

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF GENERAL CHRISTOPHER
J. MAHONEY, USMC, FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE
OF GENERAL AND TO BE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT
CHIEFS OF STAFF

Thursday, September 11, 2025

Washington, D.C.

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6
7 U.S. Senate

8 Committee on Armed Services

9 Washington, D.C.

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11 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:15 a.m. in
12 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Roger F.
13 Wicker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

14 Committee Members Present: Senators Wicker
15 [presiding], Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Sullivan,
16 Scott, Tuberville, Budd, Schmitt, Sheehy, Reed, Shaheen,
17 Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, Warren, Peters,
18 Duckworth, Rosen, Kelly, and Slotkin.



1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROGER F. WICKER, U.S.
2 SENATOR FROM MISSISSIPPI

3 Chairman Wicker: The hearing will come to order and I
4 thank members for being here.

5 I think many of us are still trying to process what
6 happened yesterday with the assassination of young Charlie
7 Kirk.

8 Today is also the anniversary of 9/11. On the morning
9 of 9/11 I was meeting with the Secretary of Defense at the
10 Pentagon when that attack began in New York, and I had just
11 left the Pentagon when it happened there.

12 And so I think we were all stunned by the acts of
13 political violence that have occurred over the past year and
14 more, and so if it is all right let us pause for a moment of
15 silence in memory of all that has occurred to us and our
16 country.

17 [Moment of silence.]

18 Chairman Wicker: Thank you.

19 This morning the committee meets to consider the
20 nomination of General Christopher J. Mahoney for the
21 position of Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

22 Before we begin, we have done the moment of silence.
23 Let us turn to today's business now.

24 General Mahoney has a tremendous responsibility before
25 him. I believe President Trump has made an excellent choice



1 in selecting him for his role. His fellow service members
2 tell us he is an admirable leader.

3 We live in the most dangerous national security moment
4 since World War II. I have said this at the beginning of
5 almost every hearing we have had this entire year.

6 An axis of aggressors led by the Chinese Communist
7 Party and Vladimir Putin's Russia means us harm. Our
8 adversaries have started wars against Ukraine and against
9 Israel, and now they threaten to open a third front against
10 Taiwan.

11 There is also the fourth front within our own
12 hemisphere as Chinese fentanyl flows into America amid the
13 cartels' murderers, drug, and human trafficking operations.

14 In the Middle East, President Trump launched Operation
15 Rough Rider against the Iran-backed Houthis. This
16 strengthened historic U.S. partnerships in the Gulf. During
17 his visit to the region in May the President signed deals
18 totaling \$2 trillion.

19 Most significantly, the President backed his commitment
20 that Iran would never be permitted to develop a nuclear
21 weapon. He took action in June, striking Iran's nuclear
22 sites.

23 In the Pacific, China's military activities are at an
24 all-time high. China is reflecting what Admiral Paparo has
25 described as a, quote, "rehearsal for war."



1 Senator Fischer and I saw these preparations firsthand
2 during a recent trip to the region. We encountered resolute
3 partners in Taiwan, Palau, and the Philippines. These
4 friends are willing to share the burden of deterring the
5 Chinese Communist Party from aggression.

6 Xi Jinping also remains the largest backer of war
7 criminal Vladimir Putin's quest to prolong the bloodshed in
8 Ukraine. President Putin has chosen to put Russia on a
9 wartime footing.

10 If we are to prioritize dealing with the threat from
11 China we will need a strong transatlantic alliance capable
12 of deterring Russian aggression.

13 President Trump affirmed his commitment to European
14 security at the NATO summit and catalyzed a new era of
15 rearmament among NATO allies, and this committee up and down
16 both sides of the dais has been part and parcel to that.

17 In our own hemisphere, President Trump has restored
18 security at our border. In short, President Trump has shown
19 that America first means American interests first, and
20 American interests are not confined to a single continent.

21 To protect these interests including peace and
22 prosperity for Americans, the Pentagon requires a sustained
23 trillion-dollar budget alongside fundamental reform of its
24 acquisition and budget processes.

25 If confirmed, General Mahoney will lead a crucial



1 portion of this reform, our military's process for
2 generating requirements for our warfighters. The Vice
3 Chairman leads the Joint Requirements Oversight Council.
4 Today, the council takes an average of 800 days simply to
5 approve the military's need for a weapon system.

6 Eight hundred days. That is way too long. With
7 technology and threats moving quickly we can no longer spend
8 years debating what the perfect solution will look like five
9 or ten years in the future.

10 The FORGED Act seeks to streamline the bureaucracy and
11 this committee is leading the charge for that in the fiscal
12 year 2026 National Defense Authorization Act.

13 If he is confirmed, I look forward to working with
14 General Mahoney to make progress in this area. General
15 Mahoney is exceptionally well-qualified to take on these
16 challenges as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

17 His decades of leadership in the Marine Corps have
18 trained him to understand the value of joint warfare in
19 light of the complexity of the threats our nation faces. I
20 also know the President will benefit greatly from his candid
21 advice.

22 With that, I turn to my friend and colleague Ranking
23 Member Reed.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE
2 ISLAND

3 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and
4 let me join you in recognizing the victims of political
5 violence over the last several years and also on this 9/11,
6 those who died and were injured on the attack not on New
7 York City but Washington, D.C.

8 But, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for that moment of
9 silence.

10 And, General Mahoney, welcome. Congratulations on your
11 nomination and thank you for stepping forward to continue
12 your long career of service and I extend my appreciation to
13 the family.

14 I want to recognize your wife Mary who is back there.
15 Thank you for all you have done. We were trying to figure
16 out how we got so far. Now we know.

17 General, you are exceptionally qualified to serve as
18 Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and you have my
19 complete support.

20 You currently serve as the assistant commandant of the
21 Marine Corps and you have led a distinguished career in the
22 United States Marines as a pilot with deployments around the
23 world and command at every level.

24 Your experience and understanding of the joint force
25 will serve you well. As important, your reputation as a



1 candid and forthright officer will be depended upon and
2 tested in this situation.

3 General, I am concerned about the state of the joint
4 force you will help lead if confirmed. Over the past year
5 and especially in the recent months we have seen an alarming
6 erosion of the civil, political, and military norms in this
7 country.

8 The administration has taken unprecedented steps to
9 politicize the military, in my view, steps that threaten the
10 very foundation of civilian-military trust and the rule of
11 law.

12 We have seen many senior generals, admirals, and
13 intelligence leaders dismissed for no given reason but
14 evidence suggests that each refused to toe the political
15 line or provide professional advice that contradicted the
16 administration's political whims.

17 We have seen troops deployed into our own cities not in
18 response to natural disasters or national emergencies but to
19 make a political point, resulting in intimidation and
20 division.

21 Across the country, U.S. troops are being pulled into
22 mass deportation operations, missions far outside their core
23 warfighting role, risking readiness and eroding the trust
24 between the military and the American people.

25 Inside the Pentagon, Secretary Hegseth has dedicated



1 significant time and resources to search for leakers
2 including grilling career military officers, threatening
3 their jobs, and creating a climate of fear.

4 At the military service academies books are being
5 removed from libraries and diversity programs dismantled,
6 not because they harm readiness but because they offend a
7 political agenda.

8 This will not increase lethality. It will undermine
9 the ability of our next generation of officers to think
10 critically and lead Americans from all walks of life, and
11 across the Department of Defense arbitrary personnel cuts
12 are hollowing out expertise and leaving critical positions
13 unfilled, weakening our ability to deter our adversaries and
14 protect the nation. Every day we are seeing the real
15 dangerous impacts of these firings and reprisals.

16 Perhaps most alarming of all, the President is
17 fundamentally challenging the rule of law. Last week the
18 President ordered an airstrike on a speedboat off the coast
19 of Venezuela which reportedly killed 11 people.

20 This was a premeditated use of lethal force carried out
21 without congressional authorization, without clear legal
22 justification, and without evidence of an imminent threat.

23 I have yet to see any intelligence, legal rationale, or
24 orders related to this attack.

25 Over the past several months the administration has



1 deployed major naval and air assets into the Southern
2 Command AOR including an amphibious squadron with, roughly,
3 4,500 Marines and sailors, three destroyers, a guided
4 missile cruiser, a fast attack submarine, F-35 fighter
5 aircraft, and P-8 reconnaissance aircraft.

6 The real costs and opportunity costs of this operation
7 are significant and, clearly, the administration intends to
8 expand its operations.

9 I am concerned that we may be stumbling into war
10 through reckless actions of a small group in the
11 administration, a war that will surprise most Americans
12 because neither Congress nor the public have been informed
13 about the objective of this military buildup.

14 General, I am concerned that this administration is
15 silencing military leaders from providing both legal advice
16 and best military advice or even speaking honestly about
17 operations.

18 When generals and admirals are afraid to tell the truth
19 we lose the very candor that keeps our nation safe. This is
20 not about politics. It is about war and peace. The oath
21 that each military service member takes is to the
22 Constitution, not to a single individual.

