

Advance Policy Questions for Dr. Robert M. Gates Nominee to be Secretary of Defense

1. Defense Reforms

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms have strengthened the warfighting readiness of our Armed Forces. They have enhanced civilian control and clearly delineated the operational chain of command and the responsibilities and authorities of the combatant commanders, and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They have also clarified the responsibility of the Military Departments to recruit, organize, train, equip, and maintain forces for assignment to the combatant commanders.

Question: Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions?

Question: If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?

It has been twenty years since this landmark legislation prepared the Department for the post-Cold War era. At this time, I do not know of a particular area that requires change but, if confirmed, I will bring an open mind to this issue and will work with the committee on this very important topic.

2. Duties of the Secretary of Defense

Section 113 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Secretary of Defense is the principal assistant to the President in all matters relating to the Department of Defense. Subject to the direction of the President, and the law, the Secretary of Defense, under section 113, has authority, direction, and control over the Department of Defense (DOD).

Question: Do you believe there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Secretary of Defense?

Question: What changes to section 113, if any, would you recommend?

Current statutory authorities for the Office of the Secretary of Defense appear to be

sufficiently clear and appropriate for the proper execution of duties. However, I will not be able to make a complete determination on this position until, if I am confirmed, I have served as Secretary of Defense.

3. Chain of Command

Section 162(b) of title 10, United States Code, provides that the chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense and from the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commands. Section 163(a) of title 10 further provides that the President may direct communications to combatant commanders be transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and may assign duties to the Chairman to assist the President and the Secretary of Defense in performing their command function.

Question: Do you believe that these provisions facilitate a clear and effective chain of command?

Based on my understanding of the existing authority, I believe there is sufficient clarity in authority in current law to facilitate a clear and effective chain of command.

Question: In your view, do these provisions enhance or degrade civilian control of the military?

I believe they should enhance it but will have to withhold final judgment until, if confirmed, I have the chance to operate within this chain of command.

4. Advice of the Service Chiefs and the Combatant Commanders

Section 151 of title 10, United States Code, provides, in part, that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense and that if any member of the Joint Chiefs submits to the Chairman advice or an opinion, in disagreement with, or advice or an opinion in addition to, the advice presented by the Chairman, the Chairman shall present that advice or opinion at the same time he provides his own advice to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

Section 163 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff serves as the spokesman for the combatant commanders,

especially on the operational requirements of their commands.

Question: What changes in law, if any, do you think may be necessary to ensure that the views of the individual Service Chiefs and of the combatant commanders are presented and considered?

At this time, I do not recommend any changes to the law.

If confirmed, and after I have been in office for a sufficient time to determine if changes are advisable, I will recommend changes as appropriate or necessary.

5. Goldwater-Nichols for the Interagency

For more than two years, General Pace has been calling for a Goldwater-Nichols Act for the entire federal government. He argues that the U.S. and allied militaries can prevail on the battlefield but that the global war on terror requires a concerted effort by a host of U.S. agencies. According to General Pace's proposal, a lead agency would be selected and several other agencies would be subordinated to and subject to the direction of the head of the lead agency.

Question: What are your views on the merits of General Pace's proposal?

The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act led to greater jointness and interdependence among the military Services. The impact has been significant and lasting on the Department of Defense. Fighting the Global War on Terror requires that all instruments of national power are brought to bear on the task at hand.

Drawing on my experience of nine years of service on the National Security Council –and under four presidents – I believe that any steps that can be taken to improve and strengthen interagency cooperation and collaboration would be worthwhile. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the President, cabinet colleagues and Congress on this issue.

6. Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA)

The Department of Defense has established an organization called the Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA). CIFA is reportedly charged with protecting military facilities and personnel and carrying out intelligence collection, analysis and operations within the United States.

Question: Do you believe that it is appropriate that DOD has such an organization?

I believe it is appropriate in the current environment that the DOD be organized and focused in such a way that it gives critical attention to counterintelligence and force protection. If confirmed, I will take a look at this matter in greater detail.

Question: What is the appropriate division of functions and responsibilities between such a DOD organization and the counterintelligence executive within the Intelligence Community?

I understand that the National Counter Intelligence Executive provides strategic guidance, mission management, and integration to the national CI community. If confirmed, I will work to make sure the Department's activities are properly coordinated and synchronized with the rest of the government.

CIFA is responsible for the TALON data base that was found to have inappropriately included information on U.S. persons, including reports on peaceful civilian protests and demonstrations inside the United States, in contradiction to Executive Orders and the rules published by DOD.

Question: What are your views on the steps that should be taken to preclude the possibility that CIFA or any other DOD organization deals inappropriately with information on U.S. persons?

I have not closely studied the allegations concerning CIFA and the TALON program. I understand that the Department has conducted an internal review of this matter and found procedural weaknesses in the program. I further understand that steps are underway to correct these deficiencies. If confirmed, I will ensure that all DOD activities, including intelligence activities, abide by the law and applicable regulations..

7. Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004

The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTA), among other actions, realigned the responsibilities for budgeting for and management of intelligence organizations between the Secretary of Defense and the head of the Intelligence Community, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI). You have written in the past that you opposed the establishment of a DNI.

Question: What do you believe is the role of DOD in intelligence under the

new statute?

It is my understanding that the role of the Department was not fundamentally changed by this legislation. The Department's focus remains on providing critical intelligence support to the warfighter as well as supporting the National Intelligence Community in its important mission.

Question: Do you believe that the IRTA strikes the correct balance between the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary and the DNI?

As you may be aware, I have written on this topic and I have opined that early versions of this legislation did not properly provide for the proper balancing of authorities and responsibilities among the major elements of the intelligence community.

Question: What changes in the IRTA, if any, would you recommend that Congress consider?

At this point I think it is premature for me to make any recommendations or modifications until I see how the program is working in actual practice.

You have also written that “for the last decade, intelligence authority has been quietly leaching from the C.I.A. and to the Pentagon, not the other way around.” You have stated that you and other CIA veterans “are unhappy about the dominance of the Defense Department in the intelligence arena.”

Question: If confirmed, what steps, if any, do you foresee taking to address these issues?

Clearly, if confirmed, this will be an area that I would look into. I do believe that an important factor to take into account is the establishment of strong working relationships among leaders of the various organizations in question. In this regard, I believe in pursuing all opportunities to continue strengthening coordination and cooperation.

8. Use of Military Force

The question as to whether and when U.S. forces should participate in potentially dangerous situations is one of the most important and difficult decisions that the national command authorities have to make. Prior Secretaries of Defense and Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have proposed criteria to guide decision-making for such situations.

Question: What factors would you consider in making recommendations to the President on the use of force?

The factors that previous Chairmen and Secretaries of Defense have put forward remain relevant; for example: the threat to our vital interests; the role of non-military means to respond to the threat; our capability to defeat that threat and improve our strategic situation through the use of military force; and the prospects for sustained public support for military action.

The March 2006 National Security Strategy states, in part, that “If necessary, however, under long-standing principles of self defense, we do not rule out the use of force before attacks occur, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack. When the consequences of an attack with WMD are potentially so devastating, we cannot afford to stand idly by as grave dangers materialize. This is the principle and logic of preemption. The place of preemption in our national security strategy remains the same. We will always proceed deliberately, weighing the consequences of our actions. The reasons for our actions will be clear, the force measured, and the cause just.”

Question: Given that we now know from the work of the Iraq Survey Group and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that Iraq did not possess stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction nor any active programs to develop them, what degree of certainty do you believe is necessary before the United States would use preemptive force?

I believe the use of pre-emptive force should be based on very strong evidence. It is a decision that must not be taken lightly.

At the same time, my intelligence background has given me an appreciation for the fact that intelligence can be a moving target and is often ambiguous.

I believe that over the years the dedicated men and women in the intelligence community do their best to get the most reliable intelligence possible. Still, we need to be aware of

the caveats that come with intelligence products. And we need to continue to ask the hard questions.

9. Coordination with the Department of Homeland Security

Since the current Secretary of Defense was confirmed, a new Department of Homeland Security has been created, and DOD has created a new U. S. Northern Command and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense. Even so, the federal, state, and local response to Hurricane Katrina demonstrated serious shortcomings at all levels.

Question: What are your goals, and what is your assessment of the current situation, regarding cooperation and coordination between DOD and DHS on homeland security matters?

I am told that the Department of Defense has established a strong relationship with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), although the response to Hurricane Katrina does show that there is room for improvement.

- I believe DOD and DHS have a common goal: the protection of the United States.*
- If confirmed, I will work closely with DHS and other Federal departments and agencies to prepare for and respond threats to the U.S. homeland.*

10. Priorities

If confirmed, you will confront a range of critical issues relating to threats to national security and ensuring that the Armed Forces are prepared to deal with these threats.

Question: What broad priorities would you establish, if confirmed, with respect to issues which must be addressed by DOD?

The Department's current priorities appear to cover three areas: 1) Iraq and Winning the Long War against violent extremism; 2) Supporting the Department's military and civilian personnel; and 3) Continuing the transformation of the U.S. military for 21st-century challenges.

If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the President in his ongoing review of Iraq policy, working with the members of the Iraq Study Group (i.e., Baker-Hamilton

Commission) and working closely with members of Congress to ensure that we have the most comprehensive approach to our strategy in Iraq.

Clearly, to win the Long War, the Department needs to strengthen key capabilities such as those for irregular warfare. We must work with and through partners across the globe to counter the threat of violent extremism.

Recruiting and retaining the best people, and providing quality care for the wounded and their families also remains at the core of the Department's priorities.

Transforming the Department to better deal with 21st-century challenges, a major charge from the President must continue. These challenges range from the threat posed by terrorist networks, to weapons of mass destruction in the hands of hostile regimes and terrorist networks, to states armed with advanced weaponry.

If I am confirmed, these will be critical priorities for me.

11. Fiscal Year 2008 President's Budget Request

Striking the right balance between the requirements for the future force and the requirements for current readiness is difficult in times of peace, and even more so in times of war.

Question: How do you propose to establish that balance, to ensure that we achieve the needed level of investment in the future force in the face of pressing requirements for completing the mission in Iraq and Afghanistan, for re-setting of the force, and for meeting ongoing operational commitments across the globe?

From my years of service in the public sector, I recognize the importance of balancing immediate and future needs. And in national security matters, such a balance is essential to keeping America safe both today and tomorrow.

If confirmed, I will work with both the Department's civilian and military leaders to strike the right balance.

If confirmed, one of your first tasks will be to weigh the Department's final decisions regarding the President's Budget Request for fiscal year 2008 and make your mark on the Department's objectives contained within the fiscal year 2008 budget request.

