

TRANSCRIPT

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Lieutenant General Harry Wyatt III

Director, Air National Guard

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Q: Welcome on this quiet summer day to Lieutenant General Harry Wyatt, III. I heard as you went around, you go by Bud.

A: Call sign Bud.

Q: Glad to have you. SMU graduate, 1971. I'm guessing about six years active duty?

A: Six years active duty.

Q: Fighter pilot. Been in the Guard pretty much ever since, and I'm told you're a judge. Is that--

A: After I did six years of active duty in 1977, transferred to the Tulsa Air National Guard in Oklahoma. We were flying F-100s at the time. That kind of dates me a little bit. And from that point until February 1 of this year I was always a traditional Guardsman--not a full time, but a traditional Guardsman. So I went to law school, practiced law for many years, and then was a State District Court Judge in Northeastern Oklahoma until the Governor asked me to be the Adjutant General, then I became a state employee as the Adjutant General.

Q: Was that a civil court or a criminal court?

A: It was a court of general jurisdiction. I did anything from traffic cases up to first

degree murder cases, civil cases, tort cases, divorce cases, child custody cases, you name it. Small little country jurisdiction, and a lot of fun.

Q: That means he's prepared for this F-22 murder case. [Laughter].

Q: We're glad to have you. Let's start with the F-22 and let's start with your letter. You were asked by Senator Chambliss to give your views, your responses to certain questions from him. I don't think I ever saw Chambliss' letter to you, so maybe you can fill in a little bit as to what the questions were that he asked, but we have the letter here from you which makes a strong case for the F-22 in the Guard. There have been various interpretations from proponents and opponents of the F-22 of your letter.

Why don't you tell us your interpretation of your letter, what you meant to say, and we'll kind of take it from there.

A: I think to get a clear understanding of what I said you do need to read the questions from Senator Chambliss because the questions that he asked were very specific, and my responses were very specific. And basically the gist of his questions were as far as the Air National Guard is concerned and the air sovereignty alert mission, does the F-22 provide the capabilities that you need to accomplish that mission. Basically the answer is yes.

I also pointed out in the letter that there were some other platforms that could also provide the capability that we needed, but yes.

Now there was nothing in the Senator's questions about additional buys and there was nothing in my response about additional buys. Some people have interpreted--that's a great thing about America. You can interpret something any way you want. And that's okay. But as far as the factual questions that the Senator asked and my response, I stand by the letter. People can make whatever inferences they want to.

I think the letter pretty specifically answered the Senator's questions and is an accurate statement.

Q: You've all seen the letter? If not, I've got a copy of it here. What kind of reaction did your letter get from within the Guard and within the Pentagon, within the Air Force? I realize those are three different questions. You might want to separate them.

A: I think when you, I guess when you ask for how it was accepted, probably as widely as it was accepted in the press and by those folks who read the articles. A lot of different interpretations. I think from the Guard perspective, I'm the Director of the Air National Guard, and the big problem that we have in the Air National Guard is trying to figure out a way to recapitalize our aging fleet. It's not just fighters. It's tankers, it's airlifters, it's

AWACS. AWACS is part of the air sovereignty alert mission, ASA mission. It is the early warning radar, it's the communication, it's the whole system that is old and needs to be recapitalized. So from an Air National Guard context I think the letter was well received because it was perceived as an effort, one of many, to address some of the issues that the Air National Guard has.

If we are a valued member of the total force and we have aircraft or capabilities that are aging out then we, the big United States Air Force, including the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard, need to figure out a way to recapitalize the United States Air Force.

My focus is primarily on the Air National Guard, but I do that in conjunction with the United States Air Force' effort to recapitalize its fleet, because, to be quite honest with you, the Air Force has the same recapitalization problem as the Air National Guard. Ours is a little bit more acute, a little bit more immediate, because our airplanes are a little bit older. Right now for most of our air sovereignty alert fleet there is no recapitalization plan that addresses the early age out of our airplanes. We're working with the Air Force to address that problem, and we're making some progress, but to date there is no plan that addresses the issues that the Air National Guard has.

As far as how it was received on the active duty Air Force, probably mixed, depending on what article you read. But most of the Air Force leadership that took the time to tread the senator's questions and my responses did not have a problem with the response.

Q: How about OSD?

A: I haven't gotten any feedback from OSD. I know that, again, I think maybe some of the early interpretations of the letter were not correct in that it appeared in some of the articles that I read that I was advocating for additional buys of the F-22. And the letter did not say that. It strictly addressed the questions that the senator had asked.

One of the themes that I've been trying to convey is that as the Air Force moves to recapitalize, as we attempt to rebalance the United States Air Force under the guidance of the Secretary of Defense, one of his themes is we need to rebalance the force. We need to take a look at when we bring on new capabilities or we readjust the capabilities that the Air Force is going to be in, we need to recapitalize all of the components, concurrently and proportionately, at the same time we do the United States Air Force.

For example, if we bring on 187 F-22s, in my view since the Air National Guard provides 34 percent of the capabilities of the United States Air Force at seven percent of the budget, I might add, that the smart thing to do would be to take a look at concurrently bedding down whatever capability the United States Air Force acquires concurrently and proportionately in the Guard.

If we had done that with the F-22 there would be 60 to 70 F-22s in the Air Guard right now. Right now there are no airplanes with Air National Guard on the tail. We do have one unit at Langley where the Air National Guard is involved in what we call a classic association where the Air National Guard provides pilots, crew chiefs, maintainers, that fall in on and work with our active duty brothers and sisters to fly the jets at Langley. And right now, as we acquire the full complement of the 187 F-22s, there is a program of record that will put an Air National Guard Wing at Hickam in Hawaii. Other than that, that's the only Guard participation in the F-22.

