

Advance Questions for Lieutenant General Leon J. LaPorte, USA
Nominee for the Position of Commander in Chief, United Nations Command/Combined
Forces Command/Commander, United States Forces Korea

1. Defense Reforms:

More than 15 years has passed since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms. You have had an opportunity to observe the implementation and impact of those reforms during your tenure.

a. Do you support full implementation of these defense reforms?

The reforms of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 have significantly streamlined the chain of command and strengthened the role of our theater Commanders in Chief. I fully support implementation of the reforms.

b. What is your view of the extent to which these defense reforms have been implemented?

From my perspective, the Department of Defense has aggressively pursued the provisions of the Goldwater-Nichols Act and the provisions of section 167 of Title 10, US Code.

c. What do you consider to be the most important aspects of these defense reforms?

I have seen and experienced enormous improvements in joint training and professional education, joint experimentation, and joint operations as a result of these defense reforms. The strong advisory role of the Chairman, JCS is invaluable, both to the President and to the Secretary of Defense, as well as to the combatant commanders. Very important to me as a warfighter, and to the readiness of US and allied forces in Korea, is the clarity of responsibility and authority for execution of assigned missions. Simplification of the chain of command improves rapid and clear communications, and ultimately saves lives in times of crisis.

d. The goal of the Congress in enacting these defense reforms, as reflected in section 3 of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act, can be summarized as strengthening civilian control; improving military advice; placing clear responsibility on the combatant commanders for the accomplishment of their missions; ensuring the authority of the combatant commanders is commensurate with their responsibility; increasing attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning; providing for more efficient use of defense resources; and enhancing the effectiveness of military operations and improving the management and administration of the Department of Defense.

Do you agree with these goals?

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Yes I do. Tremendous progress has been made regarding clarification of combatant commander responsibilities and authority, focused strategy formulation and contingency planning, and more efficient use of defense resources. In short, the overall effect of Goldwater-Nichols is a vastly improved joint warfighting capability.

e. Recently, there have been articles that indicate an interest within the Department of Defense in modifying Goldwater-Nichols in light of the changing environment and possible revisions to the National strategy. Do you anticipate that legislative proposals to amend Goldwater-Nichols may be appropriate? If so, what areas do you believe it might be appropriate to address in these proposals?

Goldwater-Nichols has provided the necessary flexibility to allow us to conduct our business jointly. Over time, there may be areas which merit a fresh review; however, none come to my mind at this time.

2. DUTIES:

a. What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/Commander, United States Forces Korea?

The Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command is responsible for maintaining the Armistice Agreement, as well as executing missions and functions in Korea as directed by the Secretary of Defense. Additionally, Commander-in-Chief, UNC is required to maintain the coalition embodied by the United Nations Command, facilitate acceptance of UNC member nation forces during contingencies, and facilitate access to the seven UNC bases in Japan.

As Commander-in-Chief, Combined Forces Command, we have two essential missions inherent in US presence in Korea: deterring hostile acts of external aggression against the Republic of Korea, and, should deterrence fail, defeat an external armed attack. In this position, we would be responsible for receiving strategic direction and missions from the ROK-US Military Committee; exercising wartime OPCON over all forces provided, both ROK and US; conducting combined exercises; equipping and planning for the employment of those forces; providing intelligence; recommending requirements; researching, analyzing, and developing strategic and tactical concepts; complying with the armistice affairs directives of CINCUNC; and supporting CINCUNC in response to armistice violations by North Korea.

The Commander, United States Forces Korea, as a sub-unified commander of the US Pacific Command, is responsible for all duties and functions associated with Title 10, United States Code, and the Unified Command Plan. It is in this capacity that we support the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty. In that position we represent USCINCPAC. This position provides us the channel for providing forces to CINC UNC/CFC, and supporting those forces with the required logistical, administration and policy initiatives necessary to maintain readiness.

b. What background and experience, including joint duty assignments, do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?

