate about is making sure that our wounded warriors have homes that are tailored to meet their needs. He's there when they're in receipt of those homes. General Cody is there. And, you know, you can't fake it when it comes to caring about people. What I would say about General Cody, and I've seen it personally, is he cares about people.

There's many other people here I want to recognize. One of them is General [Charles E.] Wilhelm, who's here. General Wilhelm was my MEF commander when I was a lieutenant colonel. I've watched him from afar for many years. Another individual who was the epitome of what you'd want a leader to be when he wore the uniform, but when he took the uniform off he's also continued to be a coach, a teacher, and a mentor, and literally a mentor, for the decades since he's taken off his uniform, for somebody else. And then a good friend here, Hawk Carlisle, is sitting here. He and I went to Capstone. We're sworn to the statute of limitations about our time at the Che Guevara Bar in Moscow and other places that we went to together. I'm not going to talk about that.

I also want to give a special acknowledgement to representatives that are here from France, or Spain, from Italy, Croatia, and Slovenia. I think your presence is particularly fitting tonight. I would tell you, those of us in the United States military understand that at the strategic level our source of strength – we call it the center of gravity – but our source of strength is the network of allies and partners that we have built since World War II. There is no question in my mind. The countries that are here represented are very much a part of that network of allies and partners.

Today, is Pearl Harbor Day. It's also, I think, appropriate to reflect and to remember the 2,430 Americans who died 77 years ago today. But of course, we're mindful not only of those who died, but those who lived – those who led America in recovering from the shock of that attack, those who defeated fascism and Nazism, and those who built a better world in the aftermath of that terrible war. They were truly a great generation. Just this week, we laid to rest one of the greatest among them, President George Herbert Walker Bush. And we continue to remember and honor his legacy.

I'll just share with you, Ellyn and I were just privileged to be a small part of the events from Monday through Wednesday. When we walked out of the National Cathedral after the service, I said to Ellyn –that was one of the most uplifting experiences I've ever had, listening to those words. I would tell you, if the day – in naval terms – if the day when I go over the side for the last time my children and my friends say 10 percent of what they said about President Bush about me, I will have considered my life a success. It was a reminder of the values that we remember tonight. Of course, he was preceded by many others, including George Marshall and Andrew Goodpaster. [I'm] proud to be amongst his family members here tonight, and honored to be associated, even in a small way, with those two names. It's humbling.

If you've spent any time walking around the Pentagon you will notice something. In my office, you will notice a four-foot by three-foot portrait of George Marshall. If you go to Secretary [of Defense James N.] Mattis' office, you'll notice two pictures of George Marshall – one in uniform, and one in a suit. If you go down to the secretary of the Army's office, you'll see a picture of George Marshall. If you go to the chief's office, you'll see a picture of George Marshall, and you'll see the chief sitting at George Marshall's desk. And there's many, many

other leaders in the Pentagon who have George Marshall's portrait or photo or some memento there.

The reason is that so many of us draw inspiration from George Marshall is not all of the things he did. We talked about some of those earlier. I think it's how he did them. In the run-up and execution of World War II, when our nation was faced with agonizingly difficult choices, he set the standard for professionalism in delivering military advice to policymakers, and faithfully executing their decision. Now, many here are familiar with the history of George Marshall. They know that many of those decisions that he executed faithfully he disagreed with. But you never knew that. And he executed them faithfully. For that reason, I consider Marshall a paragon of civil-military relations. He had faith in our democracy, and he understood the importance of the apolitical ethos of the United States military.

Here's a quote that some of you may have heard, but it's one that I have drawn strength from, and one of the reasons I'm so proud to be here tonight. This is something that George Marshall said, "The American armed forces have a great asset. And that is our people. Our countrymen do not distrust us and they do not fear us. They don't harbor any ideas that we intend to alter the government of our country or the nature of this government in any way. This is a sacred trust." And Marshall continues, "I don't want to do anything to damage the high regard in which professional soldiers are held by our people."

I can tell you that that sacred trust weighs heavily on all of us at the senior level of military leadership today. I've got to say, I'm proud that our armed forces and our leaders have upheld that tradition over the past couple years in a very turbulent political environment. As much as anyone in history, it was Marshall who set the course and speed for us. I truly appreciate the work that this foundation, again, does to perpetuate that legacy, a legacy that is worth perpetuating.

It's a particular honor to receive the Foundation's Goodpaster Award. What an appropriate award to have in honor of General Goodpaster, an award for public service. Many of you know, so I won't go on at length, but decorated for heroism in combat in World War II. After being wounded, a strategist under George Marshall in the War Plans Office. A life-long student of his profession, known to be that kind of teacher and mentor, and prolific writer about the profession. Above all, he was a selfless public servant.

But in addition to Marshall's legacy of civil-military relations and Goodpaster's legacy of selfless service, they left us another legacy of tremendous value, and that is what I referred to earlier, that network of allies and partners. Very much a part of the work that they did, particularly in the post-World War II era. In the aftermath, soldiers, statesmen like Eisenhower and Marshall, they knew that America's security was inextricably linked to other nations who share our values.

Nothing embodies that principle more than the work that they did to establish the NATO alliance. While Eisenhower and Marshall were better known, Goodpaster also played a very important role in this initiative, the establishment of NATO. In December 1950, with less than a day's notice – this is Goodpaster now – left his post here in Washington, caught a flight to Europe, and became one of the architects of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. In 24 hours, he was in France in a hotel room helping craft the plans for that headquarters.

NATO is going to be 70 years old in April. That's a tremendous milestone, I think worthy of celebration. But in recent years, people have questioned NATO's relevance. With your permission, I just want to spend a few minutes giving you my perspective on NATO, and really the legacy of Marshall and Goodpaster as it pertains to NATO. I want to tell you upfront, I don't

believe the alliance has been healthier, nor has it been on a more positive trajectory since the end of the Cold War than it is today. I really fundamentally believe that. When I became the chairman in 2015, we were already wrestling with fundamental questions about NATO's purpose, its orientation, and its priorities. After the purported end of history in the 1990s, and then the economic crisis in 2008, there were many people that were questioning whether the alliance was even needed to be maintained.

I can share with you, on a personal note, when I went through testimony from my confirmation hearing in the summer of 2015, I was asked: What is the most significant threat we face as a nation? And I paused. I said, well, we face several challenges, but the threat that could be most existential to our security would have to be Russia in my mind, given their behavior in Georgia, given their behavior in Crimea, given their behavior in the Donbas, and also given the path of capability development that they have been on over the past several years, not the least of which was cyber capabilities and modernization of their nuclear enterprise.

I will tell you, in 2015 that was not actually something that was widely recognized, widely appreciated, widely acknowledged, and was a bit at odds. I didn't appreciate it at the time, but it was a bit at odds with where our policy was. But the environment clearly has changed a great deal in the past three years. On NATO's eastern flank, Russia has violated the sovereignty of Georgia and the Ukraine. Most recently they violated international norms and standards in the Sea of Azov. That behavior's been accompanied by attempts to undermine democratic processes in the United States and amongst our European friends. Again, I mentioned that significant modernization of conventional and nuclear capability.

Not only does NATO face challenges from the east, but on the southern flank instability in the Middle East and North Africa have created conditions for mass migration and terrorism. We have seen the significant political and economic instability that those two challenges have created. In light of this, NATO has found a newfound clarity of purpose. Our heads of state have met at least twice in the past few years and reaffirmed their commitment to collective deterrence and defense. They've explicitly embraced the concept of 360-degree security, the idea that the full weight of the alliance will be brought to bear to meet the challenges that any of those 29 nations would face – whether from the east or whether from the south.

For the military chiefs, the guidance has been very clearly. We can now have substantive and candid conversations about the capabilities and the readiness necessary to meet our alliance commitments. Believe it or not, for those who have never served in NATO, you cannot plan in NATO – it's very different than in the United States – you cannot plan in NATO unless you have political direction to plan. You cannot acknowledge that something is a threat, unless you have political guidance that acknowledges that it's a threat. Well, we now have that very clear guidance from heads of state. So the chiefs of defense conference this past September was the most productive of the three years that I've been the chairman. If you would ask any of the 28 counterparts that I have in the military committee of NATO, I think they would all acknowledge the same. It's fundamentally different than it was three years ago.

We committed recently to what we call a 4x30 readiness standard. That's 30 ground battalions, 30 squadrons, 30 ships ready for deployment in 30 days. What's most significant – again, some have served in NATO – what's most significant is that actually the countries that have all signed up to this have agreed to have the Supreme Allied Commander Europe actually validate their readiness, to go out and inspect that readiness. Small step for those of us in the U.S. uniform, big step for the alliance. We also committed to build a new headquarters in Norfolk for

the United States Second Fleet that we brought back. That's to assure that we can secure the transatlantic lane in time of war, a very substantive change.

Other substantive changes include standing up a logistics command inside of Germany, and we'll have the establishment of two additional corps-level wing component commands inside of the alliance as well. These improvements in capability and capacity that come at a cost. But I want you to listen to these statistics. Our NATO alliance represents 50 percent of the Earth's economic and military might. Fifty percent. In 2017 alone, our allies boosted defense budgets by a combined 5.2 percent, the biggest increase in a quarter-century. Overall, 28 NATO allies have increased spending by \$41 billion in the last two years. So that, again, when I talk about the trajectory, I think it's very much moving in the right direction.

Like all alliances, NATO requires constant maintenance to remain what they describe as fit for purpose. Every generation's got to recommit political, economic and military capital to sustain this historic organization. But NATO is the most successful military alliance in history. No adversary has defeated it. I should remind all Americans that the only time Article 5 of the treaty was invoked was in the wake of 9/11. That's the only time that NATO has gone to war in response to Article 5 of the treaty. It's only going to fail if we let it fail. I believe the legacy left to us by men like Eisenhower, Marshall and Goodpastor remains relevant today and is going to remain relevant well into the future. I just wanted to offer you those thoughts.

I want to close by sharing two quotes that best capture how I personally feel here tonight. The first comes from a letter that then-General Goodpastor wrote to President Eisenhower in 1961. This was just four days after President Eisenhower left office. General Goodpastor closed the letter by saying, "It's been an honor to be with you. An honor and a privilege that I feel have put upon me an obligation to give the best that is within me for the rest of my own life." An honor and a privilege that I feel has been put upon me to give the best that is within me for the rest of my life. I actually understand that feeling, because I feel that same obligation towards many of my mentors, including some who preceded me in receiving this award. I feel the same obligation upon receiving an award associated with men like George Marshall and Andrew Goodpastor.

I'm going to leave here tonight reenergized to tackle the challenges that most assuredly are ahead of me in the coming months. I'm also reminded to that, I'm going to quote from Eisenhower himself. This is one of my favorite ones. I use this from time to time. He said, and I think every leader in the room this will resonate with, "The old tactical textbooks said that the commander always visits his troops to inspire them to fight. I soon discovered that one of the reasons for my visiting the front lines was to get inspiration from the young American soldier. I went back to my job ashamed of my own occasional resentments or discouragements." I understand that feeling too, because it's how I feel when I visit our men and women in uniform that I proudly represent here tonight. It's my honor to accept this award on their behalf.

Thank you very much. Semper Fidelis. And one more important thing, in the first half tomorrow – go Navy, beat Army. In the second half tomorrow, go Army, beat Navy.

**Remarks during a United Service Organizations (USO) Tour with Marines  
Trondheim, Norway  
December 21**

Hey, Marines, sailors – I don't know if we've got any soldiers here – great to be with you here tonight. Look, before we start the show, there's just a couple things I want to do.

The first thing I want to do is, firstly, wish you a merry Christmas, happy holidays, and just thank you for who you are and what you do. I've had chance to see some of you each holiday, and then over a little demo of the USO talent. I got to tell you, I'm not proud to be a general. I'm proud to wear this uniform because people like you wear this uniform. That's what makes me proud today.

There is some really important business, though, that I want to do. The first thing I want to tell you is, you know, the USO has been supporting us wherever we are for 77 years – wherever we are. Literally in every clime and place. Just like we say we go every clime and place, the USO goes every clime and place. We've always had Christmas shows. Four years ago, I asked the president and the CEO of the USO. I said, look, we're doing these shows in early December. Do you think it would be possible to do them during Christmas week itself? So we actually can get out there and see soldiers, sailors, airman, Marines during Christmas time? And Dr. J.D. Crouch and his wife Kristin not only said they could do that, they did that. This is the fourth year in a row we've been able to do that. He's been with us every time. I want to ask Dr. Crouch and his wife, Kristin, to please stand up, and please say it again, because he's the one that has to live with this, leading the team.

I don't need to tell this audience what a premium we put on allies. We've never gone to war without allies. Every place we are around the world right now, we have allies alongside. As you know, among our closest allies are the Norwegians. They've been great hosts here. I've asked you that today and you all told me that. Tonight, I'm really proud to have somebody who's the chief of defense of Norway and a close personal friend, and his wife, Admiral and Mrs. [Haakon] Bruun-Hanssen. So please thank them as well on behalf of all of us. I think you know, both Dr. Crouch and Admiral Bruun-Hanssen both have good teams that have been supporting them in making all this possible, both the show and the hospitality that you're enjoying here in Norway.

Let me just tell you a little bit about the talent. First of all, they all volunteered to be here. They all volunteered to be away from their families during the holiday season because they care about you. There's no better way to show you how much they care than actually be here. I just want to give you a little bit more of a sense of the week that they have signed up for. We did leave last night, pretty late, from Washington, D.C., flew all night. We gave them about two hours before we linked up with you all [and] spent the afternoon with you, and we'll do a show here.

Tomorrow, we'll fly into Bahrain. They'll do a show. We'll go out to an aircraft carrier. They'll do a show. We'll go to Afghanistan and do multiple shows. We'll do Iraq and do multiple shows. And we'll go in and see an Army combat brigade on the way back to the United States. That's about six days and I forget how many – somebody help me – I think it's about 10 shows in those six days, and there's about two hours of sleep each day in between travel and those shows. So when they're out here, I want you to know that. I want you to appreciate what they're doing here.

The last thing I want to do before I bring out our master of ceremonies tonight, is say not only do I appreciate what you're doing, but I want to ask you, on behalf of me and my wife

who's here, when you get on the phone to your families and you talk to them over the holidays, I wish you'd, on behalf of me, tell them Merry Christmas and thanks for the sacrifice that they're making. To be honest with you, having sat where you sat many times and had my wife and kids back at home while I was deployed, I'm surrounded by Marines, I'm focused on the mission, it's a little bit sad to be away from home for the holidays. But it's also a big sacrifice for the families that are back at home. I wanted you to just let them know that I appreciate them. Whether it's your mom, you dad, your grandparents, your spouse, your kids, they're all making that sacrifice and I wish you would deliver that message.

Our MC tonight, you'll all know who he is. He's a producer. He's an actor. A greater entertainer. Right now most known for his role in NCIS, Wilmer Valderrama. How about welcoming him out here and he'll start the show?

# 2019

## SELECTED WORKS

**Remarks for New House Members at an Event Hosted by the Congressional Research Service  
Williamsburg, Virginia  
January 6**

Ladies and gentlemen, you'd expect me to say it, but it really is an honor to be here. I want to add my congratulations to the many who have congratulated you since November. But I'd also share with you what I say to our newly selected general officers and flag officers. I say, you know, congratulations is something that is probably more appropriate for someone who wins the lottery than somebody who actually enters public service, either as an elected official or selected.

I looked at many of your biographies early this morning. Many of you sort of dislocated here both professional and personally in order to come to Washington, D.C. and make a difference. Although many of our fellow citizens sometime don't view coming to Washington as an honorable thing to do, as someone who's spent his adult life in government service, I do think what you're doing is an honorable thing to do. I do appreciate the fact that you're doing it.

Just as an aside, when I look at the young people in Washington, D.C., I hope that one of the things that you can do over the next couple years is reinvigorate the attraction of coming to Washington, D.C. and making a difference, and making sure that the top 1 percent of our students – whether it's at George Washington University or Iowa State – have what I call the wow factor. The wow factor is when they tell somebody back at their campus: I got a job working for a congressman or a congresswoman, and the response is, wow, how did that happen? It's a big deal, and they would want to do that. So, again, what I really wanted to just say is thanks. I know there's some spouses and family members here too. I am mindful of the sacrifice of sometimes keeping two households.

I was telling some people, I just spoke to a woman outside the room. I said, what do you do? She said, well, I'm running the children's program. I said, really, how many children do you have? Well, we have 41 children between the ages of one and 16 that you represent. So I'm not unmindful of the fact that in that regard some of them are not going to be with you every day, and you've made the sacrifice to come here. So, again, thank you.

Please continue to eat. I'm going to eat up the clock here for about 10 minutes. This is mostly a question and answer session. But I'm going to speak for as long as it looks like you need me to speak so you can finish eating. Then we'll go into question and answer. On a serious note, what I really wanted to do was probably two things. One, give you my thoughts on the state of the force, the state of your soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, and then a few comments about the strategic landscape. I think if I cover those two topics, it will probably plant the seeds for a productive question and answer session.



Let me start with the state of the force. One of the privileges I've had in my current assignment – I've been in this assignment now for a little over three years – is I – unlike any other time that I've been in the military – I've had the chance to visit your soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines wherever they are. From a missile silo in North Dakota providing nuclear deterrence to our sailors aboard aircraft carriers, to our special operators that are spread across the Middle East, in Africa, to our airmen in Qatar that are supporting operations across the Middle East, giving combat teams training, you name the part of the military.

What I would tell you is despite the fact we're entering 18 years of war, we are continuing to recruit and retain a high-quality force. I'm mindful of the fact – by the way, when I talked about service, I'm mindful of the fact that there are many here that are not coming to service, you're returning to service. A fairly large number of people in the crowd that have done government service and military service. But I would say that the quality of people that we have is high. Having said that, we have some challenges in the people business. One is, we have a pretty significant shortfall of pilots. As many as a couple thousand we were short in the Air Force last year. Short of maintainers.

We're in a very competitive personnel environment for people with special skills. So whether it be cyber skills, or space skills, or some of the highly technical skills, language skills and so forth, we're in a very competitive environment. I would say that over the last two to three years the environment has become more competitive. As I'm looking at recruiting right now, even though we're making our numbers, as someone who plays close attention to this I can also see that it's harder for us to make our numbers right now. Our recruiters are working harder. That can be a function of a number of things. We can talk about that in the question and answer period. But on balance, I think we're in pretty good shape with regard to people, with the exception of those areas that I mentioned.

With regard to readiness what I would talk about is equipment readiness. I know that many of you have heard about readiness challenges. Many of us testify. The first thing I will tell you is that, you know, we have a very open system. Unlike other countries, we talk about our deficiencies in public. I think we need to make sure we have in context the many challenges that have been discussed about readiness. The one thing I can tell you with a high degree of confidence today is our armed forces can protect the homeland and our way of life. We can meet our alliance commitments around the world. In the aggregate we have a competitive advantage over any potential adversary. I have confidence in saying that to you.

I have equal confidence in saying that if we don't pay attention to a few trends over the last several years, then whoever is standing here five, or seven, or eight years from now will not have the same degree of confidence and be able to say that. That's really one of the things I wanted to talk about. So in addition to people, I talked about equipment. We do have some significant challenges in modernization. Let me put that in context for you. Back in probably 2009-2010 – some of you were in the government at that time – we made two assumptions. One assumption was that the operational tempo that our forces were experiencing back in 2009, 2010, 2011 was going to reduce. So that was assumption number one. The other assumption we made at that time – if you recall we were in a particularly difficult fiscal situation. And we said the fiscal situation would stabilize.

Those two assumptions informed choices that we made. One of the choices is we continued to operate the force at a high tempo, assuming that it would level out over time. That assumption didn't obtain. We also made decisions about funding current operations and accepting risk in capability development for tomorrow, assuming that a year or two years later the fiscal situation would stabilize, and we'd be able to get after that. Neither of those two assumptions obtained. That's why we have today what I would call a bow wave of modernization. In other words, for a number of years – five or seven years – we've delayed modernizing the force, assuming that the fiscal situation would get better. And we operated the force at a high degree of tempo.

Some of you have heard about the aviation incidents that we have had, and also maybe last August you saw the USS *McCain* and the incident at sea, you saw the *Fitzgerald*. I would like to put those in context for you. It really relates to those two comments I made about operational tempo and then assumptions about fiscal environment. In my judgment, those incidents occurred because in the past – if you think about everything our men and women do as a progression of 101, 201, 301, 401, regardless of what occupation field they're at. When I was first in the Marine Corps, when I had an opportunity at 101, if I determined that my unit wasn't ready to go to 201 I was given the time to retrain the organization to be sound on the fundamentals of 101 before going to 201. We didn't go to 301 before we felt we were competent to go to 201.

I call that training to standard as opposed to time. In other words, I had the time to get to the right standard before we went on. What I would tell you is that one of the second-order effects of this very busy period of time that we have experienced over the last decade-plus is that we have gone through the 101 to 401 syllabus regardless of whether or not we were proficient in 101 to go to 201. We had a limited amount of time to get to the high-end skills necessary to deploy – whether it was deploy to Afghanistan, deploy to Iraq, or deploy to Syria. In many cases where I might have had 15 or 18 months to get my unit ready to go on a deployment, we've given our unit leaders sometimes as little as seven or eight months.

In my own judgment, that's one of the factors that caused us to have a number of these incidents over the last couple years. While we have pulled the throttle back and we have changed the way that we're prioritizing and allocating our forces today, we have gone back and revisited those two critical assumptions I made, on both operational tempo and the fiscal environment. We are still dealing with the aftermath of 15, 16, 17 years of a very high level of operational tempo. To put that in some context, when I came into the job and I would routinely go around and visit members of the force, one of the questions I would ask then when I would get them all together is say: Tell me a little bit about the history of your unit.

I'll give you some examples. I'm aboard the USS *Barry*. It's a destroyer. It was providing ballistic missile defense in Korea. I asked the sailors, who were a very good crowd and you could tell motivated, were committed to what they do. I said, hey, tell me a little bit about what you did over the past year. They had been underway 70 percent of the previous 18 months – 70 percent. Now, there's some sailors in the crowd. You might be underway 70 percent of the time. But when you're not underway you're doing maintenance. You're doing training. You're doing qualifications, preparation. You are not at home and relaxing. And there are, again, two factors. There's the human factors to maintain that kind of tempo, but there's also, again, that lack of proficiency in the 101, 201, 301 that I spoke about.

So our objective certainly over the last 18 to 24 months has been to stabilize and ensure that our units, instead of being what we used to call a one-to-one deployment to dwell ratio – that means you were gone as much as you're home. [In] that limited period of time that you're home, you're busy training. We're trying to get that to a three-to-one ratio, where you're home three times as much as you're gone. That allows us to get after that training piece that I spoke about, and it also allows you to maintain some sense of balance in your personal lives with families and those kinds of things. We are not there yet. We're much closer than we were two and a half years ago. But we have some work to do to make sure. That's our objective.