Question: What is your plan to formally review the Department's 2008 budget request and, as necessary, make those changes required to ensure that the budget request fully funds the Department's requirements while meeting your objectives for fiscal year 2008 and the future years' defense plan?

I understand that the budget process is near completion. If confirmed, I will familiarize myself with the key elements of the FY08 Budget on an urgent basis.

If, through consultation with the civilian and military leadership of the Department and the White House, we conclude that there should be revisions to the budget, we will work with the Congress toward that end.

12. Budgeting for Ongoing Operations

Question: What level of resources do you believe the Department of Defense will need to meet our national security requirements in Fiscal Year 2008?

In general terms, I believe the Department needs sufficient resources to maintain prudent near-term force readiness, fully fund wartime needs, and invest adequately in long-term defense capabilities.

Until and if I am confirmed and fully briefed on the FY 2008 budget, I am not prepared to comment on the specifics of the budget.

In the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, section 1008, Congress required that the President's annual budget submitted to Congress after fiscal year 2007 include a request for the funds for ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and an estimate of all funds expected to be required in that fiscal year for such operations.

Question: If confirmed, will you comply with the requirements of this provision?

Yes.

Question: What problems, if any, do you anticipate the Department will encounter in complying with this budgeting requirement?

My understanding is that it is difficult to forecast the scope and nature of wartime operations many months ahead of time.

13. Army Budgeting Issues

In the past several months, press reports have claimed that the Pentagon's internal budgetary process has broken down. These reports have stated that the Army refused to present their budget proposal to the Office of the Secretary of Defense because they felt their top-line guidance was too low for their ongoing missions, including costs of the war and recapitalization of equipment. These reports went on to claim the Secretary of Defense gave the services permission to appeal directly to the President's Office of Management and Budget.

Question: What is your understanding of the current status of the Department's budget process, and, if confirmed, how would you plan to resolve current challenges?

While I am aware of some press reporting on this issue, I am not familiar with the particulars.

If confirmed, I will examine thoroughly questions regarding the Department's budget process.

Question: Do you believe the Department of Defense and the military departments can and should resolve these issues using the normal budget process, or do we need changes in the budget process?

As a general matter, I believe the Department should utilize the established budget process. Again, if confirmed, I will examine thoroughly questions regarding the Department's budget process.

14. Transformation

In 2001, President Bush called for transformation of the Armed Forces directing the Department to "discard Cold War relics" and plan to meet current and future threats.

Question: How would you assess the progress that has been made since 2001 in achieving the President's goal of transforming DOD?

Question: If confirmed, what would you plan to do to ensure that the transformation goals are achieved?

If confirmed, I will build upon the President's commitment to transform our forces to better fit the 21st century. Transformation holds the promise to ensure that our military forces are more agile and lethal when confronting the enemies of this new century.

While I need to learn more about the details, I am also committed to the continuing changes in the business process that the Department has implemented to support that force.

If confirmed, I will become more familiar with ongoing transformation activities and, in consultation with the civilian and military leadership and the Congress, direct any necessary changes when and where I think it's prudent to do so.

15. Reorganization of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD(P))

A reorganization of the OUSD(P) is currently underway. In the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, an additional Assistant Secretary of Defense position was authorized to support the reorganization, however, the conferees expressed various concerns about the proposed reorganization that must be responded to in a report from the Department by February 1, 2007.

Question: What is your understanding of the purpose, parameters, and status of the OUSD(P) reorganization?

I am told that the reorganization of the Department's Policy Office is grounded in lessons learned during the QDR, which calls on the Department to transform its civilian capabilities just as military's capabilities are undergoing transformation.

Question: What is your assessment of the concerns expressed by the conferees regarding the reorganization?

I understand that the Department will formally respond to these concerns in a February 1 report to Congress

Question: If confirmed, would you continue the planned reorganization or defer any reorganization pending your own inputs?

If confirmed, I am inclined to continue the Policy Office) reorganization effort, but plan to review this proposal and will be prepared to engage the Committee in a more detailed discussion at that time.

16. Operation Desert Storm

Question: Do you believe it was a mistake not to seize Baghdad in 1991 during Operation Desert Storm?

I do not believe we were mistaken when we decided not to expand and extend military operations to seize Baghdad in 1991.

At the time, the U.S. and the Coalition had achieved our strategic objectives of ejecting Iraqi forces from Kuwait and eroding Saddam's threat to the region.

- Seizing Baghdad was not part of that campaign plan.*
- The coalition would have shattered if it had been tasked with an invasion or occupation of Iraq.*
- The Coalition had not planned for, or resourced for, military operations to occupy Iraq*
- By extending the ground war into Baghdad, we would have violated long-standing principles not to change military objectives mid-stream and engage in “mission creep.”*

17. Strategy in Iraq

Question: Do you agree that there is no purely military solution to the Iraq situation?

Yes, there is no purely military solution in Iraq. The U.S. strategy in Iraq depends on political and economic efforts, as much as military, though the military component remains critical to success there.

According to the President, the military aspect of the U.S. strategy continues to be to help develop self-reliance among Iraqi security forces, neutralizing the insurgency, and defeating the terrorists. While significant work remains to be done in a difficult environment, the Iraqi security forces have made great strides.

Security progress in many ways is contingent on political and economic progress, which will continue to require the full commitment of the other departments of the U.S. government, Iraq's regional neighbors, and the international community.

Question: Do you believe that all options should be on the table for changing the current course in Iraq?

In principle, all options should be on the table. If confirmed, I will seek the advice of the military leadership, consult with the President, and consult with the Congress in order to implement the best strategy with regard to Iraq.

18. Iraq Lessons Learned

Question: What do you believe to be the major lessons learned from the Iraq invasion and the ongoing effort to stabilize the country?

I agreed with President Bush's decision to go into Iraq. Our men and women in uniform and our coalition partners have served admirably there, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with them on a daily basis to help make the future better for the Iraqi people.

There is no question that Saddam Hussein's regime was a dangerous and disruptive force in the region. By the late 1990s, it was clear that his dictatorial regime needed to be removed from power. The Oil for Food program was a failure. Saddam's continual defiance of the international community was unacceptable.

In 2002, I supported UN Resolution 1441, which called for immediate and complete disarmament of Iraq's illegal weapons in order to give inspections another chance. Again, Saddam thumbed his nose at the international community. I believed that he

possessed WMD or the capacity for building WMD, and that with the collapse of sanctions he would aggressively pursue an effort to increase his WMD capability.

I believe that leaving Iraq in chaos would have dangerous consequences both in the region and globally for many years to come.

Question: In that regard, what would you have done differently had you been Secretary of Defense over the last six years?

War planning should be done with the understanding that the post-major combat phase of operations can be crucial. If confirmed, I intend to improve the Department's capabilities in this regard. I understand this area has been a major focus of the Department through the QDR and if confirmed I would continue to make this a priority.

With the advantages of hindsight, I might have done some things differently. With the same hindsight, I imagine others in the Administration would also have done things differently.

I understand the Department has collected information on lessons learned, and if confirmed I will review that information in detail.

19. Pre-War Intelligence

In 1989, you wrote: "Policymakers usually learn the hard way that, although intelligence can tell them a great deal, it only rarely . . . provides the kind of unambiguous and timely information that can make day-to-day decisions simpler and less risky. Intelligence officers occasionally encourage such exaggerated expectations by pretending a confidence in their judgments they cannot reasonably justify and by failing to be candid about the quality and reliability of their information and the possibility of other outcomes."

Question: What is your personal assessment of the pre-war intelligence on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and the use of that intelligence by policymakers?

Question: What lessons do you believe we should draw from this history when we contemplate future conflicts?

For intelligence, the lessons learned are about the need for an all-source intelligence approach that will give the Intelligence Community the greatest opportunity for successful collection and analysis and also minimize our adversaries' capability to deny and deceive us.

It also, once again, emphasizes the need for good analytic tradecraft that carefully vets sources, questions assumptions, clearly represents facts, and looks at alternative explanations in order to fight a tendency to fall into group think.

Policy-makers also recognize that intelligence cannot operate with the same standards of evidence used in U.S. courts, especially against hard targets such as Iraq. The intelligence collected against such targets is often episodic and contradictory.

Through the combination of all-source collection and strong tradecraft, the Intelligence Community can develop intelligence assessments which can best inform policy-makers in the often difficult choices confronting them. Still, the Community ought not exaggerate its capabilities or minimize the uncertainty that plagues assessments on such hard targets.

There are lessons learned in several respects:

- The need for high-quality collection capabilities, both human and technical.*
- The need for experienced and skilled analytical capabilities.*
- The importance of intelligence analysts being forthright about the quality of their information and the reliability of their judgments.*
- The enduring need for decision-makers to ask tough questions on intelligence.*
- The importance of not offering single outcome forecasts, which have contributed to past intelligence failures.*

20. China

China is viewed by some in the United States as a potential threat and by others as a potential constructive international partner that should be welcomed and integrated into the international economic and political community.

Question: To what extent do you believe the policies and actions of the United States and other major regional and international actors will affect the direction in which China develops, and the extent to which it becomes a cooperative partner or a competitor of the United States?

As I see it, the United States, in concert with our allies and partners, can create a regional infrastructure to expand those areas where our interests converge with China's, while discouraging China's activities of concern

China's improved behavior on proliferation, increased transparency, and cooperative approach to the North Korean nuclear question is welcome.

Question: What do you believe are China's political-military objectives regarding Taiwan, the Asia-Pacific region, and globally?

I believe China seeks to integrate Taiwan peacefully if possible. That is their policy but their capabilities suggest they are prepared to consider the use of force if peaceful efforts fail.

Beyond Taiwan, China aspires to be the pre-eminent power in Asia. Beijing is expanding its political and economic influence in the region and generating options for military coercion.

Question: What do you believe are the objectives of China's military modernization program (including its nuclear weapons program)?

It appears to me that China is building capabilities to fight short duration, high-intensity conflict on its periphery. Its near-term focus is on generating sufficient combat power to rapidly erode Taiwan's will to resist and to deter or deny effective intervention in a cross-Strait conflict.

China is also strengthening its deterrent posture through modernization of its strategic forces. Its "no first use" policy appears intact, but the shift to survivable, mobile nuclear forces gives China's leaders new options for coercion or first use in crises.

Question: How do you believe the United States should respond to China's military modernization program?

Our strategy must be designed to preserve peace and stability in the region. It must be flexible and supported by continued transformation of the U.S. military in Asia, maintenance of our global presence and access, and strengthened alliances and partnerships.

We should monitor closely the growth of China's military capabilities, while continuing to press Beijing for greater transparency. In accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act, we should maintain our capabilities to resist China's use of force or coercion against Taiwan and assist Taipei in maintaining its self-defense.