The Reserves are participating at Holloman and I think also at Elmendorf in Alaska.

Q: You've made it very clear that your letter was not a call for more F-22s. The letter. You didn't address that. So I'll address that to you now. Do you think it would be a good idea to buy more F-22s?

A: I'm interested in capability. And there are a number of platforms that provide the Air National Guard the capability it needs to do the airstrike and the alert mission. I think it's important to realize the history of the Air National Guard in performing that mission. I know there have been some folks during testimony earlier this year that said well, the active duty could do that, the Marines could do that, the Navy could do that. And certainly that's true. But in my opinion, the number one mission for the military is defense of the homeland, and that's what the Air National Guard has been doing. We fly 16 of the 18 air sovereignty alert mission sites and we've been doing that for a long period of time.

The total number of air sovereignty alert sites has gone up or down depending upon the perceived threat. Unfortunately, prior to 9/11/2001 the vector had been to take down some sovereignty alert sites, but I think the events of that day made it quite clear that we need to field that capability.

So while the Navy could do it, you have to ask the question, at what cost? Because the Navy fighters are dedicated to do what Navy fighters do, and that is provide defense for the carrier battle groups. Marine fighters are primarily concerned with close air support for ground troops. Air Force fighters are dedicated to those two purposes but also have some other obligations.

So when you say well, someone else can do the air sovereignty alert, that's true, but you have to ask the question, at what expense, and would those other entities really want to do it?

We want the mission. We've done the mission. We're the pros from Dover, if you will, so I think the mission needs to stay with the Air National Guard. The question is what

capability do you need to do it and what platforms provide that capability?

So what I've tried to do is convey the message that I am basically platform agnostic. I don't care. I'm interested in the capability and I'm interested in recapitalizing our aging fleet. Our F-16s, the bumper sticker we've been trying to show the Congress and the public is that if you take a look at our F-16s that do the air sovereignty alert mission, 80 percent of those will begin aging out in the next eight years. Right now the recapitalization plan for most of those units does not have F-35s going to those units until the early to mid 2020s, several years too late. We're working with the Air Force on that issue and have not reached resolution yet.

So do we need more F-22s? Do we need more F-35s? Do we need more F-16s, F-15s, F-18s? I don't care as long as that capability, AESA radar, infrared search and track, the ability to counter cruise missile threats launched from the sea. Is that capability out there right now? It could be. I don't know that we really know whether it is or isn't. I think it will be one of these days, and I think we need to look forward to that possibility.

Sensor fusion, communication beyond line of sight. All of those capabilities need to be in the next platform, whatever it is, that is fielded to the Guard so that we can do the air sovereignty alert mission. But what airplane we put it on or how it's acquired, that's a decision for the Air Force and basically for Congress to make because they have the constitutional obligation to raise and equip armies and air forces.

So it doesn't make any difference to me. We just need the capability, and we need it before we lose the capability that we currently have.

Q: Let me ask one more follow-up and then it's up to Dave, but you did say in here somewhere that you're fond of saying America's most important job, the ASA mission, handled by America's best fighter which I presume you mean the F-22.

A: Right.

Q: So you may be platform agnostic, but you're not platform atheistic. You're not for going back to A-7s or--

A: No, I flew A-7s. That brings up a really good issue because I flew A-7s in the Air National Guard when the United States Air Force did not. And when Desert Storm and the first desert war kicked off we had some great capability inside the Air National Guard in the A-7 platform. But because the active duty was not flying the A-7, and they were concerned about getting the top of the line weapons into the fight, we were not asked to participate.

That seems to me like a great waste of money. And I think it points out the fact that

whatever capability the United States Air Force decides to acquire, the Air National Guard needs to be concurrently fielded with the same equipment. Because it makes no sense to have a platform that you're not going to use in war. About the only thing it does is it keeps a cadre of pilots and maintainers trained. That's another issue. When you talk about the experience and the combat experience that resides in the Air National Guard, we have the most experienced pilots. We have the most experienced maintenance crews. We are an older force, a more mature force, and if you don't provide a platform or a capability to the Air National Guard, then that great expertise withers and dies and it will take you generations to regenerate that.

What the Air Guard offers is a capacity on top of what the United States Air Force offers. We provide 34 percent of the capability for 7 percent. You don't need all of that capability every day, so why should you pay for it every day?

Q: But the active is not buying any more F-15s or F-16s. So--

A: Not right now.

Q: So you're not for the Guard buying more F-15s and F-16s, are you?

A: If the Air Force did that then I would be, yes.

I think we need to be in the same platform as the United States Air Force. If the decision is made in the future by more senior officers than I am in the Air Force and the Secretary of Defense to acquire 4th generation airplanes similar to what the Navy is doing with their F-18 purchases, then I would advocate for the Air Guard being in those same platforms. Provided it's fielded concurrently and proportionately to the Air Guard.

What I'm afraid of is that if we flow equipment to the Air National Guard as we have historically done, the Air Guard gets the old stuff and we get to that point where the Air Force is flying as it was in Desert Storm, F-16s and F-15s, and the Air National Guard is flying A-7s. In my mind, we're an irrelevant force.