Again I could take many questions about people and equipment, and I will. But I wanted to go through that relatively quickly. Let me talk a little bit about the strategic landscape. So when I was preparing to come into this assignment, I did some reading. One of the quotes that resonates with me was one from Henry Kissinger. I was reading this in the summer of 2015. He said that this is the most complex and volatile security environment since World War II. At the time I thought, well, it is a very busy time. But then in the first few days after I took this assignment, the Russians entered into Syria, we had Hurricane Joaquin, and we had a major civilian casualty incident in Afghanistan. And that's the first 72 hours of my time in this particular assignment.

As I look back over the last three and a half years, Henry Kissinger was more than prophetic. By the way, he wrote those words well before 2015. And it hasn't gotten any less complex or less volatile since he wrote those words. This is the environment that we find ourselves in. In the Department of Defense, we have to find some way to make sense of the environment we find ourselves in. The challenges are many, and they vary. But we need some framework as a way to think about those challenges – a framework that will allow us to plan, a framework that will allow us to have a conversation with our overseers about readiness and ready for what, a framework that will inform new capabilities that we'll develop for tomorrow.

The framework that we have really are two documents that you will be familiar with and we will testify about. One is the National Defense Strategy. That is what the Department of Defense needs to do. The second is the National Military Strategy. That is the how we will do it. Those two documents are pretty important. We as a framework use great power competition with Russia and China, and then Iran, North Korea, and violent extremism as what we call the 2+3. The two being great power competition with China and Russia. The three being the challenges associated with Iran, North Korea, and violent extremism.

I would emphasize to you that we don't view those documents as predictive in nature. If anything, after my time in service, I am very humble about our ability to predict the future. An important assumption, though, is that what we say is if we build a force and we posture a force that can deal with one or more of those 2+3 challenges, we'll have the inherent flexibility and we'll be on the path of capability development that will allow us to deal with the unexpected. So you can test those assumptions with us routinely. I mean, if there's anything I've learned in this business is getting to the assumptions is really important. How did we come to where we are? And that assumption is one that you can challenge us on, and you should challenge us on, because that's the only way we're going to get it right, if that assumption obtains.

Again, we're assuming not necessarily that we will fight China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, we certainly are dealing with violent extremism, that's the limit of the challenges we face. But if we benchmark our force – some of you come from industry. You have to have something to

benchmark the force against. If we benchmark the force against those challenges – and not only today. But if we look at the path of capability development, the trajectory if you will, of Russia and China, in particular, are on in the future, and we look at where will they be in 2025 based on the assessment of our intelligence community, and we build a program that will allow us to develop the capabilities necessary to deal with the challenges in 2025, then we'll be in the right place.

I just want you to understand how we come about developing the capabilities we have. When we talk about risk, I say, hey, we have high risk, or medium risk, or low risk, you should test them – you should push back on us in that and say: Against what? We should be able to talk to specifically our ability to deal with those challenges I've just outlined.

Those challenges cut across what we call all domains. So when I speak now about the challenges they represent, I will talk about challenges in the traditional sea, air and land, as well as cyber, and as well as space. When we talk domains, those are the five domains we look at. When we look at those challenges, we look at them through the lens of our ability to operate with those five domains.

So what do we see when we look at Russia? Russia, for the last 10 years, despite the fact they have very significant demographic challenges, very significant economic challenges, Russia has been on a fairly unprecedented path of capability development. I say unprecedented, you'd have to go back to the Soviet days before you would see a pattern of operational deployment and the path of capability development that we see today with the Russians.

What exactly are they trying to do as they develop and modernize their nuclear enterprise, increase the capacity of their nuclear enterprise and the types of nuclear weapons, develop capabilities in maritime, obviously space and anti-space capabilities, cyber capabilities? What are they trying to do? In my judgment, Russia recognizes what we recognized when we developed those strategic documents I spoke about.

We spent a lot of time in the fall of 2016 coming to a conclusion that was fairly evident, but we worked hard to make sure we got it right. We asked ourselves: What are the sources of strength of the United States military? We concluded that the two primary sources of strength were, number one, the network of allies and partners that we had built since World War II. And, number two, our ability to project power when and where necessary to advance our interests. We felt like those two sources of strength were what were really the foundational elements of our ability to deter conflict, our ability to assure our allies that we could meet our alliance commitments, and then obviously our ability to respond in the event that deterrence fails.

Russia has studied us very carefully and they were alarmed at our ability to project power back in the early 1990s in Desert Shield/Desert Storm. They looked again at our ability to move fast and muster equipment in launching equipment and materiel and capability in 2003. And they have developed a series of capabilities that you might hear a buzzword in the Pentagon, anti-access/area denial. In plain English, that simply means they are developing capabilities that prevent us from moving to Europe, and then operating freely across those five domains I mentioned.

Why is that relevant? Number one, our ability to do those things is, again, the foundation for deterrence. It also is the foundation for assurance in relationships with our allies. So what Russia is really trying to do is, one, undermine the credibility and the cohesion of our alliance structure

in NATO. And, number two, again, in the event deterrence fails, to deny us the ability to operate freely across all those domains. Again, I can talk more specifically when the time comes.

Sort of the difference between China and Russia in my mind is if you ask me today what is the most significant challenge we face from a military perspective only, I would tell you it's Russia. If you ask me how about 2025 or how about 2030, based on economics and demographics – it's clearly China by 2025 or 2030.

Much like Russia – and, again, you have to understand Russia in the context of Georgia, Donbas, and the Crimea, and most recently the Sea of Azov – you have to understand China in the context of undermining the credibility of the rules-based order in the Pacific and doing things that are inconsistent with international laws, norms, and standards. That can be intellectual property in the business world and it can be, you know, the South China Sea.

What I always tell people about the South China Sea is – they say, well, why do we make such a big deal about a pile of rocks in the South China Sea? Why do we make such a big deal about these islands and what the Chinese are doing? Is it all about operational challenges they confront? No. It's about undermining the rules-based order in the Pacific. I learned something as a new lieutenant. It was: Every time you walk by something that's substandard and you don't do anything about it, you just set a new standard. And it's lower. And it's lower. So a failure to take coherent, collective action to violations of the rules-based order sets lower standards for international norms, rules and standards.

So when we look at China similarly, and the path of capability development, they have also developed a wide range of those weapon systems. I'll quickly go through it because it's very similar to Russia. In other words, their focus is preventing the United States from projecting power into the Pacific, and then operating freely in support of our alliances. We have five treaty allies in the Pacific. Similarly, trying to undermine the credibility and the cohesion of our alliance network. Both China and Russia recognize that that's our source of strength. Both China and Russia's day-to-day activity is designed to undermine that, from my perspective. And certainly from the military capability, designed to prevent us from meeting our alliance commitments.

If I talk about Korea – and certainly much has been said about Korea over the past two years. What the U.S. military's primary focus is with regard to North Korea, number one, is supporting the diplomatic effort. We have 28,500 Americans on the peninsula today. They are there to deter provocations by North Korea. They are there to assure the South Koreans of our commitment. In addition to supporting Secretary [of State Michael R.] Pompeo and the president and the vice president in the diplomatic effort to peacefully denuclearize the peninsula, we're also supporting the enforcement of U.N. sanctions. Largely it's the ship-to-ship transfer of illicit fuel that we're going to – the basic military activities are to deter a provocation, assure our allies, and then support the enforcement of U.N. Security Council resolutions to support a peaceful resolution to North Korea.

What I would tell you is that the actual capability of North Korea to threaten us has not changed. So there's maybe promising diplomatic initiatives that are ongoing right now, but in my business, you know, there's two things. You look at a threat's capability and you look at their intent. I can't judge what I need to do based on my assumptions about their intent. I can only look at the capability they present and assure that we are prepared to deal with those capabilities.

So clearly on a day-to-day basis, with regard to missile defense and so forth, it's focused on the capability that is fielded, even as we hope that there'll be a peaceful denuclearization and elimination of missiles. I'll come back and describe in a minute, as I close, how to put all that in context.

With regard to Iran, from my perspective what I see is a spreading of malign influence across the Middle East. When we look at Iran, we look at five challenges. We look at the traditional maritime challenge and the interdiction of commerce in the Straits of Hormuz or the Bab el-Mandeb. We look at the missile threat, which has grown. We look at the cyber threat. We look at the nuclear threat. And then we look at the support of proxies that Iran has and, of course, Hezbollah and other organizations like that.

If you look at what Iran is doing to destabilize even the formation of the government today in Iraq, what they're doing with regard to supporting the Houthis and inflaming the civil war in Yemen, what they're doing to destabilize Lebanon and obviously the support for the oppressive Assad regime in Syria, dealing with Iran is one of the significant challenges that we have in the Middle East. Again, I can talk more about that.

Let me go to the fifth challenge, which is violent extremism. I'm happy in the question and answer to talk about specifics of Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa and what we're doing in the fight against violent extremism, but I would prefer to provide to you in my comments just how I think about this from a strategic perspective. First of all, some assumptions: Number one, this fight's going to be with us for a long period of time. The underlying conditions that feed extremism are not going to go away any time soon. So we need to deal with this particular challenge. And we need to deal with this challenge in a fiscally, politically, and militarily sustainable way in the context of all of those other challenges I just spoke about.

In other words, we're going to deal with violent extremism, but we're not going to do what we can't afford to do with that singularly. We have all these other challenges. So if you think about it, there are three things that make this challenge transregional. In other words, connect groups from West Africa to Southeast Asia, to the homeland. Those three things are the flow of foreign fighters, the resources – those things that enable violent extremism – and then the narrative, the ideology. Those three things. From a strategic perspective, our focus is trying to cut – I would call that, the connective tissue, those three things – trying to cut the connective tissue between groups in West Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, and then by with and through local partners enable them to have the capability to deal with the problem that's within a specific country or a specific region.

That is what allows us, with a relatively small footprint of U.S. forces, to leverage large numbers of forces on the ground in an effort to deal with a problem that's global and we can't possibly deal with it ourselves. Another assumption I make about violent extremism, as we had that conversation, is that we cannot do this without a broad network of likeminded allies and partners that share information and, where appropriate, take coherent, collective action against violent extremism. We can't deal with this problem ourselves. To give you some idea of what I mean when I say that, three years ago I started to bring together my counterparts from around the world. We had 40 the first year. We had 70 the second year. We had 90 countries represented at Andrews Air Force Base this year, 80 of them actually chiefs of defense, this past year. That's all an effort to increase the information sharing, the intelligence sharing where appropriate, and also

where we can get nations to look at this problem through a common lens, so we can take effective action to protect our country.

Let me talk now just at the end about the character of war, and why things have changed. I'm going to use this North Korea example to highlight for you the difference in what was at one time three primary domains – sea, air, and space – what was at one time an assumption we could make as a nation that if a conflict broke out in a given geographic area, that conflict could be contained in that geographic area. If you would go back and look at our strategies in the 1990s, they were all what I would call regional strategies. Today we are dealing with challenges – almost every challenge that I can envision is a transregional challenge, meaning it cuts across multiple geographic areas, and it involves all of those domains I spoke about – sea, air, land, space, cyberspace.

If a war had broken out in Korea in the 1990s, it would have been a sea, air, land conflict. Although we would have responded because of our treaty ally, there would not have been a threat to the homeland. It would not have been a threat to the homeland direct. If a war broke out in the '90s, we would have taken a vast amount of the joint force. We would have asked the commander on the ground in Korea: What do you need? We would have given that commander largely what the commander needed.

Today if something happens on the Korean Peninsula, I don't immediately go to see what the commander on the Korean Peninsula needs. The first person I speak to is our commander of Northern Command to see where we are with regard to ballistic missile defense. The second commander I speak to is our commander of the United States Cyber Command to make sure that we have shields up and are protecting our information technology, our IT networks. The third person I'll speak to is General [John E.] Hyten out at Strategic Command to make sure we're where we need to be with regard to the nuclear enterprise.

Then I'll talk to our commander in the Pacific Command to make sure that the platform from which we would project power to the peninsula – that's our ally in Japan, that's our forces that are based in Okinawa and in Guam – were all right with regard to executing the defense of those areas. Eventually, I would get to Korea and ask the guy on the Korean Peninsula: What do you need? I'm slightly overstating the point to share with you a simple point, which is that the character of war has changed. Two of the most significant aspects of war today is that it does involve – it cuts across multiple geographic areas and it does involve all the domains.

So when you think about North Korea, North Korea can – with anti-space capabilities – have a significant impact on our economy, a significant impact on our communications. Same thing in cyberspace. Obviously with the missile threat they can reach not only our allies in the region, but they can reach the homeland. We have to factor that into our defense.

I can see all of you are finished eating. I think I've successfully done the rain delay here and run out the clock so that we can go into questions and answers. But I would just close by telling you: You can and you should have confidence in your men and women in uniform. You can and should have confidence. I am incredibly proud to represent them. And I would tell you this: When you go around the world and share what I share with staff, they don't know what you do. There's 2 million of them out there, active and reserve. On most days, they don't care what you do. Same for me.

But they have a right to expect that what we're supposed to be doing back here in Washington, D.C., we're actually doing it. I'm speaking to myself as well as the collective audience. They have trust in us. They have trust in us. I've just come back from eight days in the region over the Christmas holiday. We went to Norway, Bahrain, we were on an aircraft carrier, went to Afghanistan, went to Iraq, and we finished up in Poland. So that was about seven or eight days. Not once – not once during those seven or eight days – and I left on the 20th of December and came back on the 28th – did anybody ask me about Washington, D.C.

They asked me about what was going to happen to their unit when they went back. They asked me about the mission that they had. That was the conversation I had, because they kind of expect that we're doing what we need to do. My personal commitment to you, on behalf of those of us in uniform, particularly the senior people, is that we will engage in a dialogue with you. We will share the information you need to execute your constitutional responsibility to oversee us. We understand that. And we understand the serious responsibility that you have to make sure that the men and women that we have – particularly those in harm's way – have the wherewithal to accomplish the mission with minimal loss of life or equipment.

I view that as a collective responsibility. You have that constitutional responsibility. I have a responsibility to provide you with military advice and the facts and the information that you need to inform the prioritization and allocation of resources. We take that very seriously. So with that, I'd be happy to take questions on anything that I've spoken about, or anything else.

**Representative Van Taylor (R-TX):** Sure. Hi, General. Van Taylor from Texas's 3rd District. Proud Marine veteran. Served in the '90s, when it was a little more peaceful. Led a platoon in Iraq on D-Day March 21st, 2003. And things have gotten much more interesting for our forces since – you know, since then. Right now my question to you is where are American forces deployed today where they're exchanging gunfire? Where is combat? Where are troops? And if you – this idea of the size of U.S. forces relative to the allies that are beside us – that are standing beside us, whether they're Muslim allies, or Christian allies, or whoever they may be in the world. Who's standing with us to fight the enemy?

**Dunford:** Sure. I'll very quickly give you that. We've got 15 – and I'll kind of come east to west, I guess. Afghanistan, we have 15,000 Americans. We're supporting approximately 300,000 Afghan forces. And there's an additional 8,000 NATO members that are there. In Iraq, we have just over 6,000 U.S. forces currently on the ground supporting over a couple hundred thousand both Peshmerga in the north as well as Iraqi security forces.

We have 2,500, plus or minus, forces in Syria today. We're supporting 50,000 members of what we call the Syrian Democratic Forces. That's a mix of Kurdish and Arab forces that have been fighting ISIS for us since 2015. And, frankly, if you think back to where we were against ISIS in 2015, absent the support we have provided to Iraqi security forces, the Peshmerga and the Kurds in the north of Iraq as well as the Syrian Democratic Forces, I certainly wouldn't be able to say that ISIS today has about 2 percent of the territory that they had in 2015 as a result of those forces.

We have several hundred in East Africa, largely dealing with al-Qaida and al-Shabaab is the specific group in that area. We're supporting the Somali national forces in that particular endeavor. We have small numbers in and out of Yemen. That's focused on al-Qaida and ISIS.



And although we're not in active combat operations, we've got about 1,000 Americans that I would describe as certainly in a very high-risk environment in West Africa they're supporting 4,000 members of the French Army and about 30,000 partners in West Africa. I guess finally we have small numbers, in the tens, that are in the Philippines supporting Filipinos and dealing with al-Qaida – with ISIS in the Philippines.

That's just kind of a broad view. But, again, you asked specifically those in harm's way. In addition to that, obviously our ships at sea that are keeping open the Bab el-Mandeb, Straits of Hormuz, supporting those forces from at sea. And then the large aviation footprint that we have in the Middle East that's supporting all those operations as well. The numbers that I gave you, with the exception of Afghanistan, were forces that are on the ground in that country. For example, in Iraq, we have over 6,000 on the ground in Iraq, but the air support that is being provided to it is Qatar.

**Representative Mark Green (R-TN):** Thank you, sir, for your life of service to this great country. I'm Mark Green from Tennessee. I understand you're retiring soon. We'd love to have you in Tennessee, if you want to come our way.

**Dunford:** What's the tax rate?

**Green:** Zero. Zero. The Kurds. Erdogan has become increasingly difficult. What are your thoughts about the future of our relationship with the Kurds? And if I could get a second question, we seem to have sacrificed installation management – or maintenance for readiness over the past few years. What are your thoughts about BRAC?

**Dunford:** Sure. To the first question, it's been on my mind. I'm leaving this afternoon to go to Ankara to have a conversation. This is my 15th time, I think, going to Ankara since I've been in this job. It's probably the 25th engagement with the Turks. That gives you some sense of how difficult it's been to manage this issue. With regards to the Kurds in the north – and this is – although it's unclassified, **I think this is a not-for-attribution venue** and we're all here in that spirit. There's really three things we're focused on right now. One is defeating ISIS. The second is executing the president's decision for us to withdraw. And the third thing is protecting our Kurdish partners and making sure that there are not atrocities committed.

Here's what we know. And this is something to pay attention to. We know that what the Turks would like to do is establish a 30- to 40-kilometer buffer area south of the Turkish border into northern Syria. We know that they have more than 2 million migrants, perhaps as many as 3 million migrants – largest of the Arab population – that they would like to resettle. We also know there's about 750,000 Kurds in northeast Syria that would be pushed out of that area if the Turks were to come south. So we're managing a very difficult situation with our Kurdish partners that have taken the fight to ISIS. And yet, we have a treaty ally – a NATO ally – in the form of Turkey. We are trying to now reconcile what are on the surface irreconcilable perspectives on the future of Syria.

I will have a plan that we will lay on the table that does the best we can to meet the Turkish concerns for their security, which are real. PKK in particular is real. We are providing support in dealing with the PKK. But we are going to go to Turkey here on Monday and Tuesday and lay out a plan that in our view does the best we can to manage protecting the Kurdish population in northeast Syria, ensuring that Syria is not a sanctuary from which Turkey can be attacked, still

conduct the withdrawal that the president has directed us to conduct. And still support those who will continue to take the fight to ISIS. It could be coalition partners as well as the SDF. The details of that are probably something I shouldn't share in this venue right now.

But we, as I mean as a nation now, are very mindful of the responsibility we have to the Kurds in northeast Syria. I think you can imagine, particularly those of us in the U.S. military. I mean, I mentioned 2,000-2,500 heads on any given day, about that number. What we should know is that our special operations forces in Syria are living with the Kurds and the Arab members of the Syrian Democratic Forces in groups of six or eight or 10. Their force protection for the last three years has been inextricably linked to the relationship they have with the Syrian Democratic Forces. The progress that we have made on the ground in Syria is a direct result of the sacrifices the Syrian Democratic Forces have made. In the past month, they have suffered 75 killed and 250 wounded. In the past month, down in the Euphrates River Valley.

So we feel that sense of responsibility to them, even as we try to reconcile the very legitimate concerns of a NATO ally. And, look, this is a 9.99 degree of difficulty. You know, as I tell people, the only people that have simple solutions to these kind of questions are refugees from accountability. And that doesn't include anyone in this room, right, or yourself?

**Representative Chip Roy (R-TX):** General, Chip Roy from Texas 21. We've got Fort Sam Houston and Joint Base San Antonio. With all due respect to the gentleman from Tennessee, we also have a zero percent tax rate. On behalf of the Texas delegation, we'd love to have you in Texas as well. I just wanted to ask a quick question about the fiscal state of things in the United States going forward. Secretary [of Defense James N.] Mattis has pointed out that the debt – the \$22 trillion of debt we're now facing, the trillion-dollar deficit that we're likely facing in the next fiscal year was the greatest national security threat. I believe is a line that had used. Given that I think that y'all have suggested 3 to 5 percent growth in the military budget in the next five years-plus, something that I'll take your word at, and look forward to briefings on, and likely support – at least subject to finding ways to save costs in the Pentagon – how do you see the state of our national debt, the \$22 trillion, the trillion-dollar deficits on the horizon, and the choices that have to be made historically between guns and butter that we are not doing today.

**Dunford:** Sure. Let me avoid the political aspect of the question, for good reason, and just say that, you know, I think the unemployment that Secretary Mattis used to talk about, and when I sat next to him in testimony we would talk about, is that obviously the solvency of the nation is foundational to our ability to pay for the common defense, which today, by the way, the is about 3 ½ percent of the gross domestic product. To put that in some context, I think during Vietnam it was 7 or 8 percent. And it has been in previous times much higher than that. Without being flippant at all, we can afford survival. I think, you know, that 3.5 percent of the gross domestic product is necessary.

When people say, well, look, why are we spending so much time – so much money relative to China, Russia, or others, I'd use your question as an opportunity to answer that. We are the leader of the rules-based order I alluded to earlier. If there is to be a collective, coherent response to all these challenges that we have around the world, my own experience now tells me that it won't occur unless the United States leads in those coherent, collective responses. We have global responsibilities. In my judgment, if you look at our economic strength, if you look at the

political influence we wield around the world, and you look at the security that we enjoy, while we can make some changes and some improvements in burden sharing and other areas, the framework in which we have addressed our security over the last couple years seems to me to have worked out pretty well.

So making changes should be made mindful of what it has given us. And, yes, we do spend a lot. Yes, our military is bigger than those other countries'. We have to ask ourselves, if we are not the nation that underwrites the rules-based international order, who are the possible candidates to take our place? There are two, and really one, and it is China. Those of you that are in business, and those of you who've paid attention in the national security sphere know that the rules-based order with Chinese leadership will be fundamentally different than the rules-based order that's underwritten by the United States.

I hope that's not too evasive on the debt. I do see it as a problem, because I'm not unmindful of the balance that people have to strike. In my business I have to strike a balance between meeting today's requirements and investing in tomorrow's requirements. And I'm mindful, in your business you have to meet that challenge, but you also have to meet the challenge of all the other things that the government needs to do to keep us who we are. Some of those are in the security lane and some of those are not.

**Representative Terrance John "TJ" Cox (D-CA):** Good afternoon, General. TJ Cox from California's 21st, I'd like to get your thoughts on the projection, utilization, and maybe the erosion of the U.S.'s soft power compared to our hard power.