I have extensive experience in joint and combined operations. Within the Korean AOR, my duties as a brigade, division, and corps commander who trained and exercised with numerous Republic of Korea forces and US component units, gave me significant, on-site leadership perspectives that provided specific insights into the unique challenges associated with combined and joint operations on the Korean peninsula. Outside the Korean AOR, command of the National Training Center and experiences during Vietnam directly supporting our ROK allies, coupled with my experiences in Operation Desert Storm in training and fighting side-by-side with coalition forces has provided me the opportunity to exercise joint and combined warfighting doctrine. Command of III Armored Corps provided me the opportunity to develop operational plans in support of the Korean AOR which employed joint and combined warfighting strategy and tactics on terrain unique to the Korean Theater of Operations. In training and exercising those tactics, I was able to work side-by-side with Republic of Korea counterparts who imparted to me their unique and invaluable perspectives on warfighting in defense of their homeland. The experiences I have discussed here required me to work joint and combined reconnaissance, intelligence, infrastructure, and logistical concepts.

c. Do you believe that there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/Commander, United States Forces Korea?

I intend to conduct in-depth discussions and assessments with key personnel and analysts from relevant ROK and US government agencies and non-government specialists. Throughout my time in command I will need to continue this dialogue with ROK and US leaders to constantly improve understanding of all aspects of the current situation within the Korean Theater of Operations. This will enable me to stay abreast of the dynamic political-military environment of the Korean peninsula.

d. In carrying out your duties, how will you work with the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Undersecretaries of Defense, the Assistant Secretaries of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Director of the Joint Staff, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Chiefs of Staff of the Services, and the combatant commanders, especially the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command?

CINCUNC reports directly to the US Secretary of Defense and through him to the President. A bi-nationally validated ROK-US document provides further guidance on CINCCFC's unique relationship with the ROK National Command Authority and the US Secretary of Defense. The relationship with all of the officials listed above is critical to accomplishing our national and bi-national goals and objectives. We must be able to work closely with all levels of leadership, civilian and military, in both joint and combined

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leadership environments to ensure that a teamwork approach accomplishes the strategic goals and objectives of our national leadership. Commander, United States Forces Korea reports directly to USCINCPAC on matters directly pertaining to USFK areas of responsibility.

3. Major Challenges and Problems

a. In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Commander in Chief United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/Commander, United States Forces, Korea?

The major challenges include readiness, deterrence, maintaining stability, transformation and supporting the Global War on Terrorism. Readiness of US and allied forces will be my primary near-term focus if confirmed for this position. The ROK-US Alliance must be "ready to fight tonight" due to the proximity and lethality of the threat. A highly trained, ready force provides stability and mitigates risk. Sustaining readiness requires tough realistic training; appropriate levels of manning and modern equipment; training infrastructure, and finally, a quality of life which supports and sustains our people. I am personally committed to ensuring that readiness is at the highest level and that our people know they have the support of the nation behind them.

b. Assuming you are confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?

As Commander in Chief, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/Commander United States Forces, Korea, I will ensure that my forces remain vigilant and well-prepared. Training and readiness will be my watchwords. If confirmed I will immediately review these elements to ensure that we are as strong and as ready as we can possibly be. I will devote myself to strengthening the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea. A strong healthy Alliance can meet the challenges I discussed above. Should deterrence fail, Alliance forces must, and will be ready to defeat North Korea.

c. What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Commander in Chief United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/ Commander, United States Forces Korea? (I have combined my answer to c and d below.)

d. If confirmed, what management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems?

As a general statement, the United States and the Republic of Korea have been successful in maintaining the armistice and deterring aggression on the Korean peninsula for almost fifty years. The command structure that has evolved over time works well, but as in any organization, there is always the requirement to continue to grow and improve. Pending my opportunity to conduct a personal "on the ground" assessment, I intend to

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stay the course established by General Schwartz. I would consider my tour to be very successful if I am able to emulate his accomplishments as well as to build on the strong foundation of all the previous CINC's in Korea.

4. Priorities:

If confirmed, what broad priorities will you establish in terms of issues which must be addressed by the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/Commander, United States Forces Korea?

I will ensure that our units are trained and ready. I will devote maximum effort to maintain our deterrence through a strong united Alliance between the ROK's and the US. In addition, I will support the UNC in helping to maintain the armistice. Equally important is my commitment to improving the quality of life of our servicemen and women. All the above will enable our support of reconciliation.

5. Forward Presence:

Do you believe that our current forward presence on the Korean peninsula is appropriate? What, if any, changes would you recommend?

