

## 25 Feb. 2016: General Breedlove, House Armed Services Committee Transcript.

### **THORNBERRY:**

Committee will come to order. Seventy years ago next week, Winston Churchill gave his famous Iron Curtain speak in Fulton, Missouri. Among his insights was this: quote,

I do not believe that Soviet Russia desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines.”

He went on, “from I've seen of our Russian friends and allies during the war I'm convinced there's nothing they admire so much as strength and there is nothing for which they have less respect than weakness, especially military weakness.” End quote.

I think what was true then is true now and we are seeing it play out before our eyes. The famous reset by the Obama administration with regard to Russia has not gone so well. Just over the past year or so, Russia has consolidated its gains in Ukraine, has intervened in Syria, establishing a stronghold in the Middle East for the first time since the 1970s and has continued to take unprecedented, provocative actions against NATO ships and planes.

Russia presents a full spectrum of threats from a modern nuclear arsenal which Putin has threatened to use against conventional forces to hybrid tactics based on deception and confusion and little green men. So far, NATO and the U.S. have grappled to find effective countermeasures.

The president's budget proposal significantly -- proposes to significantly increase our exercises in Eastern Europe as part of the European reassurance initiative. But rather than ask for more money to pay for it, his budget proposal would take it out of readiness, modernization -- both of which have been other siege for years. That can hardly leave the Russians quaking in their boots.

Of course, Russia's not the only issue on the plate of our distinguished witness today. The growing threat of terrorist attack from ISIS coming both from Syria, Iraq and from Libya as well as the migration of refugees more general are a significant issue for this theater. In addition, whether a cyber attack would invoke Article 5 obligations under the NATO treaty as we talked about in our hearing a couple weeks ago is one of the many questions facing us all.

Finally, the security of Israel which is also within this geographic command is always a matter of keen interest and concern before this committee. We are privileged to have before us a witness to help clarify all of these issues. Before introducing him, I'll turn to the gentlelady from California for any comments she would like to make.

### **DAVIS:**

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly ask unanimous consent that the ranking member's statement be entered into the record.

### **THORNBERRY:**

Without objection ...

**DAVIS:**

General Breedlove, thank you very much for being here today with us and as you conclude your time in command and you look to your retirement as well and we hope that will be a good and smooth transition, I want to thank you for your work to enhance cooperation with our European partners and for moving us forward to address the challenges to Europe's security.

The Chairman has made some excellent points of course in that the complex and ever changing situation that we face everyday. I'm very interested in your thoughts on Russian motivations and U.S. and our allies can most effectively respond without pushing Russia -- the Russian government to be even more adversarial.

Russia's destabilizing efforts continue and it seems clear that Russian aggression and malign influence in Europe are likely the issues that the United States and our partners in Europe will have to grapple with for years to come. We must continue to lead in deterring Russian aggression and if necessary in concert with our partners -- but our first priority has to be to prevent conflict. I look forward to your testimony today and again thank you very much. I yield back.

**THORNBERRY:**

Our witness today is General Philip Breedlove, Supreme Allied Commander of our NATO forces and Commander of the United States European command. General Breedlove, my understanding is that our current schedule is for you to rotate out of your current position and move onto other challenges after just about 40 years in the United States military.

And so as we being I want to thank you very much for your service in this position and throughout your career. Your interaction with this committee has been extremely valuable. You have been in a key position at a very critical time when literally the world has changed. And I know I speak on behalf of all our colleagues and thank you for the way you have done this job especially but also your entire military. Without objection, the entire witness statement will be made part of the record and we'll turn the floor over to you.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Congresswoman Davis, distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I've had no greater honor in my 39 plus year career than to lead the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guard and civilians of the U.S. European Command. These remarkable men and women serve not only in the EUCOM theater but also in harm's way across the globe.

I thank this committee for your continue to support to them and to their families. I'm also honored to serve alongside the men and women in uniform of the nations of Europe. They are willing and capable. They play an essential role in helping protect our own vital interests.

The last time I addressed this committee, the security situation in Europe was complex. Since then, the situation has only grown more serious and more complicated. Today, Europe faces security challenges from two directions. First to the East, Europe faces a

resurgent aggressive Russia. Russia has chosen to be an adversary and places a long term existential threat to the United States and to our European allies and partners.

Russia is eager to exert unquestioned influence over its neighboring states to create a buffer zone. And Russia is extending its course of influence yet further afield to try to re-establish a leading role on the world stage. Russia does not want to challenge the agreed rules of the international order. It wants to rewrite them. Russia sees the United States and NATO as threats to its objectives and as constraints on its aspirations.

So Russia seeks to fracture our unity and challenge our resolve. Russia, Mr. Chairman, as you said, recognizes strength and sees weakness as opportunity. To that end, Russia applies all instruments of national power including its military to coerce, corrupt and undermined targeted European countries. Some call this unconventional warfare, some call it hybrid.

I like to talk about it as sending little gray men who use their diplomatic, economic and informational tools in addition to military pressure to shape and influence nations without triggering a NATO Article 5 military response. To the South from the Levant through North Africa, Europe faces a complicated mix of mass migration spurred by state instability and state collapse.

And masking the movement of criminals, terrorists and foreign fighters. Within this mix, Daesh -- ISIL or Daesh, as I called them, is spreading like a cancer, taking advantage of paths of least resistance, threatening European nations and our own with terrorist attacks. Its brutality is driving millions to flee from Syria and Iraq, creating an almost unprecedented humanitarian challenge.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Russia's enter into the fight in Syria has wildly exacerbated the problem, changing the dynamic in the air and on the ground. Despite public pronounces (sic) to the contrary, Russia (inaudible) has done little to counter Daesh but a great deal to bolster the Assad regime and its allies. Together, Russia and the Assad regime are deliberately weaponizing migration from Syria. In an attempt to overwhelm European structures and break European resolve. All genuinely constructive efforts to end the war are welcome. But that is not yet what we're seeing.

EUCOM is standing firm to meet this array of challenges. To counter Russia EUCOM, working with allies and partners, is deterring Russia now. And preparing to fight and win if necessary. That demonstrated preparedness to defeat is an essential part of our deterrent message. To counter (inaudible) EUCOM is actively facilitating intelligence sharing, encouraging strong civil-military relationships across ministries and across borders. And to meet all potential challenges. EUCOM is a central part of U.S. leadership in the NATO Alliance. The Alliance continues its adaptation through the Warsaw Summit, including the readiness and responsiveness of the entire (inaudible) structure.

This year's budget request reflects our solemn commitment to the security of our allies and partners and to protecting our homeland forward. EUCOM does not yet have the personnel, equipment and resources necessary to carry out this growing mission. But

the continuation of the European (inaudible) Initiative, or ERI, would strongly support EUCOM's efforts to counter Russian aggression and other threats by closing gaps in our posture and resources.

EUCOM has carefully planned and executed the ERI plans (ph) authorized over the past two years, even as our headquarters has shrunk to become one of the smallest. This year's budget request would significantly increase ERI funding to \$3.4 billion. That would let us deepen our investment in Europe along five key lines of effort.

Providing more rotational forces, increasing training with our allies and partners, increasing key position war-fighting equipment in theater, increasing the capacities of our allies and partners, and improving the requisite supporting infrastructure. Together the tools ERI would provide would send a clear and visible message to all audiences of our strong resolve. Our further efforts to assure, deter and defend (ph), supported by ERI will complement those of the entire whole of government teams.

EUCOM remains committed to a shared vision of Europe whole, free, at peace and prosperous.

Mr. Chairman as my military career (inaudible) I want to thank you again for your unwavering support of (inaudible) armed forces. And at this time I want to thank you for the personal opportunity to command them. I look forward to your questions.

**THORNBERRY:**

Thank you sir. We have a hearing a couple of weeks ago talking about Russia. Among the witnesses, for example, was your predecessor and the question was raised, is ERI to really deter Russia? Or is it to make our allies feel better? And maybe it will be one, the latter but not the former.