U.S-China military-to-military relations have been modest over the past six years, however the Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, has recently taken steps to reinvigorate this relationship.

Question: Do you believe that we should make any changes in the quality or quantity of our military relations with China? If so, what changes and why?

I believe that expanded military exchanges with China can be valuable but should be based on China's willingness to reciprocate.

21. North Korea

North Korea represents one of the greatest near term threats to U.S. national security interests in Asia.

Question: What is your assessment of the current security situation on the Korean peninsula and the diplomatic efforts to date to persuade North Korea to verifiably dismantle its nuclear weapons program?

North Korea's large, albeit aging, conventional capability and its pursuit of asymmetric capabilities in the form of WMD and missile delivery systems present a significant challenge to the U.S., our allies, the region, and the international community.

I understand the U.S. strategy remains centered on maintaining peace through deterrence and diplomacy. Our ROK and Japan alliances remain strong, and the combined capabilities of the ROK and U.S. remain ready. Our growing missile defense relationship with Japan is an important contribution to our deterrent posture.

I am told the U.S. is working closely with our allies, our Six Party Talks partners, and the international community to persuade North Korea to live up to its agreements as codified in the September 19, 2005 Joint Statement.

Question: What is your assessment of the threat posed to the United States and its allies by North Korea's ballistic missile and WMD capabilities and the export of those capabilities?

North Korea's continuing pursuit of asymmetric capabilities in the form of WMD and missile delivery systems presents a significant security challenge to the United States, our allies, the region and the international community. The potential for North Korean proliferation of nuclear weapons, technology and fissile material is a major concern and a threat that must be addressed.

President Bush stated clearly in Singapore on 16 November, the U.S. will hold Pyongyang accountable for any transfer of nuclear weapons, related technology, or fissile material to State or non-State actors.

Question: In your view, what should be done to strengthen deterrence on the Korean peninsula?

The true lynchpin to our deterrence is the strength and viability of our alliances. We must continue to evolve our relationships with both the ROK and Japan to ensure their long term political sustainability and to ensure that the DPRK never doubts our resolve to meet our treaty commitments.

The extended deterrence offered by U.S. nuclear forces to our Allies must remain a viable component of our strategy both to deter aggression in Northeast Asia and to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons globally.

22. Republic of South Korea

Since the end of World War II, the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) has been a key pillar of security in the Asia Pacific region. This relationship has gone through periods of inevitable change.

Question: What is your understanding of the current U. S. security relationship with the ROK?

In my view, the U.S.-ROK alliance remains strong and viable. Both the U.S. and Republic of Korea are looking to evolve a more equal military partnership.

Question: If confirmed, what measures, if any, would you take to improve the U.S.-ROK security relationship?

As I understand it, the Department of Defense has been working closely with the ROK to realign U.S. forces on the Peninsula.

The Department is, for example, repositioning U.S. forces to bases south of Seoul. This will make the U.S. presence less intrusive on the Korean people, remove U.S. forces from the center of Seoul, and result in a U.S. force posture that enhances U.S. forces' readiness and quality of life.

Question: What is your view regarding the timing of turning over wartime operational command to the ROK?

I understand that the U.S. and ROK have agreed on a timeframe for the transfer of wartime operational control. If confirmed I will continue to work with my ROK counterpart to complete this process.

23. Afghanistan

Question: What is your assessment of the situation in Afghanistan?

Developments in Afghanistan are a concern. There are positive trends, such as the International Security and Assistance Force completing its expansion and the transition to NATO command of the counterinsurgency mission.

But there clearly is a resurgence of the Taliban in certain areas of the country. This changing security situation must remain a high priority of the U.S. In my opinion, we must avoid repeating the mistakes of the late 1980s when in retrospect we neglected Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal.

Question: What more do you think the United States should be doing in support of the Karzai government and ongoing efforts to improve security and development in order to stabilize Afghanistan?"

I believe that this is an important moment in Afghanistan – additional investment in extending governance can build on the current momentum.

The U.S. should continue to develop the Afghan National Security Forces to ensure we have capable and an independent Afghan National Army and Police that increasingly will take responsibility for the security and stability of Afghanistan.

The U.S. should also help the government of Afghanistan to: extend the rule of law to remote areas; provide economic development that will provide people alternatives to opium production and the Taliban; and address corruption to ensure a stable state that enjoys popular support.

If confirmed, I will make our continued success in Afghanistan a significant priority.

24. National Limits on Use of NATO Forces in Afghanistan

NATO Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer has repeatedly called on NATO members to remove caveats that individual nations have placed on the movement and use of forces deployed as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, ISAF, in Afghanistan. For example, in mid-November, German Chancellor Merkel ruled out deploying Germany's 2,800 troops to southern Afghanistan, saying she would not change the German Parliament's requirement that its troops be based in northern Afghanistan.

Question: Have national caveats imposed by certain NATO members on the use of their troops reduced ISAF's ability to carry out its mission in Afghanistan, in particular to counter the Taliban insurgency in the south?

I have obviously not been involved with this issue first hand. However, it appears to me that caveats imposed by member countries restrict the flexibility of NATO commanders to carry out missions, and complicate staff planning. Caveats require Allies without caveats to take up a greater share of the common burden. To the best of my knowledge they have not to date, however, led to the failure of any mission.

Question: Are you concerned that as a result of these caveats, other NATO members – the Canadian, British, and Dutch troops – are having to bear the brunt of the fighting in southern Afghanistan?

Yes. I believe it is a concern and one that requires we continue to work on with NATO Supreme Command and other NATO allies.

I am told that the Romanians, Danes, Australians, Estonians and our own U.S. forces have been fighting side by side with the British, Dutch and Canadians since assumption of NATO command in the South this past summer.

Question: What do you believe should be done to induce NATO members to remove those national caveats, and to provide additional troops and equipment should they be needed?

As I understand it, caveats have always existed in NATO operations, such as in Bosnia and Kosovo. We need to bear in mind that some caveats reflect legal or political requirements and will require a prolonged, long-term effort to modify. We must, however, work closely with NATO and our allies to do just that.

25. Strategy in Afghanistan

The Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, stated in early January that “There is no military solution” in Afghanistan, and called instead for an expanded development and nation-building effort in the country.

Question: Do you agree with Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer that it is not possible to win in Afghanistan “by military means alone?”

I agree with Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer that Afghanistan cannot be won by military means alone.

The fight in Afghanistan requires defeating the Taliban, but also requires assisting the country in developing into a moderate, stable, representative democracy and a partner in the Global War on Terror.

Afghanistan has suffered through war for the last thirty years. In addition to the millions of lives and billions of dollars lost in the conflict, this turbulent period severely damaged the basic fabric of a functioning society.

Success will require demonstrating to the Afghan people that the elected government can deliver not only security, but improved quality of life.

26. Afghanistan- Force Size and Command Structure

In September General Jones' called for an additional 2,000-2,500 troops and additional transport helicopters to bolster the NATO effort in southern Afghanistan.

Question: If you determine those requirement are valid, what do you believe can and should be done to induce NATO members to provide the additional troops and helicopters that General Jones has called for?

In my view, we need to continue to push Allies at every opportunity and at all levels, as GEN Jones has done, to contribute the forces required for the mission in Afghanistan.

I am concerned about the limitations that some NATO countries have placed upon the operations of their forces in Afghanistan. We need to keep working with NATO and our allies to limit the national caveats that some have placed on the use of their troops.

Success in Afghanistan is vital to security in the region -- not only to NATO as an alliance, but to the strategic interests of each NATO member state.

Question: Do you believe other changes will be needed to support the U.S. and NATO mission in Afghanistan? For example, do you advocate transferring responsibility for operations and intelligence relating to Afghanistan to the European Command? Would you advocate greater intelligence-sharing with NATO in Afghanistan?

It is my understanding that the Commanders of U.S. Central and U.S. European Command, together with GEN Pace, have prepared a transition plan to ensure that we have the right command and control relationships in place in Afghanistan to support both the ISAF and our Operational Enduring Freedom (OEF) missions.

Intelligence is obviously a topic of significant interest to me. The operational needs in Afghanistan require a strong intelligence sharing relationship with NATO. If confirmed, I will work to ensure an effective intelligence-sharing relationship with Afghans as well.

27. Afghanistan - Reconstruction

Question: What is your assessment of the relationship between reconstruction and development in Afghanistan and achieving the U.S. objective of a stable, self-governing democratic Afghanistan?

In my view, Afghan reconstruction and development are critical to achieving our objectives.

The U.S. needs to do better in ensuring that economic development follows military activity. The fight in Afghanistan requires defeating the Taliban resurgence, but also requires assisting the country in developing into a moderate, stable, representative democracy and a partner in the Global War on Terror.

The U.S. also needs to help the government of Afghanistan to: extend the rule of law to remote areas; provide economic development that will provide people alternatives to opium production and the Taliban; and address corruption to ensure a stable state that enjoys popular support.

Question: What is your assessment of international and U.S. counterdrug efforts in Afghanistan? Do you believe that NATO and the United States military are doing enough to help the Afghan government to tackle this problem? If not, what do you believe we should do?

The narcotics trade is a major challenge for Afghanistan – it fuels corruption, drives a wedge between the government and Afghan poppy growers, and provides funds for the Taliban and certain criminal elements that are a threat to stability.

The U.S. needs to continue to work with the Government of Afghanistan, our allies, and the international community to address this long-term challenge.

The U.S. also needs to continue to build the counternarcotics capacity of the Government of Afghanistan.

28. Iran

You co-chaired a task force of the Council on Foreign Relations that concluded that “it is in the interests of the United States to engage selectively with Iran to promote regional stability, dissuade Iran from pursuing nuclear weapons, preserve reliable energy supplies, reduce the threat of terror, and address the ‘democracy deficit’ that pervades the Middle East as a whole.”

Question: Do you believe it would be in the United States' interest to engage Iran in a direct dialogue regarding stability and security in Iraq?

While the study I co-directed with Dr. Brzezinski in 2004 was a serious effort to assess policy options for Iran there have been several important developments since that time.

- President Ahmadinejad was elected,*
- The U.S. has offered to engage in direct talks on the nuclear issue if Iran suspends its enrichment program,*
- Iran has played an increasingly disruptive role in Iraq and more broadly in the region, including its support for Hizballah in last summer’s warfare in Lebanon.*

In addition, I am mindful that it is one thing to direct a study as a private citizen and another to serve as a senior policymaker in the Administration. In general I believe no option that could potentially benefit U.S. policy should be off the table. Even in the worst days of the cold war the U.S. maintained a dialogue with the Soviet Union and China and I believe those channels of communication helped us manage many potentially difficult situations. Engagement with Iran might well come as part of an international conference.