So why wouldn't you use the capabilities, the talents, the experience that you have residing in the Guard and as you bed down these platforms of the United States Air Force, you also bed them down currently in the Air National Guard, because you are building up the nation's capacity in a very smart and intelligent way so that if we are called upon you don't have one tier Air Force and a second tier reserve component. You have the strategic surge capabilities that need to I think continue to reside in the Guard. I think we've demonstrated since Desert Storm when we've gotten the F-15 and the F-16-- We do everything the Air Force does. We fly AEFs, we're written into all of the O Plans, because those same airplanes that fly air sovereignty alert, the F-15s and F-16s that do that right now for the Guard, they don't just do air sovereignty alert. They're written into

the war plans. They do AEF rotations and we participate the same as the United States Air Force does, so we should have the same equipment.

Q: One of the goals of QDR, as they explain it to us, is to figure out how to better use the Guard and Reserve resources. So are they actively talking to you? What are they talking about? Do you have input, insight, in the QDR? And do you think that will help or hinder or give you a chance to make your argument about the value of what you do and how you feel like you need to be equipped?

A: Those are great questions. I've been very pleased with the Air National Guard and the National Guard Bureau's participation in the QDR process, because we have been involved at every level.

The Air Force allows the Air National Guard to participate at all levels of the Air Force corporate process from the action officer level all the way up through the board, through the council, to the four star level. So I have no complaints about how the Air Force allows the Air National Guard to participate in the decision-making process. I will tell you, I get one vote. In the council, the different components are allowed to voice their concerns. And inside the QDR process we participate with the Air Force in making inputs to the process. We also, we the Air National Guard, also participates as part of the National Guard Bureau inputs into the QDR process.

Q: Can you give me any sense, though, of what kind of input you're suggesting to them? Particularly wrap around what we've been talking about so far. And are you getting pushback or support or both?

A: Any time you have a process like the QDR, you'll get some acceptance but you'll also get pushback. The key thing is that you bring the points forward. The points that we're stressing is that we think more attention needs to be applied to the number one mission. The number one strategic construct. That is defense of the homeland.

If you look at previous national security strategies, national defense strategies, national military strategies, we at one point in time were working off the old 1-4-2-1 construct. Everybody knows that that is. The big debate now in QDR is well, is it one major theater war or is it two or is it some combination? I've read some articles this morning where the Secretary of Defense is talking about that. Mr. Ochmanek is talking about that. So--

Q: He was sitting right there yesterday and made those remarks. [Laughter].

A: That's why I've read the articles.

But it's good that we're having that discussion. Because, you know, from an Air Force and an Air National Guard perspective, we need to know what it is that the country

expects us to do and we find that out through the QDR process.

We have participated and made inputs to the issue teams. I participate at what we all the stakeholders' level which is a three star review. General McKinley participates at the four star review. We participate up to the levels in the QDR process where the services are allowed to participate. But after that it goes up to higher levels that involve the Secretary of Defense and his advisors. And there is a level at which the services' input stops and decisions are made.

But I think we've been able to voice our concerns. The point that we're trying to make is that if we're not going to do two major theater wars, and even if we do we need to prioritize what we want to do. We think our number one priority ought to be defense of the homeland. And as a part of that we need to consider the role that NORTHCOM plays and the role that the National Guard plays--both Army and Air--in providing support to the civil authorities. That's a whole different concept than fighting the war over there. We think a lot more attention needs to be paid in defense of the homeland. That part of the national defense security strategy.

We, the Air National Guard, try to stress the efficiencies that we bring. That it's less costly to bed down capability in the Air National Guard and the Army National Guard, than it is the active duty. Because our folks, we have a full time cadre that makes up about 25 percent of our total force structure. But everybody else is a traditional guardsman. The country doesn't pay those individuals a salary 365 days a year because they don't work 365 days a year. If they come in to a drill they get paid for that. If they go fly a sortie, they get paid for that. But you build up the capacity, the training is the same. I can go out and fly formation with an active duty Air Force pilot and you won't know the difference.

Q: That number one mission, though, that you keep hammering away at, I hope,--

A: It's the one I'm interested in.

Q: It brings us back to the F-22 unique capabilities. You have the altitude, the speed. Small target detection capability for cruise missile defense, which when I talk to people in Hawaii or Alaska or any place else they say is rising now as an issue.

So that seems like what you're talking about in the QDR and the message you're sending is reinforcing the need for the F-22 since no F-35 is going to be around for a few more years. So is that correct? Am I making that connection accurate?

A: Again, the capability is what I'm interested in. I don't care how capable a fighter is, we still have not figured out a way to have a fighter be in more than one location at a time. Regardless of how stealthy it is. The enemy may not know where it is, but we do, and you

you can only have a fighter in one location at one point in time.

So there is I think some wisdom in taking a look at where you base those and taking a look at the least expensive way to operate those because when you're talking about air sovereignty alert you're talking about a 24 hour day, 365 mission that can get expensive. So I think there are opportunities within the number that we have now to take a look at what I would say in my mind are alternatives to basing where we can use the capability that airplane brings to do not only the air sovereignty alert mission, but also do all the other things that the active duty does. Have those airplanes written into the war plans. Have those airplanes available for AEF rotations overseas--they're not doing AEF rotations right now. But they could.

Q: When I talked to the Hawaiian Guard, they said after they get the F-22s, then they're going to go forward to Guam or Okinawa or wherever they need to go and they need a backfill, too, to come and do the air sovereignty mission in Hawaii.

So if you show up with F-22s you're in a lot better shape than you are if you show up with F-16s without an AESA.

