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AN INDEPENDENT PERSPECTIVE OF UNITED STATES DEFENSE POLICY IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

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AN INDEPENDENT PERSPECTIVE OF UNITED STATES DEFENSE POLICY IN THE ASIA–PACIFIC REGION

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:37 a.m. in Room SD–G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator John McCain (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators McCain, Ayotte, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Reed, Nelson, McCaskill, Manchin, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly, Hirono, Kaine, and King.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman MCCAIN. Good morning. The Armed Services Committee meets this morning to receive testimony on United States defense policy in the Asia-Pacific. The National Defense Authorization Act [NDAA] for Fiscal Year 2015 instructed the Secretary of Defense to commission an independent review of United States rebalance to the Asia-Pacific. This review would assess the risks to U.S. national security interests in the region, analyze current and planned U.S. force structure, and evaluate key capability gaps and shortfalls.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies was selected to conduct this review, and they have now provided it to the Congress. I offer my thanks and appreciation to CSIS for a first-rate independent assessment of our policy in the Asia-Pacific region. Reports like these are an invaluable way for this committee to gain insights and consider serious recommendations on the way forward.

To present the review's findings, I am pleased to welcome Dr. Michael Green, senior vice president for Asia and Japan chair at CSIS and one of the report's study directors; and Lieutenant General Thomas Conant, former deputy commander at U.S. Pacific Command [PACOM] and a member of the report's senior review board.

America's national interests in the Asia-Pacific region are deep and enduring. We seek to maintain a balance of power that fosters the peaceful expansion of free societies, free trade, free markets, and free commons—air, sea, space, and cyber. These are values that we share with an increasing number of Asia's citizens. And for 7 decades, administrations of both parties have worked with our

friends and allies in the region to uphold this rules-based order and to enlist new partners in this shared effort.

This is what the rebalance to Asia-Pacific is supposed to be all about. The rebalance has shown some success, including efforts like the Trans-Pacific Partnership [TPP]; new levels of cooperation between Japan, Australia, and India; and new forms of military access to the Philippines, Australia, Singapore, and Vietnam.

But ultimately, the rebalance policies fail to adequately address the shifting military balance in any serious manner. I note the report's conclusion that, and I quote, "The Obama administration has not articulated a clear, coherent, or consistent rebalance strategy. The U.S. rebalance must be enhanced if the United States is to defend its vital interests in the PACOM area of responsibility."

China is engaged, as we all know, in a rapid military modernization deliberately designed to counteract or thwart American military strengths. Under Xi Jinping, China is not just building up its military but reorganizing it to better wage modern, joint warfare at the close direction of the Chinese Communist Party.

Despite their claims to the contrary, make no mistake, the Chinese are not done with their land reclamation activities in the South China Sea. Indeed, it has been disappointing to see how the United States seems to have been totally caught off guard by the pace and scope of these activities.

A year ago this month, this committee held a hearing with Director Clapper where we discussed Chinese reclamation. At that time, China had reclaimed a total of 400 acres in the Spratly Islands. Today, that figure is a staggering 3,200 acres, with extensive infrastructure construction underway or already complete.

It is shameful that what is known publicly about China's reclamation activities has come from the CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative and not the United States Government, which should have been providing needed strategic clarity by releasing photos of these developments every step of the way.

While our government has fallen short, we owe a debt of gratitude to CSIS for providing true transparency of China's maritime activities.

Going forward, routine naval and aviation presence and freedom of navigation operations are necessary to demonstrate that the United States will not recognize the legality of China's excessive claims, and will continue to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows.

I was pleased to see the freedom of navigation operation in the Paracel Islands last week, and I look forward to seeing another conducted inside 12 nautical miles of Mischief Reef in the near future.

The Pacific theater of World War II taught this Nation, at a terrible price, that we cannot afford to garrison our military power back in Hawaii or the continental United States. If anything, China's activities in the South China Sea, and the instability and uncertainty they have generated in the Asia-Pacific, are a reminder of the importance of sustaining a predictable, credible, and robust forward presence capable of shaping the peacetime security environment and prevailing in the event of conflict.

This is a major focus of the CSIS report, and we look forward to hearing from our witnesses on its specific recommendations.

For example, given the demands on our carrier fleet globally, the sailing time required to traverse the Pacific Ocean, the additional combat power a second carrier would provide, and the strong signal it would send our partners in the region, I believe we should take a hard look at the trade-offs associated with stationing a second carrier in the Pacific.

Even as we devote the preponderance of our attention and funding to large platforms like aircraft carriers, we must remember that they are only as effective as the payloads they are able to deliver. We cannot lose sight of the importance of weapons, sensors, decoys, jammers, and other technologies to our warfighting effectiveness. And we must continue to push the envelope in adapting and innovating existing payloads to deliver new capabilities.

These will be a key element in closing the gap identified by the CSIS report in capabilities that give the United States an asymmetric, cost-imposing counter to potential competitors.

I also would like to note the CSIS report's endorsement of the relocation plan for United States facilities in Okinawa. I continue to support the current relocation plan, including the construction of the Futenma Relocation Facility; the ultimate closure of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma; and the redeployment of Marines to Guam, Australia, and Hawaii.

Taken together, this plan will reduce our overall presence in Okinawa, relocate United States forces to less populated areas of the island, and generate a more operationally resilient force posture across the region.

Despite a series of setbacks in the past year, I continue to have confidence that Prime Minister Abe and the Government of Japan will be able to execute the necessary realignment of United States force in Okinawa.

This committee will also continue its oversight of the buildup on Guam, including the cost of new housing construction there.

There are several more important issues I hope we will discuss throughout the course of the hearing, and this committee's ongoing consideration of the CSIS report and its recommendations.

Once again, I would like to thank all those at CSIS who worked so hard on this important report, and I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses.

Senator Reed?

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JACK REED

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me thank you for calling this very, very important hearing.

I also want to welcome our witnesses, Dr. Green and General Conant. Thank you for your extraordinary service.

The report recently issued by CSIS is very thoughtful in addressing the challenges that we face in the Asia-Pacific region. Thank you for that.

In the last few years, security in the region has grown more complicated and challenging for the United States. China has become more assertive in the South China Sea, alarming its neighbors and

militarizing land features in a body of water that is critical for trade and regional peace.

Kim Jong-un has destabilized the Korean Peninsula even further with nuclear and ballistic missile developments.

Regimes as authoritarian and insulated as North Korea are brittle and prone to collapse. How we would deal with such a collapse, and the security and humanitarian problems that would ensue, is an ongoing debate and challenge for United States Forces Korea and PACOM.

As the Asia-Pacific region grows more complicated, the Defense Department faces an increasing number of international challenges also, including ISIL [the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant] as a growing international threat; and a resurgent Russia, which is exerting its military influence to undermine European security, further destabilizing the Middle East and also obviously has access to the Pacific.

Additionally, we face an increasingly austere fiscal environment. We must learn to do more with less.

While the administration has sought to rebalance the Asia-Pacific region, where most of our long-term strategic interests lie, that effort has faced challenges from the exigencies of the day.

I appreciate the time and effort that went into producing this thoughtful report, and I would like to hear from the witnesses about how we should position ourselves to better implement the rebalance within the context of the global challenges facing the Department of Defense and the government as a whole.

Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Chairman MCCAIN. Dr. Green?

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL J. GREEN, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ASIA AND JAPAN CHAIR, THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Dr. GREEN. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, members of the committee, and staff, thank you for this opportunity on behalf of my co-leads at CSIS, Dr. Kathleen Hicks and Mark Cancian, and all of the contributors to the report, including our excellent senior review panel, represented today by Lieutenant General Conant. This is an opportunity that we appreciate, to give you the results of our study.

We conducted this study in a first iteration in 2012 and concluded that the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific is worthy of our support and our efforts but needed more intense strategic conceptualization and resourcing. We concluded at that time that the United States interest is in shaping an environment in the Asia-Pacific region where cooperation with China and among all countries is possible but that to build that future we had to have deterrent capabilities, the partnerships, the presence, the capacity, to ensure that no one country tried to change the rules that have governed this region and led to peace and prosperity for many decades.

Since 2012, four developments have made a reassessment of the rebalance necessary.

First, defense budget cuts have limited the Department of Defense's ability to implement critical rebalance initiatives, particu-

larly as those resources come under stress from challenges in EUCOM [United States European Command] and CENTCOM [United States Central Command].

Second, the threat from so-called anti-access/area denial, A2/AD [anti-access/area-denial], is growing as states in the region seek to deny the United States the ability to project power or even maintain bases in the Western Pacific.

Third, I think we have found in the last 2 years that China's tolerance for risk in relations with the United States and neighboring countries is significantly higher than anyone would have anticipated.

And fourth, North Korea has demonstrated that it will continue with impunity on its program to develop nuclear weapons and the ballistic missiles to deliver them against our allies and, their ultimate goal, the United States itself.

Taken together, these trends suggest that the United States rebalance must be enhanced, if the U.S. is to defend our interests and our allies in the Asia-Pacific region. To that end, CSIS, in this report, has made four major recommendations for strengthening the rebalance.

