

**TO CONDUCT A CONFIRMATION HEARING ON
THE EXPECTED NOMINATION OF: HONOR-
ABLE CHARLES T. HAGEL TO BE SEC-
RETARY OF DEFENSE**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 2013

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Udall, Hagan, Manchin, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, King, Inhofe, McCain, Sessions, Chambliss, Wicker, Ayotte, Fischer, Graham, Vitter, Blunt, Lee, and Cruz.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; Travis E. Smith, chief clerk; Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk; and Mary J. Kyle, legislative clerk.

Majority staff members present: Jonathan D. Clark, counsel; Jonathan S. Epstein, counsel; Gabriella E. Fahrner, counsel; Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Creighton Greene, professional staff member; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, counsel; Peter K. Levine, general counsel; Jason W. Maroney, counsel; Thomas K. McConnell, professional staff member; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; Michael J. Noblet, professional staff member; Roy F. Phillips, professional staff member; Roy F. Phillips, professional staff member; John H. Quirk V, professional staff member; Robie I. Samanta Roy, professional staff member; Russell L. Shaffer, counsel; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: John A. Bonsell, minority staff director; Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Steven M. Barney, minority counsel; Thomas W. Goffus, professional staff member; Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Anthony J. Lazarski, professional staff member; Daniel A. Lerner, professional staff member; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; and Robert M. Soofer, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Jennifer R. Knowles, Mariah K. McNamara, and Brian F. Sebold.

Committee members' assistants present: Carolyn Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Jeff Fatora, assistant to Senator Nelson; Jason Rauch, assistant to Senator MCCASKILL. ; Casey Howard, as-

sistant to Senator Udall; Brian Nagle, assistant to Senator Hagan; Patrick Hayes, assistant to Senator Manchin; Chad Kreikemeier, assistant to Senator Shaheen; Elana Broitman, assistant to Senator Gillibrand; Ethan Saxon, assistant to Senator Blumenthal; Marta McLellan Ross, assistant to Senator Donnelly; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Hirono; Jim Catella, assistant to Senator King, Paul C. Hutton IV, assistant to Senator McCain; T. Finch Fulton and Lenwood Landrum, assistants to Senator Sessions; Joseph Lai, assistant to Senator Wicker; Brad Bowman assistant to Senator Ayotte; Craig Abele, assistant to Senator Graham; Charles Prosch, assistant to Senator Blunt; Peter Blair, assistant to Senator Lee; and Brooke Bacak, assistant to Senator Cruz.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning. The committee meets today to consider the nomination of former Senator Chuck Hagel to be Secretary of Defense.

But before we begin, I want to first welcome Senator Inhofe as the new ranking Republican on our committee, succeeding Senator McCain. Senator McCain has been a great partner over the last six years, and I thank him for all that he has done to get our bills enacted, for all of his leadership on a host of issues, for his support of the work of this committee, and for always keeping our hearings lively.

Senator Inhofe has shown his strong commitment to the national defense over his 20 years on this committee, and I know that we are going to work well together to continue the bipartisan tradition of the committee.

We're also pleased to welcome the eight senators who are joining the committee this year, both those who are new to the Senate and those who are new to our committee—Senators Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, and King on the Democratic side, and Senators Blunt, Cruz, Fischer, and Lee on the Republican side. You will all find that this is a wonderful committee where we work across party lines to support our troops and their families and their national defense mission.

I would also like to pause for a moment to offer my thanks and the thanks of our committee to Secretary Panetta, who delayed his retirement and his return to California to serve our country first as director of Central Intelligence and then as Secretary of Defense. Secretary Panetta has provided a steady hand at the Department of Defense through two very difficult years, and has earned our great respect and our appreciation.

Finally before we get started, I would like to announce that the committee will be holding hearings next week on Benghazi and the week thereafter on the impact of a sequester on the Department of Defense.

Senator Hagel, we welcome you to the Armed Services Committee and as an old friend of those of us with whom you served during your years in the Senate. There are few jobs that are more demanding than the position to which you have been nominated. The hours are long and extremely challenging, and require sacrifices from both the Secretary and his family.

We traditionally give our nominees an opportunity to introduce their families at these hearings, and we would welcome your doing so during your opening statement.

If confirmed, Senator Hagel would be the first former enlisted man and the first veteran of the Vietnam War to serve as Secretary of Defense. You cannot read Senator Hagel's account of his military service and not be impressed by it. As Senator Hagel explained a few years ago, quote, "Probably most fundamental for me when we talk of going to war, we need to think it through carefully, not just for the political, and the geopolitical, and the diplomatic, and the economic consequences, and those are important. But at least for me," he said, "this old infantry sergeant thinks about when I was in Vietnam in 1968, someone needs to represent that perspective in our government as well. The people in Washington make the policy, but it's the little guys who come back in the body bags."

Senator Hagel's background provides an invaluable perspective, not only with respect to the difficult decisions and recommendations that a Secretary of Defense must make regarding the use of force and the commitment of U.S. troops overseas, but also with respect to the day-to-day decisions that a Secretary must make to ensure that our men and women in uniform and their families receive the support and assistance that they need and deserve.

It would be a positive message for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in harm's way around the world to know that one of their own holds the highest office in the Department of Defense, and that he has their backs.

Senator Hagel, you would be in a position to make key recommendations regarding Afghanistan, where we are down to the pre-surge level of troops with 66,000 military personnel in the country. The Secretary of Defense is called upon to advise the President on the size and mission of a post-2014 so-called residual force, and the pace of the drawdown between now and the end of 2014. The key to this transition is ensuring the readiness and ability of Afghanistan security forces to take over the defense of their own country. I have always believed that that should be our main mission and its key to success.

During my trip to Afghanistan with Senator Jack Reed last month, we heard from U.S. commanders on the ground that Afghanistan security forces are operating on their own on most operations, including conducting more than 85 percent of operations with limited or no U.S. support in the difficult regional Command East. Yet difficult obstacles remain to the process of reducing our forces and shifting responsibility to Afghanistan forces, including the difficulty of negotiating a status of forces agreement, including recent reports that the Afghanistan government might slow down a successful program of growing and training the Afghanistan local police, and including questions about the current plan to reduce the size of the Afghanistan national security forces from 352,000 to around 230,000 after 2015.

We face a number of new and growing threats elsewhere in the world, such as the ongoing threat posed by Iran's nuclear weapons program and the increasingly destructive civil war in Syria with the risk that conflict could result in the loss of control over that

country's substantial stockpile of chemical weapons. There's also the continuing instability in other countries affected by the Arab Spring, the growth of al Qaeda affiliates in ungoverned regions, including Yemen, Somalia, and North Africa, and the continued unpredictable behavior of nuclear armed regime in North Korea.

We face these challenges at a time when the Department of Defense budget is under unique pressure as a result of cuts previously agreed upon by Congress, the budgeting by continuing resolution, and the impending threat of a sequester. Secretary Panetta has said that a sequester would be devastating for our military. Senator Hagel's views today on the continuing resolution and the sequester will be of great interest to this committee and to the Nation.

Those of us who have served with Senator Hagel in the Senate know that he is a man who is not afraid to speak his mind. Senator Hagel has made a number of statements over the course of his career which committee members will ask him about during today's hearing. For example, Senator Hagel has stated that unilateral sanctions against Iran, "are exactly the wrong approach," and that, "they are the worst thing we can do would be to try to isolate Iran." I believe that while effective multilateral sanctions are preferable, that unilateral sanctions are an important part of the approach that the Obama administration has followed, and that Congress has supported. And it appears that sanctions are producing tremendous pressure on Iran.

Another statement which has raised concern is Senator Hagel's recommendation that we conduct, "direct, unconditional, and comprehensive talks with the Government of Iran." Now while there is value in communicating with our adversaries, the formulation used by Senator Hagel seemed to imply a willingness to talk to Iran on some issues that I believe that most of us would view as non-negotiable, and, therefore, any willingness to talk to Iran would need to be highly conditional. Senator Hagel's reassurance to me in my office that he supports the Obama administration's strong stance against Iran is significant, and we look forward to hearing from Senator Hagel today in some depth on that subject.

We will also be interested in Senator Hagel's addressing troubling statements that he has made about Israel and its supporters here in the United States, a statement in 2008 that our policy of non-engagement with the Syrians, "has isolated us more than the Syrians," and a 2009 statement that we should not isolate Hamas, a terrorist organization.

So there is much to be explored at this hearing, but as we struggle with the difficult security challenges facing our Nation, the President needs to have a Secretary of Defense in whom he has trust, who will give him unvarnished advice, a person of integrity, and one who has a personal understanding of the consequences of decisions relative to the use of military force. Senator Hagel certainly has those critically important qualifications to lead the Department of Defense.

Senator Inhofe.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to echo your remarks about Secretary Panetta and the work that he has done. I do not see him here today, but I do recall when he was first nominated, I was probably one of the first phone calls to him, and I have enjoyed working with him.

With Senator McCain, the same way. I will certainly continue to depend on his counsel, and you and I have worked very well together in the past.

Mr. Chairman, before I continue the opening statement, I would like to raise a concern about the sufficiency of materials provided to this committee by our nominee. Senator Hagel was requested to provide the speeches he has delivered over the last 5 years, yet his initial submission was for only four speeches. Even though, as was noticed by Senator Cruz that he had honoraria for 12 speeches, but submitted four speeches. Well, we received some more, but only late last night. And so I think it would have been much helpful—a lot more helpful if we had received them before that, and I am hoping that we will be able to get that information before we have to cast votes on this nominee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The President's nomination of Senator Hagel to serve as the next Secretary of Defense comes at a critical juncture in our military and national security interests. Senator Hagel is a good man who has a record of service. I first learned of that when he was first elected, and I have been a great admirer of the time that he spent in Vietnam with the sacrifices that he made.

And while his service is commendable, the fate of his nomination should be decided by the totality of his record. It is the votes that he has cast, the statements that he has made over the many years of his career that will inform us as to his judgment, his view of America's role in the world, and his view of the military required to support that role.

As I told Senator Hagel in my office some time ago—over two weeks ago, I guess it was—that after a long and careful review of his record, and there are things that he has said and there are things that I have personally experienced with him, that we are too philosophically opposed on the pressing issues facing our country and for me to support his nomination. And, therefore, I told him I would not be supporting his nomination.

His record demonstrates what I view as a lack of steadfast opposition to policies that diminish U.S. power and influence throughout the world as well as a recent trend of policy reversals that seem based on political expediency rather than on core beliefs. On many of the security challenges facing the U.S. interests around the world, Senator Hagel's record is deeply troubling and out of the mainstream. Too often it seems he is willing to subscribe to a worldwide view that is predicated on appeasing our adversaries while shunning our friends. I remember quoting Hiram Mann, who said, "No man survives when freedom fails. The best men rot in filthy jails. And those who cry 'appease, appease' are hanged by those they tried to please."

And I am mentioning a few of these things because they are going to come out in this hearing. In 2000, an overwhelming majority of senators sent a letter to President Clinton reaffirming our

solidarity with Israel. I was one of them who carried that letter around. I remember it well. And Senator Hagel was one of just four who refused to sign that letter, and I am sure he will want to comment about that.

In 2001, he was one of just two Senators who voted against a bill extending harsh sanctions against Iran. A year later, he urged the Bush administration to support Iran's membership in the World Trade Organization. Senator Hagel voted against a resolution designating Iran's revolutionary guard corp, a group responsible for killing American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, as a terrorist organization. And on multiple occasions, he has advocated for direct negotiations with Iran, a regime that continues to repress its people, doggedly pursue a nuclear weapon capability, and employ terrorist proxies, including Hamas, Hezbollah, who threaten the security of Israel and the region.

Senator Hagel has also been an outspoken supporter of the nuclear disarmament and the Global Zero movement. We are very sensitive to that, and we know that the President has said many times he wants a nuclear free world, and I know that Senator Hagel is right there with him. But at a time when North Korea's belligerent actions threaten our allies with their nuclear capabilities and security of our own Nation and that of our allies, why would we want to unilaterally disarm ourselves of nuclear capability?

Of late, however, Senator Hagel has expressed views in meetings with Senate colleagues, I have been informed, and through the press that appear glaringly at odds with many of his long-held positions, particularly on issues dealing with Israel, Iran, and our nuclear arsenal. This apparent willingness to walk back or alter his position, possibly for the sake of political expediency on such important issues, is deeply troubling and sends a concerning message to our allies and adversaries alike.

Though I respect Senator Hagel, his record to date demonstrates that he would be a staunch advocate for the continuation of the misguided policies of the President's first term. Retreating from America's unique global leadership role and shrinking the military will not make America safer. On the contrary, it will embolden our enemies, endanger our allies, and provide opportunity for nations that do not share our interests to fill a global leadership vacuum we leave behind.

It is for these reasons that I believe that he is the wrong person to lead the Pentagon at this perilous and consequential time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

We have two former chairmen of this committee with us to introduce Senator Hagel. No senator has had two dearer friends or better mentors than I have had with Senators Nunn and Warner. And I just want to welcome them back to this committee. I do not have to tell them that they are among dear, dear friends, those of us who have known them and who work with them, have worked with them. So it is a real, real treat actually to welcome you back to the committee.

And I think I will call on you, Senator Nunn, first. I think we will call on you alphabetically. I do not have any better way to do it. So, Sam—okay. Sam, welcome back.

**STATEMENT OF HON. SAM NUNN, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE
STATE OF GEORGIA, RETIRED**

Senator NUNN. First, for the record, seniority and age are two different things.

Chairman Levin, Ranking Member Inhofe, members of the Armed Services Committee, I am honored to join John Warner in presenting our friend, Chuck Hagel, to the committee and recommending that Chuck be confirmed as our Nation's 24th Secretary of Defense.

I think it is worth noting that 68 years ago this month, John Warner enlisted in the U.S. Navy to fight in World War II. That was the start of his great career of public service, and, John, I am very proud to be here by your side.

Mr. Chairman, I spent a lot of my Senate career sitting in your seat waiting on a quorum. Congratulations on not having to do that today. [Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN. I do not know how long it will last, but thanks for pointing it out.

Senator NUNN. Mr. Chairman, I think it should be noted that you and Senator McCain have effectively guided this committee in its important role as a compelling and absolutely essential voice for a strong and effective defense. Together you have managed to pass authorization bills, even during contentious times. And I thank you both for your dedicated service to our Nation. I am confident, Mr. Chairman and Senator Inhofe, that you will continue this tradition, and that Senator McCain will still be a very, very valuable member and voice on this committee.

I believe that our Nation is fortunate to have a nominee for Secretary of Defense with the character, the experience, the courage, and the leadership that Chuck Hagel would bring to this position. First, Chuck is acutely aware that even in an age of rapid technological advances, our military capability and effectiveness depend on the quality and the morale of the people who serve our Nation in uniform, as well as the families that support them.

Chuck received two Purple Hearts in Vietnam, and when he returned home, he continued to fight for veterans and for active duty military personnel. He knows that our people are our strongest assets. Second, Chuck's experience in Vietnam shaped his life and his perspective. War for Chuck Hagel is not an attraction. I am confident that if confirmed he will ask the hard and the smart questions before sending troops into battle.

Chuck Hagel knows that the United States has vital interests that are worth fighting for and dying for. He also knows that war should be a last resort and that our Nation must effectively use all of our tools, not limited only to our military, to protect our important and to protect our vital interests.

Certainly, Mr. Chairman, there is a tension in these values, but it is a tension that we should welcome in the thought process and in the advice that our Secretary of Defense gives to our Commander in Chief and to this Congress.

From our service together on the Defense Policy Board in recent years, I know that Chuck Hagel has a clear world view, and that it aligns with the mainstream of U.S. foreign and defense policy, and also with President Obama. Chuck Hagel believes that we must build and preserve American strength as a force for good in the world. He recognizes that protecting our interests requires strong allies and friends, as well as strong American leadership.

Third, Chuck has the depth of experience and the leadership skills required to handle this tough job. There is certainly no shortage of security challenges around the world, as this committee knows, and as you have enumerated this morning, Mr. Chairman. A very large and impressive group of former Cabinet officials and public servants from both sides of the aisle have said that they trust Chuck Hagel with this important responsibility. And I strongly agree.

Fourth, on the fiscal side, I am confident that Chuck will be a powerful advocate for a common sense approach, both within the administration and here on Capitol Hill regarding fiscal challenges to the defense budget. He understands that our defense capabilities are being threatened on two budget fronts: first, sequestration with its damaging across-the-board, up front budget cuts, and, second, rapidly rising costs within the Department's budget, including, but not limited to, health care, personnel, and retirement costs.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I believe that Chuck will work effectively with this committee and Congress in meeting these budget challenges while protecting our people, protecting our capabilities, and also while ensuring that the United States has the strongest military in the world.

Chuck Hagel was a soldier and a senator, but he has been also a highly successful executive in both the public and private sectors. He built a successful company from the ground up. He is a man who knows how to prioritize, and he knows how to make tough decisions. He will listen to and carefully consider the views of our military and civilian leaders, and guide them as necessary.

Fifth, I believe that Chuck Hagel will be a balanced and responsible voice on nuclear weapons policy. President Reagan said it often and said it well, a nuclear war cannot be won, and it must not be fought.

Mr. Chairman, as this committee knows, the risk of a global nuclear war have thankfully, substantially declined since the breakup of the Soviet Union. But with nine nations possessing nuclear weapons, with nuclear weapons usable material and knowledge spread across the globe, and with terrorists ready to use a nuclear weapon if they manage to buy, steal, or make one, we face enormous risk that a nuclear weapon will be used. If proliferation continues in countries like Iran and North Korea, and if we do not secure nuclear materials and weapons globally, the odds of use will go up even more.

Six years ago George Schultz, Bill Perry, Henry Kissinger, and I made the argument that we reduce reliance on nuclear weapons as a vital contribution to preserve—to preventing that proliferation, keeping them out of dangerous hands, and ultimately ending them as a threat to the world. Two-third of living former Secretaries of State, and Defense, and national security advisors have agreed

with the vision and the steps that we outlined, including substantial work on verification and enforcement.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that all members of the committee and the Senate will read the recent statement by four credible and very experienced Americans—Ambassador Tom Pickering, Ambassador Richard Burt, General James Cartwright, and General John Sheehan—about their work with Chuck Hagel on nuclear weapons. They made it abundantly clear that they oppose unilateral moves. They support bilateral negotiations. And they support verifiable U.S.-Russian arms reductions to be followed by multilateral negotiations, bringing other nuclear weapons countries into a serious and verifiable process of reductions.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, there are many essential characteristics and values that a Secretary of Defense should possess in our dangerous and challenging world. Let me name just two or three that I think are very important.

First, someone who is well-informed, has an open mind, engages in critical thinking, who is capable of and who seeks out independent thought. Second, someone who sets aside fixed ideologies and biases to honestly evaluate all options, and then provides his or her candid judgment to the President and to the Congress. Third, someone who pays attention to people with the best ideas, regardless of their party affiliation. No one is perfect. We all know that. But Chuck Hagel comes as close as anyone I know to having all of these qualities.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Inhofe, and members of the committee, I served for 24 years on this important committee, and I recognize that much has changed since I retired 16 years ago. I continue to believe, however, that every major problem we face today requires the best input from both political parties if we are to arrive at a solution. I believe that Chuck Hagel will seek that input. I urge his support by this committee, and I urge the

confirmation of his nomination by the U.S. Senate.

I thank the chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Nunn.
Senator Warner.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN WARNER, U.S. SENATOR FROM
THE STATE OF VIRGINIA, RETIRED**

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a moving experience for me to reenter this room. I served on this committee for 30 years. And in that period of time, Senator Nunn was the chairman, and I was the ranking. But I want to say to you and Jim Inhofe—Jim and I have been good friends and we worked together not only on this committee, but other committees. And you will be a splendid ranking member. You follow in the steps of my dear and valued friend of so many years, John McCain.

And the leadership of this committee throughout my 30 years in the Senate has been drawn from the ranks of the strongest and the best of its membership. And we have it today, and I have every reason we will have it tomorrow.

And I would like to say a word to the new members of this committee. As I look back over a very fortunate record of public service for many years, no chapter of my career was more important than

service on this committee. You will carry with you for the rest of your life the recollections of the work that you have done for one of America's most valued assets, the men and the women and their families of the armed services of the United States.

I have written out a nice long statement, and then last night late I got Sam Nunn's statement and Chuck Hagel's statement. And I said that I felt that another statement just would not do. I would rather say just a few words from the heart about the importance of what we have by way of decision before all of us today.

I thank Senator Nunn for that reference of 68 years ago in the Navy. I did no more than every other kid on my block. We all went. But I would like to remind you that a half century ago, you served in the Coast Guard. So, Grandpa, here is another grandpa. [Laughter.]

Good friends, we thank Chuck Hagel, and Mrs. Hagel, and his family because if confirmed, there is an enormous commitment by the family to this position. And having known Lilibet and slightly your children, you have made that decision to offer yourself once again—offer yourself for continued public service. Public service is a privilege. I have always regarded it as such.

And the second reason—I will not give a long statement. This statement by Senator Hagel will soon be shared with you. And I read it through not once, twice, but again this morning. And I say this carefully, I have read the statements that have been placed before the members of this committee for those 30 years. I have never read a more carefully prepared statement, a more forthright statement, and one that has no hedges or deviations. He hits firm on those issues that will make the decision in your minds and that of your colleagues as to whether or not he is qualified to take on this very, very important assignment.

I first entered the Pentagon in 1969 during the War in Vietnam under Melvin Laird. Jim Schlesinger followed, and I have worked with every Secretary of Defense since that period of time, all different, all with their strengths and indeed some of their weaknesses. But set forth in this is a series of commitments to you as a committee, to the members of the full Senate, and to the American public as precisely what his goals are and what he will do, how he will serve the President, how he will give the President his best advice. And I know Chuck to give it very strongly.

So I'm going to talk a little bit about Chuck Hagel, the man that I served with for 12 years. My distinguished colleague and long-time friend, Sam, had gone when Chuck arrived at the Senate. The first year he was here, we had Daniel—defense authorization bill on the floor. And in those days, as it is today, that bill goes on that floor, that bill stays on that floor, sometimes a couple of days, sometimes a week, sometimes broken up, but we get it through. And when it's done, we go immediately back to our committee spaces and begin to write that bill and get it to the printer so that we can go to conference. How many times have we done that together, Senator Nunn, Senator Levin, Senator McCain, Senator Inhofe, many times.

Well, the first year he was here, he watched that process, and when I had taken the staff back to the committee room, surprisingly he showed up. And I didn't know him that well, although I

had studied his biography and I wanted to get to know to know him because of my deep and abiding interest in the Vietnam period, having served for five years in that period as under secretary of the Navy.

And he strolled into the room and I introduced him to the people. And he said to the staff, you are one of the most impressive group of young people I've ever seen. I learned a lot. And he shared some of his stories as a simple, but elegant, soldier that he was. That is the way he started, and thereafter he voted for every single final passage of the authorization bill, every single final passage of the appropriation bill.

He was home and learned in that generation of Vietnam, and I am so proud to have the affiliation of having been, yes, in comparative safety at the Pentagon. But I did go to the field of battle and see these young men and some women who engaged in that struggle. But Chuck Hagel brings with him the experience of having come home, come home to an America that was quite different than what I experienced when my generation came home from World War II. We were welcomed with open arms. America at that time in Vietnam, and how well John McCain can remember this, was very divided. And when you wore your uniform back home, it did not receive the same respect that it deserved for the sacrifices that you and your colleagues had committed. Chuck will never forget that. I will never forget it. John will never forget it.

Today we welcome home and we do it with the fullest heart the young men and women, but there have been times in history, and that was one. And so that honed him to be prepared to take on his responsibilities as he addresses the declining budget situation, which is going to be a challenge. And I am absolutely certain that he will stand up and fight as hard as two of your predecessors—Leon Panetta you mentioned today, and Robert Gates. They gave their President loyalty, but they gave him their best advice and tough, and fought for their troops, and drilled down that they have got to maintain whatever budget. And sequester is not the route. But whatever budget, maintain morale and combat readiness. And also, ladies and gentlemen, that pillar of strength of our military system, the all-volunteer force.

We had drafts in Vietnam. We saw the effect of that. And we decided as a Nation to take a gamble, to let every person who wished to wear the uniform, giving that opportunity and to volunteer. No one is forced in there. That has got to be maintained. This man has the experience and gravitas and the strength to protect the all-volunteer force.

I also was deeply impressed by the Senate and the manner in which it confirmed John Kerry. John Kerry was also in that generation, and he served his trials and tribulations, and came home and faced that public in the same way Chuck did. The Senate confirmed him with a very, very strong vote. And they sent him away ready to take on the enormity of his responsibility.

Now I mention that because in my experience, I have seen a good deal of camaraderie, but a good deal of competition between the Secretaries of Defense and the Secretaries of State. It is just sort of built in there. And sometimes a lot of sand gets in that gear box.

But it is important to the United States that they, having the major jurisdiction over most of the policy issues, work as a team.

John Kerry and Chuck Hagel are a band of brothers out of Vietnam with that special bond, and I am sure that you will utilize that and remember it, and make those two departments perform their functions to best serve the President and to best serve the country.

So I have pretty well said everything I should say. I want to be brief because it is important that this committee pursue its work. But again, Bob Gates, Leon Panetta set the bar for this century of those who take on this job. And you mentioned your long friend, Chip, and how you know both. I would keep close contact. They have the experience to deal with this President of the United States, and you are the President's choice.

Folks, there is an old saying in the combat Army infantry and Marine Corps. "Certain men are asked to take the point," which means to get out and lead in the face of the enemy. Chuck Hagel did that as a sergeant in Vietnam. If confirmed, Chuck Hagel will do it again, this time not before a platoon, but before every man and woman and their families in the armed services. You will lead them. And they will know in their hearts we have one of our own.

You are on your own, and good luck.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you. [Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN. Well, we thank you both, Senator Warner, Senator Nunn, for your extraordinarily powerful introductions. I just wish every member of the Senate and every American could have heard, and I hope will hear and read about what you said here today about Chuck Hagel. And I also noticed there is another former senator, who was a member of that band of brothers, who is with us today. I just noticed in the audience Max Cleland is here, and I want to welcome you, Max, too, as an old, old friend of this committee, and the Senate, and of the Nation.

So let me now call on Senator Hagel. And, Senator Warner, Senator Nunn, again, thank you for your introductions, and you are free to get back to your lives or to stay as you wish.

Senator Hagel.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES T. HAGEL, TO BE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, Chairman Levin, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of the committee. I am honored to come before you today as the President nominee to be Secretary of Defense.

First, as you suggested, Mr. Chairman, let me introduce my family—my wife, Lilibet. Our son Ziller, and our daughter, Allyn, are not with us today. Our son, Ziller, claims he's taking a test. We will confirm that later. But both are a son and daughter that Lilibet and I are very proud of. And I think like any proud father and any proud mother, you all know how I feel about that as you have the same feelings about your children. It is the same way Lilibet and I feel about ours.

I also want to introduce my brother, Tom, who served with me in Vietnam, my brother, Mike, who is our number three brother, and I might add, who actually possesses any talent our family has.

He has in the Pentagon 10 paintings as chairman of the Air Force Artist Guild over the years, and they are hanging in different locations in the Pentagon. So we have one brother of some acclaim, and one of us did make it, my brother, Mike. Mike's son is sitting behind him, Josh. He is one of three children that Mike has.

We have here also cousins, many friends, people I owe money to. [Laughter.]

And who knows who else since I have received some publicity over the weeks.

I want to also thank my friends, Sam Nunn and John Warner. I want to thank them for their support, their encouragement, and their friendship over many years. And as each of you who had the privilege of serving with those senators, I, too, add my thanks for their tremendous service to our country. These two distinguished Americans represent what is best about American public service and responsible bipartisanship. They have embodied both in their careers, long distinguished careers, and are models for each of us.

And of course to my family, and friends, and my fellow veterans who are here, as has been noted, Max Cleland, Jan Scruggs, good friends, veterans from all wars, who are here today who I worked with for many, many years. I am grateful to them. Not just to those friends, and supporters, and fellow veterans who are here, but those who are not, thank you.

A life is only as good as the family and the friends you have and the people you surround yourself with. I also want to thank my friend, Leon Panetta, for his tremendous service to our country over so many years. If I am given the privilege of succeeding him, it will be a high honor.

President Obama for his confidence and trust in me, I thank him. I am humbled by the opportunity and the possibility he has given me to serve our country once again. And I fully recognize the immense responsibilities of the Secretary of Defense. I assured the President that if I am

confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will always do my best. I will always do my best for our Nation and for the men and women and their families, who are called on to make the enormous sacrifices of military service. Their safety, success, and welfare will always be at the forefront of the decisions I make.

I also assured the President that I would always provide him with my most honest and informed advice. I make that same commitment to this Committee and to the Congress. If confirmed, I will reach out to the members of this Committee for advice and collaboration. It will be a partnership because the national security challenges America faces require it.

Our Nation's security is the highest priority of our leaders and our government. We cannot allow the work of confronting the great threats we face today to be held hostage to partisanship on either side of the aisle, or by differences between the bodies represented in Articles I and II of our Constitution. The stakes are too high. Men and women of all political philosophies, and parties, and ideas die and fight for our country. As this committee knows so well, protecting our national security or committing our Nation to war can never become political litmus tests.

I know Secretary Panetta has put a strong emphasis on reaching out to Congress. I, like Leon, come from Congress, and respect and understand this institution's indispensable role in setting policy and helping govern our country.

We are all products of the forces that shape us. For me, there has been nothing more important in my life, or a more defining influence on my life, than my family. Whether it was helping my mother raise four boys after my father, a World War II veteran, died suddenly at age 39 on Christmas Day, or serving side by side with my brother Tom in Vietnam, or the wonderful miracle of my wife Lilibet and me being blessed with two beautiful children. That is who I am.

We each bring to our responsibilities frames of reference. These frames of reference are formed by our life's experiences. They help instruct our judgments. We build out from those personal foundations by continually informing ourselves, listening, and learning.

Like each of you, I have a record, a record that I am proud of. I am proud of my record not because of any accomplishments I may have achieved, or certainly because of an absence of mistakes, but rather because I have tried to build that record by living my life and fulfilling my responsibilities as honestly as I knew how and with hard work. Underpinning everything I have done in my life was the belief that we must always be striving to make our Nation a better and more secure place for all of our people.

During the 12 years I had the privilege of serving the people of Nebraska in the United States Senate, I cast over 3,000 votes and hundreds of committee votes. I have also given hundreds of interviews and speeches and written a book. So, as you all know, I am on the record. I am on the record on many issues.