A: And we're talking capability there. An F-16 without AESA does not have the same capability as an F-22 with its current systems.

Q: How come there's been so little emphasis given to the tactical capabilities of F-22? In all the arguments we've seen them argue about the industrial base, but I think you're virtually the only one that has mentioned cruise missile defense capability. How come they haven't tried to sell the platform on the basis of what it can do? There are some things it can do that nothing else can do.

A: That's one of the points I tried to make in the letter to Senator Chambliss, was the F-22 offers the type of capability that we need for air sovereignty alert. It doesn't mean that there are not other platforms out there that could offer that same capability. An F-15 or an F-16 or an F-18 with the appropriate AESA radar with infrared search and track, with sensor fusion, with all those other things that can be put on a fourth generation fighter. If it had that, then that might work for the Air National Guard air sovereignty alert mission. The question is, do you want to have a separate type of airplane solely for ASA, air sovereignty alert, that doesn't do anything else for the United States Air Force? In my opinion, no. We don't need a separate ASA fleet. We need an ASA fleet that has the capabilities that we need, but also has the capabilities to provide those things that we need for O plans and for the AEF rotations.

One of the factors that we'll get into is what does it cost to buy an F-35 or an F-22 versus an F-15 or an F-16 with that AESA radar, infrared search and track, sensor fusion, beyond line of sight communication? We're going to have to ask our corporate partners

what they can provide. And maybe we'll get to the point, because I see all sorts of numbers floating around. I don't know what an F-22 costs. I've heard as little as \$140 million, I've heard as much as \$350 million. It depends on how you calculate it.

Q: \$142.6.

Q: Yeah.

A: Okay.

Q: For the next one.

A: And that's another point. You ask how much does an F-35 cost, but then the follow-on question would be well, what quantity is that based upon and what does it come with? A lot of people say well, you don't need stealth aircraft for air sovereignty alert. You don't need the stealth part of it, at least today you don't. You might ten years from now. But so why pay for the stealth? My response is well, if you can get the stealth at the same price as you get the non-stealth, then why not?

The key is that whatever platform the United States Air Force decides to buy in the future, whether it's F-22s, F-35s, sixth generation, UAS, fourth generation, the platform is not that important to me as long as the capability is there. If we can get the capability, as long as that same platform is in the United States Air Force inventory, I'm good to go.

Q: I think if I heard you correctly earlier in your discussion of this you said something to the effect of the Air Force isn't buying fourth gen yet or now. Is that actively being compared in this current debate going on in the QDR, the FY11 budget, is that actually being compared, like you just said, the price of an F-16 or an F-15 versus F-22 and F-35?

A: I've said I'm keeping all options open. So the Air National Guard is thinking about that. I think it's pretty clear when you hear the statements that Secretary Donley and General Schwartz and Secretary Gates, that the future of the United States Air Force is fifth generation. They've made those decisions.

Could there be a scenario that plays out in the future where fourth generation might be considered by the United States Air Force? I can think of scenarios. Maybe budget constraints. Maybe delays in the F-35. Maybe an assumption that we're going to reach a certain level of technology development that doesn't happen. I think there are some scenarios that could play out in the future, that might drive the United States Air Force to reconsider fourth generation. I don't think we're there yet, and we may not get there. But I think just to say we will never consider fourth generation, I think maybe it's a little bit premature at this point to say that. Because I read an article a couple of weeks ago that said that the F-35 was two years behind schedule. There's certainly a debate,

depending upon who you talk to, whether they're behind or they're not. That's the great thing about this country. You can take what data you want--

Q: You never know.

A: You never know.

If it's true that the F-35 is slipping right and if it keeps slipping right, there's a scenario that could play out that if it slipped too far right that the Air Force itself might have to consider bridging the fighter gap that the Air National Guard is faced with today.

I think the Navy is taking a look at that when they made the decision to acquire more F-18s.

Q: Isn't that also an argument for buying more F-22s?

A: Certainly that would--

Q: Speaking to an agnostic. [Laughter].

A: Again, that's why I've taken the position that all options remain open, because things will happen here in the next two, three, four years, that will influence decision-makers on the smart thing to do. Some of those are within our control, and some of them aren't.

So rather than just excluding something from the very beginning from consideration, I think maybe the smart thing to do is to keep your options open and then see how the economy plays out, see how QDR plays out, see what the country expects the United States Air Force to do through QDR. Does the country see a need for the United States Air Force to be able to go anywhere in the world at any time of its own choosing? If that's what the country expects us to do, then we need certain capability. If we are not expected to do that, then we don't need maybe the same capability. But all this will play out in the QDR. That's why I like to keep my options open, because I don't know what the QDR is going to reveal.

Q: That's a theme we've heard from Air Force leadership. They want to keep their options open. They don't want to commit to anything basically, it seems like on this front, how to deal with the fighter gap. And I'm just curious, if the tripwire is another JSF delay or some huge spike in cost to JSF or something like that, don't you have to go ahead and start laying in some potential plannings and contingencies to turn on if you need an F-16 within AESA or if you needed F-15? Those airplanes can't be delivered tomorrow. The longer you wait to make a decision, the longer the gap is going to exist.

A: You're right.

Q: I don't quite understand--

A: The acquisition process is a rather lengthy one now, too.

The question is, do you make those investments today? Because if you do, then you do that at the expense of something else. And those are tough decisions. I just sat through the FY11 APOM drills and some tough recommendations, tough decisions were made by Air Force leadership. None of them very pleasant. But it all boils down to what capability is needed, what you have available to acquire that capability, and then making intelligent decisions as to which capability takes priority over another.