23 General Mahoney, these are but a few of the ongoing
24 challenges you will need to consider. During today's
25 hearing I expect and am confident you will pledge to always



1 provide your best military advice to the President and the
2 Secretary of Defense even if that advice is not what they
3 would want to hear.

4 Like every other senior officer who comes before the
5 committee I expect you will also give us your best and
6 unfiltered military opinion even if those views differ from
7 the administration, and I expect you to be responsive to
8 this committee when we request briefings and information to
9 assist in our oversight of the department.

10 The safety of our American service members and the
11 American people depends upon such candor. General, if
12 confirmed you will help lead the joint force at a momentous
13 time.

14 Thank you, and I look forward to your testimony.

15 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Reed.

17 And now it is my duty to ask you a series of questions,
18 General Mahoney, that this committee poses to all military
19 nominees.

20 To exercise its legislative oversight responsibilities
21 it is important that this committee and other appropriate
22 committees of the Congress be able to receive testimony,
23 briefings, and other communications of information.

24 Have you adhered to the applicable laws and regulations
25 governing conflicts of interest?



1 General Mahoney: I have, Senator.

2 Chairman Wicker: Do you agree when asked to give your
3 personal views even if those views differ from the
4 administration in power?

5 General Mahoney: I will, Senator.

6 Chairman Wicker: Have you assumed any duties or
7 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the
8 outcome of the confirmation process?

9 General Mahoney: I have not, Senator.

10 Chairman Wicker: Will you ensure your staff complies
11 with deadlines established for requested communications
12 including questions for the record in hearings?

13 General Mahoney: I will, Senator.

14 Chairman Wicker: Will you cooperate in providing
15 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional
16 requests?

17 General Mahoney: I will, Senator.

18 Chairman Wicker: Will those witnesses be protected
19 from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

20 General Mahoney: They will.

21 Chairman Wicker: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear
22 and testify upon request before this committee?

23 General Mahoney: I do, Senator.

24 Chairman Wicker: Do you agree to provide documents
25 including copies of electronic forms of communications?



1 General Mahoney: I do, Senator.

2 Chairman Wicker: In a timely manner. Will you do so
3 in a timely manner?

4 General Mahoney: I will do it in a timely manner as
5 well.

6 Chairman Wicker: When requested by a duly constituted
7 committee or to consult with the committee regarding the
8 basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such
9 documents?

10 Now the answer.

11 General Mahoney: I will, Senator.

12 Chairman Wicker: All right. Thank you very much.

13 Now, at this point you are recognized for your opening
14 statement and you might want to comment about your family.
15 I do not know.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL CHRISTOPHER J. MAHONEY, USMC, FOR
2 REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE VICE
3 CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

4 General Mahoney: I think I will be in trouble if I did
5 not.

6 But, Chairman Wicker and Ranking Member Reed and all
7 the members of the committee, thank you and good morning. I
8 would be remiss if I did not pause to comment just briefly
9 on the weight of this day.

10 Twenty-four years ago America was struck cowardly by
11 people who mistook slaughter for strength. From the smoke
12 and the ruin of that morning came a generation of Americans
13 who have carried forward the memory of the fallen but not
14 just in their words -- in their dedication and in their
15 deeds, and it is in that spirit, I hope, that I am here
16 before you this morning.

17 I am honored to be the President's nominee to be the
18 next Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and I
19 appreciate his confidence.

20 I also want to thank Secretary Hegseth and Chairman
21 Caine for their trust and confidence in my nomination. I am
22 also grateful to this committee for the time afforded me
23 over the last week or so. The candid conversations and the
24 perspectives have been invaluable.

25 I also want to thank this committee for your tireless



1 work in addressing the tough challenges that face the
2 Department. From acquisition to reform, your efforts in
3 emphasizing a clean audit, just to name two, have propelled
4 the joint force forward and increased our readiness and
5 lethality.

6 I want to thank the team that prepared me and worked
7 tirelessly with their patience and professionalism. Most of
8 all, Senator Wicker, I want to thank my family. My wife and
9 my children -- my son and my daughter -- have been a source
10 of strength throughout my career. Countless moves, missed
11 holidays, the unpredictable rhythm of military service.

12 I will say without a doubt, though, that the
13 experiences of my family, the friendships we have made, have
14 been priceless along the way. Their support has made my
15 service possible and I am forever grateful.

16 I would also like to thank Admiral Grady and his wife
17 Christine for their 41 years of service. Serving alongside
18 him for the last two years has been, number one, an honor
19 and, number two, a Ph.D. in military management.

20 His steady leadership through some pretty tumultuous
21 times has helped us face global challenges and has
22 strengthened the joint foundation that I hope to be able to
23 build on if I am confirmed.

24 I take this opportunity seriously and I want to assure
25 the committee that if confirmed my experience has prepared



1 me for this role. I want to get to your questions so I will
2 be brief.

3 I hail from Massachusetts. I grew up on the South
4 Shore. I was trained as a fighter pilot by the Marine Corps
5 -- trained as an infantry officer by the Marine Corps as a
6 fighter pilot by the Navy to fly for the Air Force to strike
7 targets for the Army using Space Force assets.

8 I have seen how we fight across the joint force and how
9 we have to be prepared for the next fight. If confirmed,
10 that experience will help frame the challenges that
11 determine and bring our focus now.

12 As we look ahead we must recognize that the security
13 environment is more dynamic, more unstable, than any point
14 in recent memory. While we maintain and strengthen our
15 homeland defense, China and Russia routinely challenge
16 international norms and seek to undermine our interests both
17 near and abroad.

18 Rogue regimes and malicious criminal actors threaten
19 regional stability and terrorist networks persist. In the
20 most nascent domains -- space, cyber -- they are no longer
21 novel. They are the new normal. These challenges demand
22 our joint force remain ready now while evolving to the
23 future.

24 Meeting these challenges will require continued
25 modernization, innovation at speed and at scale, not just



1 within our own outfit but with industry, all of industry,
2 balancing our capability and capacities with our allies and
3 partners and deepening our integration across the services
4 and, importantly, the COCOMs.

5 We must invest in advanced capabilities, strengthen our
6 joint warfighting concepts, and maintain our technical edge
7 while never losing sight of the most precious asset we have
8 got that has proven time and time again and that is our
9 people. It is our most critical advantage.

10 If confirmed, I will continue to ensure and work to
11 make our joint force ready, lethal, and capable of
12 prevailing against any enemy.

13 Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear and I
14 look forward to your questions.

15 [The prepared statement of General Mahoney follows:]

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25 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much. So I will take



1 a five-minute round of questioning.

2 General, much of the funding in the defense
3 reconciliation bill is unspecific and will technically be at
4 the direction of the Department of Defense, though we have
5 provided recommendations for them.

6 General Mahoney, a quick yes or no question for you.
7 Will you carry out the congressional intent for
8 reconciliation funding in the One Big Beautiful Bill?

9 General Mahoney: Yes.

10 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much.

11 Now let us talk about JROC, the Joint Requirements
12 Oversight Council. This is a Pentagon group led by the Vice
13 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It oversees the
14 process for defining military needs for new weapon systems.

15 As I mentioned in my opening statement, a 2021 GAO
16 report found that approving these needs often takes over 800
17 days, far longer than the target of 100 days.

18 We are trying to correct that in the FORGED Act by
19 removing the JROC as an approval authority and focusing on
20 collaborating with COCOM commanders to identify and
21 prioritize.

22 I am going to ask you to comment about this. Our NDAA,
23 which I hope is enacted and at least moved from the Senate
24 relatively soon, seeks to move the focus of the JROC from
25 reviewing paperwork to designing future force.



1 So do you agree with this approach?

2 General Mahoney: Senator, I agree with the reform
3 approach end to end from requirements to resources and the
4 FORGED Act moves us along that trajectory.

5 Chairman Wicker: All right. Well, I certainly hope we
6 can do this.

7 Let us talk now about autonomous drones and, certainly,
8 we have seen some news about that just in the last day or
9 two with Russia illegally sending drones into Poland, a NATO
10 ally of the United States.

11 But whether they are aerial, sea surface, or subsea, we
12 are relying on these, the so-called attritable autonomy,
13 because if we lose it, which we will, it is not a huge
14 budget buster.

15 We need to provide the Pentagon with billions of
16 dollars to scale these programs. They do cost less,
17 although they are not free, but there is the matter of
18 storing them and keeping them from the elements.

19 You cannot just leave a drone out in the desert or out
20 in the snow. You commented about this, about the logistics
21 needed to support them.

22 So are we actually in the right places? Have we
23 enabled the infrastructure we need to for storage,
24 electricity and more, and what are your plans should you be
25 confirmed by the Congress?



1 General Mahoney: Senator, you bring up a lot of great
2 points.

3 The first is autonomy, and we have seen artificial
4 intelligence build into the ability of weapon systems, in
5 this case drones, to be able to communicate between each
6 other, to be able to recognize objective areas, recognize
7 targets, and then choose targets and bring that into the
8 decision loop.