First, and this was a theme in our first report, and one the chairman just mentioned, the United States has to align our Asia strategy within the United States Government and with allies and partners, and articulate the strategy in a way that is compelling, that provides guidance to our forces, and confidence to our allies.

When we began working on this project, we asked where we could find a document that described the strategic concept of the rebalance, and we were recommended to read the speeches about the rebalance by principles in the administration, and we did. And you will see in the report our findings that, in many cases, the articulation of our strategy is inconsistent, that priorities are listed differently, appear and disappear.

And so there is still, in the region among our allies, and I think with our commands, some confusion about not the importance of the Pacific—I think that is clear—not the importance of rebalancing our forces in the Pacific, but what is our bottom line? What are we willing to defend? How do we view, for example, China's operations in the South China Sea? What is the degree of our willpower? These are questions we continue to hear.

So our first recommendation is that the administration needs to, with Congress and with our allies, work on aligning our views of the strategy and clarifying our concept. The Congress has already required the next administration to do an interagency report on Asia strategy. We fully endorse that. We recommend that the Congress consider establishing an Asia-Pacific observers group, comparable to the arms control observers group in the Cold War era, to help make sure that our message to allies and between branches of government is well-aligned.

The second recommendation, the United States, in our view, needs to strengthen ally and partner capability, capacity, resilience, and interoperability. We have different allies and partners in the Asia-Pacific region at different levels of technical competence, different geographic circumstances. At the high end, with allies like Japan, Australia, the Republic of Korea, we recommend moving to-

ward more of a federated defense concept, where we are pooling our best technology and resources. A good example of that potential is evident in the Japanese and Australia discussions of jointly developing a new diesel attack sub.

Second, we believe that states that are struggling to maintain capacity and resilience in the face of a significantly larger Chinese military presence, the Philippines and so forth, need our help with basic capabilities such as maritime domain awareness. Fortunately, Japan, Korea, Australia, our major partners, are helping, and we should network with these allies to help frontline states, like the Philippines, with their own capacity and resilience.

And third, we recommend creating a new joint task force for the Western Pacific. The reason is that, in discussions with our allies in particular, we found a disconnect in command and control when it comes to these maritime problems. We have a joint and combined command in Korea, very effective. But the challenge in the East China Sea and South China Sea is such that we think that both the Pacific Command and our Japanese allies need to create command-and-control structures that in real-time are working together constantly, that are agile and ready for the challenges we face.

Our third recommendation, the U.S. should sustain and expand our regional presence. We recommend continuing to implement and resource key posture initiatives in Japan, Australia, and, of course, Guam, and also increasing in some areas our forward capabilities. Particularly important are amphibious lift, which is insufficient for the Marine Corps even before we distribute them to Guam, to northern Australia. Second, additional attack subs—undersea warfare is our trump card, our long-term advantage.

And we recommended studying the deployment of a second carrier in the Western Pacific, probably in Yokosuka. That is a big thing to take on, but we think there is merit, as the chairman mentioned.

Finally, we recommended that the United States accelerate the development of innovative concept capabilities to deal with the A2/AD environment that is becoming increasingly challenging, including things like innovative missile defense from direct energy to railgun, to powder guns to prevent competitors from imposing costs on us and to develop more cost-effective countermeasures ourselves. This will cost money, but, in our view, many of the initiatives described are within the realm of the possible if we take the threat and our interests seriously.

And I would conclude by saying, while the committee asked us to focus, in particular, on the Department of Defense [DOD] and the Pacific Command's responsibilities, Asia is a region where the United States has, on the whole, succeeded for over 200 years because we have combined our military capabilities with a commitment to trade, to supporting our democratic values, and to building partnerships. So we are describing one tool in a broader strategic toolkit necessary for the United States.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Green follows:]

PREPARED JOINT STATEMENT BY DR. MICHAEL J. GREEN AND LT. GEN. THOMAS L. CONANT

Thank you Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, members of the Committee, and staff. We appreciate this opportunity to testify today on our views of the United States rebalance to the Asia-Pacific and the importance of strengthening United States commitment to the Asia-Pacific region.

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT

Congress directed in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015 that the Department of Defense solicit an independent organization to assess United States strategy and force posture in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as that of U.S. allies and partners. The Department of Defense chose CSIS to conduct that assessment. CSIS built on a previous Congressionally-required assessment of United States defense posture in the Asia-Pacific. That assessment looked specifically at the realignment of U.S. Marines and their dependents and was concluded in 2012.

The current study required us to assess the region more broadly, and to achieve that wider view we assembled CSIS experts on the full range of the Asia-Pacific, as well as on defense capabilities and development. Research included interviews with leading defense and security officials, experts, and military officers throughout the United States government and foreign capitals. Michael Green, Kathleen Hicks, and Mark Cancian led that study for CSIS and were aided by a senior advisor group that includes General Conant. The report before you reflects the seriousness with which CSIS undertook this assessment as well as the range of challenges and opportunities facing the United States across the Asia-Pacific region.

KEY FINDINGS

The CSIS study team made four main findings about the security situation in the Asia-Pacific. The first two findings concern the need for greater commitment and direction from Washington, the second two findings address Beijing's growing capabilities and increased appetite for risk.

First, the Obama administration has not articulated a clear, coherent, or consistent rebalance strategy, particularly when it comes to managing China's rise. Many U.S. allies and partners in the region are looking to uphold the regional and international order that has enabled so many people throughout Asia to enjoy greater security and prosperity. Yet, too often U.S. statements have listed different objectives and priorities for the rebalance to Asia, confusing even the most careful observers. Without a single strategy document to guide the rebalance, this confusion will continue.

Second, defense budget cuts have limited the Defense Department's ability to the implement critical rebalance initiatives. Cuts to the defense budget, and in particular the uncertainty caused by the combination of sequestration and the Budget Control Act, leave the Defense Department insufficient resources, and insufficient flexibility, to prepare for the growing range of challenges confronting the United States. Additionally, meeting demands in other regions—from ISIS to Russia—will require a level of resources and agility that is impossible under the current budget arrangements.

Third, the threat from so-called anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) threats is rising as some states seek to deny the United States the ability to project power in Asia. The breadth and pace of A2/AD investments throughout Asia, especially by China, are creating the potential for countries to hold at risk U.S. forward deployed and forward operating forces throughout the Western Pacific. Regional A2/AD capabilities are evolving more rapidly than the U.S. ability to counter them, requiring that the Department of Defense and regional allies work together if they are to maintain the ability to project power in East Asia.

Fourth, China's tolerance for risk has exceeded most expectations. China has surprised many experts by engaging in a series of coercive actions against neighboring states, including the creation of artificial features in disputed waters of the South China Sea. China's apparent willingness to challenge vital elements of the existing rules-based regional and international order should be of concern to U.S. policymakers, and to others around the world who believe a rules-based order provides benefits to all.

Taken together these trends suggest that the U.S. rebalance must be enhanced if the United States is to defend its vital interests in the PACOM area of responsibility. Executing an effective Asia strategy will require a clear and consistent but agile approach; continuous dialogue with regional allies, partners, and competitors; robust economic engagement throughout the region; development of new military

concepts and capabilities for deterrence, defense, and crisis management; and close cooperation between the executive and legislative branches. We suggest 29 recommendations for doing so.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

The report's recommendations fall into four key areas, discussed briefly below. Efforts are ongoing in many of these areas and should remain top priorities, but additional efforts are needed in other areas to adequately implement the rebalance.

First, the United States should align Asia strategy within the U.S. government and with allies and partners. Although the Obama administration issued a series of speeches and documents on the rebalance, there remains no central U.S. government document that describes the rebalance strategy and its associated elements. In interviews with leaders throughout the Department of Defense, in various U.S. agencies, on Capitol Hill, and across the Asia-Pacific, the study team heard consistent confusion about the rebalance strategy and concern about its implementation. Indeed, a 2014 study by CSIS found that language used to describe the rebalance has changed substantially since its announcement in 2011. Addressing this confusion will require that the executive branch develop and then articulate a clear and coherent strategy and discuss that strategy with Congress as well as with allies and partners across the world. We recommend preparing an Asia-Pacific strategic report; increasing administration outreach to Congress through an Asia-Pacific Observers Group; ensuring alignment between strategy and resources in the next QDR (now known as the Defense Strategy Review); better coordinating U.S. strategy with allies and partners; and expanding confidence building mechanisms and crisis management with China.

Second, the United States should strengthen ally and partner capability, capacity, resilience, and interoperability. The United States needs robust allies and partners across the Asia-Pacific, but we found growing concern that security challenges are outpacing the capabilities of regional states. Many allies and partners are struggling to mitigate security risks, particularly those having to do with maritime disputes in the South China Sea and East China Sea. The United States seeks and benefits from the success of all states throughout the region, so building ally and partner security capability and capacity is in the U.S. interest. Working together more closely, through coordination of strategic approaches and greater interoperability, is an important step in this direction. Strengthening regional security capability, capacity, resilience, and interoperability requires a differentiated strategy that works with highly capable militaries like Japan, Australia, India, South Korea, and Singapore while also assisting states in Southeast Asia struggling to meet basic defense needs. We recommend pursuing what we call federated approaches with highly capable regional allies; building maritime security capacity in Southeast Asia; forming a standing U.S. joint task force for the Western Pacific; encouraging Japan to establish a joint operations command; and deepening regional whole-of-government humanitarian assistance and disaster relief expertise.