So while it makes sense to do what you're talking about, I think you have to also consider that okay, if we do lay in some lead monies for whatever capability, that we do so at the expense of maybe something else that we might want to do. Then you have to weigh the priorities and make some tough decisions.

Q: Even outside of your aging Air Force, BRAC decisions and Air Force force protection, you've got to find missions for a lot of your Air Guard units. There's been talk about flying UAVs, all sorts of things.

How are you doing on replacing those positions for your Air Guard people?

A: It's a challenging prospect. We work through the United States Air Force A8 with total force initiatives. Right now, and if we go back to BRAC, and that's an excellent point. Part of the problem from the Air National Guard standpoint with BRAC was that the Air National Guard was not allowed to participate. So there were some decisions made that I will tell you, I was an Adjutant General at the time in Oklahoma, and there were some decisions made that really hit the Air National Guard hard.

We are in the process of following through and doing those things that were BRAC directed. We have until 2011 to accomplish those. We're on track. We will accomplish all of those. But the BRAC situation followed by the Air National Guard being required to do its own right-sizing exercise shortly thereafter, some of the budget decisions that were made subsequent to that, the FY10 budget announcement which, force structure allowances, which came out about a month ago including the 250 combat air force reduction hit the Air National Guard hard in several states. There will be a couple of states without a flying mission once those are implemented.

So all of that has put the Air National Guard into a restructuring mode and necessarily, a retraining mode.

If you take a look at the number, the percentages of our total population. We have

106,700 authorized positions in the Air National Guard. We're right now at about 102 percent end strength, so we're full up plus a little bit. But we need a little bit of buffer over and above our end strength to facilitate transitions from sunset missions, those missions that we're required to get out of because of BRAC, we're required to get out of because of budget drills, we're required to get out of because of CAP reductions or whatever drives that force structure change; and then re-roll those people into emerging missions, drives a huge training bill. Close to 30 percent of our force right now is in the process of going from one job skill, retraining, to another. Which adversely affects your readiness.

My hope is that we can get some stability to the force and we can get into these emerging missions as we rebalance, as the Secretary of Defense wants to do, as we rebalance from maybe relooking at how much force structure we put into the high end, and as we adjust to irregular warfare, ISR and some of the other things that the Secretary wants the Air Force to get into, we will do that. But it will drive a training requirement. And there will be some turmoil in the force.

Right now as we work through the A8 shop, active duty A8, and the total force initiatives, there are at least count 136 total force initiatives. Ninety-six of those involve the Air National Guard, and about 66 of those are led by the Air National Guard.

So we are participating with the Air Force as we rebalance the United States Air Force. There are some initiatives out there that the Air Guard will be participating in. I'm hopeful that the end result will be that, again, that we're in the same platforms, the same capabilities as the United States Air Force. Maybe our portfolio will be a little bit different as far as percentages that we put toward high end versus low end. But as we do this process I think it's a great time with QDR and everything else that's happening, I think it's a great time to take a look at the Air National Guard and ask ourselves the question, high end. Let's talk about high end. The event that might happen once or twice or three times in the career of an Air Force person. Does it make sense to put a lot of that capability in the Air National Guard? Because if the big one happens, all the force will be mobilized. That's the value of the Guard, you don't pay for them unless you use them. Or do we take some of the high operations tempo, irregular warfare, and put that in the Guard? We want to be into some of that, but if it's 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, it seems to me it makes more sense in putting that type of capability a little more heavily into the regular Air Force and reserving the capacity that you need for high end stuff in the Air National Guard.

This is all part of a debate that's going on right now, and it's one that we need to have as a country. But there is great utility in the Air National Guard in what it can do. There are strengths that we have, that the Air Force doesn't have. There are strengths that the active duty has that we don't have. So we need to leverage the strengths of the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserve, and the active duty, to do those things that we do

best and then to minimize the things that all of us do poorly. They're usually different areas.

We can do UAS. We can fly those, and we are, flying them from North Dakota, getting ready to do the MQ9 out of New York. We've got Texas, we've got Nevada, we've got California, all doing the UAV mission. We can do some more of that. That's a good mission for the Guard if we're manned properly because we can have a Guardsman that goes to work at a bank, works two or three days a week at a bank, goes four hours to the Guard unit, flies a UAS sortie in Afghanistan or in Iraq, and then goes home to the wife and kids or the husband and kids. And that's a great mission because we can do it from home station. If we need to surge, we can mobilize that guy or gal and we can provide more combat air patrols.

The ASA mission is a good one for us. Training missions are good for us.

We want to stay involved in everything that the Air Force does, so there are some opportunities out there that we need to take advantage of.

We need to think about not just replacing some of these units that you mentioned that were taken down or adversely affected by BRAC. We need to recognize that there is some manpower available when you do that that we could remission into other missions for the United States Air Force. But we need to be smart in the way that we do that.

Q: General, I'm still a little confused on the F-22. You said in answer to Amy's question that you've taken the position that all options should remain open, and rather than just excluding something from the very beginning from consideration. But if you terminate the F-22, isn't that exactly what you've done? Not you personally. [Laughter].

A: We're still in production with the F-22, will be for a little while longer. You've heard the talk about foreign sales and whether that will happen or not. So I think for the time being the decision has been, we all know what it is, we're stopping at 187. I don't have a problem with that. I'd like to see more of the 187 in the Air Guard, but the decision has been made to stop the production of the F-22.