9 We have to move faster in this regard, whether it is
10 remote systems, semi-autonomous or autonomous, to bring
11 those to, as you say, a scalable level but also recognize
12 the fully encumbered cost from flyaway cost to storage to
13 maintenance and we need to accelerate along all of those to
14 make sure that, number one, we are investing in the
15 technology, that it is affordable, but we have fully
16 encumbered the consideration so that we do not end up buying
17 into something that costs more than we believed, calling it
18 attritable at the beginning.

19 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much, and I have 35
20 seconds. I think I will save that until the end.

21 Senator Reed, you are recognized.

22 Senator Reed: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

23 Once again, congratulations, General Mahoney. Well
24 deserved and I am very pleased that you are here.

25 You have just pledged that you will give your best



1 military opinion to your superiors as well as to the
2 Congress even if it disagrees with the opinion of your
3 leadership both uniformed and civilian, and I have no doubt
4 you will. You are a man of your word.

5 How do you emphasize this ethic throughout the joint
6 force so that everyone is ready to stand up?

7 General Mahoney: Sir, I have been at this for 38
8 years. I do not expect to get orders that are illegal or
9 would even walk the line.

10 From a personal perspective, I took an oath as a second
11 lieutenant. I have taken it again and again, once again for
12 38 years, and in that oath it is an oath to the idea of the
13 United States, to the Constitution, and among my fellow
14 officers, among my fellow Marines, we propound that time and
15 time again.

16 Senator Reed: These difficult orders usually come in
17 the gray zone where, you know, you are looking for clarity
18 and the institution of clarity typically comes from the
19 judge advocate generals.

20 If you are in a situation like this will you pursue
21 such opinions and follow the legal guidance?

22 General Mahoney: Senator, I will, and, once again, it
23 has been my experience I have never climbed into the cockpit
24 with weapons in the bay or on the wings without
25 understanding completely from the operational law



1 perspective, the ROE perspective, and the law of armed
2 conflict perspective. It is absolutely critical.

3 Senator Reed: Thank you.

4 Do you agree that the Department of Defense should be
5 responsive to Congress, especially with respect to
6 information required by law that we should get the key facts
7 immediately or as soon as required?

8 General Mahoney: Sir, I believe we should always
9 comply with the law and, as I started the testimony, being
10 timely with our responses to Congress.

11 Senator Reed: Thank you, sir.

12 In your role as head of the JROC what do you think you
13 can do to improve interoperability between the services?

14 General Mahoney: Specific to the JROC, should I be
15 confirmed I will continue the great work that Admiral Grady
16 has done in ensuring that joint requirements are truly
17 requirements, that service-specific requirements can be
18 developed by the services.

19 But in the joint enterprise the JROC will take,
20 analyze, and bring those decisions forward for
21 recommendation for funding.

22 Senator Reed: Now --

23 General Mahoney: We --

24 Senator Reed: Excuse me, sir. Go ahead. Go ahead,
25 sir.



1 General Mahoney: As indicated, the JROC -- the concept
2 -- I think is completely valid. We have to get rid of some
3 of the bureaucracy and Admiral Grady has started down that
4 road. We have to make the process less burdened by
5 paperwork and more sensitive to speed and product.

6 Senator Reed: Well, I think that is right and I
7 commend the chairman for his efforts in this NDAA to give
8 you those tools.

9 Are there any specific tools, though, that you think
10 you need or you will use with respect to generating these
11 requirements?

12 General Mahoney: I think what we need to do is look at
13 the authorities that we have now, look at some of the
14 language enforced. On the House side we have speed.

15 We also just got done with a report from last year
16 called the 811 report which come with a bunch of very, very
17 good recommendations.

18 And then an outlier that is a little bit old that I
19 think we should bring into the conversation is the PPBE
20 report that Bob Hale and Ellen Lord chaired that also bring
21 great ideas in.

22 When we look at this and we take best of breed I think
23 we will get a process, once again, from determining a gap,
24 looking at the solutions against that gap, getting a
25 coherent and quick acquisition strategy and, meaningfully --



1 and this is important -- synchronizing that with the
2 resources.

3 Those three things often treated as separate pillars I
4 believe are a system and if you do not treat them as a
5 system you are going to break down somewhere.

6 Senator Reed: Well, my time is expiring but just one
7 point is that we might send a request and a follow-up. But
8 the JCIDS has been disestablished and we are left wondering
9 what process will take its place and if you could fill us in
10 on that in a timely way I would appreciate it.

11 General Mahoney: Senator, I would be happy to come
12 back to you with those.

13 Senator Reed: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Reed.

15 Senator Fischer?

16 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Welcome, General, and thank you for your service and
18 your family as well. I appreciated the conversation that we
19 were able to have in the SCIF and the focus we had on JROC.

20 I would follow up with Ranking Member's comment on the
21 JCIDS process. I think we have a real opportunity here to
22 fundamentally change that requirement process and be able to
23 leverage resources. So I am also interested in your views
24 and any thoughts you may have on that in the future as well.

25 You also mentioned the PPBE reform and touched on kind



1 of a broad category of recommendations. Do you have any
2 specific ones that stood out?

3 General Mahoney: The report comes up with a lot of
4 very common sense recommendations. Some of the ones that I
5 believe in the department we may have authorities right now
6 but we may have to, if we come close to the line, come back
7 to this committee and others for some authorities relief.

8 Flexibility in the year of execution and the
9 availability of funds -- for operations and maintenance
10 funds they are available for a year. Flexibility to bring
11 them across fiscal years to two or three years would help.
12 Also, built-in protections against continuing resolutions so
13 that we are not living our modernization life by anomalies.

14 To my knowledge, Mr. Putin and Mr. Xi do not do
15 modernization by anomalies. That would help. Those are two
16 ideas, but there are many common sense ones throughout that.

17 One more that comes to mind as the old budget guy is
18 flexibility with the threshold amounts for reprogramming.
19 In other words, being able to take larger amounts and move
20 them across budget activities or move them across accounts
21 so that we spend them the way the taxpayers meant it to be
22 spent.

23 Senator Fischer: Great. Thank you.

24 With combatant commanders have -- when you are looking
25 at their concerns that they have and any operational



1 requirements that they have how are you going to take those
2 into consideration in the future JROC processes?

3 General Mahoney: The combatant commanders'
4 requirements are extremely important. They are critical
5 and, quite frankly, they are the engine that is going to
6 make the integration of the joint force run.

7 So, if confirmed, through the JROC process and other
8 processes the combatant commanders' sensitivities,
9 requirements, will be brought to the fore and treated very
10 seriously.

11 Senator Fischer: Okay. Thank you.

12 Senator King, who is not here right now but he and I
13 are on Strategic Forces and we often refer to the NC3 as the
14 fourth leg of the triad and the President's ability to
15 command, control, and communicate with our nuclear forces I
16 know you understand how important that is. It underpins our
17 entire deterrent.

18 Unfortunately, the services have not consistently
19 prioritized modernizing the NC3 systems. The JROC and now
20 the sun-setting JCIDS process provided a framework. It was
21 a cumbersome one but it was provided to ensure the proper
22 resourcing of those NC3 systems.

23 If confirmed, how do you plan to work with the
24 secretary, the services, STRATCOM to ensure that NC3
25 modernization efforts are going to progress in a not just



1 coordinated but also a timely manner?

2 General Mahoney: Ma'am, as you well state, strategic
3 stability is undergirded by our strategic posture, our
4 strategy, and we have to understand that we have the rise of
5 another nuclear peer in China.

6 If I am confirmed on the JROC, we will take on this new
7 challenge and make sure that the requirements and gaps are
8 filled expeditiously and married up with resources to the
9 extent that I can influence it.

10 The Nuclear Posture Review is pretty clear about where
11 we are with the terrestrial leg, where we are with the
12 maritime leg, where we are with the air-delivered leg, and
13 as you point out NC3 being that fourth leg and we need to
14 modernize and accelerate all of those.

15 Senator Fischer: Or need to be on schedule at least,
16 right?

17 General Mahoney: That is a start. Yes, ma'am.

18 Senator Fischer: Thank you.

19 In the fiscal year '24 NDAA Congress established a
20 program of record for SLCCM and that was to fill a
21 capability gap that currently exists there. Are you
22 familiar with the program?

23 General Mahoney: I am somewhat familiar, ma'am.

24 Senator Fischer: Okay. I am sure you will look into
25 it and make sure it is on time?



1 General Mahoney: Yes, Senator.

2 Senator Fischer: Okay. Thank you.

3 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Fischer.

4 Senator Rounds will take the chair for a few moments.

5 Senator Shaheen, you are recognized.

6 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
7 congratulations, General Mahoney. Thank you for taking time
8 to talk with me last week. I appreciated our conversation.

9 Many of us on this committee have concerns about rumors
10 that we have heard about plans to withdraw U.S. forces from
11 NATO's eastern flank, from the Korean Peninsula, and from
12 the Middle East, and on a bipartisan basis, as you may be
13 aware, we limited the executive branch's ability to hastily
14 withdraw without consulting with and certifying to Congress
15 the effects of U.S. -- such a withdrawal on U.S. national
16 security.