But no one individual vote, no one individual quote, no one individual statement defines me, my beliefs, or my record. My overall world view has never changed: that America has and must maintain the strongest military in the world, that we must lead the international community to confront threats and challenges together, and take advantage of opportunities together; that we must use all our tools of American power to protect our citizens and our interests. I believe, and I always have believed, that America must engage in the world, not retreat from the world, but engage from the world. My record is consistent on these points.

It is clear that we are living at a defining time. Our Nation is emerging from over a decade of war. We have brought our men and women in uniform home from Iraq, and have started to bring them home from Afghanistan.

That does not mean that the threats we face and will continue to face are any less dangerous or complicated. In fact, it is quite the opposite. Recent events in Mali and Algeria remind us clearly of this reality. Twenty first century complexities, technologies, economies, threats are bringing the 7 billion global citizens closer together than ever before. And as our planet adds another 2 billion people over the next 25 years, the dangers, complications, and human demands will not be lessened, but rather heightened.

Despite these challenges, I believe we also have historic opportunities to help build a safer, more prosperous, more secure, more hopeful and just world than maybe any time in history of man, for

all people. Yes, the curse of intolerance, hatred, and danger exists around the world, and we must continue to be clear-eyed about this danger, and we will be. We will not hesitate to use the full force of the United States military in defense of our security. But we must also be smart, and, more importantly, wise, wise in how we employ all of our Nation's great power.

America's continued leadership and strength at home and abroad will be critically important for our country and the world. While we will not hesitate to act unilaterally when necessary, it is essential that we work closely with our allies and partners to enhance America's influence and security, as well as global security. If confirmed, I will continue to build on the efforts of this administration and of former Secretary Gates, Secretary Panetta, and Secretary Clinton to strengthen our alliances and partnerships around the world. I will also look forward to working with my former Senate colleague—your colleague—and our friend, John Kerry, in this pursuit.

As I told the President, I am committed to his positions on all issues of national security, specifically decisions that the Department of Defense is in the process of implementing now. This includes the Defense Strategic Guidance the President outlined in January 2012. Allow me to very briefly address a few of those specific issues now.

First, we have a plan to place—a plan in place to transition out of Afghanistan, continue bringing our troops home, and end the war, which has been the longest war, as we all know, in America's history. As you also know, discussions are ongoing about what the U.S. presence in Afghanistan will look like after 2014. The President has made clear, and I agree, that there should be only two functions for U.S. troops that remain in Afghanistan after 2014: counterterrorism, particularly to target Al-Qaeda and its affiliates, and training and advising Afghan forces. It is time we forge a new partnership with Afghanistan, with its government and, most importantly, with its people.

Second, as Secretary of Defense I will ensure we stay vigilant and keep up the pressure on terrorist organizations as they try to expand their affiliates around the world, in places like Yemen, Somalia, and North Africa. At the Pentagon, that means continuing to invest in and build the tools to assist in that fight, such as special operations forces and new intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance technologies. And it will mean working hand-in-hand with our partners here at home across the national security and intelligence communities to confront these and other threats, especially the emerging threat—the very dangerous and real threat of cyber warfare.

Third, as I have made clear, I am fully committed to the President's goal of preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and I have been on record on that issue. And as I have said in the past many times, all options must be on the table to achieve that goal.

My policy has always been the same as the President's, one of prevention, not of containment. And the President has made clear that is the policy of our government. As Secretary of Defense, I will make sure the Department is prepared for any contingency. That

is my job. That is my responsibility. I will ensure our friend and ally Israel maintains its qualitative military edge in the region, and will continue to support systems like Iron Dome, which is today saving Israeli lives from terrorist rocket attacks. That support I have always made clear and been on the record for.

Fourth, while we pursue the reductions in our deployed stockpiles and launchers consistent with the New START Treaty, I am committed to maintaining a modern, strong, safe, ready, and effective nuclear arsenal. America's nuclear deterrent over the last 35 years has played a central role in ensuring global security and the avoidance of World War III. I have been committed to that. My record is clear on that. I am committed to modernizing our nuclear arsenal.

As we emerge from this decade of war, we must also broaden our Nation's focus overseas as we look at future threats and challenges. As this committee knows, that is why DOD is rebalancing its resources towards the Asia-Pacific region. We are in the process of modernizing our defense posture across the entire region to defend and deepen our partnerships with traditional allies, especially Japan, South Korea, and Australia, to continue to deter and defend against provocations from states like North Korea, as well as non-state actors, and to expand our networks of security cooperation throughout the region to combat terrorism, counter proliferation, provide disaster relief, fight piracy, and ensure maritime security.

I will continue this rebalancing even as we continue to work closely—closely—with our long-time allies of NATO and our friends, and with allies, and partners, and friends in other regions of the world. At the same time, we will continue to focus on challenges in the Middle East and North Africa where we have clear national interests. Rather, it is a recognition that the United States has been and always will be a Pacific power, and the Asian-Pacific area is increasingly vital to America's security and economic interests. That is why we must become even more engaged in the region over the coming years.

Doing all of this and much more will require smart and strategic budget decisions. I have made it clear I share Leon Panetta's and our Service Chiefs' serious concerns about the impact sequestration would have on our armed forces. And as someone who has run businesses, I know that the uncertainty and turbulence of the current budget climate makes it much more difficult to manage the Pentagon's resources and our national security. If confirmed, I am committed to effectively and efficiently using every single taxpayer's dollar the right way, to maintaining the strongest military in the world, and to working with Congress to ensure the Department has the resources it needs, and that the disposition of those resources is accountable.

Even as we deal with difficult budget decisions, I will never break America's commitment to our troops, our veterans, and our military families. We will continue to invest in the well-being of our all-volunteer force. And, working with the VA and other institutions, we will make sure our troops and their families get the health care, job opportunities, and education they have earned and deserve, just as I did when I co-authored the Post-9/11 GI Bill with Senators Jim Webb, Frank Lautenberg, and John Warner. This in-

cludes focusing on the mental health of our fighting force, because no one who volunteers to fight and die for this country should ever feel like that they have nowhere to turn. That is unacceptable in this country.

In my 12 years in the Senate, my one guiding principle on every security decision I made and every vote I cast was always this—simply this: is our policy worthy of our troops and their families and the sacrifices that we ask them to make? That same question will guide me if I am confirmed as Secretary of Defense.

Our men and women in uniform and their families must never doubt that their leaders' first priority is them. I believe my record of leadership on veterans issues over the years, going back to my service in the Veterans Administration under President Reagan, demonstrates my rock-solid commitment to our veterans and their families.

We must always take care of our people. That is why I will work to ensure that everyone who volunteers to fight for this country has the same rights and same opportunities. As I have discussed with many of you in our meetings, I am fully committed to implementing the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and doing everything possible under current law to provide equal benefits to the families of all—all—our servicemembers and their families.

I will work with the service chiefs as we officially open combat positions to women, a decision I strongly support. And I will continue the important work that Leon Panetta has done to combat sexual assault—sexual assault in the military. Maintaining the health and well-being of those who serve is critical to maintaining a strong and capable military, because an institution's people must always come first.

As we look ahead to the coming years, we have an extraordinary opportunity now at this moment to define what is next for America's military and our country. It is incumbent upon all of us to make decisions that will ensure our Nation is prepared to confront any threat we may face in the future, protect our citizens, and remain the greatest force for good in the world.

If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, it will be my great honor, working with the President, this committee, the Congress, and our military, to ensure our policies are worthy of the service and sacrifice of America's men and women.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Senator Hagel follows.]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Hagel. And here is what the plan is now for the hearing.

We will have a first round of eight minutes each. We have a vote that is scheduled for 12:15. We are going to work through that vote, and we are also going to work through lunch, which means that we would ask you to vote some time during that 12:15 vote and come back for those of you who have not had your turn yet.

There are five votes at 2:15. I hope that we can complete our first round by 2:00 or 2:15 so that we could then have a late lunch at 2:15 during those five votes. We would then come back perhaps an hour later. We would ask those who have not had a turn, if that is the case, or during our second round, that to begin our second round that you on the final vote, vote early and then come back

so we can start as quickly as possible around 3:15 or 3:30, I would assume, to either complete the first round if it has not been completed, or to begin our second round.

Because of the time crunch, we have standard questions which we ask of all nominees. I am going to ask those at a later time during this hearing, but we will ask them. And again, I think that we hope to finish today. We will leave the record open for questions. But our goal would be to finish today no matter how long it takes today, then to have the record open for questions.

So let us now begin our first round of 8 minutes.

Senator Hagel, you have made reference to the looming sequester. We received a letter signed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff relative to sequester which says that we are on the brink of creating a hollow force due to an unprecedented convergence of budget conditions and legislation. They have talked about the readiness crisis which would result: grounding aircraft, returning ships to port, stop driving combat vehicles, and training, and so forth.

Can you—and you have spoken very briefly about your agreeing in general with the impact. Would you expand on the impact of that sequester from your perspective?

Senator HAGEL. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think the Chiefs have laid it out rather directly, plainly, as Secretary Panetta has. As recently as two or three days ago, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter, in an interview went into some detail.

The fact is, the bottom line if sequester would occur, it is not just a reduction in a significant amount of dollars that would occur, but it would be a convergence of taking the flexibility, the projection, the management, the future, away from those who are responsible for managing our budget. Furloughs—furloughing civilian employees would have to occur. You listed an inventory of consequences of cutting back on flying time, of training, of steaming. These are real consequences that would occur.

I know the Pentagon, the Chiefs, those who have responsibility for managing every department of this three million operation, security institution, are preparing for the worst. But make no mistake, this is not an exaggeration. And when managers are not given the flexibility, and the opportunity, and the tools to manage with complete uncertainty as to what is ahead, that is disaster.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. On the question of Iran and the use of force, the President has said that Iran's leaders should understand that President Obama does not have a policy of containment. He has a policy to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, that he has made clear that he will not hesitate, in his words, to use force when it is necessary to defend the United States and its interests. Do you agree with President Obama's position that, quote, "all options should be on the table," closed quote, to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon?

Senator HAGEL. I do. I have, and I strongly agree with him.

Chairman LEVIN. On Iranian sanctions, President Obama has said that the sanctions which have been put in place are crippling the economy of Iran. I happen to agree. Their currency has dropped 80 percent. Oil production has plunged. Economy is in a shambles. Do you share the President's views on the importance and effectiveness of sanctions against Iran? And if so, how do you reconcile your

position with some of your past statements that suggest that the national security of the United States is not served by isolating Iran?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first, I do agree with—and always have agreed with multilateral sanctions because I think they have an effect. And I think this President in particular has probably done more than any president to effectively employ those kinds of international sanctions starting with a Security Council UN agreement and UN mandates. So I agree with what the President is doing. And I have said publicly incidentally long before the President ever asked me to consider this job, that additional sanctions might be required.

As to my record on votes in the Senate regarding unilateral sanctions, I have differed on some of those. I have voted for some as well. It was always on a case-by-case basis. When I voted against some of those unilateral sanctions on Iran, it was a different time. For example, I believe one was in 2001, 2001. We were at a different place with Iran during that time. Matter of fact, I recall the Bush administration did not want a renewal of the 5-year renewal of ILSA during that time because they weren't sure of the effectiveness of sanctions.

That was not the only reason I voted against it. It was because I thought that there might be other ways to employ our vast ability to harness power and allies. It was never a question of did I disagree with the objective. The objective was, I think, very clear to both of us.

I recall, for example, in 2008, Secretary of State Rice sending a letter to the chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator Baucus, requesting that a sanctions resolution unilateral in the Finance Committee not come out of the Finance Committee because the Bush administration at the time was working with the Russians specifically, but with the Security Council of the United Nations to try to get international sanctions, which I think that effort, by the way, in 2008, led to the 2010 international sanctions.

Chairman LEVIN. Can you give us your view on the size of the U.S. force which might be necessary or would be necessary after 2014, the so-called residual force, if you have an opinion on the size. You indicated in your opening statement two missions for that residual force.

Can you also give us your opinion about the size of the Afghanistan national security force after 2014, and whether you agree with me, and Senator Graham on this committee, and others that we ought to reconsider the position that the Afghanistan national security force should be reduced by a third starting in 2014 to about 230,000 from what its current goal is, which is about 350,000.

Senator HAGEL. As you all know, General Allen has presented his options to the President for the President's consideration. As far as I know, as of this morning, the President had not made a decision on what a residual force, numbers wise, would look like. I have not been included in those discussions, so I do not know, other than knowing that he has got a range of options as you do.

But I would say that from what the President has told me, what Secretary Panetta has told me, that that decision will be made to assure resourcing the mission and the capability of that mission.

As to what kind of a force structure should eventually be in place by the Afghans, I do not know enough about the specifics to give you a good answer, other than to say that I think that has to be a decision that is made certainly with the President of Afghanistan, what we can do to continue to support, and train, and protect our interests within the scope of our ability to do that. Obviously the immunity for our troops is an issue, which was an issue in Iraq. All those considerations will be important and will be made. If I am confirmed and in a position to give the President on that, I will with consultation of our commanders on the ground and our Chiefs giving the best options that we can provide.

Chairman LEVIN. Will you review that question of the size of the Afghanistan force with an open mind if you are confirmed?

Senator HAGEL. I will because I think we have to.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Hagel, my first question is not to be responded as to explaining the position, but I want to state the position or restate the position on five things that I mentioned in my opening statement, merely to ask you if these are accurate reflections of things that happened in the past.

The first one is in 2007 you voted against the designating of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corp as a terrorist organization. The second thing in 2006, you were one of 12 senators who refused to petition the EU to identify Hezbollah as a terrorist group. Third, in November of '03, you failed to vote on a Syrian—on a Syria accountability act authorizing sanctions on Syria for its support of terrorism and occupation of Lebanon. Four, in 2001, you were one of only two senators that year to vote against renewal of the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. And lastly, in 2001, you were one of four senators who refused to sign the letter supporting Israel. Are those accurate?

Senator HAGEL. Well, let's start with the—

Senator INHOFE. Well, no, I just want to know if the statements—these are votes that took place. Do you agree that those votes took place?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I want to ask the letter that you just noted in your fifth point, what was the date in the letter?

Senator INHOFE. The date?

Senator HAGEL. You said I refused to sign a letter.

Senator INHOFE. It was October 2001.

Senator HAGEL. A letter to—

Senator INHOFE. Okay, skip that one. Are the other ones true? [Laughter.]

Senator HAGEL. Well, it is very important, as you know, Senator, that we—

Senator INHOFE. Well, it is very important because I was holding the letter at the time that we were gathering signatures.

Senator HAGEL. I see. On the 2008 question regarding designating the Revolutionary Guard as a terrorist organization, I did vote against it.

Senator INHOFE. I am sorry, and I do not want to be rude. You and I are very good friends, but I know that my time is going to

expire. Others are going to ask you why you did this. I was asking for the accuracy, and you do not want to answer that, that is fine.

Senator HAGEL. No, I just said I did vote against it, and I was going to explain why I voted against it.

Senator INHOFE. I know, and they will be asking you for your explanation. I want to get to three other things, and that is why it is critical that we kind of keep moving along here.

One of the criticisms I have had of this administration is the lack of priority and funding for the military. While they have increased the deficit by \$5.3 trillion in four years, the only major part of the budget has not decreased has been the military.

Now, that is something that is pretty well known. A lot of people do not like that idea. The thing that bothers me just as much is putting the agenda—another agenda under the military budget. For example, you have heard Senator McCain, and me, and others talk about the fact the fact that the Navy paid for \$450,000 gallons of fuel, some \$26 a gallon that you can get on the market for \$3. The Air Force, the same thing, except that it is \$59 a gallon.

And so the question I would have of you is just a commitment that if you are confirmed, will you confine the dollars that we are going to spend in the defense budget for defense purposes, for war fighting purposes?

Senator HAGEL. Well, of course I will because that is the intent of our budget and the Department of Defense.

Senator INHOFE. Good. I appreciate that very much. There was an article the other day in the Washington Post by Jennifer Rubin called “Our Dimwitted State Department.” It was kind of an interesting article. And there are four questions that I am going to ask that you respond for the record. For people who do not know what that is, that means later on in writing.

The questions that I liked that she asked were, did the sale of the F-16s encourage Morsi to crack down on his people? Number two, had we known he would crack, would we still have sent the weaponry? Number three, how will we respond to Morsi’s anti-democratic moves and the rise in violence against Christians in Egypt, or, as will likely be the case, a failure to live up to Egypt’s security obligations regarding Gaza? And, four, have we miscalculated the Muslim Brotherhood? That would be for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator INHOFE. In the area of the Global Zero policy, you and I talked about that in my office. Others have talked about it. We are very much concerned.

When I heard Senator Warner and others talk about what used to be the case, the problem, in terms of nuclear capability, we used to be talking about Russia and the United States. It is not true anymore. Our intelligence has told us since 2007 that Iran will have that nuclear capability and a delivery system by 2015, so it is other countries that are involved in that.

The question I would ask you, in your book you wrote that “We must once again convince the world that America has a clear intention of fulfilling the nuclear disarmament committee—commitments that we have made.” The question—and then a bit more recently you said, “I believe that providing necessary resources for

nuclear modernization of the triads should be a national priority.” Do you stand by your last statement?

Senator HAGEL. My last statement was——

Senator INHOFE. Your last statement is saying that it should—“I believe that providing the necessary resources for nuclear modernization of the triads should be a national priority.”

Senator HAGEL. Absolutely it should be, and I agree with that. And that is what the policy of this administration is.

Senator INHOFE. Well, I am merely bringing out the inconsistency because when you were involved with supporting the Global Zero or whatever the organization was, their declaration is, quote, “We, the undersigned believe that to protect our children, our grandchildren, our civilization from the threat of nuclear catastrophe, we must eliminate all nuclear weapons globally. We, therefore, commit to working for a legally binding verifiable agreement, including all nations, to eliminate nuclear weapons by a date certain.”

Senator HAGEL. The position of Global Zero, my position—some of the individuals—national security leaders, as Senator Nunn talked about, including himself, has never unilateral disarmament ever. Never. We have over the years, which I have supported, the United States has led in reducing—the efforts to reducing nuclear warheads. There was no more significant voice for that than Ronald Reagan when he laid before Secretary General Gorbachev in 1986 a rather bold plan. In fact, I believe, paraphrasing President Reagan, we must eliminate nuclear warheads from the face of the face. I believe he said something to that effect.

Global Zero has been very clear on this. Their effort is in line with every major national leader in the world, including President Obama, to continue to try to make an effort to reduce our nuclear warheads. But in a dangerous world, nuclear arsenals and our containment policy, which I mentioned in my statement, has been critically important. We are not going to unilaterally disarm. Verifiable. It has to be bilateral. It has to be negotiated, as all our treaties have been.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Senator Hagel, but the reason I mentioned the mission statement is that is the group that you belong to. We can talk about that later. You may want to expand on that for the record.

My time has expired, but I have one last question I would like to ask, and that is, given that Iran—“The people”—and I am quoting right now—“from Iran, people of the Middle East, the Muslim region, and North Africa, people of these regions hate America from the bottom of their heart.” It further said, “Israel is a cancerous tumor in the heart of the Islamist world.” It further said, “Iran’s warriors are ready and willing to wipe Israel off the map.”

The question I would like to ask you, and you can answer for the record if you would like, is, why do you think that the Iranian foreign ministry so strongly supports your nomination to be the Secretary of Defense?

Senator HAGEL. I have a difficult enough time with American politics. Senator, I have no idea. But thank you, and I will be glad to respond further for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator REED.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would ask unanimous consent that several letters of support, including one from 13 former Secretaries of Defense, Secretaries of State, and National Security advisors, strongly endorsing Senator Hagel's nomination, be placed in the record.

Chairman LEVIN. It will be placed in the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator REED. Mr. Chairman, I think the President chose wisely. There are very few people in this country with the experience, as a combat infantryman, decorated and wounded, as a business leader, as the second leader of the Veterans Administration, as U.S. Senator, as someone who every day understands that the decisions we make will be carried out by young Americans, actually looked in the face of young Americans, who has seen them suffer and die for this country. And I think that quality is, if not unique, extraordinarily part of the nominee before us. So, again, I think the President made a wise choice.

I think Senator Inhofe's discussions of the zero growth is an opportunity for a quote, and let me quote. "There is one way safely and legitimately to reduce the cost of national security, and that is to reduce the need for it. This is why we are trying to do in negotiations with the Soviet Union. We are not just assessing limits on a further increase in nuclear weapons. We seek instead to reduce the number. We seek the total elimination one day of nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth." President Ronald Reagan in his second inaugural address.

So the notion of Global Zero is not something unique. I would also point out that as signatories to the nuclear disarmament treaty, the Nonproliferation Treaty, Article 11 undertakes to commit at least to a treaty ultimately on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective control.

So this is an aspiration that the United States has embraced for a very long time under presidents of both parties. And I think as Senator Hagel pointed out, this is not unilateral disarmament. This is a long process of making sure we have the nuclear weapons in place to deal with appropriate challenges, some of them very different than the Cold War, but the aspiration is important. And it is has been a bipartisan and constant for decades. Is that a rough summary of what you might agree to, Senator?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, it is, Senator. Thank you.

Senator REED. The other issue is that there were several specific points raised with your record, and let me give you the opportunity to respond, if you will, to the questions that Senator Inhofe posed with respect to votes. If you have the list before you or—

Senator HAGEL. The what? I'm sorry?

Senator REED. Senator Inhofe posed several issues about a 2007 vote, a 2006 resolution with Hezbollah, 2003 Syrian sanctions, et cetera. You were prepared to comment. I think it is appropriate

that you have an opportunity to comment. If you want to do so now, I would invite you to do so.

Senator HAGEL. Well, and I would be glad to further comment for the record because I have none of those specific quotes in front of me, and which I will, Senator, listing every vote I took.

I would say, though, included in those votes, which I do recall some of them, were a vote in 1998, a vote in 2000, a vote in 2006, specifically against Iran, sanctioning companies, unilateral sanctions, that in any way assisted in Iran's building their capability of nuclear weapons or rocket or missiles. I voted for those.

I recall signing a letter—a Warner-Levin letter in 2002 to the President of the United States regarding anti-Semitism in Russia. I wrote a letter to President Clinton specifically in 1999 recommending to President Clinton a number of steps that he take with President Yeltsin regarding anti-Semitism in Russia. I remember specifically there were two unanimous consent resolutions in 2006 against Hezbollah, against Hamas, against Syria, and Iran that we had unanimous consent, I supported on the floor of the Senate.

So there is a more complete record, Senator, than just one, or two, or three, or four, and those are some of them that I recall. As I noted in one of the responses back to Senator Inhofe, I did not take any action on any vote, as I suspect every colleague has the same way to approach votes, on this specific issue, on Hezbollah, Hamas, which I am on the record many times designating and saying that Hezbollah and Hamas are terrorist organizations. I am on the record many times in speeches, and on the floor of the Senate, and in the book I wrote in 2008 saying that Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism. That is not new. That is in my record.

But the way I approached every vote I ever took in the Senate was based on what I thought could be most effective, what was—at the time what was the situation at the time, how could we do this smarter and better. I have always believed that the President of the United States is the elected leader of America. He has within his responsibilities, and I believe it is clearly articulated Article 2, to conduct foreign policy. I always thought the best way to deal with foreign leaders was let the President do that directly, for us to communicate with the President.

I do not think there was a letter that I can recall I signed to a President on any of these issues that I agreed with it that I did not sign. So it was never a matter of differing objectives here. It was a matter of how best we could do it.

I mentioned in 2008, the Secretary of State did not want one of those unilateral sanctions to go forward during the Bush administration, wrote a letter, 2001, which is one of the issues that Senator Inhofe brought up. The Bush administration was opposed to a 5-year renewal of ILSA.

Now, I am not saying that is right or wrong, but every one of the decisions I made, every vote I cast, was based on at the time what I thought made the most sense.

Senator REED. Senator, you have clearly stated that you are supportive of the President's efforts to support the state of Israel. And you have indicated specifically the example Iron Dome. I recall a statement recently by Defense Minister Barach that he has seldom

seen or never has seen the same level of military support to the state of Israel that he has seen in the last several years.

And you are, I presume and I hope, fully prepared to carry out that same effort, that same level of support, because of the vital interests that we share with the state of Israel.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I am, and I have a record on that. In my book in 2008, interviews, speeches, I have always said I am a supporter of Israel. In some cases I have said I am a strong supporter of Israel. In some cases I have even written, and I think it is in my book, that we have a special relationship with Israel. We always have had.

So I have never voted against Israel ever in the 12 years I was in the Senate whether it was military authorizations, additional supplemental appropriations. The record is very clear on that.

I might add, as long as we are on this subject, that—and Senator Nelson may have a clearer view of this since he was just in Jerusalem, there have been a couple of recent statements made by the current Israeli ambassador to the United States, the former Israeli ambassador to the United States, now the deputy foreign minister of Israel, that were fairly positive about me.

So I think all the Israeli leaders I have dealt with over the years and met—and I have been to Israel many times. The first time I was—the first two times I was in Israel was when I was the head of the USO. I kept the Haifa USO open. We did not close it. There was a lot of pressure when I took over the World USO to close USOs around the world, and we did. There was a lot of pressure to close the Haifa USO. I am the one that made the decision not to do that.

The former chief of Naval Operations of Israel, Admiral Zev Almad, who has recently been interviewed about me, has strongly supported me and said specifically that I was a strong friend of Israel. The current—now the USO is closed, but the current then director of the USO, a lady by the name of Gila Garrison, who lives in Haifa, said I was a strong supporter and friend of Israel.

So I think my record is pretty clear on my support of Israel, and I would, of course, continue to support the President's policies. And I think he has been as strong a supporter of Israel as maybe any President since 1948 when Harry Truman helped give birth to Israel. This President has been there. As he said, I have Israel's back—\$3.1 billion in assistance, almost \$300 additional million out of the Defense Department for Iron Dome, what we are doing with David Sling Arrow. I am a strong supporter of all those programs and will continue to support them.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. Before I call on Senator McCain, there is a quorum that is now present, and I now ask the committee to consider a list of 952 pending military nominations. They have all been before the committee the required length of time.

Is there a motion to favorably report those nominations?

Unidentified Speaker: I so move.

Chairman LEVIN. Is there a second?

Unidentified Speaker: Second.

Chairman LEVIN. All in favor, say aye?

[A chorus of ayes.]

Chairman LEVIN. Opposed, any?

[No response.]

Chairman LEVIN. The motion carries. Thank you all very much.
Senator MCCAIN.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I am pleased to see an old friend here before the committee, and especially pleased to see Senator Warner and Senator Nunn, two of the great members of this committee, who have contributed so much to our Nation's defense.

Senator Hagel, members of this committee will raise questions reflecting concerns with your policy positions. They are not reasonable people disagreeing. They have fundamental disagreements. Our concerns pertain to the quality of your professional judgment and your world view on critical areas of national security, including security in the Middle East.

With that in mind, let me begin with your opposition to the surge in Iraq. 2006 we lost—Republicans lost the election, and we began the surge, and you wrote a piece in the Washington Post called "Leaving Iraq Honorably." In 2007, you committed—you said it is not in the national interests to deepen its military involvement. In January 2007 in a rather bizarre exchange with Secretary Rice in the Foreign Relations Committee after some nonsense about Syria and crossing the border into Iran and Syria because of the Syria, and a reference to Cambodia in 1970, you said, "When you set in motion the kind of policy the President is talking about here, it's very, very dangerous." Quote, "Matter of fact, I have to say, Madam Secretary, I think the speech given last night by this President represents the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in this country since Vietnam. If it is carried out, I will resist it." And then of course you continued on and on for months afterwards talking about what a disaster the surge would be, even to the point where it was clear the surge was succeeding.

In March 2008, you said, quote, "Hear the term quagmire could apply. Some reject that term, but if that is not a quagmire, then what is?" Even as late as August 29th, 2011, in an interview—2011 in an interview with the Financial Times, you said, "I disagreed with President Obama, his decision to surge in Iraq as I did with President Bush on the surge in Iraq."

Do you stand by those comments, Senator Hagel?

Senator HAGEL. Well, Senator, I stand by them because I made them.

Senator MCCAIN. Were you right? Were you correct in your assessment?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I would defer to the judgment of history to support that out.

Senator MCCAIN. The committee deserves your judgment as to whether you were right or wrong about the surge.

Senator HAGEL. I will explain why I made those comments.

Senator MCCAIN. I want to know if you were right or wrong. That is a direct question. I expect a direct answer.

Senator HAGEL. The surge assisted in the objective. But if we review the record a little bit—

Senator MCCAIN. Will you please answer the question? Were you correct or incorrect when you said that "The surge would be the

most dangerous foreign policy blunder in this country since Vietnam.” Where you correct or incorrect, yes or no?

Senator HAGEL. My reference to the surge being the most dangerous—

Senator MCCAIN. Are you going to answer the question, Senator Hagel? The question is, were you right or wrong? That is a pretty straightforward question. I would like an answer whether you were right or wrong, and then you are free to elaborate.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I am not going to give you a yes or no answer on a lot of things today.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, let the record show that you refuse to answer that question. Now, please go ahead.

Senator HAGEL. Well, if you would like me to explain why—

Senator MCCAIN. Well, I actually would like an answer, yes or no.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I am not going to give you a yes or no. I think it is far more complicated than that, as I have already said. My answer is, I will defer that judgment to history.

As to the comment I made about the most dangerous foreign policy decision Vietnam was about not just the surge, but the overall war of choice going into Iraq. That particular decision that was made on the surge, but more to the point, our war in Iraq, I think was the most fundamental bad, dangerous decision since Vietnam.

Aside from the cost that occurred in this country through blood and treasure, aside what that did to take our focus off of Afghanistan, which, in fact, was the original and real focus of a national threat to this country, Iraq was not. I always tried to frame all the different issues before I made a decision on anything.

Now, just as you said, Senator, we can have differences of opinion, but that is essentially why I took the position I did.

Senator MCCAIN. It is a fundamental difference of opinion, Senator Hagel. And Senator Graham and I, and Senator Lieberman, when there were 59 votes in the U.S. Senate, spent our time trying to prevent that 60th. Thank god for Senator Lieberman. I think history has already made a judgment about the surge, sir, and you are on the wrong side of it. And your refusal to answer whether you were right or wrong about it is going to have an impact on my judgment as to whether to vote for your confirmation or not. I hope you will reconsider the fact the fact that you refuse to answer a fundamental question about an issue that took the lives of thousands of young Americans.