There's still a window of time, depending upon what the President and Secretary of Defense decide to do as far as foreign sales on the F-22, that might extend it or whatever.

But I see it as the same situation as the F-15 and F-16. Those production lines are not closed yet, but if they get to that point in time where they are closed without any decisions being made, then you have lost that option at that point in time.

If we continue down the current course on the F-22 acquisition program, there will come

come a time when the option to buy more of those will be gone because the line's been shut down. But that's true of any airplane. It's true of F-18s, it's true of sixth generation fighters when we get to that point.

At those points in time we need to make intelligent decisions. Right now the decision's been made to stop production of the F-22 at 187. That's the decision. We, the Air National Guard, will keep options open, but that option is quickly coming to an end if it hasn't already.

Q: You said earlier that most of the Air Force leadership that took the time to read the Chambliss letter and your response understood where you were coming from. You didn't say all the Air Force leadership. Did General Schwartz or anyone else in the Air Force leadership take issue with the content of your letter, either the appropriateness of your saying it or any security issues?

A: No. Nothing on security. There's nothing in my response that breached any security. We looked at that. We, the Air National Guard, looked at that very closely and there's nothing in there that reveals any classified information.

General Schwartz looked at it. I did have the opportunity to visit with him. He understood my response. There were some, I guess some questions about the timing, but he recognized that the timing was generated by the date of the Senator's letter. He understood and still does, the necessity to respond quickly and promptly to inquiries from Congress. We discussed that.

As far as the content of the letter, we had discussions about that. He took no issue with the content. There's always discussions about could you have said this a little differently, and we had that discussion. But overall, if you look at the questions and the answers, it's pretty factual.

I think what the concern initially was, that the letter was being spun or used to somehow promote additional acquisitions of F-22, which was contrary to what the Chief and the Secretary of the Air Force and the SecDef had decided to do.

But that interpretation was not mine. It's not contained in the letter. I think when the Air Force leadership looked at the questions and the answers, they understood and the fact that I'm still here talking to you is kind of an indication that we're okay.

Obviously the timing was sensitive, but I can't control when Congress asks me a question, and I think I'm obligated to provide truthful and accurate and timely responses to inquiries. And the Chief of Staff of the Air Force agrees.

Q: You mentioned that you recently came from, or sat in on some POM discussions,

some POM drills. Can you shed a little light on what some of those painful decisions were? Or are? Or that are under consideration?

A: They're still under consideration. And the problem with discussing those is that it causes great angst when you talk about those things. Until it's final, I'd like to hold off on that.

I made the inputs from the Air National Guard side and some of the inside the Air Force discussions turned out okay for us; other ones didn't. But that's true of the active duty and the reserve component, too. We all made our arguments. We were able to fairly represent our equities, if you will. But in the end there are some tough decisions that the Air Force leadership had to make and we're in the process now of those decisions and recommendations moving up the chain of command to the Secretary of Defense. So I would be premature in any announcements, because some of those could be turned around and it would be tragic for some information to be released that turned out not to be true. So I'd like to stay away from the particulars of the '11 POM.

Q: What about the size or the amount of pain coming the Air Force's direction? Yesterday we talked a little bit about this. A \$50 to \$60 billion potential shortfall across the FYDP and--

Q: With Ochmanek.

Q: --all the services.

A: I saw that.

Q: What about, what's in store for the Air Force specifically?

A: The '11 POM dealt with issues in the '11 POM and not necessarily anticipated bills to pay out of the QDR. If there are bills to pay out of the QDR, I imagine that they will be painful in that change is sometimes hard to go through and sometimes painful. It doesn't mean it's not good. But when you change course from what you have been planning to do to something as a result of QDR, that you are now refocusing your priorities, there will be some, as you make that turn, you're going to probably experience some high Gs, if you will, to use an old fighter pilot term. It's not straight and level. It's not 1G. When you turn something like the United States Air Force tightly and quickly as we're trying to do there will be some Gs, and there will be some pain, but it's nothing that we can't work through. And I trust that at the end of this that we'll be a better, stronger, more efficient Air Force.

The programs that we have that we're taking a look at in the '11 POM and some of the decisions that were made were painful because they're very important programs. Not

just to the Air Force but to the country. But we're in that point in time in history where we have to prioritize and make some difficult decisions and eliminate some capability that we think is important in favor of some capability that we think is more important.

Whenever you make that turn and make that change, yes, it's painful. But maybe it's a good pain. I don't know if there is such a thing.

Q: Good morning, General. I interviewed Major General Reese, the Oregon Adjutant General, on the 5 corners initiative with F-22s, and based on what you've said I'm a little bit unclear as to whether you support that initiative or not. Please tell us your thoughts on that initiative.

A: Five corners, 4 corners, is a term that is used I think to address a possible way to approach air sovereignty alert. Right now we have 18 corners--16 of which are manned by the Air National Guard. So I'm concerned primarily with 18 corners, 16 corner, and not necessarily 4 corners or 5 corners.

General Reese, for his reasons, chooses to focus on 4 or 5 corners, and I'm not saying he's wrong, I'm just saying that's another way to look at air sovereignty alert. I think he is advocating that F-22s be bedded down into the Air National Guard and looked at, the 4 corners approach, as far as a basing mechanism or a basing decision, process. So I see where he's coming from. I understand that. And I don't have a problem with that. But my concern is not necessarily 4 corners, 5 corners. My concern is 18 corners.