17 I am particularly concerned about maintaining U.S.
18 leadership at NATO. That not only ensures U.S. command and
19 control of our forces on the continent but it gives us
20 control over the nuclear weapons in Europe.

21 I also just returned from Syria where the U.S. is
22 supporting the counter-ISIS mission, and ISIS regaining a
23 foothold in the country would not only be detrimental to the
24 security and stability for a post-Assad Syria but to the
25 region and ultimately to the United States, given the



1 resources and lives that we have put into defeating ISIS in
2 Syria.

3 So can you talk about the benefits of having U.S.
4 presence in these theaters and, if confirmed, do you commit
5 to being transparent to Congress about what the plans are
6 with respect to decisions about these theaters?

7 General Mahoney: Senator, I think our presence is
8 critical. I think striking a balance with our allies and
9 partners not only in capability but in capacity is extremely
10 important and I commit to sharing as much information as I
11 can with you and with the committee and others.

12 Senator Shaheen: And do you have any sense of whether
13 there are currently plans to withdraw from any of those
14 theaters?

15 General Mahoney: Senator, I have no knowledge of the
16 policy that would drive that.

17 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

18 Last week we also discussed the Portsmouth Naval
19 Shipyard which has been having real challenges in hiring new
20 workers due to delays at the Pentagon but mostly from the
21 Office of Personnel Management and the impact that these
22 policies will have long term over our Navy's ability to
23 ensure that our nuclear submarines are ready and operating.

24 The shipyard normally needs to hire about 550 workers a
25 year to keep up with the demand for submarine maintenance.



1 Because of the delays in hiring, next year they are going to
2 need to hire 700 people. That means more time spent on
3 training, less time available for maintenance and
4 operations. That leads to delays.

5 So can I get a commitment from you, General, that you
6 will help us to maintain stability and predictability in the
7 hiring process at our public shipyards to avoid these kinds
8 of delays?

9 General Mahoney: Ma'am, extremely important subject,
10 and if confirmed you have my commitment.

11 Senator Shaheen: Thank you very much. I know it is
12 something that the Secretary of the Navy has also been
13 concerned about and I have raised it with Secretary Hegseth
14 at a hearing as well.

15 And I want to also follow up on our conversation about
16 the readiness of the joint force because since we spoke the
17 President has authorized military force in the Caribbean
18 Sea.

19 As I am sure you know from your current position, when
20 the two Iwo Jima Amphibious Readiness Group left for its
21 deployment to the Caribbean the Navy's amphibious fleet was
22 at a 41 percent readiness rate. That is only half of the
23 rate that the Marines need to complete current missions.
24 General Smith has called that a crisis.

25 Further, the Lake Erie cruiser just left the Indo-



1 Pacific to join the two Iwo Jima and two destroyers in the
2 Caribbean. The Pentagon has also sent our F-35 stealth
3 fighter jets to Puerto Rico.

4 We have seen the National Guard sent to Washington and
5 active duty Marines sent to Los Angeles in the middle of
6 training for a planned deployment. So the resources are
7 being diverted from deterring the PRC in the Indo-Pacific
8 and maintaining assets needed to respond to crises in other
9 parts of the world.

10 Can you talk about how you see the military responding
11 to compensate for that readiness loss because of those
12 deployments?

13 General Mahoney: Ma'am, any deployment that we go on,
14 any mission that we go on, will incur some cost in readiness
15 if you are not training to all of your core mission
16 essential tasks.

17 So it is incumbent, first, to assess the risk. There
18 is risk in not training to a certain task. There is risk
19 over time if you continue not to train to it, and we make
20 those assessments in every deployment that we make.

21 So lately we are doing the same thing. Two techniques
22 that we use and I have used as a commander, we have in-situ
23 training to make a training plan to mitigate against the
24 training that we are losing and we have a rotational plan
25 that we used on the border and we have used in other places.



1 I used it in combat to bring people off the line to
2 train to other mission essential tasks and then put them
3 back in, which has been fairly effective.

4 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Senator Rounds: [Presiding.] Thank you, Senator
6 Shaheen.

7 General, I appreciated our discussion in my office and
8 I want to thank you for your service to the nation and for
9 being here in front of us today.

10 General, I want to be consistent. We have discussed
11 spectrum before but I wanted to bring it up publicly with
12 you today.

13 I have heard from over 30 senior Pentagon officials in
14 public hearings over the last two and a half years including
15 every service chief and eight combatant commanders who all
16 agree that vacating the 3.1 to 3.45 gigahertz band of the
17 electromagnetic spectrum would have significantly negative
18 consequences for our warfighting capabilities.

19 In fact, the Department of the Navy previously
20 estimated that relocating their systems to a different
21 spectrum band would cost them \$250 billion.

22 Both the Navy and the Marine Corps intend to make
23 extensive use of capabilities which require the
24 electromagnetic spectrum to function in the Western Pacific
25 against China.



1 General, does the joint force have capabilities
2 operating on the 3.1 to 3.45 gigahertz band and the 7 and 8
3 gigahertz bands of the spectrum which would be used in a
4 conflict with China?

5 General Mahoney: Yes, Senator, we do. Extensive
6 capabilities.

7 Senator Rounds: Would those capabilities be negatively
8 impacted if you were forced to vacate those bands or share
9 them with commercial users in a nonoptimal manner?

10 General Mahoney: Yes, Senator, they would, as I
11 understand it.

12 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

13 General, in my office we discussed the possibility --
14 the possible near-term threat of a conflict involving
15 multiple adversaries in multiple theaters.

16 Some key observers assess that our adversaries will
17 seek to press their advantage in the event we are committed
18 in another area, particularly given the increasingly close
19 coordination between China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.

20 We have looked at this through the NDAA. You will find
21 it mentioned again in this year's NDAA as being proposed.
22 How can we better posture to maintain deterrence in multiple
23 theaters?

24 And just thinking about it what is it going to mean in
25 terms of resources, capabilities, and authorities that the



1 joint force would need to consider with the fact that this
2 is a very likely scenario should we have an adversarial
3 conflict in one of those theaters?

4 General Mahoney: Senator, I do not think anybody is
5 surprised by the relationship, say, between Russia and
6 China, China and Iran, Russia and North Korea. I think what
7 may surprise some people is the depth of that relationship
8 and the interactions that have been going on which support
9 the statement you made.

10 If there is a conflict in one area there may be a
11 reflex or reactive conflict in another, and from the joint
12 force and, if confirmed, and to the level of my influence I
13 will make sure that we are balanced in our capability and
14 capacity against the most dangerous and the most likely
15 courses of action should that happen.

16 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

17 General, we discussed high-pressure cold spray and
18 similar advanced manufacturing technologies that will enable
19 deployed forces to continue combat operations in the face of
20 contested logistics.

21 If confirmed, will you advocate for adoption and
22 standardization of technologies like high-pressure cold
23 spray that will help mitigate the contested logistics
24 problem set for our forward deployed warfighters across the
25 joint force?



1 General Mahoney: Sir, cold spray is a great example of
2 advanced manufacturing for repair and for building high-
3 quality components and I do commit to pushing forward those
4 capabilities to the extent that I can influence it.

5 Needing less forward and having to bring less forward
6 is an opportunity that we can go after with advanced
7 manufacturing.

8 Senator Rounds: Yeah, the bottom line is if we have
9 got the ability to actually recreate or to repair items
10 without waiting for a supply chain to deliver in a contested
11 area of operation would mean literally saving lives should
12 we be able to accomplish this and to get that material out
13 in advance. Fair enough?

14 General Mahoney: Very fair, Senator.

15 Senator Rounds: Thank you. Thank you, sir.

16 Look, I think you are eminently qualified. I think you
17 are the right guy for the job and I do look forward to
18 supporting your nomination.

19 General Mahoney: Thank you, sir.

20 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

21 Chairman Wicker: [Presiding.] Senator Hirono?

22 Senator Rounds: Senator Hirono?

23 Senator Hirono: Thank you very much. Thank you.

24 General Mahoney, it is good to see you again. I will
25 start with the two initial questions that I ask of all



1 nominees before any of my committees relating to fitness to
2 serve.

3 So I will ask you since you became a legal adult have
4 you ever made unwanted requests for sexual favors or
5 committed any verbal or physical harassment or assault of a
6 sexual nature?

7 General Mahoney: No, Senator, I have not.

8 Senator Hirono: Have you ever faced discipline or
9 entered into a settlement relating to this kind of conduct?

10 General Mahoney: No, Senator, I have not.

11 Senator Hirono: General, successive administrations
12 have identified China as the pacing threat to U.S. national
13 security and the Indo-Pacific as the priority theater.

14 I am concerned about recent reporting that the draft
15 National Defense Strategy deprioritizes the challenge posed
16 by China and refocuses on the homeland and Western
17 Hemisphere.