**Dunford:** Sure. First of all, everyone wrings their hands about the erosion of soft power. If we can just for a common-definition purpose say – let's just say that the output of soft power is influence. Every country I go – in fact, one of the – a lot of the things about this is there are moments in this assignment when, you know, I wish I was fishing. But there are great moments in this assignment. I talked about the men and women. The other thing is, you know, when I get off the plane that says the United States of America, it's an incredible proud thing.

No matter where I go – including those countries that publicly say bad things about us – in private, universally, heads of state, my counterparts, ministers, in private will say: Don't leave. Don't leave. You need to help lead us out of these challenges. That's in the Middle East. That's in Southeast Asia. That's in South Asia. That's in South America. It doesn't matter. And so we shouldn't take it for granted. We should make sure that when we talk about the competition of ideas that we win the competition of ideas. But I will just tell you, we have a brand. We have a brand that nobody else has. It's still a very viable brand around the world, despite all the criticism. Just making sure that we're in a position to leverage that is important.

But I do think that tools – if you get down to the tactical, operational level – things like we've done in the past with Voice of America and education exchanges to bring young people here in the United States, all those things are things we should double down on. I'm mindful of an expression that Jack Welch had when he was at General Electric. He said, if you think you're communicating enough, double it. I think with regard to making sure we win in the marketplace of ideas, talking about who we are and what we do as a people is something we ought to be doing. But I wouldn't understate the influence that we have around the world. We are still the leaders in the world. There is no question about it. We can still put together coalitions. We can

still bring cohesive, collective action to particular problems. What we need to just do is make sure we don't take that for granted and become complacent.

**Representative Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ):** Well, thank you so much, sir. Mikie Sherrill from New Jersey's 11th District, home of Picatinny Arsenal. I was just wondering – I've heard that the Chinese and Russians have done a joint exercise recently. I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about the military relationship between those two countries.

**Dunford:** Sure. No, Congresswoman, it's a great question. The question was the military relationship. So the Chinese did a major exercise now about, I think, six, eight weeks ago. And the Russians participated. I would just share with you, it was a fairly superficial engagement. It was largely a political statement. I think there are more areas of divergence with China and Russia than there are of convergence. Strategically one of the things we talk about is the number-one thing we need to do is prevent Russia and China from aligning. So as we look at what we're doing and how we are addressing the strategic challenges we have, keeping them from aligning is important.

I don't view that what they're doing today is a fairly mature degree of alignment. I don't think that their interoperability from a military perspective was at all demonstrated. We watched that pretty close. When it comes to information exchanges and so forth, they are both very skeptical of each other. They're both mistrusting. And so they only show them so much. But we – again, this is another area where I don't think it's a crisis, the alignment of China and Russia, but we all ought to be mindful that were that to be the case, strategically that would put us at a very significant disadvantage.

**Representative Steve Watkins (R-KS):** Steve Watkins, Kansas 2nd. General, thanks for being here. Kansas is home of Leavenworth, and I was also in the Army, veteran of Afghanistan. Can you comment on President Trump's decision to withdraw troops from Syria and Afghanistan?

**Dunford:** Sure. With regard to withdrawing from Syria, I'll talk to that first. The president has made a decision to withdraw our U.S. forces from Syria. He's directed us to work with the Turks, work with the coalition, work with our partners on the ground to ensure that the defeat ISIS campaign is still being prosecuted. We're not operating on a specific timeline. So we're going to do this deliberately. We're going to do it in a way that accounts for the safety of our people on the ground. We're going to do it in a way that ensures that the campaign progress we made against ISIS doesn't erode. Again, that's part of my trip to Ankara is to try to figure that out. So the decision is made, but the implementation – I feel like we have a bit of flexibility now as we implement that decision. It's clear to me what the president has directed, and we're going to do that, but it's also clear – particularly after this visit to Iraq over Christmas – that we have the latitude to make sure we get it right. I'll be accompanied by Ambassador [James F.] Jeffrey and Ambassador [John R.] Bolton in Ankara this week so that we're linked both at the political and military level as we come up with a solution. So we'll do that.

With regard to Afghanistan, no specific decision has been made. I would tell you this: This is what needs to be the debate. Okay. So if you don't mind, on Afghanistan, because we're going to have this conversation in the coming months. You all have a voice. I'll just share with you my perspective. If you ask me: Do I want to get out of Afghanistan, would I want to draw down U.S.

forces in Afghanistan in the context of that strategy I spoke about, the answer is yes. Here's the challenge, is that there are about 20 groups in the South Asia region that have expressed an intent to attack the West, attack the United States. The pressure – and I really believe this – the pressure that we have put on those groups since 9/11 has prevented them from reconstituting and posing a threat to the homeland and our way of life.

The intelligence community is clear that left unchecked those groups, given the unique geography and the unique demographics in South Asia – Afghanistan and Pakistan – would reconstitute and pose a threat. In a perfect world, we would have a secure, stable Afghanistan in the future. From my perspective, we are not in Afghanistan to have a stable, secure Afghanistan. We're not in Afghanistan under any illusion of what Afghanistan might look like in the future. We may, by our presence, give the Afghan people the space they need to do some things. But the reason that we are in Afghanistan, and the prioritization, allocation of forces we have in Afghanistan, is informed by dealing with the threat that is in South Asia and making sure we keep consistent pressure.

So adjusting by some thousands of forces is not the end of the world. The key is, is the presence that the United States has in Afghanistan and in South Asia sufficient to address our security challenges? There are obviously broader ones to include two nuclear states in South Asia – India and Pakistan – and what would likely take place in Afghanistan in the wake of a U.S. departure.

The way I put it is that we have an enduring, vital national interest in the region, which means we're going to have an enduring diplomatic, economic, and military presence in South Asia. The size of that presence actually be informed by the environment within which we find ourselves, not by our own desire. The enemy gets a vote. The environment in South Asia is what it is. We can't necessarily change it in all ways. So – and I would never say this publicly – but in many ways you can view our presence in Afghanistan as term insurance. I'm not offering to you the premium on the backside of our presence in Afghanistan. It might happen. Something might happen. But what I am offering to you is that the presence in Afghanistan will keep the American people safe and keep those 20 groups from reconstituting and posing a threat.

In the meantime, our priority focus – and this is why it's so sensitive to talk about this in public right now – there are some opportunities for reconciliation. I mean, the way this ends is an Afghan-owned, Afghan-led peace process. For the first time in years, there's a number of initiatives right now in reconciliation. We have an ambassador who is assigned for that purpose. So we're trying to be very careful about our public messaging about Afghanistan and making sure that our public messaging is supportive of Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, who's responsible for pulling together the various groups and developing a path towards reconciliation.

But, again, as you all debate the issue of Afghanistan, and you talk about we've been doing the same thing for 17 years what do we expect? We are doing it, first and foremost, for us. First and foremost, for us. This is a response to 9/11. You can question whether or not we have the right approach to put pressure on those groups. What I would ask you to accept – and if you don't accept it, get an intelligence brief – I would ask you to accept there is a legitimate threat from that region that, if left unaddressed, will pose a threat to us. So let the debate be about how we deal with that threat, and not that we can ignore that threat and it's not going to have an impact here in the homeland.

It has, on 9/11. If you look at the cost of what we have in Afghanistan on a day-to-day basis, and you compare that to the cost of 9/11, and all that has happened in the wake of 9/11, I think that's a reasonable way to inform the dialogue and debate on Afghanistan.

**Representative Andy Levin (D-MI):** General, thanks so much for being here. Andy Levin from Michigan's 9th District, the home of TARDEC and TACOM, and Selfridge Air National Guard Base is right there as well. You mentioned the five threats – or six threats at the beginning. How do you see the migration and extreme weather events of accelerating climate change factoring into the questions – the national security threats to our country.

**Dunford:** Sure. Sure. Well, first of all, it's a great question. When I think about terrorism, while many people think about terrorist attacks, one of the great consequences of terrorism is the mass migration. If you look at the political and economic destabilization in Europe, in particular, as a result of mass migration, if you look at the fact that the Turks are sitting on 2 million – 2 to 3 million additional migrants that if they went to Europe – I mean, just look at what happened in Germany with the politics. Look what happened with Brexit. Look what's happening in Germany with the rise of the right. Look what happened in Hungary. A significant challenge is the migration aspect. If you really want to not sleep at night, get a brief on the demographics of Africa and the projections on what's going to happen over the next 15 or 20 years in the African continent, and the implications from a migration perspective and, obviously, a terrorist perspective as well.

With regard to the things like climate, in the sticker price of the U.S. military is the ability to either provide support to civilian authorities here in the United States – as we did, for example, in Hurricane Katrina and others – or to provide support to our allies and partners for humanitarian crises, and so forth. So, again, from a military perspective, our responsibility is dealing with the consequences of those things. You know, very little we can do in terms of preventing that.

**Representative Dan Crenshaw (R-TX):** General, thank you for coming. Dan Crenshaw from Texas 2nd District. First of all, I appreciate the comments on Afghanistan. I give that answer to my constituents all the time: We go there so they don't come here. It's that simple. But my question is about Chinese artificial intelligence. How worried should we be about their capabilities? And what are we doing to enhance our own capabilities?

**Dunford:** Sure, Congressman. It's a great question. I don't think it's an overstatement to say that whoever masters artificial intelligence – whether it be processing large volumes of information, man-machine capabilities and so forth – is going to have a decisive competitive advantage in warfare and in many other – in many other areas. And so we are concerned about it. One of the reasons we're concerned about it, I referred a couple times to the theft of intellectual property. The Chinese didn't start down here and work their way up. They started over here with where we were, and they're working their way up.

The other advantage the Chinese have, we can argue the disadvantages of a national state-owned enterprise. But there are some benefits to that, in the sense that everything that Chinese industry has is available to the Chinese military. I like to say that for us to maintain a competitive advantage, the relationship with human capital and the industrial base of the United States is

important. But I don't necessarily always have the same relationship with our capability and our industry as the Chinese do. So that's point one.

We stood up about two years ago inside the Pentagon an organization to look just at this, it's led by a three-star, to make sure that we are, one, reaching out to academia, to industry, and leveraging the capabilities that exist right now informing our path of capability development. It's identified – when we look at areas for experimentation and investments, if you look at our science and technology research and development budget, you'll see that it's one of the top four areas in both sides of technology, research and development. As we think about development of weapon systems in the future, it's very much a part of what we're doing.

We have an organization called DIU, which is really to reach out to industry and make sure that anything that's available in the next couple years we can immediately harness it. Then we're working some data projects for me personally to make sure that we can do with AI what maybe took people months and months to do. But it is an absolute area of focus in the department.

**Excerpts from Remarks to the Chosin Reservoir Board of Directors  
Washington, District of Columbia  
January 24**

**Dunford:** I am concerned because a combination of the economy, a combination of the theme of these endless wars – and I'd like to talk about that. Maybe that would be a good thing for me to just address for a minute. But there is this theme out there that we're in these endless wars that don't mean anything, there's no definition of victory. That, combined with the economy, seems to be having an impact there.

What I've told people, to include our political leadership, is when it comes to Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, we can have a definition of victory over state actors. We today have a competitive advantage over any one of those four challenges. Five, seven years from now, if we don't do things a little bit different than we are doing now, may not be able to say that. But I'm confident telling you that we have a competitive advantage today.

With regard to violent extremism, where I am is that we can deal with terrorism and we can deal with mass migration; we are not addressing the underlying conditions that feed violent extremism. So what I've told the president, what I've told the secretary, and what I've told others is, look, the definition of success here is buying down the risk to the American people at as low a cost in forces deployed and money spent as possible, because we're dealing with violent extremism in the context of now dealing with the challenges of Russia, China, Iran, North Korea. So, in implementing a strategy, we've got to get the investment on violent extremism right. Our approach has been with a relatively small footprint of U.S. forces we try to enable local forces to put pressure on the threat so we can make sure that we don't have all of our forces tied up in places like Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

As an example, the investment in Syria. We have a little over 2,000 U.S. forces on the ground. You say, well, what could 2,000 U.S. forces do? Well, we were leveraging over 50,000 partners that we had developed over the last couple years. We've got 15,000 Americans in Afghanistan; there's 300,000 Afghans. If you look at the casualties over the last couple years, the casualties are Afghan casualties, Iraqi casualties, and Syrian Defense Force casualties, with a very small number – not understating what happened Saturday, when we welcomed back three Americans at Dover, but the numbers of U.S. casualties are down. And the numbers of U.S. forces deployed are down.

But the fact of the matter is we have threats that can develop to the homeland from West Africa and Southeast Asia, and it requires constant pressure on those threats or we'll see another 9/11. That's what I believe. The fact that we haven't seen another 9/11, and if you look at the law enforcement arrests, the intelligence tips and those kind of things, the network that we have created around the world is keeping us safe.

You know, the president says, well, when does this end? I said, Mr. President, it never ends. It doesn't end. It doesn't end in my lifetime. It doesn't end. This is like term insurance. As long as you are willing to pay the premium, I can mitigate the risk to the American people. If you don't want to pay the premium then we just see what happens. But no one can say two or three years from now when an attack takes place in the Mall of America or an airport someplace that, boy, we didn't see that coming. No, we did see it coming, and what we're doing now is trying to mitigate the risk of it happening.

That's kind of the debate that we have about violent extremism. People are very frustrated because it does cost a lot of money. It costs a lot of money. We're probably spending – and we need to drive down the cost, there's no question about it – we're probably spending somewhat on the order of 60 (billion dollars) to \$70 billion on what we call Overseas Contingency Operations. So that's across the Middle East largely, but also including Africa. Al-Shabaab, [the] al-Qaida affiliate that's in Somalia, is a group that we're putting pressure on there. So 60 (billion dollars) to \$70 billion is not an insignificant amount of money. I understand that.

But anyway, I just wanted to, quick, on the violent extremism piece – and I think it's important we communicate this to the American people – that what our young men and women are doing every day is they're keeping us safe, and there's no way around it. We're not doing this for the Afghans. We're not doing it for the Iraqis. We're not doing it for the Syrians. We're doing it for the American people. And by the way, when Americans do things, because we bring our values with us it benefits other people as well. It benefits other people as well.

We went to Korea in 1950. We went to Korea for two reasons: One, to protect the Korean people; the other reason is because we said, look, one state cannot violate another state's sovereignty without paying a price. What I learned from your generation is if you walk by something that's substandard and you don't adjust it, you just set a new standard and it's lower. And so we had to react in 1950. In my judgment, we have to do what we're doing today.



General [Stephen G.] Olmstead asked me about the Kurds. So if you're looking at my eyes and wondering why they're bloodshot, I've spent the last two weeks two trips to Europe, one to Ankara last Tuesday and about 25 hours of flying for 24 hours on the ground, and just came back from meeting the Turks again this past week, as well as 14 of our NATO allies that are in what we call the Framework Group for the counterterrorism coalition.

The president made the decision for us to leave Syria, and we're going to do that in the coming months. But we have been working with – I mentioned 50,000 Kurds and Arabs that have been fighting ISIS for us. When I came into this job in October of 2015, if I show you a map of Iraq and Syria, it would have been completely red, completely red. ISIS was in control of the majority of territory, the majority of economic resources in Iraq and Syria. If I show you that map today there's a small, little piece of red right now in the Euphrates River Valley in Syria where ISIS has a toehold and there's no place in Iraq. There's certain places where they still operate, but there's no place where they hold a town, a city, ground. That's not just what U.S. forces did. We certainly provided significant enabling capability – aviation capability, fire support – but who did the fighting were those forces on the ground.

In the case of the Syrians, we started in 2015. We hadn't been in the region for three or four years. The first group of Americans who went over there – a small group of Special Forces officers and enlisted leaders went over there, and they literally started going around talking to people to try to build an army. The first two or three times we tried, it failed. We'd put 200 on infantry training; 75 would show up. It wasn't working. Eventually, we made a deal with the Syrian Democratic Forces, really a Kurdish group led by a guy named Muslim, and that group started in the hundreds and it grew to 50,000. We've trained, organized, and equipped that force of 50,000, and that's been the force that has cleared ISIS from holding physical ground inside of Syria. Tough, tough fighters; very, very good. And with minimal U.S. support they have done this.

So now, when the president gave us the order to withdraw, I said, OK, we have four objectives.

One, we've got to continue the ISIS campaign. It just became more difficult.

Two, we need to make sure we keep faith with those who have fought with us over the past couple years and not walk away from them.

Three, we need to make sure that we keep any threats from Syria from affecting a Turkish ally – a NATO ally, Turkey, in the north.

And the whole reason we went into Syria in the first place was collective defense of Iraq, and so we've still got to protect Iraq. We need another way to do that.

What we're trying to do right now is keep some members of the coalition – maybe the French, maybe the United Kingdom; this is what I've been doing over the past two weeks, is visiting with them – keep them there, continue to provide U.S. air support. Maintain the current campaign exactly as it is today, the only difference being that U.S. forces are out of Syria, not on the ground. But we would still provide combat support, still provide aviation. Meet the president's direction, but still maintain the current campaign coherence, and not allow ISIS to come back. That's really what we're trying to do. And in the meantime, protect the Kurds.

So the plan that we're really working on now keeps the Turks north, because the biggest threat to the Kurds is not the Syrian regime, you know. It's not the Russians. And it's not the Iranians. The biggest threat to the Kurds is the Turks, right? So the plan is to keep the Turks in Turkey, to keep the Kurds south of Turkey so they don't pose a threat and try to come up with some assurance operation in the middle while we continue to support the Syrian Democratic Forces in taking the fight to ISIS.

We have cleared ISIS of all the ground that they held. What we haven't done is complete the training with local forces that can help keep ISIS from coming back. We've been very clear about that. I think I said before I knew the president was pulling out, people asked me when will we be done. I said, I've been around long enough to be humble about projecting timelines. So I don't do that anymore. I don't talk about timelines. But I would tell you we need about 35,000 global forces to be trained. We're probably about a fifth or a sixth of the way through doing that. So we've got some work to do.

The plan that we have right now is designed to allow us to continue to train those forces to be able to put pressure on ISIS and buy more time for a political process, which is probably some years away before we'll be able to do that.

**Q:** Who or what is going to be the referee, umpire between the Turks and the Kurds? He said this – he's moving there, or something like that. He shouldn't do it. So who's saying, you shouldn't do that?

**Dunford:** So here's what I told the Turks. I said, look, here's your choice. The president said withdraw, so the plan that's on the table right now is we're going to create a vacuum in northeast Syria when we leave. The Russians, the Iranians and the regime are coming east. The Kurds are going to be there. You're going to come south. You tell me what's going to happen. Then we told the Kurds: Look, we leave, there's a vacuum. So the plan right now is, if the Turks don't voluntarily comply with this, and the Kurds don't voluntarily comply with this, there is no plan.

There is no plan. So when I look at this, this is how I sold it. I sold it to the Turks as the option that's best because if they don't comply with this the regime, the Russians, and the Iranians are coming east, and that's going to be a threat on their border. And they are very concerned about the Iranians on their border. So that's the Turkish perspective. The Kurds understand that this keeps the assurances of the United States, it keeps us supporting them, it keeps the coalition supporting them.

The Europeans, when I sat down with them, and they were a bit skeptical. I'll just tell you what I told the French chief of defense. I said, OK, you can tell me that your president is not interested in staying in Syria if we leave but let me share this with you. We have 777 foreign terrorist fighters being held by the Kurds right now. What's going to happen to them? We have 2 million-plus refugees inside of Turkey right now that can be weaponized and released to Europe. Remember the economic and political instability that occurred a couple years ago when that happened. There's another 4 million independently displaced persons inside of Syria that can easily become refugees and affect Europe. I think you have more interest in this than I do, in terms of the addressing it.

So it's very clear to me that the Europeans have some interests, the Kurds have interests, and the Turks have interests. The only ones who don't benefit from this are the Russians and the regime. And we have right now a deconfliction alignment, where we've told the Russians to stay west of the Euphrates River and not come east. We've got F-22s and so forth that are enforcing that deconfliction line. I talk to my Russian counterpart about once a month to make sure we keep that alive. In fact, I'll visit with him the 5th and 6th and 7th of February. We'll go do another face to face and make sure that the rules inside of Syria are clear when we go.

So sort of the truth of the matter is that – and what I've told people is, here's the guidance that I have from the president. I'm trying to help you. I'm trying to lay out a plan that mitigates the consequences of the decision that has been made. I can't undo the decision, but I might be able to address some of the challenges associated with the decision. If you don't want to cooperate, I can't help you. I can't care about this more than you do. That's exactly what I said last week.

**Q:** So you and your counterpart in the Soviet Union are the guys that are going to have to make sure that we stick to what we agreed to on this.

**Dunford:** Yes, sir. That's probably over time the biggest challenge in addressing Syria is at some point the regime and the Russians will want to reassert control over all the territory that's historically Syria. I think we have a little bit of time right now because they're very tied up in the northwest. There's probably about 40,000 opposition forces in place called Idlib, which is in the northwest part of the country. About 9,000 or 10,000 of those are al-Qaida affiliates with an organization called HTS. And so they're not ready to – we don't assess the regime has having the capacity to move to the east right now. What the Russians care more about is not this area where the Kurds are up in the north. They care about the oil resources that are more in the central part of the country.

**Q:** It looked to me, general, that the location where they are seems to be awfully easy to interdict their supply lines. Can we still get stuff to the Kurds? Have we looked at that situation?

**Dunford:** We can, sir. We have about 16 forward operating bases that we maintain right now that are distributed in northeast Syria. The Kurds are pretty good about, you know, maintaining some security along their lines of communication. We got a very heavy aviation footprint that's

over there that's doing that. The two major bases are C-17 and C-130 capable. They're direct airfields, so every time –

**Q:** Are there overland routes?

**Dunford:** There's an overland route from Iraq. We're using that extensively. And there's an overland route from Turkey that we're not using right now, but we could open up if we had to. ISIS will – there's still 9,000 or 10,000 – you see estimates as high as 12,000 or 15,000 – ISIS fighters remaining in Syria. So they're dispersed. They're an insurgency. They're fighting. But, they're doing the kinds of things we've seen over the last few days right now. Guerilla-type, insurgent-type activities. We think as long as we maintain pressure, they won't be able to form into large groups. And we'll be able to get through with the lines of communication and support the SDF.

But if you're talking about that long line of communication from the north down to the Euphrates River Valley, there's no question it's a long line of communication. But we've had it open now – we've been doing this for three years.

**Q:** And it's stayed open?

**Dunford:** Right. When people say, well, how can you do this? We've been keeping the Russians at bay for over three years. We've been supporting the SDF for three years. We've been pressuring ISIS and clearing them from the ground that they held for over three years. And we've been keeping the Turks in a box for three years. I would tell you, the plan I just outlined for you a minute ago, I described it honestly as seven consecutive miracles.

But I'm not going to have a regret factor that we didn't do everything we could do in the wake of the president's decision to try to maintain pressure on ISIS. When you look at Iraq, if anyone's concerned about Iranian influence in the Middle East, and if anyone's concerned about, you know, ISIS 3.0, so to speak, Iraq is the most important geographic ground in the region. If we don't have a relatively stable and sovereign Iraq, with capable security forces, then we're going to see what we saw in 2014. But the one thing we've seen of this threat is every variation of the threat becomes more virulent, right?