What's your view of that?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, I would agree with parts of that but I would like to elaborate on some others. I would agree that ERI does both assure our allies and I believe ERI begins the movement or the changes we need to make to fully deter Russia. But it is a step along that path. For the past two decades, as you know, Mr. Chairman, we have been in a position where we have been trying to make a partner out of Russian in Europe. And we have downsized our forces, downsized our headquarters, capabilities, et cetera for becoming (inaudible) that was focused on engaging Russia as a partner and building partnership capacity in Europe.

What we now have is clearly not a partner in Russia. And so we have to begin reshaping the European command and the NATO force structure to be able now to confront someone that does not wish to share our norms and values in Europe. That 20 years of change will not be overcome in one or two steps. ERI is one of the steps along the way to reposition (inaudible) in forces, in headquarters capability, in the way we deal with our allies, to get to where we need to be to deter.

**THORNBERRY:**

Let me follow up with one other question for you. And it really goes to the heart of deterrence, what deters. There's an article that just came out in the Foreign Affairs magazine that raises a point that I've thought about, and let me just read you a couple of sentences and then get your reaction.

This is an article entitled "Eurasia's Coming Anarchy" by Robert Kaplan. He says, "In China and Russia it is domestic insecurity that is breeding belligerence. Whereas aggression driven by domestic strength often follows a methodical, well-developed strategy, one that can be interpreted by other states which can then react appropriately, that fueled by domestic crisis results in daring, reactive, impulsive behavior which is much harder to forecast or counter."

Then he goes on to say, "Part of what Putin's doing is -- the more chaos he can generate abroad, the more valuable the autocratic stability he provides at home will appear."

My interpretation of that is part of what's going on, especially in Russia, maybe China, is for domestic political concerns they gotta have outward aggression and the last point was the more chaos out there the more valuable he tries -- he believes it makes him for his internal purposes to stay in power. But that makes it harder to deter. Because if it's all about what's happening inside Russia, then maybe this deterrence and ERI and other things isn't really going to get much done.

I'd appreciate your reaction to the thought and anything you can shed on that.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Thank you, Chairman. I again would like to agree with some of the terms (ph) but elaborate on others.

You have heard me say before that deterrence is in the mind of the deterred. We are after the mind and the decision-making process of Mr. Putin. I did see some of the discussion we had with Jim Stavridis and I would like to use a single formulation about what I believe Mr. Putin sees and will deter him is using all of the instruments of a nation's power -- diplomatic, informational, military and economic. But they are all required.

As you said in your opening statement and I did in mine, Mr. Putin understands strength and recognizes weakness. If we only use the diplomatic, the informational and the economic to address Mr. Putin, he will see that the military is absent, or, as I think Mr. Stavridis talked about, a lack of will to use the military may be absent. So I think that to deter Mr. Putin we have to have an all out government response which shows resistance diplomatically, informationally, militarily and economically.

Again, important to the military piece is not only having the capability and the capacity, but showing the will to use it if and when required.

And I didn't address the other two pieces of your question. First, exterior chaos. I believe exterior chaos is a tool that Mr. Putin likes to use to give him a platform to show that the great power of Russia needs to intervene in a (inaudible) that cannot bring

order to the world. It gives him that platform to try to talk about the game that the great Russia, as an equal player on the stage, bringing order.

The second piece that you talked about, Sir, is domestic crisis inside the nation. I believe Mr. Putin's using a crisis inside his nation -- I do believe that his people are feeling the dropping oil prices, the sanctions and the other things affecting his government. But he uses that to focus them on the external enemy to bring their focus to what he wants to do with his nation's power. He is now focusing his people completely on the United States first and foremost, and secondarily NATO as an external enemy that they need to be ready to rise up to meet.

**THORNBERRY:**

Thank you.

Ms. Davis?

**DAVIS:**

Thank you very much, Sir, for being here and Mr. Chairman. You have an opportunity to work with our allies, our partners, and I think the discussion you just had with the Chairman is very helpful. Is that something that you feel is understood throughout the allied community?

**BREEDLOVE:**

I do. But understood is not attached always to the kind of action that maybe we would seek or hope for. But I will tell you that I'm not an optimist here. I am aware of a glass half full in the way our allies are now approaching the security environment in Europe.

In Wales (ph), we saw the leading edge of the problems in Ukraine, we made the biggest changes to NATO ever, and some things are going extremely well. The most things are going extremely well in that change. The military things we have done to change the very high level this Joint Task Force, the way we have organized our headquarters, the overall changes in the readiness and responsiveness of NATO forces -- most specifically the ERF (ph), all these things are completely moving apace to be completed before Warsaw. We have deployed and demonstrated them.

We have as I mentioned to you in the not-too-distant past, we see the nations now turning around budgets. The numbers may be wrong, it changes from day to day, but 16, 17 of our nations have stopped declines in their budgets, five were over 2 percent, six or seven now have a credible plan to get to 2 percent spending over a reasonable amount of time.

So I have seen change which is good.

**DAVIS:**

The European Nations Initiative -- how do you see that as a tool then for us to support, I think those efforts specifically and I just want to get a sense of -- you mentioned that this not -- this is not going to be a one year budget. As I understand it this is part of our overseas contingency operation funds and yet it's something that going to have to continue.

What would that look like to you? What would be -- your -- we're sorry that you're going to be leaving the command but we that you want to leave something in place, what should that look like as we move forward?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So ma'am as I explained before, and I won't go too far back but we have got about 20 years of a different paradigm to correct. We are on our third -- we will have had two years of ERI and we are now asking for this third year of ERI.

We have kept, as you heard me mention in my opening remarks a focus on basically five areas. Infrastructure -- and that is not building buildings. That is fixing ports, fixing rail yards, changing exercise and training areas, changing storage areas in order to make it easier for us to rapidly reinforce Europe.

Preposition of equipment we talked about. And that is that we are in this ERI looking to bring across our second heavy force to put into preposition status. In this one would be used -- not for practicing but for war fighting.

We are using the ERI to rotationally increase our forward structure. I've been very straightforward. There is no real substitute for permanently forward station forces but a second best, which is acceptable and which is where we're heading is to have a heel to toe rotational forces fully funded to increase our presence in Europe and that is a part of ERI.

Building the partnership capacity, bringing other nations in our NATO alliance up along side of us in the skill sets and capabilities we need., And then the last piece -- training and exercise with our partners.

So I don't mean to build a watch but those five elements are going to be needed to be sustained for some number of years to get us to that position where we believe we are now in the position where we can deter -- as well as insure, but deter. And we are working now on what that future position we think should be.

**DAVIS:**

Thank you sir, and I think as people are refining that further that will be helpful for us to know and to work with our budget focus as well. Thank you.

**THORNBERRY:**

Mr. Turner.

**TURNER:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to join with you in thanking General Breedlove for your service. It has been an incredibly important time for you to be in Europe because you both have been incredibly articulate of the rising threat of Russia but not alarmists. You have balanced in telling us policy makers and decision makers, as to what we need to do to give you the tools to change the dynamics.

You and I've discussed the very public (RAN) study that most recently has tried to give a picture of that vulnerability, looking at the Baltics -- perhaps being available within 60 hours to Russia's new aggression, the modernization and their forces.

I appreciate your use of the word deter because it's incredibly important that we deter aggression -- not just meet aggression. Preventing it from happening in the first place is going to require a Military force for which there would be risk to the other side.

You've indicated prepositioning as an important aspect. I'd like to talk to you about two aspects of our -- of our change in posture that we need. And General Ben Hodges who is a Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe has stated that quote, "There used to be 300,000 soldiers in Europe during the height of the Cold War, today we have 30,000 with the same mission -- to ensure allies into Russia." There's a big difference between 300 and 30,000.