Third, the United States should sustain and expand its regional military presence. We encountered concern both in Washington and in foreign capitals about the sustainability of U.S. military presence throughout the region. Forward-stationed U.S. forces are one of the most important ways to signal U.S. political commitment to the region. The political and military value of forward presence is enormous. U.S. military presence serves as a stabilizing force in the region, helping to deter conflict on the Korean Peninsula and manage crises from the South China Sea through the Indian Ocean. Forward presence provides opportunities for partnership, interoperating, training, and exercising with allies and partners that U.S.-based forces cannot support. We recommend continuing to implement and resource key posture initiatives; increasing surface fleet presence; improving undersea capacity; deploying additional amphibious lift; continuing to diversify air operating locations; bolstering regional missile defenses; advancing and adapting the U.S. Army's Regionally Aligned Forces concept; addressing logistical challenges; stockpiling critical precision munitions; and enhancing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance cooperation with allies.

Fourth, the United States should accelerate development of innovative capabilities and concepts. We identified capability gaps in two types of areas. First are those capabilities required to offset an emerging risk to U.S. forces, such as the growing ballistic missile risk to U.S. ships and forward bases. Second are those capabilities that the United States could develop to provide an asymmetric counter to potential regional competitors. Both will be needed for the U.S. military to retain a resilient forward presence and the ability to project combat power in the Asia-Pacific, despite competitors' efforts to constrain U.S. leaders by increasing the risk to U.S. forces.

Existing concepts and capabilities must be updated to ensure that the future force is capable of deterring and prevailing in potential conflicts. China's development of anti-access/area-denial capabilities aims to restrict U.S., ally, and partner freedom of maneuver. To overcome this challenge, the United States is developing new concepts of operation and next-generation capabilities. However, the security environment is highly dynamic and will require a culture of adaptability, a willingness to try new approaches and risk failure through experimentation, and the ability to move rapidly from concept to acquisition. We recommend institutionalizing a culture of experimentation; encouraging rapid platform evolution; developing advanced long-range missiles; funding innovative missile defense concepts; fielding additional air combat systems; exploiting the U.S. undersea advantage; and augmenting space, cyber, and electronic warfare capabilities.

Many of the efforts described above would require additional resources, as we describe in more detail in the full report. If the United States is to protect its interests in Asia, then meeting these resource challenges should be a top priority for U.S. leaders, both in the administration and in Congress.

CONCLUSION

The initiatives outlined above are focused on the defense portion of the rebalance, as directed by Section 1059 of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act. However, additional effort is needed not just on the defense component of the rebalance, but on the prosperity and values aspects as well. Passing the Trans-Pacific Partnership, for example, is an economic initiative but is vital to regional security, as well as prosperity. Strengthening the rebalance to Asia will require that Washington use all the tools at its disposal if the United States and its allies and partners are to maintain a secure, peaceful, prosperous, and free Asia-Pacific region.

Chairman MCCAIN. Thank you.

General?

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL THOMAS L. CONANT, USMC (RET.), FORMER DEPUTY COMMANDER, UNITED STATES PACIFIC COMMAND

General CONANT. Senator McCain, Senator Reed, and members, thank you for allowing us to come here to talk to you.

My message is simple, as it says in the report. I am a strong believer that there is a strategic imperative, that we have a very clear and concise message to our partners and allies and to the world on what the rebalance really means. I think that strategy and that message needs to be consistent in its vision and in its articulation across the whole of government.

And then I think you need that continuous engagement with allies and partners throughout the region to reassure them that we are there for them, and that the rebalance is, in reality, a fact.

From the defense side of the house, Chairman, I think we will see new concepts we will have to look at as we study this problem set that China has presented to us.

You will see more distributed operations, dispersal of forces, and such. Long-range strike in both weapons and platforms will become an imperative.

And then I think there will be the proper investment in both naval platforms and air platforms, not to include Army.

So there is a lot to discuss, and I look forward to your questions, sir, instead of me just carrying on. So thank you so much.

Chairman MCCAIN. Thank you very much. I thank the witnesses.

In your report you say, "The Obama administration has not articulated a clear, coherent, or consistent rebalance strategy, particularly when it comes to managing China's rise."

It seems to me that we have, in this behavior of China, an opportunity to strengthen our relationships with other nations in the re-

gion—Philippines, Vietnam, in particular—that would not have been thought of in some years past. What steps do we need to take to take advantage of this new deep concern that the Pacific Region, nations in the region, have concerning China, Dr. Green?

Dr. GREEN. We have done a survey, Senator, at CSIS of elites in 10 Asian countries several times over the past 5 years. And it is remarkable how much strategic thinkers, political leaders, from Vietnam to India to Japan, want more of us. They want more cooperation. They want more exercises. They want more trade agreements. They do not want bases. They do not want bases, in most cases. But they are willing to accept new arrangements.

Chairman MCCAIN. Like the Australia arrangement.

Dr. GREEN. Like the Australia arrangement, where we rotate Marines through Darwin, where we will, if we can move the negotiations forward, have access to Royal Australian Air Force airfields. In the Philippines, where the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement has passed the Supreme Court test, we will be able to move people through, that kind of thing. Cam Ranh Bay, perhaps, in Vietnam, that is an opportunity.

We suffer a bit, in my view, Senator, because the way we articulate our vision of the future of Asia has been quite inconsistent. At times, senior administration officials have embraced Chinese leader Xi Jinping's vision of what he calls a new model of great power relations, which is designed to stabilize U.S.-China relations, but to do so by recognizing that China and the United States and Russia are great powers that should settle the affairs of Asia.

And we at various points at senior levels have said we embrace that idea, and we want to operationalize that idea. The fundamental flaw, from our perspective, should be this new model of great powers does not include great democracies like Japan, India, Australia, Korea, Indonesia as great powers. They are considered second-tier.

So the way we have talked about how we see order in Asia, the relations, has sent confused signals. We need to get that straight.

We also should be realistic that while we are getting more access and more cooperation with the Philippines, with Vietnam, with Malaysia, these are all systems where political leadership could change. In Vietnam, there was just a change. The Philippines have an election.

So we need to be patient, and we need to be in this for the long game. And we need to build it on professional relationships between the militaries.

It may not always be us, in a case like Vietnam. It may be Japan or Korea, which are providing patrol boats that take the lead in helping build capacity. But we all have the same interests.

So we, in the report, suggest we need a venue or a framework with our allies and partners to make sure that we are all helping these states, irrespective of how our specific bilateral relations with them or leadership changes affect our expectations.

Chairman MCCAIN. I am very interested in your recommendation about a second carrier to Japan. We are sending our carriers from the West Coast on 10-month deployments. That is too long to in any way maintain a sustainable all-volunteer force.

But one of the sources of frustration for me and other members of this committee is the situation in Okinawa and the relocation. Talk about fits and starts and setbacks and political problems in Okinawa itself. It is one of the more difficult issues, but yet, I think one of the most important.

What is the witnesses' latest assessment of that situation?

Dr. GREEN. We have spent a lot of time on this issue, Senator, in 2012 and in this report. My colleague Nick Szechenyi spent time in Okinawa, talking to local political officials. We did meet with the governor of Okinawa, as you did, sir.

It is complicated. The Okinawan people suffered in the Second World War like no other Japanese in that terrible battle. But it is not as black and white as it often appears in the media.

Prime Minister Abe has committed to moving forward with the Futenma Replacement Facility. His chief cabinet secretary, Mr. Suga, is working this strenuously. He is responsible for a whole host of issues, but he is focused on this. And they are committed. It is in Japan's national interests, and it is in their political interests, to move forward on this.

The mayoral election in Ginowan, the town closest to the current Marine Corps Air Station, resulted in a victory for someone who supports moving forward.

It will not be easy, but I think—and this is based on detailed looks at the operational questions but also the local politics—this is the best of a lot of hard options. And I think, and we agreed in our group unanimously, we need to move forward.

We also, frankly, need to remember that that are other airfields in Okinawa. They may not provide the solution for the Marine's requirements, but as we look at the A2/AD threat and the ballistic missile threat and the increasing requirements for humanitarian disaster relief, we ought to be working with Japan's defense forces.

And that is an important development, by the way, Senator. The Japan Self-Defense Forces were viewed very negatively in Okinawa after the war, because of what the Imperial Japanese Army did to them. That has changed significantly. There is considerable pride and support for Japan Self-Defense Forces in Okinawa.

So we ought to, in the longer term, be looking at joint use of bases. The Ground Self-Defense Force wants to create a marine corps capability. And General Conant can speak to this. We can co-locate with them.

In other words, we can give Japan more ownership of these bases and build more support, I think, as we go forward.