Q: So you haven't endorsed his plan, per se? You're not necessarily on the same page with that, per se? Or--

A: We've talked about it. I think what I'm trying to do for the Air National Guard is not competitive or not at odds with what he's trying to do. I'm just not saying that I--First of all, I don't have any F-22s to put out there in ASA. And from the standpoint where he is advocating that we get the capability, whether it's 4 corners or 18 corners, into the Air National Guard, we're on the same page. When we get down to the details as to which unit should get F-35s, which ones should fly Golden Eagles, which ones should fly F-22s, if any come to the Guard, we may not be seeing quite eye to eye. Certainly that's an option. It's a viable option. The Oregon Air National Guard does air sovereignty alert and they're very good at what they do. That's certainly an option we would look at. But I can't wholeheartedly endorse his plan because to do that comes at the expense of maybe some other concerns that I have.

Q: [Inaudible] plan for homeland security. I'm wondering [inaudible] if you can talk a little bit about how intel fusion and how agencies working differently will affect you and the National Guard. Also if you can give us a quick update on the UAVs on the border and what your [inaudible] are, what you need?

A: Sensor fusion. We get into delicate areas because this AOR, the NORTHCOM AOR, the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska AOR is completely different than Afghanistan or Iraq when we're talking about sensor fusion and what you do with UASes. The military under our constitution cannot be a policeman. And there are certainly some limitations on what we can do to protect the rights of all of our citizens.

The National Guard, because if we're not in Title 10 status we're in 32 status or state active duty status, we're working for the governors. Posse comitatus laws allow the National Guard, working for the governor, to do some police activities if the governors so choose that the active duty is not allowed to do.

There is an opportunity for discussion, and this is way above my pay grade, that the Secretary will probably get into. In the interest of the country, but at the same time protecting the civil rights of our citizens, how do we effectively use the capabilities that the National Guard provides to assist Secretary Napolitano in what she is charged to do, and that's defense of the homeland.

There is a discussion that has been going on ever since NORTHCOM was created as to exactly what are the roles of the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security vis-à-vis the United States of America AOR. And I think there's some confusion. I don't know that I'm smart enough to figure it out, but it's a debate that we need to have in the United States, to figure out exactly whose responsibility it is to do what.

The National Guard I think, right now all of the funding and resourcing that the National Guard gets comes either from the United States Air Force or the United States Army, Air Guard, Army Guard, through the National Guard Bureau. And maybe it's time that we recognize that part of the utility and the dual use, the dual capability of the National Guard which is a capability that does not reside in the other Reserve components because those are Title 10 forces, they are not allowed by constitutional law and posse comitatus to do some of the things that the National Guard can do.

So we need to have this discussion if the National Guard is to be used to its fullest capabilities and capacities in providing not only the Title 10 warfight overseas, but also providing homeland security and homeland defense in support of our governors, in support of civil support, in support of NORTHCOM, in support of Secretary Napolitano, maybe we need to take a look at resourcing some National Guard capability through the Department of Homeland Security, because we can provide some capabilities to help Secretary Napolitano.

Now where that decision is made needs to be an agreement or discussion between Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security because I'm not clear in

my mind if capabilities or responsibilities overlap, or if they are separated and there's a gap in between. I think it just depends on who you talk to.

So I would like to see more debate and decisions made to move the departments together so that we have the homeland covered, but not duplicate capabilities and not duplicate expenses. Where that line is drawn is I think the key discussion that needs to take place and I think Secretary Napolitano and Secretary Gates--Right now there's activities and initiatives underway to help answer that question, but I see that as the big challenge that the Secretary has.

You can relate that to Border Patrol and UASes and that sort of discussion.

Q: Can you tell us what your capabilities are UAV wise along the southern border?

A: The Border Patrol has some UAVs. I'm not real sure on how they operate those. But the UAVs that we have are dedicated toward filling the 50 CAP requirement that the United States Air Force has, that the Secretary of Defense has challenged the Air Force to meet. So our capability is right now being used for that.

Could it be used for--

Q: You're opening up two bases, right? For overseas operating [inaudible]?

A: We have North Dakota right now is operating MQ1s. Of the 35 combat air patrols that are operating right now, the Air National Guard operates eight of those. So roughly 20-25 percent. We're assisting the Air Force in trying to meet that 50 CAP goal, but we've got North Dakota operating right now in the MQ1. We've got New York getting ready to stand up MQ9. We have Texas, MQ1; Nevada, MQ1; California, MQ1; and MQ1 instruction training. So right now those five states are involved.

We're in the process of trying to robust the capabilities within those five states before we move on to bedding down--and when I say bedding down, you need to understand that the MQ1s are not in North Dakota, they're in the theater. But through technology they are flown and the sensor operators work in distributive ground control stations at those Air National Guard locations.

We have a launch and recovery element in theater that will launch the UAVs, get them airborne, and then they hand off the mission to operators and sensor operators back here in the United States in the Air National Guard. And the Air Force does the same thing.

They also have some locally controlled operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, but that's basically the way it works. It's kind of hard, we call them unmanned aerial systems.

They're not. They're manned. We just don't have a pilot in the cockpit.

Q: I was hoping you could give us an update on the Joint Cargo Aircraft and the transfer to the Air Force and whether you had any concerns that the program has been cut in half and how you were handling the fewer aircraft.