So there's two vulnerabilities that we have. In listening to your comments and I'd like to know how to address them.

One -- we don't know what we used to know about what Russia's doing. We used to have all eyes on them and when they would do build ups, and preparations for what you described as snap exercises we knew where they were going, what they were doing, and how they were going to do it.

And two -- with the concept of prepositioning, you know we just don't have what we need there and we might not be able to get there. In the (RAN) study they point out the vulnerability of playing an away game while the advocates playing a home game.

Could you please describe what we need to be doing in both the aspects of greater understating with the visibility into Russia's actions and what they're doing. And secondly then emphasize again your statements of our need to have forces there.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, thank you very much for the question, I'll try not to long because it is quite a -- to walk this from left to right will take a moment. First and foremost, a lot of smart people in (RAN). I really love their work and I have known most of these people most of my military career.

But what you find from a study is tied a lot to how you've been given the problem. And what is the status of the forces at the beginning of a problem -- I think is at the heart of the matter of the question you're asking me.

We used to have a very persistent and capable look at Russia at the strategic level, the operational level and the tactical level so that we could understand what they were doing with their forces. And we built a robust system of indications and warnings -- INW. That was based on that robust Intel.

For the past 20 years, we have been refocusing for all the right reasons -- I think you'd agree, some of our intelligence on Al Qaeda, Daesh, Taliban, other elements around the world. And so for the past 20 years as we have been trying to make Russia a partner we have reapportioned a large portion of our ability to see away from Russia and towards these other threats.

So the bottom line is we do not have that insight into their operational and tactical level work. We retained a view of that strategic force which makes them an existential threat but we lost contact with the operational and tactical.

And in order to determine that we need to move forces into position that might change the outcome of the studies that you're referring to we need to have that capability and capacity of intelligence to reestablish indications and warnings so that we can deploy quickly -- the NATO, very high readiness task force, or deploy quickly the U.S. (inaudible) to have them in position before our possibly to deter a conflict and that might change some of the outcomes of what you're talking about.

So it's incredibly important for -- the first part of your question -- that we reestablish our ability to see and interpret so that we can deploy early to hope to avoid conflict or to change the outcome of the conflict.

Secondarily, as I said before, I believe that we will never go back to where Europe was when Captain Breedlove went there in 1983. Two cores, seven divisions, multiple brigades, ten fighter wings -- it was a force to be reckoned with. We will never go back there, this is not the Cold War.

But I do believe we are not where we need to be now in the mixture of permanently forged station forces, prepositioned stock so that we can rapidly fall in on it. And then as you mentioned at the last part of your question, we are not where we might need to be to be able to penetrate with A2AD -Anti-Access and Area Denial environment, that would allow us to do the third part which is rapidly reinforced.

So just 20 second wrap up -- I believe that we need to move forward in what our forged forces are. Forward in how much prepositioned stock we have so that we don't have to have as many forged forces. And we need to make sure that we have the capacity to do Anti-Access Area Denial to break it so that we can continue to rapidly reinforce.

I hope I answered your question, sir.

**THORNBERRY:**

Mr. Courtney.

**COURTNEY:**

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you General for your leadership and your thoughtful testimony hear today. On page four of your written testimony you advocate that the U.S. should join the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea Treaty UNCLOS.

I find that kind of striking because yesterday your colleague Admiral Harris who is dealing with a totally different part of the globe and totally different set of issues in terms of maritime world contest, made precisely the same recommendation. And I was wondering if you could sort of describe what you think the benefits would be if we took your advice and ratified UNCLOS and what are the hindrances that you're dealing with today by not being part of the convention.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, thank you for the question. I think our uniformed military has been pretty consistent over time in the support of the UNCLOS.

If I could just do a vignette for you of the Arctic. We are facing a very challenging situation in the Arctic. The Arctic -- I think, should be a opportunity. As the ice flow pattern changes, the maritime trade route in the Arctic shortens by over 30 days -- I'm told -- transit to the far east. That should be an opportunity.

Many of our NATO allies -- Canada and the U.S. are concerned about what we see as the militarization of the Arctic now by Russia. What we would see in the Crimea situation, and the Duma situation -- currently in Syria is that Russia has a pattern of putting military force in the field to set the conditions to negotiate from a position of power.

And so what we see now in the Arctic is Russia establishing a military capability in capacity to influence that new passage in the North. And being part of the UNCLOS would allow us to be at the table in the diplomatic informational and economic arenas to address that.

Last week I think sir, you saw that Russia changed its claim in the North Pole area. It didn't affect U.S. claims but it affected three of our other allies and partners claims. And these are the kind of things that will severed in the framework of the UNCLOS.

**COURTNEY:**

Thank you.

Again, I think learned again the harm recently when the Hague Convention denied the U.S. request to intervene on the Philippine claims in the South China Sea. Again, a trend that I think really mirrors what you're talking about. Militarizing a part of the Pacific and our inability to even be at the table when these issues are being resolved -- that we'll have a direct impact in terms of military strategy and resources in the future is the ultimate unforced error.

So thank you for your input this morning on that issue. Admiral Stavridis when he was here a couple weeks ago talked about the fact that the undersea realm is getting much busier and said highest level of activity since the Cold War. Do we have enough assets in terms of naval resources? Submarines, anti-submarine, surface ships in terms of the European command to address that issue?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So sir, I'm glad you asked that in the context of the European command. I wouldn't want to try to advise -- the CNO's business on numbers but these undersea assets are very highly sought after asset. I'll just factually say I do not get what I've ask for and what that means is that in the North Sea in the vicinity what we call the Big Gap -- Greenland, Iceland, U.K. gap area -- where all of the sophisticated submarines and surface combatants that Russia has comes out of the bastion where they are built, tested and fielded.

And then employs in the Atlantic, in the Mediterranean and some other transits to the Pacific. But the bottom line is in that very contested, very highly sophisticated part of the

world we play zone defense. We can't man on man and so I hate to simplify this but it's just a very simple way of understanding.

**COURTNEY:**

Thank you. Again, our fleet today of attack subs is about 52 and as I think you know it's going to dip just because of the legacy fleet ongoing off-line. And I guess we would probably agree that that's just going to make that stress even worse for your successors in terms of trying to get those -- the assets you need to play zone defense let alone man to man.

**BREEDLOVE:**

And so I would just and not to choose the question or to divert but this is a similar to other stories in what we call low density, high demand requirements. High end ISR, high end aircraft, certainly submarines, et cetera, et cetera.

**THORNBERRY:**

Mr. Rogers.

**ROGERS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General, it's good to have you back in front of us. Thank you for your service and I don't think the administration's announced who's going to follow you but you're going to be a tough to follow. And I appreciate all you've done for our country. General, do you have an opinion as to whether you believe Russia has any intention of returning into compliance with the INF Treaty?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, thank you for the question and I'm going to answer it in the way I answer a lot of things. I am unable to ascertain and I don't think I'm qualified to really determine what Mr. Putin and his folks intend. But what I would say is that what I have done and I've said this to you before -- I look at what our opponent does as far as building capabilities and capacities.

And then I infer from that how he would use them or what he might do with them. And I think you have heard me testify about as have many others that we firmly believe that Russia is in violation of the INF Treaty. And that not only are they in violation of the INF Treaty but the type of weapons system that that they have -- that they have tested and fielded in that category is very easily hidden or masked in its conventional forces. And so it is worrisome to me that they have created a capability that will be very problematic for us to keep track of.

**ROGERS:**

How do you think we should raise the cost to Russia for its violations?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, the Secretary of Defense has laid out his approach to that and it is an escalating approach starting with diplomacy and then moving to more what I would call kinetic means. And I believe that we are in the phase where we are -- we and our allies are trying to reach a diplomatic solution with that. But I support the Secretary of Defense framework for addressing the breach in the INF.