For over 50 years US forces have provided stability in a critical region to US interests. Physical U.S. presence provides peace of mind to the democratic nations of the region and tangible deterrence against North Korea. These superbly trained forces provide the much-needed technological superiority, information dominance capabilities and warfighting prowess that complement the ROK military in ensuring the region's stability. It is this visible forward presence that means the difference between devastating war on the Peninsula and the continued peace, growth and prosperity for the South Korean people and its many trading partners. If confirmed, I will look at various recommendations on how best to modernize and transform our forward presence US forces to support DOD transformation initiatives, while maintaining interoperability and improved Alliance capabilities with our ROK Allies.

6. Capabilities of U.S. Forces Korea

a. Based on your experience as both the III Corps Commander and the Army's Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, you have first hand knowledge of both the threat on the Korean peninsula and readiness conditions of our forces in Korea. Based on this experience, what do you consider to be the most critical shortfalls in the capabilities of our forces stationed in Korea?

I will thoroughly review our peninsula-wide requirements and capabilities. That assessment is key to understanding any existing critical shortfalls. I would ask that the committee allow me to discuss this with you in a continuing dialogue.

7. Jointness and Transformation

What steps do you believe can and should be taken by the regional and sub-regional combatant commanders to enhance jointness and transformation? Are there opportunities in this area that are unique to U.S. Forces Korea?

If confirmed as a Combatant Commander, it is imperative that I work to enhance jointness and accelerate transformation at every opportunity. My Korean deployments have taught me that jointness must be our culture to provide the most valuable training opportunities. Korea is unique in that we have ongoing laboratories for joint and combined operations as we execute our mission. We need to train as we would fight. As the CINC, my role would be to promote the cross-flow of lessons learned that would make us better joint and combined warfighters. That is a solid initial step in the realization of the Quadrennial Defense Review's objective of making our alliances stronger, and ever more capable. The Korean operational environment and training areas serve as superb classrooms for innovation, combined operations and future capabilities.

8. Joint Experimentation

U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) has taken an active role in experimentation, especially with regard to U.S. Navy fleet battle experiments.

a. In your view, what is the role of the combatant and subordinate commands with regard to joint experimentation?

An effective joint experimentation program requires the active participation and support of the Combatant Commanders working with the Services to identify key requirements and efficiencies that can be obtained by new capabilities, organizations and doctrine. I am enthusiastic about the PACOM initiatives and experimentation efforts. USFK and CFC will actively support both individual service and JFCOM-led joint experimentation. We have some unique opportunities in Korea to be able to support such experimentation, including: 1) large numbers of forces deployed to their fighting AOR, 2) routine joint/combined operations, 3) an active, vibrant OPLAN that warfighters understand and train to daily, 4) a combined allied partner committed to the goals and progress of our defensive preparedness, and 5) robust large scale exercises. These Korean-specific characteristics provide superb joint experimentation opportunities.

b. What type of relationship should exist between U.S. Forces Korea, PACOM, and Joint Forces Command with regard to joint experimentation?

In Korea, the CINC wears multiple hats that offer a unique perspective. As USFK, we should work directly with PACOM as a subordinate command and identify/support joint experimentation that has a regional focus and impact. As CFC, we need to recognize our role as a command ready to execute the OPLAN and "fight tonight" on the Korean Peninsula. This offers the opportunity to directly sponsor and develop warfighting concepts. I envision an active relationship with JFCOM and PACOM as we work to increase our capabilities.

9. 1994 Agreed Framework

a. What is your assessment of the 1994 Agreed Framework and the role that it plays in promoting stability on the Korean peninsula?

The 1994 Agreed Framework has proven successful in freezing North Korea's nuclear program. In the absence of the Agreed Framework, North Korea could have produced weapons-grade plutonium for dozens of nuclear weapons. This would have been destabilizing to both the Peninsula and the entire Northeast Asian region. Consequently, the Agreed Framework has contributed to the stability of the Korean Peninsula in a substantial way.

b. To what extent is North Korea complying with the Agreed Framework and with other agreements it has entered into to reduce the WMD threat on the peninsula, such as the 1991 Joint Declaration on Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula?