General CONANT. Sir, thank you for that question.

I think, looking at the carrier, we just do not need to restrict ourselves to Japan. There other places you could possibly put it, whether it is Guam, whether it is back in Hawaii, whether it is even in Australia, in Perth. There are ways to look at the situation.

It is easiest to go to Japan, because the infrastructure is there, and so the investment and the additional investment for the Navy probably carries the day on that.

As you look, the A2/AD and the ballistic and cruise missile threat out of an adversary, then you are already under that umbrella if you are stationed that far forward in Japan. So depending on the

strategic messaging you want to send, we could look and possibly look at putting it someplace else.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Reed?

Senator REED. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Green, I noticed that when you were talking, in your comments, you described our undersea assets as the trump card. I think, for the record, you were making a gambling allusion, not a political allusion.

But I think there are several factors here, and you both have talked about it, is the increased precision strike capability of Chinese forces from land-based and other bases, which makes surface ships much more vulnerable. They would have to launch, in the case of a carrier, from much further away. Submarines do not have those particular vulnerabilities. Also, just in terms of technology, we have a significant advantage over what we are seeing right now in the waters with the Chinese and others.

So I would assume that, for that reason, we want to make a much more vigorous investment in deployment of undersea assets into this area. That could be the leading-edge of the sword. Is that fair?

Dr. GREEN. Senator, that is right. We have an advantage undersea, over any potential adversary, that is considerable. And if you add into the mix the really first-class undersea capabilities of Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Forces and the Royal Australian Navy, and increasingly the Indian Navy, that is a pretty strong undersea net around the entire Indo-Asia-Pacific, which would cause any potential adversary pause, if they thought about challenging us in a serious military way.

So we thought it was very, very important. And one of the areas we need to focus on more is interoperability with these other navies, one more reason why our group thought discussions between Japan and Australia about not only a common platform but also increasing cooperation is the kind of development we should want to see.

Senator REED. General Conant, any comments?

General CONANT. Yes, sir. In my time as deputy commander at PACOM as a Marine, I found out the significance of what that submarine force provided for us. In so many other things that we can't talk about in open source, but really, in its capability sets in ISR [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance] and just discovering what is going on.

It is also a way to send a message to those who want to threaten our access in the region that there is a cost to that activity, if somebody chooses to bring it to conflict.

That submarine force is very, very capable. And if I had one more marginal dollar, and you weren't going to spend it anywhere else, as a Marine, I would probably put it in the submarine force, sir.

Senator REED. Thank you, sir.

One other aspect of this, and I think it is implicit in your report, is that, most likely, if we are engaged in a serious confrontation in the area, that the cyber activity would be so extensive that we will be operating literally in the dark. GPS [Global Positioning System]

will go down. Systems on aircraft and surface ships, everything, will be operating almost as we were 50, 100 years ago.

Is that realistic, General? Or is that sort of more apocalyptic?

General CONANT. No, that is a very good assessment.

In fact, when we were out at PACOM talking with Admiral Locklear one day, I thought we ought to do a Nimitz project. Admiral Nimitz fought World War II with about a 65-man staff that grew to 200-some. And he thought it grew too big.

What they did is they provided specific mission guides, mission orders, and then sent them out on task forces. I think you would have to get something like that, where you could have, within the task force, internally assured mission sets through some classified work. But then you wouldn't be beholden to the GPS and some other things. But space will become a new issue and then navigation.

So it is a good way to think about it, but I don't think just cyber alone, it is hard for all of us to understand, even at my level, what it can do and what it won't do. And then you are into law and policy.

But they don't care. They will shut us down quickly, sir.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

Dr. Green, in the report, you talked about the relationship between China and North Korea. And there have been some reports that the Chinese are willing to tolerate a nuclear-armed North Korea to a certain degree, which is very dangerous to the world, given the instability in that government.

And the other aspect, and this is a real question, not a rhetorical, is that any sort of effective solution, I would assume, would have to take the United States and the Chinese together to be able to bring the appropriate political and diplomatic influence on the North Koreans to behave better. Is that fair? And what is your sense of the whole issue?

Dr. GREEN. Sir, I would agree that an ultimate resolution—and I worked on the North Korea problem in the previous administration and spent time in Pyongyang and Beijing, and frankly, came away very pessimistic about any near-, medium-, and maybe even long-term diplomatic solution.

But ultimately, if we are going to denuclearize the peninsula, we are going to need to do it with our allies first, but with China and Russia. And if we have a sudden or cataclysmic collapse of the North Korean state, which is feasible, is possible, at a minimum, we are going to want to deconflict with China. So it is very important.

But we have not had much success. When I was in the previous administration, we kind of bullied the Chinese into helping us in the six-party talks. And we thought we were making progress and that China would be helpful. But frankly, the Chinese have an interest in a denuclearized peninsula, but it is, I think, becoming evident that they have a greater interest in stability and in maintaining a dominant position over the peninsula in the long term.

So I believe they will tolerate a nuclear program in North Korea, so long as it is not destabilizing the whole region. And then they can settle it when, in their view, they have greater strategic purchase, greater influence.

Our approach generally has been to respond to these North Korean nuclear tests and missile tests in the Security Council and try to get consensus with China. And I think this most recent test, and China's rather anemic reaction, demonstrates that that is not an approach that is going to get us results.

And the other approach would be to do more with our allies to make it evident that we will increase our missile defense capabilities, we will increase the joint operations, and all of these things which are necessary because of the North Korean threat, and that from Beijing's perspective their nonaction will have consequences. As we take care of ourselves and our allies, they may not like—we need to think about how we incentivize the Chinese beyond trying to point out their interests in denuclearization at this point.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, gentlemen. Thank you.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Rounds?

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Green, in your testimony, you recommend fielding additional air combat systems as a means to counter China's increasing A2/AD capabilities. Specifically, you state in your abridged report that developing a fleet of next-generation aircraft with the right combination of capabilities will be critical to prevailing in a major conflict against a peer competitor.

Does our fleet of fifth-generation fighter aircraft, specifically the number of operational F–22s, currently meet the need? And I think we are probably being optimistic if we say we can anticipate 140 of those aircraft in a reasonable time frame.

Does that meet our need today? And if not, what would our need be? And is this the right question, in terms of the F–22 being part of that solution?

Dr. GREEN. Senator, General Conant should speak to this as well.

The F–22 and the F–35 have had various challenges as programs, but talking to our allies, talking to the air component commander's on our side in the Pacific, it is pretty clear to me what we do get for this, and it is significant.

We do not just get a squadron of F–22s or F–35s. We get stealthy platforms that can coordinate fourth-generation aircraft. It is a multiplier effect that, frankly, when I went out and talked to people, was not coming from the generals, with all respect to the generals. It was coming from captains and majors innovating with this new platform. And this is what the Royal Australian Air Force, the Koreans, and the Japanese are starting to discover as well. So there is a multiplier effect we have to consider, and then the interoperability and jointness effect among our allies.

The next generation, meaning the sixth, seventh generation, and I defer to General Conant on this, may not be manned, ultimately. But for what we have in the fifth generation, we get a lot.

If I had a concern, and Admiral Harris, the Pacific commander spoke to this, our platforms are stealthy, they are excellent. But our air-to-air missiles, our surface-to-surface missiles, do not have the range that the Chinese, with much less capable platforms, increasingly are fielding to hit us.

So that is one of the capability gaps that I think needs near-term addressing.

General CONANT. Senator Rounds, good question.

The F–22 or the F–35 as a fifth-generation fighter is very capable. But it is not the end-all and be-all, as Dr. Green alluded to.

When I was at 3rd MAW [Marine Aircraft Wing], we had an exercise where we brought F–22s out and worked with our F/A–18A Pluses and Cs, a fourth-generation legacy airplane. And we had the capability to share that picture that F–22 presented.

What those majors and what those captains did with those packages, once they got wiped out by just trying to fight the F–22, they then went into a strike package type training scenario. It was phenomenal.

And I am a stronger believer that you do not have to put all your eggs in one basket. In fact, we have kind of gone down the road where we really are almost doing that.

So F–22s have tremendous capability. Nothing else can match it. The F–35s are great.

But we have fourth-generation fighters we can do things with that give more respectful numbers that you are going to need out in this problem set. And then there is a value of quantity to this problem set, and China sees that. So they are sticking with four and four-plus gen. But they are very, very capable.

So it all doesn't have to be fifth gen, sir, but it is part of the mix.

Senator ROUNDS. What role do you see long-range strike systems, the LRS–B [Long-Range Strike Bomber], as an example, that particular bomber? How do you see that playing into the U.S. defense strategy in Asia in the coming years?

General CONANT. As we wargame various scenarios, and as we look at the ballistic and cruise missile threat out there, as I said on the Defense Science Board for that task force, you are going to need long-range strike. And you ought to have the capable platform that brings that strike in.

We have always done, as Dr. Green alluded to, fifth-generation fighters with fourth- and third-generation weapons. So we need to match that capability and the platform with a weapon system.