Question: What more do you believe the United States and the international community could be doing to dissuade Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapons program?

The U.S. has been fully committed to working with the international community to find a diplomatic solution to Tehran’s nuclear weapons ambitions. The State Department properly has the lead in these diplomatic and non-military means of dissuading Iran’s nuclear ambitions, and if confirmed, I plan to review the situation and make recommendations to my colleagues, other national security agencies in the government, and the President.

29. Syria

Question: Do you believe it would be in the United States' interest to engage Syria in a direct dialogue regarding stability and security in Iraq?

Our approach to Syria needs to be tied to our overall approach to Iraq. As we review our approach to Iraq, all options should be on the table. On several occasions in recent years, the U.S. has urged Syria to change its unhelpful behavior.

Our engagement with Syria need not be unilateral. It could, for instance, take the form of Syrian participation in a regional conference.

30. Kosovo

Nearly 16,000 NATO troops currently participate in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) providing security and stabilization assistance.

Question: What do you anticipate will be the role and requirements for KFOR, and for U. S. forces in particular, after the conclusion of Serbian general elections in January 2007 and after the decision by the Contact Group of six major powers regarding the final status for Kosovo has been announced?

As President Bush said in July 2001, the U.S. went into the Balkans as a member of the Alliance and we will leave with the Alliance; however, we want to hasten the day when we can conclude our extraordinary deployments there.

I am aware there is a UN Secretary General-sponsored process looking at the UN Kosovo progress and until that has run its course it would be inappropriate for me to speculate on the possible new roles or functions for the U.S. forces in Kosovo.

31. Turkey

In June 2006, the Council on Foreign Relations issued a report on Turkey recommending that the United States and Turkey engage in a dialogue on the future of Iraq; that the U.S. initiate a diplomatic approach encouraging Europe to agree to Turkish accession to the EU; and that a high-level U.S.-Turkish commission be established to provide a structured mechanism for regular interaction across agencies of government, NGOs, and the private sector.

Question: Do you agree with the recommendations of the Council's report?

My general view is that Turkey's role as a NATO ally and as an important player in the Middle East and Central Asia has long been underappreciated by too many apart from the U.S. and the United Kingdom. I understand actions to implement many of the recommendations have been underway for some time.

Question: If confirmed, what initiatives would you anticipate taking to promote stronger U.S.-Turkish military relations?

Historically, our military relationship has provided a strong foundation for the broader relationship. The relationship remains solid, but the U.S. and Turkey have much work to do in dealing with the challenges of the new security environment.

I also believe that support for General Joe Ralston's efforts as the Special Envoy for Countering the PKK will continue to be critically important.

Question: What do you believe the Government of Turkey should do, if anything, to improve its relationship with the United States following their refusal to permit military forces to transit Turkey in preparation for the war in 2003?

Turkey remains an important ally of the U.S. and continues to be an important partner in the Global War on Terror through its significant support in Afghanistan, strong contributions to NATO, and support for operations at Incirlik air base.

Turkey also remains an important regional power. Turkey can play a constructive role with its neighbors; specifically supporting the Permanent 5 members of the UN Security Council on Iran, supporting the Government in Iraq, and holding Syria accountable.

32. Africa

In 2004, the Department of Defense conducted a review of the Unified Command Plan. While the Department reviewed the command structure in Africa, it did not approve establishing a separate command or realigning the existing command structure. Under the existing command structure, EUCOM, CENTCOM, and PACOM have responsibilities for Africa.

Question: What is your view on the present command structure in Africa?

I believe that changes in the security environment suggest that now is a good time to examine how we deal with Africa.

My understanding is that the Defense Department is considering changes to the Unified Command Plan addressing how we approach evolving security challenges in Africa.

Question: What are the significant factors that should be considered in determining whether the Department of Defense is properly organized to meet its objectives in the region?

The threats we face from global terrorist networks operating in Africa and security threats from instability, conflict, poverty and disease in Africa are all important factors to consider.

The Department of Defense needs to be a part of a more comprehensive, political-military-economic approach to the continent.

33. Darfur

Question: With agreement in principle on a joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping force for Darfur, should U.S. military forces be a component of an international peacekeeping force for Darfur, and if so, what role should they play?

The President has worked with the U.N. Secretary General, the NATO Secretary General and others to highlight the suffering in Darfur. The international community needs to meet the challenge presented by the situation in Darfur.

I understand that the U.S. has provided an appropriate contribution to strategic airlift and provided U.S. military advisors to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) as part of previously offered NATO assistance.

Question: What kinds of support do you believe would be appropriate for the United States to provide to the joint peacekeeping force for Darfur?

The U.S. is already making contributions, and if confirmed, I would want to make a more detailed assessment of the status of the joint peacekeeping force before making recommendations to the President on what appropriate additional U.S. contributions, if any, might be made.

34. Future of NATO

Outgoing President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Pierre Lellouche, in an address to the Assembly members recently spoke of his concern for the future of the NATO Alliance. Mr. Lellouche said, "I must admit that I am concerned about the fate of the Atlantic Alliance...I have my concerns, first of all because our American friends and allies do not give me the impression of having truly chosen a direction for the future of the Alliance." Mr. Lellouche said that after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center the U.S. had by-passed the Alliance during the "first phase of the war in Afghanistan and then Iraq". "But I am also concerned about the non-existence of the famous European pillar of the Alliance. Although Europe is delighted with its famous ESDP, the European Security and Defense Policy, in actuality, with the exception of Great Britain and France, Europe is in a process of unilateral budgetary disarmament," he said.

Question: Do you agree with Mr. Lellouche's observation? What do you believe needs to be done to address his concerns?

I am quite optimistic about NATO's future, but Mr. Lellouche raises a valid concern about the level of effort by allies. While the GDP of most allies has grown in recent years, most defense budgets are flat or declining, and have been for a long time.

Question: What are the greatest opportunities and challenges that you foresee for NATO over the next five years?

NATO has the opportunity to complete its transformation from a static military Alliance, focused solely on territorial defense, to an Alliance that can deliver security wherever Allies' common security interests are threatened around the globe.

NATO's operation in Afghanistan is a step in the right direction. However, the need to generate the necessary forces and capabilities has been difficult because of budget constraints and a shortage of modern, highly capable, interoperable, expeditionary forces.

Thus a primary challenge will continue to be to get Allies to devote the resources needed to continue transforming their military forces to succeed in expeditionary operations.

Question: Do you envision further enlargement of NATO within the next five years?

My understanding is NATO's door is open to new members, but aspirants must meet NATO's performance-based standards and prepare themselves for the responsibilities and obligations of membership.

Question: What more can the United States do to encourage NATO member nations to spend more on defense, transform their militaries, acquire advanced capabilities, and enhance their interoperability with the United States and other NATO member nations?

Transforming Allies' forces and funding are among NATO's primary challenges.

The U.S. can help by working through NATO to address today's complex security challenges, and making it clear to Allies that we expect them to bear an equitable share of the burden.

Question: In your view, is there a continuing requirement for U.S. nuclear weapons to be deployed in NATO countries?

I believe that the U.S. nuclear forces committed to NATO and based in Europe provide an enduring political and military link between the U.S. and its European Allies. They are an expression of the common commitment of the Alliance.

35. European Security and Defense Policy

The European Union's (EU) European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) reflects the EU's intention to create a capability to conduct military operations in response to international crises in cases where "NATO as a whole is not engaged." Many in the Congress have expressed concern that the ESDP could emerge as a competitor, rather than a complement, to the NATO Alliance.

Question: Do you share these concerns about the ESDP?

I would support the European Security and Defense Policy, based on the understanding that it would:

- help build new European capabilities (that are also available to NATO);*
- conduct operations "where NATO is not engaged"*
- do so in a manner that is cooperative, not competitive or duplicative, with NATO.*

Question: What steps do you believe that the United States and NATO members should take to ensure that ESDP is implemented in a way that complements and strengthens NATO?

The E.U. capability should remain consistent with NATO's ability in order to be interoperable. In addition, the situations in the Balkans and Afghanistan offer important opportunities for NATO and the EU to cooperate in the Balkans and in Afghanistan.

36. Engagement Policy

One of the central pillars of our recent national security strategy has been military engagement as a means of building relationships around the world. Military-to-military contacts, Joint Combined Exchange Training exercises, combatant commander exercises, and humanitarian demining operations, have been used to achieve this goal.

Question: Do you believe that these activities contribute positively to U.S. national security?

I agree that military-to-military activities with our allies and partners can contribute positively to U.S. national security. Such activities can strengthen trust and interoperability, and help other nations contribute to coalition operations.

Such activities should form a key component of our strategy for combating violent extremism. We need to work with our partners across the globe to counter terrorist groups.

Question: If confirmed, would you support continued engagement activities of the U.S. military?

Yes, if confirmed, I would want to continue such activities. I would want to ensure that they were focused on our top priorities; first and foremost the need to counter violent extremist groups across the globe.

Question: What improvements, if any, would you suggest to the interagency process for implementing these authorities?

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Secretary of State and others to make such recommendations to the President. I would not presume to offer specific suggestions for improving the interagency process at this point.

37. Stability and Support Operations

The U.S. experience in Iraq has underscored the importance of planning and training to prepare for the conduct and support of stability and support operations in post-conflict situations.

Question: In your view, what are the appropriate roles and responsibilities between the Department of Defense and other departments and agencies of the Federal Government in the planning and conduct of stability operations?

Stability operations clearly are an area of critical importance to the challenges the U.S. will face in the international environment.

Frequently these efforts must be civilian led with the military in support. I understand that DOD is currently working with Secretary Rice and her colleagues at the Department of State in this regard.

Question: In developing the capabilities necessary for stability operations, what adjustments, if any, should be made to prepare U.S. Armed Forces to conduct stability operations without detracting from its ability to perform combat missions?

I understand there are efforts underway in the Department to increase the capability of military services to conduct stability operations. If confirmed, I intend to familiarize myself with these efforts and will work with the Service Secretaries and Chiefs to ensure appropriate adjustments are made.

Question: Do you believe that the authorities provided under Section 1206 (Building the Capacity of Foreign Military Forces) and Section 1207 (Security and Stabilization Assistance) of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2006 contribute to a policy of military engagement?

I understand the Departments of State and Defense have started implementing a new, joint train and equip authority and the ability to use DOD funds to help civilians quickly deploy to crises.

I am told these authorities allow the U.S. government to move more rapidly in response to changing security needs and feature appropriate interagency development, review and implementation.

Question: Do you believe that the U.S. government needs to establish new organizations or offices to manage stability operations? If so, why?