Senator HAGEL. Well, Senator, there was more to it than flooding—

Senator MCCAIN. I am asking about the surge, Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. I know you are, and I am trying to explain my position. The beginning of the surge also factored in what General Allen had put into place in Anbar Province, the Sunni Awakening. We put over, as you know, 100,000 young soldiers—

Senator MCCAIN. Senator Hagel, I am very well of the history of the surge and the Anbar Awakening, and I also am aware that any casual observer will know that the surge was the fundamental factor, led by two great leaders, General Petraeus and Ambassador—

Senator HAGEL. Well, I do not know if that would have been required and cost us over 1,000 American lives and thousands of wounded.

Senator MCCAIN. So you do not know if the surge would have been required. Okay.

Senator Hagel, let me go to Syria now. More than 60,000 people have been killed in Syria. Do you believe that we should be more engaged in Syria?

Senator HAGEL. I know this administration is very engaged in working with its partners.

Senator MCCAIN. So you do not think we should do more?

Senator HAGEL. Well, when you say “do more,” do you mean—

Senator MCCAIN. Do you think we should put—make sure that the Syrians get the weapons they need, and perhaps establish a no fly zone? Do you think we do?

Senator HAGEL. I believe that part of our review is looking at those options.

Senator MCCAIN. It has been 22 months, Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I was not there. I do not know the details. I am not there now.

Senator MCCAIN. I am sure you have read in the newspapers that 60,000 people have been killed, and that it is in danger of spilling over into neighboring countries. My question, I guess, is how many more would have to die before you would support—arming the resistance and establishing a new fly zone—no fly zone?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I do not think anyone questions the terrible tragedy that is occurring there every day. It is a matter of how best do we work our way through this so that we can stop it to begin with, and then what comes next. I think the President—

Senator MCCAIN. Did you disagree with President Obama on his decision for the surge in Afghanistan?

Senator HAGEL. I did not think we should get ourselves into—first of all, I had no regional position as far as no formal position. But I did not think we were—

Senator MCCAIN. But you were reported on August 29th, 2011 saying I disagreed with President Obama and his decision to surge in Afghanistan.

Senator HAGEL. That was my personal opinion, yes.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator Nelson.

Senator NELSON. Since the issue of Iraq has come up here, I just want to state for the record and lay the predicate that this senator was one of many that voted for the authorization to go into Iraq, and as it turns out, the lessons of history, we were given incorrect information as a justification for going into Iraq.

We were told by the Secretary of Defense, by the Secretary of State, by the National Security advisor, and the director of the CIA that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. And so for a lot of the decisions that were made at the outset, they were decisions that were informed with incorrect information. So as the committee is judging Senator Hagel on that decision as well as others,

I want to tell the committee what was this experience of this senator.

Now, what I would like to do with my time here is that since there are a few of this in this room that served in the military during the Vietnam era, and you clearly had that experience in combat, Senator Hagel, I would—and by the way, a lot of people do not know anything about Vietnam, and do not know how difficult it was, as Senator Warner has so eloquently stated in his comments, how the Nation was divided.

But I would like for you, as the committee is getting to know you, to know something about your service in Vietnam, and your combat experience. Were you wounded, Senator Hagel?

Senator HAGEL. Well, Senator Nelson, thank you. If I may, and if I read into your question some latitude in answering, I would respond this way. I think my time is better served to maybe talk about more of the specific things, like Senator McCain ask about me about and some others. And maybe weave some of my experience as to how it formed my judgment, rather than going through a 12-month journal of my time in the jungles when my brother, Tom, and I were both wounded twice together.

1968 when Tom and I served there was the worst year we had. Those who may not recall that year, we sent over 16,000 dead Americans home. Now, that is unfathomable in the world that we live in today, 16,000 dead Americans. I saw that from the bottom.

I think Chairman Levin in an accurate and appropriate quote about what I said in his introductory statements about what formed me, and it directly goes to Senator McCain's question about the surge. Just as I said in my statement, I had one fundamental question that I asked myself on every vote I took, every decision I made. Was the policy worthy of the men and women that we were sending into battle and surely to their deaths? And in many cases, unfortunately tens of thousands of cases that we are living with, these poor families are living with, wounded, the results, the consequences.

I know it is easy here—it is anywhere—if you do not have a connection to some of this to see these things a little differently. It does not mean I am any better, Senator. It does not mean I am any smarter. It does not mean I am any more appreciative of the service of our country. That is not it. I saw it from the bottom. I saw what happens. I saw the consequences and the suffering when we are at war.

So I did question a surge. It was not an aberration to me ever. I always ask the question, is this going to be worth the sacrifice, because there will be sacrifice. In the surge case in Iraq, we lost almost 1,200 dead Americans during that surge and thousands of wounded. Now, was it required? Was it necessary? Senator McCain has his opinion on that shared by others. I am not sure. I am not that certain that it was required. Now it does not mean I am right. It does not mean I did not make wrong votes. But that is what guides me.

And you asked me the question about my time in Vietnam and was I wounded. Well, I was a very insignificant part of this. We were just doing our job, Senator, as every military person knows that. Some of this committee has rather distinguished members

who served, starting with Senator McCain, and the sacrifices he has made to this country.

But it does condition you. I am not shaped, framed, molded, consumed by that experience. Of course not. But it is part of me. I tried to explain that in my opening statement. We are all shaped by those experiences. I hope that experience that I have had is for the better. I hope if I have the privilege of serving as Secretary of Defense it will put someone in charge at the Pentagon—not questioning past Secretaries of Defense; I can only speak for myself—who understands the realities of consequences of war. It does not mean I am better, but that is who I am. I do not walk away from that. I acknowledge that. But it does not consume me, Senator.

I do not see the lens of every world event and whether we should use American power through the lens of Vietnam. That is part of me. It is part of that lens. I think that is for the better. I think we need to be cautious with our power. I think we need to be wise with our power.

We have great power. We have awesome power. No nation in the world is even in our league. We have done so much good with that power. I do not think there is a nation in the history of man who has ever been as judicious and careful with its power as we have. And I want to make sure we continue to do that, as you all do.

We will have differences, Senator, on policies, but all I can do is my best based on my own experiences. And as I also said in my statement, reaching out, listening, learning, never knowing enough, understand circumstances change.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator SESSIONS.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you. Senator Hagel, it is great to have you with us and to have this hearing and an opportunity to discuss important issues. I admire your service to your country, and your combat experience is something we all honor and respect.

I have been for the most part chairman, ranking member, or member of the Strategic Subcommittee of this Senate Armed Services Committee for the time I have been in the Senate. We came together. And so I have had some experience and knowledge about the great debates involving nuclear weapons and national security. I believe the Secretary of Defense should be the core, the rock solid person, for defense of America. I believe he should project an image of solidity and steadfastness that the whole world and American people can depend on.

And I am more than a little troubled by the report that you participated in—Global Zero report that calls for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and clearly suggests that is an achievable goal in a realistic period of time, although certainly not immediately. And your report writers defend you. They have issued an article defending you and the report that was just issued last year. And they protest mightily and say that, quote, “Chuck Hagel and Global Zero’s views on nuclear weapons in the national security interests and squarely in the mainstream.”

Indeed, your defendants insist you are in the main steam because your position is that of President Obama’s, and dramatically they assert you are out of the mainstream if you believe otherwise.

So your report explicitly calls for, quote, “an urgent and transformational change in the U.S. nuclear force structure, strategy, and posture,” closed quote. I think it is a rather exceedingly dramatic report frankly.

Now, specifically as to the historic nuclear force triad that has been the bedrock of our defense policy for half a century, you report calls for bilaterally or unilaterally totally eliminating the ICBM triad leg. In fact, the report refers to itself as a dyad instead of a triad report. And you propose eliminating the 75 nuclear B-52 bombers entirely, leaving only 18 B-2 bombers, reducing nuclear submarines from 14 to 10.

Further, the committee report that you were one of the five members that produced it, you favor eliminating all tactical nuclear weapons, de-alerting all weapons, and according to the report as I read it, that would mean it would take from one to three days to place a weapon on alert. And so I certainly agree that that would be a transformational change in our nuclear force structure, strategy, and posture. And I think it is a big historic thing.

Now, General Kaylor, the present commander of the U.S. Strategic Command and Secretary of Air Force Mike Donnelly do not agree with the recommendations in this report, people you will supervise. General Kaylor told the press on August 8th last year, “I do not support the former vice chairman,” and that is General Cartwright. “I do not think that we are in a place he suggests now, nor do I see that particular place any time soon.” So you will be supervising him.

Would you share with us where you are today on that issue? Do you support the view of General Kaylor, or do you support the view of the commission report that you signed?

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, Senator. Let me first correct some of your interpretation of what the Global Zero report was, and is, and what it actually said.

First, it did not propose or call for anything. It was, in fact—the word specifically used at the front end of that report was “illustrative,” proposing nothing, but laying out different scenarios, and possibilities, and schedules. But here is the key part of all this. And by the way, this was summarized in a letter to President Obama in 2009. Bilateral, never unilateral. Nothing was ever suggested on a unilateral basis to take down our arsenal. Negotiated, verifiable. These are all terms that were in the report.

As Senator Nunn said in his opening statement, and I have alluded generally to this, the mainstream thinking of most Presidents we have had the last 65 years, and I go back to Ronald Reagan’s comments as Senator Nunn quoted, was reduction of nuclear weapons for the obvious reasons. That is why we have engaged in treaties to reduce nuclear weapons. Those were not unilateral arrangements, those were bilateral arrangements.

The United States and the Russians, as you know, have about 90 percent of the nuclear in this—in the world today. Now there are others who have them. There are nine nuclear powers, dangerous. Obviously the so-called loose nukes or non-state actors, terrorist groups getting a hold of these are threats.

Senator SESSIONS. But, Senator Hagel, I think—

Senator HAGEL. I just want to make sure that is clear.

Senator SESSIONS. I know, but it is not clear in your report. The report says, quote, on page 1, "These steps could be taken with Russia in unison through reciprocal presidential directives, negotiated in another round of bilateral arms reductions, or in implemented unilateral." A little further on—

Senator HAGEL. Well, that is not proposing.

Senator SESSIONS.—it says it two more times in this report that these ideas could be a—less good approach would be to adopt this agenda unilaterally. It suggests that it should be adopted. That would not be as good, but you would do so. And there is another reference to that. And it does call for these reductions. In your conclusion, you say, "The United States should seek to achieve such reductions in 10 years and plan to base its arsenal on a dyad of nuclear delivery vehicles."

You go on to say, Trident missile submarines—the optimal mix would consist of 10 Trident submarines and 18 B-2 bombers, the normal conditions it would have for the warhead stockpile would be deployed on these carriers. The other half would be kept in reserve. All land-based intercontinental missiles armed with nuclear payloads would be retired, along with carriers of non-strategic nuclear warheads, all of which would be eliminated. That is the tactical nuclear weapons, all of which would be eliminated from the stockpile. B-52 bombers would be completely dismantled or converted to carry only conventional weapons.

I do not believe that is consistent with the policy of the country as a whole. We got—I supported legislation to create a bipartisan commission several years ago to help us—Senator Levin and others supported that. The House supported it, and it passed—to help determine how much further we can continue to draw down our nuclear weapons. It was chaired by William Perry, the Secretary of Defense under Carter, James Schlesinger, who served in the Carter and Nixon cabinets. It had John Glenn on it, Martin Halperin, Lee Hamilton, James Woolsey, Keith Paine, and others. They had access to the Defense Department secret documents and information, and they came out with quite a different view.

Let me just point out some of the things that they came up with. They said, maintain the triad. They said maintain tactical nuclear weapons. They recommended no change in the alert statute, and, in fact, the Defense Department's nuclear posture review under President Obama and Secretary Gates, explicitly found the alert status should not be altered in their review of nuclear weapons. And they fundamentally found a need for nuclear weapons. That is the point. And your commission basically said that it undermines the request for nuclear weapons.

And I just—I will give you a chance to respond. On Global Zero, they sort of I think foresaw this argument. Before your report was issued, they said this, "The conditions that might make possible the global elimination of nuclear weapons are not present today. And their creation would require a fundamental transformation of the world political order,"

That is a very strong statement, and I think it was aimed at this idea that is practical and realistic for us to expect that the world is going to move to zero nuclear weapons.

So first, I want to ask you one question that you told me in our meeting that I appreciated. President Obama stated when we did the New START Treaty discussion, and vote, and debate, “I intend to modernize or replace the triad of strategy nuclear systems, a heavy bomber, and air launch cruise missile, and ICBM, and nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine.”

And he committed to, quote, “accelerate the design of the CMRR and the UPF”—those are the two buildings where our modernizations would take place—“and request full funding for those projects.”

So first, let me ask you, would you support that vision and commitment the President made?

Senator HAGEL. Well, absolutely I do, and—

Senator SESSIONS. And then you are free to respond to what I was saying. But I really do feel that—I am uneasy about this vision expressed in that committee report of yours.

Senator HAGEL. Well, let me just briefly come back to what you said, Senator, and I appreciate you giving me a chance to respond.

First, my record has always been very clear, everything I have voted on in my career in the Senate and wherever I have been. A strong, agile, safe, secure, effective, nuclear arsenal for the United States is not debatable. I voted that way. I believe that. You know that the home of the Strategic Command is now in Senator Fischer’s State, which used to be the State I represented or I used to be in that State as a senator. It has not changed.

I know a little something about it, not as much as you and others on the committee, but I have been to that facility many times. I know General Kaylor very well, know all the STRATCOM commanders very well. And you know what the motto of STRATCOM is. It is a pretty significant motto. “Peace is our business.”

And what has kept the peace, as I noted in my opening statement as much as anything else in the world since World War II, is that nuclear deterrent. This prospective, Secretary of Defense, would never do anything or in any way take any action that would minimize, or harm, or downgrade that reality. But again, I go back to—no to get caught up in this report. This report was about illustrative possibilities—what could things—how could things be done. Always, always bilateral. Always verifiable. Always negotiable, just as we have always done in our treaties.

So I will stop there. That is the commitment I make to you. I made it to the President. My record is clear on that.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. I think we have to move on.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, just thank you. And I would just say the vision stated in your Global Zero report, I believe, is likely to create instability rather than confidence and stability, create uncertainty in the world among our allies and our potential adversaries. And I do not believe it would meet the goal that you said not to weaken our ability.

So I am troubled that—I feel—I appreciate your comments today, but I am troubled by the language in that report.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Sessions.

Senator McCaskill.

Senator McCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the six years I have served on this committee, I have served under Senator War-

ner as a ranking Republican member, and Senator McCain as a ranking Republican member. And I have got to tell you that there has never been a time that I did not sense that we all agreed that our work on behalf of our Nation in terms of protecting our country and defending our country, that it was a bipartisan effort.

I believe very strongly that this committee needs to be bipartisan. And I hope that the new ranking member holds the same regard for that as Senator McCain and Senator Warner did, because at all times I felt that they were respectful and were willing to listen to our disagreements. And I am hopeful that that will continue, and I will be optimistic that it will.

I am going to ask a series of questions, and then at the end of them, if you need more time, just say so.

Do you believe that all options should be on the table when we confront Iran?

Senator HAGEL. Absolutely.

Senator MCCASKILL. Do you believe Iran is currently a state sponsor of terrorism and provides material support to Hezbollah and to Hamas?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, and I am on the record a number of time saying that.

Senator MCCASKILL. Do you believe—do you support sanctions against Iran?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Senator MCCASKILL. Do you believe that the United States should unilaterally eliminate its nuclear arsenal?

Senator HAGEL. No.

Senator MCCASKILL. Do you agree with four national security leaders, including Mr. Perry, Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn, William Perry, and George Schultz, President Reagan's Secretary of State, when they said, and I quote, "The four of us have come together in a nonpartisan effort, deeply committed to building support for a global effort to reduce reliance on nuclear weapons, to prevent their spread into potentially dangerous hands, and to ultimately end them as a threat to the world. We remain committed to working towards this vision and advancing the steps essential to achieve this goal." Do you agree with those four bipartisan national leaders in the area of national security and foreign policy?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Senator MCCASKILL. I wanted to take a few minutes to talk about some of the things we talked about in my office, and some people on the committee are going, oh, here she goes on contracting, but auditability of the Defense Department.

I know you stated in some of the advanced policy questions that you want to hold people accountable on auditability. I do not think most Americans realize that as we face shrinking budgets and as we want to secure the preeminence of our military, and not hollow out the spending at the Defense Department, that auditability is a crucial ingredient to us being able to figure out whether all the money that is being spent there is being spent like Americans would want it to be spent.

Can you reassure me that auditability, as prescribed by law, coming through this committee, that it needs to happen no later than 2017? Can you make a commitment to me today on the record

that that will be a priority of yours, making sure as Secretary Panetta did and Secretary Gates before him, that auditability will be an essential priority of your time as Secretary of Defense?

Senator HAGEL. As I told you, Senator, I will. I make that commitment to this committee.

Senator MCCASKILL. And then turning to contracting, I have yet to have provided to me, other than raw numbers that we spent, any data that would indicate that major infrastructure rebuilding as part of a counterinsurgency strategy works.

There are many things that work in a counterinsurgency strategy, and one of them, as it was originally posed to me back some six years ago on this committee by General Petraeus, was that the CERP/F funds—the commander's emergency response program, that those—that walking around money to fix plate glass windows in neighborhoods, that that was an essential part of the COIN strategy.

That morphed into our military building major infrastructure projects without really any data ever to indicate that the billions of dollars that we were spending was, in fact, advancing our mission—our military mission.

In addition to that, it is clear if you want to look at Iraq and the failures that Iraq represents in some ways, one of the failures is the crumbling investments that this country made in Iraq: the health centers that never opened, the water parks that sit crumbling, the power facilities that were blown up before they even had an opportunity to operate. I can go down billions of dollars of waste because we didn't do the analysis on sustainability after we left.

I am convinced that we have made the same mistakes in Afghanistan. And I would like your response to this issue of major infrastructure building while we are in a conflict being conducted by our military, not by AID, not by the State Department, and whether or not you would make a commitment to come back to this committee with a report analyzing whether or not there is data to support that aspect of the COIN strategy.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I will make that commitment, and it is part of the larger series of questions and factors always involved when a nation gets clearly committed, as we were, and still are, in Afghanistan, and were in Iraq for eight years. When you are at war, the highest first priority is to take care of your people. And as a result of that, all the rest of the normal latitude, and guidance, and theory, policy, is secondary.

And so I think in both of those wars, because we got ourselves in so deep with so many people, and the welfare of our men and women was paramount, we tried a lot of things. We had never been this way before. We had never seen anything quite like these two situations. And as a result, and you know, our special inspector generals have come up with billions and billions and billions of dollars that are unaccounted for, corruption, fraud, waste, abuse. It really is quite astounding. But when you think about the universe of money that went into both those wars, no one should be surprised.

Now, how do we fix it? What do we do? To your point, how do we learn? How do we learn from this? We need to learn from this. And it wasn't the fault of the military. The military was asked to

do everything. We overloaded the circuits of our military. We said, you do it. You've got the money. You've got the structure. You've got the organization. You've got the people. Now go do it.

And so we put these people—these young captains—you talked about CERP/F funds—in very difficult spots. These young captains were given \$100,000 in cash, essentially walking around money to take care of tribal chiefs and so on and so on. It wasn't their fault. They were told to do this. This is what was part of the strategy.

So I do not question necessarily any particular strategy or part of it, but I do think it is part of the whole that you are talking about. And if I am confirmed and go over there, I will take a look at this, and we will go deeper and wider into this because we owe it to our people. We owe it to the people of this country who pay the bills. And for the future, what did we learn for future challenges?

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Chuck, again, congratulations on your nomination. As we talked the other day, you and I have been good friends since I came to the Senate 2002, sat next to each other for 6 years on the Intel Committee, and during that process you cast some votes that I questioned. But we were always able to dialogue, and it never impacted our friendship, and I am very appreciative of that.

You also were introduced by two of my dearest friends, Senator Nunn and Senator Warner, which certainly is a credit to you.

I want to drill down, Chuck, on the issue that I think is going to be very much at the forefront of—probably the number one issue you are going to have to deal with, assuming that you are confirmed, and that is the issue of our relationship with Iran and where we go in the future, short term as well as long term.

Now, you wrote in your book, and I quote, "We blundered into Iraq because of flawed intelligence, flawed assumptions, flawed judgments, and ideologically driven motives. We must not repeat these errors with Iran, and the best way to avoid them is to maintain an effective dialogue." You then go on to advocate again, and I quote, "for a direct and strategic diplomatic initiative."

Now, I heard you in your opening comments say that your position on Iran is prevention, not containment, when it comes to their nuclear weaponization. And I want you to expand on that, and I want to go back to Senator Inhofe and Senator Reed's question or comment relative to why you did not vote to designate the IRGC as a terrorist organization.

Iran is the number one terrorist sponsoring state in the world. I do not think there is any disagreement about that. I want you to expand on your position on a nuclear weaponized Iran, and talk about red lines. If your position is truly prevention and not containment, Chuck, what is the red line? What is the point? We know there are some things happening over there right now that are very serious. So how far do we go?

Do you still advocate direct negotiations with Iran as you said and you made clear that all options are on the table, and you stated again that military options is one of those. If you will, talk

about direct negotiation. We have never negotiated with a terrorist state. Why do you feel like that we ought to dialogue with them, even on this issue today?

And lastly, what alterations, if any, do you think are necessary to our military force posture in the Gulf region to deter Iranian regional ambitions and support international diplomatic efforts to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability? That is a broad statement on my part, broad question, but this is the issue from a national security standpoint, Chuck, and I would like you to be pretty specific.

Senator HAGEL. Well, let us start with the specific question on a vote regarding designating the Revolutionary Guard as a terrorist organization. You recall because you were there, there were 22 senators who voted against that. The effort against it, the main point made on the floor of the Senate came from Senator Jim Webb. And his point was we have never, ever designated a part of a legitimate government, a state—and when I say “legitimate,” it does not mean we agree with Iran, but it is a member of the United Nations. Almost all of our allies have embassies in Iran. So that is why I note an elected legitimate government, whether we agree or not.

But we have never made any part of a legitimate independent government designated them or made part—made them part of a terrorist organization. We have just never done that. And so you say, well, so what? What is the big problem? The problem was, at least 22 of us believed—they were both Republicans and Democrats, by the way, in that vote, but it was Jim Webb who was on the floor most of the time on it—said that if you do that, that is tantamount to giving the President of the United States authority to use military force against Iran without having to come back to get a resolution from, or partner with, or cooperate with, the Congress of the United States. Essentially if we vote for this, we are giving that—we are giving a President, in a sense, that authority. Now, you can agree or disagree with that.

But I listened to that debate, and there was some pretty thoughtful debate. And that debate I thought was pretty powerful with me. We were already in two wars at the time, and I thought that this made sense, and so I voted against it. That is why I voted against that. You might also remember that Secretary-designate—almost Secretary of State Kerry voted against it. Then President Obama or Senator Obama, he gave speeches against it. He did not vote that day. Vice President Biden voted against it. Dick Lugar voted against it. There were some other Republicans.

As to the Iranian red line, Persian Gulf, some of the Iranian questions you asked. I support the President’s strong position on containment as I have said, and I will speak more specifically to a couple of the examples you used from my book. But his position I think is right.

And when you asked the question about red line, well, a red line—I think the President has gone as far as he should go publicly on that. And he said clearly that in his words, he has Israel’s back. He said that his policy is not to allow the Iranians to get a nuclear weapon.

What constitutes when action would be taken? I think that is always something that should not be discussed publicly or debated publicly or out in the public domain.

Your quotations from my book, which you acknowledge as well that I always said the military option should be on the table, and I had said that consistently as well as engaging with Iran. I have always thought it is far smarter to approach these very serious threats, including Iran, probably as significant a threat as we have out there out there today, although North Korea is beyond a threat. It is a real nuclear power and quite unpredictable. I think Pakistan is another very complicated reality.

But staying on Iran, I think we are far smarter to do what the President has been doing, which I laid out, by the way, in my book. I have a chapter on Iran. I have two chapters on Iraq. I have a chapter on the Middle East. Getting the world community behind us with these UN sanctions through the Security Council of the United Nations. These are tough sanctions. They are having a tremendous impact, you know that, on Iran.

If, in fact, the military option is the only one required, I think we are always on higher ground in every way, international law, domestic law, people of the world, people of the region to be with us on this if we have tried and if we have gone through every possibility to resolve this in a responsible, peaceful way rather than going to war.

Everything I said in my book was about that. I do not have a problem with engaging. I think great powers engage. I think engagement is clearly in our interests. That is not negotiation. Engagement is not appeasement. Engagement is not surrender. I think if the time is right, the climate is right, the dynamics are right, we should find ways, if we can find ways. We cannot force it. But I think we are always smarter and wiser to take that approach initially.

Posture in the Persian Gulf. As you know, Senator, our Fifth Fleet is located in the Persian Gulf in Bahrain. As you also know, we have a couple of carrier battle groups in that area. Our military posture there is very strong. It is very ready. It is very capable. These are contingencies and options that the Secretary of Defense, working with these Chiefs and their combatant commanders, always have to give in the present and make sure that we are prepared.

So let me stop there, and I may have missed some of the specific things that you wanted to discuss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Well, I am understanding you to say that you are not ready to discuss red lines in a specific way. Am I hearing that right?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I do not think that is my role now to start with. I am not the Secretary of Defense. But I think the President is wise in his course of action in not discussing that publicly. I think it is a far smarter way to handle it, and I think he has said what he needs to say. I think it has been understood in Iran. I think the world understands his position.

By the way, I have just been handed a note that I misspoke and said I supported the President's position on containment. If I said that, it meant to say that obviously his position on containment, we

do not have a position on containment. I recognize—I have had more attention paid to my words the last eight weeks that I ever thought possible, so I do not take any chances. Thank you.

Senator CHAMBLISS. I think I understood you correct on containment and prevention.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Just to make sure your correction is clear, we do have a position on containment, which is that we do not favor containment.

Senator HAGEL. We do not favor containment. That is the President's position, and that was my position.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. I just want to clarify the clarify.

Senator HAGEL. If you need further clarification, that is why I am here.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Udall.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Senator.

Senator UDALL. Thank you for your service. Thank you for your willingness to once again heed the call and lead the Department of Defense.

We had a great private meeting last week. We covered many of the threats and challenges that our country faces: shrinking budgets, strategic national security shifts, and ensuring, as you have underlined over and over again already this morning, that we continue to provide fair and equal opportunities for all of our servicemembers and their families.

Again, I want to tell you I appreciate that opportunity. I am going to take you up on your offer if you are confirmed to continue sitting down with you as a member of the Armed Services Committee.

I know this issue has already been addressed, but I want to make sure that I am on the record as raising my concerns, and I want, as I think this committee should, give you every opportunity to clarify and underline your point of view.

When we met privately, you emphasized your determination to keep all options on the table with regard to Iran, including a military strike, if Iran continues to pursue a nuclear program in defiance of this international obligation.

We also discussed your long-standing support of Israel and our long-standing relationship. But you have critics out there—I do not have to tell you that—who maintain that your record on Iran is in question, and that you are anti-Israel. These are serious charges.

So let me direct some questions your way. Why should Americans trust that you will consider every option when it comes to one of the most serious national security threats facing us today, which is Iran?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first, thank you for an opportunity to clarify these issues. My record has been very clear on Iran. Senator Chambliss noted from my 2008 book and my chapter, specifically noting that I said the military option must remain on the table. I

said that as recently in an op-ed that I co-authored last year in the Washington Post with two former CENTCOM commanders.

We talked about Iran, and one of the very specific points we bring out in that op-ed was the military option must remain on the table along with all the other areas of effort, and expertise, and diplomacy, and economics, and sanctions, the President is using, which I have already said I support.

So my record is rather thorough on this, and I would continue to support that position, and I strongly support the President's position.

Senator UDALL. Senator, talk about your view on Israel, our relationship with Israel, how can we continue to have a special alliance with a country with whom we share more than an economic or political philosophy, but with a broader or moral connection that we have to Israel?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I have said many times, just as I have said regarding the military option on Iran many times, in my book, speeches on the floor, interviews I have given, I am a strong supporter of Israel. I have been. I will continue to be. I have also said specifically, and I believe this is in my book, that we have a special relationship with Israel.

So again, my record is pretty clear. I voted in 12 years in the United States senate for every authorization, every appropriation that I had an opportunity to vote on for Israel. I have been to Israel many times. I have met with their leaders many times.

So again, if you look at my record, I think my record is pretty clear in my strong support for Israel.

Senator UDALL. Senator, I heard you say when you discussed your vote against the resolution applying to the IRG, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, that in the end you were protecting the Congress' prerogative when it comes to declaring war. Is that correct?

Senator HAGEL. That is exactly right. That is exactly what I was saying, and I did not say it, I guess, that way. But that was the point. And, again, I say, like I have in answering some of the other questions, it was not a question of the objective. I mean, I shared the objective, and I suspect all 22 members in the Senate who voted against that resolution supported the objective. But as Jim Webb made the case I think pretty effectively, and Senator Webb was an individual who had rather considerable experience in this business. He had been Secretary of Navy under Ronald Reagan. He had been Assistant Secretary of Defense under Ronald Reagan. One of the most decorated veterans of Vietnam, U.S. Senator, celebrated author, lawyer. And I thought he made a pretty strong, persuasive case. So did many of us.

Senator UDALL. Let us turn to cyber security. I was pleased that you mentioned cyber security early in your initial remarks. The Pentagon's move to significantly expand its cyber security assets and knowledge. I have to talk about Colorado since I represent Colorado. The Air Force Academy is well positioned to train those new cyber security experts. We are also the home of space command and Northern Command.

Would you talk a little bit more about your take on cyber security, what we ought to be doing, what sorts of resources we need?

Senator HAGEL. Well, Senator, you may know that I have been to those facilities in Colorado a few times, and I do not know as much about them as you do. But I am pretty familiar with them. They are essential to our national security.

Cyber, I believe, represents as big a threat to the security of this country as any one specific threat for all the reasons this committee understands. It is an insidious, quiet kind of a threat that we have never quite seen before. It can paralyze a nation in a second, not just a power grid or a banking system, but it can knock out satellites. It can take down computers on all of our carrier battleships. It can do tremendous damage to our national security apparatus.

That is the larger threat. But when you start defining it down, this body, I know. I watched it, went through a pretty agonizing 3 months at the end of 2012 trying to find a bill that they could agree on on cyber. I know or I believe Congress will come back at it in this new Congress. I think you must, and you know that.

Because we have different intergovernmental authorizations here—Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense—where is the capacity? Where are the budgets? Where are the authorities? This is law enforcement. This is privacy, business, a lot of complications that we have really never, ever had to face before on other national defense threats to this country.

So cyber will be an area that we will continue to focus on. We must. It is an area that I will put high priority on if I am confirmed to be Secretary of Defense.