As you look at long-range strike, it is not just the airframes. Our SAGs, surface action groups, need that long-range strike capability also. We are putting it on submarines.

So that creates a bigger problem set for the adversary and gives you more decision space, if you do come up into a problem set, sir.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Hirono?

Senator HIRONO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The stability in the Asia-Pacific area is hugely important. And the U.S. role in being a part of creating the stability is critical. We have articulated our commitment as rebalance—and yes, I agree that it would be helpful to have a much clear articulation of this. But a lot of what we talk about in rebalance is in the implementation. Part of our rebalance strategy, as implemented, is in our force posture.

So I did want to ask you a little bit more about your suggestion that we should consider deploying a second carrier in that area, and also mentioned by the chairman.

So, for example, if we wanted to locate a second carrier at Yokosuka, which already has infrastructure, is there a time frame when it would be most advantageous for us to pursue a study and come to a decision, i.e., while Prime Minister Abe is still in office? Can you talk a little bit more about the time frame for locating a second carrier in the Pacific?

Dr. GREEN. There is a saying in Japanese politics, because they have a parliamentary system, so you can have an election at any moment, that one step ahead is darkness.

But Prime Minister Abe, or if not Prime Minister Abe, someone with a comparable commitment to our alliance, is likely to be in power for some time. The year 2019 is something of a date, because that is when the USS Gerald Ford will be ready for deployment. It seems to me that would be the opportunity.

Now, we did not come out with a hard recommendation on this, because there are operational questions and costs and infrastructure questions. If you deployed this new carrier in Yokosuka, you would have to find a place for the air wing. Iwakuni, which handles the air wing now, could probably expanded. But that is a political lift for the Japanese Government, questions of host nation support.

But when we put this suggestion out, it got covered in the Japanese press, and there was not a lot of pushback. A number of senior officials and military officers in Japan were quite intrigued, because of the signal it sends and the firepower it provides.

And it addresses a concern our allies have, which is the Seventh Fleet's one carrier is out of the Pacific, or PACOM AOR [area of responsibility], a lot, and they watch that. So they would have constant coverage, in their view, in an increasingly difficult region.

But 2019 and the USS Gerald Ford, that is a heavy lift for Japanese politics. It would have to be Japan's decision.

I was in the White House when we asked Japan to take the George Washington, the first nuclear carrier. Everyone said they would never do it. They needed and wanted that firepower, that commitment, that connectivity with us.

I think it is politically feasible, and 2019 would be the target date, I would think.

Senator HIRONO. So we should move ahead with a study, so that we can make the decision in an appropriate time frame.

I think the Japanese are well aware of the changing environment with North Korea and China.

Dr. Green, can you talk more about your suggestion that we should form an Asia-Pacific observers group? I am not familiar with where that suggestion is coming from. And what would it do to enhance the rebalance implementation?

Dr. GREEN. This was John Hamre, the president of CSIS, my boss, his idea. Of course, as you know, he worked for this committee for a long time and in the Pentagon. He suggested it after looking at the problem of articulating our strategy to the Congress, to our allies. And I think, for him, the comparable group that monitored arms control negotiations in the Reagan administration, bipartisan, was the model.

But I would offer another model, Senator, in all sincerity, and that is a great Senator from Hawaii, who, with Ted Stevens from Alaska, Senator Inouye, provided constant oversight of our strategy

in Asia. I was in the White House for 5 years, and when the Inouye-Stevens combination went out to the region, it was like another aircraft carrier. I mean, it was quite powerful.

So both in terms of monitoring and coordinating in Washington, but also as a bipartisan group that could speak to the region, not always about reassuring about our commitment, but telling sometimes our friends and allies what they have to do.

Senator HIRONO. And this would not require legislation.

Dr. GREEN. No.

Senator HIRONO. So my time is almost up, but I did want to ask you, as we look 10 to 20 years in the future, what would a successful rebalance look like in this region?

Maybe you can think on it and respond to me in writing.

Dr. GREEN. No, I would be happy to do that, Senator. We have thought about it. We were tasked with——

Senator HIRONO. Senator McCain, would it be all right for him to respond now?

Chairman MCCAIN. Absolutely.

Dr. GREEN. I apologize.

Our tasking was to look out 10 years, so we took that seriously and considered this. I think my colleagues at CSIS, and I think I will speak also for our senior advisory review board, would say that the friction we have with China right now over the South China Sea and the East China Sea is not going to go away, that we are going to probably be living with this for 5 or 10 years, because it is built into the PLA's [People's Liberation Army] operational concept, their force structure building, their doctrine. And the Foreign Ministry or others in the China system are not going to knock them off of that trajectory. And in my view, that is true whether the Chinese economy slows down or not.

So in 10 years and for the next 10 years, we will have some friction in our relationship with China, and we should know that, and we should not be afraid of it. We need to manage it. But in 10 years, if we have a relationship with our allies and partners, not a collective security arrangement like NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization], almost no one wants that. And that is a bit too much for China. That would produce a China we do not want. But the kind of network and cooperation that incentivizes China to play within the rules; and the kind of capacity-building for the Philippines and for smaller micro states, CNMI [the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands] and so forth, where they can handle earthquakes and tsunamis or internal corruption problems in a way where they are not vulnerable strategically; and where we have, frankly, a trade agreement, the TPP plus the regional agreements, fusing toward more of a rules-based open Pacific order—I think that is what we should be thinking about. And if we do think in those terms, I think it will add some discipline to how the administration and others articulate our strategy, what we are aiming for. We are not containing China. We are looking for a rules-based order, and here is how it might look in terms of our relations with allies and other partners.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Manchin?

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you both for your service.

If I may ask you this, Dr. Green, your report assesses that Chinese President Xi Jinping has a less awestruck view of the U.S. power than his predecessors, contributing to a greater tolerance for risk and a reduction of emphasis on the China-U.S. relations.

So I would ask, that is a pretty striking observation. What do you think has led to his diminished view of U.S. power? And what do you think it will take to alter his views?

Dr. GREEN. Xi Jinping is the first Chinese leader since Deng Xiaoping who is not, as the Chinese say, helicoptered, picked up personally by Deng Xiaoping and groomed for leadership. So he is not beholden to the Deng Xiaoping vision of relations with the U.S., which was competitive but one where China dampens down any sense of competition as much as possible in order to focus on economic development, ending the Cold War to balance the Soviet threat to China.

He is unconstrained by that, because of his independence from being groomed and brought up by Xiaoping. That is one factor.

The other factor is that I think the financial crisis in 2008 and 2009 led a lot of Chinese observers to conclude that America's best days were over, and that there was going to be a pretty fundamental shift. They are probably rethinking that now, but that set this——

Senator MANCHIN. That sets me up for the following question then. Does China's economic slowdown affect its regional military capabilities?

And also, should the U.S. rebalance strategies take into account lower Chinese economic growth? Should we be considering what they were thinking of us in 2007, 2008, 2009? Should we be thinking that same type of thought process now, since they are having a reversal?

Dr. GREEN. It is an excellent question, Senator. It is an interesting one to contemplate. We should learn from the Chinese mistake underestimating American wherewithal and not assume that the nature of Chinese rule in Asia will dramatically change.

Senator MANCHIN. You believe that they are going to double down, just as Russia might be doubling down, even at the expense of their own people?

Dr. GREEN. I think there is a debate among experts about whether China's increased aggressiveness and their military modernization reflects their economy or reflects a more fundamental definition of interests. I think it is the latter.

Even if we are talking about a China growing at 3 percent or 4 percent, that is a huge economy. Those are a lot of resources. It absolutely dwarfs anybody in the region, except us and Japan. And it changes the trajectory, but I do not think it minimizes the complication for us in any way that would lead us to change our strategy.

We may want to change the way we think about U.S.-China relations in economic terms. But in terms of creating a military presence capability and alliances and partnerships——

Senator MANCHIN. We should be——

Dr. GREEN. We should be doing what we are doing.

It could be that you have a more humble China in 5 years. It could be. You could also have a China that is more nationalistic and grumpy.

But in terms of their capabilities, I do not think the trajectory changes all that much.

Senator MANCHIN. Let me follow up with General Conant.

General, your report notes that most military, economic, and diplomatic conditions favor a future Russia strategic alignment with China, but that Russia is ultimately likely to seek a balance between collaborating with and hedging against China.

So I would ask, what concrete Russian or Chinese interests stand in the way of a strategic alliance?

General CONANT. Sir, from my personal experience, I think there is still mistrust between the two powers. But they are working closer together than they have ever worked before. And they are starting to do exchanges.

To follow up what Dr. Green, a little bit, thought on this slowdown on the growth of China, we know they had a target at 10 percent, went down to 9.5 percent, went down to 9 percent. I was once told that if they could not grow at 9 percent, then they thought they would have internal problems.

Now they are down to 7 percent, 7.5 percent. But you still see them, even in their maritime and military buildup of what we would call a coast guard, they are building larger ships. They are arming those ships. And they are building fourth-generation fighters. They have a series of five to six new fighters, new ships.

So I do not see it slowing down. They may worry about what the people think, but that Politburo of seven people answers to nobody but the party.