As I stated in a previous answer, this is an important interagency issue. The ability to manage stability operations is a critical challenge facing the Nation. As for a precise prescriptive solution, it is premature for me to comment at this time.

38. Interagency Operations

In 2005, President Bush issued a new National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD-44) aimed at improving the management of interagency efforts concerning reconstruction and stabilization assistance. In particular, the directive requires that “the Secretaries of State and Defense integrate stabilization and reconstruction contingency plans with military contingency plans when relevant and appropriate.”

Question: What challenges do you foresee in implementing this directive and in coordinating stabilization and reconstruction contingency plans with military contingency plans?

My service over nearly nine years under four Presidents on the National Security Council staff taught me well about the importance of interagency collaboration and cooperation. The U.S. clearly needs a government-wide approach to the challenges we face today and will face in the future. If confirmed, this type of interagency collaboration and cooperation will be one of my priorities.

39. Special Operation Forces (SOF)

Question: Do you believe that the force size, structure and budget of the Special Operations Command is sufficient, given the current roles and missions of SOF? If not, why, and what changes would you make, if confirmed?

I understand significant enhancements in special operations capabilities have been accomplished over the past five years and are continuing. If confirmed, I will review these capabilities and plans as well as others and make recommendations for any necessary adjustments.

40. Russia and Nuclear Weapons

Although Russia is no longer considered to pose a near term threat to U.S. national security, the fact remains that Russia retains a huge nuclear arsenal and inventory of strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons and nuclear-related materials. The Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program has accomplished a great deal over the past fifteen years to help reduce and safeguard such weapons and materials in the former Soviet Union, but Russia has many tactical nuclear weapons that pose a security and a proliferation threat. The 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), with its strict limitations, counting rules, verification, and transparency measures, will expire in 2009 unless the parties agree to extend its duration. The Moscow Treaty remains in force until 2012, but the ability of the United States to verify it, and to monitor the status and development of Russian nuclear forces more generally will decrease dramatically should START be permitted to expire.

Question: What is your view of the utility of legally binding, verifiable, nuclear arms control agreements with Russia at this stage in the post-Cold War era?

The START Treaty was negotiated toward the end of the Cold War, and today's circumstances are significantly different.

The most productive path may be continuing dialogue with Russia on how best to continue reducing nuclear weapons and increasing transparency and confidence.

Question: Is it in the U.S. interest to extend the duration of the START Treaty, or, alternatively, to negotiate a new treaty that will offer similar benefits to both parties and further reduce their nuclear forces?

I believe it remains in our interest to continue improving our relationship with the Russian Federation. However, formal negotiations for Cold War-style, legally binding arms control agreements may not further that relationship.

The U.S. may want to look at a variety of confidence-building and transparency measures regarding our respective strategic force postures.

If confirmed, I will certainly review these matters.

41. DOD's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

The CTR program, which is focused primarily on eliminating Cold War era weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the states of the former Soviet Union, has several key objectives that include: (1) eliminating strategic nuclear weapons; (2) improving the security and accounting of nuclear weapons and weapons-usable fissile material; (3) eliminating and preventing the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons and capabilities; and (4) encouraging military reductions and reforms to reduce proliferation threats.

Question: In your view, what needs to be done to reduce the proliferation threat from the residual Cold War stockpiles of WMD weapons and materials in the former Soviet Union?

Residual Cold War stockpiles of WMD and related materials in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) pose a continuing proliferation threat. Where host governments are unable to mitigate this threat, CTR and other U.S. programs are able to help, provided the recipients work with us cooperatively.

Question: Are Russia and the former Soviet Union countries making a significant contribution to efforts to reduce the proliferation threats they inherited?

My understanding is that the Russian Federation and other Former Soviet Union states are making varying contributions to reduce the proliferation threats they inherited.

Question: What needs to be done to enable agreement between Russia and the United States on access and liability issues that continue to hamper progress on some CTR programs?

I am told that the U.S. and Russia have reached an agreement that has resolved a number of these issues for a period of time.

Question: Do you think the CTR program is well coordinated among the U.S. government agencies that engage in threat reduction efforts in Russia, e.g., the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the State Department?

If confirmed, I will become more familiar where we stand on these issues, but at this point I have no knowledge if these activities are well coordinated or not.

Question: Do you believe there are either geographic or programmatic areas where the CTR program should be expanded?

I understand the original CTR program has expanded mitigation activities outside the FSU and to other activities and generally speaking, I believe these developments move the program in the right direction.

42. Defense Acquisition Reform

The Government Accountability Office recently noted that the total cost of all major defense acquisition programs for 2006 is over \$1.4 trillion, up from \$700 billion in 2001. At the same time continuously evolving requirements, unregulated program cost growth after initial estimates, and failure to utilize economic purchasing options result in fewer, yet more costly, weapon systems available to support the warfighter. Despite this trend, the Department of Defense continually seeks to place more capability on fewer platforms, further increasing the cost of these systems while diminishing their ability to project force around the globe.

Question: What are your views regarding the Defense acquisition process and the need for reform?

Efforts to reform the defense acquisition system must be continued on behalf of the military and the American tax payer. There have been many studies and recommendations to improve DOD's acquisition processes. I understand that initiatives in this area are underway under the auspices of Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England. If confirmed, I plan to familiarize myself with these efforts and review the Department's acquisition processes and outcomes using the 2006 QDR section on Reshaping the Defense Enterprise as a starting point.

Question: If confirmed, how would you improve all three aspects of the acquisition process – requirements, acquisition, and budgeting?

If confirmed, I plan to review how all three aspects of the acquisition process work with each other to identify suitable, supportable, timely, and affordable solutions.

Question: If confirmed, how would you improve acquisition accountability?

See above response.

Question: Do you believe that the current investment budget for major systems is affordable given increasing historic cost growth in major systems, costs of current operations, Army modularization, and asset recapitalization?

I do not have a detailed understanding at this time of the various drivers in the budget. If confirmed, I will address the overall Department Fiscal Year 08 budget as one of my immediate priorities.

Question: What would be the impact of a decision by the Department to reduce purchases of major systems because of affordability issues?

I understand that there are ramifications with every acquisition decision. If confirmed, I will work to understand those issues including effects of reduced purchases.

Question: If confirmed, how do you plan to address this issue and guard against the potential impact of weapon systems cost growth?

Again, I understand the issue in general terms, and certainly recognize its importance. Weapons system cost growth has been a historic challenge to the defense program due to the complexity of U.S. systems and the difficulty in making accurate or realistic estimates from the outset. I will need to better understand the particulars of the current defense acquisition program before being able to offer a more informed perspective on this issue.

43. Services Contracting

Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic increase in the volume of services purchased by the Department of Defense. According to GAO, the Department spent more than \$140 billion on services in Fiscal Year 2005 – almost double the amount spent ten years earlier and more than the Department spends on all products, including weapon systems. Indeed, the Department has become dependent on contractors to perform most of its functions, including acquisition functions. Yet, the Department has yet to establish a management structure for services contracts comparable to the structure in place for the acquisition of products.

Question: What is your view of the Department’s reliance on service contractors?

Question: If confirmed, how do you plan to address the issue of cost growth in services contracting and ensure that the Department gets the most for its money in this area?

It is my understanding that service contractors provide a valuable function to the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I intend to review the Department’s policies and procedures and make any necessary adjustments.

44. Tactical Fighter Programs

Perhaps the largest modernization effort that we will face over the next several years is the set of programs to modernize our tactical aviation forces with fifth generation tactical aircraft equipped with stealth technology, to include the F-22 and the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF).

Question: Based on current and projected threats, what are your views on the requirements for and timing of these programs?

If confirmed, I will take a close look at the current and projected threats, associated program requirements and the timing of our tactical aviation forces to include the F-22 and JSF.

45. Unmanned Systems

Congress has established a goal that by 2015, one-third of the aircraft in the operational deep strike force aircraft fleet and one-third of operational ground combat vehicles will be unmanned.

Question: Do you support this goal?

I understand the Department is committed to integrating unmanned systems into the military force structure to provide a range of capabilities including strike/combat capability.

Question: What is your assessment of DOD's ability to achieve this goal?

If confirmed, I will continue to pursue the goal of unmanned systems capabilities to support the Department needs.

Question: What steps do you believe the Department should take to achieve this goal?

If confirmed, I plan to review the Department's priorities for unmanned systems to assure they are balanced and focused on the Departments highest priority needs.

46. Navy Shipbuilding

Today's Navy is at its smallest size in decades – 281 ships – and threatens to continue to decline. In response to concerns raised by this Committee, the Chief of Naval Operations conducted a force structure review and concluded that the Navy requires a 313-ship fleet to perform its mission. The Navy estimates that investment in shipbuilding must increase by greater than 50 percent – a full \$5 billion to \$10 billion per year - to meet this force structure requirement.

Question: What are your views regarding the CNO's force structure review conclusions and the adequacy of the Navy's current and projected future inventory of ships?

I am not familiar with Chief of Naval Operations' force structure conclusions at this time. Nevertheless, I recognize the importance to sustain the ability of the U.S. to project power globally, a key element of our National Security Strategy. If confirmed, I expect to have detailed discussions on this issue with the CNO.

47. Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Office

The Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a directive granting full authority and responsibility to the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Office (JIEDDO) to lead the Department's efforts in fighting the IED threat.

Question: What are your views regarding the Department's process for addressing the combatant commander's requirements for the fielding of IED countermeasures?

Question: What else can and should be done to get this critical capability to the warfighters?

Section 256 of the Fiscal Year 2006 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 109-163) required the Director of the JIEDDO Task Force, to work in coordination with the executive agent for blast injury prevention, mitigation, and treatment to ensure adequacy of blast injury research and collection of data on explosive detect and defeat devices and personnel and vehicle armor. The Committee believes that the lethal and devastating consequences of blast injury to our servicemen and women who are affected by IED blasts should be addressed along with the important rapid research and acquisition programs to detect and defeat IEDs and other threats.

Question: What is your assessment of the adequacy of the tools and funding provided to the Department of Defense for counter IED detect, defeat and mitigation research, development and acquisition, including the adequacy of blast mitigation efforts and other related military-specific combat casualty care programs throughout the Department of Defense?

It is vitally important that we not take a business-as-usual approach to responding to the IED threat. I understand IEDs are the most frequent cause of casualties to our armed forces in Iraq. I also understand that, as a result, the Department has established a cross-functional organization designed to streamline the acquisition process with the goal of rapidly delivering equipment, intelligence, and tactics to the warfighters. This approach appears to be sound, and if confirmed, I will continually evaluate its effectiveness and remain open to alternative solutions.

48. Management Issues

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) is intended to provide managers with a disciplined approach – developing a strategic plan, establishing annual goals, measuring performance, and reporting on the results – for improving the performance and internal management of an organization.