Senator UDALL. Senator, in the 2013 NDAA, there is a provision that compels the military to accommodate the conscience moral principles or religious beliefs of all members of the armed forces. It does sound reasonable on the surface, but I am especially concerned that this could lead to misguided claims of a right to discriminate against lesbian, gay, and bisexual servicemembers, women, or persons with certain religious beliefs.

The President has said—I want to quote him—that the Department of Defense will, quote, “not permit or condone discriminatory actions that compromise good order and discipline or otherwise violate military codes of conduct,” end of his statement.

Will you ensure that the Department of Defense in accommodating religious beliefs or conscience—matters of conscience, does not tolerate discrimination or harm to others?

Senator HAGEL. Absolutely. I will faithfully, diligently enforce our laws. All men and women deserve the same rights, and I can assure you that that will be a high priority if I—to enforce that and ensure that in every way through the entire line of chain of command and accountability.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Senator Hagel. I look forward to the second round of questions.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator UDALL. I think it is now afternoon, so good afternoon to you, and thank you for being here.

Senator HAGEL. Senator, thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Udall.

Senator Wicker.

Senator WICKER. Let me just follow up on that. Does that mean, though, a chaplain would have to perform a same sex marriage, in your view, if he objected based on conscience?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I think the Pentagon regulations show, Senator, that same sex marriage is legal in the nine states.

Senator WICKER. No, would a chaplain be able to bow out of that procedure based on conscience.

Senator HAGEL. Certainly.

Senator WICKER. Okay.

Senator HAGEL. But what we do not want, though—Senator Udall's point is someone to be denied to be married in a chapel or a facility and so on, but certainly a matter of conscience, yes. What I am talking about is a strict interpretation of defending the law, which defends rights.

Senator WICKER. Thank you very much for clarifying that. And thank you for calling early on. We had our conversation on January 8, and I appreciated that opportunity.

You just said that your statements over time have been—have gotten a lot more attention than you ever dreamed possible. I hope you agree that that is entirely appropriate in this context.

Chairman Levin mentioned in his opening statement that in speaking your mind, you had terrible things that caused him concern. He asked you about that. Senator Inhofe mentioned several of your statements involved what some people feel are policy reversals based on expediency. And so those are concerns.

You and I talked about two of these topics during our conversation, and one of them was with regard to sanctions against Iran. You told me in our conversation that you opposed unilateral sanctions because they do not work and they isolate the United States. Indeed you had made that statement to the Omaha paper just the day before. "I have not supported unilateral sanctions because when it is us alone, they do not work and they just isolate the United States," in the Omaha paper.

I will have to say that that statement seems to be in direct contradiction to your letter to Senator Boxer one week later when you told her, and I quote, "I agree that with Iran's continued rejection of diplomatic overtures, further effective sanctions, both multilateral and unilateral, may be necessary."

Now, a week before that you said that you have opposed them because they do not work. Senator Levin mentioned in his statement he disagrees that. He believes they do work. You gave him an answer to that statement, and we have it on the record. But let me just suggest to you, Senator, that if words have meaning, there is no two ways about it. The statement that you gave in the Omaha paper and that you gave to me the following day is substantially and substantively different from what you wrote to Senator Boxer a week later.

The Office of Secretary of Defense is one of the most powerful positions in the country, and arguably in the world. And this official, whoever he or she is, must lead with clarity and precision. And people around the world need to rely on the clear meaning of the words of the Secretary of Defense.

Now, the other thing we discussed that gave me concern during our conversation on January 8th was your statement about the

Jewish lobby. And you told me that you have had apologized for using that terminology, and you retracted the use of the term “Jewish lobby.” What you said was the Jewish lobby intimidates a lot of people up here. This was in a book—an interview that you gave to Aaron David Miller. And you said, “I’ve always argued against some of the dumb things they do because I don’t think it’s in the interest of Israel.”

Here is my problem with your position at this point. You have corrected the term “Jewish lobby,” and I assume now the correct term would be “Israel lobby” or “Israeli lobby.” Do you still stand by your statement that they succeed in this town because of intimidation? And that it amounts to causing us to do dumb things, because I want to say this, Senator. You are here today as the potential Secretary of Defense, and it would seem to me that however you characterize them, you have suggested that there is an effective lobby out there, whether you call them the Jewish lobby, the Israeli lobby, or the Israel lobby, and that they succeed in doing dumb things through intimidation, and that U.S. policy has been the wrong approach because the intimidation has worked.

So when you talked about the Jewish lobby, were you talking about AIPAC? Were you talking about NORPAC? Were you talking about Christians United or Israel? And do you still believe that their success in this town is because of intimidation and that they are, as you stated, urging upon our government that we do dumb things?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first, I have never been accused of political expediency. I do not do that. It probably has gotten me in some trouble, Senator.

Second, to address the last comment, and then we will go back sanctions. I have already said I regret referencing the Jewish lobby. I should have said pro-Israel lobby. I think it is the only time on the record that I have ever said that.

Now, you all have done a lot of work with my record, and, yes, it is appropriate, by the way. Any nominee’s record, what he or she thinks, says, done, absolutely. I was on your side of dais for 12 years, so I understand that and that responsibility. So I do not have any problem with that. So I have already noted that I should have used another term, and I am sorry, and I regret it.

On the use of intimidation. I should have used “influence,” I think would have been more appropriate. We were talking about in that book, and you evidently read it, Aaron David Miller’s book—and, by the way, it is a book, *The Much Too Promised Land*. He has spoken out directly over the last few weeks, written an op-ed about my position because it has gotten some attention as you have noted, and been quite favorable to me, and said much of that was taken out of context, and he was offended by it. Those were his words.

Those of you know something about Aaron David Miller know that he is Jewish. He is a highly respected individual who has counseled presidents and secretaries of state. He also says in that interview, which is a fairly short interview, he mentioned that I am a strong supporter of Israel. That it is in the interview. So I think that says something.

I should not have said “dumb” or “stupid” because I understand, appreciate, there are different views on these things. We were talking about Israel. We were talking about the Middle East. We were not talking about Armenia, or Turkey, or the banking influence, or chamber of commerce influence. That was the context of my comments were about.

Your point on the unilateral sanctions conversation and the quote, a couple of points. Let us go back to the ILSA vote, about the original ILSA vote during the Clinton administration and connect that to a comment I made in the World Herald about they do not work. They are ineffective. And, by the way, I have already noted for the record here that I have supported and voted for some unilateral sanctions, and I think I noted three specific ones that I recall.

But on your specific question about the specific comment. Just to give you an example of partly what I was talking about. You were not in the Senate at the time. Some were. But those who were here in the Senate might recall the European Union’s reaction to that ILSA Act. I was not in the Senate when that was voted on originally, so I did not have a vote.

But in 1998, the European Union passed a resolution against the United States and threatened to take the United States to the World Trade Organization. As a consequence, Secretary Albright had to get into this, and as a consequence of that, President Clinton had to sign a waiver to allow a French oil company not to be part of that U.S. unilateral waiver.

Now I am not suggesting United States action should be hostage to the European Union or any other country. But what I am suggesting is many times there are consequences to these actions. Now, every senator has their own position on these, exercise their own judgment as they should, and cast their own vote. So I don’t think necessarily that there was a disconnect from what I said in The World Herald to where I have been on international sanctions.

As to your specific point about supporting unilateral sanctions as well as international sanctions in the letter to Senator Boxer, it is a different situation to start with. We already have very effective international sanctions on Iran.

Senator WICKER. Are you saying that those two statements do not contradict each other, the one to the Omaha paper and the one to Senator Boxer?

Senator HAGEL. There are two points to it. Let me finish if I could, Senator, thank you, my second point.

My second point is this. Where we are with Iran today, the international sanctions that have been placed on Iran, that puts Iran and the United States in a far different place than where we were in 2000, or 1998, or 2001 when I did not support the re-imposition. And by the way, the Bush administration did not either. They did not want a 5-year re-imposition for some of the same reasons that I questioned that re-imposition of 5 years on ILSA.

But my point in making where we are today, connecting that to unilateral sanctions, then we have got a different situation. Unilateral sanctions, because we have already got strong international sanctions, should be considered. I think the President is right to

consider those. I would support that because it is different than it was in 2001 or 1998.

Senator WICKER. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you. Senator Hagel, thank you for being here. Thank you for your service to our country

and the military and your service in the U.S. Senate. And I also want to thank your wife and your family for standing with you today.

You played an important role in supporting Vietnam veterans impacted by the exposure to Agent Orange. I have been involved in a similar set of issues facing veterans stationed at Camp LeJeune. And they continue to search for answers about the effects of water contamination there. As many as a million marines and their families stationed at the base between the early 1950s and the 1980s may have been exposed to harmful chemicals that led to the development of cancer and other ailments.

The quest for answers in looking into this has been long. It has been drawn out, and the recognition that men, women, and children were dying or going broke paying out of pocket for their treatment while they were waiting for these various studies to be completed on the water contamination. We in Congress took action last year. The House and the Senate passed a bill that will provide for the treatment of veterans and their family members through the VA.

And I continue to believe that the families of those stationed at Camp LeJeune during this time period, they deserve answers from the U.S. government about who was exposed to the harmful chemicals, what impact that might have had on their health, and what the government knew about this exposure.

And I have been fighting for answers with a group of other committed senators on a bipartisan basis. And along the way progress has been by endless bureaucratic delays and obstacles.

My question to you is, do you agree that these marines and the families deserve complete answers about the water contamination that occurred at Camp LeJeune? And if confirmed, will you pledge to work with us to overcome any bureaucratic hurdles that may halt or delay the pursuit of answers for the affected marines and their family members?

Senator HAGEL. Well, thank you. You noted that we had a long conversation about this. I committed to you in your office. I will make that commitment in front of this committee. I will do that.

There should never, ever be a question about the health, and the safety, and the environment that we put our men and women and their families in when we ask them to make sacrifices to serve this country. And I am committed to that, and we will have further conversations.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you. I know you have answered a number of questions about Israel already today, but I do have one I want to ask you also. There is a special and historic bond between the United States and Israel, and I am personally committed to Israel's security and identity as a Jewish state.

When we met earlier this week, I was pleased to hear you say you agree and that you also support a two-state solution and oppose any unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state.

We also discussed the need for a strong military and intelligence engagement between the United States and Israel. Just last fall I was in Israel, and I have spoken with senior military officials from both countries, and I have continually heard that the ties between our military and our intelligence organizations have never been stronger.

If confirmed, do you intend to maintain this close relationship, and do you have any ideas for how we can further strengthen this coordination?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I would once again reaffirm the commitment that I made to you to this committee. I absolutely support the continuation and the strengthening of our relationship with Israel. As been noted before, in my book, a chapter I have on Israel, I talk about the special and historic relationship between the United States and Israel.

It is critically important that the qualitative military edge that we have assured Israel since 1948 be maintained and be enhanced. The Iron Dome is I think but one example. The latest military exercise we had with the Israelis last fall, Austere Challenge, it was the largest military exercise between our two countries in the history of our two countries. I think our intelligence agencies are working closer, and are stronger and more coordinated than ever before.

I think this President has done as much to support Israel as any president, as I mentioned earlier, since Harry Truman, and I would look forward to continuing to follow those policies and enhance those policies.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you. I wanted to ask a question on sequestration. Stopping sequestration from occurring is very important to me. North Carolina, we have seven military institutions—installations, and we have over 100,000 active duty servicemembers in my State. And I believe that these cuts are going to harm our national security, will impair our readiness, will defer necessary maintenance that will help keep our troops safe and delay important investments in research and procurement, as well as stunt our economic recovery at this time.

I do not believe we can allow these cuts to move forward. Congress needs to work on a bipartisan basis on a balanced plan that will help eliminate this threat of sequestration. Also we have to reduce our deficit and protect the critical investments and areas in our national defense.

When we spoke earlier this week, I was pleased to hear you say that you did not support these indiscriminate, unprioritized cuts that sequestration would cause. If allowed to take effect, how will sequestration impact the Department's ability to meet the future threats and challenges?

As I shared with you, I chair the subcommittee of this committee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, so I am particularly interested in your thoughts. You were commenting earlier to Senator Udall's questions on cyber security issues obviously being considered in the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee.

So my question is, what impact do you believe that these cuts would have on our servicemembers and their families at home and abroad, and in particular the cuts—the sequestration, how would this impact areas such as cyber security and the other areas?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first, as we have said this morning and you know, the Chiefs have made very clear and Secretary Panetta, there will be consequences, significant consequences to the management of our Defense Department and our ability to have the flexibility to make the decisions not just for the immediate, but for the future.

When you hang that kind of uncertainty over any institution, but especially the institution charged with national security in our country, it is very dangerous. Readiness is obviously the number one priority, and we will continue to do that. The Chiefs have already started to work through this, and I think in some of the public statements they have made, we are preparing for that. They will be prepared. If in the event the sequestration does take effect, we will be ready to deal with it. But this is going to be very difficult.

And we talked a little earlier here this morning about we are going to have to reduce training, steaming time, flying time. But I think the American people do need to be reassured, as I think Secretary Panetta and the Chiefs have, that the security of this country is not going to be in jeopardy. But it is going to be difficult, and it is going to affect longer-term kinds of planning.

But make no mistake, if this happens, this is going to be a severe problem.

Senator HAGAN. My time is up. Thank you for your comments.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Hagan, thank you so much. Now we are going to work right through the vote that is going on now, but we are going to take a 10-minute recess right now and come right back. And then we are going to call on Senator Ayotte and then Senator Manchin. They are next in line, and I urge them to go vote and come right back.

So we will now recess for 10 minutes. [Recessed.]

Chairman LEVIN. We will come back to order.

Senator Ayotte.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you, Senator Hagel, for your service to our country and for being here today in this important hearing, and I want to thank your family as well.

Senator Hagel, I think we have established, as I understand it from the prior questions you have been asked, in July of 2001, you were one of only two Senators to vote against extending the Iran Sanctions Act, the sanctions in that act. That is a vote that you have agreed that you have taken. Correct?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Senator AYOTTE. Yes or no? Yes. And that was when you were only one of two Senators in the entire Senate to vote against that.

Also, in 2008, I believe you were asked you were again one of two Senators within the Senate Banking Committee, though, not the entire Senate, to vote against the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Accountability Act of 2008. Is that right?

Senator HAGEL. That is right.

Senator AYOTTE. Okay. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. Yes. I am sorry. Yes.

Senator AYOTTE. Yes, thank you, Senator.

As I understand it, on October 2nd of 2008, Majority Leader Harry Reid brought a similar bill to the floor. In fact, it was called the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Accountability Act of 2008, and he brought it to the floor on October 2nd of 2008. There have been media reports that you blocked unanimous consent for the consideration of that bill. Are those true or not?

Senator HAGEL. I was one of some Republican Senators who did not want that vote to go forward. I voted against it in the subcommittee, and the reason I did was because the Bush administration did not want that bill to go forward.

The reason that they didn't is because they were involved in negotiations with the Russians in the U.N. and Security Council members to put multilateral sanctions on Iran.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you.

But just to be clear, you did block unanimous consent of that bill in 2008?

Senator HAGEL. I was part of an effort, yes. That is right.

Senator AYOTTE. Okay. Thank you.

And also, you know, would it surprise you that an earlier version of that sanctions bill was actually cosponsored by Secretary Kerry, Secretary Clinton, and President Obama at the time? You were not a cosponsor. Would that surprise you?

Senator HAGEL. Well, no, not necessarily. I didn't ever base my votes, Senator, on what everybody else thought or did. I voted based on what I thought was right.

Senator AYOTTE. And also, we, of course, the sanctions that are in place now, that bill or its next generation

passed the United States Senate after you left in a vote of 99 to 0, and no one in the Senate, in fact, voted against that. So that has been our clear policy of the bill, really the next generation of the bill that you blocked in the Senate.

I want to ask you also about your position with respect to involvement in the Global Zero. I know many people have asked you questions about this.

Senator HAGEL. Mm-hmm.

Senator AYOTTE. Here is what is troubling me. You have testified before this committee today that you have never been for unilateral nuclear disarmament. In other words, unilateral actions by the United States of America. Yet this report itself, which you call an illustration, its illustration or recommendation or however you want to frame it, is to actually—there are many recommendations in it.

One of them is to eliminate a leg of our triad, which is the land-based ICBMs. You would agree with that? That is the illustration that is contained in this report, or you call it an illustration. Is that right?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I call it an illustration, Senator, because that is the term it used at the front end of the report.

Senator AYOTTE. Well, let us—

Senator HAGEL. Not a recommendation.

Senator AYOTTE. Well, let me talk about the other terms that this report uses because this report twice, as Senator Sessions

asked you, on page 1 and on page 16 says that the illustrations or this example given in this report, one of which is eliminating a leg of our triad, nuclear triad, could be implemented unilaterally.

So here is what I am struggling with. Why would you ever put your name on a report that is inherently inconsistent with what you are telling us today is that you have never been for unilateral disarmament as a possibility?

Senator HAGEL. Well, it is not inconsistent, I don't believe, Senator. But you used the term "could." That is a pretty important operative word in the report.

The report does not recommend we do these things. The report says "could," "illustrative," "scenarios," "possibilities." And you probably know the four other individuals who were involved in that report, mainly General Cartwright, former strategic commander and—

Senator AYOTTE. And Senator Hagel, I know we don't have a lot of time here. I don't dispute the qualifications or the service of the prior individuals, the other individuals that are involved in this report. But of all the illustrations and of all the "coulds" you could pick, this report says that the President could implement these unilaterally, although that is inconsistent with what you say is your position. Yet you signed off on this.

This report also says of all the illustrations you could have picked, the illustration is eliminating a leg of our nuclear triad. So one thing that troubles me is that of all the things that this group could have picked as what you call an illustration is a significant reduction in our nuclear deterrent.

So, to me, I view that as troubling and inconsistent. And one thing I would hope you wouldn't do as Secretary of Defense is to put—to sign off on a report that would say something like unilateral, like this one does, that could be implemented unilaterally that is different than your philosophy or our policy.

Senator HAGEL. Well, as Secretary of Defense, I won't be signing off on reports in the same way as a private citizen. Obviously, I will have a different kind of responsibility if I am confirmed by the Senate.

But I don't think that there is anything that also changes my position in that report because it was a letter sent, which you may have, to the President of the United States—

Senator AYOTTE. Just so—just so we are clear, and I am not—I don't want to interrupt you, but just we don't have a lot of time. Just so we are clear, you don't view what you are telling us today and the language in this report as inconsistent?

Senator HAGEL. I do not because it wasn't a recommendation. The report also says and the authors of it says, have always said, none of this can be any reductions unilateral, just like any strategic arms reduction treaty that we have signed, both Republican and Democrats have led on that, has to be bilateral, has to be verifiable, has to be negotiated.

I have always been there, and that is where we have been on this report.

Senator AYOTTE. Okay. Thank you.

May I follow up on the discussion about containment, nuclear containment with Iran? And I wanted to—there seemed to be—first

question I would have, as you said very clearly to Senator Levin, that you believe that a military option should be on the table with respect to Iran. In fact, I think you said, "I do, I have, and I strongly agree" in terms of that being one of the options the President of the United States would have in addressing Iran is the language that you said.

Senator HAGEL. Mm-hmm.

Senator AYOTTE. Can you help me understand when you went to Islamabad, Pakistan, in 2006, you said at that time that a military strike against Iran, a military option is not a viable, feasible, or responsible option. And it strikes me as that what you are saying about the military option now and even seems inconsistent with that statement.

And why would you make that statement in Pakistan that it is not a viable, feasible, or responsible option in light of your statement today that you do, "I have, and I strongly agree" that a military option should be on the table?

Senator HAGEL. That statement was made in the context of all options regarding Iran, and Pakistan was where I was at the time. And the larger context of that was nuclear powers, which certainly Pakistan is part of that club.

And not unlike what Secretary Gates said about a strike on Iran, my point was that this would not be a preferable option. There would be consequences to this option. Things would happen as a result of it.

If we could find a better option, a better way to deal with Iran to assure they do not get nuclear weapons, then we are far better off. That was the context of that statement.

Senator AYOTTE. Senator Hagel, I know that my time is up, and I know we will have an opportunity for a second round of questions. But as I see your quote, it didn't say preferable option. It said it was not a responsible option. And I view those words as having a very different meaning.

So I look forward to following up in the subsequent round of questioning. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Ayotte.

Senator Manchin.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Senator Hagel, thank you so much and your family for your service and for putting your services on the line for us. I appreciate it very much.

And I would like to say this. You and I have not known each other before. I never had the pleasure of serving with you, which I wish I would have. And we had a great conversation. You bring a breath of fresh air, truly a breath of fresh air to this process in a bipartisan way. Having two great Senators sitting by your side—one a Democrat, one a Republican—that basically support you wholeheartedly speaks volumes in the toxic process that we have today.

With that being said, also everyone has been so fixated on your past, what you have said, and I think I have come to learn in the very short time I have been a Senator that this town and this process and this body has become almost a guilt by conversation. With that being said, I respect you being the person being able to say

what you thought needed to be said. You voted the way you thought you should be voting for your constituents and your country, and you weren't really driven by your party or by any pressure groups.

I can't tell you how much I wish I would have served with you. Sometime I feel very lonely.

With all that being said, sir, we are asked to consider you as a part of a Cabinet. Is there anything that would lead us to believe that you wouldn't follow the orders that were given?

Senator HAGEL. No. I understand clearly the responsibilities of the Secretary of Defense. As I said in my opening statement, those responsibilities are very serious. I don't know of many jobs that are more serious, and I would obviously always make every decision for the Defense Department and my advice to the President based on only one thing, and that is the security of this country.

Senator MANCHIN. I looked back at your record. You and I come from the same era. We are very close in age, and I remember the Vietnam era very well. And that, I think, shaped all of us to a certain extent of how we looked after, post-Vietnam, of how we would have looked at it if we would have known what we knew before.

And I am sure that kind of guided you as you looked at this, the Iraq, and I saw the information that we were given. If I had been a Senator, probably I might have voted also, like many people that were misled.

But after having seen 5 or 6 years of that unfortunate scenario play out, the surge, and I know where you are coming from, would you say that your experiences in Vietnam and looking at basically what sometimes misguided—our misguided mission had been shaped a lot of your positions today?

Senator HAGEL. Well, there is no question that as I have said this morning, that my experience in Vietnam very much guided the questions. I think I noted a couple of times in my opening statement that it was one fundamental question that I always asked, was the policy worthy of the men and women that we are asking to make the sacrifices?

And I know there are differences of opinion. You mentioned Iraq. You mentioned the surge. My positions there were very much guided by, well, what is the political purpose—

Senator MANCHIN. Right.

Senator HAGEL.—of the surge? Where do we go from here? Yes, there will be—you put 35,000 more American troops in an area for a sustained period of time or more on top of more than 100,000 we already had there, you will have a tactical victory. But there will be a cost for that victory.

And that is what always guided me. Do we understand the costs? Are we prepared to make those costs in lives? And then where was the bigger answer here? Where were we going with the surge? How was this going to take us, advance us to where we needed to go, and where did we think we needed to go?

So, yes, those experiences did shape my questions.

Senator MANCHIN. And I appreciate that. Let me just say that as speaking of now, what we deal with and the concerns that people had had with your nomination, the support of Israel, I have no doubt in my mind your support of Israel as our greatest ally and

would always be there. I think you have answered that. I think we all feel very comfortable with that.

Also your commitment that Iran should not under any circumstance have the ability to have a nuclear weapon, and I appreciate that position very much.

Where we go with the strength of our Army if we have our military might in the Department of Defense, the National Guard, how does the National Guard play in your role of thinking of what they should be doing and what they could be doing?

Senator HAGEL. Well, the National Guard, as you know, now has a chair at the table with the Joint Chiefs. And General Grass represents the National Guard effectively, a new, as you know, chief. But their role will continue to be important, as will the Reserves.

I think we saw over the last 12 years of war how important our National Guard is and the Reserves. We could not have conducted those two wars without the National Guard and Reserves. I think that has professionalized both services. They are going to continue to be necessary. They are important.

Their training, their credibility, their leadership, that is obviously why the decision was made to assure their representation with the Joint Chiefs, and I strongly support the National Guard and Reserves.

Senator MANCHIN. Personnel, I think that Senator McCASKILL touched on things I am very concerned about. Every time I hear about the sequestering and people tell me that if we do a sequestering it could destroy our ability to defend ourselves and have the military might that we do.

Now I don't see that whatsoever, and I followed the statistics. I followed all the post war eras from starting with Korea and Vietnam, Cold War, and where we are today. This will be the least amount of money that we have asked to draw down under any post war time. But yet everyone is hollering that it will be devastating.

And I know there is a way to do that, but the contracting. We are having a hard time getting our hands around the contracting, the cost of contracting, the ability for people in the contracting world to be reimbursed by over \$700,000, almost twice what the President gets paid. Some of these things, would you embrace working with us and sitting down and looking and embracing an audit?

Myself and Tom Coburn have had legislation asking for a complete audit of Department of Defense. Your thoughts on those two things, sir?

Senator HAGEL. Well, of course, I will, and as I have noted this morning, I am committed to do that. I will do it.

Accountability is a primary responsibility of any institution or organization. That is clearly in the purview of the Congress. We have to do it. We have got to improve on the process.

We talked a little bit this morning about the astounding amount of waste, fraud, and abuse the Inspector General, special Inspectors General both in Iraq and Afghanistan have found. I am committed, as I have said, to assure that we make that deadline of 2017 on the audits, and I will work with you closely on that.

Senator MANCHIN. And my time is up, and one thing I want to state that we talked about in my office is the commitment to help

our returning veterans get jobs. The Jobs Caucus, "I Hire a Vet," it is so important. I appreciate your support for that. I look forward to working with you that we can put more of our vets back to work when they come home and get them back into mainstream America.

Thank you, sir. And I look forward to voting for you.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Manchin.

Senator Fischer.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Inhofe.

Good afternoon, Senator. It is good to see you again.

Senator HAGEL. Thanks.

Senator FISCHER. I want to begin by thanking you for your service to our country and to the State of Nebraska. And I do appreciate your continued willingness to serve the United States.

But I need to be honest with you. After our meeting last week, I still have some concerns about your nomination. Many of my colleagues are concerned that you have changed your views, and I share that concern. But I must admit that I am more worried that your views have not changed.

From your meeting with me last week, it was clear that you maintain the views that have led to so much scrutiny of your nomination. Despite these recent claims to the contrary, you continue to hold, I believe, extreme views far to the left of even this administration.

In particular, your clear statement to me during our meeting that if given the opportunity to recast your vote on the Iranian sanctions, you would still oppose those sanctions. I believe that that indicates that you hold these concerning views.

Our Nation faces many challenges, perhaps none greater or more immediate than Iran's continued progress towards obtaining nuclear weapons. At the same time, the Department of Defense is entering a period of transformation that will likely define its role for many decades to come. The future of our nuclear deterrent could depend on our choices made by the next Secretary of Defense.

I am going to bring up the report that we have heard about quite a bit. You are listed as a coauthor of that May 2012 Global Zero report on our nuclear posture. I believe there is a recommendation in there, and I believe that the recommendation is to drastically reduce the U.S. nuclear forces.

When we spoke last week, you described this report as being authored by General Cartwright. And I had the impression, and I believe you implied to me, that you weren't closely affiliated with it. But you are listed as a coauthor of that report, as one of the five coauthors.

Moreover, you told me at that time that this report discussed options. You have reiterated that stance today. But after I have reexamined it once again, the only options that I have found in the report are related to how best achieve those drastic reductions that I believe it advises. There are no alternative views or dissenting opinions that are presented or discussed in the report.

It states many controversial opinions. It states them as facts in support of its conclusion, and I believe it is important to determine whether or not you agree with those positions. As it has been said

before, my time here is limited, and so I would like to quickly go through and review some of those more concerning proclamations that it makes with you. I would appreciate if we could kind of go through this quickly.

For example, the United States ICBM force has lost its central utility. That is stated in the report. Do you agree with that?

Senator HAGEL. Well, Senator, that report was not a recommendation. That report, as we have said—it is in the report—was a series of scenarios. And again, I use the term “illustrative” because that was the beginning of the report as possible ways we could continue to reduce our warheads. Not unilaterally, but bilaterally.

Every treaty we have ever signed to reduce warheads and the thrust capability with the Russians has been about reduction. So that is not new. That is where it has always been.

But ICMBs, your specific question, it is a 25-page report. I assume you have read it. Talked about one of the reasons ICBMs may well eventually be insignificant because of the overflight over Russia and so on. Now those aren’t—those aren’t fictional analyses. Those are facts.

Now no one is recommending in that report—and you probably know General Cartwright. When he was in Omaha, you probably got acquainted with him. These are serious people who understand this business, and no one is recommending that we unilaterally do away with our ICBMs.

What that report was about was looking at where this is all going. Again, the title of the report was “Modernizing Our Nuclear Strategy,” not eliminating it.

Senator FISCHER. Correct. But do you agree with the statement made in the report that the ICBMs, that force has lost its central utility?

Senator HAGEL. That is not what the report said.

Senator FISCHER. I have it—I have it cited, Senator. And with respect, I can enter that into the record. But it is cited in the report.

Senator HAGEL. The report, in the overall context, ICBMs and all of the parts of that report were about the utilities of our triad, where is this going, and the money that we are investing in it, and we have to look at it. I think—I think those kinds of reports are valuable to assess our needs, to assess our nuclear capability, to assess our nuclear deterrent.

I mean, we do studies all the time. This was not an official report from an official government. Think tanks do this all the time. I think that is valuable.

Now whether policymakers—

Senator FISCHER. I, too, think—excuse me. I, too, think that reports from various organizations—think tanks, individuals, groups—I think those are all very important in getting information and opinions out there. But when you coauthor a report, I think you should be able to answer if you agree with statements that are made in the report.

Senator HAGEL. I don’t—I do not agree with any recommendation that would unilaterally take any action to further reduce our nuclear warheads on our capability. But again, that is not what the report said.

But I do not agree with that. Every option that we must look at, every action we must take to reduce warheads or anything should be bilateral. It should be verifiable. It should be negotiated.

Senator FISCHER. Every action that this country takes needs to be bilateral?

Senator HAGEL. I didn't say that. I said in nuclear capabilities in our warheads. When we are talking about reducing warheads, as every treaty we have signed with the Russians has been bilateral. It has been verifiable.

Ronald Reagan said it best, "Trust, but verify." And I think that is the key word. He also said, as I said this morning, we should wipe nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth.

I think almost every President has agreed with that, including, by the way, this President has seen this report. World leaders do agree with the continued reduction, and this is not a report that is out of the mainstream at all. President Obama has said in his Prague speech in 2009 that that was his goal, as Ronald Reagan did, as many Presidents.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you.