A: The requirement, the current requirement that I understand has gone through great scrutiny, through the Joint Requirements Oversight Process, I understand it to be 78. The current decision is to buy 38. I think General Schwartz, and I don't know if Secretary Donnelly, but I know General Schwartz says that 38 is the number. That may be a floor, we don't know. But I can tell you from the Air National Guard standpoint, we're working with 38.

Q:--plans going to transfer, are they set or--

A: We're working through that. In fact as we speak, the Air National Guard working with the Army National Guard, working with United States Air Force, primarily Air Mobility Command, and United States Army, to develop the concept of operation, concept of employment.

The first air crews are in training, and they're a mixture of Army National Guard and Air National Guard operators. We'll be transitioning to all blue shortly thereafter. Most of the maintenance right now, pursuant to the Army contract, is contract maintenance. It's not service maintenance. But we anticipate that we'll be transitioning at some date in the future to Air National Guard maintenance.

There was, back when the program was 78, there were 24 that were to come to the Air National Guard, but those were to be in the out years, I think 2013, 2014. And General Blum, when he was Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the United States Air Force announced to Congress that there were six states in the Air National Guard that would receive the JCS, four PAA per unit, for a total of 24.

When the program went to 38 and the jointness went away, an additional 14 are coming to the Air National Guard. We are working with the Air National Guard with the United States Army with the Army National Guard and with the Adjutants General to identify other possible locations.

The Army National Guard had a bed-down plan that they had envisioned. I think they had something like 12 locations, four PAA at 12 locations. We're certainly looking at those.

Here is an additional problem that we have now with 38 that we didn't have 78, and that is that the concept of employment is that a rather large percentage of the 38 will be

employed in theater. Sixteen airplanes, I think, is what we're talking about that will be in theater all the time.

Sixteen of 78 allows you to have a lower crew ratio because you have more aircraft to rotate through theater, you have more, the crews are all spread out. When you go to 38 airplanes but you're still requiring that same operations tempo in theater, what we have to do as the Air National Guard is we have to increase the crew ratio per airplane in order to have the crews available to fly the airplanes. But you can only do that up to a certain level because the more crews you lay on, the more training you have to have to keep those crews current. So you reach a sweet spot where you maximize the number of crews available to fly the limited number of airplanes, but if you exceed that with greater crews you start detracting upon the availability of the airplane to fly in theater because you have to dedicate so many hours to training.

So the challenge that we have in the Air National Guard is that we identified the six bases. We had anticipated, because at that point in time the program was 78, that the crew ratio would be two crews per airplane. We had built our force structure based on that. Now that we've gone to 38 airplanes, we're going to have to look at a 4.0 crew ratio which requires more people--

Q: Four?

A: Yeah, you've got four airplanes, so now you have 16 crews as opposed to 8 crews, so we've doubled the amount of crew that we have. Because you're going to be required to fly more hours we probably will have to increase the maintenance requirement. And because the units that the Air Guard had decided to put these airplanes in were basically units that had been BRAC'd and had lost platforms but still maintained the manpower, we could roll the manpower from say a C-130 unit that got BRAC'd into the C-27J.

I think we're okay on the six locations that the Air Guard had previously identified. As far as the other locations, it's going to take a scrub of available manpower based on this new 4.0 crew ratio requirement, it could be 5. So we have additional challenges, but we think we're going to be able to work our way through them.

Q: Really quickly. What about service life extensions for your current fleet as a stop gap? Say you continue with the F-35 recap plan. Is that an option?

A: It is. Like I say, all options remain open. There is a cost associated with that option. And if you do a schlep, are you talking about just the airframe, just to keep the current existing capability? Or while you're doing that do you also improve AESA radar and add some of the things that you would need to provide the capability in the future?

The cost of the schlep would depend upon what your purpose in doing the schlep is. If

you're just extending the life of the airframe, it costs less than it does to extend the life of the airframe and add the additional capability that you need to do the mission.

Then the question is what do you get? You get an airplane that maybe you get four or five more years of life out of. And if you're going to spend that money, is it better spent schlep or is it better spent in acquiring a different airplane? Those are balancing decisions that you have to make.

But certainly schlep is an option and we're looking at that. Schleps aren't expensive, and the scary thing about schleps is that experience tells us that you get an initial estimate on what it costs to do a schlep and then you get into the airframe and you find out whoops, we've got more problems than we thought we had.

They're doing some studies now on the F-15. The Air Force is tearing one apart to take a look at the viability of the F-15 fleet and perhaps can answer some of those questions. But schlep remains an option.

Q: What about a mixed schlep versus--a mixed buy between schleps and whatever aircraft you decide to recap with?

A: That would probably be the way we would go if we decide to do schlep, because there are some early blocks of the F-16 that we've already looked at that it does not make any sense to schlep. The cost to do it and what you get in return is not a smart return on investment.

So what we would probably take a look at is schlepping a number, if we did that we would take a look at schlepping a number of F-16s, 100 to 150, to give us just a little bit of life to hopefully reach that point in the F-35 bed down program when we start getting those in the Guard.

Again, whether we do that or not, depends on a lot of other factors. What you want to accomplish with schlep and what happens to the F-35 schedule? How long do you want to plan on schlepping these airplanes? How many of them do you need to reach that point in time when the F-35 starts being bedded down in the Air Guard?

I'm a great fan for accelerating the bed-down of F-35 in the Air National Guard. The concurrent and proportional thought that I keep promoting out there. Platform agnostic, but whatever it is, we the Guard need to be fielded the capability at the same time that the active duty is.

Q: We'll have to leave it there. Thank you very much.

END TEXT