Question: What do you consider to be the most important priorities and challenges facing DOD as it strives to achieve these management goals?

I have reviewed the 2006 QDR and was impressed by the discussion concerning the Department's performance and internal management.

I believe the Department's business mission must support the warfighter and be accountable to the taxpayers. Collaboration within the Department is essential to support more effective and efficient use of resources. To this end, the decision-making process needs to be as open, transparent, and agile as possible. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Deputy Secretary Gordon England on this important matter.

Question: What are your views on the importance and role of financial information in managing operations and holding managers accountable?

I believe that making managers accountable in a fair and credible manner will improve performance.

Visible and credible financial information is essential to this process because it enhances decision making and links performance and resources in a way that allows the Department to use its resources effectively and efficiently.

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) envisions that agencies will link their human capital planning with their strategic and annual plans. The DOD workforce has undergone significant downsizing in the past, and with the current tight labor market, it is increasingly difficult to attract and retain talent.

Question: How would you work to attract and retain individuals with the experience, education, and skills needed throughout the Department of Defense?

Any good employer needs focused recruiting and retention initiatives, competitive compensation and rewards structures, attractive career development opportunities, and education and training programs.

The Department must have a vision that conveys to the public a commitment to attract and develop the best mix of people, both military and civilian. This vision must be supported by an effective human capital strategy that is actively measured against well defined goals.

49. Financial Management

The Department of Defense spends billions of dollars every year to acquire, operate and upgrade business systems needed to support the warfighter, including systems related to the management of contracts, finances, the supply chain, and support infrastructure. Despite these expenditures, the Department's business systems are stovepiped, duplicative and non-integrated. As a result, the Department remains unable to produce timely, accurate and complete information to support management decisions. The Comptroller General has concluded that these problems can only be addressed through committed leadership at the most senior levels of the Department of Defense. The Comptroller General has recommended that the Department establish a new Deputy Secretary of Defense for Management to help address this problem. Section 907 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 required an independent study to review this problem. This report is due on December 1, 2006.

Question: If confirmed, will you ensure that the financial management problems of the Department of Defense receive priority attention at the senior management level?

Yes. I believe the Department has an obligation to account for and wisely manage taxpayer dollars.

Question: Will you review the report required by section 907 and provide us your views on the feasibility and advisability of establishing a new Deputy Secretary of Defense for Management?

Yes.

50. Readiness Impact of Contingency Operations

Over the past several years, military units have been increasingly deployed to contingency operations around the world. Participation in these operations disrupt operating budgets, cause lost training opportunities, and accelerate wear and tear on equipment. Additionally, increased OPTEMPO impacts quality of life and could jeopardize retention of high-quality people.

Question: What ideas do you have with regard to how to reduce the impact of these operations on both near and long-term readiness and modernization programs?

It is clear to me that the current pace of operations has significantly challenged our military forces. I understand that DOD has been addressing this challenge through multiple initiatives to reduce stress on individual military personnel and support the operational needs of the Combatant Commanders. This is a complex challenge involving recruiting, retention, readiness, quality of life, resources and many other critical variables. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department's military leadership and extend this issue priority attention.

51. Modernization

In October, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that if the Department were to execute the current procurement plans, including cost risk, an additional \$30 billion a year could be required in the procurement accounts alone.

Question: Do you agree that the current procurement accounts are not executable unless there is an infusion of additional funds?

Question: Do you believe that significant changes are needed in the Department's current procurement plans?

Question: If confirmed, how do you intend to address this shortfall, if it in fact exists?

Even if all of the current aircraft modernization programs execute as planned, the average age of the tactical, strategic, and tanker fleet will increase. Aging aircraft require ever-increasing maintenance, but even with these increasing maintenance costs, readiness levels continue to decline.

Question: Can both the maintenance of the legacy force and the modernization efforts be affordable at anywhere near the current budget levels?

Question: Some critics believe that there is still too much service parochial duplication in procuring new systems. Do you agree with these critics? If so, what would you recommend to ensure more jointness in procurement?

The affordability of the defense acquisition program has historically been a challenge. I don't have intimate details of the DOD procurement program, but I am aware, that over the course of the Bush Administration, procurement investment levels have gone up by a significant amount. If confirmed, I will evaluate this process in the context of the broader budget discussions facing the Department.

52. Foreign Investment in the United States

Question: Do you believe the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) structure and process facilitates sufficient communication with the various components of the national security and homeland defense community, including intelligence?

I understand this matter has received much debate recently and that improvements have been made in the manner that the CFIUS process operates. If confirmed, I will become more familiar and better able to address the issue in more detail.

53. Buy American Provisions

Section 842 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 recodifies the so-called "Berry Amendment" requiring that certain strategic materials be purchased from American sources. This provision repeals the former Berry amendment giving the Department new flexibility in addressing non-compliant materials delivered under contracts entered prior to the date of enactment. It also contains waiver provisions giving the Department flexibility with regard to contracts entered after the date of enactment.

Question: Would you agree that it is important for the Department to make use of the flexibility provided by Congress in this provision to ensure that it is in a position to accept delivery of weapon systems needed for the national defense?

Question: If confirmed, will you ensure that the provision is interpreted in a manner consistent with the congressional intent to provide such flexibility?

I'm not familiar with the intricacies of the Berry Amendment. I believe it is important that the Department be afforded necessary flexibility to procure and acquire capabilities needed for National Defense in today's global marketplace.

54. Information Assurance

Protection of military networks, information, and communications is critical to Department of Defense operations. The Department's Inspector General has noted that the Department does not yet have a comprehensive enterprise-wide inventory of information systems which makes reliable evaluation of the security of information systems impossible. The committee has included a requirement in this year's defense authorization report for a progress report on addressing previously identified information and cyber security vulnerabilities.

Question: What is your assessment of the security of the Department's information systems?

Question: What Department-wide policies or guidance do you believe are necessary to address information and cyber security challenges for current and future systems?

I recognize the importance of cyber security and that it is a critical challenge to the Department and the Nation as a whole. If confirmed, I will get a better understanding of the Department's capabilities in this area.

55. Test and Evaluation (T&E)

A natural tension exists between major program objectives to reduce cost and schedule and the T&E objective to demonstrate performance to specifications and requirements.

Question: What is your assessment of the appropriate balance between the desire to reduce acquisition cycle times and the need to perform adequate testing?

If confirmed, I will seek to balance the acquisition and operational testing processes between reducing costs and accelerating schedules.

Question: Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe we should procure weapon systems and equipment that has not been demonstrated through test and evaluation to be operationally effective, suitable, and survivable?

I'm aware that in the current environment the Department has chosen to field certain systems still under development without having completed full testing. These examples are clearly exceptions to the normal process but they were needed to meet urgent military requirements. If confirmed, I would look at this on a case by case basis.

Congress established the position of Director of Operational Test and Evaluation to serve as an independent voice on matters relating to operational testing of weapons systems. As established, the Director has a unique and direct relationship with Congress which allows him to preserve his independence.

Question: Do you support the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation's ability to speak freely and independently with the Congress?

Yes.

56. Funding for Science and Technology Investments

In the past, the Quadrennial Defense Review and Secretary Rumsfeld have both endorsed the statutory goal of investing 3% of the Department's budget into science and technology programs.

Question: Do you support that investment goal?

As President of Texas A&M, I recognize the importance of basic science and technology research to ensuring the Department remains on the cutting edge of emerging technology for the warfighter. If confirmed, I plan to place a high priority on a robust science and technology program for the Department.

Question: How will you assess whether the science and technology investment portfolio is adequate to meet the current and future needs of the Department?

Assessing the adequacy of science and technology investment is a complex challenge. The program should be addressed as a whole, across all Services and technology areas and matched against current and emerging threats.

57. Technology Strategy

The nation is confronted with a dispersed enemy which is expert at using relatively simple, inexpensive technology to achieve destructive and disruptive results. Creative prediction and adaptation to continuously changing threats is a focus for this Committee. You were a member of the National Academy's panel that produced the report "Rising Above the Gathering Storm" recommending doubling investments in defense basic research over seven years.

Question: What is your assessment of the Department's ability to develop a responsive research strategy capable of quick reaction but which is also designed to include sustained investments in the development of a set of capabilities based on threat predictions and identification of related technology gaps?

I don't have enough knowledge on this subject to provide an assessment at this time. This is an important issue to me and I will afford it priority attention.

Question: How should the Department proceed to implement the National Academy's recommendations regarding basic research investments?

I believe the Department should give this body of work serious consideration.

58. Missile Defense

The John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 includes a provision (Sec. 223) stating that it is the policy of the United States that the Department of Defense accord a priority within the missile defense program to the development, testing, fielding, and improvement of effective near-term missile defense capabilities, including the ground-based midcourse defense system, the Aegis ballistic missile defense system, the Patriot PAC-3 system, the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense System, and the sensors necessary to support such systems.

Question: Do you agree that we should not deploy missile defenses that are not operationally effective?

I understand the Administration's policy is to develop and deploy a missile defense capability at the earliest possible date.

I am told that efforts are underway through continuous testing, to ensure that these defenses are capable of intercepting missiles that threaten our homeland, deployed forces and friends and allies.

Question: Do you agree that we should conduct adequate operational test and evaluation of our ballistic missile defense systems to determine if they are operationally effective?

See above.

Question: Do you agree that our ballistic missile defense program and systems should be prioritized to address the missile threats we face?

We face an international environment where missile threats of various kinds are rapidly increasing and proliferating. In response, we need to develop a full spectrum of capabilities to defend against that threat.

59. Space

Question: What is your view on weapons in space and the merits of establishing an international agreement establishing rules of the road for space operations?

Space is vital to U.S. national security and that of our friends and allies. I support our long-standing national policies of the right of all nations to use outer space for peaceful purposes, the right of free passage through space, and the right to protect our forces and our nation from those that would use space for hostile purposes.

Question: Do you believe that fielding a ground-based missile defense site in Europe is consistent with these near-term priorities?

I understand that the Administration's policy is to develop and deploy ballistic missile defenses drawing on the best technologies available to ensure that these defenses are capable of intercepting missiles that threaten our homeland, deployed forces and friends and allies. I further understand that this effort could involve the placement of elements of the missile defense system in other nations to enhance the ability to defeat threats from a broader range of locations. If confirmed, I expect to delve into this matter with greater detail and with some urgency considering the timing of some of these decisions.

Question: What lessons do you draw for missile defense policy from the recent ballistic missile tests conducted by North Korea and Iran?

North Korea and Iran continue to develop longer range missiles and are determined to pursue weapons of mass destruction. We must stay ahead of this threat. In this regard, defenses with a limited operational capability, at least initially, are better than no defenses.