If I could continue on this vein of questioning, please? Also, as I read the report, it calls for all U.S. tactical nuclear weapons to be eliminated over the next 10 years and asserts that their military utility is practically nil.

Do you agree with that statement?

Senator HAGEL. Senator, I don't believe it calls for. These are scenarios and schedules and possibilities and options. But none of this could ever, ever happen unless it would be negotiated, bilateral, and verifiable. And that was part of a letter that the Global Zero growth group sent to the President in 2009 specifically stating that.

If I might, I might give you a more recent example of that. Senator Feinstein's subcommittee—

Senator FISCHER. Just a quick one, please.

Senator HAGEL.—had a hearing on this last year. And in that hearing, and the committee can get the transcript if it doesn't, General Cartwright and Admiral Pickering—or Ambassador Pickering testified. And they went into this, that this is all, everything with any action we would take would have to be negotiated. It would have to be bilateral. No unilateral action.

And they made that point again on the record in front of Senator Feinstein's subcommittee. And I support that. I agree with that.

Senator FISCHER. I have another statement from the report. The United States ICBM rapid reaction posture remains in operation and runs a real risk of accidental or mistaken launch.

I think that statement is pretty clear. Do you agree with that?

Senator HAGEL. Yes. I mean, I think accidental launches and those kinds of things are always to be concerned about. And we need to assure, as we have over the years, that that doesn't happen, both on the Russian side—

Senator FISCHER. That we run a real risk of accidental or mistaken launch?

Senator HAGEL. Well, you take "real" out. You could just put risk. But there is always a risk. I mean, when we are talking about nuclear weapons and the consequences, as you know, you know,

you don't get a lot of second chances. So we need to be very sure about these things, and I think that was the whole point.

Chairman LEVIN. I think you need to save any additional questions for the second round, if you would today.

Senator FISCHER. Oh, I am sorry. I don't—thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. You may not have gotten a card. I am sorry if you didn't.

Senator FISCHER. Oh, thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Fischer.

Senator Gillibrand.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Senator Hagel, for testifying today.

I appreciate that you have brought your family with you. I appreciate the support of your wife.

I am going to submit several questions for the record because they are important to me as the Senator from New York, particularly about New York bases, cybersecurity, and children of military families with disabilities. But today, I want to focus on the most urgent issues from my perspective. I want to talk more about your thoughts on Israel and Israel's security. I want to talk about Afghanistan, and I want to talk about personnel issues.

So, on Israel. Obviously, our relationship with Israel is tremendously important to Israel, and we are fundamentally tied to them because of being such a strong democracy in the Middle East and having our national securities very much being tied in many ways.

We talked quite a bit about Iran, and you have clarified your position that containment is not an option. I am concerned about a statement you said with regard to Iran. A nuclear Iran is an existential threat to the United States, as well as Israel. The Iranian government has been responsible for the deaths of U.S. servicemembers, an attempted attack on U.S. soil, the funding, training of terrorist groups.

Their latest in a long list of direct threats to Israel came just today. So I want to make sure that in your statement earlier today with regard to whether Iran is legitimate, I can understand if you meant it is a legal entity that has international relations and has diplomatic relations and is a member of the U.N. But I do not see Iran or the Iranian government as a legitimate government, and I would like your thoughts on that.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, Senator.

What I meant to say, should have said, it is recognizable. It has been recognized, is recognized at the United Nations. Most of our allies have embassies there. That is what I should have said, and thank you.

Senator GILLIBRAND. You are welcome.

With regard to Israel, Israel's security is very important, and I have been one of the strongest advocates for our alliance, fighting for more increases in missile defense cooperation as well as coordination on a number of the technology programs that are fundamental to Israel's security.

Last year, Iron Dome more than proved itself as missiles from Gaza continually headed towards Israel. In December, Ranking Member Inhofe and I successfully pushed for full funding of the U.S.-Israel cooperative missile defense systems.

Will you personally support robust funding for Iron Dome, David's Sling, and other programs? Will you also, if we have to have a continuing resolution, the funding for Iron Dome will be well below the authorized amount for fiscal year 2013. In such a case, will you recommend either reprogramming other funds or sending forth an anomaly budget requesting to fully cover our commitment to this program?

Senator HAGEL. First, I fully support and will continue to fully support Iron Dome and Arrow and David's Sling. As to a commitment to the second part of your question, I would have to better understand what our restrictions are going to be in our budgets before I could make any decisions like that, and I would have to talk with our Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and each of the chiefs and want to better understand, depending on how bad and deep this sequestration might get.

But make no mistake. It is clearly a priority program. I believe we will continue to fund it. We should. I will support the continuing funding.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Well, I hope you will also be a strong advocate because our budget is, even under sequestration, significant. And this is a very high priority certainly for me.

Senator HAGEL. Well, if I am confirmed, we will work together, as I will with this committee, on this and other issues.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you.

A number of members were just in Egypt, and we met with President Morsi. And obviously, we are very concerned about the Sinai becoming a route for arms coming straight from Libya going to terrorist groups. And we, obviously, are very concerned about we give \$1.5 billion—or \$1.2 billion to Egypt in aid, and we want to figure out if there is a way to put some of those funds towards more anti-terrorism missions as opposed to the typical technology.

Do you have any thoughts on that and what we can do to really try to assist in cracking down on the weapons trade?

Senator HAGEL. Well, it is a huge challenge and part of obviously what allows terrorists, extremists to advance their cause. Maritime security, piracy issues, I mentioned in my opening statement that that is all part of why we need to rebalance resources and why we need the kind of flexible, agile resource base—in particular our Navy—to be able to do this.

It also is going to continue to take cooperation with our allies. We can't do this. As good as our intelligence is, best in the world, military best in the world, we are the largest, wealthiest country in the world. But we have to work with allies, and we have got to find that through intelligence before it gets beyond the capacity to be used to do damage against the interests of this country and our allies.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Well, as Israel is one of our most important allies, one of the growing risks we have now is Syria, particularly chemical weapons being not properly locked down. And there is concern, and obviously with what happened yesterday, will—I sus-

pect that there has been very close cooperation between our militaries on contingency plans with respect to Syria's chemical weapons. But will this be something that you can focus your concern on because of your past statements about the Israel-Hezbollah war in 2006?

Is this something that you will also commit to and keeping this alliance strong and making sure we have a strong contingency plan with regard to any chemical weapons coming out of Syria?

Senator HAGEL. Yes. And by the way, I have said on the record many times that Hezbollah and Hamas are terrorist groups, and I have said many times on the record that Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism. So, yes, I am committed to do that and will do that.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Okay. For my last minute, with regard to Afghanistan, we have heard your views, and you didn't give a specific statement about how many troops when. But will you, in your capacity as Secretary of Defense, advise the President that we should be drawing down troops sooner rather than later?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I think he has made that pretty clear that he wants to do that. And if I am confirmed, I will need to better understand all the dimensions of this. I don't know all those dimensions. And I think that there is little question that—and I support completely where the President wants to go in Afghanistan and his commitment to unwind that war.

As we have said, there should be, there will be. He has noted that he will, in fact, enforce a new policy and new relationship based on a limited objective for our troops there, and I support that.

Senator GILLIBRAND. My last question that I will submit for the record, but you and I talked at length about it. Obviously, the personnel of our military is our most important asset. And when we hear reports that there are upwards of 19,000 sexual assaults in the military against women, it is unacceptable.

We also have finally repealed "don't ask, don't tell." But it is difficult for a military spouse to even go to the commissary and be on base or be notified if a spouse is killed in action. I will need a strong commitment from you that you will treat our military families and look after them in the way you would look after your own.

I want you to be concerned about every man and woman in the military, that their well-being is being looked after, and see real advocacy and leadership. Not status quo. Not implementing whatever we put forward. But actually fighting for them every single day.

Senator HAGEL. Well, you have my complete commitment on that. I have made that commitment to, I think, all members of the committee that I have spoken to directly and privately.

Again, I mentioned that point in my opening statement, you will recall. I think I have a pretty clear record on that in my life. I will continue to do that, will do that, and I agree it is not good enough just to say zero tolerance. The whole chain of command needs to be accountable for this, all the way down to the bottom. So I will.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Gillibrand.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Hagel, congratulations on your appointment. You are a good, honest man, and I really appreciate your willingness to serve the country in the past and be willing to do so in the future.

What percentage of GDP do we spend on defense?

Senator HAGEL. Well, we are I think it is probably 5 percent now in that area in our budget, our discretionary budget—

Senator GRAHAM. Is that historically high or low?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I think generally depends on real dollars and wars, but—

Senator GRAHAM. Are we at war?

Senator HAGEL. We are at war in Afghanistan. We are at war around the world with active threat—

Senator GRAHAM. So you agree with me we are at war in Afghanistan. We are at war around the world. So when you look at spending on defense, every Senator should be aware of the fact we are still at war. Do you agree with that?

Senator HAGEL. I am sorry. What, your question—

Senator GRAHAM. Do you agree that every Senator, every Member of Congress should be wide-eyed and understanding that when you vote on a defense budget we are at war?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, I do.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. Thank you.

Now let us talk a little bit about statements you made. You have explained this a bit. You said, “The Jewish lobby intimidates a lot of people up here. I am not an Israeli senator. I am a U.S. Senator. This pressure makes us do dumb things at times.”

You have said the Jewish lobby should not have been—that term shouldn’t have been used. It should have been some other term. Name one person, in your opinion, who is intimidated by the Israeli lobby in the U.S. Senate.

Senator HAGEL. Well, first—

Senator GRAHAM. Name one.

Senator HAGEL. I don’t know.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, why would you say it?

Senator HAGEL. I didn’t have in mind a specific—

Senator GRAHAM. First, do you agree it is a provocative statement? That I can’t think of a more provocative thing to say about the relationship between the United States and Israel and the Senate or the Congress than what you said.

Name one dumb thing we have been goaded into doing because of the pressure from the Israeli or Jewish lobby.

Senator HAGEL. I have already stated that I regret the terminology I used.

Senator GRAHAM. But you said back then it makes us do dumb things. You can’t name one Senator intimidated. Now give me one example of the dumb things that we are pressured to do up here.

Senator HAGEL. We were talking in that interview about the Middle East, about positions, about Israel. That is what I was referring to.

Senator GRAHAM. So give me an example of where we have been intimidated by the Israeli/Jewish lobby to do something dumb regarding the Mideast, Israel, or anywhere else.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I can’t give you an example.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

Do you agree with me you shouldn't have said something like that?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, I do. I have already said that.

Senator GRAHAM. Now do you agree with me that Hezbollah is a terrorist organization?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. Now, in 2006, you were 1 of 12 Senators who refused to sign the letter to the European Union asking them to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization for the purposes of the EU sanctioning Hezbollah. Why were you 1 of 12 who refused to sign that letter?

Senator HAGEL. Because I have generally had a policy during my time in the Senate that I didn't think it was the right approach for the Congress of the United States to be sending leaders any instructions or any documents versus letting our President do that. And as I have already stated—

Senator GRAHAM. Well, why did you sign the letter to Bill Clinton, urging him to deal with the Russians when it comes to their policy against Jewish people?

Senator HAGEL. Because I think that is the appropriate approach because I think it is our President who conducts foreign policy.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, all I could suggest to you is that when a letter is presented to a U.S. Senator about the times in which we live in, you can't write one letter and not write the other and, in my view, be consistent.

And the letter was urging the EU to impose sanctions on Hezbollah, and you have been a big believer that we shouldn't go it alone. We shouldn't do it unilaterally. Why in the world wouldn't you take this chance to urge the European Union to go ahead and sanction Hezbollah because it may help the world at large deal with this terrorist organization? And your answer is you just don't think we should be writing letters?

Senator HAGEL. That wasn't my answer. My answer was I think the President of the United States is the appropriate official—

Senator GRAHAM. So Congress has no interest at all in whether or not the EU would designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. Do you think that is our role up here, that we should just stay out of those things?

Senator HAGEL. The Congress has an interest responsibility in all things. But I—

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. I got you. Now let me—apparently not there.

Not let me ask you this about the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. You said just a minute ago you think they are a terrorist organization. Do you agree with that?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. And you voted against the amendment designating them a terrorist organization because you thought we would be going down the wrong road by doing that because they are a recognized state. Iran, you wouldn't want to designate the army of a recognized state as a terrorist organization?

Senator HAGEL. I said that Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism. I also just clarified a statement on Iran being a recognized nation

by the United Nations, by most world bodies. The reason again, I will explain it again, why I did not vote, as 22 other members did—
 Senator GRAHAM. Right.

Senator HAGEL.—because I think Jim Webb’s argument was a strong argument, and that was we have never—this is what he said on the floor—designated part of a government as a terrorist organization. Thereby what his concern was, as was mine and other Senators voted against it, would this be then tantamount to giving the President of the United States authority from the Congress to take military action against Iran?

Senator GRAHAM. I got you. Now let me just ask you this. Do you believe that the sum total of all of your votes—refusing to sign a letter to the EU asking Hezbollah to be designated a terrorist organization, being 1 of 22 to vote to designate the Iranian Revolutionary Guard a terrorist organization, being one of two on two occasions to vote against sanctions that this body was trying to impose on Iran, the statements you have made about Palestinians and about the Jewish lobby—all that together, that the image you have created is one of sending the worst possible signal to our enemies and friends at one of the most critical times in world history?

Senator HAGEL. No, I would not agree with that because I have taken actions and made statements very clear as to what I believed Hezbollah and Hamas are as terrorist organizations. In fact, Senator—

Senator GRAHAM. If you there was a vote on the floor of the Senate this afternoon to label the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, the people who have killed our soldiers in Iraq, some of the most vicious people to the people of Iran themselves, if there were a vote tomorrow or this afternoon or after lunch, would you still vote no?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I would want to know from the President what they were doing, but again—

Senator GRAHAM. I mean—I mean, you read the paper. You watch TV. You got any doubt what they are doing? They are expanding terrorism. They are trying to intimidate their own people. They are the instrument of the theocracy to oppress their own people, and they are the biggest supporter of the regime keeping them in power so then they can get a nuclear weapon.

If you had a chance tomorrow, today, after lunch to vote to say that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard was a terrorist organization, would you still vote no?

Senator HAGEL. Well, the reason I voted no to start with began with the same—

Senator GRAHAM. Well, I know why. You told me that. My question is—

Senator HAGEL. That hasn’t changed.

Senator GRAHAM.—would you reconsider, and would you vote yes this time, or would you still vote no?

Senator HAGEL. Well, times change. I recognize that. And yes, I would reconsider. But the whole theory—

Senator GRAHAM. Well, thank you. That is encouraging.

My time is up, but we will have another round.

Senator Inhofe said that you were one of four Senators who refused to sign a letter in October. And the first paragraph says, “We write to you to express our solidarity with the state of Israel at this

moment of crisis and our profound disappointment and frustration with PLO Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian Authority. We are dismayed that they would allow violence by Palestinians to be carried out without restraint or comment.”

This was when the Intifada was being raging, and Senator Inhofe, led by Daschle and Lott, wanted a letter from every member of this body to clearly put us on record that we believe Arafat and the Intifada is undercutting the agreements they had reached and that they had resorted to violence to intimidate the Israeli government and people in a way that was just absolutely unacceptable.

If you had a chance to do it over, would you sign this letter now? And I am going to give it to you during whatever break we have and ask you to reconsider. I would ask you, Senator Hagel, to tell the country, the world at large, particularly the state of Israel, you made a mistake by not signing that letter.

Senator HAGEL. Who is the letter to?

Senator GRAHAM. I think it goes to the President. Is that who it was to? It was the President.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I will look at it. I don't recall the letter, and I will look at it and give you an answer.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, all I can say, it was a very big deal at a very important time. And the lack of signature by you runs chills up my spine because I can't imagine not signing a letter like that at a time when it really mattered.

And we will continue this conversation. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

We now will go to Senator Blumenthal.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to join, Senator Hagel, in thanking you for your service, thanking your family, and expressing appreciation not only to you for your service in uniform, but also afterward to our veterans, which people may not appreciate as much as they do your military service, but I think is every bit as important to our Nation.

And I just want to say about that letter, I wasn't here when the letter was circulated. I would have signed it, but I would certainly join in urging that you reconsider and commit to the statement of support in the letter for the state of Israel. And if it is appropriate now and applicable to today's events, I hope you will consider expressing your support for it.

You know, I noted in your opening statement that no single quote and no single vote define you in the entirety, and perhaps not as a whole, but votes and quotes do matter. And I think that the questions about what you have said and what you have done in the past are entirely appropriate, and I think also reconsidering or your views evolving is also appropriate.

And I am going to be submitting questions on some of the topics that you have heard. You and I have discussed some of these questions. I might say your private meetings with members of this body have been very productive and effective, as you have seen in some of the comments that have been expressed here. And so, the more we hear from you, I think the better you do on many of these issues.

I want to begin by talking about one issue that concerns our veterans, and particularly our Vietnam veterans. Many Vietnam veterans in Connecticut and around the country received less than honorable discharge as a result of conduct that was a direct consequence of PST, at a time PST was not a term, not diagnosed, not treated.

But they have to live with the consequences of a less than honorable discharge. They have to live with fewer benefits often. And I would like a commitment from you that the Department of Defense will reevaluate and revisit perhaps some of those individual cases as well as its general policies to take account of the fact that we now know that many of those veterans during the Vietnam era suffered from PST or related kinds of injuries.

Senator HAGEL. You have my commitment to do everything I can about that. I understand the issue pretty well, been working on this issue long before I actually ever got to the Senate. So I will.

Thank you.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you.

And I would like the same kind of commitment that you have expressed very persuasively on the repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell” on the issue of sexual assaults. This issue bedevils the military. I don’t know whether you have seen an excellent documentary called “The Invisible War?”

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And I know you are familiar with this issue. I commend you for what you have said to me privately, and I would ask that your commitment not only to the prosecution and holding accountable people who are involved in this criminal conduct, but also to the victims so that they receive the kind of services that in the civilian world many of them do through victim’s advocates in the courts and similar kinds of roles played.

So both to prosecution—effective, vigorous, zealous—but also to protection of the victims. Can you commit to that?

Senator HAGEL. Absolutely, I will commit to that, yes.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. On the strategic issues, I wonder if I could talk to you for a moment about submarines, which you and I discussed privately briefly. The Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs, the President have all committed to an *Ohio*-class replacement program that consists of a fleet of 12, starting no later than 2031.

Global Zero settled on a lower number, 10. I strongly believe that the cost will increase, the cost per submarine, and that we will be at severe risk, for reasons that you may well understand, although we can’t really discuss them in detail here because I think they may be classified. I would like a commitment that you are committed as well to a fleet of 12 *Ohio*-class replacement submarines.

Senator HAGEL. On that issue, I would want to talk with our chief, our Chief of Naval Operations, get a better understanding of our budget. I can tell you this. I am committed completely to modernizing our Navy and everything it includes and will require. I will give you that commitment.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I am sure you know that the *Ohio*-class replacement program is really the cornerstone of our nuclear deterrence.

Senator HAGEL. I do.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Vital to our national security, but it requires clear leadership and support from the next Secretary of Defense. So I hope you will perhaps come back to us on that issue.

Senator HAGEL. I will. You and I will be discussing this, I am sure, many times if I am confirmed. So thank you.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you.

Going to the *Virginia*-class submarines, the next multiyear purchase, known as Block IV, envisions 10 submarines. There is a threat that it could be reduced to nine. For reasons related to both cost and national security, I think that number should be 10.

The intent and spirit of the last National Defense Authorization Act was that it should be 10, and I would like to ask you, similarly, for your commitment that there will be two submarines for 2014 and that the program continues to be viable at the level of 10.

Senator HAGEL. Senator, I will commit to what we have committed to to carry out what we need to fund and develop and build in order to maintain the kind of modern Navy we are going to require. Those submarines, as you note, are cornerstones to that security.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. They are absolutely vital cornerstones, essential building blocks to our national security as we move to the Pacific-Asia theater and seek to advance our interests there. They have the intelligence and reconnaissance and surveillance capability as well as, as you well know, counterterrorism, the importance. So I hope that that effort will continue, and I appreciate your commitment.

Let me just finish with a question that I think goes back to the contracting area where you were asked questions before. Senator Ayotte and I, in a trip led by Senator McCain, recently visited Afghanistan and were briefed—and I am going to try to make this question brief—about the continuing corruption in the Afghanistan government. Deeply troubling and even shocking.

But equally so is the waste of American taxpayer dollars in part because of the procedural roadblock to enforcement of Section 841. I am not going to quiz you on 841. So you can take a deep breath there. But 841 is designed to protect American tax dollars from corrupt contracts that, in fact, go to benefit the enemy.

And we are working revisions that will make more effective the procedures for terminating those contracts, getting back American dollars, extending those protections to nondefense dollars, and I hope that we can have your commitment as well to work with us on that area.

Senator HAGEL. You have my commitment, and I will enthusiastically work with you on this area.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I appreciate your frank and forthright answers, and I don't know whether I will be here for the second round of questioning, but I want to express my sincere gratitude to you

for your willingness to serve and your patience and forthrightness in answering all our questions.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

Senator Blunt.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Chairman.

And Senator Hagel, thank you for being here today. Thank you for your service to the country in so many ways and your willingness to serve again. To see your wife and your brothers there behind you is an indication of the family commitment as well as your personal commitment.

There are several things that I may get to in a second round on Iran and sanctions. I was very involved in that unilateral sanctions effort when I was in the House. We drafted some of that legislation in my office when I was in the House.

Our relationship with Israel is of great concern to me, and it is a priority to our efforts in the Middle East. And I think that is largely exhausted in this first round, at least from my point of view. I may want to come back to some of it later.

I want to talk a little bit about the ongoing structure of the force. The Wall Street Journal in an editorial today said that the current American military was the smallest, least modern, and least battle ready in recent memory.

And I don't think that means we are not maybe more modern than anybody else in the world or more battle ready than anybody else in the world. But I think that is a recognition that our investment and the way we have used those resources has gotten them in a position where we maybe need to be more focused on rebuilding than we do building down.

Secretary Panetta has been very forthcoming in his comments about the sort of across-the-board cutting approach of sequestration. What do we do to get our worn-out equipment and our worn-out personnel in a better position a year from now than they are right now? And your brief strategic view of that because I don't have very much time here.

Senator HAGEL. Yes. Senator, you have just identified one of the priorities of the next few years at the Department of Defense. Resetting equipment and essentially reshaping our force structure, but also renewing our force structure.

I mean, the fact is we have been at war for 12 years. Every Senator here knows and you have got constituents that we keep sending these kids back and back and back to two wars. Well, of course, there is going to be a consequence. Something is going to break down, not only your equipment, but your manpower. And you can't keep doing that.

So that is going to be an overall challenge, Senator, that is going to take as much of my time, if I am confirmed, as anything, as it will our chiefs. Our chiefs know this better than anyone, as we structure and rebalance and renew and re-outfit.

We have got, I believe, a force structure that is as capable as ever. I mean, I don't accept that our force structure is somehow behind or not modern or not capable. I don't think that is true.

Senator BLUNT. I think the point that the editorial was making was not that we were behind, but we are not at the quite as far

on the cutting edge as we may have been. And I would hope you and I would both want to see us get there.

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Senator BLUNT. Let me ask a question about that. Secretary Gates said recently that his—one of his big concerns was that we repeat the mistakes of what I think he referred to as a “procurement holiday” that we took in the 1970s and then, to some extent, again in the 1990s. And we spent a lot of time in the 10 years after that trying to get built back up to where we had hoped to be.

How, in these discussions of cutting, do we keep the lines open, do we keep our effort ongoing? And one of the things that I know quite a bit about is the F-18 line because it is in St. Louis, Missouri, where Boeing Military is. And I do know that if you ever close that line down, we are always talking about, well, what other country needs some version of this, and how do we keep our capacity at a time when there is this talk about cutting and not just cutting, but sort of cutting everything a little bit, which means that some of the things that get cut a little bit I think disappear because they can't survive if they are only partly there.

Senator HAGEL. Mm-hmm. Well, Senator, you have just again identified one of the great challenges that lies ahead, and that is maintaining our industrial base. You use the F-18.

Senator BLUNT. And there are lots of other lines. That just happens to be the one I have been on the most times.

Senator HAGEL. No, I understand. And, but that is a good example of what we are going to have to continue to keep strong.

But the reality is, as you say, because we know what we have got to deal with, what our budgets are as a result of the Budget Act of 2011. What we don't know brings us back to the uncertainty of sequestration. And some of the examples you are using are good examples of areas that will and can be, could be cut arbitrarily in order to fulfill budget requirements.

So I think what you have just noted again is going to be a huge part of keeping our technological superiority, our edge. Senator Blumenthal mentioned submarines. I mean, that is another component of this. All the superior technical edge this country has possessed since World War II has kept us, along with other things and for other reasons, the strongest military power in the history of man. That must be maintained.

Threats change. Cyber is a good example. I mean, 10 years ago, nobody had any idea what we were talking about, cyber. Even 5 years ago. We have got to adjust to that challenge, that reality.

Senator BLUNT. Let me see if I can—

Senator HAGEL. The core base, though, Senator, is exactly right, and we have got to protect that.

Senator BLUNT. Well, we do. And you know, we have made efforts with our allies and friends to give them some other version of equipment we had, maybe not quite as good as we had, but something that keeps our defense procurement lines in place so that when we do need them, they are still there. And that is critically important.

Before you were designated Secretary of Defense, as the potential nominee for this job, in talking about sequestration, you made a comment about there is lots of bloat—I am sure you have talked

about this comment quite a bit and are very familiar with it, more than you were before you made it probably—in the Pentagon. What do you have in mind there?

What is being done at the Pentagon that could maybe better be done somewhere else or is being duplicated somewhere else? I think in some of maybe the follow-up of that, I saw you mentioned things that should be in the State Department have gotten over to the Pentagon. Are there examples of that that we can work on and you will want to lead on?

Senator HAGEL. Two things. First, that comment came in a large, extended interview about budgets about everything, and it was—that interview was done in 2011 prior to the Budget Control Act, just to get the timeframe right on that. I never supported sequestration, by the way.

Now, to your question about what we could do. Well, obviously, much of the conversation here in the last few hours has been about acquisition, about waste, fraud, and abuse, billions of dollars. Why aren't we auditing these programs? Where is the accountability? That is certainly an area that we are going to have to take a look at.

My reference to State Department programs, some of the general areas—and I mentioned this this morning—where we have pushed down on the military the last 12 years to do things that usually are done out of State Department, aid type programs and exchange programs, helping civilian type programs in areas. That was all given to the—not all, but a great deal of it was given to the military at the time we were at war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

So the military has taken on a tremendous volume of assignments and funding that goes with that. That needs to be sorted through, I think. Those are areas where I think we—

Senator BLUNT. And one of your commitments will be to help us sort through that?

Senator HAGEL. It has to be, Senator. It has to be.

Senator BLUNT. I am out of time, Senator. I will be here for the second round.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Blunt.

Senator Donnelly.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Ranking Member. It is an honor to be part of this committee. I look forward to working with my colleagues, and I am proud to serve the people of Indiana.

We are the heartland of America, and Senator Hagel, we have over 14,000 members of the National Guard. In our State, we have the fourth-largest contingent of National Guard members in the entire country. And I want to thank you for your service to the country, you along with all Vietnam veterans and other veterans, for what you have done for our Nation. And I appreciate your taking the time to meet with me.

We had an extensive discussion, and your understanding of the complex challenges we face in the Middle East and the importance of our alliance with Israel. It is a special and historic relationship. I believe it is a special and historic relationship. The people of my State believe that as well.

And I think it was important for you to let everyone know that there can be no nuclear Iran, that there are lines that cannot be crossed, and we will stand up and defend our friends and the entire world in that area.

When we were together, I mentioned to you about my visit to Crane Naval Warfare Systems in Indiana. And what they do is they work to create the technologies to control the spectrum, in effect, try to win the battlefield before the battle ever starts on the ground.

And so, we were wondering what can be done in this time of challenging budgets to ensure that in the area of technology, in the area of spectrum, we can maintain our budget so that, as I said, before the war is ever started on the ground, we have won it on the spectrum level? And how critical is that in terms of your planning in the Defense Department?

Senator HAGEL. Well, Senator, I think that focus is on as much the core challenge that the Pentagon has in front of it as any one thing. This committee is going to be particularly important to help the leaders of the Pentagon sort through that because, as evidenced in the whole series of questions that have been asked today, Senator Blunt's most recent questions, this is a time of priorities.

Budgets drive that, but missions should always drive everything. And what are going to be our missions in the Defense Department over the next few years? How are we going to resource those missions? What are the priorities going to be? And it is the entire universe of what the responsibilities are and how do we carry those responsibilities out to secure this Nation?

So your general questions and most of the questions asked here today have been about this. Until I would get over to the Pentagon, if I am confirmed, and understand more of the specifics and work with the chiefs and get a better grasp of exactly what we have got, I won't be in a position to be able to say this or this or we will do this or we won't.

Obviously, that is why I say this committee, the authorizing committees are going to be particularly important.

Senator DONNELLY. And my next question probably ties into that as well, which is, as I mentioned, as have over 14,000 members of the Guard in our State, Army Reserves. And they have done tour after tour after tour in Iraq and in Afghanistan. And as we wind down, I think it is critical to make sure that we have a strategic plan for the Guard in the future so that the Guard we have today, equipment wise, it is struggling on equipment. We have to upgrade not only our vehicles, but in other areas as well.

And so, I guess the question is how do you view the mission of the Guard in the years ahead?

Senator HAGEL. Well, as you know, during our conversation and a couple of the questions I have had here today on the Guard, I have said I am committed to a strong National Guard. It is an essential part of our force structure going into the future. And again, I think it was proven quite clearly and effectively the last 12 years.

That will be maintained. And again, I think further evidence of that, putting a chief of the National Guard into the Joint Chiefs. So you have my commitment that I will be continually focused on that integration and the upgrading in every way.

Senator DONNELLY. I have had the privilege of working with General Shinseki in recent years on veterans issues, but I think back to when he testified regarding Iraq and talked about how many troops he thought were needed and all the repercussions that came out of that not only for the general, but in so many ways.

I think it is critical that the generals and the people in the Pentagon provide you with the most unvarnished information possible. They tell you exactly what they think. You tell them exactly what you think. And that nobody at any time has their career affected for telling you the truth. I want to make sure that that is the way that you are approaching this as well.

Senator HAGEL. That is the way I would approach it. I value that. There is no other way to assure that we are getting the best, the most honest advice from our most capable leaders than to say it like that.