**ROGERS:**

What do you think Russia's trying to hide from us in Kaliningrad by illegally denying our flights over the the heavily -- this heavily militarized piece of Russian territory?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So Kaliningrad sir, as you know is a very militarized piece of property and as we talked about just a little bit before in this discussion of anti-access area denial -- A2AD as we shortened it. Kaliningrad is a -- is a fortress of A2AD. It projects land attack cruise missile capability, it projects coastal defence cruise missile capability and it projects air defense capability.

So a complete bubble to defend against land approach routes or land targets, air targets and seaborne targets. And as I mentioned before some of the land attack cruise missile systems are land attack missile systems in Kaliningrad are those that can be dual use. Meaning they can be nuclear and -- and -- and I would not guess what they're trying to hide. But there's a lot of things in there that -- that support these capabilities.

**ROGERS:**

Lastly, you made reference in your opening statement to Russia weaponizing the migration from Syria. Can you speak more specifically to that?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, I cannot -- again I look at what I see in capabilities and capacities and I determine intent. So what I am seeing in Syria in places like Aleppo and others are what I would call absolutely indiscriminate, unprecise bombing rubbleizing major portions of a city. That do not appear to be -- to me to be against any specific military target because the weapons they're using have no capability of hitting specific targets. They are unguided dumb weapons.

And what I have seen in the Assad regime from the beginning when they started using barrel bombs which have absolutely no military utility. They are unguided and crude and what are they designed to do (sic) is terrorize the public and get them on the road. Later, Assad using chlorine gas and other chemical type approaches to these same barrel bombs.

Again, almost zero military utility. Designed to get people on the road and make them someone else's problem. Get them on the road, make them a problem for Europe to bend Europe to the will of where they want them to be. And so I see a continuing pattern in Aleppo and other places of this indiscriminate use of military capability that all I can determine from it is the goal is to get more people on the road and make them a problem for someone else to bend the will of those being affected.

**ROGERS:**

Thank you, General. I yield back.

**THORNBERRY:**

Very disturbing. Mr. Ashford.

**ASHFORD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and General, thank you very much. We had the opportunity a few weeks ago to -- in conjunction with the trip to the Gulf States to stop at NATO headquarters and be briefed and much of what was said there as you've suggested today. And I want to thank you for the efforts to get the other NATO partners to contribute to two percent.

I think you had a great deal to do with that and it's such a big deal. And also the shift in the last two years in how we approach Russia -- the threat of Russia is much to do with your efforts. So I really -- you know that but I want to thank you again for that. I just have -- one of the -- one of the discussion points at NATO headquarters really was the discussion about the treaty itself.

About Article 5, about -- is -- in your view, does the language of that agreement which was -- or that treaty which is relatively older. A little younger than me but older. Is the language sufficient as we look at the types of threats that you've described whether it's cyber or whether it's little gray men or it's a different kind of situation.

How close to Estonia do the Russians have to be or if there's some sort of cyber activity or other kinds of activity like that? At what point does it trigger? And that's my question.

**BREEDLOVE:**

So thank you for that and if I could just wind the clock back a little bit to the other articles of the treaty. We often talk about Article 5. As important to me is Article 3 and Article 4. Article 3 can be summarized very succinctly in defense begins at home and we have been using that with our allies and partners to talk to them about just what you said.

Increasing and thickening their own defense, investment in their own country and that investment is not only two percent in total but what is also important is that 20 percent of that needs to be recapitalization of investment in kit. It's not helpful if the entire portfolio is in personnel costs. And so Article 3 -- important.

Defense begins at home and we've been working with allies and partners to build capabilities that fit nicely into the alliance. Everybody doesn't need to be flying F-16s. Some people need to be creating tactical air control parties, rotary-wing lift, et cetera, et cetera. So knitting the alliance via Article 3.

Article 4 of course is that point at where the nation feels threatened and they begin a conversation with the other nations about we are facing a threat and how are we going to respond. And this is the point when the nations are starting to look at and say, "this is a legitimate breach of what NATO was built to do -- collective defense." And then Article 5 of course is the most highly recognized one.

**BREEDLOVE:**

To your point, the language is not precise when it comes to what we now call sort of the gray areas: the cyber, the hybrids. And Mr. Putin is trying to live below the that Article 5 level. He is taking action in nations now all around his periphery, trying to remain below that level at which the alliance would respond. And that's tough. It's tougher in the states between Russia and NATO but I think he's already taking these actions in some NATO nations.

I would encourage one of your staff to look at Mr. Gerasimov's model. His strategy of indirect action and deterrence. It's completely unclassified and out there on the net, if you look at his stage one, two and three, and what the actions he prescribes in that model of war, he's already taking those actions in many of our nations.

**ASHFORD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**THORNBERRY:**

Thank you.

Mr. (inaudible)

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

General, thank you for coming before this committee again. I understand this might be your last time before this committee so if you will forgive me I would like to just take a moment and express my personal gratitude to you for being the noble and benevolent (ph) way you've been on behalf of human freedom in this country, and I know my 7-year-old children have a better chance to walk in the light of freedom because of people like you and I truly believe that on just the basis of this committee's perspective that you've been a strategic asset in the arsenal of freedom and I can't express to you the personal goodwill I have for you and your family.

With that, your statement -- your written statement -- you talk a lot about the assurance and deterrence mission that you accomplished under the umbrella of Atlantic Resolve. And it's my understanding that Atlantic Resolve is really not a named operation. What additional (inaudible) and resources could you tap into if Operation Atlantic Resolve were a named operation?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Thank you and thank you for your support and (inaudible) Air Force Base which is dear to my heart, and to our military forces.

The difference between the operation that we did and a named operation is subtle but important. Named operations have funding streams, they have dedicated rules of engagement and they garner certain priorities and allocations of forces et cetera et cetera, and so a named operation would mean more stability and long term focus to Atlantic Resolve.

We're thankful to this committee and others for three years, or two years and possibly a third year, of ERI, which is very important to Atlantic Resolve because it pays for those rotational forces and things that drive -- explain we're a part of the way forward. I think in a named operation would give a sustained funding stream to things like that.

(UNKNOWN)

You also mentioned that EUCOM does not yet have the personnel, equipment and resources necessary to carry out its full (ph) mission. To me that implies that although there is a plan for the future, the military cost were (inaudible) tomorrow, that you would

not be equipped to deal with it as you would see fit. What specific resources do you need to fulfill your mission that are not included in the current budget, and secondarily is your headquarters adequately sized and staffed at the levels required for you to execute your mission?

**BREEDLOVE:**

If I could step back just to piggyback on a thought that I put out before, for 20 years we've been trying to make a partner out of Russia, and we have changed our force structure and our headquarters and other capabilities in Europe to affect the mission that was about engagement, and building partnership capacity.

Now we have determined that we -- people categorize it differently, but we definitely do not have a partner in Russia. Our resolve now is to be able to meet the challenge of a resurgent, revanchist, however you want to label it, Russia. WE have to be able now to be a war-fighting headquarters and a war-fighting force as opposed to an engagement and partnership building capacity force. We will still do those functions, but we have to rethink do we have the capability and capacity to be a war-fighting force, and maybe not.

We think that we've got to look at our forward force structure, we've got to look at prepositioning capability, we've got to make sure we've got the access to Europe in the face of a (inaudible). That will take capacity, it will take some new capabilities. Also the headquarters our Secretary of Defense has recognized that our headquarters is not sized right. We are still downsizing the headquarters from the BCA (ph) first \$478 billion cuts, with five years of cuts to the headquarters laid in, we are still getting smaller. But this year the Deputy Secretary has increased our headquarters size to stop, to arrest that, and hopefully we will continue to do that across the next years.

But it will take some time to reconstitute a war-fighting headquarters from where we've been for the last 20 years.

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you. Thank you Mr. Chairman and I hope that this committee and this country has the opportunity to access the wisdom and acumen of this gentleman in the future.