60. Prompt Global Strike

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review concluded that “the U.S. needs to make greater progress in fielding prompt, accurate, non-nuclear Global Strike capabilities.” Accordingly, DOD requested \$127 million in FY 2007 for the Conventional Trident Modification (CTM) program to provide a prompt global strike capability within 2 years. The CTM program proved to be controversial within Congress, resulting in a funding level of only \$20 million for developmental efforts common to all global strike alternatives, and two reporting requirements.

Question: In your view, what is the role for a conventional prompt global strike capability in addressing the key threats to U.S. national security in the near future?

The international security environment is uncertain. The U.S. faces threats from terrorists and certain states, such as North Korea and Iran, who either have or seek weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them rapidly.

I understand the prompt global strike effort is meant to provide the nation with a conventional capability to strike time-sensitive targets, so that distant, hard-to-reach places will no longer provide sanctuary to adversaries.

Currently, the only means we have to strike globally in a prompt manner is with nuclear-armed ballistic missiles.

Question: What approach to implementation of this capability would you expect to pursue if confirmed?

I understand Congress has requested additional studies on the prompt global strike requirements and alternatives.

If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing DOD's analysis, and the studies the Congress has requested.

Question: In your view what, if any, improvements in intelligence capabilities would be needed to support a prompt global strike capability?

Intelligence will continue to be a necessary critical capability for deployment of this and other military capabilities tailored to address today's global threat environment.

61. Nuclear Weapons and Stockpile Stewardship

Congress established the Stockpile Stewardship Program with the aim of creating the computational capabilities and experimental tools needed to allow for the continued certification of the nuclear weapons stockpile as safe, secure, and reliable without the need for nuclear weapons testing. The Secretaries of Defense and Energy are statutorily required to certify annually to the Congress the continued safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile.

Question: As the stockpile continues to age, what do you view as the greatest challenges with respect to assuring the safety, reliability, and security of the stockpile?

The legacy nuclear forces in the U.S. arsenal were developed to meet the challenges of the Cold War, which ended over a decade ago. Our challenge today is dealing with uncertainty—both political and technical.

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Energy, Congress, and others, to ensure that the Stockpile Stewardship Program has the tools and resources it needs to maintain the credibility of the U.S. nuclear deterrent, and ensure its safety and reliability.

Question: If the technical conclusions and data from the Stockpile Stewardship Program could no longer confidently support the annual certification of the stockpile as safe, secure, and reliable, would you recommend the resumption of underground nuclear testing? What considerations would guide your recommendation in this regard?

A decision regarding the resumption of nuclear testing cannot be made in the abstract. If confirmed, I would rely on input from operational commanders, policy and technical experts to make a recommendation to the President that best supports our national security interests. Any such recommendation would be grounded on the best available assessment of the safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear stockpile.

Question: What is your view of the Reliable Replacement Warhead program?

I have not had an opportunity to assess the Reliable Replacement Warhead Program. If confirmed, I will do so.

Question: Would you support substantial reductions in the U.S. nuclear stockpile?

I support the substantial reductions in nuclear weapons the U.S. plans to make through implementation of the Moscow Treaty.

62. Chemical Weapons Demilitarization

DOD has encountered significant problems and cost growth in the management and implementation of the chemical weapons demilitarization program, and the Department has acknowledged that it will be unable to eliminate its chemical weapons in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention time lines.

Question: What is your understanding of the Department's estimates of its ability to comply with treaty commitments under the Chemical Weapons Convention?

I understand the Department is in the process of requesting an extension, but I am not aware of the details. If confirmed, I will look into it.

Question: Would you take steps, if confirmed, to raise the priority of the Department's efforts to eliminate the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile?

I am not very familiar with the programmatic details of the chemical demilitarization program. I understand that the U.S. program has already expended considerable resources and made significant progress toward meeting our goals and obligations. If confirmed, I will look further into this issue.

63. Active-Duty End Strength

Question: What is your view of the adequacy of the active-duty Army and Marine Corps end strength to support current missions including combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan?

This is an important issue. I am told the Department continually reassesses end strength needs with the Combatant Commanders and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. If confirmed, I will work with the Joint Chiefs, the Service Chiefs, and the civilian leadership to ensure the nation is properly prepared to meet its military requirements.

As a result of recommendations in the Quadrennial Defense Review, the Air Force plans to reduce its active-duty end strength, as well as its reserve components and civilian workforce by as much as 40,000 full-time equivalent positions. The impact in the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard is magnified because multiple positions that are considered "part-time" must be eliminated to achieve one

full-time equivalent. The Navy has sought and plans to implement comparable reductions in its active and reserve force.

Question: Are you confident that these plans are still adequate and appropriate?

I am not familiar with the particulars of the Air Force plan, but I understand they are trying to rebalance their program to better position the Service to support their organize, train and equip obligations into the future. If confirmed, I will become more familiar with this issue and assess as appropriate.

Question: What is your understanding of the steps that will be taken in 2007 and beyond with respect to the military and civilian employee manning of the Air Force and Navy?

Question: What impact on readiness do you foresee as a result of these personnel reductions?

I cannot give a definitive answer at this point. If confirmed, I will review this matter.

64. Reserve and National Guard Deployments

Current DOD policy provides that, members of reserve components shall not be required to involuntarily deploy more than 24 months cumulatively in response to the existing national emergency. This policy has exempted thousands of members of the Selected Reserve, including members of the National Guard, from additional involuntary call ups in support of overseas operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Question: Given the current and projected demand for forces in Iraq, what are your views on continuing this 24 cumulative month policy?

The transition from strategic reserve to operational reserve as I understand it is a necessary step in the proper direction, but has presented the Reserve Components with new and unique challenges. If confirmed, I will delve into these issues with greater depth in order to ensure the Department provides the Reserve Components with the best possible approach to their utilization consistent with the concept of an operational reserve.

Question: What is your assessment of the Army's ability to support scheduled troop rotation planning beyond 2006, particularly in combat support and combat service support missions, given the 24-month policy?

I do not have enough information on the particulars of this issue to give an informed response. If confirmed, I will review this issue.

65. Combat Injuries

Medical care for service members wounded in combat has been exceptional. Many service members who would have died in earlier wars live today because of the exceptional medical care. However, many of these service members suffer from traumatic brain injury and post traumatic stress disorder and require continuing care.

Question: If confirmed, what programs will you put in place to ensure that these service members receive the quality health care that they need for as long as they need it?

News accounts indicate that soldiers and marines suffering from post traumatic stress disorder are being separated from the service with Other Than Honorable Conditions discharges for misconduct such as alcohol and drug abuse, which are classic symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder. The characterization of their discharges can lead to a denial of VA benefits needed to treat their post traumatic stress disorder condition.

Question: What is the Department doing to ensure that service members returning from combat are not separated for exhibiting symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder and then denied the very VA benefits they need to treat this disorder?

There is no issue more important than caring for our wounded service men and women upon their return. If confirmed, I will ensure that we review the issues raised in cooperation with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

66. Medical Holdovers

Reserve component personnel returning from deployment are frequently held on active duty while receiving medical treatment for injuries incurred while deployed. Many of these personnel are retained for a year or more while receiving medical care.

Question: What steps can be taken to expedite delivery of effective health care to medical holdover personnel so they can be released and returned to their civilian communities?

Question: If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that medical holdover personnel receive the medical care they need in a timely manner, and that their living conditions while retained on active duty are at least equal to the living conditions of other active duty personnel?

I understand the Army has developed programs for Reserve Component personnel who require medical services near their hometown and to be able to get that care at home while remaining on active duty. If confirmed, I will work to ensure these service men and women get the care, medical treatment, and housing they require in a timely manner.

67. Sustaining the Military Health Care Benefit

Quality health care for military members and their families, as well as for retirees and their families, is a fundamental aspect of this country's commitment to those who serve their country in uniform.

Question: In your opinion, how important is it for DOD to reshape health care benefits now and in the future?

I believe it is critically important to place the Military Health Care System on a sound fiscal basis to sustain its long term viability.

Question: What elements of the military health care system require reform and what steps would you take, if confirmed, to accomplish reform?

If confirmed, I will review these issues in greater detail in order to better determine what additional steps can be taken to ensure this benefit is sustained well into the future.

68. Quality of Life

Throughout the global war on terrorism, military members and their families in both the active and reserve components have made tremendous sacrifices in support of operational deployments. Senior military leaders, however, have warned of growing concerns among military families as a result of the stress of frequent deployments and the long separations that go with them.

Question: In your judgment, what are the most critical needs of military personnel and their families today?

Question: If confirmed, what would your priorities be for improving and sustaining quality of life for military members and their families?

Military personnel and their families want to know that their service is valued. This starts with fair treatment and a competitive compensation package.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues to focus on these issues.

69. Human Capital Planning

The Government Accountability Office has designated human capital planning a high-risk area across the federal government, because of agencies' lack of a consistent strategic approach to marshaling, managing, and maintaining the human capital needed to maximize government performance. GAO has found the problem to be particularly acute at DOD. The Department of Defense faces a critical shortfall in key areas of its civilian workforce, including the management of acquisition programs, information technology systems and financial management, and senior DOD officials have expressed alarm at the extent of the Department's reliance on contractors in these areas.

Question: Would you agree that the Department's human capital, including its civilian workforce, is critical to the accomplishment of its national security mission?

Yes.

Question: Do you share the concern expressed by others about the extent of the Department's reliance on contractors in critical areas such as the

management of acquisition programs, information technology and financial management?

I believe there is a valid concern about the appropriate roles of contractors in providing governmental functions. If confirmed, I will review the Department's policies and practices, and determine the proper balance necessary for the nation's security.

Question: If confirmed, will you ensure that the Department undertakes necessary human capital planning to ensure that its civilian workforce is prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades?

Yes.

70. National Security Personnel System

The National Security Personnel System (NSPS) was enacted by Congress to provide DOD with needed tools to improve the quality, flexibility, and expertise of its civilian work force. Though full implementation of the NSPS has been delayed as a result of litigation, partial implementation of pay for performance reforms has proceeded for non-bargaining unit employees.

Question: If confirmed, would you continue to implement NSPS in its present form or seek some alternative approach to the Department's civilian personnel management system?

Reforming civil service rules to make our civilian workforce more adaptable, flexible, and agile is critical to the future of the Department. I believe NSPS is integral to the Department's Human Capital Strategy of developing the right mix of people and skills across the Total Force. If confirmed, I will review the NSPS program to see if any further changes are required.