So the strain of extremism we're dealing with right now is actually more challenging, more adaptable than the last one. This one now, very savvy in cyberspace. Very savvy in getting the message out around the world. They've figured out ways to spread resources across the globe. They're connected in 20 different countries. They found ways to work around customs and border and so forth. So every strain of this extremist element, they learn from the last – they incorporate their lessons learned and they become more difficult to deal with.

That's why I'm so adamant about remaining in Iraq long enough for the Iraqis to be able to provide for their own security. Because if we walk away and leave a vacuum in the Middle East, you're going to see two things. You're going to see Iranian malign influence spread from Iran

across the Middle East to Lebanon. And we're going to see opportunity for another sanctuary for violent extremism to exist in Iraq and Syria. We saw what happened the first time.

And it is a threat to the American people. It's not real every day. That's the good news. The good news is, it's not real every day. But there's a price to be paid to keep us from having to worry about it. You know, we – Ellyn and I, spent – this is the fourth year in a row we've done it. We spent Christmas in Iraq and Afghanistan, aboard the [USS] *John C. Stennis*, in Bahrain, and so forth. We brought the USO. They volunteered to bring some people with us every year. And we've done that. What I told the troops when they were deployed is I said: Look, you're being here is why people are opening presents back at home.

They're not actually thinking about you. They're not thinking about you. They're not thinking about the threat. They're not walking out of their houses going: I wonder what's going to happen. But people around the world can't say that. If you're in Paris right now, 10,000 French soldiers are defending Paris – Paris! Ten thousand! The biggest deployment the French army has right now is in Paris. That's a hell of a way to live. If you look at the instability that's occurred in Germany as a result of migration and terrorism, it really ended Angela Merkel's regime, and it's created a really strong backlash – a right-wing backlash in Germany that we haven't seen since the days of World War II.

You know, some people think of this threat as just terrorism. But the mass migration that has occurred, and the political and economic instability that that has driven, is probably a bigger threat to the globe than just the actual individual terrorist attacks. The cost of that is – you know, when people say how much does it cost to defend us? How much does it cost not to defend us?

**Q:** Is Brexit on your radar screen?

**Dunford:** It is and Brexit's a problem. The biggest problem is that the United Kingdom has played a special role in the United States in maintaining the Euro-Atlantic way. So European security has stayed in line with NATO, has stayed in line with the United States, and the U.K. has been one of the reasons that's been the case. With the U.K. outside of the European Union, we've already seen some suggestions by people that Article 5 of NATO is not the cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security. You saw this weekend where the French and the Germans signed a treaty. We don't assess that that's as significant as they wanted it to be a couple years, because it's not the political environment to sign it.

But the French, you know, still have a strain of de Gaullism – and this is inside the family here – they still have a strain of de Gaullism where they would like to break away from the United States. The truth of the matter is, only with the 29 nations in NATO, and leveraging the economic, political, military weight of NATO, can we deter Russia and defeat Russia if deterrence fails. If NATO doesn't remain strong, deterrence in Europe doesn't remain strong. We're going to see continued activity like we saw in Georgia, like we saw in the Donbas in eastern Ukraine, like we've seen recently in the Sea of Azov, and the Crimea.

What Russia is doing is, back to the rules and back to 1950, they're continuing to violate international laws, norms, and standards. And they aren't paying a price. As long as they don't

pay a price, they're going to continue to violate international norms, laws, and standards. The only way that we can prevent that is what I described as a coherent, collective response. Meaning the rest of the countries that are over there have to say: This is enough. And the price that Russia pays for doing it, it doesn't have to be a military price. It can be an economic price. It can be a political price. But the price that they pay has to exceed what they hope to gain by being in places like the eastern Donbas, or Georgia, or so forth.

But Brexit is a threat to NATO in some regards. It's a threat to European security. It's not one that can't be mitigated, but it is significant. The other thing is that the U.K. has historically been, obviously, a very close partner. And their defense spending has been going down. Their army is now less than 80,000. It's less than 80,000. If you come home, the United States Marine Corps is 180,000-plus on active duty. The United States Army 500,000. But the U.K. military is very small. And their ability to sustain deployments is going down. Brexit is going to exacerbate that, because of the economic impact on the U.K. So it is a concern.

**Q:** Well, I was going to ask if the – on the long-term of these things, the model that I have in my mind is that the long-term that has happened in Korea, and the cost to us – in a sense, the cost to us to maintain the shell that allows it to happen. And when you look at the internal strength of Korea – and it's grown into the social strength, not just the political strength and somewhat the military strength – but the social strength has strengthened. It seems to me that's the path that allows future peace. From World War II on across Europe, we have seen that drive to increase the social capacity of France and Germany right after the war, but now all the way toward Russia. It seems to me that's the same problem that we're going to be facing most places. And how does that social structure take hold that that they allow for internal peace? Your comment on that would be very interesting.

**Dunford:** You're talking North Korea specifically now? I'll tell you, I don't see how right now Kim Jong-un can take – you know, when we look at North Korea, and we look at Kim Jong-un's methodology of maintaining control, it's going to be very difficult for him to take the kind of risk necessary to establish peace and put us on a path toward unification or even normalization, as a step to unification. It's going to be hard for him to do that. And this – but the social cohesion today, in my view, is not at all comparable to France, or South Korea, or Germany. It's a social cohesion based on the deification of KJU, and absolute authority of KJU.

So I believe that society is very fragile and not cohesive. Absent the deity of KJU and the control that KJU has, I think the society would have a lot of problems. It would take some time before you get the cultural, social, civil society linkages that you see – in other words, that doesn't exist, like it does in France and Germany and so forth. So what I see is, absent a civil society that we know, everything from the Boy Scouts to Kiwanis, absent that, the society kind of crumbles before you put it back together again. So I don't actually see North Korea as a cohesive society. I see it as a ruthlessly enforced autocracy.

**Q:** Yes. How about in the Middle East, though, with where we're – this is one of – (inaudible) – of seeing us sort of leave the area in Syria? I mean, the outcome that we have seen is the change of society when we're – as long as we're there. As long as we stayed – have stayed in Korea –

you know, it's been a long time, like 70 years – but the investment is tiny compared to the results.

**Dunford:** Sir, that's exactly the point that I've made. If you look at Syria today, Syria is not going to be stable until the grievances of the civil war is in the past. It's not going to happen. [Syrian President Bashar al-]Assad – it's impossible for me to see that Assad remains in power and you have peace inside of Syria. There's too many – I mean, if you read about Deraa in Syria in 2011/2012, they were rounding up all kinds of young boys for doing things that young boys do, pull out their fingernails, kill them, torture them, destroy their family homes as punishment, completely abusive, which is why they rose up in 2011. And Assad, the only way that he can maintain power is through the ruthless abuse of his people.

So I don't see a path today that doesn't involve the international community, led by the United States, maintaining some degree of security and stability until there's a process where there's political transition in Syria and you put the country back together again. If someone would say to me how long will that take, I'd say a long time, a long time. If you don't want to pay the price and you just want to – the one thing that General [Anthony C.] Zinni said in 2002 that has stuck with me – in the Marines we're understanding this as soldiers – he said, you know, when you have your hand on the plunger and you depress it, you ought to have some idea what's on the other end before you do that. When it comes to some of these situations, if we decide to just kind of walk and go, we're going to deal with the consequences. I do believe that the investment we're making – it's not insignificant, but the investment we're making is keeping some degree of stability that is affecting our security.

If I didn't believe that I would recommend that we draw down because the money we are spending in these places is at least limiting the amount of money that we can spend on capability development. What keeps me awake at night are things that even as a Marine – space resilience, our cyber capabilities, hypersonic weapons, making sure we have sufficient ballistic missile defense, dominating the electromagnetic spectrum, that's what's actually keeping me awake. What I'm trying to do is get the investment right in these other areas so we can focus on that, and so I'm incentivized to draw down from these areas as much as possible and drive down the cost as much as possible so we can maintain a competitive advantage against China, Russia, and Iran. But the fact of the matter is a lower investment is not zero. A lower investment is not zero. I think that we may not want the Middle East, but we're there.

**Q:** Sir, you speak of paying the price. How do you define paying the price? What is it?

**Dunford:** Yeah, I think it's a small number of Americans, 1 percent in uniform, that are making sure the other 99 percent can live in a way that represents the values and the way of life in the United States.

**Q:** How do they do that?

**Dunford:** By being forward deployed and keeping things like what happened on 9/11 from occurring. You know, here's what I know from the last 15 or 16 years: The individuals that we're fighting overseas have the will, but today not the capability to attack the United States.

They have the will, not the capability. If we weren't putting pressure on them in places like Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq, as much as we might not want to do that, they'll combine not just the will, which they have today, but the capability.

That pressure that we put on them requires us to – you know, I had 80 different countries here to have an information and intelligence network to put pressure on these guys in Southeast Asia to West Africa. There's an ISIS group in West Africa. There's an ISIS group in Libya. There's an ISIS group in Somalia. There's an ISIS in Yemen. There's ISIS in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Southeast Asia. And they're communicating with each other. They're cooperating with each other. A couple years ago we had 140,000 fighters – I'm sorry, we had 40,000 fighters from 122 different countries come to Iraq and Syria alone. They learned what they learned on the battlefield in Iraq and Syria, and then they go back home and they come to San Bernardino and come to the Mall of America in Minnesota and they come to New York City.

It's hard sometimes to convince people that a threat that they can't see exists. Everybody just wants it to go away. Why are we bothering all these people overseas? Why don't we just leave them alone and bring our people home? That's not the threat. The threat is one that they – we are a threat to these people. Our way of life, our ideas represent a threat to them. And they've been kind enough – just like other dictators in history, ISIS and other groups have laid out a very clear path of where they're heading. They want to establish a caliphate around the world dominated by their perversion of Islam and disrupt the Western world and values as we know it. And so 1 percent of the American people putting pressure on those groups mitigates the risk of that happening.

Look, I argue this all the time, and I understand the argument, which is: Why the hell are we doing this? Why are we spending so much money? Why are young Americans dying other places? I wouldn't recommend that we do if I didn't believe that that small number of Americans over there, you know, weren't making us safer here at home.

If you look at after 9/11, just look at airports. Just look at what we've spent for security inside of airports. I'm here to tell you, almost daily there are ISIS threats where we see them try to develop explosives that can be snuck on airplanes, computers that can be exploded, that can be brought on airplanes. They are constantly trying to develop chemical weapons, dispersion techniques. They're constantly trying to develop things that will bring terror to Europe and the United States.

Every single day – we have an organization down in Jordan with right now about 30 countries represented. They're poring through social media, unclassified social media, combining it with intelligence, and probably dozens of law enforcement tips every single day as a result of that effort. Who knows about that, right? When these arrests are made, when these knocks on the door are made, a threat is disrupted, it's not news. When the attack takes place, it's news.



I wish it wasn't this way. I wish we weren't deploying at the rate that we're deploying. I wish we weren't in this war for the last 17 years. I wish we could ignore South Asia, Afghanistan. But in that particular case, Afghanistan not only was the home of al-Qaida, Pakistan has nuclear weapons. India has nuclear weapons. Iran is to the west of Afghanistan. A vacuum in South Asia I believe does two things. One, it creates sanctuary for these groups that attacked us on 9/11 and have continued to try to attack us since then. The other thing it does is it increases the probability of these groups having possession of nuclear weapons.

My own judgment is that the price that we're paying is high, but it's necessary.

**Remarks to NATO Military Representatives**  
**Pentagon, Virginia**  
**March 13**

First, I want to welcome you to the Pentagon, welcome you to the United States. For most of you, many of you, it's welcome back to both the Pentagon and the United States. I look forward to listening to the feedback from Norfolk. Hopefully you've had a productive session down in Norfolk.

You've come during a pretty interesting week. We just entered into day three of a U.S. exercise to reinforce NATO. So we are doing a global exercise – all of our geographic combatant commanders, all of our functional combatant commanders. We will eventually call them global combatant commanders. That's our Cyber Command, our Space Command, our Special Operations Command. But we have all of our commanders involved in the exercise. All of us are playing ourselves. So the secretary of defense is involved in the exercise. The Joint Staff is, with principals, involved in the exercise. We're working through all of the issues of executing the National Defense Strategy in the context of a crisis in Europe.

It's been very instructive, and needless to say only a few days into it, I probably have a longer list of challenges to resolve and things I feel comfortable about. I woke up this morning about 2:30 and I haven't gone back to sleep – and that's only as a result of two days of the exercise. That's one thing.

The other thing the secretary and I are doing tomorrow is testifying before our Senate Armed Services Committee. Our budget hearing starts this week, and our first hearing tomorrow is with the Senate Armed Services Committee. As you can expect, NATO will be one of the topics. So I'll share a couple thoughts with you here on my topline messages for NATO, which you might be interested in.

You might have seen since you've been on the road that our Congress, bipartisan invitation to the [NATO] secretary-general to come to address a combined session of the U.S. Congress, which is actually a fairly significant thing. It is an honor that's only really given to heads of state. It would be extraordinary and exceptional except for heads of state. Senator [A. Mitchell] McConnell and Speaker [of the House Nancy P.] Pelosi, a Republican and a Democrat, issued

that invitation. I think that's an important thing for you to know as you think about NATO and you think about the United States.

Let me – again, I'd rather do it out here if you're comfortable than inside – just share a couple of thoughts with you about NATO as we prepare to go inside and maybe you ask me questions from a U.S. perspective. You'll spend time with our staff and we'll share with you a little bit about where we are in our own journey of a National Military Strategy, joint concepts, and more importantly capability development and integration of capability, which is kind of a theme for these next couple hours.

But I've now been in my assignment three and a half years, and when I will speak to our members of Congress – and I've done a number of office calls over the last couple weeks – I say a couple things. I say, first of all, when I look at where we are as an alliance compared to where we were in 2015, when I came into this job, without candy-coating it, we really have made significant progress in the alliance.

To that point, when I testified to be confirmed for this job in the summer of 2014, one of the questions I was asked is: General, what is the most significant threat facing the United States? What threat could be existential to the United States? I said, well, I think Russia. From the perspective of nuclear capability, cyber capability, what they have done in Georgia, what they have done in the Ukraine, I would have to say Russia. That was news in 2014, and it was not consistent with the U.S. policy in '14. So it created a bit of friction even as I came into my job – I'm saying the summer of 2014; it was the summer of 2015, so it was July of 2015 – to say that Russia was a potential adversary was news.

I would like to share one thing with you. I went to the War College, and I started in 1998. So this year, when I went back to the War College, it was 20 years since I started the War College. When I went to speak at the War College, I dusted off the U.S. National Security Strategy for 1998, so 1998 to 2018. No mention of China in our National Security Strategy in 1998. No mention of violent extremism, except the potential nexus of violent extremism in weapons of mass destruction. And we were in a dialogue in NATO with Russia, so there was no threat.

The 1990s were a period where our ability to project power when and where necessary to advance our interests was uncontested. The 1990s was a period of time where we, as an alliance, had no peer competitor and, as I described it, no hot breath on the back of our neck from a competition perspective. As I look back on the 1990s, it's impossible to overstate how insidious it was not to have a competitor and not to have a competitive mindset. When it came to things like assessments, when it came to things like capability development, when it came to things like strategic thinking we, to say the least – if you look back even in your own countries – we were not at the top of our game. In many cases, what we were focused on were failed and failing states, and peacekeeping operations.

Here we are in 2019. I bring this up because my perspective on where we should go as an alliance is very much informed by my journey in my current assignment from a U.S. perspective. In 2015, when we started to look at how the world had changed – which has now become our National Defense Strategy, the resuming of great power competition. At the same time, in our case, dealing with Iran, North Korea, and violent extremism. Clearly the strategic landscape has changed. As we had been almost singularly focused on dealing with violent extremism, and we had lived in a period of significant budget instability, we found ourselves where our competitive

advantage – back to that 1998 National Security Strategy – our competitive advantage was here, decisive. Over time, I still believe we have a competitive advantage, but the margin of our competitive advantage has significantly changed.

In my judgment, what that means is, number one, we've got to be clear-eyed about our strategy, which is the foundational element and the framework within which all of our activity should take place, is the strategy. From the strategy, obviously are operational concepts. Then that drives the path of capability development – all of which we'll talk about today.

I would like to thank the chairman for his personal engagement and would like to thank all of you for the hard work and effort in getting after our military strategy. It is not just a document to be put on the shelf. It's not just a document to answer the mail. It should be, for all of us, the best military thinking that we can offer about the strategic environment within which we find ourselves. It should be the document that is the basis for all that we do as an alliance.

When I talk about where we are with our Senate Armed Services Committee, I do – and I'm sincere in this – talk about in complimentary terms how the alliance has evolved since 2015, and the significant decisions that our heads of state have made to improve the alliance. From the organizational construct that addresses logistics, to the maritime element that you just were down at Norfolk, to the readiness initiative, to the focus on what it is we should be prepared for as an alliance. I think we get good grades in that evolution since 2015.

Where I don't think we get good grades – and this is also something we're looking at from a U.S. perspective – is on updating our operational concepts to reflect the current operational requirement and setting the conditions for us to integrate combat power to fight and to win – deter, to fight, and to win. And then also, set the conditions where our path of capability development – look, it's a political statement to talk about percentage of GDP. That's what politicians talk about. Those of us in uniform, we talk about capabilities. We talk about capabilities and our ability as an alliance to integrate those capabilities.

So I would just ask today if there's anything that we're offering, anything we're talking about that you have thoughts about, that we have an ongoing dialogue. Again, once we get inside we'll let everyone get food, and I'm happy to take questions that first hour. Then the team will come in and speak afterwards. But I'm excited that you're here. I'm happy that our staff will have a chance to interact with you a little bit. I would ask you to maybe question the assumptions that we make. Those are everything, to include our own strategy, the assumptions that we're making about the current strategic environment.

But I believe that if we don't up our game in terms of our operational concepts, if we don't more coherently think about the path of capability development, we're not going to be where we need to be. What I can say with confidence today, and I say this, is, look, if you took the 29 nations of NATO, politically, economically, and militarily, how would anybody look at that and think they can come up on the upside? In other words, if there's alliance cohesion, if we have the capability to integrate and we have political will, I don't know how anybody could think there could be an upside to that, which is a positive comment to make about our ability to deter.

But if people don't see that, that isn't something we have to see. That's something everybody else has to see as well. The other comment I'd make about NATO is that when people say, hey, has the alliance outlived its usefulness, is it still what it needs to be? Think about this thing. I say, you know, Senator, there's probably some things we need to do better. I'll say this

tomorrow. But when I look around the world, I wish – and many of you have interest there too – I wish we had a NATO in the Pacific. I wish we had some organization in Africa. I wish we had some organization in South America. I don't necessarily mean from an Article 5 perspective. What I mean is from an ability of an alliance to take coherent, collective action to set the conditions for all to advance our national interests.

In other words, what we have in NATO is a political framework and a military framework that sets the conditions for us to maintain the rules-based order that we have all benefited from since World War II, and has continued to develop, in many cases, in the countries represented in NATO. That coherent collective action should not be something we take for granted. It is, in my judgment, the envy of the rest of the world. The only place where we have it is in NATO. I defy any of you to think of any other organization where you have the ability politically and militarily to take coherent collective action in response to a violation of international norms, standards, or law. It doesn't exist anywhere else.

We ought not to undervalue what we have. By the same token, I think my message to you today is we ought not to be complacent about our military capability to deliver in the event that deterrence fails. We ought not to be complacent about what an adversary may see when they look through their lens on us politically or militarily, and how effective our deterrence is. But, look, I don't want to take too much of your time. The most important thing I want to do was welcome you. Thank you for taking the time to come and to visit us. Our mission, as General [John K.] Love has been driving us to do this – has been to make sure that your time in the United States is well spent. Chairman, I can tell you, you've got no stronger advocate than your MILREP for the United States to make this trip successful. He's been wearing us all out, you can see that today to make sure that it is a successful visit.

But what I would like to do, take a quick picture. We're going to go straight in. There's kind of a buffet line to grab food. Then as soon as you all kind of have food and we're kind of in there, then what I would like to do is open up a dialogue to talk about not just what we just spoke about, but you're in the United States so I'm happy to answer any questions about where we are on any policy, things we've spoken about or things I haven't spoken about. Again, chairman, thanks for your leadership on driving in NATO, the same place you'll see us driving to in the United States, which is to make sure that we get the right military framework to inform every other thing we do. Most importantly, to deter, and to win if deterrence fails. Thanks.

**Excerpts from Interview with Barbara Starr at the Atlantic Council  
Washington, District of Columbia  
March 21**

**Dunford:** You know, I was going to make a couple of comments. I think Fred [Kempe] actually framed the idea of great power competition pretty well. But let me maybe just share a quick story. This year I started off in September addressing the National War College. It was 1998 when I started as a student, so it was exactly 20 years. In preparation I went back and read the National Security Strategy from 1998 and said, what did it say? Just to put it in perspective, it

didn't say anything about China. It wasn't mentioned. To the extent it spoke about Russia, it spoke about Russia in the dialogue ongoing with NATO.

There was a lot in there about failed and failing states. To the extent that it spoke about violent extremism, it spoke about the nexus of violent extremism and weapons of mass destruction. And so you think about that whole period in the 1990s, we did not have a competitor – a peer competitor, economically, diplomatically, or militarily. We just didn't in 1998. You compare that today and, again, Fred touched on much of it. You have two states, both trying to establish preeminence, if not hegemony, in their respective geographical areas, and both trying to assert greater influence on the world stage. Then from a military perspective, what this really means is the path of capability development that China and Russia has been on from a military perspective does challenge us in a number of areas.

Why is that important? Our National Military Strategy, the first thing you do when you write a strategy is look at yourself. We said that there was two things that make the United States military strong. One is our network of allies and partners, and the other is the ability to project power when and where necessary to advance our national interests. So what has been going with China and Russia, they both recognize those threats. They both recognize the strength of our allies and partners. They both recognize – having carefully studied the U.S. ability to project power in 1991, 1992, 2003, they recognized the competitive advantage we've had historically.

What they were seeking to do is undermine the credibility of our alliance structure in Europe and in the Pacific, as the case may be. Then from a military perspective, they have been on a specific path of capability development to make it much more difficult and contest our ability to move in an area to meet our alliance commitments, or then operate freely once we're there across sea, air, land, space and cyberspace. In the past we took for granted our ability to project power when and where necessary to advance our interests. I think to some extent, certainly in the 1990s, we took advantage of the access that our alliance structure gave us.

Neither of those things can be taken for granted today. In a nutshell, from a military perspective, when we think about great power competition we really do take a look at the competition for allies and credibility with our allies, and also from a military perspective the ability for the U.S. military to do what it has historically done to give us a competitive advantage, and obviously directly related to conventional deterrence.