18 We have already noted that China, North Korea, India,
19 Russia, Iran probably are in there. They are talking to
20 each other, China being the country with the most resources.

21 So we are seeing this happening, and at the same time
22 it is very concerning that we are going to turn our face
23 away from the Indo-Pacific area in view of these
24 relationships that appear to be quite obvious.

25 So what is your best military advice on this proposed



1 shift and what risks would deprioritizing China in the Indo-
2 Pacific pose on U.S. national security?

3 General Mahoney: Senator, the way I would answer that
4 is I think from 2018 NDS to the 2022 NDS and to the
5 international defense strategic guidance has been fairly
6 consistent with putting the homeland as the foundation of
7 our strategy.

8 But they have all been consistent as well as focusing
9 on the Indo-Pacific and I cannot see a meaningful change or
10 shift away from that having not seen the final version of
11 the NDS.

12 I am an old budget guy so if you follow the investments
13 and follow the programs I think you will see across the
14 services a keen focus on the INDOPACOM theater for good
15 reason.

16 Senator Hirono: So your position would be -- because
17 you will be a main advisor to President Trump as to where we
18 should place our priorities, so as far as you are concerned
19 from what I am hearing you say just now that we should
20 continue to focus on the Indo-Pacific as a major AOR?

21 General Mahoney: Senator, I think I would and I think
22 you will see that borne out when the final version of the
23 NDS comes out, and in your conversations between you and I
24 we know and understand that the pacing threat is communist
25 China.



1 Senator Hirono: And as we already know, China is very
2 active in the Indo-Pacific area putting out its resources
3 and its tentacles with the island nations there as well as
4 other countries.

5 So I think we should be -- we should continue to pay
6 attention. And I do agree with Admiral Paparo's recent
7 comments earlier this week where he said the homeland is in
8 the Pacific so that is Hawaii, Guam, CNMI, our compact
9 partners. It needs to be prioritized.

10 You have been asked a number of questions about JROC as
11 sort of the new way that we are going to deal with the needs
12 of the joint forces and we have already been, as I
13 mentioned, asked questions and I would appreciate, as I
14 mentioned when I met with you, that you provide comments to
15 us regarding any authorities you need in the final NDAA to
16 deliver critical capabilities to the joint forces at speed
17 and scale, particularly to support our warfighters in the
18 Indo-Pacific.

19 General Mahoney: Senator, I commit to you to do that.

20 I think what I have seen in the generation of the NDAA this
21 year and the report that we just got done with the NDAA last
22 year we are on the road to real reform. I think that there
23 is an opportunity here that we need to take advantage of.

24 Senator Hirono: You have always -- you know, I do want
25 to mention about foreign assistance. There have been major



1 cuts. USAID to foreign assistance and it is not as though -
2 - is it your view that a strong military is what we need,
3 the only thing we need to have peace in our world?

4 Or is it important to you that we maintain our ability
5 to provide foreign aid and those kinds of relationships as
6 being just as important? The diplomatic aspects of what we
7 do as a leading nation is just as important as a strong and
8 ready military?

9 General Mahoney: Senator, I believe as a country we
10 have many tools that we use and we should use all of them.

11 Senator Hirono: Including our diplomatic capabilities?

12 General Mahoney: Use all the tools, ma'am. Yes.

13 Senator Hirono: Okay. War being, I would say, the
14 last resort.

15 Okay, my time is up. Thank you.

16 Chairman Wicker: Thank you.

17 General, you do agree with what Admiral Paparo said,
18 that China is reflecting a rehearsal for war?

19 General Mahoney: Senator, I have been going to what
20 the Marines call the WestPac, the Indo-Pacific theater,
21 since I was a first lieutenant. My last tour over there was
22 as the deputy commander of U.S. forces Japan.

23 If I compare the operational and strategic landscape
24 from my time as a first lieutenant to my time then as a
25 major general, they are strategically, operationally --



1 leave the political and economic changes alone -- they are
2 different worlds and we have to take stock of the fact that
3 as that strategic terrain changes under our feet we have to
4 change with it.

5 So, yes, I agree with Admiral Paparo.

6 Chairman Wicker: And, again -- and I hope my
7 colleagues will indulge me for a moment -- with regard to
8 Senator Hirono's question, the soft power that we have used
9 through USAID is a very vital part of our National Defense
10 Strategy. Is that correct? Do you agree with that
11 statement?

12 General Mahoney: I would defer to the COCOMs to make a
13 value statement on that. But as I said, among all our tools
14 we need to use all of them.

15 Chairman Wicker: Very careful answer, General.

16 Senator Scott?

17 Senator Scott: Good morning.

18 First off, you are well qualified. You are going to do
19 a great job. I was very impressed with our meeting.

20 The Department of War recently notified some European
21 countries that military support under Section 333 will be
22 phased down with the expectation that these nations and our
23 NATO allies will step up their efforts.

24 Now, we all know these are not unilateral overnight
25 decisions. They must first be approved by the Secretary of



1 State and approved by Congress.

2 Can you speak to how you would advise Pentagon
3 leadership on where and why Section 333 funding is needed
4 and how this funding provides a return on American tax
5 dollars, or do you completely agree that we ought to
6 completely phase it out?

7 General Mahoney: I would look less -- if confirmed, I
8 would look less at the code and I would look more at what
9 the effect of that code is and is it covered by something
10 else, and strike a balance between removing something and
11 the requirement to make sure that it is covered, Senator.

12 Senator Scott: Do you feel comfortable our European
13 allies are starting to step up?

14 General Mahoney: I think we are seeing, whether it is
15 from defense spending and with 5 percent commitment from
16 most of them, I think they are. From a military standpoint,
17 I will tell you I think they are.

18 Senator Scott: So in -- I think it was in March I
19 traveled to Denmark, Estonia, and Finland and all three of
20 those countries for sure are stepping up.

21 Finland has been doing it for a long time, as we all
22 know. They have got a pretty -- I think over a thousand-
23 mile border with Russia and they have always been ready and
24 I think they told me almost 20 percent of the entire
25 population would be ready to mobilize within days if there



1 was an invasion across their border.

2 So one of the things they complained about, though, was
3 their foreign military sales program. Number one, they do
4 not understand why it takes so long to get a decision and
5 then, number two, even after the decision is made they are
6 still struggling to get the equipment from American
7 manufacturers.

8 Can you talk about what you could do in this role to
9 improve the military sales process and help our
10 manufacturers get more produced and get it over to our
11 allies when they want to buy something?

12 General Mahoney: Senator, I am not directly -- should
13 I be confirmed as the vice I would not be directly involved
14 with FMS. But what you key on I think a big part of the
15 sclerotic system that you describe in FMS is the defense
16 industrial base and the ability to produce at speed.

17 So to the extent that I can influence the relationship
18 of our requirements acquisition with the defense industrial
19 base I will do that.

20 Senator Scott: So do you feel comfortable that we
21 should not rely on China for any military supplies?

22 General Mahoney: I do not believe that we should rely
23 on China or bankroll China with -- by buying things of a
24 military nature.

25 Senator Scott: So what do you think about the



1 Department of War buying a significant portion of their
2 drugs from China?

3 General Mahoney: I am not familiar with that, Senator,
4 but as a concept it is not a good idea.

5 Senator Scott: Off the top of your head -- yeah.

6 So do you think our Wall Street should be continuing to
7 fund companies that help the Chinese build their military?

8 General Mahoney: I do not believe that we should
9 engage in activities that bankroll the PLA or bankroll
10 systems that we will find on the front in Ukraine or that we
11 will find in UAVs out of Iran or that we will find north of
12 the DMZ in North Korea.

13 Senator Scott: So any reliance we have on Chinese
14 equipment, whether it is our ports or whether it is our
15 computer systems, whether it is our communications
16 infrastructure, you think we probably ought to walk away
17 from Chinese producers, right?

18 General Mahoney: I think we should assess the risk and
19 then make the appropriate adjustments, yes, Senator.

20 Senator Scott: All right. Thank you. You are going
21 to do a great job.

22 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much.

23 Senator Rosen?

24 Senator Rosen: Thank you, Chairman Wicker, Ranking
25 Member Reed, for holding this hearing, and I would like to



1 thank you, General Mahoney, for your family -- your family
2 here too, for your lifetime of service to our country and
3 for your willingness to serve. Thank you.

4 I want to talk a little bit about documenting exposure
5 at classified locations because I asked General Caine at his
6 confirmation hearing about documenting exposure at data mass
7 locations where the duty station and its existence are
8 classified.

9 That ensures -- I want to ensure that service members'
10 records accurately reflect service-connected injuries at
11 those locations. I have heard from constituents who served
12 at such locations within the Nevada test and training range
13 who believe they were exposed to radiation from our days of
14 conducting explosive nuclear weapons testing and to burn
15 pits which dispose of classified waste.

16 However, as I have explained before this committee many
17 times, DOD does not classify the range as a place where
18 exposure has occurred despite the Department of Energy
19 providing the presumption of exposure for their personnel
20 who served at these exact locations within the range.