**THORNBERRY:**

Appreciate it.

Mr. Moulton?

**MOULTON:**

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

And General, thank you very much for this service.

Are we meeting Russia's threat in the Arctic from your perspective in Europe? Are we adequately meeting the militarization of the Arctic today?

**BREEDLOVE:**

I'm going to try to answer this question along with (inaudible). I do not believe that our nation, or most of the other nations of the Arctic Council, want to militarize the Arctic.

**MOULTON:**

I agree with that.

**BREEDLOVE:**

What we see is that our opponent has decided to militarize the Arctic. I think this is a view, a discussion, do we have the appropriate capabilities of all means, aircraft, icebreakers, other things, and do we have the capacities and that is work that is being looked at now.

(CROSSTALK)

**MOULTON:**

Today, do you believe that we have those capabilities and capacities to meet and deter what Russia's activity is in the Arctic?

**BREEDLOVE:**

We do have some extremely capable Arctic capabilities as do some of our allies. In fact, just before arriving here for this series of engagements with Congress I was in Alaska and we were talking about this with the leadership in Alaska and the forces of the ALCOM there do specialize in these capabilities. The real question is we have to determine what other capacities that are required.

**MOULTON:**

To move on to a different topic and back to Representative Ashford's question. Some experts have said that now we have to afford additional policy, if the word is (ph) to DOD to allow for training of National Guard and other forces to counter the little green men and little gray men (ph) in Eastern Europe. How can this be best accomplished and what changes to statute, what policy provisions would better enable that kind of cooperation?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, I'll be very honest, I don't think I can answer the context of how you asked it. But I do believe I can address this issue.

**MOULTON:**

OK.

**BREEDLOVE:**

The capacity to address hybrid warfare in its new (ph) form, so it's bigger than little green, we also talk about little gray men, that hybrid warfare does across all four elements of national power -- diplomatic, informational, military and economic -- and so even the nations where they are can help to determine what they need to do is important, and I'll get to the part that's important (inaudible). If you look at the Baltic nations from north to south, they do things very differently. This hybrid approach in one nation is almost completely a military problem and very slightly a minister of interior problem. In another of the nations it's about 50/50, ministry of defense, ministry of

interior, and in another the exactly opposite. It's almost entirely ministry of interior and partly ministry of defense.

So I think where your question is headed is, as you know, we have unique Title II limitations on what we can do with other nations, so it is an all of government engagement. National Guard brings some interesting capabilities, when you have a Guardsman you have experiences in other fields, for instance judiciary, legal, (inaudible), so I think that's where this move (ph) is headed.

**MOULTON:**

So General do you think that we need to (inaudible) the current policy to be able to do that kind of training to better meet this hybrid warfare or whatever you want to call it threat from Russia?

**BREEDLOVE:**

I don't think I know -- or I'm not familiar with the limitations enough to pass judgment. But let me tell you that as a commander, I need the ability to engage a government across all the elements of governmental power to train them to address the hybrid war.

**MOULTON:**

Thanks for that (ph) General. I think my concern is that, as you said, we're never going to get to the seven divisions that we had in the Cold War, and we can expend all our resources trying to incrementally move in that direction, which maybe we have the right direction, but if spend all our resources doing that and don't get to a point where it adequately does deter Putin, at the expense of all these other aspects of this warfare we're going to really miss the boat.

**BREEDLOVE:**

I completely agree that we have to have capacities in all of those elements of national power to deter, as we've talked about with Congresswoman Davis.

**MOULTON:**

Thank you General. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**THORNBERRY:**

(inaudible)

**FLEMING:**

(inaudible). Thank you for testifying before us today and once again, thank you for your sage counsel and advice and all your years of experience and what you've brought to the table. You'll be sorely missed. Everything you said I think is spot-on to where we need to be in terms of deterrence and dealing with an emerging Russia.

**FLEMING:**

I do have some questions. I told you earlier with respect to B-52s, Barksdale Air Force Base, is in my district, home of Global Strike Command, and General Rand, and so what I want to know from you is what is the deterrence effect of the B-52 bomber? What do you see as the future for that bomber in terms of what it can bring to the battlefield both in a kinetic action but also in deterrence?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, I will not doubt your question but I would say this is much more appropriately addressed by General Welch (ph) and others as to that specific platform. Let me tell you what the bomber and the B-52 being a mainstay of that fleet -- the bomber brings to deterrence. And that is as you know the B-52, the B-1 and to a certain degree the B-2 have become much more flexible across their lives.

And the B-52 as a platform for employing all manner of weapons like the other bombers but certainly the B-52 is a great deterrent in effect because it can a part of a purely conventional response to try to de-escalate the situation. Which is what we really want. We don't want to fight. We want the capacity and capability to defeat but we don't want to go there.

And so the ability of that particular platform to be able to do all missions and bring capacity to both a conventional and a non- conventional war is important. The other piece is it has proved as you know to be an incredibly long living airframe with capability still into the future. I'm not sure if it's still true but when I was the Vice Chief of Staff at the Air Force now five years ago we used to say that the mother of the son or daughter that will be the last pilot of the B-52 has not been born yet.

**FLEMING:**

Right.

**BREEDLOVE:**

And it will be well over 100 years ago before we're done with it.

**FLEMING:**

Yeah. Amazing. Well, and since you brought that up we are looking at the develop (sic) of the Long-Range Strike Bomber. So my question is, what will be that affect and what are the current timelines for both the upgrade to B-52 and replacement of Long-Term Strike Bombers?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So sir, as you remember we were talking earlier about A2AD -- anti-access area denial. One of the biggest keys to being able to break anti-access area denial is the ability to penetrate the air defenses so that we can get close to not only destroy the air defenses but to destroy the coastal defense cruise missiles and the land attack missiles which are the three elements of an A2AD environment.

One of the primary and very important tools to busting that A2AD environment is a fifth generation ability to penetrate. In the LRSB you will have a platform and weapons that can penetrate. Key to the future in the -- of the older generation bombers and platforms are developing and we are and have those weapons that can penetrate. And so those upgrades are all important to me as a user so that I can call on the service to bring forward the capabilities and capacities to address A2AD.

**FLEMING:**

Right. Great. Thanks. And in the remaining time I have, could you comment on the current state of research by the Navy and Air Force into deterrence assurance. By this, I

mean the gaming scenarios in planning to address the aggressive behavior and Russia's apparent shift in nuclear doctrine?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So I can't speak specifically to just the services. You maybe familiar with what we call the RSI -- the Russian Strategic Initiative. It is modeled after the CSI -- the Chinese Strategic Initiative which is nearly seven years old. As we in the past couple of years have seen Russia as no longer our partner we have developed the Russia Strategic Initiative to do just this kind of work.

To look at the things we need to change in weaponry but more importantly to do things like war gaming to understand how they would react to our war planes, et cetera et cetera. But what I am aware is as the leader of the Russia Strategic Initiative for the Department of Defense we are getting some very exquisite help in understanding this business.

**FLEMING:**

Great. Well, thank you, General and -- so much for the Russian reset. And I yield back.

**THORNBERRY:**

Mr. Langevin.

**LANGEVIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General, I want to thank you for your testimony today and for your service to our nation. Your service has been absolutely invaluable to our country and we will miss you in your retirement. But I certainly want to be among the many to wish you well in this next chapter of your life.

Our officials within the department have stated that they've very worried that our military's ability to counter and wage electronic warfare has atrophied pretty significantly while other partners around the world -- or I should say adversaries around the world have invested heavily in this area.

And that we may be lagging behind countries such as Russia. Would you agree with this assessment and how do you believe EUCOM is currently positioned to address this challenge across the AOR? My other question that I have, I hope we can get to is -- and I spend a lot of time obviously on cybersecurity.