The General Shinseki episode was a very unfortunate episode in this country, what happened to him for telling the truth. I will assure this committee that if I am Secretary of Defense that kind of thing will never happen, for a general officer, a senior commander to be handled and treated that way when he told the truth to the Congress of the United States.

Senator DONNELLY. And I will say, and I know you know this, the job he has done for veterans as the VA Secretary has been extraordinary.

Another area in regards to not only our veterans, which we are challenged with right now, but also on active duty, is the suicide rate. That it has—it has been heartbreaking. In 2012, we lost more active duty members to suicide than we did in fighting in Afghanistan.

I know General Chiarelli has at this point basically dedicated his life to trying to solve this problem. I want to make sure that the Defense Department is going to lean all in to try to fix this and provide the care and help and answers so that that number goes to zero in the years ahead.

Senator HAGEL. Well, you have my complete commitment on this issue.

Senator DONNELLY. It is something that our veterans then face as well. It is also a transition issue that as much as you can work with the VA, as our active duties transition out and our National Guard when they go home, that they have somebody to talk to, somebody to tell how they feel, and somebody who understands what they are going through because if we can help with that, they have borne the burden of battle, and we owe them. We owe them everything.

Another question I wanted to ask you about is Pakistan. And as we know, the incredible challenges we have in Afghanistan, so much of it is caused by Pakistan. We spent about or provided about \$2.5 billion in aid. Do you think those were dollars well spent?

Senator HAGEL. Pakistan is a complicated relationship. It is a nuclear power. They cooperate with the United States on some things. We have difficulties with them on others.

As to your question on investment in Pakistan, we condition that assistance, as you know. We must continue to condition that assistance. I think Pakistan is too dangerous and that area of the world

is so clearly in the national security interest of this country that we just can't walk away from it and not deal with them.

It is complicated. It is imperfect. But this is where all the levers of influence and relationships and diplomacy and economics and power come into play. How we wisely use all of those resources is going to determine some of the outcomes.

We have to be honest as well. We are dealing with factors there that we don't agree with, that we have difficulties with. But again, we have to continue to work at it, and I believe that we will and we should.

Senator DONNELLY. Senator, thank you very much.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Donnelly.

Senator CRUZ.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Hagel, I want to thank you for being here, and I want to begin by thanking you for your honorable service to our Nation, for your personal sacrifice that you have put into standing and fighting for this country.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator CRUZ. I would like to begin by addressing a question of process. In your prepared statements today, you describe that you have given hundreds of speeches and interviews.

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Senator CRUZ. This committee asked you in this process to submit those speeches in the last 5 years, and in response to that, you handed over a total of four speeches. In my view, that submission was facially insufficient for this committee to assess your record.

Indeed, your financial disclosure revealed you had received paid honoraria in the past year for 12 speeches, and yet you did not even hand over those speeches for which you were paid substantial sums of money. Beyond that, 2 days ago, 6 Senators, including Ranking Member Inhofe, sent you a letter asking for financial disclosure. You have not chosen to respond to that letter.

That letter in particular asked about the private organizations that have paid you over the past 5 years and the degree to which any of those funding sources have come from foreign countries, foreign nationals, foreign sovereign debt funds. You chose not to respond to that letter.

In my view, unless and until you respond to the requests of members of this committee, this committee does not have a proper record on which to assess your confirmation, and I think we need full disclosure and adequate time to assess that.

Now I would like to ask initially a point of clarification. With respect to the International Criminal Court, do you believe the United States should become a party to the International Criminal Court?

Senator HAGEL. Senator, may I quickly respond to your first comment?

Senator CRUZ. I would like you to answer my question. My time is limited.

Senator HAGEL. That question is one that I am most likely not going to be dealing with, as Secretary of Defense.

Senator CRUZ. It is a simple question. Do you think we should be a member of the International Criminal Court? I am asking for your judgment on whether the United States should be a party.

Senator HAGEL. I support where the United States is today.

Senator CRUZ. So we are not a party today. You think we should not be a party. Is that a correct statement of your position?

Senator HAGEL. That is correct, yes.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. Thank you.

I would like to draw your attention to an interview you did in 2009 with Al Jazeera. And with the chairman's indulgence, if we can play an excerpt of that interview?

[Video excerpt shown.]

Senator CRUZ. Now in that excerpt, Senator Hagel, the caller suggests that the Nation of Israel has committed war crimes, and your response to that was not to dispute that characterization, but indeed to describe what he said as, "Well, I think that is exactly right."

I would like to ask you, do you think the Nation of Israel has committed war crimes?

Senator HAGEL. No, but—no, I do not, Senator. I would want to look at the full context of the interview. But to answer your question, no.

Senator CRUZ. I mean, the context of that question, we played the entirety of it, and I wanted to give you that context so you could hear the question and you can hear your response. I would suggest that a suggestion that Israel has committed war crimes is particularly offensive, given that the Jewish people suffered under the most horrific war crimes in the Holocaust.

And I would also suggest that for the Secretary of Defense or prospective Secretary of Defense not to take issue with that claim is highly troubling. I would also point out in 2006 your characterization of the Nation of Israel's action, and that was in a speech on the floor of the Senate, you referred to Israel's military campaign against the terrorist group Hezbollah as a "sickening slaughter."

Now I would suggest the characterizations, do you think it is right that Israel was committing a "sickening slaughter," as you said on the floor of the Senate?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I think, again, I would want to read all of it, what I said. First, I have said many, many times, Senator, every nation has a right to defend itself. And—

Senator CRUZ. Do you think a "sickening slaughter" would constitute a war crime?

Senator HAGEL. No. Depends on they were attacked, depends on many factors. If Israel was defending itself, there was slaughter going on on both sides.

Senator CRUZ. Does one typically characterize defending yourself against terrorism as a "sickening slaughter?"

Senator HAGEL. No, but again, Senator, I would want to look at everything because—

Senator CRUZ. Okay. Well, let us look at another excerpt from the same interview, if we can play the second excerpt?

[Video excerpt shown.]

Senator CRUZ. Senator Hagel, do you think it is appropriate for the chief civilian leader of the U.S. military forces to agree with the statement that both the perception “and the reality” is that the United States is “the world’s bully?”

Senator HAGEL. I didn’t hear her say that, by the way, of the United States, and I think my comment was it is a relevant and good observation. I don’t think I said that I agree with it.

Senator CRUZ. With respect, I think the record speaks for itself. It was in writing that she said the U.S. is “the world’s bully,” that it is the reality, and your response, you did say you agree with it. You said, “Her observation is a good one. It is relevant. Uh, yes, to her question.”

You explicitly agreed with the characterization of the United States as the world’s bully, and I would suggest that is not a characterization. I think the United States has spilled more blood, more treasure standing for freedom, liberating people across the world. And to go on Al Jazeera, a foreign network, broadcasting propaganda to nations that are hostile to us and to explicitly agree with the characterization of the United States as the world’s bully, I would suggest is not the conduct one would expect of a Secretary of Defense.

Senator HAGEL. Senator, she said that was an observation.

Senator CRUZ. I will point out that her quote was “the perception and the reality.” And with that, my time is expired. I look forward to a second round of questioning.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Now what we are going to do, given the fact that some of those tapes there are—they need to be transcribed to be made part of the record so that people can judge exactly what was said and what was asked. I heard that first question, by the way, as a response to the need for moral leadership. I didn’t hear it the way the Senator, Senator Cruz did.

But in any event, it is important that the words be transcribed so they can be made part of the record. It is a rather unusual thing. I told Senator Cruz that I preferred that we have a transcript and that you be asked questions from a transcript, but that I didn’t want to stop him from offering the tape of it, and he went ahead and did it.

And in any event, the I think fair thing now is that the transcript of each of those segments be made part of the record and that we give also Senator Hagel an opportunity, should he want either on this question or, by the way, on other questions, an opportunity to answer for the record in any way he might proceed as though he were answering questions for the record.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We will be happy to provide a transcript, and we will also be making public a link both to these excerpts and to the entire transcript so that anyone who wants can view it in its entirety and assess it in context.

Chairman LEVIN. That would be very helpful. Thank you, Senator Cruz.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Hirono.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Inhofe.

I join my colleagues in welcoming you, Senator Hagel.

We live in a complex world, and any Secretary of Defense should ask tough questions, maybe not particularly politically popular questions. And I see you, Senator Hagel, as that kind of person, based on your service to our country, your conduct and responses to the questions asked of you today, and the conversation that you and I had.

Turning to your statement this morning, you talked about looking at our future threats and challenges and why the Department of Defense is rebalancing its resources toward the Asia-Pacific region. And of course, this kind of rebalance is critically important to Hawaii in our forward position in the Pacific.

Would you expand as to why and what particular economic or national security factors come into play as we rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region?

Senator HAGEL. Senator, you know better than most your region and its importance and why it will continue to be important to the world, but certainly to the United States. As I noted in my opening statement and you know, we have always been a Pacific power. We have been a Pacific power because we have clear economic interests there. We have diplomatic security interests there. We have strong allies there. I mentioned some of them in my opening statement.

When we look at the growth of economies, we look at trade growth, we look at population growth, the rise of China. But not just China, but that entire Asia-Pacific region, we need to stay relevant to opportunities as well as challenges in all areas, but in particular the areas that we see as emerging as to the largest, most significant economic security issues and challenges and opportunities.

It is appropriate that any nation rebalance assets. You have to be relevant to the times, to the shifts, the changes. Our world today is totally different than it was 12 years ago. Our force structure is being refit, and we are looking at a far more agile, flexible force structure as our economies are becoming more agile and flexible.

So, for all those reasons and more, that is why we are doing what I think is exactly the right thing to do. Doesn't mean, as I said in my opening statement, that we are abandoning anybody or any part of the world. We can't.

Senator HIRONO. Senator, as we live in times of budget constraints, will you commit to keeping me and this committee informed as you develop the strategies and contemplate force posture adjustments that go along with this kind of rebalancing?

Senator HAGEL. Yes. I look forward to it.

Senator HIRONO. I am very heartened by your perspective, turning to another question, that you always ask the question, is the policy working—worthy of the men and women that we send into battle and possibly to their deaths? So I am very heartened by that kind of a perspective from someone who served our country.

What will be your top priorities as you look to care for the men and women in uniform and their families?

Senator HAGEL. Well, as I said in my opening statement, the welfare, the safety, the success of our men and women in uniform is my top priority, has been and will continue to be, and their families.

Senator HIRONO. Do you have any specific programmatic ways that you will reflect that?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first, to implement the law. We have a number of new laws, policies that are in the process of being implemented. We have spoken about some here today. And I will assure, if confirmed, that we do that.

And as I said in my opening statement, we will assure that every military man and woman and their families are given exactly the same opportunities and rights as each other and all members of the armed forces.

Senator HIRONO. I also take to heart your belief in the importance of the core nation and the work between the Department of Defense and the VA, and I understand that you have a strong relationship with Secretary Shinseki. So, with your experience as a veteran and having been a senior leader in the Veterans Administration, what will be your primary challenges and goals as you look to collaborate with Secretary Shinseki and the VA?

Senator HAGEL. It will be the same that Secretary Panetta and, before him, Secretary Gates initiated in closer collaboration between the two agencies, and that means the integration of our systems. As our men and women transition out from active duty into civilian life or retired life and are going to require the assistance of some veterans assistance programs, a closer integration.

We know that the backlogs now are still far, far too long to get evaluations of whether it is PTSD or whatever the health issue is. So I think continuing to work with Secretary Shinseki, as Secretary Panetta and Gates did, but strengthening that integration of those systems, of leadership, of our people understanding each other better, and maximizing the resources that each agency has and making those resources more value-added and count more.

Senator HIRONO. Well, I had an opportunity to meet with Secretary Shinseki recently, and those kinds of collaborative efforts are not happening as expeditiously as we would like. So I certainly hope that you will have a renewed sense of urgency about the outcomes of these collaborative efforts because, of course, the bottom line is it is to help our men and women who are transitioning out of uniform into civilian life.

So I hope that we have that kind of commitment, strong commitment from you—

Senator HAGEL. You have my strong commitment.

Senator HIRONO.—for outcomes. The Department of Defense is the U.S.'s largest consumer of energy, and we talked about that briefly when you came to see me. And it is clear that the military will benefit greatly from cheaper, more stable fuel costs over the long term. And promising work is being done in this area to commercialize alternative fuels that can be produced abundantly in the United States.

And of course, this kind of collaboration is very important for Hawaii as being the most oil-dependent State in the entire country. So, if confirmed, will you continue to emphasize and prioritize re-

search, development, and, where possible, deployment of renewable fuels as well as enhanced energy efficiency efforts to reduce the Department of Defense's energy costs over the long term?

Senator HAGEL. Senator, as you have noted, Department of Defense is the largest user of certainly liquid fuels. But I think our energy budget, I don't know the exact number, but it's probably around \$18 billion a year.

Anything we can do to make any aspect of securing our country more cost effective, we need to look at, and I would make that a high priority, if I am confirmed and go over to the Defense Department, to see if we could—how we do that, how we can continue to do that, because in the end, for all the reasons you know, it is just clearly in the interest of our country, our resources, and our people.

Senator HIRONO. And certainly, continuing to fund R&D efforts in these areas will accrue to us in the long term in terms of huge, huge cost savings for DOD.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you. My time is up.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hirono.

Now here is the situation we have. This first vote is a 10-minute vote apparently, and all the subsequent votes are 10 minutes.

So, Senator Lee, I am happy to call upon you now, but you would have to kind of keep track of this yourself and have your staff keep track of it. If you want to take the risk, there may be some risk if you took your full 8 minutes.

I would be happy to recess now instead of after your questions. We are going to recess for the five votes. It will be about an hour.

Would you like to start now and then take a chance that you might not finish? Or would you rather start at the beginning after an hour recess?

Senator LEE. Thank you for that offer, Mr. Chairman.

I better not risk the possibility of missing a vote. So I would prefer that you recess now.

Chairman LEVIN. We are now going to recess for about an hour. But I want you all to follow this.

At the last vote—and it may not be the fifth vote. There may be four votes. We don't know. It is up to five votes. The final vote, though, we know will be called final passage of the debt limit bill. We will start, we will begin about 5 minutes after the beginning of that vote.

We will stand in recess. [Recessed.]

The committee will come back to order.

Senator Lee.

Senator LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Senator Hagel, for joining us today and for answering the questions that have been asked to you so far. I'd like to talk to you for a few minutes about Israel. Israel is, I believe, America's most important ally, certainly in the Middle East and in many respects in the entire world. A lot of people in this body are concerned, quite appropriately, about making sure that that alliance remains strong, about making sure, about making sure that our interests as Americans are protected abroad. A lot of us feel like one

of the best ways of protecting American national security is through that alliance in the Middle East.

On April 12, 2002, there was a Palestinian terrorist who detonated a bomb in downtown Jerusalem, killing 6 Israelis and wounding I believe about 100 others. On that

day, while you were still serving in the U.S. Senate, you gave a speech on the Senate floor. You made a couple of comments that I'd like to discuss with you and ask you a little bit about.

In one segment of the speech you said: "We understand Israel's right to defend itself. We're committed to that. We've helped Israel defend that right. We will continue to do so. But it should not be at the expense of the Palestinian people, innocent Palestinian people, and innocent Israelis who are paying a high price."

Some who have read that have reacted with concern that this may be indicative of a feeling on your part that there might be some moral equivalency between on the one hand Israel's exercise of its right to defend itself and on the other hand Palestinian terrorism. Do you believe that there is a moral equivalency between these two things?

Senator HAGEL. Oh, absolutely not, Senator.

Senator LEE. Do you understand how others might read this statement in such a way that could leave them with that impression?

Senator HAGEL. I do.

Senator LEE. How do you respond to it? In other words, do—do Palestinians, let's say those Palestinians who have engaged in acts of terrorism, perhaps in retaliation against Israel for Israel defending itself, do they have a legitimate gripe?

Senator HAGEL. Well, terrorism can never be justified under any circumstances.

Senator LEE. Is their grievance legitimate?

Senator HAGEL. The Palestinians?

Senator LEE. Yes, the Palestinians who decide to strap a bomb onto themselves and detonate it or otherwise engage in acts of terror; do they have a legitimate grievance that they're expressing?

Senator HAGEL. Well, they have grievances. A lot of people have grievances—

Senator LEE. Are those grievances legitimate?

Senator HAGEL.—but not a justification for terrorism and killing innocent people, never.

Senator LEE. Are they on par with the grievances that innocent Israelis have when they become the victims of violent acts?

Senator HAGEL. I don't think you can judge whether it's Israelis or Palestinians or anybody in the world in separating innocent victims of terrorism.

Senator LEE. Well, I think you can in some circumstances, can't you? I mean—

Senator HAGEL. Not victims.

Senator LEE. For heaven's sakes, though—oh, okay, maybe not victims. Can you, and indeed must you not, judge when it comes to one group of people who may at least be willing to recognize the other group of people's right to exist?

Senator HAGEL. Absolutely. In fact, I'm clearly on the record on that point. In fact, in 2006 there was the Anti-Palestinian Terrorist

Act that I voted for, and there are a number of other resolutions, acts, votes, speeches I've made. In my book I have said unequivocally Hezbollah, Hamas specifically, they must renounce terrorism, and first they must accept Israel's right to exist as a Jewish homeland, respect the borders, protect the borders. Absolutely, I've made that very clear.

Senator LEE. Okay. Now, later on in the same speech you asked a question. You asked—you referred to the fact, that we really need to develop peace in the Middle East, and you asked the question: "Who guarantees this peace?" You then continue by asking another question: "If in fact we expect Israel to pull back to their pre-1967 borders, who guarantees that peace?"

Does this, Senator Hagel, reflect sentiment on your part that that is a legitimate way of solving the peace process, of bringing about peace in Israel, in the Middle East, is by asking Israel to withdraw to its pre-1967 borders?

Senator HAGEL. No, not at all. What I said was, as you just quoted me, who guarantees the security of Israel's borders? Israel's borders must be secure. That's part of the fundamentals of the Quartet Principles of 2006, in fact, the UN Resolutions 242 and 337 and other resolutions. That's paramount, the guarantee of the security of Israel and its borders.

Senator LEE. I understand that part of the question related to how we bring about that peace, and I want to get back to that in a minute. But another part of the question started from the premise that Israel would be withdrawing to its pre-1967 borders. Do you view that as a tenable solution? Do you believe such borders are militarily defensible?

Senator HAGEL. I think that's all negotiable. I mean, the Quartet Principles of 2006, which President Bush laid down, and a two-state solution, all those issues have to be resolved. Land for peace, trading land, all those issues are final status issues that are absolutely key to the future of Israel or before Israel can agree to anything.

Senator LEE. So you're saying that you might describe a resolution of this crisis involving withdrawal to the pre-1967 borders as perhaps one among several tenable solutions?

Senator HAGEL. Well, it's part of what's been talked about and defined in, as I said, the 2006 Quartet Principles and U.N. resolutions that that is part of a final status set of issues that have to be resolved. The United States and no other country can impose that on Israel. That is a negotiable issue, but it's been out there, and that remains to be dealt with in negotiations.

Senator LEE. Is it one that you think the United States should encourage?

Senator HAGEL. I would encourage peace and a secure, safe Israel. That's what I think most of us would want to see.

Senator LEE. Okay. Now, in 2009 you made a statement suggesting that U.S. ground troops—U.S. ground troops should be sent to that part of the world and installed as UN peacekeepers in a "non-militarized Palestinian state." Is this something you stand behind today? Is this an approach that you think is appropriate?

Senator HAGEL. Senator, I don't have the facts behind me, in front of me, but I don't think that that was a recommendation I

was making. If I recall, my comments—and you may be able to give me exactly the comments—were in the context of how do you secure Israel's border, who secures Israel's border? For example, General Brent Scowcroft has suggested at times maybe this is a role, a peacekeeping role for NATO. That was what that was all about.

Senator LEE. Senator, my time has expired. I need to ask you one more question. I understand that you have made a statement indicating that there is no justification for Palestinian suicide bombers, but that there is also no justification for Israel to “keep Palestinians caged up like animals.” Did you say that, and if so do you stand by that statement today?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I said it, and I don't remember the context or when I said it. But—

Senator LEE. Do you believe today that Israel keeps Palestinians caged up like animals?

Senator HAGEL. No. If I had an opportunity to edit that, like many things I've said, I would like to go back and change the words and the meaning. No, it was I think in a larger context. I've said many, many things over many years. It was a larger context of the frustration and what's happening, which is not in Israel's interest, to find ways that we can help bring peace and security to Israel.

If I had a chance to go back and edit it, I would. I regret that I used those words.

Senator LEE. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Lee.

Senator Kane.

Senator KANE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, Mr. Ranking Member.

Welcome, Senator Hagel. It was good to see you with my dear friend Senator Warner, decorated Navy and Marine veteran from World War II and the Korean War, Secretary of the Navy, long-time member of this committee. You couldn't have a better ally than Senator Warner and it was good to see him here.

He exemplifies—and forgive my Virginia-centrism for a minute. He exemplifies something that's very important about our Commonwealth. Our map is a map of the military history of this country: Yorktown, Appomattox, the Pentagon, where September 11 occurred. There's a ceremony in Arlington tonight for the commissioning of a new amphib, the USS *Arlington*, that will be commissioned in Norfolk in April.

We care very deeply about these events. One in eight Virginians—one in nine Virginians, excuse me, is a veteran. Not one in nine voters, not one in nine adults, but birth to death one in nine is a veteran. When you add in Active Duty and Guard and Reserve and DOD civilian and DOD contractor and their families, now you're talking about probably one in three of us. And we care very, very deeply about all that's within DOD.

Virginians talk all the time about national security concerns and threats. Let me be plain: The threat and the concern that Virginians are now talking about more than any other is the inability of Congress to find a way forward on reasonable budget compromise. That's what's in the newspapers, that's what's in the headlines.

At the direction of Deputy Secretary Ash Carter, DOD is now cutting expenditures and planning for future cuts. We have a looming sequester on March 1 and then a CR expiration on March 27. I'm very worried at the macro level about DOD's ability to pursue and execute appropriate national security objectives in this time of congressional inability to find budget compromise.

The current CR limits flexibility, for example, of the military to appropriately tailor resources to the appropriate ends under a CR. The Navy has no flexibility to meet a \$3.7 billion O and M short-fall.

I'm new here. To me it seems like funding the military through CR is poor business, poor budgeting, poor governance. I'm worried about its effect upon the morale of all of our men and women in service.

So my first question is a really simple one: Do you agree that we, Congress, must finish an fiscal year 2013 appropriations process as soon as possible to allow DOD to move forward with this year's funding decisions, rather than continuing to be bound by an fiscal year 2012 CR?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, I do. I think I've been very clear on that point all day today. You have described it accurately.

Senator KANE. My second question related, is about sequestration. To me, again the new guy, allowing budget sequestration—the cavalier discussions I've seen in some newspapers recently by members of Congress about the fact that it's reality and we probably can't change it makes absolutely no sense.

I'm kind of curious and interested to see whether it might be more sensible to sort of even realign the deadlines, the sequester deadline. We are now, based on the vote we just had on the floor of the Senate, in a budgetary process where there's a strong likelihood that we'll be able to produce budgets together with the House. Why would we be making short-term one-off decisions that are holdovers from a previous Congress that couldn't get it right when we are embarking upon a budget process? To my way of thinking, that's the way you ought to make revenue and spending decisions, in accord with a budget, rather than through gimmicks like sequester.

I think we're going to get out of this budget uncertainty, but when we do you will have the task, if confirmed, of being the Secretary of Defense in a resource-constrained environment and you're going to have to deal, hopefully in a more thoughtful budgetary process with Congress, on how to make priorities about spending. And I'd like to have you talk a little bit about how you would approach that administrative task in a resource-constrained world, how you're going to approach that task of dealing with these fiscal realities.

Senator HAGEL. First, as I noted this morning in my opening statement, if I am confirmed I would intend to make this relationship between the Secretary of Defense and Congress a partnership, much as Secretary Panetta has done. I think it's critically important for many reasons. Let's start with the budget. You authorize, you appropriate. So the Federal Government is captive to that authorization and appropriation, and each Department must work within the budgetary framework of those resources.

I have said that, like all of these big issues, it is a matter of, first of all, clearly defining the mission in its entirety as to what is the mission of the Department of Defense, then what are our priorities as they fit into our strategic interests around the world, and the how do you do it? How do you manage it? How do you lead?

That includes working closely with the chiefs. That includes working with all the leadership within the Department of Defense. It's about teams, it's about people, and it's about building consensus in the Congress as well as within the military.

Each military chief has a responsibility for his or her areas and service, and that's as it should be. Obviously, Goldwater-Nichols integrated our services, which was the right thing. I think most people agree with that. But also, the Commandant of the Marine Corps and each chief has a responsibility to look out for the interests of their service. So the coordination of those efforts and the understanding the bigger picture are critically important. Those are all different elements, not unlike you as a governor at one time, would bring to the job.

Senator KANE. Senator, switching gears for a minute, it is still kind of hard to contemplate that if confirmed you would be the first enlisted person to hold the position of SECDEF, and I want to ask a question about especially our enlisteds. Senator Manchin touched upon it earlier, the unacceptably high rate of unemployment of folks exiting military service. I think officers have a little bit easier time, but when we see an unemployment rate among enlisteds that is higher than the national average, when they've sacrificed, when they've given, and when they have leadership and technical skills that could benefit a civilian workforce, we know something is wrong.

There have been some pilot projects through the NDAA's in 2012 and 2013 to focus on an issue that matters a lot to me, and we talked about it, how to credential active duty military while they are in their MOSs, while they are gaining technical skills, with credentials that mean something in the civilian workforce, so that when they leave they're not just an E-5 or a gunny sergeant, which people in the civilian workforce may not understand, but they actually have the credentials that the civilian-hiring workforce does understand.

Are you committed to pushing forward on those pilot programs and expanding them so that we can get at this unemployment issue?

Senator HAGEL. Absolutely. And again, I noted that in my opening statement, Senator. I think I have some experience in that, in that area over the years. I'm committed to that. As I said, nothing is more important than our men and women and their families. And that doesn't mean just throughout their time in our service to our country, but afterward. What this country commits to them, we must fulfill that commitment.

Senator KANE. One last comment, Senator Hagel, not a question. As the topics have come up today, when we talked about Iran and the threat of a nuclear Iran, we've often talked about it as linked with Israel's security, which it is. They're Holocaust deniers and they've threatened the security of the state of Israel. But I want

to make sure that everybody in this chamber understands it's not just about the security of Israel.

The Iranian nuclear threat is a much bigger one. It is very clear that if Iran gets nuclear weapons that other nations will start to do the same thing, and that would cut completely counter to I know principles that you hold, principles the President holds. It's not just on Israel's shoulders to be worried about a nuclear Iran. It is a threat that we all need to worry about.

Senator HAGEL. Well, thank you. I agree. I think, just to add one point on that, you all know, of course, and many have been involved in this over the years, the current P5 Plus 1 engagement to get all five members of the UN Security Council together on this one issue. Now, we have variations of exactly what should be done. But I think that gives the world some indication of how Russia, China, the United States, and essentially all nations of the world view the threat of a nuclear Iran.

Senator KANE. Thank you, Senator.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Kane.

Senator VITTER.

Senator VITTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Senator, for being here, and thank you very much for your military service.

My single biggest concern, Senator, about the nomination is the dramatic flip-flops between your past statements and record and what you're saying as the nominee. And they're about key core issues, and we've discussed some of those today. So I wanted to focus on that, and I apologize if I go over some of the things that have come up before. I couldn't be here for most of the hearing.

In 2006 when Israel was responding to attacks by Hezbollah from Lebanon, you called that response a "sickening slaughter" and you accused Israel of "the systematic destruction of an American friend, the country and people of Lebanon." What do you say about those quotes today?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first, I said them. I've been asked about them. I have said I regret saying that. It was in the larger context of a speech I made about what was going on, the 30-some days of war going on. I also included in that speech the responsibility of Hezbollah, who started the war. So it wasn't exactly the way you just noted it. The language is exact, what you just said, but it was a larger context.

Yes, I regret that language. But I think the bigger point is, Senator—and I have noted this all morning—my unequivocal support of Israel over the years. There's been no flip-flop on that. How I've voted, I've never voted against anything but Israel's interests in every vote I've

cast in the United States Senate. I've said it in my book. They're a special, historic ally. We will always support them and defend them. I've said it in my speeches.

There's no flip-flop on my support for Israel.

Senator VITTER. Is there a flip-flop on your calling their response to Hezbollah "the systematic destruction of an American friend, the country and people of Lebanon"? Do you stand by that today?

Senator HAGEL. I just said I said that, and I said that I regretted saying that. But that's not——

Senator VITTER. Do you stand by those words, or is that a flip-flop?

Senator HAGEL. No, if I had a chance to edit those words out, I would.

Senator VITTER. That's what I'm talking about in terms of flip-flop.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I suppose if I had a chance to edit a lot of things in my life, Senator, I'd probably be fairly busy.

Senator VITTER. Let me move on because I have a number of these concerns. In 1998 in a Senate hearing, you said that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had "tilted way too far toward Israel in the Middle East peace process." Do you still think that of that peace process in 1998?

Senator HAGEL. I don't recall the event. I don't recall the words. I don't know where it comes from. I don't know the context. You know, again, Senator, I go back for years and years and years on different things I've said, but I don't recall that or what the context was, so I don't know.

Secretary Albright has endorsed me, by the way, to be the next Secretary of Defense. I worked very closely with Secretary Albright, as I did with President Clinton and his administration, in support of Israel.

Senator VITTER. In general, at that time under the Clinton administration, do you think that they were going "way too far toward Israel in the Middle East peace process"?

Senator HAGEL. No, I don't, because I was very supportive of what the President did at the end of his term in December-January, December 2000, January of 2001. As a matter of fact, I recount that episode in my book, when I was in Israel.

Senator VITTER. Just to clarify, that's the sort of flip-flop I'm talking about, because that's what you said then and you're changing your mind now.

Senator HAGEL. Senator, that's not a flip-flop. I don't recall everything I've said in the last 20 years or 25 years. If I could go back and change some of it, I would. But that still doesn't discount the support that I've always given Israel and continue to give Israel.

Senator VITTER. Let me go to a third thing, is actually what you said today, talking about Iran as a "legitimate elected government." Do you think the election that had to do with this Iranian government coming to power was free and fair and legitimate?

Senator HAGEL. I noted that the term "legitimate" was not the term I should have used. I should have used "recognized." That's the more appropriate term. And I was referring to the fact that it's a nation that is a member of the United Nations, it has embassies from all our allies.

Senator VITTER. What about the——

Senator HAGEL. It's a recognized nation.