**Starr:** So let's drill down just a little bit on the Russians for one minute. The U.S. military always talks about adversaries' intentions and capabilities. You mentioned their intention appears to be to make it more difficult for the U.S. to project power. Do you see an intention and a capability there? What is their military intention? You know, to cut to the bottom line, do you anticipate that the Russians are trying to develop a capability to attack the United States?

**Dunford:** Barbara, what they're developing is a capability to deny the ability of the United States to meet its alliance commitments, specifically in Europe. Many people are familiar with the term anti-access/area denial. I don't use that particular term, but what that term really means is make it difficult, in this case, for us to get to Europe and then operate freely to meet our alliance commitments once we get there. Russia over the past 10 or 12 years in particular [has made] significant investment in anti-ship cruise missiles, anti-ship ballistic missiles, electronic

warfare, anti-space capabilities, and maritime capabilities – all of it focused on what they perceive to be our vulnerabilities in our ability to project power.

**Starr:** That's an intention that you see them developing. Do you see them – when I ask on the capabilities side, how soon? Two years? Three years? Today? Could they deny us the ability to get to Europe?

**Dunford:** Well, first of all let me address both the intention and the capability. There is no doubt that the path of capability development that they're on is specifically tailored to deny us the ability to reinforce and meet our alliance commitments in Europe. They see that as a threat, and they're developing capabilities to do that. With regard to can they deny us the ability today, the answer is no, they can't. Can they contest us in a way today that they couldn't 10, 15 or 20 year ago? There's absolutely no question that it would be more difficult for us to project power in Europe today than it would have been 10 or 15 years ago. We were almost singularly focused on dealing with violent extremism, again, going back and studying us and what we did in 1990s, what we did in the early part of 2003, they have developed a range of capabilities to make it more difficult to do what they have seen us do in the past.

**Starr:** So if I understand you correctly, as we sit here today if there was a contingency, it would be more difficult for the U.S. military to deploy to Europe to defend NATO and other allies in Europe than it's been in the past.

**Dunford:** First, let me make one thing clear, before we try to isolate one variable. When I look at NATO and I look at the 29 nations of NATO, economically, politically and militarily, I have no doubt that with will we have a competitive advantage over Russia. We can meet our alliance commitments as an alliance. Yes, it would be more difficult for us to project power to Europe today than it would have been 10 or 15 years ago. Yes, we are more contested across sea, air, land, space and cyberspace, than we would have been 10 or 15 years ago. No, Russia is not in a position to deny us the ability to meet our objectives. It would take more time. It would be more costly. But we could do it. My evidence of that, by the way, is that I believe today Russia is deterred from conventional action. I think what we see them doing is largely driven by the fact that we have conventional deterrence in Europe right now.

**Starr:** That gets to the question, I suppose, of [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's military intentions and capabilities. He does seem to have an expertise in staying just in that sort of gray zone, the line below conflict. Do you see him having any intention of military conflict with the United States? Or is he happy enough just to stay below that line and sort of aggravate?

**Dunford:** First of all, what you described as the gray zone, you know, I call it adversarial competition below the level of full armed conflict. But it has a military dimension. So we're talking about Putin putting together information operations, cyber operations, economic coercion, political influence, unconventional military operations to advance his objectives in places like Georgia, the Ukraine, and so forth. So that's what he's doing. There is a military dimension to that. I don't believe that Putin has an intent right now of attacking a NATO ally in a conventional sense, because I think it's very clear that the cost that would be imposed on Putin for doing that would far exceed whatever he could hope to gain, which is the basic formula of deterrence in Europe.

**Starr:** But do you think, as you just pointed out, after Crimea, we're at five years, Georgia, eastern Ukraine, do you think he's given up on that type of action? Or do you think he has further intentions to engage in that strategy, again, somewhere in Eastern Europe? Give us your assessment of where you're watching for this?

**Dunford:** Well, first of all, Putin is doing things. You know, he did things in the United States in the context of the 2016 elections to try to undermine our democracy, and every day is conducting information operations and cyber operations in Europe. In many cases, it's not attributable, but it's ongoing, nonetheless. There's no indication to me that Putin is going to back off the types of actions that he has embarked upon since about 2015 in Georgia, and most recently in the Sea of Azov.

**Starr:** Can I add Crimea into that? Many military analysts will say Crimea, there was no allied military solution to that.

**Dunford:** Well, I mean, first, it's got to be a political decision. I'm not going to speculate on what we might or might not have been able to do in the Crimea. But you know, again, we're talking NATO, we're talking Article 5, and we're talking about a coherent, collective response. We're talking about the Crimea, where that's not the case. The military dimension of our support for Ukraine as a whole has been to assist the Ukraine in developing its defensive capabilities so it can stand on its own. We do not have an alliance commitment to the Ukraine. We did not have an alliance commitment in the case of Crimea.

**Starr:** OK. You've mentioned cyber several times. Cyber, when we look at the Russians – and we'll get to the Chinese as well – but when you look at the Russians, cyber now a full military domain – a full military issue that I am presuming you spend a good deal of time thinking about.

**Dunford:** We do. And you know, it is recognized as a domain. We recognize it as a domain. In the three and a half years I've been in this job, I look at the path of capability development we've been on. I can remember not too long ago having discussions about how are we going to move ahead and develop capabilities? We have now developed in the last four or five years 133 cyber mission teams that are out there every day doing what must be done. So our own cyber capabilities have developed quite a bit. But Putin has recognized that as one of the areas – earlier when I talked about perceived vulnerabilities, he believes that investments in cyber is one of the areas that will be a high return for him.

**Starr:** So what can he do? What can he do to the United States in the cyber world?

**Dunford:** Well, number one, he can attempt to undermine democracy. He's used cyber as one of the tools. We ought not to think about cyber in isolation. It is one of the tools. It's part of a broader campaign and where we happen to be operating. So certainly cyber was an element in Putin's efforts to undermine our democracy in 2016. Cyber is something that can be done to inhibit our weapons capability and so forth. There's a lot of things that can be done. But it can be done—it can be used to steal technology. So there's both an espionage perspective, as well as a destructive capability. Clearly, I think we all know the vulnerabilities to our civilian infrastructure and so forth to cyberattacks here in the United States.

**Starr:** We know that there have been sanctions against Russian entities. We know there have been Russian entities identified as potentially being involved in the activity regarding the U.S. elections. But you now twice have very specifically said Putin. You're not someone who says anything casually. So in your mind, Putin, he was involved?

**Dunford:** I'm not making news here, Barbara. The intelligence community came out some time ago and said there was no question that Russian attempted to interfere with our democratic processes in 2016. Russia is an autocratic form of government. So I make an assumption that there's very little that Russia does that Putin is not aware of, particularly something as significant as trying to undermine democracy in the United States of America.

**Starr:** OK. Now, this gets to the question: Great power competition, the Russians, what is your assessment? Do you view them as an adversary?

**Dunford:** No. They are a competitor would be how I would characterize them.

**Starr:** Are the Russians trying to get you to pull back U.S. presence in Europe? This week we had six B-52s in the U.K., 1,500 troops from Fort Bliss moving into Poland for a series of exercises and missile defense. They're always unhappy about U.S. presence. Are they trying to get you to pull back?

**Dunford:** Barbara, it wouldn't be a bold statement for me to say the Russians would be much more comfortable if we weren't physically present in Europe, and if we hadn't enhanced over the last three to four years in a fairly significant way our posture in Europe, which we have enhanced our posture in Europe as a physical manifestation of our commitment to the NATO alliance.

It's fair to say that given Russia's political objectives and what we opened up with in terms of influence in Europe, they'd be much happier if there was not a physical manifestation of our commitment to NATO, because their message that we were not willing to meet our alliances would be much easier for them to sell. It's hard for them in the information space to talk about the United States' lack of commitment to NATO when sitting in Europe is the physical manifestation of our commitment, which is our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.

**Starr:** OK. Let's move to China, if we can for a few minutes. Go down the same path for us here. China: Great power competition. In the military arena, what do you see the Chinese doing? What is their intention and capability? And what concerns you? What do you take the most seriously from them at this time?

**Dunford:** Sure. Look, very different countries, clearly. And would probably highlight some of the differences. The broad framework of what they are trying to do, we talked about upfront. It's very similar – in the case of China, establish preeminence if not hegemony in the Pacific, and have global influence. Most importantly, attempt to modify the world order as we know it to be advantageous to them, both economically and from a security perspective. So that's broadly what they're trying to do.

In the case of China, the anti-ship cruise missile, anti-ship ballistic missiles – significant investment in missiles over the years. Maritime capability, aircraft carrier. Undersea capability, trying to compete with our submarines. Space and anti-space capabilities. Modernization of their



military. They embarked on something that we embarked upon in the 1980s akin to Goldwater-Nichols. When I visited last year, one of the most common questions I received from my Chinese interlocutors is talk to us about unified command. To which I responded, well, it seems to me you've made so much progress maybe I could learn from you. And so please help me understand unified command.

But the point being they are trying to develop a military capability, again, that would make it much more difficult – push us away, if you will – from our ability to project power in the Pacific. And then, similar to Russia, their capabilities across what we've described as all domains are designed to contest us in those domains.

**Starr:** Do they have an intention beyond pushing the U.S. back in the Pacific?

**Dunford:** I mean, number one they want to, again, have preeminence at least in the Pacific. Number two, they want to have access to global markets. And they have aspirations beyond the Pacific. With those aspirations for global markets has come a military footprint. We've seen the establishment of a military base in Djibouti. We've seen negotiations in several other countries where military infrastructure now is following economic initiatives. So they do have clear aspirations that go well beyond the Pacific.

**Starr:** Do they have intentions someday of directly, militarily challenging the United States?

**Dunford:** I think they have intentions today of challenging the U.S. military's ability to project power into the Pacific and meet our alliance commitments. And we have five in the Pacific.

**Starr:** So the question I have then, when it comes to both Russia and China – and I mean this sincerely – do they take the U.S. military seriously? They're not going to attack. Neither of them appear to have any intention of directly attacking the U.S. military. So do they take all this deterrence, do they take this forward presence, the great power competition – what is your assessment? Do either of these countries take this U.S. effort seriously?

**Dunford:** Look, Barbara, I don't think you can isolate the military dimension of the broader issue of ensuring that there's a free – in the case of the Pacific – there's a free and open Indo-Pacific. While there is a military dimension, and that military dimension deters a conventional attack – certainly does what the department considers its most important responsibility, deters a nuclear attack – if we're talking about establishing a free and open Indo-Pacific, there has to be coherent collective action politically, economically, and in the security sphere. So if you're asking me, can the U.S. military alone establish a free and open Indo-Pacific, the answer is no. If you're asking me, does the military dimension of our strategy in the Pacific, you know, constitute an important element of our ability to have a free and open Indo-Pacific, then I would say yes.

**Starr:** So you made a lot of news the other day when you were talking about China and Google. And I wanted to give you an opportunity to just lay that out one more time, because I think you spoke on Capitol Hill when you were talking about the Chinese, about Google – and I suppose other companies – being aware when they deal with the Chinese in the commercial arena, that they are essentially dealing with the Chinese military. Can you go back and lay out with some

specificity your concerns about Google first, and your deeper concerns about American companies understanding what their involvement could be with the Chinese military, simply by doing business with China?

**Dunford:** Sure. I'm going to answer in a different way. I'm going to put Google aside for a minute, and then I'll come back to it. First of all, when I look at the United States military – and I talk a lot about competitive advantage – why have we historically had a competitive advantage? You go back certainly from World War II to today, the partnership that the United State military has with industry in the United States. Our ability to tap into the intellectual capital, the human capital if you will, of the American people, the innovative ideas and our production capacity, has been what has made the U.S. military strong. And so that relationship is very important.

Xi Jinping understands that as well. He calls in civil military fusion, breaking down the barriers between the military and industry in China. Here's my concern with U.S. industry, particularly high-tech U.S. industry, doing business in China. Number one, typically if a company does business in China they are automatically going to be required to have a cell of the Communist Party in that company. That is going to lead to that intellectual property from that company finding its way to the Chinese military. It is a distinction without a difference between the Chinese Communist Party, the government, and the Chinese military.

And so my concern, when you think about things like artificial intelligence, ventures to help develop artificial intelligence in China are going to do two things. They're going to help an authoritarian government assert control over its own population. Again, our country exists for the individual. China exists for the Chinese Communist Party. The second thing it's going to do is it's going to enable the Chinese military to take advantage of the technology that is developed in the United States. Why is it developed in the United States? Why is Silicon Valley in the United States? Because of our system of government and the enabling of individual ideas to bubble up and advance the world whether it's medically, education, artificial intelligence, you name it.

So I just think it's a debate that we have to have because if we do want what I describe to be the good guys – the United States of America – to be the ones that are actually leading an effort for a global order, the one that we've enjoyed since World War II, it seems to me the United States military is an important part of assuring that global order remains as it has been over the past 70 years. In my judgment, us assisting the Chinese military in advancing technologically is not in U.S. national interests. So it's a debate we have to have.

In the case of Google, they were highlighted because they have an artificial intelligence venture in China. I think it's a reasonable assertion, even in an open venue like this, to assert that the benefit of that venture for artificial intelligence in China – it's one of many ventures of our companies that are there – indirectly benefits the Chinese military and creates a challenge for us in maintaining a competitive advantage. That's what it's all about. I just think we need to have a debate about that. We ought not to think that it's just about business when we do business in China.

**Starr:** I'm just curious, has Google reached out to you at all?

**Dunford:** I think I have a meeting next week. And I think I might have one at lunch here today. I think somebody's here from Google. I'm happy to have that debate. This is not about me and Google. This is about us looking at the second- and third-order effects of our business ventures

in China, Chinese form of government, and the impact it's going to have on the United States' ability to maintain a competitive military advantage, and all that goes with that.

**Starr:** It's so interesting you said this, because people I talk to – who know nothing compared to what people you talk to – have talked increasingly about President Xi is spending a lot of time and effort, because he has to, – you talked about China being the state – and devoting a lot to internal security inside China. This may not be just about China's external military programs, but about what they can do to maintain internal security increasingly. Do you see the Chinese worried, devoting resources to internal security?

**Dunford:** There's no doubt. Look, 6 percent of people in China belong to the Chinese Communist Party. Six percent. I think that's an important statistic. Almost every aspect of Chinese life now is – if you – the thing I was struck with in the recent trip to Beijing is everything is cash, without cash. So you want to rent a bicycle, you want to go to Starbucks, you want to go to the store. What China is able to do is identify patterns of behavior amongst people and determine who's reliable and who's not reliable. We have seen this manifest in how the Uighurs are treated. So there is no question in my mind that China will leverage technology to assist the 6 percent of the Chinese population in controlling the other 94 percent.

**Starr:** Including the Uighurs? Including their Muslim population?

**Dunford:** Including the other 94 percent of the people in China, that's right.

**Statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee on Defense on the Proposal to  
Establish a United States Space Force  
Washington, District of Columbia  
April 11**

Chairman [James M.] Inhofe, Ranking Member [Jack] Reed, distinguished members of the committee, thanks for the opportunity to join Secretary [of Defense Patrick M.] Shanahan, Secretary of the Air Force Heather A.] Wilson and General [John E.] Hyten here today.

Last month, I testified before you that China and Russia had developed capabilities to contest our ability to operate across all domains. This includes space, which is now a fully contested warfighting domain, along with sea, air, land and cyberspace. As you know, we have conducted Joint Military Net Assessments each of the last two years to determine our readiness to execute the National Defense and Military Strategies. At the unclassified level, our assessment includes several observations that are relevant to our discussion this morning and highlight that our competitive advantage in space has eroded. China and Russia have taken significant steps to challenge our traditional dominance in space. They have reorganized their armed forces and developed robust space capabilities to include space-based intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. These steps provide the ability to more effectively target U.S. and allied forces.

China and Russia are also capable of searching, tracking and characterizing satellites in all earth orbits in support of space and counter-space operations. Their counter-space capabilities include jamming, cyber-operations, directed-energy weapons, on-orbit capabilities and ground-

based anti-satellite missiles. China and Russia clearly recognize the implications of space from both an economic and a warfighting perspective and, as a result, they are adapting.

As Secretary Shanahan has in his written statement, Secretary Wilson has addressed, and both the chairman and the ranking member have mentioned, space is no longer a sanctuary. Traditionally, the Air Force has been the principal driver of our efforts in space. And because of airmen like John Hyten, who joins us here today, our capabilities today are second to none. But our current organizational construct was developed before space was a contested domain. As a result of our analysis over the last few years, I have become convinced that we need change to maintain our competitive edge. In the past, we have often effected change in the wake of failure. Today, we have an opportunity and I would argue an imperative to change based on our ability to anticipate. We have an opportunity to look to the future and posture ourselves to seize and hold the high ground of space.

We've already acted to establish the United States Space Command, which will ensure we can most effectively operate in and from space. Taking the next step to create a Space Force will allow us to develop and maintain a singular focus on developing the people, the capabilities, the doctrine and the culture we'll need to maintain our competitive advantage in space.

Together, I believe these steps will accelerate our efforts to develop, field and operate the capabilities we'll need for joint warfighting in the future. Thank you, chairman. And I look forward to taking questions.

**Remarks at the Army War College  
Carlisle, Pennsylvania  
April 23**

Hey, it is great to be back in Carlisle. I know at this point in the year I guess you're about six to eight weeks to go. What I hope, for those of you who are here, is that you've had as rewarding a year as I did when I was here. I mean that sincerely. I look back now and I think all of us on this end of the stage would tell you that this is a pretty formative year. The opportunity – I didn't realize and appreciate it at the time – but the opportunity to spend a whole year thinking, engaging, reading, reflecting is one you won't replicate for the rest of your career. I can remember people saying that this experience will get you through the back half of your career. I didn't realize, sitting here with 22 years on active duty at the time, that the back half of my career would be as long as the front half of my career. But in all sincerity, I do look back on this year as one where – you know, I remember the conversations we had about transitioning from direct to indirect leadership. I remember the conversations we had about the differences in thinking about problems from a strategic level. I do believe that the year that I spent here held me in good stead for the following years.

One of the reasons for that it – and looking around the room there's the international student that are here. So I would recognize all of you and tell you that if the past is prologue many of you will go back and become senior leaders in your own services, in your own countries. I will tell you from my own personal experience, your classmates – you will cross paths. The relationships that you have built this year will be foundational in helping to build

strong bilateral relationships between our militaries and between our countries. No world-class organization is world-class without faculty and staff. And so as this is close to the end of the year, I'd recognize the faculty and staff here as well. As a receiver of the product from the United States Army War College, I'd say thanks for that as well.

Well, we have about two hours together. As you can see, I brought the leadership of the Joint Staff with me here tonight. I did that for two reasons. One, I wanted you to know how important we believe you are, and the investment that we wanted to make in spending some time with you and sharing our thoughts. The other is that we're going through what I believe are some fairly profound changes in how we organize ourselves for war, how we conduct planning, how we do our force development, force design, and how we manage our forces. It's reflected in the strategic landscape. I wanted them to come up here and have a little bit of an opportunity to share with you in their own lanes what we're doing.

So that's what really we'll do today primarily, is I'm going to share a few thoughts about the strategic landscape with you and, more importantly, talk a little bit about the implications of today's strategic landscape. Then we'll spend a little bit of time talking about the changes that we're making as a result of those implications. But I will be mindful – and I'll ask for a little bit of help in this regard – I'll be mindful that no less than 30 minutes before we break I'll stop and we can take questions on what we've spoken about or, frankly, anything that's on your mind. So I'm happy to go in a different direction than we spoke about.

Let me talk a little bit about the strategic landscape. You know, when I came into this job, and I was preparing and doing a lot of reading. One of the quotes that I came across that I use all the time came from Henry Kissinger, who said that we live today in the most complex and volatile period since World War II. And he wrote that in about 2013 or 2014. I would argue that it perhaps if anything is more complex and more volatile than when he wrote those words over the last couple years. I was laughing with the provost, when I was here about this time of the year when I was a student, they did what they call a strategic decision-making exercise, I guess. We had various students assigned to be the chairman, combatant commanders, service chiefs, and so forth.

I actually in about April, maybe beginning of May, of 1999 now – so 20 years exactly from now – I was here at a student. I was the exercise chairman for this exercise. The exercise starts with kind of a complicated scenario, then at 10:00 I remember them giving an inject that there's another problem that you have to solve, and then at 12:00 there's another problem, 13:00 there's another problem. Then they parade you out in front of CNN and they give you a very hostile interview, and then at 15:00 there's – and at the end of the day I said: This is absolute BS. This would never happen this way. The only thing I can tell you is that the faculty and staff at Carlisle when I was here lacked imagination because it's actually a lot more complicated than that strategic exercise.

In fact, in all sincerity, the first weekend that I was in my current assignment is when the Russians moved into Syria in a meaningful way, we had a major civilian casualty incident in Afghanistan, and Hurricane Joaquin hit. And that was the first 72 hours. The tempo hasn't changed since. But when you look at the strategic landscape, there are many more things to it than what's outlined in the National Defense Strategy. I know at this point you're all familiar with what we call the 2+3, China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, violent extremism. I don't want you

to think as I talk about the strategy that there isn't a lot more going on. But in this complicated world that Henry Kissinger described, and the one that you will serve in again as you leave school, you need some way to frame the strategic landscape. You need some way to manage risk. You need some way to inform your force development, force design, how do you manage the force, how do you think about your planning?

And so we look at the National Defense Strategy, an important point, not as predictive but as a framework that can bring some coherence to all of those activities I just spoke about. What do we see when we look at those 2+3? First – and I'm going to give you a fairly short version of this to make a point – first, when you look at China and Russia, I think you see a couple things. They know what our sources of strength are, right? Our source of strength, identified in the National Military Strategy, the thing that makes the United States what it is, one, the network of allies and partners that we've grown since World War II, many of them represented here in the room. The second has been our ability to project power when and where necessary to advance our national interests and to operate freely across all domains and achieve superiority in a given domain at a given time based on our mission. That's what we've been able to do.

If you look at what China and Russia are doing in Europe and in the Pacific, number one, they're trying to undermine the credibility and cohesion of our alliance structure. And number two, they've studied us since 1990-1991. They've watched the way we've projected power. They've studied us in 2003. While we have been decisively engaged in dealing with violent extremism over the last 17 years, they've been on a path of capability development to design weapon systems that can go after vulnerabilities that we have. I avoid the use of the word anti-access/area denial. Those the systems I'm describing, of course. The reason I don't use those words is this is about us projecting power, not dealing with somebody else defending against us. So when I think about anti-access/area denial systems, the primary issue is our ability to project power when and where necessary to advance our interests.

The whole range of anti-ship cruise missiles, anti-ship ballistic missiles, anti-satellite systems, cyber capabilities, electronic warfare, undersea capabilities – and then in the areas that fall short of armed conflict, the ability to put together political influence, economic coercion, information operations, unconventional operations and cyber operations to advance their interests, that's clearly what we're dealing with when we talk about China and Russia. Certainly different challenges in the Pacific and Europe, but generally speaking that's what we have seen. They've both been on a path of capability development to undermine our ability to project power and to operate freely across all domains.