21 And because their service records are data masked these
22 veterans cannot even prove to the VA that they were ever
23 even stationed there. I know you know where they are in
24 Nevada specifically.

25 So, General, I am very thankful the Senate version of



1 the NDAA includes my provisions to begin addressing this
2 issue but we need senior Pentagon leadership to help us see
3 it through.

4 So, if confirmed, will you commit to working with me
5 and this committee to ensure that the department provides a
6 presumption of exposure for relevant locations such as those
7 which the Department of Energy -- well, they have already
8 done so for their personnel. We can just follow what they
9 are doing, and we want to ensure that those who served and,
10 of course, are currently serving at these data-masked sites
11 receive sufficient documentation to support their health-
12 related claims all while protecting the classified nature of
13 their service.

14 General Mahoney: Senator, I commit to working with
15 you. I will say that I am not intimately familiar with the
16 issue but I will, if confirmed, assess that and come back to
17 you.

18 Just as a statement, we owe all the members high-
19 quality health care irrespective of where they may have
20 served or what they did. That is an expectation when they
21 come in to serve this country.

22 Senator Rosen: Thank you. I look forward to setting
23 up that meeting to talk about the data-masked locations.

24 I want to move on to cybersecurity and resiliency
25 because as a former computer programmer systems analyst I



1 have a deep appreciation for how critical cyber and
2 technology are to our national defense.

3 As vice chairman you will be responsible for leading
4 the development of the national military strategy. So how
5 do you see cyber fitting into that strategy both as a
6 warfighting domain as an enabler for joint operations, of
7 course, land, sea, air, and space as a warfighting domain?

8 General Mahoney: Senator, I am not a cyber expert, but
9 as I said in my opening statement we tend to treat cyber as
10 this mysterious domain apart. It can no longer be treated
11 that way.

12 The more that we use digital technology and transport
13 it through many different means we have to have ability to
14 harden and protect it and we need to have the ability to go
15 on offense as well in the cyber world.

16 Senator Rosen: Well, speaking of that and building
17 maybe on Senator Scott as well, do you have a feel for any
18 specific priorities that have to be elevated in the national
19 military strategy? We have got to keep pace with our
20 adversaries like China and Russia, for sure. Do you have
21 any off the top of your head or --

22 General Mahoney: I will just go back on my recent
23 experience as kind of the uber requirements guy in the
24 Marine Corps. Every program that deals with digital
25 technology, that transports digital technology, that stores



1 it, has to have a level of cyber protection, cyber
2 hardening.

3 Senator Rosen: How do you balance that with our
4 readiness between traditional forces and then cyberspace
5 writ large, we will say?

6 General Mahoney: Well, first, Senator, I do not think
7 it is a choice. I think it is something that we have to
8 invest in going in. When I talked about fully encumbered
9 cost of attritable drones the fully encumbered cost of any
10 program has to include the cyber aspect and cyber hardening.

11 Senator Rosen: And last thing, I just want to see if
12 you have a thought on the strategy addressing integrating
13 cyber with our allies and partners especially in the Indo-
14 Pacific.

15 General Mahoney: Again, if we were going to say allies
16 and partners as part of our strategy, cyber is an organic
17 part of how we do business so it needs to be an organic part
18 of our strategy.

19 Senator Rosen: Thank you. I yield back.

20 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much.

21 Senator Tuberville?

22 Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 General, thanks for your service. Congratulations.

24 Let us follow up on Senator Rosen's talk on AI. We
25 know the direction we are headed. Future conflicts will be



1 dominated by artificial intelligence.

2 Emerging technologies like quantum computing are
3 basically two quantum computing models, gate and annealing.

4 We only use one of them, basically, and our adversaries use
5 the other.

6 Do you think that is a smart way to handle this?

7 General Mahoney: Senator, thanks.

8 Artificial intelligence, algorithmic-derived systems
9 are -- again, if cyber has just become part of the normal
10 warfighting domain, artificial intelligence is not too far
11 behind and we do not need to look too far to see how it is
12 being applied, especially in the Russia-Ukraine example. We
13 have to bring that in and make it a normal part of our
14 programmatic.

15 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Let us go to a more
16 simple topic here. I am getting calls all the time. You
17 know, we have spent trillions of dollars on these wars over
18 the years but we cannot house our people on military bases.

19 We have mold. Roofs are falling in. Kids are getting
20 sick. But we can spend hundreds of billions of dollars on
21 another country. We are an all-volunteer army.

22 Will you commit to help solve this problem? I know it
23 is not just your problem but it is a huge problem probably
24 in recruiting. And, again, our phone rings off the wall
25 when it comes to this.



1 General Mahoney: Senator, I commit to you and I -- to
2 do just that and I will go on my recent experience in the
3 Marine Corps and the commandant's emphasis on our Barracks
4 2030 initiative.

5 While we are unapologetic about the investments that we
6 made over the last 20 years because we are fighting, we have
7 to get back into the installations resilience business. We
8 have to get back into the installations quality business.

9 Two primary reasons. First, it is an expectation among
10 soldiers, Marines, Guardians, airmen, sailors, to have a
11 good quality infrastructure place to live.

12 Secondly, we have to look at it for what it is, which
13 is a power projection platform, and we have to invest in
14 that, Senator.

15 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Investment in our
16 soldiers. That is what -- I think that is what a lot of
17 them are looking for.

18 Recently, Secretary Hegseth directed the dismantling of
19 the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System.
20 This is core of a slow and heavily bureaucratic acquisition
21 process.

22 In your role as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs this
23 change will, largely, be your responsibility. How will you
24 ensure this rapid and agile system provide combat
25 capabilities to the warfighter and allow us to keep pace



1 with our adversaries?

2 General Mahoney: Senator, you hit it right on the head
3 and, if confirmed, as the chairman of the JROC and part of
4 the reform process my goal -- one of my goals and priorities
5 will be to make sure that we have end-to-end systems
6 treatment of requirements to meaningful resources and with
7 acquisition built into that.

8 So if it is three gears moving they all need to be
9 engaged with each other and you can only move at the slowest
10 gear. We need to quicken all those gears -- requirements,
11 acquisition, resources -- and sequence them so that we get a
12 good product.

13 As chairman of the JROC if confirmed, we used to say
14 cost, schedule, and performance as the three parameters that
15 we would look at a program. I think we ought to move it to
16 schedule or speed, cost, and performance, and I will make
17 that a priority, Senator.

18 Senator Tuberville: Great. Sounds like you have a
19 plan. Organization is the key to winning and you seem to be
20 up on that.

21 You know, one of the many things the United States
22 Marine Corps does better than any other service is the
23 ability to pass an audit. While not directly responsible
24 for an audit, what lessons do you bring from the Marine
25 Corps that will help the Department of War achieve a clean



1 audit for the first time in many years?

2 General Mahoney: Senator, you already said it. You
3 know, organization is the key to victory and I am very proud
4 of the fact that the Marine Corps has had two clean
5 opinions.

6 You heard it here first. We will have a third one, and
7 to the extent that I can influence it I will press to move
8 the department along in coming out a disclaimer and getting
9 a clean audit.

10 Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Thank you for your
11 service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Tuberville.

13 Senator Blumenthal?

14 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 General, thank you for visiting me and thank you for
16 your profoundly impressive service over so many years in the
17 United States Marine Corps.

18 We are here at a really historic moment, not only
19 because we are commemorating 9/11 but there has been
20 literally an attack on a NATO nation by Russia in its
21 brazenly violating Polish airspace with a number of drones,
22 a direct incursion into the sovereign territory of that NATO
23 member state by an autocrat who has played the United
24 States, has mocked American power, and stalled and
25 stonewalled our president.



1 I hope that you agree with me that now is the time that
2 the United States has to show strength against Putin by
3 reacting offensively in the great tradition of the Marine
4 Corps against this unprecedented and extraordinary step of
5 sending Russian drones into Poland.

6 General Mahoney: Senator, I believe that we need to
7 remain strong in all eventualities, this being one of them.

8 If the Russians meant to do it it was provocative. If they
9 did not mean to do it it is an indication of incompetence.

10 At any rate, I think what we are seeing is the Poles --
11 the Polish armed forces from their increase in defense
12 spending to their increase in capability being emblematic of
13 that balance that we need to do just what you say, to stand
14 up against an irredentist Russia.

15 Senator Blumenthal: Do you not find it inconceivable
16 that this incursion was unintentional? There were so many
17 drones and they were sent at the same time over a long
18 period of time in the same time period?

19 General Mahoney: From a military perspective, sir, you
20 know, my assessment, based on what I know, is that it looks
21 more intentional than not. Once again, if it was not there
22 is some significant incompetence there.

23 Senator Blumenthal: I hope that you will join me and
24 others on this committee in demanding that our nation and
25 our European allies increase our military aid for Ukraine so



1 that it can resist this kind of aggression and slaughter and
2 heightened economic sanctions against the nations that are
3 fueling Russia's war machine by buying Putin's oil and gas.