And you mentioned that the challenges we face with respect to what Russia is doing. And my question is, how do you believe that we are doing at countering cyber threats with our allies against what Russia is doing and what their capabilities are? And do our NATO allies see eye to eye on this threat and are our partners' capabilities mature enough to manage the dangers that -- and challenges that we are seeing across cyberspace?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Thank you, sir. On the electronic warfare the same sort of situation applies. For 20 years we have been making a partner out of Russia so our focus has not been on the capabilities that they have been developing. And secondarily, again for all the right reasons for the last 13 or so years our nation's military has been focused on

counterinsurgency operations -- COIN in Afghanistan and fighting Al Qaida in -- in some of the spaces around the world.

And so we have been focused very deeply on addressing a threat that does not have electronic warfare capability. So rather than retained capability we have not really practiced to it to the ferocity that we used to nor have we retained the capacity that might be required to bust these growing A2AD problems we see around the world.

So to really shorten the answer up we have electronic warfare capability. We probably do not have the capacity we need now to address it. Our suppression of enemy air defense capabilities cede to take down air defense nets and things are very good but they're not dents. We don't have a lot of them.

Russia knows how we roll and they have invested a lot in electronic warfare because they know that we are a connected and precise force and they need to disconnect us to make us imprecise. When it comes to cyber this is, sir, I think a glass well over half full. When I arrived to my station about three years ago I think that many of the nations of the alliance and in Europe were very insularly focused.

They were -- they were acknowledging the cyber threat but they were really primarily about their own cyber problem. What we discovered though is with 28 nations in alignment -- in an alliance, you may have an absolute iron curtain wall around two or three of them but there are 25 other doors into the enterprise. And so what we had to do is come to a larger, more corporate approach to cyber.

And so I see that happening. I'm encouraged by what I see happening. I would recommend that someday in your travels you stop into Estonia and go to the NATO cyber center in Tallinn. It is absolutely superior and they are adding value to our -- to our alliance everyday.

**LANGEVIN:**

Thank you, General. Next question, is there a role for the U.S. and for EUCOM to play in assisting our European allies to mitigate the potential national security threats when it comes to the ongoing refugee crisis? What does that role look like and what resources are needed?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So there is a role and we are executing that role now. And the refugee crisis and the part that we're addressing the most is that embedded in this refugee flow is criminality, terrorism and foreign fighters. We have -- we have adopted and built a very good network of sharing information, sharing intelligence and trying to target and understand these flows of criminals, terrorists and foreign fighters as they move back and forth.

And so we are a part of that now. As you are aware the NATO alliance began an operational in the Aegean Sea essentially just about a week ago where we are beginning to try to help our Greek and Turk allies to address the dense flow of refugees across that water space. By being a part of managing that water space in terms of surveillance and reconnaissance and handing off data to the coast guards of Turkey and Greece. So it's a little more complicated than that but we have -- the NATO alliance has begun to enter into that portion of the mission as well.

**LANGEVIN:**

Thank you, General and thank you again for your service. We wish you well.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Thank you, sir.

**THORNBERRY:**

Mr. Nugent.

**NUGENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I definitely want to thank General Breedlove and your staff for -- for your -- your honest answers in the prior meeting that we had. It's very sobering to hear where we are and without illusion. I worry as we move forward -- we've done this now pivot to Asia, rebalance in the Pacific, all those types of things. And I think we're trying to do unfortunately way too much in regards to the stresses that we're putting on the military.

**NUGENT:**

There was a point in time where our policy was to able to fight two major conflicts while -- but what we found is that we had a hard time doing one. When you look back at Afghanistan and we had -- they have -- you know, forces there for 15 months on a single rotation.

And so I think that we're fooling sometimes American public to think we have the -- I know we have the desire and I know that we have the best trained, best equipped force on the face of the Earth. But I don't know that we have enough and I need to hit that on capacity. But we have enough to do the things that we told the American people that we can do and should do.

I think we've really -- I guess hiding the ball in regards to hoping that our advocacies don't see that and I truly have a lot of -- I believe that Mr. Putin is very calculating and is not stupid by any stretch of the imagination. But I guess the question is -- you know, back when I first ran it six years ago it was a big deal about -- hey listen we need to get out of Europe. We need to let the Europeans deal with their issues and I think while that sounded good at the time. Obviously now we're paying a dear price for that.

So why is it so important? And we need to stress this to the American public because everyone's footing the bill. Why is it so important that we have permanently stationed -- forward stationed troops and equipment in Europe? Why is it that important we should invest that?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So sir, thank you for the question and just a 30 second recap, I believe that permanently forward stationed troops are a part of that mixture. We have to have appropriate amount of permanent stationed, the appropriate amount of prepositioned so that we can rapidly reinforce.

And then we need to have the capability and capacities to be able to rapidly reinforce to include busting this A2AD problem. So the permanently forged forces are an important part.

And here are some things that are not often heard. Permanently forged stationed forces by you a lot of things -- one of them is relationships, and relationships equals access. The flexibility that our -- many of our nations -- but let me just mention a few. That's Spain, Italy, Greece, and even Turkey. The flexibility that they give us to move around and employ forces to address problems across all of North Africa, the Levant, and even to support CENTCOM into Syria and Iraq.

This is all built on relationships and trust that are established over time by permanently stationed forward forces. I can not overstate the importance of having this access.

A couple of -- sort of quip remarks that I will give to you -- one is, that you can not surge trust. You can not surge relationships. If we're not in a nation establishing trust in a relationship and then we desperately need to be able to do execute force from or within that nation. You don't -- you can't surge the trust of the relationship.

**NUGENT:**

And doesn't having permanently stationed forces buy us time to do just what you're talking about when you have prepositioned equipment, it buys us time to actually get to that equipment?

**BREEDLOVE:**

It does -- it does, and that's why it's a mix. The permanently forged stationed forces are there and ready and we can execute. They are ready to fight forward if they have to. And that allows -- enables the prepositioning and enables the capability to respond.

**NUGENT:**

So do we have enough prepositioned -- or not prepositioned -- but do we have enough permanently stationed troops in Europe?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, I'm on record multiple times as saying no. We are looking at that now but if we choose not to increase permanently stationed forces forward then we can adjust and pick up the requirement in the rotational force.

**NUGENT:**

But hasn't it been a problem in regards to -- and I know we've been -- you know, getting gaveled out on this one -- but in regards to -- when we have different commands flushing through that you don't have a continuity?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Right. This is a problem that could manifest itself. Our U.S. Army and Navy and Air Force by the way in their rotation patterns are dedicating units, it will not always be perfect, but we have units assigned with a primary European mission that are a part of that rotational force. We are trying to address just your concern.

**NUGENT:**

I appreciate that, and I appreciate the Chair. Thank you for very much.

**THORNBERRY:**

Ms. Duckworth.

**DUCKWORTH:**

Thank you, I'm actually going to continue the gentleman's line of questioning because we were thinking along much of the same ways.

General, thank you again so much for being here. I want to pick up on this line of questioning. You know, the F.Y. '17 budget request quadruples the amount of the F.Y. '16 request for the European Reassuring Initiative, but a lot of that is for prepositioning of equipment in Central Eastern Europe and from here to total rotational deployments.

I was reading the National Commission on the Future of the Army's Report -- that has two significant recommendations. One is to forward station and ABCT in Europe itself -- where as the other has to do with the aviation of the CAB.

And I want to sort of peel back the layers -- the affect of the Army's Aviation Restructuring Initiative and what it's done to our aviation capability in Europe. Specifically, you know, we go back to this idea of building trust and long term relationships.

One, let me start off by saying -- am I right in saying that you would prefer to have permanently placed, ABCT in additional -- at additional equipment in Europe? Would that be a true statement?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Yes, ma'am.