To a lesser extent, Iran and North Korea have done the same. With regard to Iran, you know, the nuclear issue aside, but whenever we look at Iran we look at five challenges. We look at the nuclear issue, which at least temporarily was addressed. But we also see missile challenges, cyber challenges, a proxy challenge, and a maritime challenge. So those are the challenges we're dealing with. I don't need to speak much about DPRK. That's been going on as you've been here as students this year. Clearly the missile threat and the potential nuclear combination with a ballistic missile, that hasn't changed. That threat still exists. And all of us have lived the challenges of violent extremism.

But let me give you one anecdote to maybe highlight for you the changed character of war, and what we really see when we look at those challenges. So you'll hear words today like “all

domain.” You’ll hear words today like ‘transregional.’ You’ll hear words like “our current commitments exceed the inventory of capabilities we have.” You’ll see that we’re going to talk about the implications of all of those things from a planning, from execution, from force management, from force development, force design perspective. But let me give you one anecdote that I think best describes the difference between warfare when I was a student at Carlisle and warfare today, and what’s going to confront you in the years ahead.

When I was here, had a conflict broke out on the Korean Peninsula, it would have been a sea-air-land conflict. A key assumption that would have been made is that would have been a regional conflict and we would have sought to contain that on the Korean Peninsula. If a war broke out on the peninsula, what would have happened is that my predecessor, the chairman at the time, would have found out: What does the commander of U.S. Forces Korea/Combined Forces Korea need? The whole joint force would have started to move to the sound of guns, to give the commander of the peninsula what that commander needed.

You know, I’ve got to be honest with you, it’s much different today. If a conflict breaks out on the peninsula today, then General [Robert B.] Abrams will be on my mind but the first individual that I’ll speak to will be General [Terrence J.] O’Shaughnessy, United States Northern Command, in talking about where we are with regard to ballistic missile defense. Perhaps the second individual that I’ll speak to will be General [Paul M.] Nakasone, and ask him where are we with regard to cyber defense? The third individual I’ll likely speak to will be General [John E.] Hyten of the United States Strategic Command and talk about where are we with regard to nuclear deterrence. And then I’ll talk to Admiral [Philip S.] Davidson, and I’ll talk about where are we regionally in making sure that we have the platforms available from which we project power onto the peninsula – clearly, Japan being primary – Japan, Guam, Okinawa being the primary platforms.

So as you think about that, we’ve gone very quickly from an isolated regional conflict involving sea, air and land, to a transregional conflict involving all those commanders, just for the Korean Peninsula. And, by the way, who thinks at any given time that we would have the luxury of only having to deal with that particular challenge? So as this is ongoing, we’re still dealing with what’s going on in the rest of the world. We’re playing the ball where it lies today in terms of still having to deter Russia, still having to deal with violent extremism across the Middle East, still having to deter Iran, and still having to deal with broader strategic challenges inside the Pacific simultaneous to this Korean Peninsula conflict.

So when we talk about transregional, you can see the implications of that one challenge. And, by the way, if I go down the list of China, Russia, Iran, North Korea – North Korea is, by far, not the most perplexing problem that we face. I use the North Korean example for that reason. It’s even more complicated were a war to break out with China or Russia, with even broader strategic implications than just the Korean scenario.

The point I would make as I look at the China-Russia-Iran-North Korea-violent extremism, as I looked at that one example that gives you some idea when we talk about the changed character of war, when we talk about war involving all domains, when we talk about transregional, that example. Here’s a couple things I want you to keep in mind. Number one, the character of war has changed. Any conflict that we would have, even when dealing with violent

extremism, is going to involve all domains. Any conflict that we're going to have is going to be transregional. That's kind of a fact. We're there.

If you look at the 2+3 – and I call it the 2+3 plus tax, all the other challenges that we have – it's a fact right now that the inventory of capabilities and capacities we have in the force are inadequate to deal with all of those challenges if we don't change the way that we've addressed those challenges in the past. In the 1990s, while some of you might have been involved in force management in those days, combatant commanders may never have been satisfied with what they had. I can assure you, we came pretty close to be able to meet combatant commanders' requirements during the days that were best described as the end of history – in the 1990s. We had no peer competitor.

When I think about the National Security Strategy in 1998, it doesn't mention China once. It doesn't talk about cyber. Russia is a partner of NATO. It talks about regional conflict and failed and failing states. It's nothing like the 2+3 we're speaking about. So the conclusion that I draw is that the command and control, the decision-making processes that we had in the 1990s are inadequate to deal with the challenges we have today. The force management processes that we had in those days are inadequate to deal with the challenges that we have today. The force design and force development procedures that we had in place are inadequate.

The way that we plan, the way that we plan, is going to change. Again, we've transitioned from operations plans, in those days, plans singularly focused on the Korean Peninsula, to what I just described, the scenario that would require a global campaign plan, even in the event that a conflict breaks out on the Korean Peninsula. You need a global campaign plan to describe what the rest of the joint force is doing simultaneously to this conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

So for the next 60-75 minutes, what we're going to walk through is what we're doing to accommodate and adapt to those challenges I just described. What are the changes that we are making in order to address that multidomain and transregional fight, given the character of war today and given the relative inventory of capabilities and capacities we have, and the strategy that we have been directed to support?

**Excerpt from Testimony to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense  
Washington, District of Columbia  
May 8**

**[Senator Richard C.] Shelby:** It's been about a year since the Department of Defense received its first request from the Department of Homeland of Homeland Security. As the border and humanitarian conditions have evolved over the past several months, you have received multiple additional requests to include support for construction of a physical barrier and additional support from the National Board. It's my understanding that there have been seven requests at least so far. Secretary Shanahan, could you tell us here--give us an update on the status of DoD's operations at the border as well as provide your best judgment of how much support you could provide without negatively affecting other DoD missions?

**[Secretary of Defense Patrick M.] Shanahan:** Chairman, let me start with characterizing our support to the border in maybe three areas, the first being building of the barrier, the second



being the requests for assistance that you've described, and then the capabilities that we intend to enable within the Department of Homeland Security.

So, in terms of the border barrier itself, the Army Corps of Engineers has responsibility to build the barrier. We now have on contract sufficient funds to build about 256 miles of barrier. Over the course--just to give you sense of 256 miles, and that represents DHS funds from '17 and '18 as well as federal--Treasury forfeiture funds as well as reprogramming. How you will see this materialize in the next six months is that in--about 63 additional new miles of wall will come online, so about a half a mile a day will be produced.

The RFAs, as you described, about a year ago we received our first request. And I think as of this morning we have 4,364 troops on the border. It's a mixture of Guard and active. The primary role is doing monitor and detection, of which we have approximately 1,167 performing that mission. But we have a broader set of missions which range from logistical support to aviation support, food service. I mean, there is a whole host of those.

We - to more broadly answer your question in terms of readiness - we've seen no degradation to readiness. In fact, in some cases, it's enhanced our readiness because the troops get to perform certain functions. And then the chairman and I--and I'd maybe ask the chairman to describe how we're supporting DHS. I mean, we have a history and the department of doing border control. And we've supplemented DHS with leadership so that we can address how to more effectively control the selfless border.

Chairman, maybe you could provide a little commentary?

**Dunford:** Chairman, what we did was we had a--there was a position on the Joint Staff, assistant to the chairman, and that individual typically supports the secretary of State. We've offered him up to the secretary of Homeland Security to put together an interagency planning team. As the secretary said, although the commitment to the border hasn't impacted our preparedness for other missions at this point, what we want to do is get into a more predictable mode of the requirements that the Department of Homeland Security has and do better integrating across the government. So, we provided a two star plus a number of planners to the Department of Homeland Security so that we can lay out the next couple of years based on the assumptions of the numbers of migrants that we'll find that our border based on the capacity of Homeland Security and their growth over time, and then obviously based on the support that they'll need from the rest of the government. So, what we are hopeful to do is to have, in fairly short order, for the secretary of Homeland Security a much more predictable, comprehensive plan for the next couple years.

**Excerpts from Remarks to the Brookings Institution  
Washington, District of Columbia  
May 29**

**Allen:** General Dunford has been the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff since October 2015, and prior to that he served as our nation's 36th commandant of the Marine Corps. And he commanded all U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan before that. General Dunford and I have known each other for many years – since we were captains, in fact – and I can say with complete certainty and sincerity that he is one of the finest Marines to have been minted in the modern era

of the Marine Corps. In 1996, Lieutenant Colonel Dunford would take command of the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines from me at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, and then years later in Kabul we would repeat that ceremony as he would take command of the war effort in Afghanistan. His storied career spans more than four decades of brilliant service to our country and to the world in peace and in crisis and in war. And as the U.S. navigates multiple crises today, as we sit here this morning, I can think of no one – no one – better suited to the burdens of this moment than Joe Dunford.

General, let me say that you are the very definition and embodiment of an American leader. And we're so grateful and so honored that you'd be with us this morning here at Brookings. Shortly, General Dunford will take the stage for a conversation on many of the issues we face as a nation, and he'll be joined by Brookings Senior Fellow and Director of Research for our Foreign Policy Program Mike O'Hanlon. And they'll talk for about 30 minutes, and then we'll go out to you for questions and answers. I'll close by saying we're joined today by a large number of the world's media. And as I always do, ladies and gentlemen of the press, you are most welcome at the Brookings Institution. Thus, we are also on the record.

So with that, ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the 19th chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joe Dunford, and Mike O'Hanlon.

**Dunford:** That was probably less than an unbiased introduction, John. Thank you.

**Allen:** You have to pay it off.

**Dunford:** I'm not sure if you picked up on the subtlety of his comment that I followed him into both battalion command and then at ISAF. So to any success I had in either of those two assignments, I can attribute it to my predecessor. The secret is out.

**O'Hanlon:** Well, it's great to have you here, General. I just want to say how much it's been a privilege for me to interact with you over the years at Brookings and to learn from you. I think you've been not only a great military leader, but a role model at a personal level to a lot of us. Apart from your support for the Patriots, pretty much an unblemished set of ethics and leadership skills. So thank you very much, and again for the chance to speak today.

I wanted, if I could, to begin by taking stock of the four years that you've been chairman and just asking you to reflect a little bit on how the world has changed, because when you came into the position in 2015 we had had a pretty rough 2014.

**Dunford:** Right.

**O'Hanlon:** A lot of the troubles that you've been coping with manifested themselves acutely that year or thereabouts, everything from the Russian aggressions in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, ISIS and its success in Syria and Iraq at that time, China's ongoing militarization of the South China Sea – even as President Xi [Jinping] promised it would not happen, but it did. And you, with Secretary [of Defense Ashton B.] Carter and the Obama administration, and then Secretary [of Defense James N.] Mattis and the Trump administration, changed the way we thought about defense priorities. You came up with the 4+1 framework for four threats – Russia, China, North Korea, Iran – and transnational terror. You and Secretary Mattis created the National Defense Strategy focused on great-power competition.

I guess I want to ask, do you see progress because of all those changes? And do you feel that the world, while still dangerous, clearly, is stabilizing a little bit in 2019 relative to 2015? Or do you feel we're in just as tense of a moment as ever?

**Dunford:** Yeah. You know, Mike, one of the quotes that I use a lot, as I was coming into this assignment, I tripped over something that Henry Kissinger had written, and he said that this was

the most complex and volatile period of history since World War II. To answer your question, if I think about the problem sets you mentioned, since 2015 the Russians went into Syria. Since 2015, their presence in the Donbas has been more overt. Since 2015, the GRU conducted an operation inside of the United Kingdom. Since 2015, they attempted to interfere with our elections. And since 2015, they've been quite open about their path of capability development, to include modernizing the nuclear enterprise.

You mentioned China in the South China Sea, and then of course the economic friction that we see today.

North Korea probably is the one area of those three that I would say was probably worse in 2015 and 2016 – 2016, unprecedented numbers of tests, two nuclear tests. People can be skeptical of the current diplomatic track, but obviously, it's not what it was in 2016. Much remains to be seen in the wake of the summit in Vietnam.

With regard to Iran, I probably don't need to speak much about that right now. I'm sure a question will come up about that later. But certainly, the tension with Iran is greater.

Violent extremism. With General Allen sitting here, the situation in 2015, obviously, much worse. ISIS has been cleared from the ground that they held in Iraq and Syria. Iraqi security forces are by and large providing security in their own country. The partners that we have on the ground in Syria, with a relatively small U.S. footprint, are securing that area that has been cleared from ISIS. But I would say, we describe violent extremism as a generational conflict, and I wouldn't take issue with that characterization. So while we have made great progress against ISIS, that fight remains.

You brought up the 4+1 becoming the 2+3. I would argue that we probably have put a better framework to deal with these challenges out there since 2015, but I wouldn't argue that the situation in the world is more stable or that Kissinger's words don't ring more true to me today than they did in 2015.

**O'Hanlon:** Let me go a little bit one by one on each of those big threats, if I could, and start with Russia. You've had an ongoing dialogue with General [Valery] Gerasimov, and that's been in many cases the highest-level ongoing U.S.-Russia consultation. I know it's been professional and quiet and discreet, and you don't want to talk a lot about it publicly, but has that helped to create any kind of a sense of stability? Because as I hear you survey the world, the one thing where I might try to give you a little more of a pat on the back than you gave yourself would be in regard to Russia, where it seems to me that despite all the disinformation campaigns and other serious concerns at that level that the risk of military confrontation to my eyes looks less, because you've built up the European Deterrence Initiative, because NATO is more focused on the task of deterring in the East, and I think because of your dialogue with General Gerasimov. Is there any way in which perhaps, even though Vladimir Putin remains a wildcard and unpredictable, that we do have, as you say, a pretty strong framework now in place for deterring at least overt aggression against our allies in Europe?

**Dunford:** When I think about military-to-military relationships, I think about it in terms of mitigating the risk of miscalculation and then managing a crisis in the event of a crisis. In the wake of the Ukraine, we went about a two-year period with no military-to-military dialogue with Russia. In December of 2015, about two months after I came into the assignment, we reached out for the first time. I think we've since met three or four times face to face, and routinely had conversations.

It was in the beginning largely just a focus on managing the conflict in Syria and establishing what has been I think a very effective deconfliction mechanism in Syria. That was the initial nature of the dialogue. Since then we have had a conversation on virtually all of the issues that affect the security of our two countries.

But as you've spoken about, Mike, the one thing we agreed to – and he has, as a professional, maintained confidence in this regard – we said, look, the last thing we can afford to do is politicize our relationship. If we want to mitigate the risk of miscalculation, if we want to be in a position to have an open dialogue to manage a crisis, we can agree to disagree on a whole number of issues, particularly policy issues, but we've got to as military professionals make sure that we don't politicize our relationship. Each and every conversation we've had we've finished with an agreement on the public affairs guidance. With apologies to those in the back of the room, we've agreed not to share the details of our conversation in public so as to protect the relationship. And so, as a result, four years now into my tenure, we still have an open dialogue and I have the opportunity to work through some difficult issues that confront our two countries in a professional way.

But you said something else that's, I think, important. I'd talk about NATO, because you talk about Russia. I would argue in 2015, if you think about it, the discussion in NATO really revolved around assuring allies and partners. The Enhanced Forward Presence Initiative really was to give confidence to certain members of NATO that the alliance really would be there for them.

We made a fundamental shift about 18 months after that to truly enhance deterrence, as well as assurance. I would argue that the investments that we have made as a nation in Europe over the last few years – and it's been, respectively, \$4 billion, \$6 billion, \$8 billion on what was the European Reassurance Initiative, and has become the European Defense Initiative – has, in fact, improved our posture in Europe from what it was four years ago; has, in fact, improved deterrence. I think the cohesion of the alliance, for all of the noise we hear, if you look at the result of the summits over the last three years and then you look at the actions that have taken place in following up to those summits – I'd point to the most recent commitment by Europe to have 30 battalions, 30 ships, 30 squadrons available in 30 days, and in an unprecedented way to expose those units to validation of their level of readiness by the supreme allied commander of Europe, something that was never done in the past.

We've made a fundamental organizational change in the United States, where we stood back up the 2nd Fleet. The 2nd Fleet was stood up in large part to make sure that the transatlantic link would be secure in the event of a conflict. We also supported the reorganization of the logistics enterprise in NATO and worked with the European Union to work through some of the mobility issues in Europe. Much work remains to be done, but on the right path.

Then we just completed, and the chiefs of defense approved it last week for submission to the ministers of defense, the first NATO Military Strategy in decades has been written. It clearly articulates – clearly articulates – the challenges that confront NATO. It provides the framework for the various plans that will be in place in the event that deterrence fails.

So I would argue that as an alliance NATO is stronger than it was four years ago. Again, could walk through many other initiatives that have been taken to enhance real capability. Do we have more work to do? We certainly do. But when I look back at the four years, one of the things that stands out to me is the very meaningful changes that have been made in NATO to enhance its capability.

Again, four years ago, if you think about it, I had my confirmation hearing in July of 2015. I was asked in that confirmation hearing, hey, what do you think are the most significant challenges facing our country. And I said, well, if I had to point out someone who could pose an existential threat, I'd have to point to Russia. I went on to talk about their nuclear capability, their cyber capability, Georgia, Crimea, Ukraine. That was newsworthy in 2015 in a way that it is not newsworthy today, and we were still debating in NATO how to deal with Russia. I think there is now fair to say general consensus that Russia poses a threat to the NATO alliance, and therefore we need to take steps to first and foremost deter, and then if deterrence fails defend the alliance.

**O'Hanlon:** Thank you. On this quick tour of the world – and again, we're grateful for your willingness to expound on so many topics so quickly – but I now want to shift over to Asia, and I want to ask a quick question on Korea and then get to China.

On Korea, I'd like to, if I could, ask about your overall assessment of alliance readiness, because there has been concern that in President Trump's diplomatic efforts to try to break the ice, so to speak, with Kim Jong-un and establish a little more positive momentum. I've been somewhat supportive of a lot of what he's been trying to do, even though, obviously, the style is a little different than the norm historically. But he has, of course, spoken critically of the big U.S.-ROK military exercises, and he suspended many if not most of the larger ones, and there's been some concern from some military officers that alliance readiness has suffered as a result. Can you help us analyze just how much alliance readiness might have been degraded by the suspension of these exercises? Or are we able to do enough smaller exercises that we've preserved most of the combat preparedness despite suspending the sort of signature events?

**Dunford:** Sure. I'm glad you asked that question. First, we have historically spoken about the need to be able to fight tonight with the ROK-U.S. alliance on the peninsula, and I can tell you right up front that remains a capability that we have.

You talked about some military officers talking about impact to readiness as a result of changes in the exercises. I can also tell you those military officers don't include me, they don't include Admiral [Philip S.] Davidson, and they don't include General [Robert B.] Abrams, who are the three officers that have responsibility for readiness on the peninsula, and I'll tell you why. We have historically done exercises on the peninsula for two reasons. One was deterrence. In that regard, the exercises were very high-profile from a public affairs perspective, and so we had a large footprint of forces ongoing with command post exercises designed to deter.

Inside of those exercises were also a number of activities that were designed to enhance readiness. We have adjusted the former in support of the diplomatic track, and so we have reduced the profile of exercises on the peninsula. We have reduced the public affairs profile of the exercises. We have in many cases reduced periods of time where there's a large footprint of U.S. forces reinforcing the peninsula. We have gone to what I would describe, without getting too esoteric, to a mission-essential task-based assessment of readiness. We've looked at the mission-essential tasks for every organization on the peninsula and we've developed a two-year training plan to make sure that those units could be ready.

The other thing I would tell you is at the squadron and the battalion level there has been no change to training on the peninsula. Of course, that is the fundamental building block of the ability to integrate combined arms and fight on the peninsula. There's been no change in that regard. The big change has been to the high-profile, higher-headquarters exercises, and we have found ways to do that. There's reasons to do that twice a year. One is that we have high turnover

with U.S. personnel in the summer, and the Republic of Korea has traditionally high turnover in the wintertime. And so the exercise program is designed to ensure continuity and the ability to execute the campaign, and we still have that.

General Abrams knows – he’s our commander on the peninsula right now, United States Forces Korea, Combined Forces Korea – he knows that at the moment he becomes uncomfortable with the framework that we have in place right now to maintain readiness, he needs to come back to us and we’ll make an adjustment. But I would tell you, Mike, I am very confident today that we have not compromised the readiness of the alliance to go to war should that be required.

**O’Hanlon:** Thank you. Let me now ask about China, and I want to ask about the South China Sea in particular and our freedom of navigation exercises and the overall Chinese effort to build up capability – military capability in the South China Sea. A lot of that happened in the 2013 to 2015 period in terms of the reclaiming of the islands. Then they put military forces on those islands even though President Xi had promised President Obama he wouldn’t. But the recent DOD white paper on China, the annual report, said that that process appears to have been plateauing, if I remember correctly the wording that was used. But I know you’re still very concerned about the South China Sea. You’re still doing a lot of freedom of navigation exercises. Can you give a sense of the state of play? Are things still getting worse? Is there at least a temporary lull in the deterioration? How worried are you about that theater?

**Dunford:** Well, Mike, you mentioned the fall of 2016 President Xi Jinping promised President Obama that they would not militarize the islands. What we see today are 10,000-foot runways, ammunition storage facilities, routine deployment of missile defense capabilities, aviation capabilities, and so forth. So clearly, they have walked away from that commitment.

To the extent that the military capabilities haven’t been increased in recent months, I assume that’s because the islands have now been developed to the point where they provide the military capability that the Chinese required them to have. So I don’t know that I’d read much into no change over the last few months. Stabilized in terms of activity, perhaps achieved operational capability from a Chinese perspective.

But you and I spoke just before coming out here, and I think it’s probably worth repeating how I view the South China Sea. The South China Sea is, in my judgment, not a pile of rocks, as we’ve talked about before. What is at stake in the South China Sea and elsewhere where there are territorial claims is the rule of law – international laws, norms, and standards. In my judgment, when we ignore actions that are not in compliance with international rules, norms, and standards, we have just set, you know, a new standard. As you and I have spoken about before, that new standard is lower than it was the day before. So I think what really is necessary – and I’m not suggesting at all that it’s a military response, but what needs to happen, in my view, to have a free and open Indo-Pacific – which is the aspiration not only of the United States but the expressed aspiration of all the ASEAN nations is a free and open Indo-Pacific – what needs to happen is there needs to be coherent collective action to those who violate international norms and standards, and they need to be held accountable in some way so that future violations are deterred.