Senator MANCHIN. If this alignment would take effect, the alignment between Russia and China would take effect, even though there was distrust there, but let's say that it moves in a different way economically but militarily that they basically start teaming up, if you will, what action should the United States undertake basically in security, economic, or diplomatic realms to affect the likelihood of that?

General CONANT. Well, I think you have to have a dialogue, first of all, of why that alignment is necessary.

Senator MANCHIN. Following up really quick—and I know my time is up, Mr. Chairman, if I may. Following up, what type of dialogue do we have basically on the military aspects between Russia and China, between the U.S.? What would you say, how those relationships——

General CONANT. Well, between Russia and China, we have very little.

Senator MANCHIN. We, the country?

General CONANT. We. So when I was deputy, to have the Russian engagement, I had to go to Stuttgart, and we were going to have the EUCOM lead to the Russian piece.

Senator MANCHIN. Okay.

General CONANT. So together, though, we could build that discussion and bring that into the China realm.

Senator MANCHIN. Right now, we have very little interaction.

General CONANT. I am not current enough to try to make a statement for Admiral Harris, sir.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Ernst?

Senator ERNST. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here. Dr. Green, General, thank you.

I would like to ask you just a couple things about advancing and adapting the U.S. Army's regionally aligned forces concept, particularly as it relates to our Army Reserve and National Guard forces, and if you could talk a little bit about the State Partnership Program and how that could be usefully employed in that region.

Iowa is a member of the State Partnership Program. We are partnered with Kosovo through EUCOM. I think there are 22 partnerships in EUCOM. There are 22 with SOUTHCOM [United States Southern Command]. But there are only eight with PACOM.

So if you could talk through that, how that might be beneficial, employing those forces and developing those partnerships, I would appreciate that.

Dr. GREEN. We think there is an enormous opportunity for the State National Guard components to play in the rebalance. The Army's Pacific Pathways program is quite welcome in the region.

The challenge is that most countries in Asia cannot handle a Stryker brigade or the kind of unit that the brigade formations of the big Army is built around.

We were also struck, Senator, that only eight of the State partnerships are in the Pacific, which over half of Americans now consistently say in polls that Asia is the most important region to our future. That is not just Hawaii and California. That is the entire Republic.

Now the Army tells us they cannot decide who does State partnerships, but it makes sense that National Guard units do more.

There is another reason, which is there are some quite close sister city relationships. I think Haiphong in Vietnam, for example, with I think Seattle, if I remember correctly. These cities are doing disaster preparedness exercises, continuity of government.

It seems to me there is a logical role for the Guard to play in these exercises, and it is not expensive. It is not a large-scale thing. And it has multiple benefits for us, among them, showing some of these countries that are transitioning toward a more democratic system how civil-military relations in a democracy should work.

So I hope, of the recommendations that we looked at, that there is interest in that one, because there is enormous opportunity and real synergies with the region and between the Guard and local and municipal governments.

Senator ERNST. General, do you have any thoughts?

General CONANT. Yes, ma'am.

First of all, I think when we did the Tonga State partnership with Admiral Locklear, that was over 1.5 years just to get through the wickets, whatever those wickets are.

Senator ERNST. Right.

General CONANT. I think it is kind of a political football between the Department of State, Army, and Guard. But the benefit to

those State partnerships are tremendous, and it gives a cultural awareness for that State partnership, and the training aspect is that even the smaller countries focus on small unit leadership.

It does not take a lot to make a big impact. So I am a big proponent of it. When we first looked at it with Admiral Locklear, we found these small numbers not aligned. Europe has been the most beneficiary of that.

So we ought to somehow figure out how to bring more into the Pacific at the pace and at the level those countries desire.

Senator ERNST. That is fantastic. I am a huge proponent of the State Partnership Program. And we have hosted many Kosovars, young NCOs [non-commissioned officers] and officers, with our soldiers in the Iowa Army National Guard. It has been a great benefit to both countries, as well. And sister cities, we also have a sister city program now that came out of State Partnership, because of our great relationship.

And I will tell you, Mr. Chairman, just this last Friday, we opened the first consulate in the State of Iowa in Des Moines, Iowa. That consulate is the Republic of Kosovo consulate.

So there are many great things happening through the State Partnership Program. I do hope that we are able to project more of those into the Pacific region.

So thank you very much, gentlemen.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman MCCAIN. Is this to send ethanol to Kosovo? Pretty much?

[Laughter.]

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thanks to the witnesses. I have two lines of questions for you.

The first deals with the U.S.-India relationship going forward. Senator King and I visited India in October 2014 and had dialogue in a number of areas, but including the mil-to-mil cooperation and opportunities under the government, which is not connected to sort of the nonalignment tradition that had been an Indian tradition.

We saw some real opportunities. We visited the shipyard at Mazagon Docks in Mumbai and saw the shipbuilding expertise in India and encouraged them to come visit the United States. There has been a recent delegation of Indian military officials to see our shipbuilding capacity.

And we were also told by the Indians that they do more joint military exercises with the United States than with any other Nation.

Talk a little bit about that relationship and what you could realistically predict going forward 10 years or beyond, and how that would be helpful in our posture in the region.

Dr. GREEN. I was in the Bush administration, and I had responsibly in the NSC [National Security Council] for India, and the bipartisan and continuous support for building this relationship is a very positive thing for our country.

As you mentioned, Senator, there is still this nonalignment tradition in the Ministry of External Affairs, but it is not growing. It is receding. Public opinion polls about the U.S. and India are very,

very positive. As you said, we do more exercises with India than India does with the whole rest of the world combined.

We also sell a lot of stuff. People forget we lost the fighter competition, but we sell a lot of things to India.

A 10-year vision, I think, would include regular Malabar exercises that would include the Indian Navy but also Japan, Singapore, Australia, maybe China or others. Depending on the exercise, you can do these in sequence and have different kinds of exercises. We do more of that.

In our commercial or defense-industrial relationship, I think there is potential for ASW [anti-submarine warfare] patrol, maybe even submarines. Ten years from now, I wouldn't erase that. But it is not going to be a U.S. nuclear attack sub. It is going to be some version of a Japanese or Australian sub where maybe we help with the integration of the weapon systems. So there is an industrial part.

One of the most difficult parts of the relationship has been the intelligence relationship, which is the lifeblood of any alliance or partnership. And that is moving in a good direction, too.

So a sustained by partition commitment to the relationship is good. I would say, of all the aspects of U.S.-India relations, the defense component now is moving forward with the most speed. Nothing is fast in India, but with the most speed, in that context.

Senator KAINE. General?

General CONANT. Yes, sir. I think they are an important strategic ally and partner.

We were told to kind of go at them and try to find a better way for cooperation. When I was at PACOM, we were getting there. They like a shared coproduction aspect in anything you want to sell them or produce. I do not think we should be afraid of that.

Senator KAINE. Right.

General CONANT. I think we ought to look at that.

And then you get in the acquisition world. That needs a little with reforming.

I was just reading today, the CEO [chief executive officer] of Boeing is out there, posturing maybe a coproduction with the F/A–18E/F. The more we could share in that, the more we could get to that.

Now, the multilateral exercises, the only way you will be successful in any multilateral activity is having a very strong bilateral relationship with those multilateral partners. So I used to tell the PACOM staff, make sure we are square U.S. to India before we go U.S. to India to Japan to Australia or anybody else, planning that. And make sure we are answering their concerns and assuaging their fears of how we are going to do the exercise.

Senator KAINE. Great.

General CONANT. So you listen more. So that is a key point.

When you say multilateral, as Dr. Green said, there is a steppingstone to that process.

Senator KAINE. The second question is, would it be valuable if the Senate ratified the Law of the Sea Convention, again, in terms of our posture in the region?

Dr. GREEN. It would, on balance. And many of our allies and partners—our closest allies and partners in the region are asking us to ratify.

In my own personal view, though, the fact that we have not ratified UNCLOS [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea] is often exaggerated as an obstacle to progress on these disputes in the South China Sea and so forth. We, the United States Government, the Navy, basically abide by the convention based on previous conventions and our practice and doctrine and policies.

And the real problem, ultimately, is not that we have not ratified it. The real problem is that China, which says that it has, defines it in a way that is completely alien to the spirit of the convention and the understanding of all the other parties. I am not sure our ratifying——

Senator KAINE. Do we have standing to critique them on that, if we have not ratified?

Dr. GREEN. It gives them a talking point to throwback at us.

Senator KAINE. Yes.

Dr. GREEN. Would ratifying change China's interpretation of UNCLOS? I am doubtful. But it would give us some more purchase. It would align us more with other allies and partners in the region who have ratified.

Senator KAINE. Great. My time has expired.

Thanks, Mr. Chair.

And thank you.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Sullivan?

Senator SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, Dr. Green, good to see you. I want to thank you for your great work that you have been doing, not only on this report, but for years. It is very much appreciated.

One of the things about the Asia-Pacific—you mentioned it, Senator Hirono, earlier—a lot of us are, certainly, interested in it. My State is an Asia-Pacific State.