**DUCKWORTH:**

OK, so on the aviation side -- the report actually suggests that the rotational model will work, except that we need more of a war fighter aligned headquarters. What's there now is really more of an administrative aviation headquarters as opposed to a CAB type of headquarters there would actually be much more aligned to that rotational mission they can come in, they can pick up. Would you agree with that?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So ma'am the report -- I think correctly identifies the absolute value of having a dedicated command and controlled force. And frankly it just emphasizes the value in general of -- Army aviation as one element of air power in Europe. And they are all absolutely critical.

**DUCKWORTH:**

They are. Thank you. I'm not promising anything but I would hope that with such an increase in the ERI funding that we might be able to address some of the aviation shortfall.

Can you talk a little bit more about the rotational model on your aviation needs in Europe? And where have you assumed specifically the most risk and what capability gaps needs the most attention when it comes to Army aviation?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So ma'am, what I need to do is give some thanks and respect to what the Army did as they took the last tranche -- the last tranche of aviation out of Europe. If you look at it in

a net way, we really didn't lose any presence because the aviation that we had in Europe at the time was continually being tasked into theater. So while it was assigned in Europe it was gone a fair amount.

A larger piece Europe, but the rotational piece that we got to replace it is dedicated to Europe and does not rotate into theater. So it netted out almost exactly the same in the amount of time that we had aviation on the ground. So I need to -- we need to properly acknowledge the Army's efforts to make this right for Europe.

But the larger picture is that faced with the revanchist resurgent Russia, we do not have the aviation requirement that we need in Europe and that will be the focus of my command into the future.

**DUCKWORTH:**

OK. And so you are actually saying -- are you saying then that you'd like to have a full time -- a CAB permanently stationed in Europe?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Ma'am, the planning is ongoing -- it may be more than a CAB. I would not -- I would not want to put a number on it now and have it exactly wrong when the planning is finished.

**DUCKWORTH:**

OK. I only have a minute left. Can you comment a little bit on the State Partnership Program? Having been in the -- spent my 23 years in the Illinois National Guard.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Can not say enough about it.

**DUCKWORTH:**

Since Poland is our country and they're staring down the barrel of Russian aggression there in Poland.

**BREEDLOVE:**

The State Partnership Program in 21 States, 22 Nations is one of my premiere tools. And I hate to use a word like that. But literally they represent 23 -- 24 percent of the engagement that I have in Europe.

I've told this committee a couple of times that I much prefer permanently stationed forces. Rotational forces being an acceptable but second option. I would re-categorize a little bit -- the State Partnership Program. They are a rotational force. They are a bit episodic. But the difference is that they maintain long term relationships in leadership, in command, in training . Forces are going left to America, right to Europe and the -- most of these programs are widely successful. Some of them are just successful.

But the point being that this is a very valuable tool in our quiver to be able to develop capacity in our allies. Especially the smaller, former Soviet allies, et cetera, et cetera.

**DUCKWORTH:**

And I thank you for service to this country, General.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Thank you, General.

**THORNBERRY:**

Mr. Jones.

**JONES:**

Mr. Chairman thank you and General, thank you. As everyone else has you're a great military leader and we appreciate it more than we could ever tell you.

Yesterday, on the floor of the House, Mr. Brooks who just left a few hours ago, gave a very disturbing speech on the fact that America is headed toward Greece financially.

I later came on to give another five minute speech about the waste of money in Afghanistan -- talked about the fact that John Sopko said that -- to the Senate that our country Department Defense spent \$6 million to buy nine goats to Italy to send to Western Afghanistan.

I wonder -- when I listen to you -- and because I have such great respect for your evaluation of Russia and the threat that they are -- could bring to -- more of Europe than it does today. Then I think about the comment about Admiral Mullen when he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, when he said "The biggest threat to our military is the growing debt of our nation."

**JONES:**

I listen to you and your recommendations and the things that you feel like we need to do not only in Europe but for our military. But specifically Europe today that we need to do to be a stronger deterrent in Europe. My concern is that I have read recently that a couple of the civilian leaders in a couple of the countries have debated reducing the amount of money going into the defense budget of some of those countries.

You, having relationships that you've had both with military leaders and civilian leaders, do you feel -- talking about the civilian leaders now, not the military leaders -- that they fully understand that they've got to make a financial investment as much as American has to make to keep Europe safe from being taken over by Russia?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Sir, thank you much and if I could just comment that I have deep respect for Admiral Mullen. I've worked for him a couple of times directly in my life. And he's a man of I think incredible character and he really has it upstairs.

The answer to the last part which is the focus of your question is we need to have a sober reply. But I have said that I am a glass half full...

**JONES:**

Right...

**BREEDLOVE:**

Here. In Wales, we made a commitment -- we being the nations of the alliance -- made a commitment to get towards the two percent. They gave themselves a broad time

period which was a little bit worrisome -- 10 years. But they made a commitment to get to two percent. What I have seen is because of the continued aggressive behavior of Russia the nations have become much more focused on this.

And I use these three numbers a couple of times. They are exactly wrong. They change but they're pretty close to right. Sixteen of NATO's nations have stopped the decline in their budget. Five of NATO's nations are already at two percent. We need to qualify at least one of those and I'll mention that in a second. And then I believe -- this is Phil Breedlove's opinion, not others. That there are about seven nations that have I think a legitimate plan to get to the right spending in a reasonable amount of time -- not 10 years but four, five, six years.

And so I think I would use those numbers to point out to you sir, that -- that I do believe the leadership of the nations are beginning to make decisions with their budgets. I do not want to overstate because there is a lot here to do. And as I mentioned earlier one of the important things in the two percent is that it's important. And the other goal is that 20 percent of that two percent is on recapitalization -- investment so that they can bring capability to the table.

If the entire budget is a personnel budget it is not going to be helpful over time as a force. And so we also need to bring focus among our allies and partners that they not only get the investment up or certainly arrest the decrease but they also need to look at the investment accounts to make sure that they're bringing capabilities to the fore. But I just want to close with it's not perfect. A lot of work to do but I am over half full here because of what I see in these trend lines.

**JONES:**

General, thank you so much. I yield back.

**THORNBERRY:**

I was just looking, we're at 26 percent according to the last chart we have up here on the monetization part. So we got a little work to -- have a little work to do as. Ms. Stefanik.

**STEFANIK:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, General Breedlove for being here to testify and for your service and leadership to our nation. I'm interested to hear your thoughts on the increased online presence of ISIL in Europe and our capacity to truly counter these direct at the Combatant Command level.

How is EUCOM leveraging technology and new ideas to counter online propaganda and equipment as it relates not to the hybrid threat posed by Russia but also this increased online recruitment and digital propaganda that we are seeing by ISIL in Europe?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So I would categorize this in two ways. We are not where we need to be yet. We have a lot to do. We have started and are headed in the right direction. I'm sure you will have Admiral Rogers here from NSA/Cyber Command to talk to you. He has been a magnificent partner in that he has taken the approach of pushing capacity and capability

to the Combatant Commanders so that the Combatant Commanders can individually focus and target that capability and capacity.

In this open forum I will have to stop there on what that looks like. But let me assure you that the admiral has a wonderful focus on how he's going to do this for us. But it's -- we have a lot farther to go. Inside of EUCOM itself again in an open forum I will tell that we have several venues where we are using exquisite tools to get after this problem set.

And I'll just stop there. Again, not enough yet but we have started this process.

**STEFANIK:**

So as much as you can say in an open forum, what tools do you need? How will increased ERI funding assisting the area? Broadly can you give us guidance?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So -- so, ma'am, ERI has been the focused (sic) on our allies and how we fight there. And so I will have to have my staff get back to your staff. I don't want to misstate. I'm not sure that there's this specific capability. There are capabilities in cyber but what you're talking about I cannot definitive speak to that. I'll have my staff contact your staff on that...

**STEFANIK:**

Great...

**BREEDLOVE:**

Rather than misstate.