Senator VITTER. What about the word "elected," because you said "legitimate elected government"?

Senator HAGEL. Well, there was an election in Iran.

Senator VITTER. So my question specifically was, you apparently think that was a free and fair and legitimate election?

Senator HAGEL. That's not what I said.

Senator VITTER. That's why I'm asking what you meant, because you said "legitimate elected government."

Senator HAGEL. I just explained I should have said "recognized" instead of "legitimate," which I did earlier today. There was an election. There will be another presidential election in June of this year for President of Iran. Whether it's free and fair, I don't know.

Senator VITTER. Do you expect it to be free and fair and legitimate?

Senator HAGEL. I don't know.

Senator VITTER. Okay. You have no expectations one way or the other about that?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I do know that Iran is not exactly a model democracy and it has not been. So I don't have any expectations for a free, fair election.

Senator VITTER. Okay. In 2008 you wrote that a nuclear Iran might be tolerable because "sovereign nation states possessing nuclear weapons capability, as opposed to stateless terrorist groups, will often respond with some degree of responsible, or at least sane, behavior." Is that still your hope or expectation about this government of Iran?

Senator HAGEL. Again, I'm not sure where the reference came from or the context. But what I obviously was referring to were different options that people will look at in regard to Iran getting nuclear weapons. I've always said that Iran must not get weapons of mass destruction. I've always said it's a sponsor of terrorists, of terrorism, and I've always said the military option should remain on the table to assure that Iran does not get nuclear weapons.

Senator VITTER. Well, again, this quote, you suggest that Iran would maybe or hopefully respond in a "responsible, or at least sane," way. Those were the words. Is that still your expectation or hope?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I always have hope that people respond in a sane way. But that doesn't at all change the facts that it is a dangerous, dangerous country that's a threat to the United States, Israel, and the entire world.

Senator VITTER. Okay. After your nomination, the Iranian government press noted with satisfaction that the "anti-Israel" Hagel—obviously, that's not your quote; that's theirs—is known for "his criticism of Washington's anti-Iran policies," and that he "has consistently opposed any plan to launch a military strike against Iran." Why do you think they have that impression?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first of all, it's not an accurate quote. I've never opposed military action against Iran.

Senator VITTER. Let me just clarify. It's an accurate quote of the Iranian government press. Why do you think they have that impression?

Senator HAGEL. It's not an accurate statement about my position.

Senator VITTER. Right. But why do you think they have that impression?

Senator HAGEL. As I said in answer to that question earlier, I have enough difficulty understanding American politics, Senator. I surely don't understand Iranian politics.

Senator VITTER. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. But if I might add, I also said that there have been some rather significant Israeli government leaders recently that have said some pretty nice things about me, current Israeli leaders.

Senator VITTER. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Vitter.

Senator KING.

Senator KING. Like all the other inquisitors today, Senator, I want to thank you for your service, and particularly for your willingness to put yourself through this process to serve your country once again. It's one of my life principles never to take a job where I would have to be confirmed by a legislative body, and you're doing it.

I also want to comment, I read one commentator that said the fact that this guy was an enlisted man in Vietnam is nice, but not really significant. I think it's very significant. I'm a bit of a student of the Cuban missile crisis, the most dangerous moment this country has ever experienced, and anybody that studies that period, it's hard to escape the conclusion that President Kennedy's service on the front lines of World War II and Chairman Khrushchev's service in his army during World War II was a significant influence on their willingness to back away from the nuclear precipice. I think it's very important to have people with your experience in this, in this position.

Most of the questions, probably 90 percent, today have been about policy. But the reality is, as I think you would concede, that the policy comes from the President of the United States. You're certainly going to advise, but that's where the policy comes from. I'd like to ask your thoughts about management, because you're about to take on the world's most cumbersome bureaucracy, with a lot of problems and headaches and budgetary challenges.

Just share with me some thoughts about how you're going to approach the management of the Department of Defense?

Senator HAGEL. Senator, thank you. I note you were sitting there during the exchange I had with Senator Kane about some of this, and I would, in answering your question, pick up on a couple of those observations.

First—and you too, I know, you were a governor. So you both understand a lot of the pieces of this. No matter how big an organization is, there are still some fundamentals to leadership and management. Now, as you have noted, the Department of Defense is the largest institution certainly in this country, maybe the world. How then do you try to manage it? Well, it's not about me. The Secretary of Defense, he leads, he advises the President. But it's really about the people who have the accountability and the responsibility to manage every aspect of our defense apparatus. That includes all the officers. I think there are over 50 presidential appointees in the Department of Defense. You have obviously the military, uniformed military, 1.3 million there. So all of these people are required to manage the Department.

I think a fundamental to me, I think, in answering your question is accountability. We've had some discussions today about audits. All institutions must be accountable. Elected officials are account-

able. We're all accountable. And the emphasis on accountability I don't think can ever be overstated. You give managers flexibility, you give them resources, but you give them direction and expectations, and they have to be very clear, very direct, and very defined, but not to the point where you don't want their input and their ability to be flexible with their management. I think that's, in my opinion, Senator, is the key to anything, but surely it is the key to something as large as the Department of Defense.

A number of questions were asked of me today about specific programs, submarine programs, different areas of technology and acquisitions, and our superior technology. And I've said I don't know enough about it. I don't. There are a lot of things I don't know about. I, if confirmed, intend to know a lot more than I do. I will have to.

But at the same time, I would never think that this, as I said earlier, is about me or I will be running anything. I will be the leader, I'll be responsible, I'll be accountable. But I've got to rely on the right teams, the right people, bring those people together. And again, it's accountability and responsibility.

I would stop there, if that gives you some sense of how I would intend to do this business.

Senator KING. My theory of leadership is hire good people and take credit for what they do. That's my best advice.

You're a guy from Nebraska. You were in the Army. So I'm imagining that every morning you don't get up and think about the Navy. I hope to correct that over the next few years. Particularly of concern to us right now in Maine and in other parts of the country is the multi-year procurement program which is in jeopardy because of the budget situation.

Your feelings about multi-year procurement and maintaining the industrial base, which we just have to do if we're going to be able to maintain our force?

Senator HAGEL. Governor, you probably know, and Governor Kane does as well, that there is such a thing as a Nebraska navy. Our governors make these distinguished appointments throughout their career. Our fleet is small but mighty. But that has been my initial, early on experience with the Navy.

Industrial base, I referenced that in a couple of comments I made earlier today in responding to questions. Absolutely essential to our future that we maintain a strong, growing, credible military industrial base, for all the reasons you understand. Certainly Senator Kane does, being from Virginia, and other Senators here who have in their States these facilities and, more importantly, private companies that represent our industrial base.

How we then prioritize our needs, how we account for and audit contracts, forward procurements, cost overruns, waste, fraud, and abuse, all part of it. This is going to be more and more essential as we are dealing with, as you have noted, a restricted budget. It may be a very restricted budget, depending on how things happen on sequestration.

The Navy is an indispensable part of our security apparatus. First, it is the one visible projection of power that we have in the world. Obviously, our rebalancing of resources in the Asia-Pacific region are some indication of that. The Persian Gulf; we have been

talking all day about Iran, about Israel, but specifically Iran in the Persian Gulf. You know we have our Fifth Fleet there in Bahrain. We have two carrier battle groups in and out of that small little area. The flexibility, agility, missile defense, nuclear, all those capabilities are within the Navy.

So I am a strong supporter of advancing our Navy technology and our efforts, and I will continue to do that if confirmed.

Senator KING. Thank you, Senator. I'll have some more questions at a later time. I appreciate it.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator King.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Hagel, thank you very much for the tremendous service that you've already provided to this country and for your willingness to consider taking on this challenge as Secretary of Defense and for your stamina at this hearing all day. You will certainly need it as Secretary of Defense.

I want to follow up on Senator King's question about the Navy, because the Navy is obviously very important to us in New Hampshire as well. Our four public shipyards are the backbone of our naval power, but according to the Navy there's a huge backlog of the restoration and modernization projects at our shipyards. According to last year's numbers, that backlog was around \$3 billion.

At Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, which Senator King, Senator Ayotte and I are all very concerned about, that number was \$513 million. This backlog not only potentially affects our readiness, but it's also not cost effective. For example, a 2010 GAO report pointed out that a pier project at Norfolk, which I'm sure Senator Kane is familiar with, if it had been addressed early it would have cost \$15 million. Because that didn't happen, the pier now is going to cost about \$85 million.

So in fiscal year 2012 Senators Collins, Ayotte, and I included an amendment in the NDAA bill that requires the Pentagon to produce a shipyard modernization plan to address these shortfalls. That report's late, but it was promised in the upcoming budget submission for fiscal year 2014. Will you commit to ensuring that this modernization plan is produced and will you commit to pressing the Navy, within the fiscal constraints that I appreciate, but to fully fund the investments that are needed to save money in the long term and ensure that we continue to be very effective and efficient at our shipyards?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, I will make that commitment to do everything I can to first understand the specifics, which I don't know all the details. But your request is preliminary to effective, efficient use of our resources and planning and our national security. So I will make that commitment. If I am confirmed, I will get the details. I will assure that the Navy responds.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. And I'm sure Senators King and Ayotte join me in inviting you to come and visit the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. We hope that you will do that as soon as you're confirmed.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. I know there's been a fair amount of discussion earlier today about your involvement with the organization Global Zero and what your position is on nuclear weapons. I think it's worth re quoting what Senator Reed said about Ronald Reagan, who said that: "We seek the total elimination one day of nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth." I think every President since Ronald Reagan has supported that aspirational goal, recognizing that at this point in time it is a goal.

Certainly that's what President Obama has said he supports, is that some day, probably not in this lifetime, but some day, we should hope for a world that would be free of nuclear weapons.

I know I've heard you say that you agree with those two statements, but do you also agree that as long as nuclear weapons exist that we have to maintain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal to deter any adversaries?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, completely, absolutely. I have never had any other position but that, as I have indicated this morning and this afternoon, and will continue to take that position. As I said in my opening statement and in answer to other questions, our nuclear deterrent has probably been the core of keeping world peace and avoiding a World War III, that nuclear deterrent.

As long as there is the threat of nuclear weapons—and like you noted and President Obama noted in his Prague speech in 2009—it probably will not happen in our lifetime. But, just as you noted and Senator Reed's comments about what President Reagan laid on the table in 1986, we need to keep working on it. We need to keep moving forward, attempting to do it.

Quite frankly, if you look at the START agreements and you look at the different treaties we've had, we have brought those warheads down, under both Republican and Democratic administrations, bipartisan. What Sam Nunn said this morning, he and his former colleagues Secretary Kissinger, Secretary Shultz, Secretary Perry, hundreds of national leaders in Republican and Democratic administrations over the years have supported the reduction of weapons of nuclear destruction—not unilateral, but bilateral, negotiated and verifiable.

As I said this morning, as Ronald Reagan said, "Trust but verify." Nothing unilateral.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Again, I know there's been a lot of discussion about your comments relative to sanctions on Iran and various options that we might pursue with respect to Iran and nuclear weapons. But I wonder again if you would confirm what your position is on the President's current strategy of strong diplomacy, tough international sanctions, and keeping all the options on the table?

Senator HAGEL. Well, you have just defined President Obama's strategy on Iran, which I firmly support, strongly support. It is the wise way to do it. I don't know if I mentioned this to you in our meeting, but I wrote a book in 2008 and I have a chapter on Iran, and I lay all that out in the chapter. As I've said, I don't think President Obama went to my chapter and developed his strategy based on my chapter, but there's nothing in that chapter that I wrote in that book in 2008 or anything I've ever said that deviates from where the President is.

The military option is always on the table, must be on the table, always should be the last option, always the last option. But aren't we wiser and smarter if we can figure this out, accomplish our objectives, without having to go to war, for everybody?

Senator SHAHEEN. I hope so.

You referenced the meeting that we had last week and I very much appreciated your taking time to come in and sit down and talk about some of the statements that have been represented that you have addressed today. One of those had to do with Israel's security. Again, I know this has been discussed at length during the day today, but I wonder if again you could reconfirm what your commitment is on Israel and the security of Israel in the Middle East?

Senator HAGEL. My support of Israel's security is and always has been very clear. I strongly support Israel. The security of Israel is a commitment that we made to Israel in 1948 when Israel was born under American leadership, Harry Truman. That commitment is a bond that is more than just an ally to ally. It is special, it's historical, it's values-driven.

I've never equivocated from that line. My votes in the Senate have shown that. What I've said publicly has shown that. I've said this in my book. Absolutely, and we'll continue to do that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Shaheen.

Okay, we're going to have a 5-minute second round, and if we need a third round we will have a third round. I'm going to try to take less than five minutes so I can yield a couple minutes, if I still have them, to Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Earlier today, Senator Hagel, one of my colleagues made a statement that you had not responded to requests for copies of all your speeches and to requests about contributions to certain organizations I believe that you either served or had spoken to, and that you didn't have the opportunity at that time to respond to that statement. I want to give you the opportunity now, if you wish to, or if you prefer to respond for the record.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will respond for the record. But I will take this opportunity to respond. First, as far as I know—and I asked again at the break of our counsel, Ethics Office lawyers, have we responded to all requests or are we in the process of responding to every single request? The answer is yes. Some of these requests didn't come in until yesterday, specifically the financial documentation request. Copies of my speeches came in late.

We have given the committee every copy of every speech that I have that's out there, every video that I have that's out there. On paid speeches, most every one of those paid speeches, in the contract it says that they are private and not videotaped. That wasn't my decision; that was the contract of the group I spoke to. I believe every paid speech I gave I didn't have a prepared text. I gave it extemporaneously, which is something I've been doing for long before I left the Senate.

So we are fulfilling every legal commitment I said and I am obligated to, and I've complied with every ethical request. I always

have. I did when I was in the Senate. I'll continue to do it now. We are doing it now.

Chairman LEVIN. There was one or two other times when you did not have the opportunity to reply to a question and, in order not to use up all my time, you should feel free to do that for the record. We're going to keep this record open until close of business tomorrow for questions and for your answers close of business Monday, which means 5:00 p.m. tomorrow for questions for the record, 5:00 p.m. on Monday for your responses to questions for the record.

At that time, would you give us the update on any additional documents, speeches, or information that you have been requested to provide which you have not yet been able to, but is in the works, so you can give us an update?

Senator HAGEL. I will. And again, I have committed and will continue to commit to complying with every legal document, legal requirement.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

I hope I have a minute or two that I can then yield to Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that courtesy very, very much. I'm going to have to hurry this up a little bit because it's less time than I thought we had, I say to my good friend.

It was mentioned that one of the members up here thought I was being disrespectful during the time that I was questioning you. It was at a time when I made the statement that you have been endorsed by the ministry of Iran for your nomination to be Secretary of Defense. Do you consider that to be a disrespectful notion on my part?

Senator HAGEL. No, it's a legitimate question.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you very much.

I have kind of been the leader on postponing any further Abrams tanks or F-16s to Egypt until such time as that government is under control. This is my own statement, only representing my own thoughts. I think Morsi's an enemy. I think their military is a friend.

There was a vote just a little while ago to do away permanently with the sending of any of this equipment to Egypt. I don't think that's a good idea. What I think is a good idea is to continue to use that as leverage. If you do that, you lose the leverage. I believe that we are going to be in a position—right now, Morsi has already distanced himself from the military. To me that's a first good step, and I would like to think that we could reinstate a friend, a friend in that area.

I would only ask you, would you agree with my statement that I came out with a long time ago or my bill that I introduced, I should say, and I re-introduced in a stronger way today, saying that we would withhold sending this equipment to Egypt until such time as these conditions are met? And I mentioned the conditions of keeping the accords from Camp David and that type of thing. Would you consider that?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first, that's a policy decision that the President of the United States would make. If he asks for my advice I would certainly give it to him. But to the bigger question, I think

it is important that our assistance to Egypt be conditional. They play an absolutely critical role in fulfilling the commitments of Camp David for the security of Israel and elsewhere.

Senator INHOFE. I'm sorry to interrupt you, but we're almost out of time right now. And I appreciate that answer.

You made one statement that I strongly disagreed with. You said that President Obama has been the strongest ally of Israel—or Israeli supporter since 1948. I have a hard time with that. I know that he's not up for confirmation; you are. But when you see statements coming out of the administration like "The United States believes that negotiations should result in two states with permanent Palestinian borders with Israel and Jordan and Egypt," and they come out with the statements like "We believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 borderlines," these are statements I think are very damaging, and I can assure you that the leadership over in Israel feel that those statements are damaging.

So do you still feel that this President, Obama, has been the strongest supporter of Israel since 1948?

Senator HAGEL. I do, and I will tell you very quickly why. First of all, the 2006 Quartet Principles that President Bush laid down I think cover most of the points that you've made, and I supported President Bush then and still do, what he did in developing those principles.

But when you look at the assistance this administration has given to Israel, the most significant and largest military to military exercise, Austere Challenge, Israeli-U.S. forces last fall, the additional moneys that we put into Iron Dome, the President's position, we've got your back——

Senator INHOFE. I've answered the question. That's fine. I appreciate it.

Senator HAGEL. I think it's hard to——

Senator INHOFE. But one other subject before we run out of time here, and it's one that I know you're very interested in. You actually were a co-sponsor of the Missile Defense Act of 1999 and I was, too. So we agreed. Times have changed since that time. At that time people thought having the capabilities was confined to the USSR at that time, or Russia, and the United States. A lot has happened since then.

I often say that one of the things I disagreed with most in the first budget that this President had was when he did away with the ground-based interceptor site in Poland. I think most people are aware that that was built for protection of Western Europe and Eastern United States. I'm satisfied that we have, even with the reduction of ground-based interceptors on the West Coast, which I disagreed with, but I still think we have adequate protection on the West Coast. It's from the East Coast, and right now we still—our intelligence still says today that Iran will have the weapon capability and the delivery capability by 2015. That's why it was supposed to be there.

Now there's a discussion saying to cover that void we need to have a third site. Do you support a third site of ground-based interceptor? It would be on the East Coast somewhere.

Senator HAGEL. I'm aware of the NDAA authorization and instruction for a third site and an environmental impact statement. I don't know enough of the details. If I am confirmed and go over there, I will get into it. But to respond to that, which I will for the record, I just don't know enough about it.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator INHOFE. Okay, if you'd respond for the record. I think it's very significant and I think that most people are looking at this with this void. You know, you have a period of time between 2015—nobody disputes the capability that Iran will have at that time. It's not even classified. But there is still a void of about 6 years between that and when we would have the capability to knock down what has to be knocked down unless we have a third site in place. So I am hoping that maybe for the record you'll come back and say that you support the third site.

The last thing I'll mention, if you'll forgive me, Mr. Chairman, when Senator Hroto talked to you she talked about your efforts and her expectations on your being involved in using the Department of Defense for all these environmental things. I would suggest to you that's why we have a Department of Energy. When I asked you the question, will you refrain from doing some of the things that have been done in the past in this administration, such as forcing the Navy to pay \$26 a gallon for 450,000 gallons of fuel that you could buy for \$3 and other things, it's billions of dollars that we're paying which we could be using for warfighting. So I see an inconsistency in your answer to me and your answer to the Senator from Hawaii.

Senator HAGEL. Well, my answer to the Senator from Hawaii was, I believe—they can read it back—that I am committed to all efficiencies that we can find in the Department of Defense which are in the interest of our country. I didn't commit to any one program.

Senator INHOFE. Or any program that would be a costly program on experimentation, such as the programs that I've just mentioned, clearly are in the jurisdiction of the Department of Energy and they're the ones supposed to be doing it. Don't you agree that we should be confining ourselves to enhancing our warfighter capabilities?

Senator HAGEL. Well, of course. But I think within that realm certainly the kind of money that we spend, as you've noted, on fuel, that should include some not only sense of that, but are there things that we can be doing with our research and technology in the Department of Defense, why wouldn't we? It just seems to make sense.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, we should as a government, but that's what the Department of Energy is supposed to be doing. And when you said, as you suggest, the high cost of fuel, yes, it's a high cost because we're paying 10 times as much as we would have to pay, money that we could be putting toward our warfighting efforts. That's my point.

Senator HAGEL. Well, yes, I agree, but why wouldn't we be looking at all options if we have the kind of sophisticated research and technology that the Department of Defense does and has possession

of? Why wouldn't we be enlarging that? I don't know anything more specific to or central to our security than energy.

Senator INHOFE. Well—and I know my time has expired. We're spending literally millions, actually some billions of dollars, on some of these experimentations that again are not in the purview of this. And right now we're stalling 179 F-35s that we just recently are putting off. I always say that if they put them off indefinitely, that's just a cut; it's not a put-off. Those are things that we should be doing right now.

We're looking at the *Ohio*-class sub. We should be doing that right now, but we've postponed it. And if we were to spend the money that we're spending on the environmental causes on warfighting, I think it would do us better good. Apparently you don't agree with that.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I've said what I said, but I will commit this to you, Senator, that, as I said to the Senator from Hawaii, I will, if I'm confirmed, will obviously look at all these programs. I'll have to.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Manchin.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you.

Sir, I feel like I want to apologize for some of the tone and demeanor today.

With that being said, if I could ask you this, since we're so again talking about things you have done, things you have said over the years. How did you get to Vietnam? And I want to go back there. Were you ordered to go to Vietnam? Were you sent there? Or how was your orders?

Senator HAGEL. Well, actually I got to Vietnam through kind of an interesting route. I volunteered for the draft, as my brother did a month after me. And during that time in 1967 the draft was coming down with pretty heavy levies. You recall.

Senator MANCHIN. I was there.

Senator HAGEL. And I know your story. They wouldn't take you, not because you weren't smart enough, of course, but they wouldn't take you because of your knees. And I know you tried to bribe your way in, but they still wouldn't let you. So I admire you for that effort and I know your story.

I went to basic training, advanced infantry training. My brother followed me everywhere a month after me. After advanced infantry training, I was selected to be one of nine first class then-Top Secret shoulder-fired heat-seeking missile called the Redeye gun. At the time it was classified, and it was built to bring down low-flying Soviet MiGs coming over Germany, eastern Germany, down the Fulda Gap.

We went to White Sands Missile Range and spent two months training. It was all classified, couldn't get calls in or out. We were then quietly, all nine of us, ordered to go to Germany and be integrated into NATO units without any fanfare or anybody knowing about it.

I got my orders to go to Germany. I went to Fort Dix, New Jersey, in November 1967. My eight fellow soldiers and I were getting packed up to get the bus to go out to the airport to take a flight to Germany, and I just decided if I was going to be in the military

it didn't make much sense to go to Germany. I'd never been to Germany. My great-grandparents were from Germany. Probably a pretty good place, I thought, but I had to go where there was a war.

So I took my orders down to the orderly, told him I was Private Hagel, I had orders to go to Germany, here are my orders, and I wanted to volunteer to go to Vietnam. The office was a bit quiet. They put me in a holding room. They brought priests, rabbis, ministers, psychiatrists. All came in to examine me, thinking that I was—something was wrong, I was running away from something or I had killed somebody.

After two days of testing me to see if it was okay, they held me, which—I scrubbed barracks for five days before they could cut new orders. So they gave me new orders to go to Vietnam, sent me home for five days, and then on to Travis Air Force Base in San Francisco, and I got to Vietnam December 1967, got back to the United States December—

Senator MANCHIN. There is no reason any one of us should ever be concerned about your willing to do anything that you possibly can to defend this country and making sure that we defend against all foreign enemies, wherever they may be?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I hope not, Senator. I mean, we can disagree on policies, but I think my life and my commitment to this country is pretty clear, and I'm proud of it.

Senator MANCHIN. On that, sir, I would say that Israel, the spokespeople for Israel, support you. They've come to me and they tell me they support you. Have you gotten that?

Senator HAGEL. There are a lot of pro-Israeli groups that have formally come out and endorsed me, support me, which I'm grateful for.

Senator MANCHIN. From what I've heard today, it sounds like Iran has wishful thinking.

Senator HAGEL. Evidently Iran supports me.

Senator MANCHIN. The President has asked you to serve at this level, so he has confidence in you.

Senator HAGEL. Well, the President did ask me to serve. And I said in my opening statement I am grateful and honored by that trust and confidence, and I will do everything in my power never to do anything that would disabuse that confidence and trust for this country.

Senator MANCHIN. One final very quickly, if I may. As you see the role of Secretary of Defense—and I know we've talked about and you've been questioned on policy, and I know you're not going to be in a policy position. You're going to be basically following policy, not making policy. But if you could just wrap it up, what we should expect from your position as Secretary of Defense?

Senator HAGEL. Well, thank you, Senator. If I am confirmed, as I noted in my opening comments, I would see this relationship, Senator, as a partnership. I'm going to need your help. I'm going to need your advice. I'm going to need your collaboration.

Many people on this authorization committee have a great deal of experience in this business, many far more than I do, as is the case in the Congress, both the Senate and the House. I will need that. I will call upon that.

I won't be in a policymaking position, as you note. I also committed to all of you—and those of you who served with me know this—I'll always be honest with you. You'll never have to worry about that. I'll listen to you. I'm sure we won't always agree, but I'll say it straight, and I'll give you and the President my honest, most informed advice always.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you. And I'll say one more thing. Where I come from there's an old saying: If you can't change your mind, you can't change anything.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Manchin.

Senator SESSIONS.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Senator Hagel. You're holding up well. But it's an important office and you're asked to lead our Defense Department. I know you know the seriousness of that and it's exceedingly important.

You have to know, and particularly in recent years, there has been tension in Congress between the executive and Congress over a number of issues. One of them is national missile defense, and that's a subcommittee I'm a member of and we've wrestled with that over the years, and had pretty consistently a bipartisan Congressional vote on those issues. We voted again this year a unanimous Armed Services defense authorization bill, unanimous out of committee, under Chairman Levin's leadership and Senator McCain.

But I'm looking today, I believe the National Journal, the Obama administration is moving to begin new U.S.-Russian talks on further drawdowns of the Nation's nuclear arsenal. That's also been an issue of concern, but I believe we've been staying fairly bipartisan and unified on that.

But your report is what causes a great deal of concern, this study of the Global Zero group. But I just note that Vice President Biden is set to meet with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov this weekend during the Munich security conference. National Security Advisor Tom Donilon will then head to Moscow in February. President Obama and then-President Medvedev signed the bilateral New START Treaty in 2010 calling for deployment of strategic nuclear arsenals involving 700 delivery systems.

Now, as I read the Global Zero report that you co-authored just last year, less than a year ago, you call for the elimination of all ICBMs, all tactical nuclear weapons, most of the bombers, I think 67 B-52s eliminated, leaving only 18 bombers and 10 submarines. So instead of 700 delivery systems that was part of the New START, it looks like you're down to about 28 delivery systems. So this is a dramatic—introduced dramatic concern.

There are worries on Capitol Hill, the National Journal reports, that the administration could revise its missile shield strategy or go ahead with cutbacks to the U.S. stockpile as a means of drawing Russia into new negotiations. Foreign Policy Magazine reported ahead of your unannounced discussions with Lavrov, House committee chairman, subcommittee chairman, Mike Rogers asked that they have assurance as to what's going on there, essentially.

I would note that the last year's defense authorization bill calls for briefings on these discussions to the Congress, to the Armed Services Committee and the Foreign Relations Committee. It says "Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this act and not less than twice each year thereafter, the President or the President's designee shall brief the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate on the dialogue between the United States and the Russian Federation on issues related to limits or controls on nuclear arms, missile defense systems, and long-range conventional strike systems." The deadline I believe for that briefing would be March 2 this year.

So a first question to you: If you're confirmed in this position, will you honor that request as part of the NDAA?

Senator HAGEL. The request for the briefing?

Senator SESSIONS. Briefings, yes, the requirements for the briefings. Will you keep the Congress advised on any discussions dealing with national missile defense and dialogue with Russia on national missile defense and nuclear arms and long-range conventional strike systems?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, I commit to do that.

Senator SESSIONS. Also, there's a sense of Congress on certain agreements: "It is the sense of Congress that any agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation related to nuclear arms or missile defense systems or long-range conventional strike systems, obligating the United States to reduce or limit armed forces or armaments of the United States in any militarily significant manner may be made only pursuant to the treaty-making power of the President as set forth in Article II, Section 2, Clause 2, of the Constitution of the United States."

That is a sense of our Congress that any significant alteration of those deeply important relation between our two nations, the two most powerful nuclear nations in the world, would be done by treaty. Will you support that concept and before making significant changes present those changes to the Congress pursuant to a treaty, and not as a either secret or open bilateral agreement?

Senator HAGEL. So your question is will I commit to a briefing on all this?

Senator SESSIONS. No. Whether or not that any significant changes that would occur in our relationship on those issues, significant—"in any militarily significant manner may be made only pursuant to the treaty-making power of the President." And we would ask that that be presented to this Congress because we have treaties already that impact so much of this and Congress believes that any changes should also be made by treaty.

Senator HAGEL. Well, without getting into specifics of it, let me just commit to obviously consultation with Congress, with the authorizing committee, yes.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, it seems like we've not been consulted on the Biden trip and the Donilon trip. We expect that to be done. What's been going on is disturbing to us. The President said, you know, to Mr. Medvedev, that we'll have more flexibility after the election, and he was clearly responding to these issues, missile defense I think in particular and maybe nuclear issues also. He wasn't consulting with the American people, wasn't telling us or

the Congress what he planned to do, but he was apparently willing to discuss it with the Russian leaders.

So I guess I'm asking you, will you comply with the treaty-making matters? If these agreements are significant militarily, I believe they should be done by treaty and not by personal agreements between our two leaders.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I would commit to fulfilling any treaty obligations and any commitments to Congress and any consultations that Congress needs to be part of, absolutely.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, I'm not sure that answered the question, because the Congress is concerned about these kind of negotiations that are going on. We do not have—the President also has made it clear he believes in zero nuclear weapons. That is his policy for America. I think it's utterly unrealistic. It's just amazing to me. And that could lead us into unwise decisionmaking.

And Congress has a responsibility to the American people to ensure the national defense. We need to know and have you share those negotiations with us, and changes that impact our security relationships between us and Russia should be done by treaty, as they've been done in the past.

Senator HAGEL. I've never discussed any of the specifics of this with the President. I know he knows and believes and is committed to treaties. That's the purview

of the United States Senate, as the Senate passed the New START Treaty. All that goes into that negotiation with in this particular case Russia, certainly the Congress has to be involved in that.

Senator SESSIONS. That's very important, Senator Hagel, I just have to tell you, because there's unease here that that may not be in the works. There's been some discussion for some time about private unilateral or bilateral negotiations in which Congress is not involved, that impacts the national security of our country. That's why this was passed, just passed. So we expect you to comply with that, and I take your testimony that you would comply with that.