71. Women in Combat

In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, Congress required the Department to report in the current and future implementation of the policy regarding assignment of women in the Armed Forces, with particular focus on the Army's plan to reorganize its force structure by creating more modular brigade combat teams. Currently, the report is overdue, but results are expected early in this legislative cycle.

Question: In your opinion, what have we learned about the assignment of women in the armed forces through our recent combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan?

I understand that the Congress has asked the Department to review the matter and if confirmed, I will acquaint myself with this assessment to better understand what our experiences have taught us.

Question: If confirmed, will you ensure the required report is immediately delivered to Congress?

Yes. I am told the report will be ready by January 2007.

72. Sexual Assault

In response to Congressional direction, the Department has developed and implemented a comprehensive set of policies and procedures aimed at improving prevention of and response to incidents of sexual assaults, including appropriate resources and care for victims of sexual assault.

Question: If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure senior management level direction and oversight of Departmental efforts on sexual assault prevention and response?

I believe that sexual assault has no place in the Armed Forces and I understand that the Department currently has a zero tolerance policy.

If confirmed, my goal will be to ensure the Department's sexual assault prevention and response program is the standard for other organizations to follow. I will work closely with the Secretaries of the Military Departments to continue the progress achieved over the past two years.

73. All Volunteer Force

The All Volunteer Force came into existence over 33 years ago and, since its inception, volunteer soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines have helped to win the Cold War, defeat aggression during the Persian Gulf War, keep peace in the former Yugoslavia, liberate Iraq and Afghanistan, and defend freedom around the world.

Question: Are you committed to an All Volunteer Force?

Absolutely. The All Volunteer Force has served well for over thirty years, providing a military that is experienced, high-quality, disciplined, and representative of America.

Question: What factors do you consider most significant to the success of the All Volunteer Force?

I believe the most important factor is the patriotism and dedication of the American men and women who respond to their nation's call to serve. Further, sustaining the success of the All Volunteer Force will require that we:

- Treat our people properly, including paying them compensation that's fair and competitive.*
- Focus on the military personnel and their families. Assuring a quality education for the children and a meaningful career for the spouse is high on the agenda of today's military generation.*

Question: What changes, if any, in pay, compensation, and benefits, if any, are needed in your view to sustain recruiting and retention?

If confirmed, I will review the pay, compensation, and benefits plans currently employed by the Department, and consult with senior civilian and military leadership to ensure we provide the right compensation for our men and women who serve. Following such a review, I would be pleased to discuss with the Congress any suggested changes or recommendations.

74. Recruiting Standards

Recruiting highly qualified individuals for military service and retaining highly trained and motivated personnel for careers present unique challenges, particularly while the nation is at war. Criticism has been aimed at the Department for allowing relaxed enlistment standards in the Army with respect to factors such

as age, intelligence, weight and physical fitness standards, citizenship status, tattoos, and past criminal misconduct.

Question: What is your assessment of the adequacy of current standards regarding qualifications for enlistment in the Armed Forces?

I am not sufficiently familiar with the standards regarding qualifications for enlistment at this time to answer this question. If confirmed, I will review the standards.

Question: In your view, does the Army have adequate procedures in place to ensure recruitment of only fully qualified individuals?

To the best of my knowledge, yes.

75. Foreign Language Policy

In February 2005, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz approved the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap to improve the Department's foreign language capability and regional area expertise. Since then, the Department has been working toward implementing that roadmap.

Question: In your view, what should be the priorities of the Federal Government to expanding the foreign language skills of civilian and military personnel and improving coordination of foreign language programs and activities among the Federal agencies?

Understanding the languages and cultures of other countries is a critical component of keeping the peace and defending the nation. Initiatives to advance pre-deployment language and culture training and the provision of interpreter and translation services are critical. I was struck by the priority this issue received in the 2006 QDR. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's progress.

76. Detainee Treatment Policy

Question: Do you support the memorandum issued by Deputy Secretary of Defense England on July 7, 2006, stating that all relevant DOD directives, regulations, policies, practices and procedures must fully comply with the standards of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

Yes.

Question: Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated September 5, 2006?

Yes.

Question: Do you share the view of the Judge Advocates General that standards for detainee treatment must be based on the principle of reciprocity, that is, that we must always keep in mind the risk that the manner in which we treat our own detainees may have a direct impact on the manner in which U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen or Marines are treated, should they be captured in future conflicts?

I believe that the Department's leadership should always be mindful of multiple considerations when developing standards for detainee treatment, including the risk that the manner in which we treat our own detainees may have a direct impact on the manner in which U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen or Marines are treated, should they be captured in future conflicts.

Question: If confirmed, will you cooperate with Committee requests for information or documents relating to Defense Department detention and interrogation policies or operations or allegations of detainee mistreatment?

Yes.

Section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 provides that no person in the custody of the Department of Defense shall be subject to any treatment or technique of interrogation not listed in the Army Field Manual.

Question: Has the Department of Defense complied with this requirement by ensuring that no treatment or technique not listed in the Army Field Manual is or may be authorized?

I am told within hours of the President's signing of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued an order implementing the requirements of section 1402 of that Act.

77. Military Commission Trials for Detainees

In October, the President signed the Military Commissions Act of 2006 which established congressional authorization and a statutory framework for trial of alien enemy unlawful combatants for violations of the law of war.

Question: How soon do you believe the Department will be ready to begin military commission trials under this new law?

My understanding is that the Department would like to proceed with Military Commissions as soon as possible.

Question: What is your understanding of the steps that the Department must take before it can begin such trials?

The Department is in the process of establishing the procedures for commissions as outlined in the Military Commissions Act. I understand that DOD expects to have the revised procedures completed by the end of the year.

I understand that there are also logistical challenges that will require congressional support for infrastructure improvements at Guantanamo Bay.

Question: If the long-term plan is to end detention operations at Guantanamo Bay at some point in the future, why should Congress authorize substantial new investment in facilities there?

The President has stated, "America does not want to be the world's jailer," and that he would like to "move towards the day that we can eventually close Guantanamo." At the moment, however, I am aware of no good alternative to the Guantanamo Bay (GTMO) facility exists.

78. Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy

DOD is in the process of implementing an integrated strategy for the basing of U.S. military force structure around the world. The strategy currently calls for reductions in U.S. force levels in Europe, Japan, and the Republic of Korea and return of those troops to the United States. The cost to implement these force structure relocations has been estimated to exceed \$12 billion, including an estimated of \$9 billion for the re-stationing of 7,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam.

Question: In your opinion, what priority should DOD assign to the continued

investment in infrastructure and new facilities around the world in support of this strategy?

My impression is that the ongoing effort to change US Cold War basing structures to a more relevant forward posture is important for helping to strengthen the Department's ability to meet this new era's challenges.

I would not presume to opine at this point on specific infrastructure priorities for these facilities. I understand, however, that these changes have been endorsed by our allies and partners and are in various stages of implementation.

Question: In your view, are any changes needed in the approach to this overseas basing strategy?

If confirmed, I would examine this strategy to ensure that it is contributing effectively to the Department's adaptation to the new strategy landscape.

79. Base Realignment and Closure

DOD is presently implementing the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) decisions. The law authorizing the BRAC process requires the Secretary of Defense to complete all closures and realignments not later than September 15, 2011.

Question: Do you believe the Department currently has an adequate plan with accurate cost estimates and resources in place to meet the deadline?

Question: In your opinion, will DOD's current BRAC business plans be detrimental to the military services by requiring them to defer other critical new and current mission military construction requirements in order to compensate for an increase in estimates and costs to carry out BRAC decisions?

Question: What changes, if any, would you propose in order to meet the intent of Congress?

I do not have enough information on the details of the BRAC implementation process to answer these questions.

80. Iran-Contra

In your testimony before the Iran-Contra Committee and at your confirmation hearing in 1991, you testified that you did not recall a series of meetings, memoranda, and conversations that appeared to link you to the events of the Iran-Contra affair. These included: a September 1985 meeting regarding the Iran project that Clair George testified you attended; a conversation reported by Admiral Poindexter in which he says you discussed efforts to have the CIA buy the assets of a private logistics operation; an August-September 1986 conversation in which Richard Kerr says he told you of Charles Allen's concern about a possible diversion; a September 1986 memo about Lt. Colonel North and Mr. Ghorbanifar, which Charles Allen says he sent you; a conversation in which, according to Mr. Allen, you said that you admired Oliver North's abilities, but this time he was going too far; an October 3, 1986 CIA memorandum that you initialed, indicating that you met with Admiral Poindexter the previous day to discuss "a special Iranian project"; and a discussion David Doherty says he had with you on October 15, 1986 regarding a possible diversion to Central America and "contributions from other countries".

Question: Do you remember anything now about these meetings, memoranda and conversations?

I have no further details to report on these conversations beyond my earlier testimonies.

These conversations and my peripheral involvement in the 20-year old Iran-Contra affair were investigated exhaustively by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence during my 1991 confirmation hearings for Director of Central Intelligence. Key figures in the affair were interviewed or testified, and affirmed that they had not shared important information with me. The Iran-Contra Independent Counsel, after seven years of investigation, could not find a single witness to testify that my role in the matter was other than I had described it.

I acknowledged 15 years ago that I should have handled my part in Iran-Contra better. I learned important lessons as a result of this experience and, in subsequent years as DDCI and DCI, established a model of CIA and Intelligence Community cooperation with Congressional overseers of intelligence. After I became Acting Director of Central Intelligence in December 1986, following more than a decade of controversy and conflict between CIA and the Congress, there would not be a significant further conflict or major controversy between CIA and the Congress for the remainder of my career, nor would there be another scandal tainting CIA during that time.

Finally, it is worth noting that the most of the leaders of the Congressional Iran-Contra Committee – and the Committee’s chief counsel – supported my nomination to become DCI in 1991.

81. Encroachment

Some of the most significant issues that impact the readiness of the Armed Forces are categorized as outside encroachment upon military reservations and resources. This encroachment has included, but it not limited to environmental constraints on military training ranges, local community efforts to obtain military property, housing construction, and other land use changes near military installations, airspace restrictions to accommodate civilian airlines, and transfer of radio frequency spectrum from DOD to the wireless communications industry. Unless these issues are effectively addressed, military forces will find it increasingly difficult to train and operate at home and abroad.

Question: In your opinion, how serious are encroachment problems?

Question: If confirmed, what efforts would you take to ensure that military access to the resources listed above, and other required resources, will be preserved?

I am generally aware that encroachment is a serious issue for the Department and needs to be addressed. I don’t have enough details to assess the issue at this point, but I recognize it is an important component to ensuring the Department can sustain operational readiness in the current environment.

82. Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Question: Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?

Yes.

Question: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or

designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Secretary of Defense?

Yes.

Question: Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?

Yes.