**O’Hanlon:** Thank you. I want to ask a couple of questions now before going to the audience about the state of the U.S. military and then look forward to the broader conversation. When you became chairman in 2015 – and of course, you had been commandant of the Marine Corps;

before that, you had succeeded in John Allen in Afghanistan; and then you had been assistant commandant of the Marine Corps; so you've had four four-star jobs, and you've seen a lot of perspective from the service point of view as well as from the chairman point of view. We've been coping with a difficult decade in terms of military readiness, as the chiefs have been saying for a long time, first brought upon by the intense deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, exacerbated the last decade by the budget problems in Washington – everything from the Budget Control Act to sequestration, but perhaps even more the continuing resolutions, never having a budget on time, et cetera, et cetera. But in the last two or three years I think there's been headway, if I read DOD's documentation correctly and your testimony and so forth. How would you assess the state of readiness of the U.S. military today as it tries to get on the comeback trail from, you know, a rough – pretty rough first 20 years of this century?

**Dunford:** Let me maybe reinforce the point you made about how did we get there. I remember very clearly in 2010 the collective leadership – and I was a part of it, so I'm not having an out-of-body experience and blaming somebody else here – but we made two assumptions in 2010. We said that our operational commitments would reduce and the fiscal environment would stabilize. So those are two assumptions. The decisions that we made in 2011, '12, and '13 were informed by those two assumptions. As you can remember in 2010, '11, '12, '13, we still had some significant commitments. What we said was, look, our major priority has to be making sure our men and women in harm's way have the wherewithal to do the job, and we're going to make sure we do that. We will then address some of these other underlying readiness issues and modernization issues, and by the way at some point those become a distinction without a difference between readiness and modernization. We'll get after these issues.

By 2015, it was clear to all of us that, number one, the operational environment was not going to change and our commitments were not going to be reduced – in fact, they may actually increase – and the fiscal situation wasn't going to stabilize. At that point we started to achieve what I think was a better balance, and I articulated this as what I viewed as one of my most significant challenges when I came into the job was getting the balance between today and tomorrow right. I think by 2015 it became clear to all of us that we were not balanced in that regard and we needed to be as attentive to tomorrow as we had been towards meeting the current operational requirements. Fortunately, starting in 2017, I would argue that we began to see adequate levels of funding to be able to address those issues.

To put readiness in some context, that was ammunition shortfalls. It was lack of spare parts. It was operations and maintenance money for training. In some cases it also became lack of tails or vehicles either on the flight line or in the motor pool. That's why I say it's a distinction without a difference: at some point, if you have only six airplanes in a squadron that rates 12, it doesn't matter how ready those six airplanes are; you're still at 50 percent of capability. In '17, '18, and '19 we were able to address the ammunition shortfalls. We were able to rebalance our training for those units that were at home station, because the bill payer had been not the units that were deployed, it was the units that were at home station. We were able to rebalance that and we began to invest in our aviation enterprise, ground vehicles, and so forth to address some of the shortfalls.

We're now what I hope to be four years into stable and adequate levels of funding, assuming that we get fiscal year '20 at or about what the president's budget reflect. That has made a quantifiable impact on the level of readiness that we have. What I would say is this, though, that we have described it as fill the holes. So we have addressed unit readiness, and I think unit readiness compared to 2015 is significantly better.

The second piece of it, though, is our overall competitive advantage to be able to project power and then achieve superiority in any domain when required to execute our campaign. That would be sea, air, land, space, and cyberspace. In that regard, our competitive advantage from where it was in 2000 to where it is today has eroded over time. As I look forward and I think about readiness, what I think about is ensuring that we make the investments necessary to have a competitive advantage in 2024 and 2025, as well as today.

I feel very confident today in saying that we can protect the homeland, we can meet our alliance commitments, and we have a competitive advantage over any potential adversary. I feel confident in saying that. I feel equally confident in saying that the path that we've been on in '17, '18, '19, and '20 has to continue for several more years in order for us to address that competitive advantage issue, which is separate and distinct from unit-level readiness.

**O'Hanlon:** Just one last question, and want to pursue this issue of resources because even though the fiscal '20 request wound up being at the higher end of what people expected – and if you get that, as you say, you'll be, I think, fairly happy with your resourcing – if we look at the five-year plan the buildup sort of stops, right, because the projections for DOD's budget are basically 1 percent growth in future years, which would be less than the rate of inflation. The reason why I noticed that is not because I think 750 billion (dollars) is too little for defense, but there still is – I wonder, you know, people have called the 2020 budget proposal the masterpiece. I wonder if there is a tiny flaw in the masterpiece, or at least one unanswered question, which is the Air Force and the Navy still have ambitious plans for force structure growth. We've heard General [David L.] Goldfein and we've heard Secretary [of the Air Force Heather A.] Wilson last fall unveil a plan for the Air Force to grow by 25 percent. The Navy still wants to grow its fleet by 25 percent. And at the same time that we're trying to improve quality and innovation, those two services in particular want to improve or augment size. I wonder if there's a quality/quantity dilemma, that we're prioritizing both and we don't really have the long-term resource trajectory that's going to be able to afford the modernization that you talk about and also the force structure growth. So, to the extent you're leaving that question for the future, do you have guidance to offer as to which of those is more important, quality or quantity?

**Dunford:** Yeah, we view that as capability and capacity, right, what we can do and how much of it we can do. I've been pretty clear in testimony that we need sustained, predictable, and adequate levels of funding in the future. I've been pretty clear that we've done some detailed analysis of what we call competitive areas. So we have looked at ourselves through the lens of 14 competitive areas, and although it's a classified study you can imagine what they are. They're the maritime domain, our cyber capabilities, our space capabilities, where are we in electronic warfare, and so forth. We've looked at the 14 competitive areas. We've looked at the trajectory of capability development that our peer competitors are on. We've made judgments in conjunction with the intelligence community about where they'll be in the mid-'20s. We've looked at where we are today and where we would need to be to maintain an acceptable competitive advantage in 2020. We have done the math to justify 3 to 5 percent real growth over inflation to meet both the capability and capacity requirements. Having said that, if the budget doesn't realize 3 to 5 percent real growth, you have to make tough choices.

What I would say to the issue of is it capability or capacity is it can only be capacity where you have capability. I think the lesson that many of us learned in the 1970s and the 1980s is you can't have force structure without proper training, without proper equipment, without proper leadership, without proper funding, you know, to conduct exercises and provide maintenance. So



what I would say to those coming behind me is make sure that if we grow – I don't dispute in many cases the requirement to increase our capacity to meet our commitments at an acceptable level of what we call deployment to dwell – how much time are our forces away, how much time are they home. But I would say this: If we're going to grow capacity, you need to do it in a way where it is meaningful capability, balanced capability, and when you have to make a choice between capacity and capability I would go with capability. I would make sure every unit that we have actually has the level of readiness to meet its requirements, and I wouldn't grow the force in a way that exceeds that we predict is going to be sustainable.

That's a tough call. But I've seen us get that wrong twice in my career, and in my mind the quality over quantity would be the most important thing I would recommend. In fact, if you look at our budget since '17, '18, and '19, that's exactly the choices that we have made. We have invested significantly in space, invested significantly in cyberspace, invested significantly in electronic warfare. We've built back up our ammunition stores. All of those things designed to enhance our combat readiness, even at the cost of not growing perhaps to the degree that we wanted to to meet our commitments.

**O'Hanlon:** Fantastic. Thank you.

**Remarks at the Retirement Ceremony of Major General Frederick Padilla  
Washington, District of Columbia  
May 31**

Major General Fred Padilla and the service and support of his family over those years. It's a particular honor for me to do this. As I'll mention in a few minutes, I've been with Fred since 1985, and I had a front-row seat throughout most of his career. General and Mrs. [David H.] Berger, General and Mrs. [Brian D.] Beaudreault, General and Mrs. [Michael A.] Rocco, Bobby Hogue is here, and – I'm drawing a blank – but it's good to have you all here.

You know, this is a celebration of service in a lot of different ways, and I'm not sure who knows this: Fred's father, retired United States Air Force; his brother, retired major general, United States Air Force; his sister, retired United States Air Force; his brother-in-law, retired United States Air Force; his daughter Laura proudly claimed the title; his son Ricky, just back from deployment as a United States Marine; and missing in action is the youngest member of the Padilla fire team, Amy, who is out completing her first year at the United States Air Force Academy. So that's a pretty commendable record of service of the Padilla family.

Which reminds me, you know, because we're in the middle of a ceremony, we didn't have a chance to recognize the fire team lead of Samantha who gave us that inspiring rendition of the national anthem. Samantha, I'm going to embarrass you and ask you to stand up. I told Fred when she finished – I said, hey, we can kind of wrap it up right now. We're all done. That was extraordinary.

As I mentioned, Fred, both from a professional and personal perspective, it really is an honor for me to be here and to do this. You are somebody I've held in high regard since the first time we met, and I'll talk about that here in a few minutes, but I'm also proud to call you friend. I heard an expression at one time. It says a true leader should live a life ready for inspection. So I thought today, Fred, on your last day of active duty we'd have an inspection. But you don't actually have to stand up to be inspected.

What I would tell you – and of course that means, not just in a literal sense but in a figurative sense, every aspect of a leader's life ought to be ready for inspection. I'm in kind of a unique position to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that for the last 36 years, that Fred Padilla, on both a professional and personal level, has been formed and ready for inspection every day. And had you at any point in these 36 years inspected Fred, first you would have found somebody who is extraordinarily competent, committed to the profession. You would have found somebody that was extraordinarily physically and mentally tough. You would have found somebody – we're in a museum – somebody who embodied the Missouri style of leadership, and many of the people that he has touched along the way are here today, but somebody who absolutely was selfless and truly did put the needs of his Marines always ahead of his own.

You would have found someone of extraordinary character, and someone with integrity. If you talk to Fred Padilla, you can take his word to the bank. And then you would have found someone that, despite the nature of our profession and all the sacrifices and the time away, you would have found somebody that found a way to be a good husband, to be a good father, to be a good son, to be a good brother, and to be a good friend. Fred, I can tell you – I'm not going to share it with you today – I probably ought to give you copies of it – you know, my team had reached out to the family and asked for input for today. Of course, in any event, I didn't need it because I'm going to talk from personal perspective about you. But I would like to think that my children and my family would say about me what your family and your children say about you.

Then I would tell you things that you might not have seen in the early days but you can see here in the final discussion is a senior leader who has had extraordinary impact at the strategic level, and somebody that not only helps a unit deal with the challenges today, but I can tell you from personal experience – and I'll talk a little bit about it in a minute – somebody who also has anticipatory skills and can look around the corner and prepare the organization for tomorrow as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, you can look in the program. You will see Fred's assignments. He is somebody who has literally served in every clime and place. We were together in his first assignment when he was a lieutenant commander in 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines, a unit deployment and an LF6F deployment. He went off to be an adjutant in MAG-42. There's a story behind that, but we'll get to that later. A Marine detachment CO aboard a submarine tender, company commander in 3-9, both UDP and in combat operations in Somalia. An I&I in 223. JTF-6 – probably the highlight of your career, right, Cindy? Because you met Cindy in 1999 at JTF-6, so I'm assuming that was your favorite assignment. There you go. Operations officer in the 1st Marine Division. Battalion commander in the 1st Battalion 5th Marines – and I had another chance to serve with Fred at that time, obviously in combat operations. Joint Staff, with complete lack of preparation went in to be the secretary of the JROC and somehow muddled your way through that. Commanding officer of SOI West. Chief of staff for General Flynn at MCCDC. Commander at Parris – commanding officer – commanding general at Parris Island. Commanding general of 3rd Marine Division. PP&O – I think General Berger and I would say the heartbeat of the Marine Corps at PO. And then the president of National Defense University before your final assignment.

I have been with you or around you for about 75 percent of that time. Clearly, in just a few minutes of comments, I couldn't begin to capture the impact that Fred has had in all of those assignments in every clime and place, but I can share a few things from personal experience, and I will. I was talking to Fred upstairs – I remember there are certain moments in your Marine Corps career that stick with you, and I actually remember the first day that I met Lieutenant

Padilla. Then-Captain Waldhauser and I had driven down Highway 95 at about 110 miles an hour out of AWFS to check in at 3rd Battalion 6th Marines, and about three weeks later we went to Okinawa. I don't remember meeting Lieutenant Padilla before we went to Okinawa, but I remember very clearly sometime around August we were at Camp Courtney and for whatever reason Fred's company commander, Captain Lance Ledoux, wasn't there, and Fred was the acting company commander of Kilo Company. I'm not sure exactly what we were doing, but we were doing some type of battalion field training exercise, and Fred was on my flank. So we spent a lot of time planning together, a lot of time speaking together. I will tell you, at that moment I walked away saying, wow, that is an impressive lieutenant. What was most impressive to me was not his tactical proficiency, but I was watching him around all the lieutenants, and all the lieutenants were treating him like he was a lieutenant colonel, and he was a fellow lieutenant as the company commander. It was clear to me also that the Marines in the company just revered him. By that time he had been in the battalion about a year and half or so, and so everybody knew Lieutenant Padilla.

To tell you that my opinion at that time was shared by others – Larry Zinser – I don't know if he made it – I saw him on the list – but he was our battalion commander at that time. This was a battalion that was mostly together, a lot of enlisted personnel turbulence, but the leadership mostly together for both a UDP and an LF6F, and Larry Zinser said that Fred Padilla was number one of 30 lieutenants in the battalion. Something else he said – and Larry Zinser was one of those Vietnam leaders who'd kind of seen it all – we thought so anyway at the time – and at that time had 19 years in the Marine Corps, and he wrote on one of Fred fitness reports, I've only seen four lieutenants in my career that had the mark of greatness, and Fred Padilla is one of them.

And he – you know, obviously captains spent a lot of time talking about lieutenants in the battalion, and I can tell you that the captains that were there – Captain Waldhauser, Captain Dunford, Captain Ledoux, Captain Hand (sp), Captain Lugman (ph) also spent a lot of time talking about lieutenants at the time, and the one that we all recognized at that point as being just a little bit different than all the rest was Lieutenant Padilla.

But what I also remember from that early experience is something else that you could see for the next, you know, 36 years. Fred, as good as he was, applied for augmentation, and at that time the Marine Corps had a system, and he had his MOS changed, and he had his MOS changed to 0180. So after being considered probably the best 0302 in the battalion, we made him an 0180. What I remember about that was Fred didn't go in a corner and suck his thumb. I never heard him complain. I never heard him talk about getting out of the Marine Corps. He was just happy to be a Marine. And so he gets sent upstairs to be the battalion adjutant with absolutely zero school training, zero experience. The good news was he could read and write and then we tested him right away because, as I mentioned, we did an LF6F, so he was not only battalion adjutant, but he was trying to figure it out – you know, if you've ever done a company morning report, you know how hard that is. Fred was responsible for figuring out at that time a five-ship amphibious ready group. He was responsible to the battalion commander for having accountability across five ships, and that was no small task.

But I guess the point I want to make is, I saw Fred tested by the institution when he didn't necessarily get what he wanted to do, and he went off as a professional and did it and spent the last year we were together with the battalion as the adjutant, and not only that, that's how he did make his way to MAG-42 as an adjutant.

But Colonel Zinser and many others recognized that a Marine should and could serve anywhere that the Corps needs them, but they also recognized that there was something special about Fred and probably he could best serve as an infantry officer, and after MAG-42 got his MOS changed, and did kind of a short tour there at MAG-42, sent him off to sea duty, and then again back to the 3-9. Although I wasn't there – I think Jason Boehm (sp) and some others were there – Fred was a company commander and a weapons company commander in 3-9, again, a UDP, and then combat operations in Somalia. I've talked to some of the Marines that Fred served with in Somalia. If you can imagine, we weren't a very combat-experienced force during those days, and so that was a pretty big test for Marines that were new to combat to be in such a complex situation.

But something I would see later on is something that his Marines saw in those days in Somalia was just that kind of calm, confident way about then-Captain Padilla that made everybody feel like it was going to be OK, and they knew exactly what they had to do, and they just went around about doing it because they were being led by Captain Padilla.

I won't talk too much about his next couple of assignments – I already mentioned that he met Cindy on one of them – but you know, the one thing that Fred is beyond being a Marine also, and this is where you saw it was on I&I duty and at JTF-6. You know, that's where you saw him be a mentor to elementary school children. That's where you saw him be a coach. That's where you saw him raise money for a Medal of Honor monument to two Medal of Honor recipients down in the El Paso area. That's where you saw him be an active member of church. When he left, that's when you saw him in both assignments the community just fall out in sadness because then-Major Padilla was leaving.

The next time Fred and I would personally make contact was when I checked into the 1st Marine Division in May of 2001, and Fred was up as the operations officer in the G-3. I think most of you know that that's the place where battalion commanders are either coming out or going in, and they're up there in the G-3 waiting to go down. Fred was waiting to go down to battalion command, and he was one of the individuals I spent a lot of time with as I was preparing to go down to 5th Marines just to figure out the division and get myself up to speed, and then of course was blessed about 60 days after I joined the regiment, Fred came down and took command of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. I would have a front-row seat to his time in battalion command.

You know, for the first year we spent much of the time training, and I had a chance to watch Fred – same things that I talked about as lieutenant or captain I saw in him as a battalion commander: extraordinary coach, teacher, mentor; molded captains. Evidence of the impact he had on captains, I think every one of your captains made colonel, and now the first one to start and make brigadier general, Cal Worth, and I'm not sure if he's here, but that's a pretty good indicator of the impact that Fred had as battalion commander.

Then in the chaotic days of 2002, we tested him and we told him he was going to Tajikistan, and we sent all of his gear to Tajikistan, and we sent him on a site survey to Tajikistan. Then we blew the whistle and said, never mind; you're not going to Tajikistan; you're going UDP. So getting ready to go to the Unit Deployment Program, get ready to go to the 31st MEU. And in December 2002 we sent his advance party over to Okinawa, and that's where Cal Worth was, and we got the word that we're going to OIF. So we said, all right, blow the whistle, bring the advance party back, and Fred, you're actually not going to Okinawa. In three weeks, I need you to – you're going to be conducting maritime pre-position operations, so get your battalion ready

to go to Iraq. You're going to link up with a couple of ships in Kuwait, drive them north, get in an assembly area, and Fred turned the battalion around and got them ready to go to Iraq.

Then on March 20th of 2003, another day with Fred Padilla that I remember very clearly, the CG had called me and said, hey, look, there's intelligence that indicates that the Iraqis are going to destroy the southern oil fields, Rumaila oil fields. How fast can you guys cross the line of departure? – and this would have been a pre-D-Day attack. I said, whew, I don't know; let me check. The first guy I called was Fred Padilla, and I repeated the conversation with Fred. Hey, Fred, how fast can you guys be ready to go? Hey, we can be ready to go right now. Then in a matter of hours Fred was the first ground unit to cross the line of departure back in 2003.

I can remember listening on the radio very clearly that night – I think Steve Armas (sp) might be here. He was Battalion 3, and I was listening to either the 3, the XO, or Fred Padilla calmly and confidently telling people what was going on, reporting T-55 destroyed, reporting the first sad casualties of the war, to include Shane Childers that first night. In all the chaos, and darkness, and friction that is, you know, kind of part of the deal when you first bring a unit into combat, and I would guess that Fred was maybe one of two people in the 1st Battalion 5th Marines on that first night that had never heard a shot fired in anger from his days in Somalia. But what I remember was listening on the radio, again, to Fred's calm, confident voice, and people just knowing that everything was going to be OK because Lieutenant Colonel Padilla was there.

I remember another day when we crossed into Baghdad, the Saddam Canal – another chaotic day with everything that could have gone wrong about to go wrong, and once again, Fred Padilla's leadership got it figured out. And then, without—at the risk of telling war stories, the only other day that I think I probably remember like it was yesterday was the 10th of April of 2003. In what was nothing more than a movement to contact, we told Fred, hey, look, you're going to move to Baghdad. There've been some Saddam sightings. There are some, it looks like, Republican Guard units down there, and the intelligence was anything but clear, but whatever it is we've got to do, I'd just go down there and figure it out. By the time Fred was two or three hours in the mission, we actually gave him three different objectives. He had three different – he had three companies spread all over the west side of Baghdad chasing Saddam Hussein and some other individuals.

What I remember most about that day was we kept expecting high casualty reports because there was a lot of shooting, and it was a very difficult situation, as you can imagine. Where Fred Padilla was, was leading from the front. But we weren't getting many casualty reports. Then about 48 hours later, we get a report from 1-5 that there are 87 wounded. I said, hey, Fred, what is the deal? You know, 48 hours later we're – the truth was that the Marines that were wounded on those three objectives that day in all the chaos, they didn't want to leave. They didn't want to leave 1-5. They wanted to stay in their companies, and it was only a couple of days later as the leadership started sorting through things that we started to identify people that actually needed to go out and get medical care. That's the kind of commanding climate that Fred Padilla had in the 1st Battalion 5th Marines. That's the kind of combat leader Fred Padilla was, and that's kind of impact Fred Padilla has on people. Again, as I mentioned, virtually all the captains that I can think of that were in that unit at that particular time have gone on to do great things in the Corps, and carry on in that same tradition, and pass that on to the next generation of young lieutenants and captains in that Padilla-style leadership.

You know, one thing I would tell you, just as I am thinking about the final inspection here, those of you who know Fred Padilla, you know, he is exactly the same today as he was when he

was a lieutenant; in other words, that kind of understated, humble style of leadership but just – you just walk away from every engagement with him knowing, yeah, I got it, and off he goes to do it. I don't know that there's many of us can say that, you know, 36 years and a couple of stars along the way didn't change us at all. But Fred, I can tell you that, for you, it didn't change you at all.

The other assignments I'd point out – I can talk about the impact. I was watching from afar when you were out at SOI West, and I think at that time, fair to say, we were beginning to deduce lessons learned from combat, we reorganized the infantry training and established the battalion training that was there, the advanced infantry training. But one of the reasons why we did that, for those that were in recon at the time – there's probably a couple of you – we were, I think, having an attrition of about 60 or 70 percent out of the basic reconnaissance course. We really had a problem inside the institution, and in many other ways. In training – there was some basic, fundamental combat training for infantry that we probably weren't doing as well as we could have done, and the lessons learned from combat and the attrition at BRC I think brought it all to a head. I think Fred, fair to say, walked point in helping us fix that and put us on the right path, and with a huge impact out there.

But the other assignment – an interesting one because it was a relatively short assignment of a year, but I had a chance to see Fred in action. And General George Flynn is here, my great friend, and he was MCCDC at the time, and I was PP&O. Fred was the chief of staff down at MCCDC. Anybody who has ever served at Headquarters Marine Corps knows that, without overstating, colonels run Headquarters Marine Corps. You know, it's the EAs, the MILSEC, and it's that colonels', you know, coconut telegraph with phone calls, and meetings and so forth that kind of overcome the fact that general officers have attention deficit disorder and can't stay the task. They kind of keep the institution focused.

That's another example – I mentioned peer leadership. I mentioned that you can inspect Fred at any point in his career, and you'd see some of the same qualities. That's another place where I saw peer leadership. Fred was another colonel, but very clearly he's not just another colonel, but a colonel who is having a huge impact on the organization. I think Fred's performance in that particular assignment would later come back and make him uniquely capable of filling another hard job that General Flynn had a lot to do with, and I'll get to that.