4 I am talking about India, China, Brazil. The best way
5 to achieve peace, would you not agree, is to show strength
6 by passing the bill?

7 It is the Graham-Blumenthal bill that would impose
8 scorching sanctions on those nations that are in effect
9 enabling Russia to continue this aggression.

10 General Mahoney: Senator, I would prefer to stay in my
11 military lane and just say that should I be confirmed part
12 of my job will be to provide options for the use of power
13 against eventualities most dangerous and most likely, and
14 this case would be no exception.

15 Senator Blumenthal: Well, this conversation,
16 obviously, will not end here and I look forward to
17 continuing it with you, General, when you are confirmed and
18 I will support your confirmation. I am very impressed by
19 your background.

20 Let me just ask you finally, we have received reports
21 that the Secretary of Defense, or the Secretary of War as he
22 now calls himself, means for the Department of Defense to
23 focus more on law enforcement -- state and local law
24 enforcement -- and that he has issued policy directives
25 within the Pentagon to that effect.



1 Are you aware of those policy directives or a planned
2 strategy paper?

3 General Mahoney: In my current job, Senator, I am not
4 aware of that. I am not aware of any directives of that
5 nature --

6 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you very much.

7 General Mahoney: -- on the Marine Corps side.

8 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

9 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

10 Senator Schmitt?

11 Senator Schmitt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 I want to kind of pick up on that and zoom in a little
13 bit and then zoom out.

14 Fort Leonard Wood, which I am sure you are familiar
15 with, in the great state of Missouri has a lot of land and
16 has a number of missions including training our military
17 police and has also been the home of the Army's criminal
18 investigative training -- special agent training efforts.
19 So it is well positioned.

20 After the One Big Beautiful Bill was passed we have got
21 these resources out there for border enforcement to help
22 train ICE agents. That is completely, by the way, in line
23 with what the military can do.

24 They are not performing a law enforcement function but,
25 rather, sharing their knowledge with agents who are charged



1 with enforcing our laws.

2 And, by the way, that did not used to be controversial.

3 Bill Clinton deported a lot of people. Barack Obama
4 deported a lot of people.

5 So in your role and your knowledge of Fort Leonard Wood
6 do you think it can play a role in kind of surge training
7 ICE agents for the important functions that they have?

8 General Mahoney: Senator, I have been to Fort Leonard
9 Wood a few times in my prior life as a counter IED officer.

10 I am not aware of those functions that you discussed or the
11 capacity there, too.

12 Senator Schmitt: Well, we would love to get you out
13 there. There is a lot of land and a lot of capabilities.
14 So we are just sort of putting a marker down and I love
15 trying to persuade. So maybe we will continue our
16 conversations.

17 General Mahoney: Yes, Senator.

18 Senator Schmitt: The second issue, I guess, in sort of
19 zooming out now I wanted to ask about as it relates to the
20 Indo-Pacific. In your view, what do you find is the or what
21 do you see as the greatest disconnect between our strategic
22 goals in the Indo-Pacific and our actual force posture and
23 readiness?

24 General Mahoney: We have got a very capable and
25 brilliant commander out there in Admiral Paparo and he has



1 aligned function, posture with the strategy, not only
2 national strategy but his theater strategy.

3 As a military man, as the assistant commandant of the
4 Marine Corps and where we commit forces out there, I am very
5 happy currently with the posture of the Marine Corps
6 pursuant to Admiral Paparo's strategy.

7 Senator Schmitt: Okay.

8 Well, I think as we talk about a lot, although a lot of
9 the discussion is in Europe, we talk about a lot of pivoting
10 to Asia. I would just ask that as you kind of dig into this
11 new role whatever deficiencies or disconnects or
12 misalignment might exist to try to work with the committee,
13 our office specifically.

14 We want to be helpful in that regard because this is
15 the future. This is the great competition, and if we are
16 looking forward China is our greatest adversary. It is now
17 and it will be presumably for the next century.

18 And then related to that, China is moving rapidly to
19 develop their own carrier force. How do you see the
20 delaying of the FAXX, to me, is a real problem. How do you
21 see delaying that project impacting our ability to compete
22 with them?

23 General Mahoney: I think what we have to do is keep
24 our eye on the capabilities that we need. We need longer
25 range, deeper penetration, and better sensors. To the



1 extent that FAXX would fill that void we need to look at
2 that very closely.

3 Senator Schmitt: Yeah. Well, I would argue that it
4 does. So we will work with you on that, too.

5 And then, finally, on sort of recruitment, which is
6 going really well which is I think one of the great
7 positives of the first 250 days or so of this current
8 administration, I want to just ask you as far as long-term
9 retention how or -- how can we or should we be incentivizing
10 service members to continue their careers whose -- you know,
11 they are reaching a point where they may want to extend it
12 or not.

13 In your view, in your experience, what are some of the
14 things that we can do to make it more attractive?

15 General Mahoney: I think all the services are having a
16 very, very good year on the accession side. I cannot speak
17 to the other services as far as retention but for the Marine
18 Corps side we are almost at historic levels of retention,
19 and some of the keys that we use to that are an incentive
20 structure. Some of the keys are bonuses. Some of the keys
21 are lateral moves.

22 But it is meeting the quality talent on their terms and
23 asking the question of not why are you getting out but how
24 can we make you stay.

25 Senator Schmitt: Thank you. Look forward to working



1 with you. Congratulations.

2 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator.

3 Senator Peters?

4 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 General Mahoney, great to see you here today and thank
6 you for your years of service.

7 As you know, Exercise Northern Strike in Michigan helps
8 train thousands of service members from over 20 different
9 countries at the National All-Domain Warfighting Center.
10 Northern Strike takes advantage of, roughly, 17,000 square
11 miles of special use and all-domain training environments
12 for kind of realistic joint force training with our global
13 allies and partners.

14 In his hearing before our committee Admiral Paparo, the
15 INDOPACOM commander praised Northern Strike's importance to
16 his command and he said -- I want to quote him because it
17 was great -- he said, quote, "I treasure it and I want more
18 of it and I want to expand it," end of quote.

19 So my question for you, sir, is do you agree with
20 Admiral Paparo's assessment of the importance of exercises
21 like Northern Strike in Michigan and what role should these
22 exercises play in advancing DOD's strategic goals of the
23 Indo-Pacific?

24 General Mahoney: I will go big to small.

25 I know that the training area up there facilitates some



1 great interaction of live training. I believe there is some
2 virtual connectivity there as well.

3 Speaking for the Marine Corps, we had our Air and Naval
4 Gunfire Liaison Company up there and V-22s also
5 participating, and it is a great workout in particular for
6 the Reserve and some Guard.

7 I have not been on deployment. I have not been in a
8 command operations center. I have not been in support of
9 the unit where the Guard and the Reserves did not play a big
10 part.

11 So Northern Strike, not only for the quality of the
12 training but the demographic of combat power that it deals
13 with, is extremely important.

14 Senator Peters: Great. Well, thank you, General.

15 General, as you know, the AUKUS agreement is a once-in-
16 a-generation partnership between Australia, the U.K., and
17 the U.S. to share nuclear-powered submarine technology as
18 well as to enhance technology collaboration between our
19 three -- these three allies.

20 I was fortunate to recently visit Australia and I was
21 impressed not only with their cutting-edge work on unmanned
22 technologies but also their unwavering national commitment
23 to the AUKUS agreement.

24 As someone who has extensively studied a potential
25 conflict in the Indo-Pacific, I believe that you will agree



1 that our key advantage in the region is our long-term
2 relationships with allies and partners which includes AUKUS.

3 And so my question for you, sir, is how important is
4 AUKUS in deterring Chinese aggression in the Indo-Pacific
5 and, if confirmed, would you continue to support this
6 critical agreement?

7 General Mahoney: Senator, I will stay away from the
8 policy side of AUKUS and just look at the potential on the
9 military side.

10 I have lived in Australia. I went to school in
11 Australia. I have trained extensively with the Australians
12 and fought with the Australians.

13 We will not find a more capable ally and someone who
14 has been leaning into capabilities and capacities that can
15 only help us in the region and help us in countering
16 communist China.

17 Senator Peters: Well, as you know, there are two
18 pillars to AUKUS. The one that tends to get most of the
19 attention is the agreement of submarines -- the Virginia-
20 class submarines that are coming online.

21 But I would argue pillar two is equally if not more
22 important, which deals with advanced technologies, emerging
23 technologies unmanned. The programs they have like Ghost
24 Shark and Ghost Bat and whether in the air or undersea,
25 really, we have the opportunity to explore some of those



1 endeavors and they are incredibly impressive.

2 Could you talk a little bit about pillar two and, being
3 someone very familiar with Australia, how their capabilities
4 will advance our ability to fight the war of the future?

5 General Mahoney: To the extent that pillar two will
6 enhance our military interconnectedness, our ability to
7 integrate and move all of those capabilities that you just
8 talked about forward, it is a great initiative.