Senator HAGEL. I will comply with all requirements and laws, absolutely.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator King.

Senator KING. Senator Hagel, one of the first meetings I had after I began running for this office last summer was with a group of veterans, going all the way from World War II right up through Iraq and Afghanistan. I want to share with you one of the ideas that came out of that meeting because it's been touched upon today, and that is the issue of employability and employment of particularly recent veterans. The suggestion was made that the Army and the military has recruiters, people who help to bring people in, and perhaps it might make some sense for them to have the reciprocal of recruiters, outplacement people to deal with soldiers who are, men and women, who are about to leave, because there's an information gap, is what the veterans told me, between leaving the military active duty and then going into the Veterans Administration jurisdiction. There's a gap there.

You don't really need to respond, but that's a suggestion I might make, where it would be tremendously helpful to provide that kind of information—what the programs are, what's available, what the scholarships are, how the GI Bill works, all those things, to people. And I'm sure it's done to some extent now, but to really regularize that and increase it, to be comparable to the effort that's put into recruiting.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, Senator. I will think about that. I had not thought exactly about that potential, but I would say that as we think through how do we accommodate and fulfill commitments and assist our veterans, I think we've got to open up all vistas of new thinking and that is one that would deserve some exploration and if I'm confirmed I look forward to pursuing the idea with you.

Senator KING. Thank you.

I'm also serving on the Intelligence Committee and one of the issues—and you talked about this in your statement and it's been touched upon some today—is the whole issue of counterterrorism. Counterterrorism involves the actions of a number of agencies and bodies of the United States Government. I would commend to you that I think it deserves some real thought as to where the Department of Defense ends, stops, and CIA begins in terms of action and counterterrorism action.

I think there's some—it would be worthwhile for you, if you are confirmed, to meet with Mr. Brennan if he's confirmed to talk about the coordination between the two agencies, so we don't end up with similar, if not identical, functions in different regions of the world with whole different command structures, rules of engagement, and all of those kinds of things.

I think counterterrorism sort of spans, covers the gap or the relationship between traditional defense and the intelligence community.

Senator HAGEL. That is an area that is becoming more and more relevant, complicated, Title 10 versus Title 50 and all those dynamics. If confirmed, yes, if Mr. Brennan is confirmed, we'll be spending some time together.

Senator KING. A final thought, and I know you've touched upon this. I don't think we can adequately emphasize the importance of the cyber threat. That may well be the war of the future. My sense is that we aren't—we're all talking about it, but I'm not sure we have the sense of urgency. I know Secretary Panetta has increased or proposed the increase of that capacity. But people can die and our society could be brought to a standstill without a rocket ever taking off or an airplane penetrating our air space, and I hope that will be a point of emphasis because, as I say, I think that may be the next war.

Senator HAGEL. I agree. I, as you know, noted it in my opening statement. I agree with everything you've said. This is a huge issue that continues to loom large over our future and our security, and it will have, if confirmed, a lot of my attention.

Senator KING. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator KING [presiding]. In the absence of the chairman, Senator Ayotte, I believe it's your opportunity.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KING. Wow, that was fast.

Senator AYOTTE. You've been promoted very quickly.

Senator KING. Really, that's astounding. [Laughter.]

Senator AYOTTE. First of all, we've all expressed our deep respect for your service to our country, but also let me thank you for your endurance. We appreciate it.

I wanted to ask you about a speech that you made in 2007. It was at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and it was a speech entitled "The United States and Iran at Dangerous Crossroads." In that speech you, in referring to Iran, you said that "the strategy of containment remains relevant today."

So I wanted to ask you about that statement that you made in 2007 about "the strategy of containment remains relevant" with regard to Iran today. Now, that was in 2007, but why would you say that, first of all? And then, isn't that inconsistent with what you've been saying today with regard to containment?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I don't have the speech in front of me and I think there was more to it than just that few words that you quoted. If I recall, the entire speech was about how do we deal with Iran. If I recall, what I was inventorying in specific reference to containment was within that inventory what are the options. I don't think that speech says that I support it.

Senator AYOTTE. No, but you said that it was relevant to the discussion with Iran, and I guess I would ask you to say why do you think that that was a strategy that we should have considered? It was obviously one of the things you mentioned.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I didn't say it was a strategy, I don't think. As I said, in the context of how do we deal with—

Senator AYOTTE. I don't want to be unfair, but I think, just to be clear, the quote that you said was "The strategy of containment remains relevant." So why is it relevant with regard to Iran?

Senator HAGEL. The bigger point is what I was saying, I think—I haven't looked at that speech since I gave it, probably, but I do recall some of it. And the point was, what is the range of options that we would have to look at, the world would look at. Again, I didn't advocate it, I didn't recommend it, I didn't support it.

Senator AYOTTE. Was it that containment was one of the options?

Senator HAGEL. Yes. I mean, of course. When you look at the whole range of what your options are, that certainly would be one of them.

Senator AYOTTE. Do you think containment's one of the options now?

Senator HAGEL. No, I don't know. But it doesn't make any difference what I think. It's when you look at range, it's like the Global Zero. That was not a recommendation report. That was a range of goals, aspirations, possibilities. That wasn't in any way—that report never said we recommend the following. If I recall that speech, I think that was the same kind of what's the range of options.

Senator AYOTTE. Senator, I want to be clear: It does matter what you think, and obviously your understanding and thought process on these issues is very important to us. So as a follow-up, I know that Senator Vitter had asked you about a portion of the book that you wrote, "America, Our Next Chapter," and it was in that book

you had said that “The genie of nuclear armaments is already out of the bottom no matter what Iran does.” Obviously, North Korea, other powers. “In this imperfect world, sovereign nation states possession nuclear weapons capability, as opposed to stateless terrorist groups, will often respond with some degree of responsible, or at least sane, behavior.”

Do you believe that Iran responds or will respond with some degree of responsible or sane behavior?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first of all, it’s not what I suggested in that quote, as you know.

Senator AYOTTE. Well, it’s in the context of Iran, but I’m asking you just straightforwardly: Do you think that the Iranian regime responds—you talked about the difference between nation states versus, for example, stateless terrorist organizations. Do you believe, in the context of Iran, do you believe that the Iranian regime responds with some degree of responsible, or at least sane, behavior, or will respond like that?

Senator HAGEL. Well, so far they have not, and I have said, as you know, and I’ve said in that same book that you’re quoting from, that Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism. I’ve said that many times. So no is the answer to your question.

Senator AYOTTE. So if they’re not responding—I mean, they haven’t been responding with a level of, with a degree of responsible or sane behavior and, as you say in your book, that it’s a state sponsor of terrorism, I’m also struggling with the question of why you would have thought that it was appropriate for us to have direct, unconditional talks with Iran, because here we have a regime that doesn’t respond in a responsible or sane behavior, is a state sponsor of terrorism, and what we thought we could—why that would be an appropriate manner for us to address them?

Senator HAGEL. Well, first, I said “engagement.” I think we should talk. We actually are indirectly in the P5 Plus 1. We have been. I think that’s responsible. I think it’s always responsible to try to talk first.

North Korea, I don’t think that—I don’t consider North Korea a responsible, sane administration, but we are talking to North Korea. We’ve been talking bilaterally to North Korea. We’re talking with the Party of 6 to North Korea. I think that’s wise. I think it’s always wise to try to talk to people before you get into war.

Senator AYOTTE. But I think that you were not just—you were beyond the P5. You refer to direct discussions with our two countries, and also for establishing diplomatic ties with our country.

Senator HAGEL. Well, again, when I talked about the possibility of diplomatic ties or even I said, I think, in 2002 encouraging Iran to join the WTO, I’ve always thought that that’s smarter more wiser, if you can push, help push, institutions like China into world bodies, because when they go into world bodies they have to comply with some semblance of international behavior. It doesn’t mean they always will. They won’t. They cheat. But I think we’re smarter to do that.

I’ve never—Senator, I’ve never thought engagement is weakness. I never thought it was surrender. I never thought it was appeasement. I think it’s clearly in our interest. If that doesn’t work, then I think the President’s position and his strategy has been exactly

right: Get the United Nations behind you, get the international sanctions behind you, keep military options on the table. If the military option is the only option, it's the only option.

Senator AYOTTE. Just to be clear, I don't think that all engagement is weakness, either. But I think there's a huge distinction when we're dealing with a regime that is the largest state sponsor of terrorism, and given the fact that they have a long history, including in Iraq, with assisting the militias to murder our troops, including what they've done with Hezbollah and Hamas, what they're doing now in Syria. So I think there's always a distinction in how we deal with different players around the world, is my point.

I know that my time has expired and I will submit for the record questions that I think are very important about the VIRGINIA-class submarine. I share the important work done at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard with my colleagues Senator Jeanne Shaheen and also I know Senator King is very focused on that, and maintaining our submarine fleet. I know that Senator Blumenthal asked you about that as well.

I do have concerns that part of the Global Zero report does recommend that the *Ohio*-class submarine would actually be diminished down to 10. So I'll follow up with those questions and the record. I have to go now. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. I'd be glad to respond. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Ayotte.

Senator Donnelly.

Senator DONNELLY. No.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. Senator Fischer.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Senator Hagel. It's been a long day and I do appreciate your answers to these important questions.

When we spoke last week, we talked somewhat about the sequester, also budget concerns, the modernization of our nuclear forces. Especially being from Nebraska, you understand the importance of STRATCOM and its mission as it deals with deterrence that we use in this country and that we've used for many, many years and I believe has been very, very successful and it's a good point for us.

Today you also in your opening discussed the need to modernize our defensive forces. You spoke to Senator Blunt, also Senator Blumenthal, about the need to modernize our Navy.

I guess I would like to hear your thought process about how we're going to do this. Where's the money coming from? How are you going to advise the President in making these decisions? Because we're looking at sequester, we're looking at budget constraints. How is this all going to tie together, and what would be your advice to the President on how the Pentagon is going to address all of those budget constraints?

Senator HAGEL. Well, let's start with where we are. The Pentagon is adjusting, and I think responsibly, to our future based on the Budget Control Act of 2011. You know the details of that. The Chiefs have submitted plans. I think as we rebalance and refit and unwind the second war and all the other dynamics that are changing since the last decade, it gives us some new opportunities: au-

dits, all the acquisition focus, accountability. We are being forced, the Department of Defense, the take a hard at its priorities.

But as I've said before, it begins with mission and then the resources to fulfill that mission, and then what are the priorities within that mission.

To your specific question, how do you finance it all, well, if sequestration would take effect then all of this is going to be affected. That's exactly right. As you know, we've deferred some decisions. We've set back some of the schedules on some of our ships, planes, decisions on a number of things.

It isn't just the dollars that affect this, but it's the planning, it's the flexibility. It's the ability to bring all this together and then project and plan.

So in no way—I hope I did not give any indication that we were going to be able to continue to do everything for everybody everywhere. That's just not a reality.

Senator FISCHER. We can't.

Senator HAGEL. We can't.

Senator FISCHER. How do you decide, though? You've made commitments to members here today on philosophy, on working with this committee. Do we have a commitment to build up the Navy? Do we have a commitment to STRATCOM so that they can continue their mission of deterrence? Do we have those commitments?

How do you decide what's going to be the priority? What will your advice be? Is STRATCOM important? Should that be a priority? Would it be a priority in your advice to the President?

Senator HAGEL. Well, the Pentagon is working off the Defense Authorization Act of 2013, which this committee passed. And that is the directive that frames the budgetary restraints, except if sequestration takes effect. So that prioritizes, to your point, being what's important, what do you budget for, what do you finance. And we have to manage that.

If I am confirmed, then I'll be working closely with our Chiefs and all of our managers and decisionmakers on how we do this. On STRATCOM, I think STRATCOM is vitally important to the future of this country. It's been my position when I was in the Senate. It was my position long before I was in the Senate. Of the nine combatant commands—as you know, STRATCOM is one of them—that's a key command.

So we have to continue to fund our commands and find ways to do that. But that's going to require some tough choices and hard decisions.

Senator FISCHER. Right. Also, I believe we need to make sure we don't have hollow forces out there as well.

My time's up. Once again, I thank you. I thank you for your service. I thank you for being here today. I thank you for your willingness to continue to serve the people of this country.

Senator HAGEL. Senator, thank you.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Fischer.

Senator Blunt.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, I join everybody else, Senator Hagel, in thanking you for staying today and the answers you've given.

One of the things we were frustrate about was the difficulty of getting information on the groups you've spoken to in the last year, and of course the hundreds of groups you've spoken to in the course of your career would be too much to ask. I do have three comments from groups that I'm going to enter into the record, two comments you made before groups, one the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee conference in 2002; another Arab-American audience in 2007; and then in 2006, the one I'll put in the record right now and just enter the others, the Council on American-Islamic Relations Forum. "University of Chicago Professor John Mearsheimer praised Hagel for not being pro-Israel. He said 'Potential presidential candidates for 2008, like Hillary Clinton, John McCain, Joe Biden, and Newt Gingrich, were falling all over themselves to express their support for Israel. The only exception to that rule was Senator Chuck Hagel.'" Unfortunately, I don't have anything to go with that of what you might have said.

But some of the concerns of being—you know, I used to say when I was the Whip in the House that you could count on the House and the Senate to be, among other things, always pro-Israel, and I think that's been the mainstream of our views. I've seen a number of times, in fairness to you, where you've said you're pro-Israel, but that doesn't mean you have to be reflexively for everything that Israel is for.

These statements are a little—they're what they are. They're the things that were reported from comments you made that are out of the context of the other comments. But I'm going to put those all in the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator BLUNT. Also, earlier today I asked you about the comment about the bloated Pentagon. I want to get this straight. You said that that, those comments, were before the sequestration bill passed, and they were after. Sequestration passed on August 2. The Financial Times interview was on August 29. And what you said on August 29 in that Financial Times interview was you said "I think"—August 29, 2011. The quote out of the article was:

"The Defense Department I think"—this was your quote. "The Defense Department I think in many ways has been bloated. Let's look at the reality here. The Defense Department's gotten everything it wanted the last 10 years and more. We've taken priorities, we've taken dollars, we've taken programs, we've taken policies out of the State Department, out of a number of other Departments, and put them over in Defense."

So that "bloated" comment was after sequestration. Of course, this is the Department you now, 18 months later, if this nomination is approved, would be running. And again, where do we find that, those bloated things in the Defense Department, and what are you prioritizing? Another way to ask what Ms. Fischer was asking maybe is, are we going to let money drive strategy here or strategy drive the money? And as Secretary of Defense, which of those positions are you going to take and how are you going to advocate, here's the money we need for the strategy we must have

until we get to the reality of here's the money you have, now do the best you can with it? I hope you're an advocate for strategic-driven spending in the Pentagon, rather than just the caretaker of the money that winds up there.

Senator HAGEL. Senator, thank you. There are a lot of pieces and I know we've got time issues, but let me start this way. First, on the comments I made in the Financial Times interview, again as I addressed that today, that was an extensive interview about a lot of things. So I was three weeks off.

Senator BLUNT. Well, you were after the sequestration bill had passed, though. So you were talking—

Senator HAGEL. Not sequestration; the Budget Control Act.

Senator BLUNT. But that's what included—they were talking here about what would happen if you took these cuts.

Senator HAGEL. That's what I was talking about. But the Budget Control Act that was passed was implemented a few months later, which I agreed with, and obviously the majority of the Congress did as well, to try to find a trillion dollars overall in our government in savings and \$490 billion is coming out of DOD for the next 10 years.

But to your bigger point, you start there with the reality of what the Congress has passed, what the Congress has decided to appropriate for each Federal agency. In this current fiscal year that we're living in, as you know, it's a \$525 billion operating budget and \$88 billion for overseas contingencies. So the Department of Defense works within the framework of those numbers.

I've said a number of times here that I agree with you that budget alone should not drive our national security, of course not. What is the mission, as I've said? What are the priorities, which you just brought up about different projects that Senator Fischer and others have asked me about? How are going to fund everything? Should you fund everything?

Do times change? Are there different threats? Ten years ago, we put a lot of money in the Defense Department budget; there was no such thing as a cyber warfare threat. Do we need to do more there?

Do we need to change our force presence in Asia? Well, we've decided we're going to do that. That changes things. We're moving Marines around in the Pacific. That wasn't the case 10 years ago.

So things change. You manage and you direct your efforts and you lead based on the security interests of your country first. If I am confirmed, Senator, I will be a strong, have to be a strong advocate for the Defense Department. That will be part of my job. But that doesn't mean that I don't have some responsibilities for efficient use of the taxpayers' dollars and effective use of the taxpayers' dollars.

Senator BLUNT. Just the opposite, you do have that responsibility.

Senator HAGEL. I do, that's right.

Senator BLUNT. But I think the point is we want to be sure that you're advocating for the money you think you need to strategically accomplish what we can. Then obviously at the end of the day you have to deal with the will of the process to provide the money you

have. But we ought to let the money as much as possible be defined by the strategy rather than the other way around, Senator.

Senator HAGEL. I agree with that.

Senator BLUNT. I'm once again out of time.

Senator HAGEL. I agree with that, Senator. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Blunt.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Hagel, we have listened all afternoon to a series of questions about what you said in 2002, in 2006, in 2007. I expect, though, if you're confirmed as the Secretary of Defense the President of the United States will not turn to you and ask you about your floor speeches, as elegant as they were. He will ask you if you're prepared to advise him on matters of literally life and death, that you have prepared the Department of Defense to address every contingency in a thoughtful way, knowing the costs and the benefits; that he assumes, as I do and as you've stated repeatedly, your staunch commitment to our allies, in particular in the context today of the state of Israel; and that you are fundamentally committed to the welfare of our troops and families because you have seen as a soldier that ultimately they are the difference in our military.

So looking not backwards to a series of individual quotes and footnotes and etcetera, but looking ahead, if you are there and the President turns to you, can you give us—and I think you can; I'm convinced of that—the confidence that you will be prepared to give him the advice he needs to make life and death decisions which he as Commander in Chief must make?

Senator HAGEL. Senator, when the President asked me to consider this job I didn't want another job. I was not looking for another job. Lilibet and I had a pretty good life since I left the Senate, nothing personal. But the friendships that we've maintained here and valued here and the experiences we had here we will treasure for always. Highest privilege of my life, serving in this body.

I say that because I wasn't looking for another job. The President asked me to come see him and we had a long conversation one night, just the two of us, over an hour. And we talked about the job, the world, security, the future. And within the context of that conversation, we got down into what about this job.

I didn't try to sell him on the job, that I could do it. In fact, when he asked me about why am I qualified or why would I be uniquely qualified, I said I'm not. There are a lot of very qualified Americans who could do this job. I don't think a lot of them in the sense that they're out there everywhere. I think there are some qualifications for this job. But I'm not the only one.

And I said: Mr. President, I'm not going to sit here and try to convince you that I'm the right person. You know me, you know my record, you know what I believe. I've had the opportunity to work with him pretty closely over the last four years as I served as co-chairman with you and Senator Levin's former colleague, Senator Dave Boren from Oklahoma, on the President's Intelligence Advisory Board. That's allowed me to stay pretty current with intelligence and make a contribution maybe a little bit there. In the last

four years I've served on Secretary Gates's, Secretary Panetta's Policy Advisory Boards.

So I do have some understanding, as I told him, of this. But why I think when Lilibet and I talked about it I agreed to go forward with this is because of the tremendous opportunities and the important time that we are living in and the opportunities we now have to help make a better world. I think the next few years are going to be as defining and as important in this country truly as any few years post-World War II.

I told the President he was here at a very defining time, and if I can help him do that, if I can help this country, I want to do it. The experiences I'll bring to the job, Senator, you know. I think I've got a pretty varied background on a lot of things. I think always in the end, like any job, judgment is the ultimate determinant of everything. I think experience is a factor, varied experience, responsible experience. But that all adds up to judgment. And I hope if I'm confirmed I can do those things to give the President and this country wise, informed, honest advice, and I will do everything within my power to do that.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator CRUZ.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Hagel, thank you for remaining through what has been a very long hearing.

I'd like to ask some additional questions to further explore your positions and your record, and begin with asking: Are you familiar with an individual named Chas Freeman?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, yes.

Senator CRUZ. He was, if I understand correctly, a vice chairman at the Atlantic Council; is that correct?

Senator HAGEL. When I became chairman of the Atlantic Council after I left the Senate to replace General Jim Jones, he was one of many board members and I think was a vice chairman. But I never really worked with him in the Atlantic Council, but I know him, yes.

Senator CRUZ. And you and he were part of a group that traveled last year to China together; is that correct as well?

Senator HAGEL. No, that's not correct.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. There have been press reports to that effect.

Senator HAGEL. Well, those press reports are incorrect. I have never been on any trip with Chas Freeman.

Senator CRUZ. There have also been press reports that has described Mr. Freeman as helping coordinate efforts to defend your nomination. Is that an accurate characterization?

Senator HAGEL. I haven't spoken with Chas Freeman in years. I don't know of any activity that he's involved in to endorse me. There are a lot of people I appreciate are endorsing me and supporting me, but I haven't talked to Chas Freeman in years.

Senator CRUZ. Is he someone whose judgment you respect?

Senator HAGEL. I think Chas Freeman has been an important public servant for this country. There are a lot of different opinions that people have on different issues. I don't agree with everybody

and it's pretty clear everybody doesn't agree with me. So that's okay.

Senator CRUZ. Do you consider his views well within the mainstream?

Senator HAGEL. Well, what views are you speaking about, Senator?

Senator CRUZ. His views on the Middle East and on the Nation of Israel?

Senator HAGEL. Well, I'm not actually that familiar with all of his views. I can't speak for Chas Freeman.

Senator CRUZ. All right. Well, let's move on to your record then. You stated in your prepared remarks: "My overall world view has never changed." I have to admit I find that difficult to reconcile with statements and positions you've taken for over a decade and what seems to me a fairly significant shift since you've been nominated for Secretary of Defense.

So what I'd like to do is go through some past statements, past positions of yours and just clarify if you agree with them or not, beginning with number one. In 2001 you voted against legislation sanctioning Iran. Now, am I correct you no longer agree with that position; you think sanctions against Iran are a good policy today?

Senator HAGEL. I have said on the record multilateral international sanctions—

Senator CRUZ. Do you agree with sanctions against Iran?

Senator HAGEL. I'm sorry?

Senator CRUZ. Do you think sanctions against Iran are a good idea today?

Senator HAGEL. Yes, yes. Yes, I always have.

Senator CRUZ. So it's fair—I'm trying to characterize your—I'm trying to understand your views and characterize them fairly. It's fair to say you no longer agree with the position in 2001 that we should not be sanctioning Iran?

Senator HAGEL. That was a unilateral sanction and the Bush administration—

Senator CRUZ. Today do you think unilateral sanctions are a bad idea?

Senator HAGEL. Well, it's a different time now because we now have international sanctions on. I've supported the President's position—

Senator CRUZ. Senator Hagel, please answer the question I asked. Today do you think unilateral sanctions would be a bad idea?

Senator HAGEL. Not today, 12 years later.

Senator CRUZ. So that is not a view you'd agree with today?

Senator HAGEL. Because times have changed. We now have international sanctions on them.

Senator CRUZ. The second slide: In 2007 you voted against legislation designating the Iranian Revolutionary Guard as a terrorist group.

Senator HAGEL. That's correct.

Senator CRUZ. You no longer agree with that policy. Today your position is the Iranian Revolutionary Guard is a terrorist group; is that correct?

Senator HAGEL. The Revolutionary Guard is part of the Iranian government. The reason I voted against—

Senator CRUZ. Sir, I'm not asking the reason. I'm asking for your views today. Do you believe the Iranian Revolutionary Guard is a terrorist group, yes or no?

Senator HAGEL. It is part of a state sponsor of terrorism, so it's part of Iran, which I've said is a sponsor of state terrorism.

Senator CRUZ. Is that a yes?

Senator HAGEL. That vote wasn't that question. That vote gave—

Senator CRUZ. I'm asking your views today. Do you believe the Iranian Revolutionary National Guard is a terrorist group?

Senator HAGEL. It is part of a terrorist—it is part of a government that supports terrorism.

Senator CRUZ. Is that a yes or a no?

Senator HAGEL. It's the answer I just gave you.

Senator CRUZ. All right, we'll move on to the next one. 2008, you also voted against comprehensive Iran sanctions. We've already discussed that today you agree with sanctions, so that is another position—

Senator HAGEL. That again was a unilateral sanction that the Bush administration was opposed to, and the Secretary of State of this country, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, wrote that.

Senator CRUZ. Sir, my time is limited. I understand that you want to give reasons for the past positions. We've discussed the reasons. I'm simply trying to clarify your positions today.

If you look at number four, in 2010 you stated you're not sure it's necessary to keep all options on the table with regard to Iran's nuclear program. Do you agree with that position today or is that no longer your position?

Senator HAGEL. I don't recall that. I have always said that all options remain on the table. I don't recall that speech.

Senator CRUZ. So this is not your position today? I'm just trying to understand.

Senator HAGEL. No, it's not. I have said that all options must remain on the table, including—in fact, in an op-ed I wrote with two former CENTCOM commanders last year—

Senator CRUZ. And the final one I'm going to ask you: In a 1998 Senate hearing you stated that the United States has “tilted too far towards Israel in the Middle East peace process.” Do you continue to agree with this position or is that no longer your position today?

Senator HAGEL. I don't remember that, the context of the hearing or the speech or all the things I said in it. No, I don't think the United States has tilted too far to Israel. I support the President's position on Israel. I've said in my book and other speeches that I strongly support Israel.

Senator CRUZ. So you do not agree with—you do not agree with this policy. I will point out that I have a list of 10 other statements in the past which I'm pretty confident if I asked you you would say you do not agree with, and they're all statements and quotes from you.

In my judgment, your record as a U.S. Senator—and you and I don't know each other. We do not have a personal relationship. But I think your record and your past statements as a U.S. dem-

onstrate greater antagonism for the Nation of Israel than any member of this body, and also demonstrate a greater willingness to stand against sanctions, stand against military action, stand against any strong position against Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, terrorists.

And that ultimately is why the Washington Post described your foreign policy views as “near the fringe of the Senate.” And that raises I think very serious questions about your suitability to serve as the Secretary of Defense. In my view, having a Secretary of Defense who is not viewed as supporting credible, strong military action makes it more likely the United States will be drawn into military conflict, and I think that would be a very unfortunate outcome.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Cruz.

That ends the second round. If you want an opportunity to comment on that. If not, I will ask you some other questions.

By the way, Senator Ayotte, in reaction to one of the things you said about it doesn't matter what I believe, I think what you were—first of all, I think it does matter. We all would agree it very much matters what I believe. But I think what you were pointing out is that ultimately what matters is what the President believes. I think that's what you were aiming at.

Senator HAGEL. That's exactly what I was aiming at, and that's what I meant to say, that's right. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. I'm now going to ask you the standard questions that I've delayed, and these are just the questions we ask of every nominee.

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

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Have you assumed any duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

Senator HAGEL. I'm sorry? I didn't hear.

Chairman LEVIN. Have you assumed any duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

Senator HAGEL. No.

Chairman LEVIN. Will you ensure that your staff complies with deadlines established for requested communications, including questions for the record in hearings?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. If you are confirmed, will you cooperate in providing witnesses and briefers in response to Congressional requests?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Will those witnesses be protected from reprisal for their testimony or their briefings?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify upon request before this committee?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. And do you agree that you will provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

Senator HAGEL. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, we've completed our second round and that means that we can—if there's other questions remaining, we can take a few minutes for them. Is there anybody that wants to? Yes, Senator King.

Senator KING. One very brief question. In watching television over the last week or so, I've seen an ad questioning your nomination, a television ad. And I just wondered if you or any of the people that have worked on preparing you for this has any idea who's sponsoring that ad, because it's not apparent from the ad itself? Have you gotten to the bottom of that?

Senator HAGEL. Senator, first, I have not seen any of those ads. I know they're there. I long ago figured out the better way to live life is not get drug down in the underbrush of these kinds of things. So I don't pay attention to it. My focus is on what's important about this assignment, this job, if I am confirmed, and in particular this committee and this body, and preparing myself hopefully for what matters in the possibility—with the possibility that the United States Senate confirms me for this job.

So I have not asked anybody that question. I don't know, have never seen the ads.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you very much, and thank you for your testimony today. You've been forthright and strong, and again I appreciate your commitment to this country.

Senator HAGEL. Senator, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Another question?

Senator CRUZ. Very briefly, I wanted to thank you for your commitment to this committee, number one, to provide a complete accounting and copies of the speeches you've given; and number two, to respond to the letter that you received two days ago requesting specific financial information. I appreciate your commitment to do that.

I also would ask you—in our discussion about Chas Freeman you said you were not particularly close with him, but that your understanding was his views were within the mainstream, if that's a fair characterization.

Senator HAGEL. No, I didn't say in the mainstream. I said I don't know.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. What I would ask you to do also as a follow-up is to review in particular a speech that Mr. Freeman gave on March 4, 2011, at the Palestine Center in Washington, DC, and give me your judgment in terms of whether you agree with the views on the Middle East and the views of the Nation of Israel that are expressed in that speech. In particular, I would be interested in your views on the fifth paragraph of that speech.

In my view, the views expressed in that speech are not accurate and not within the mainstream, and I would be interested if you concur in that assessment or if you have a different assessment.

Chairman LEVIN. That's a question you're asking for the record?

Senator CRUZ. For the record, yes.
[The information referred to follows:]
[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. And other questions for the record need to be submitted, as I said before, by tomorrow at 5:00 p.m.

I assume, Senator Cruz, that when you said that he's agreed to provide all of the speeches, it would be all the speeches that he has access to; is that fair?

Senator CRUZ. That he has or that he can get copies of. I would certainly hope and expect that he would engage in reasonable efforts to get copies of speeches if he doesn't have them in his immediate files.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, we'll say that if you have easy access or reasonable access to speeches you've given, even though you don't have them, that we would expect that you could provide this as well, as well as the other information you indicated you're perfectly happy to submit, you just haven't had the time to get it ready.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, I will commit to that and every request, as we have. As I said, some of this I didn't see until yesterday. But everything that is out there that we can find, we'll make every effort to get it and provide it.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, we very much appreciate that, and your openness in your responses today.

Again, the record will be open until tomorrow, as I said, at 5:00. But your answers we would hope and expect would be in by Monday at 5:00 p.m., because we would very much like to move this nomination forward to a resolution, first on this committee, and that timetable would help us move in an expeditious way.

We thank you. We thank your family and your friends.

And we will now—unless there are other questions, we will now stand adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 5:50 p.m., the committee adjourned.]