**STEFANIK:**

Let me shift to another area. A mission as complex as EUCOM requires a great deal of international partnership and inter- agency communication. How well in your assessment is EUCOM integrated with the various agencies throughout Europe to counter the increased threats? And would you say there is a solid view of the investment between partners and agencies to counter the challenges posed by resurgent Russia and the various unconventional threats that face Europe today?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Ma'am, this is a place I'm very proud of our command. We are well integrated and partially that is because this committee made a decision years ago to develop a distinct branch of our command called J9 where we pull in all of the other agencies. It's a little mini agency and we pay for their presence in order to ensure that we have connections to law enforcement, FBI and a lot of other agencies which we'll not mentioned here.

But we know that in Europe when we try to combat things like foreign fighter flows and terrorism -- in Europe this is not about kinetic strikes like it is in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and portions of North Africa. In Europe, this is about integrating with the highly capable legal judicial and police systems of Europe. And so we have invested distinctly in this capability to have connected tissue to the other nations of Europe.

And so this is a place where EUCOM before my time -- I do not take the credit expect for that we have expanded it and continued to fund it before me. But leaders before me have seen the wisdom and the value of this interagency approach in Europe.

**STEFANIK:**

Great. Thank you very much. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

**THORNBERRY:**

Thank you. Ms. McSally.

**MCSALLY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, General Breedlove for your service and commitment to our troops and to our security. You've talked many times about the force structure and our downsizing in Europe. I think back at one point we have six A-10 squadrons in the U.K. back in the day. Then we went to one at Spenge (ph) [*Spang— i.e., Spangdahlem AB*] and less than three years ago that one closed down.

We're now deploying A-10 units of the nine remaining operational across the active guard and reserve for part of the EIR in order to help with training and deterrence. So that's just one example but that was just a couple years ago. Can you give some info into the logic? That's an entire capability because now there's none there -- that we've lost.

And I'm still waiting to hear about from the Air Force is the cost -- the cost comparison of stations that are full time versus rotating over. But can you give some insight as to that logic and do you think looking in hindsight that was not a good decision?

**BREEDLOVE:**

So I will allow the Air Force to talk to you about cost benefit ratio...

**MCSALLY:**

Right...

**BREEDLOVE:**

As a user, I'm just looking for the capability. And I think you know I -- I -- the round number that my staff gave me is that we're -- we are -- we have about two A-10 exercise and about 200 flying hours a month on average now in EUCOM. So we are asking for that capability.

And I -- I try to refrain from asking specifically for air frames. I try to ask for capabilities and certainly we have airplanes that can deliver what the A-10 delivers. But the A-10 is extremely good at delivering post air support...

**MCSALLY:**

Just based on your overall testimony, though, would it be better to have a capability like that stationed in Europe versus rotating over? Just in line with everything that you said.

**BREEDLOVE:**

So what we have seen is that that capability serves a very important niche of our requirements.

**MCSALLY:**

Great. Thanks. You may not be able to answer the next question but a recent RAND study when looking at difference of the Balkans talked about among other things a lack of air superiority because of just the swift nature of that potential scenario. You said you're looking into four structure options. But if you were not resource constrained and you had everything you wanted, could you give us a sense or can you get back to me with a sense of what would the fighter force structure look like in order to make sure we have air superiority?

It's been now sixty years since the last time we did not have air superiority in any military operation so...

**BREEDLOVE:**

Since 1953...

**MCSALLY:**

Exactly.

**BREEDLOVE:**

So yes, ma'am. We do not at present have sitting on the ground in Europe sufficient capacity...

**MCSALLY:**

Right...

**BREEDLOVE:**

To ensure air superiority over the battlefield. We would have to start off any conflict working towards localized air superiority to employ troops and then reinforce from the rear. I would -- if I could, I would actually attack this question a little differently. The premiere air craft in air superiority these days are not only air superiority platforms but they are explicit stealth precise attack platforms.

**BREEDLOVE:**

And these kinds of capabilities are incredibly important -- the best thing that A2AD problem that we've talked about several times today. Not only to provide air superiority for the troops but that stealthy ability to deliver precise weapons to take down A2AD is incredibly important. And it will take a significant -- more of that capability to establish what you and I have known to be our superiority over the battlefield.

**MCSALLY:**

Could we maybe get back in a classified setting about what that -- what would that look like?

(CROSSTALK)

**BREEDLOVE:**

As you know we're working on War Plan Three, the business (ph) now and that will allow us to control optimize (ph) that, it's not ready for prime time. Not yet.

**MCSALLY:**

(inaudible). Obviously, we've talked about the challenges that program (ph) is not reaching, 2 percent of GDP and spending, and it seems like we're going up and some turning around, but it's still not enough. If we compare the (inaudible) with the PACOM figure, allies see the value of being there for their own defense? I mean, offer support in other ways, even if it's not just with the military, they're paying the bills, they're providing that monetary support -- are there initiatives we could push a little harder on right now, now that we've got the Russian threat, we've got the ISIS threat, they say, "Oh, if you're not ramping up your military, can you really start paying some of the bills for us to be there?" so that we can use our resources for other things?

Just to be a little more creative and have them step up their contribution.

**BREEDLOVE:**

As you know, in limited ways that's already happened in a couple of places. As I mentioned before, it's not a perfect world, but we really see especially -- the Mediterranean nations -- the flexibility that they allow us, to move forces around, especially to meet the threat in North Africa, is quite demonstrative.

I asked someone once would you -- what would happen if another nation asked to come into your state and on a routine basis move around large groups of foreign military and foreign aircraft, and sometimes do that on less than 48 hours notice? And so we have to acknowledge that there are some sacrifices these nations make.

**MCSALLY:**

They get value out of it too.

(CROSSTALK)

**MCSALLY:**

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**THORNBERRY:**

General, do you know off the top of your head how many permanent U.S. military installations we still have in Europe?

**BREEDLOVE:**

I do not. The number of new gen (ph) [*major*] installations is less than two dozen, but there are a lot of small ones.

**THORNBERRY:**

OK. Thank you.

One other question I want to ask you with your NATO hat on, that has not been raised today, is Turkey. We read every day about the tensions related to this Syria situation, especially, and so from a NATO perspective what is that relationship like with Turkey today, as it integrates into the Alliance?

**BREEDLOVE:**

Mr. Chairman, let me say unequivocally, in a mil-to- mil environment, which is where I am most qualified, it is a strong, (meaning) strong relationship. Of course the position of

the military inside Turkey has changed over time, but our mil-to-mil relationship is strong. We don't always see perfectly eye to eye, but we have incredible cooperation and personal relationships that the Chief of Defense there, General Hulusi Akar, is not American trained but he is Western trained and he really understands the way we do business.

He is a very much a cooperative partner. Turkey as you know, Mr. Chairman, lives in a very tough neighborhood. To their south, a civil war that's really going quite badly. To the north, the Black Sea, which has become a bastion of Russian power, again (inaudible). Major A2/AD nodes that we have talked about. Turkey's in a tough place and facing what they see as some tough problems around them. But let me assure you, I feel only qualified to speak on the mil-to-mil basis, we have a strong and continued relationship mil-to-mil with our ally Turkey.

**THORNBERRY:**

We have seen in other cases where that continuation of a strong military relationship is really the bedrock as governments come and go, that our relationships can often depend on, so I think that is a very important thing for us to keep in mind.

**BREEDLOVE:**

Nineteen major installations, Mr. Chairman.

**THORNBERRY:**

Thank you, sir, I appreciate that. I often get asked at home why don't we close some bases in Europe and so that is -- helps arm me with the facts.

General I've got to warn you that you've received lots of accolades today and people saying they're gonna miss you, so the problem is, even this week we have had interactions with two former combatant commanders and picking their brain so we don't usually let people get off too lightly. Or completely away from us. We may see you before the change of command but thank you very much for being here today and for your insights.

And with that the hearing stands adjourned.

**CQ Transcriptions, Feb. 25, 2016**