And I think it is an opportunity, a rare one, to be honest, where you have the legislative branch supporting the executive branch on a major foreign policy strategy, the so-called pivot or rebalance to the Asia-Pacific. I think you see a lot of support in this committee for that.

However, your report kind of makes it a little bit clear that that is not necessarily the most cogent strategy. How would you describe that strategy right now in one word?

Dr. GREEN. The rebalance strategy?

Senator SULLIVAN. Yes.

Dr. GREEN. Well, if I were given one word, it would be "rebalance." That sounds like a copout.

Senator SULLIVAN. It is.

Dr. GREEN. Part of the problem with this articulation of the strategy is that rebalancing is a process. It is a ways, not an end. And I think what we have lacked in the articulation of the strategy is an articulation of the Asia-Pacific and the kinds of relationships that we are aiming for and what we will and will not tolerate.

Senator SULLIVAN. How would you improve it, in particular, not just the strategy? Your report stated that the Obama administration has not articulated a clear, coherent, or consistent strategy for the region. So not just the strategy, but the FONOP [Freedom of Navigation Operation] issue, which I think many of us, again, bipartisan, are very interested in. We have encouraged the adminis-

tration to get behind those as a regular occurrence, routine missions and operations with our allies, if possible.

But in my discussions with some of our allies, there seems to be enormous confusion even on the articulation of what we are trying to do with those. How would you help improve that?

Dr. GREEN. So we mentioned this in the report, Senator. The speeches by the senior-most officials in the administration articulate our priorities for the region differently every time. I think the Secretary of Defense and his predecessors have had the most consistent articulation. But there is not the kind of consistent explanation of our priorities that we need or that you had in previous administrations articulating our strategy towards the region.

I mentioned this earlier, but we have, at the senior-most levels, embraced a vision that Xi Jinping put forward for a new model of great power relations, which is a great power of Russia, China, and the U.S. And our allies were unhappy, understandably.

So how we have articulated this at the senior most levels, in terms of how we see the order and future of the region, keeps shifting. That is one problem.

Also, I think, in the FONOPs, we do not have a story. I mean, the Australians, the Japanese, the Philippines, all our treaty allies wanted us to do freedom of navigation operations after this alarming Chinese reclamation and building of military spec airfields across the South China Sea. The first was near Subi island. It was at low-tide elevation. We did it as an innocent passage, because it was also within 12 nautical miles of island features. So that was confusing.

The most recent one was more consistent, but ultimately, as the chairman articulated at the beginning of the hearing, ultimately, we need to demonstrate that we do not accept these new artificial island outposts as having any legitimacy in terms of territorial waters. And we need to do it consistently, and we need to make it appear we are not doing it reluctantly, because the first FONOP came after sort of Macbeth-like "to do or not to do" drama in the press.

So we need to show how we view the region, why our values and allies are at the center of it; and second, that when order, freedom of navigation challenge are challenged, we don't break a sweat.

Senator SULLIVAN. I am going to ask one final quick question.

I appreciate that you have focused a lot in this report on the Arctic and the interests of different countries in the Arctic. And at the same time, we have done a lot on this committee, and there is a lot of interest from a lot of different Senators on the issues of the Arctic. We required DOD to have a plan for the Arctic in the NDAA.

At the same time, as the President talked about strengthening our presence in the Asia-Pacific, they are looking at dramatically cutting our military forces, particularly our only airborne brigade combat team in the Arctic, in the entire Asia-Pacific.

Do you think that our potential adversaries, whether it is the Koreans, whether it is the Russians, view that kind of cutback in a way that undermines the credibility of our focus on the rebalance, and also on our focus, late to the game, of course, on the Arctic

where the Russians, as you mentioned in the report, are dramatically increasing their presence? And that is for both of you.

General?

Dr. GREEN. If I may start, General.

When the President announced the rebalance in Australia in November 2011, it was well-received in the region. We have done polling where over 80 percent outside of China, over 80 percent of elites, welcome or would welcome a U.S. rebalance. There are questions about implementation, but the idea we are going to do this is important to them.

In that speech in Australia, the President said that defense cuts will not, and he said, I repeat, will not, come at the expense of the Asia-Pacific region.

So, technically, is the 425 part of PACOM? It is a little gray.

Senator SULLIVAN. It is.

Dr. GREEN. Will our allies see it as such? Yes.

So this would be the first cut in the Pacific since the announcement of the rebalance.

You mentioned the Arctic. There are growing uncertainties about the future of, frankly, not only the legal status and the exploitation of the Arctic but the security environment.

So I saw that General Milley, in response to your question in his hearing, said he would need to look at operational requirements before force cuts. As we said in our report, that strikes us as the right sequence.

Senator SULLIVAN. General?

General CONANT. I am more simple. The Army said they regionally aligned with the forces out of I Corps, that unit that comes out of I Corps, which means you have less capacity and capability for the Pacific.

The airborne aspect of it, I have been up there in your State and visited them. It is very impressive.

I am not one for giving it away because you just do not know when you might need it. I understand there might be a cost factor. But again, I go to that regional alignment that Army has dictated to the rebalance, and that is the I Corps and 425th being part of that.

I understand that we have gone the way with NORTHCOM, who owns Alaska and all that. But it is really the force should not be drawn down, because it is just paying another bill somewhere else. I would be interested in where that bill is being paid. Thank you.

Senator SULLIVAN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Blumenthal?

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding this hearing, another very valuable session in the development of strategic concepts and initiatives.

And I want to thank both of you for being here and for your very, very important insights and information.

I want to come back to undersea warfare that was raised by Senator Reed, because it is identified in the report as the area of our greatest asymmetric advantage right now, but only if we continue to invest in it. We have a technological edge, but the Chinese and Russians and others are seeking to catch us.

So my question, Dr. Green, is, how should we target that investment to make sure we preserve and even enhance that advantage undersea?

Dr. GREEN. Some of this, Senator, is in the classified report we provided. And I am certain that our colleagues would be happy to come and brief you on some of the specific ideas.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I would welcome that.

Dr. GREEN. One area we emphasized in the unclassified report is deployment forward.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Deployment of another six?

Dr. GREEN. Yes. To us, it makes sense to put more Los Angeles class in Guam and eventually *Virginia*-class——

Senator BLUMENTHAL. But you also identified as critical the *Ohio* replacement program.

Dr. GREEN. Right.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And that will take a major investment. So my question is, in targeting resources, how would you suggest that we preserve that as a priority of the Navy?

Dr. GREEN. Well, as General Conant said earlier, of the different assets we want forward deployed to have a credible deterrent, submarines are at the top of the list. I would say followed closely by amphibious capabilities for the Marines.

But I should let General Conant answer.

General CONANT. Senator, as I said before, it is such a valuable strategic asset that it does so many different missions. And I am talking subs, and we are looking at unmanned systems that go along with subs.

Nobody is going to match that. Nobody can match our submarine crews. Nobody can match our ability to go on patrol and do what needs to be done in those special collection missions and other things they do anywhere else in the world.

And it is something we should not back away from. And I think it is something we will have as a superior capability for some time to come.

So I would be, again, really looking hard at how we do that investment.

There is a part of the nuclear piece you need to look at, that is part of the triad that needs to be replaced. And that is another deterrence value that sends a strong message, sir.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. The amount of the investment in the *Ohio* replacement is so large, $100 billion, shouldn't the financing, the funding for it, come from the DOD as a whole, not limited to the Navy budget?

General CONANT. Being a former programmer in the Marine Corps, I used to hear those conversations about HMX [Marine Helicopter Squadron One] and other things that people said they cannot afford to fund. At the end of the day, the Navy has that, I think, responsibility. Whether they get a bigger share of the pie than others, I am all for that.

But I do not who else—I mean, I do not know how you do that, other than creating a firestorm for the Pentagon comptroller, which he can handle.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. To shift to the unmanned undersea vehicles, is our investment sufficient now?

General CONANT. From what I have looked at, I think you are doing well. I think you can do little bit more. As you look at maybe doing some aspect of unmanned systems that have other things in them that pop up, and all of a sudden in a battle space can contribute to that knowledge and to that ability to control it. It is a little bit classified, but again, it is talking in generalities here.

I think the Navy is doing a very, very good job at looking at that. I was briefed on that right before I left PACOM. So, again, I would watch it with a close eye. It may become a bill payer as other things come due.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I just want to finish, in the seconds I have left, to ask you about institutionalizing a culture of experimentation, which I view as a very promising vision, the idea of the red and green teams, and awarding citations, and so forth.

Has that been proposed before? And has it ever been implemented in the Department of Defense or intelligence community?

General CONANT. Yes, we have used that numerous times as we looked at different plans. But my experience with General Krulak, back during his commandant days when he said we do not have any money but we have our brains. So you can apply a very small investment into this red team, blue team, gold team, white team, whatever you want to call it, and apply the intellectual rigor against how we should be doing things different. That was when I talked about these new conceptual pieces that we are going to have to think about.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And that is one of the recommendations of the report?

General CONANT. Yes.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General CONANT. And you see that being done up in the Naval War College and the Air War College and Marine War College. They are starting to look at these new concepts.