President Bush's policy of focusing on North Korean compliance with its responsibilities under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is the right approach to stemming this threat. North Korea has yet to comply with the safeguards inspections of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Compliance with these inspections is necessary to verify North Korea's intent with regards to its nuclear program and fulfill its responsibilities under the Safeguards Agreement that North Korea signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency in 1992. To date North Korea has shown no positive intent in complying with the Joint Declaration on Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula agreed to jointly by North and South Korea in 1991.

10. Ballistic Missile Program

What is your assessment of the threat to U.S. forces and allies posed by North Korean ballistic missile developments and missile exports?

North Korean ballistic missile development remains a significant threat to US forces and their allies on the peninsula. Their ballistic missile inventory includes over 500 SCUDS of various types that can threaten the entire peninsula and they continue to produce and deploy No Dong missiles capable of striking Japan and our U.S. bases there. Pyongyang is also developing multi-stage missiles capable of striking the continental United States. Over the past two years, North Korea has upheld its self-imposed moratorium on flight testing long-range missiles, but has not halted research and development. Their continued proliferation of missiles throughout the Middle East provides North Korea powerful diplomatic and political leverage, while providing the regime hard cash with little regard for technology transfers or the instability that this proliferation could cause.

11. Demilitarizing of Old Munitions

a. What is the long term plan for demilitarizing outdated munitions of the Korean peninsula?

Currently, the only means of demilitarizing munitions on the peninsula is open detonation. This capability is extremely limited (approximately 1,000 short tons per year) and does not keep pace with demilitarization requirements. The comprehensive long-term plan for demilitarizing munitions calls for partial retrograde of unserviceable/obsolete munitions to the US for demilitarization by the US Army. In addition, we are in negotiations with the Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense to establish an enhanced demilitarization capability on the peninsula beyond our current open-detonation capability.

b. Are there adequate funds to support disposal of old munitions so that sufficient space is available for more modern ammunition? If not, how will you address this problem?

As I understand it, within the past several years sufficient funds to support disposal and retrograde have not been available. I understand the command is currently working with the services to identify these funding requirements.

12. Status of Forces Agreement

What is your assessment of the current Status of Forces Agreement with South Korea? What, if any, changes to the agreement would you recommend?

The current Status of Forces Agreement was updated in 2001. My current assessment is that the SOFA is working well for both Alliance partners and is perceived as balanced and fair. This is an issue that I will continually assess if confirmed to ensure it remains fair and equitable for both the US and ROK.

13. Land Transfers

a. What is your assessment of the Land Partnership Plan to consolidate U.S. facilities, and improve living conditions for U.S. forces in Korea and their dependents? If confirmed as Commander in Chief, United Nations Command /Combined Forces Command/Commander, United States Forces Korea how would you further these objectives?

I believe the Land Partnership Plan is the right investment, at the right time for Korea. LPP improves combined readiness, increases force protection, enhances public safety, and improves quality of life for U.S. forces in Korea. LPP will reconfigure and protect training areas while consolidating our forces around enduring training installations. It will also allow us to make sound investments, enhance force structure, gain efficiencies and return valuable land to the second most densely populated country in the world. It meets the requirements specified in the Overseas Basing Requirements Study and gives us a comprehensive approach to positioning USFK forces to meet security requirements well

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into the future. It makes our Alliance stronger because it is “win-win” situation for both the Republic of Korea and the United States.

b. Will you, if confirmed as Commander of United States Forces Korea, pursue a comprehensive strategy to protect and improve air training on the peninsula? How would you go about such an effort?

I am dedicated to ensuring that USFK/CFC/UNC forces receive the best possible training to ensure that readiness and our ability to deter is at the highest possible level. Our success with the Land Partnership Plan will serve as a model for improving training management and training areas throughout the peninsula. The methodology used with LPP was based on maximizing joint use of ranges, ensuring that US problems were identified at the appropriate level with ROK counterparts and that a process was established which enhanced training. This is the recipe for success to protect and improve air training on the peninsula. If confirmed, training and readiness will be my highest priority.

14. Family Housing

General Schwartz, the current Commander, United States Forces Korea, proposed to increase the number of personnel in Korea on accompanied tours from 10% today to 25% by 2010 and to 50% by 2020.

a. What are your views on the advisability and affordability of this proposal, and how would you rank increased housing in Korea against other priorities in the theater?