With regard to Parris Island, he was the commander down there and did all the things that great commanders out of Parris Island do. But the other thing at that point – and for those who came after him, you can probably thank Fred – the infrastructure was in pretty poor shape when Fred went down to Parris Island. So in addition to the normal leadership you have to observe as the commanding general of Parris Island, Fred recognized that – and again, a balanced leader would – recognized that more needed to be done. They went from the bottom installation in the Marine Corps in virtually every category to winning three awards for the top installation from the mess hall to the facilities. And who would know it, but that's the kind of impact Fred had.

When he went to the 3rd Marine Division, as you often do from time to time, managing your relationship to yield balance, hit some peaks and valleys, Fred came in at a particularly difficult time – a lot of friction with the Okinawan people at that time, and also had had some leadership issues, without going into great detail – but some significant leadership issues in the division at the time. Once again, with that same style of steady, competent leadership – coach, teacher, mentor – contributed to turn that around.

Then I want to talk a little bit about the National Defense University, which many people don't know – how did Fred go from being in PP&O in the field for a short period of time, and all

of a sudden he shows up at the National Defense University. General Flynn was in the J7 at the time, and fair to say that the National Defense University, which is supposed to be the flagship educational organization in the Department of Defense, was experiencing significant problems. It has an interesting demographic of civilians and uniformed people. It has people on tenure, it has in many cases people – we don't know what they do in those days – that were assigned to National Defense University doing some form of research. And the chairman at the time, General [Martin E.] Dempsey and General Flynn recognized that some significant changes needed to be made at the National Defense University, and they turned to Fred Padilla. They said, hey, Fred, we need you to go in there and turn this thing around. That's again where I come in because I had the good fortune to inherit – Fred already had the National Defense University when I came in as the chairman four years ago, and I can tell you, difficult assignment, 1-5 with combat; difficult assignment, company commander in 3-9 in combat; difficult assignments all along the way.

I would argue that Fred is a strategic leader. Fred is a person who has probably never been tested as much as he was during those couple of years at the National Defense University. I can tell you – I don't know if the provost is here, Dr. [John W.] Yaeger – he's not here – but I can tell you that what Fred did, first and foremost, was just reset basic leadership at the NDU, just sit down with everybody and do what every good leader does: just talk to people. Just talk to people and explain where the organization was going to go, and then, unrelenting, took the organization where it needed to go. I want to tell you, Fred, all of us are beneficiary of that, particularly me in my current assignment because he put NDU back on the proper trajectory, and I know in that regard, as much of an impact as you've had on many, many Marines throughout your career, you've had a huge impact on the professional military education of the important demographic: our lieutenant colonels that are going to be the senior leadership across the joint force in the years to come.

I had a chance to watch you reform the curriculum, knock it down to just the people that needed to be there, balance some of the difficulties, the fiscal difficulties that you had, address again some of the infrastructure issues and put us on the right track for infrastructure, but also – and probably as importantly, make sure that we were recruiting and retaining the right quality of talent at NDU. By the time you had been there a very short period of time, people wanted to be at NDU because Fred Padilla was there at the National Defense University. And so General Flynn's confidence in you was well placed, and you had a huge impact.

But Fred, you know, I could go on for a long time. You know, there's things flashing in my mind even as I'm speaking now where your face is there. I can remember things that we have done – some we should talk about, some we should not and I'm only reporting on the inspection of the 36 years of active duty. I know there are many more qualified than me to report on the results of the inspection prior to those 36 years, but I'm not sure those results would be as excellent as the ones once you became commissioned as a lieutenant in the Marines. But suffice it to say that there is a legion of Marines that are really proud to be – you know, Padilla trained. There's a number of friends that are proud to say Fred Padilla is my friend, and we know that the years of friendship ahead we're going to be able to count on you.

I always say that at a retirement you really only have three things when you go over the side. You've got your reputation, and I hope, Fred, that this morning, and the turnout that's here, and the many people you've heard from over the last several weeks will tell you that, well, you have a reputation that would be the envy of any Marine that would be completing their time on active duty, let alone 36 years.

You've got your memories, and I hope at least, if nothing else, I've kick-started a few of those in our conversation upstairs and down here this morning because you should have so many, many great memories. And then relationships, and we're just a small sample of the depth and the width of relationships that you've developed throughout your career.

Cindy, I would remiss if I didn't talk about you and the Padilla fire team in all six, and you know, what Ellyn and I remember of you, of course, is those days in OIF and what you meant to the other spouses in 1-5, and the way you handled the challenges of Fred's separation during that time. But more importantly, the way you handled the uncertainty of those days. I think from Sergeant Ricky to Marine Laura, to Samantha, Bonnie, to Amy – and you know, Fred, the pride that your dad has in you is – in a five-minute conversation all of your names will come up and all of what you are doing. That's the way it has been ever since I've known him. That's the way it has been ever since I've known him.

If you would ask him – you know, we always talk about centers of gravity, sources of strength. Anybody that knows Fred Padilla know that his center of gravity and his source of strength is sitting right here in the front row. That's Fred Padilla's source of strength, and the fact that we get four out of six, and the only reason – the other two have really good excuses. In addition to Amy, we also have one that's expecting. So those are two pretty good reasons not to be here. Otherwise we got a pretty good turnout.

Colonel Padilla, sir, my mother used to have an expression. She said, well – when someone would say something nice about somebody she'd say, well, they didn't get that from the wind. Of course what that meant was, you know, it came from a role model, an example, and we like to take credit for instilling character in Marines, but the truth of the matter is, in the case of the Padilla family – and Exhibits A, B, C, D, and E are here – but in the case of the Padilla family the character was well formed long before Fred became a lieutenant of the Marines. And it wasn't through Air Force ROTC; it was through being the son of Colonel Frank Padilla. There's no doubt about that. So sir, I know for Fred it's particularly meaningful to have you here as well as his brothers and sisters.

Ladies and gentlemen, the most important thing that I have to do this morning is to introduce Major General Fred Padilla of the United States Marine Corps, retired – a hell of a Marine.

## **Excerpts from Media Interview**

### **Baghdad, Iraq**

**July 26**

**Q:** Sir, can I ask you about Iraq? It's, obviously, changing now, the impetus here in the country. What does that mean for U.S. presence here? What does that mean for the coalition going after ISIS?

**Dunford:** I'll let the ambassador and General [Paul J.] LaCamera correct me or add to what I would say. First of all, the threat hasn't gone away. Let's start by looking at ISIS in the region. I think we can all certainly be proud of the progress that's taken place since 2015-16 and after '17 in particular in terms of clearing ISIS from Mosul, from Raqqa, from Fallujah, from Ramadi, and so forth, so mixing Syria and Iraq for a minute. But we also know that there's still a fairly vibrant insurgency, and they've reverted now to guerilla-type tactics and so forth, and so there's still a threat. There's also still a need – and this is something that we agree on with the Iraqi government – there's still a need for U.S. support for Iraqi security forces and international



support. This is a coalition, a U.S.-led coalition as well as the NATO mission here. And both of those missions are welcomed by the Iraqis.

We have already made adjustments to our U.S. military presence here. When I was talking to General LaCamera today, I think about our U.S. military presence here in terms of capabilities that are here and then the activities that we conduct on a routine basis, and we've made some adjustments. General LaCamera briefed me today about some of the emphasis on training operational units to make sure that during the time that they're rotating out of their operational duties they've got good trainers and advisors and so forth that are there, so we're both enabling them during combat operations but also providing advice.

So, in my view, a long-term partnership with the Iraqi security forces is required. Our force – our footprint at any given time is going to reflect what General LaCamera and his team believes is necessary to do the three things that we've been doing, which is continue to provide training, to provide advice, and then to provide enabling capability for them to conduct operations. And then also, in doing that, the United States is postured to address our own counterterrorism objectives in the region.

So, I don't expect that there's going to be any big change on any given day. I think the mission will continue to evolve over time, and we'll continue to look at the activities we conduct on a day-to-day basis and the capabilities that exist in Operation Inherent Resolve based on the conditions on the ground. The conditions on the ground have certainly changed since last year, and we've already internally changed the composition of forces that General LaCamera has available to him.

**Q:** General, when you first took office and came here, there were tanks in the streets guarding it because ISIS was just down the road. I'd just ask you to look back over the last four years, how do you think the strategy worked?

**Dunford:** Yeah. But you know, I had General LaCamera and the team together earlier. I talked to the team a little bit about the question you're asking. I just reflected back on October 2015, the first visit. Ramadi was still held. But what was most important was the – it was – and you can go back and look at the stories that were written, right, October/November of 2015. The confidence that the Iraqi forces would be able to do what needed to be done was very low. Most people were predicting that they would be not up to the task. If you remember the Ramadi case in particular, I think it was probably 120, 150, 180 days that there were units surrounding Ramadi – 10, 20 kilometers outside the city – and there was the great watch; when is Ramadi going to be attacked by the Iraqi security forces. And then the Iraqi security forces on several occasions had some difficulty.

So the biggest change that I've seen is the Iraqi security forces. You asked earlier about the adaptation of the mission. The Iraqi security forces are much more capable than they were in 2015. Again, go back and look at the articles that were written in 2015 and look at where we are today. It's pretty dramatic.

Then if you just look at both with the Iraqi security forces have done in Iraq to clear ISIS from the ground that it held and to clear – and the Syrian Democratic Forces to clear ISIS from the ground that they held inside of Syria, I believe that what's happened in both Syria and Iraq is a model for training, advising, and enabling local forces to do the work. The work has been done by the Iraqi security forces with what has been a relatively small footprint of coalition forces. Critical, particularly enabling capability, but the heavy lifting – and that's exhibit A in terms of

heavy lifting is the casualties that were taken by the Iraqi security forces and the Syrian Democratic Forces in doing the work. That's a big takeaway, is their performance.

And October 2015, not only did people lack confidence in the Iraqi security forces – and perhaps even the Iraqis lacked confidence in 2015 – we probably had less than 200 individuals inside of Syria that we were working with in the defeat ISIS campaign. Less than 200. Today, a combination of Kurds and Arabs, close to 50,000. Again, the performance speaks for itself.

But the emphasis is the enemy has changed as a result of the clearing of the ground that they held. They're making adaptations as well. And so I don't believe the fight is over. I don't think ISIS is defeated. I think we have significantly changed the character of the threat. We have disrupted them. We have cleared them. I say "we" meaning our partners have cleared them from the ground they held. But we need to realize that this is a long-term campaign. Until the conditions that fed ISIS in the first place are addressed, there's still going to be violent extremism we have to deal with across the Middle East. As we all know, ISIS is not only just a threat here but it's a transregional threat.

### **Remarks at the United States Space Command Recognition of Establishment Ceremony Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado September 9**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, elected officials, Secretary [of the Air Force Matthew P.] Donovan, distinguished guests, senior military leaders, and most of all to the men and women of the United States Space Command. It's an honor to be with you here today. And, General [John W.] Raymond, I'm proud to be here with you and your leadership team. We are fortunate to have the right leaders at the right time for this critical task. To Mollie Raymond and all the Space Command family members that are here, thank you for your continued service and sacrifice.

I see a number of allies in the crowd who have traveled great distances, had a chance to meet some of them in the reception. I think it's appropriate, I'd just ask for the representatives of our allied nations to please stand up and recognized. It really does mean a lot that you went through so much effort to be here today.

As you all know, and as the narrator mentioned, we had a ceremony in Washington the 29th of August to reestablish the United States Space Command. It was an important day, and it highlighted the president's commitment to American leadership in space. A look back at history puts the importance of that commitment in perspective. In the early days of the Cold War, another period of great-power competition, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik and put the first man into orbit. Those events sparked fear that we were falling behind in technological capability. In 1961, President [John F.] Kennedy responded with a call to action.

We then saw how executive branch leadership, a clear vision, and appropriate resources from the Congress enabled extraordinary achievement in space. By July 1969, President Kennedy's vision was realized with Neil Armstrong's giant leap for mankind and our nation. In the decades that followed the United States controlled uncontested access to the military and commercial advantages of space.

In my view, it's not an overstatement to say that we're at another Sputnik moment. You could argue that the stakes are much higher than they were in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The reestablishment of Space Command should be understood as part of a broader effort to maintain

our nation's competitive advantage in space. But while space has implications far beyond the military dimension, I'd like to focus on the importance of Space Command to our National Defense Strategy and joint warfighting.

The enduring mission of the Defense Department is to provide combat-credible military forces to deter war, protect the nation, and respond if deterrence fails. Today we perform our mission in a very complex and volatile security environment. We're once again in an era of great power competition. The character of war has changed, and the pace of change across the profession of arms, you could argue, is unprecedented.

The competitive advantage we enjoyed after the Cold War has also eroded. For the last two decades, our adversaries have studied us, and developed capabilities designed to exploit what they perceived to be our vulnerabilities. That dynamic has been particularly evident in space. The Russians and Chinese have seen how we leverage space to enhance our command and control, missile warning, navigation, targeting, and our overall warfighting capability. In response, they have developed jamming, cyberspace capabilities, directed energy weapons, on-orbit capabilities, and anti-satellite missiles.

In 2015, both countries reorganized to place a greater emphasis on space and counter-space capabilities. In general, Iran and North Korea have less mature capabilities, but they still pose a threat. As General Raymond, General [John E.] Hyten and others have been saying for years, we can no longer take our access to space for granted. Space is a contested domain. The implications of that fact affects our ability to fight and win on future battlefields. In that context, we didn't reestablish Space Command simply to compete in space. We formed this command as a foundational element of more effective joint warfighting.

Those of you in this room have delivered the space capabilities we need in recent years. And no one has done it better. No one has done it better. But this is about taking it to the next level. Once again, the men and women of Space Command, with a singular focus on one of five warfighting domains, will integrate the joint and allied capabilities we need to defend our interests in space, to fight, and to win. I learned early in my career the value of seizing the high ground in a fight. Space Command will seize and hold the high ground. More importantly, in accomplishing that critical task, the United States Space Command will ensure that our soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines will never find themselves in a fair fight. As I look around the room, I'm filled with confidence that we have the right leaders and the right team at the right time.

With that, I'm going to perform my most important responsibility this morning, introducing the commander of the United States Space Command, General Jay Raymond. Ladies and gentlemen, General Raymond.

**Remarks at the 9-11 Pentagon Observance Ceremony  
Pentagon, Virginia  
September 11**

Mr. President, Mrs. [Melania] Trump, Secretary and Mrs. [Mark T.] Esper, distinguished guests and most importantly to the survivors and family members of the fallen who are with us: good morning. It's an honor to join you at this sacred place where 184 men, women and children were taken from us, before their time.

They and those lost at the World Trade Center and in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, were the innocent victims of an unprovoked attack. While they were taken from us prematurely, their memory lives on. We're here today to renew our commitment to never forget.

The terrorist attacks were intended to challenge our way of life and they sought to break our spirit. But their purpose was never realized. That day made us stronger, more determined and more resolved to protect our nation and that for which it stands. As President George Bush said from the Oval Office in the hours after the attacks: "Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel--they cannot dent the steel of American resolve." That resolve carries on. As we stand here today, our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen are performing their duty across the globe, doing what must be done. So as we pause this morning to remember and honor those lost on 11 September 2001, I hope the American people also find comfort in knowing that a new generation of men and women have stepped forward to serve and protect our way of life. And now, ladies and gentlemen, I'm honored to introduce someone who has embraced public service for decades, our 27th Secretary of Defense, the honorable Mark Esper.

**Excerpts from an Interview with Media**  
**London, England**  
**September 17**

**Q:** Back on Afghanistan, Air Chief Marshal [Stuart W.] Peach reiterated, you know, in together out together, with the discussion that's happening about Afghanistan.

**Dunford:** Sure. Yeah...we had a very good brief by General [Austin S.] Miller – not surprising – and Ambassador [Sir Nicholas] Kay who is the special representative to the secretary-general there, and they talked about the ongoing preparations for the elections. Ambassador Kay, obviously, focused on that. General Miller talked about the support we're providing to the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior as they prepare for elections and as they continue to secure Afghanistan in advance of the elections.

If you go back and look at any of the elections that have taken place, you're always increasing operational tempo prior to elections. That increase of security can afford the maximum number of people to go to the polls. So that's an Afghan plan to increase security, particularly in those areas where polling stations are. Their requirements are driving General Miller's plan to support the Afghan NDSF as they prepare for the elections. So General Miller kind of walked through that.

And then, beyond that, let me tell you exactly what I said to the chiefs of defense. I said: The president has not made any decisions right now on future posture adjustments. So we have the force in Afghanistan we have right now. He hasn't made any decision on future posture adjustments. What I told my fellow chiefs of defense is, that Secretary [of State Michael R.] Pompeo said, Secretary [of Defense Mark T.] Esper: We're committed to have transparency with Secretary-General [Jens] Stoltenberg and our counterparts as we consider adjustments of posture. We'll make sure that they are informed so that we can make these adjustments together, meaning in the Resolute Support mission as a whole.

Because, presumably, any adjustments that are being made are going to be made in support of an operational plan. Each of the countries will be affected by the overall plan by Resolute Support, and it wouldn't just be the United States making adjustments. It would be the other

countries as well. So I think that we're appreciative of that message, but that's the message we brought them.

**Q:** Well, considering the attack today that clearly targeted President [Ashraf] Ghani, what does this tell you about the Afghans' ability to protect the election and as you look ahead down the road?

**Dunford:** Well, look, we know that the Taliban, particularly in advance of the elections, are also attempting to increase their tempo of operations, and particularly for the high-profile terrorist attacks, which is really what took place here – a high-profile terrorist attack. I don't think one incident – you can't make a general conclusion about the Afghan forces based on one incident. But having said that, I've been public about stating I still believe the Afghan forces in the current security environment, given the level of violence associated with the insurgency, needs support from the United States and NATO, and partner nations. So it's relying on all the partner nations that are in NATO.

### **A Message from the Chairman to the Men and Women of Our U.S. Armed Forces**

Washington, District of Columbia

September 24

In the coming days, I will complete over four decades of active service and my tenure as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Before taking off my uniform for the last time, I wanted to tell you what an honor it has been to serve alongside you and to represent you here in Washington, D.C. and across the globe. More importantly, I wanted to take a minute to simply thank you for who you are and what you do.

Those of you in uniform active, Guard, and reserve represent less than one percent of the American people and you've answered the call to serve our nation during a time of war. You chose to challenge yourself to excellence and to be a part of something greater than yourself.

You chose to make a difference. Across the globe, you stand the watch on sea, air, and land as we simultaneously tackle the challenges associated with Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and violent extremism. And you are driving change to deal with the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to include those in space and cyberspace.

Like your predecessors, you are ordinary men and women who hail from across the 50 states and U.S. territories but you routinely demonstrate extraordinary courage, honor, commitment, loyalty, and self-sacrifice. It's because of *you* that I am confident that we can defend the homeland and our way of life. It's because of *you* that we have earned the trust and confidence of allies and partners around the world. It's because of *you* that people believe in America.

Over the past four years, I have spoken a lot about the need for our nation to maintain a competitive advantage over any potential adversary. You are our most important competitive advantage and any adversary would think twice about committing an act of aggression because of you. All of these words apply equally to our great civil servants who are an integral part of the team.

I'd also like to take a minute to recognize our families. My wife, Ellyn, and I know the unique challenges and sacrifices of military families. But we also know that the U.S. military is strong because of our foundation and our foundation is our families. One of the most rewarding experiences of the last four years has been meeting with military families across the force. Thank

you for welcoming us into your homes. Thank you for your willingness to sacrifice and support and thank you for your resilience.

Let me close by saying that as I depart active service, I depart with incredible pride and gratitude, not because I'm a general or the chairman, but simply because I have stood in ranks with the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen who wear the cloth of our nation.

Please know that I will remain in proud over watch following my retirement. God bless you all and Semper Fidelis.

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

A2/AD	Anti-Access/Area Denial
AAV	Amphibious Assault Vehicle
AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
AI	artificial intelligence
ANA	Afghan National Army
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWFS	Amphibious Warfare School
BMP	Boyevaya Mashina Pyekhoty (Infantry Fighting Vehicle)
BRC	Basic Reconnaissance Course
CAOC	Combined Air Operations Center
CENTCOM	United States Central Command
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CG	Commanding General
CHOD	Chief of Defense
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CJSOR	Combined Joint Statement of Requirements
CMC	Commandant of the Marine Corps; Central Military Commission
CNAS	Center for New American Security
CO	Commanding Officer
COCOM	Combatant Command
CP	Command post
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies

CTS	Counter-Terrorism Service
DDG	Guided missile destroyer
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DIU	Defense Innovation Unit
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EA	Executive Assistant
EUCOM	United States European Command
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FY	Fiscal Year
FYDP	Future Years Defense Plan
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	General Electric
GFMAP	Global Force Management Allocation Plan
GPA	Grade Point Average
GRU	Glavnoye Razvedyvatelnoye Upravlenie (Chief Intelligence Unit)
HIMARS	High Mobility Artillery Rocket System
HTS	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (Organization for the Liberation of the Levant)
I&I	Inspector-Instructor
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
INDOPACOM	United States Indo-Pacific Command



IS	Islamic State
ISAF	International Stabilization Force
ISIL	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
IT	Information Technology
JROC	Joint Requirements Oversight Council
JTAC	Joint Terminal Attack Controller
JTF	Joint Task Force
KJU	Kim Jong-Un
LCS	Littoral Combat Ship
LF6F	Landing Force 6th Fleet
MAG	Marine Air Group
MAGTF	Marine Air-Ground Task Force
MC	Master of ceremonies
MCCDC	Marine Corps Combat Development Command
MEF	Marine Expeditionary Force
MEU	Marine Expeditionary Unit
MILREP	Military representative
MILSEC	Military Secretariat
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MPA	Military Performance Appraisal

MRAP	Mine-Resistant/Ambush-Protected
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCIS	Naval Criminal Investigation Service
NCO	Noncommissioned officer
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NDSF	National Defense and Security Forces
NDU	National Defense University
NHL	National Hockey League
NMS	National Military Strategy
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defense Command
NORTHCOM	United States Northern Command
NSC	National Security Council
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OPLAN	Operation plan
OPTEMPO	Operations Tempo
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PEA	Physical Education Average
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
PMF	Popular Mobilization Forces
POM	Program Objective Memorandum
POW	Prisoner of War
PP&O	Plans, Policies, and Operations
PRC	Portable Radio Communication

RFA	Request for Assistance
RP	Religious Program specialist
RPG	Rocket propelled grenade
SAC	Syrian Arab Coalition
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
SDF	Syrian Democratic Force
SITREP	Situation report
SOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
SOI	School of Infantry
SOUTHCOM	United States Southern Command
SU	Sukhoi
T&E	Train & equip
TACOM	Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command
TARDEC	Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center
THAAD	Terminal High Altitude Area Defense
TMO	Traffic Management Office
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UCP	Unified Command Plan
UDP	Unit Deployment Program
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
VTC	Video teleconference

XO	Executive Officer
YPG	Yekîneyên Parastina Gel (People's Defense Units)