But you ought to get the service labs really involved in what is the art of the possibility, because sometimes you are just going to study something you are not going to gain for 20 years, and you do not have the time to invest in it.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thanks very much.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator King?

Senator KING. Two areas that I would like to talk about, North Korea nuclear policy and also the area of most immediate potential conflict with China, which is the South China Sea.

Shouldn't we change the name of the South China Sea? It is not anywhere near China.

I do not understand how they claim the Spratly Islands, which is about the same distance from China as Venezuela is from us. How are we going to deal with this incredibly expansive claim, which does not necessarily affect us but all those other regional—Vietnam, Malaysia, although other regional countries that are encompassed in this? It just seems that this is fraught with risk.

What is the thinking of the group on what we should do to deal with this issue?

General Conant, do you want to take a pass at that?

General CONANT. Sure. First of all, I do not think we let them define the problem set, them being China. So the nine-dash line

came out, spent a couple years trying to figure out what it was all about, and it comes from a historical document. And so, therefore, they think they have a claim.

It kind of goes back to Senator Kaine's question on UNCLOS. If you are not there at the table and you do not have your best lawyers engaging in the law of warfare, the lawfare that they use against us, that they think against us in a strategic context, then you are not going to get there.

I wouldn't rename anything.

Senator KING. I was being facetious.

General CONANT. I know, sir. But historical norms, I think it is worth the engagement. But again, they will say the relevancy is, are you a treaty signator or not? But I think that is worthy of it.

But they are out and about, and they are reclaiming rocks, submerged assets, submerged——

Senator KING. Well, they are reclaiming, but they are also rebuilding airstrips on them and reconstructing.

General CONANT. They are.

Senator KING. I agree with you on the Law of the Sea Treaty. We are on the sideline, and I think we are undercutting our own national interests by not being at the table.

We recently did a kind of sail-by to establish international waters. What should be our actions? What should we do to assist in trying to move toward a resolution of what I see as a long-term potential problem?

Dr. GREEN. Senator, as a spinoff of this report, which was commissioned by your committee, we at CSIS have done a separate project, we would be happy to brief you or your staff on, on exactly that question. What would a counter-coercion strategy look like, to increase the cost to China and slow them down, frankly, try to get some stability in the region?

Senator KING. Are the neighbors down there concerned about this?

Dr. GREEN. Absolutely. Every single one of them now. It used to be just the Philippines or Vietnam. But now, across all the members of the Association of Southeast Asian nations, ASEAN, there is concern.

One thing we do have to do is recognize this is not just a manifestation of Chinese nationalism, that there are geopolitical and military operational implications.

When we had the Taiwan Straits crisis with China in 1995, 1996, that southern flank, that South China Sea, we could have entered with impunity. If we have another crisis with China in the first island chain with these airfields, they may be easy targets when the shooting starts, but before that point, with these airfoils, we will have to or our allies will have to stretch our attention and our forces to deal with that flank so that it is not a bastion for us, in effect, to be outflanked.

Senator KING. I would appreciate a briefing on that, on your report on that particular issue.

The second question, very briefly, how does North Korea's recent actions with regard to missiles and nuclear tests change that calculus in terms of our deterrent, our commitment to our allies in the region? My concern is that if our allies lose confidence in our deter-

rent, they are going to develop their own capability, and then we are moving away from nonproliferation.

General?

General CONANT. Yes, sir. I think that is a spot-on assessment. We have heard forever that China can influence North Korea to some factor.

Senator KING. I wish they would do it.

General CONANT. I am here to tell you, in personal conversations and other times, I just do not see that happening. So the worst thing that could happen, if Kim Jong-un decides to not only nuclearize but miniaturize a delivery vehicle, put it on a three-stage Taepodong, then you have an existential threat that we have not thought about before.

It is in our interests to ensure that that never happens or that does not happen.

To think that we can count on China helping us with that, I am not sure history has shown us that is going to happen.

Senator KING. Thank you. I would like to pursue that issue, too, offline.

Thank you very much, gentlemen, for your testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCCAIN. Senator Nelson?

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To what degree do you think the successful passage of the Pacific trade agreement is important to our defense policy in the Pacific region?

Dr. GREEN. It is very important. Passage of TPP would indicate—I mean, there are economic advantages. But in addition to those, the passage of TPP, in short, indicates American competence and willpower.

From an Asian perspective, TPP looks so obviously in American interests economically and strategically, it would be very difficult to explain why we could not pass it. And it would raise questions, and I hear these in the region. And I apologize if I am being too blunt, but it would great questions about our willpower to lead in that region and our competence in assembling tools that the region wants to help us assemble to lead.

So it is not just about economics, Senator. I think it gets to the heart of what is ultimately the most important thing to this region. They care about how many subs we have. They care about how many Marines we have. But they care, above all, about our willpower and our competence to lead.

Senator NELSON. General?

General CONANT. Yes, sir. I think it is extremely important because it is another factor of U.S. strategic vision on what should happen out in that region.

The factor that you have such people as Vietnam and Cambodia wanting it to happen for the benefit to themselves is tremendous.

Again, it is a shared awareness that you are going to have over 40 percent GDP [gross domestic product] production out of that part of the world. And not to have some kind of trade agreement or partnership with them would seem to be not in the best strategic vision sense for this Nation.

But a lot of capability out there that goes both ways.

Senator NELSON. And does it get us in the economic door before China with those countries?

Dr. GREEN. Senator, it does, in many cases.

For example, there are estimates that $100 million a year of trade with the U.S. would shift from China to Vietnam because Vietnam is in TPP, and Vietnam would be accepting the rules, not just the tariff, but the behind the border rules.

TPP is important for another reason, which is, it is sparking a debate in China about whether they can afford to be outside of the emerging rules in the Asia-Pacific region. So the complexity of the strategy we describe in our report is, we are trying to deter China, we are trying to shape China's behavior, but we do not want to make China an enemy. TPP is one of the tools that allows us to force people in Beijing to think about the advantages of being in a rules-based system and the cost of being out. They can do the math and figure that out.

Over the past few years, once Japan committed to TPP, the debate in Beijing changed. Instead of talking about this as containment of China, they talked about it as the external pressure they need to reform their economy.

So it has a multiplier effect for us that goes beyond the job creation, recognizing, of course, that trade is hard, because there are winners and losers in these agreements.

Senator NELSON. If I am correct, the sand spits that they are now turning into runways are between Vietnam and the Philippines. If that is the case, and if you were the commander in chief, what would you do and how close would you run our naval vessels? And beyond that, as a show of force, what would you do to deter this Chinese strategy?

General CONANT. Good question. A difficult question, first of all. But I will not speak for anybody but myself.

I think, in that aspect, you need an engagement process that shows those transits of ships, the overflight of airplanes. You are going to have your reconnaissance missions out there trying to see what they are doing and what they are not doing.

I think that process alone sends a strong message. But every time we do that, there is a process it has to go through to approve those missions, and it is very complex, convoluted. And sometimes it takes days, weeks, to get that approval. Sometimes they are turned off at the last minute.

So if you want true freedom of navigation through the air and through the sea, then we should be trying to empower those commanders on a reasonable basis in consultation with the administration on when we run them and how we should run them.

We know how to do this, sir. We have done it before. And it should not threaten anybody.

But the fact that China is squawking so hard about it is probably something that we ought to pay attention to. It may be a deterrence factor in the end.

And also allies and partners, we have five allies. We have very many partners out there, and the partners are as important as allies.

Dr. GREEN. If I may, Senator?

I agree completely with General Conant's recommendations.

First and foremost, we need to do more of these freedom of navigation operations, and we probably need to do one near Mischief Reef or one of these undersea features, to demonstrate that we and our allies will welcome it, and our partners do not accept China's claim that this is an island with territorial rights.

On a broader strategic scale, I think the assumption in Beijing is that time is on their side and that our bilateral alliances in Asia will gradually whither as China becomes more important economically. If China sees that its actions are not only strengthening our alliances, but causing more cooperation and networking across alliances—the U.S., Australia, Japan, India, support for the Philippines—that is not built into their assumptions about China's longer term interests in Asia.

I think that is how you cause second thought in Beijing. If they start creating the antibodies in the system to come together because of what they are doing, they will have to rethink their assumptions about China's future strategic interests and position in the Asia-Pacific region.

Chairman MCCAIN. Well, I want to thank the witnesses. Amongst the many recommendations I am interested in is one of your recommendations about encouraging Japan to establish a joint operations command. Thinking outside of the box, now that there seems to have been a reconciliation between Japan and South Korea, you might even think about expanding that as well.

I think one of the least noticed, but more important events of recent years is finally resolving the comfort women issue, so that we could have arguably the two strongest nations in the Pacific region with us in a much more coordinated fashion.

And I think the witnesses would agree that things are not going to get quieter in the Pacific region, in the near future anyway. So I thank you all.

Senator Reed do you have anything?

Senator REED. No, sir. Thank you very much.

Chairman MCCAIN. Thank you very much. The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:04 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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