As many of the committee members have seen first hand, the housing situation in Korea must be addressed. The near-term focus on improving housing for the currently authorized 10% accompanied tours fixes a long-standing problem. The decision point for increasing the number of accompanied personnel to 25% occurs around the 2006 timeframe. Affordability remains dependent on stable military construction funding lines as programmed in the Future Years Defense Plan. I will continually assess the viability of this plan.

b. Have the services and United States Forces Korea estimated the additional requirements this would create not only for family housing, but also for increased medical and child care facilities and services and for force protection, and what would be the additional cost of those requirements?

It is my understanding that the command consulted the stakeholders to comprehensively review key issues associated with this action. This group included senior people from within the community, from the Department of Defense Dependent Schools, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service, the Defense Commissary Agency, the Medical Command and the component base agencies responsible for family support services. The financial

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plan leverages the Korean private sector, while maximizing the use of Host Nation Funded Construction.

c. To your knowledge, has the Republic of Korea agreed to finance any of this increased cost under the Land Partnership Plan (LPP), or would such a proposal constitute a separate initiative funded solely by the United States?

The Land Partnership Plan and Long Range Housing Plans are two separate initiatives. Consolidation of facilities under the Land Partnership Plan enables us to consolidate our housing investments. Under the Land Partnership Plan, the Republic of Korea will pay for 45% of the cost of new land and facilities. Another 41% will be funded from the Host Nation Construction Program, and 14% will be funded from already programmed Military Construction projects that will be redirected from a closing installation to an enduring installation.

d. To what extent do you believe the cost of additional housing and support facilities would be funded within current levels or as part of the LPP, and to what extent will additional U.S. funding be required?

My goal will be to accomplish the increased housing and support facilities without new Military Construction funding other than what is programmed in the Future Year Defense Plan.

15. Special Pays and Allowances for U.S. Forces in Korea

The current Commander, United States Forces Korea, General Schwartz, has expressed his view that the pay and allowances for troops assigned to units in South Korea are insufficient. He has noted, for example, that troops assigned to units in Japan receive more money than their peers in Korea and expressed his opinion that soldiers in his AOR should receive higher pay and allowances in recognition of the hardships they encounter.

What are your views regarding the adequacy of pay and allowances for soldiers stationed in Korea?

Serving a tour in Korea imposes additional individual costs for our unaccompanied personnel. Married servicemembers accepting a Korean assignment are faced with the decision of either establishing a second household and paying out of pocket expenses or bringing their family unaccompanied to Korea and enduring even more unreimbursed expenses. The great men and women who work in Korea are motivated by more than money, but we have to recognize the linkage between fair pay and morale. Service members desire nothing more than a level playing field for pay and benefits. Besides the hidden costs of a second household, an Army Sgt serving in Korea knows his counterparts in other hardship theaters earn approximately \$500 more per month. Servicemembers believe that duty in Korea imposes a financial hardship.

16. Declination of Assignments to Duty in Korea

In his testimony before the Committee in March of this year, General Schwartz stated that the “no show” rate for soldiers assigned to Korea was unacceptable high, including those who could command units in Korea.

a. What aspects of duty in Korea, in your opinion, account for decisions by Army Offices to decline command of units in Korea?

It has been my experience that officers decline command duty in Korea for two reasons. First, they do not want to be separated from their families for two years to command. Rather than be separated for this time period, they decline to take the command assignment. Second, many times these same people have had previous tours in Korea, and they remember the poor living conditions that existed from their prior tours. Unfortunately, in some cases, these conditions still exist. Consequently, they decline to come to Korea to command rather than face living in sub-standard conditions.

b. What actions do you plan to take, if confirmed, to address this problem?

First, I plan to make it clear to the soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines serving in Korea that I am dedicated to providing their families the best possible housing, infrastructure and support facilities. Next, we will emphasize that Korea is an important theater with a real world mission and service there is a challenging and rewarding experience. I will follow in General Schwartz’s footsteps in mentoring our future leadership on the advantages of a Korean assignment.

17. Congressional Oversight

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

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

Yes.

b. Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?

Yes

c. Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/Commander, United States Forces Korea?

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Yes

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

Yes