9 And, like I said, I have not worked in a place with the
10 Australians where they have not been leading forward and
11 always willing and quite skilled, in fact, at moving
12 capabilities forward, sometimes outpacing us.

13 Senator Peters: Great. Thank you, General.

14 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Chairman Wicker: Thank you very much.

16 Senator Ernst?

17 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 And today is a solemn day of remembrance so thank you
19 very much, General, for remembering those that lost their
20 lives on 9/11 as well as those first responders and those
21 that have served in the global war on terrorism.

22 Thanks for the time that we were able to spend together
23 in the office discussing a number of priorities. I would
24 like to start with the announcement of the pending National
25 Defense Strategy.



1 What it is doing is making clear that defending the
2 homeland is the department's top priority and that includes
3 protecting our critical infrastructure, strengthening, of
4 course, our missile defenses and enhancing our cyber
5 resilience.

6 Those will really be at the forefront of our efforts
7 and in this mission it does appear that the National Guard
8 and the Reserves will be an indispensable part of that
9 equation.

10 We know that these forces are uniquely positioned to
11 defend the homeland not only through disaster response but
12 also in emerging domains like cyber and space and, of
13 course, I am very partial to the National Guard and the
14 Reserves.

15 Having served in both of those I know firsthand how
16 vital it is in their contributions to our national defense.

17 So, General Mahoney, with the upcoming National Defense
18 Strategy placing that renewed emphasis on our homeland
19 defense how do you plan to ensure that the mission remains
20 front and center as threats continue to grow and evolve?

21 General Mahoney: Thanks, Senator, and I think the
22 primacy of the homeland has been a key tenet of our
23 strategies going back at least as far as 2018, and I think
24 it has to be that way.

25 The military reason that it needs to be that way is it



1 must be considered as a power projection platform. You
2 cannot push off a platform that is faulty. You cannot push
3 off a foundation that is weak, and all of the attributes
4 that you talked about have to be strengthened and fortified.

5 Going to the Guard and Reserve, as I mentioned earlier,
6 I have never been in a situation deployed or otherwise -- or
7 contingent of combat where Guardsmen and Reserves were not a
8 big part of the picture.

9 So to strengthen that aspect of it not only for the
10 homeland but to play the away game as well is important.

11 Senator Ernst: No, I appreciate that very much, and
12 just reminding people that the reason our great United
13 States came to be, the reason our colonies came together as
14 states and formed the great United States of America, was
15 for the common defense of our nation.

16 So it is incredibly important that our military is
17 positioned to defend our homeland.

18 What role do you envision for the National Guard and
19 our great Reservists out there as they are playing a role in
20 building a resilience against these threats both here in the
21 homeland and abroad?

22 General Mahoney: I do not think you can realistically
23 talk about an integrated joint approach without bringing in
24 the Guard and Reserve and recent history is replete with
25 that point.



1 So what I would say is even by -- I know that
2 statutorily and policy wise there is a differentiation
3 between Guard, Reserve, and active.

4 But when we look at the total force, the integrated
5 force, and Chairman Caine as the integrator, this is a
6 whole. This is a single demographic of combat power, once
7 again, whether it is at home or away.

8 Senator Ernst: Yeah, thank you. We have talked
9 extensively this morning about the defense industrial base
10 and its revitalization. That is really important.

11 In order to deliver upon the safety for our great
12 United States we have to make sure that we have the
13 platforms and the munitions that are available.

14 So I am just going to make a plug. We have facilities
15 in Iowa like the Iowa Army ammunition plant, which will be
16 an important part of delivering munitions for our military.

17 Also, the Rock Island Arsenal which is situated -- it
18 actually belongs to Illinois but is situated in the
19 Mississippi River dividing Iowa and Illinois.

20 Making sure that we are able to expand production and
21 support those facilities will be very important in the
22 future. So how do you plan to ensure that that industrial
23 base can meet the demand for these critical systems while
24 also sustaining support for our allies in a very brief
25 answer, please?



1 General Mahoney: If confirmed as the chairman of the
2 JROC I will make sure that the defense industrial base is a
3 leading consideration from requirements to resources.

4 Senator Ernst: And I will take it. I have no time
5 remaining. Thank you very much. I look forward to
6 supporting your confirmation.

7 Thank you.

8 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Ernst, and I am
9 glad you drilled down on the Guard and the Reserve.

10 Senator Kaine?

11 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12 I would like to begin by associating myself with
13 comments of my colleagues earlier in the hearing.

14 First, Senator Wicker, I appreciate you having a moment
15 of silence in honor of those who lost lives or family on
16 9/11 -- the attack occurred in Virginia and other locations
17 -- and also for your moment of silence to think about
18 political violence.

19 I did not know Mr. Kirk but I think many of my Senate
20 colleagues did and some considered him acquaintance and some
21 considered him a friend. And so I offered prayers for his
22 family in the university community yesterday.

23 But as I am sitting here looking at colleagues who may
24 have known him, I know how devastating it was to our
25 colleagues Senator Klobuchar and Senator Smith when their



1 friends were killed a couple months back.

2 And so I feel for my colleagues, anybody in this body
3 who knew or were friends with, acquaintance with Mr. Kirk.
4 It is just so sad. There have been 300 instances of
5 political violence in this country since January 6th.

6 We have a colleague, Senator Kelly, whose life was
7 dramatically changed. We have a colleague, Congressman
8 Scalise, whose life was dramatically changed by political
9 violence, and those of us on this committee who travel
10 around the world and interact with leaders they kind of look
11 at us as, like, this is who you are.

12 We do not really think it is who we are but it is
13 becoming so common and we have to figure out a way out of
14 it. I do not have any answers but I am very troubled this
15 morning in the aftermath of it.

16 I want to thank Senator Reed for raising the questions
17 that you raised about the Venezuela strike. The idea of the
18 Framers that we should not be engaged in military action
19 without Congress they came up with that idea when George
20 Washington was the president.

21 They had a president they revered who was a great
22 military leader and, yet, they did not think the decision
23 about use of military force in hostilities should be
24 dependent upon one person and we have yet to get answers
25 about some critical aspects of the attack.



1 And the decision to interdict versus attack is a really
2 important one because interdiction often gets you evidence
3 that you can then use to prosecute or go after the higher-
4 ups or the kingpins. And so we still do not have an
5 understanding of why there was an attack rather than an
6 interdiction.

7 Many of my colleagues have joined me in a letter
8 seeking answers to those questions and I hope we will get
9 them.

10 And, finally, I want to associate myself with Senator
11 Blumenthal and the sanctions bill that is currently on the
12 table before us that has overwhelming bipartisan support.

13 I can understand a desire to pause action on that while
14 we would seek some resolution with Russia and Ukraine but
15 during the pause what we have seen is Russian aggression
16 grow in Ukraine against EU offices in Ukraine and now
17 against Poland.

18 And I agree with you, General Mahoney, whether it was
19 intentional, which I think it likely was, or unintentional,
20 which would raise a whole set of other troubling questions,
21 I do believe there needs to be a response from the
22 administration and from this body.

23 Let me ask you this, General Mahoney. You are very
24 well qualified for the position. I support your nomination.

25 I appreciated our visit.



1 The press is reporting that the DOD is going to send
2 its reconciliation spending plan to Congress sometime in
3 September. Do you have any information here today about the
4 status of that plan and when we will likely see it?

5 General Mahoney: I do not have any specific
6 information on that, Senator. I know as the uber budget guy
7 in the Marine Corps we have put our spend plan together and
8 submitted it. I do not know when it will be delivered.

9 Senator Kaine: Okay.

10 You know, the reconciliation bill called for it by
11 August 22. I am not completely surprised that it was not to
12 us by then because this is a big amount of money and we want
13 to make sure we spend it the right way.

14 But I do hope we get it soon so that in response to
15 Senator Wicker's questions I know you will make sure we
16 execute on the plan. But we are very interested in that
17 plan here.

18 I want to ask you, General Mahoney, you have often been
19 before our Readiness Subcommittee in earlier iterations. I
20 want to ask you some readiness questions.

21 How will you think about assessing readiness across the
22 joint force, especially when it comes to preparedness for
23 executing O plans?

24 General Mahoney: And I think we might have discussed
25 this in Readiness. There is -- the man, train, and equip



1 aspect of it that the services own and then there is the
2 exercises versus O plan that are primarily owned by the
3 COCOMs.

4 I think the chairman as the integrator also has an
5 exercise flow where he brings all those things together to
6 work out the entire joint force end to end, whether it is
7 versus a specific O plan or scenario or whether it is
8 through derived scenarios as well.

9 So it looks like a pyramid from the services going up
10 to the chairman as the global integrator.

11 Senator Kaine: I will just say as I hand back,
12 readiness of joint enablers like strategic lift, contested
13 logistics, communications networks, very important,
14 especially in INDOPACOM.

15 I know you are aware of that. The fact that you have
16 done so much work in the INDOPACOM already I think is going
17 to stand you in a good place.

18 General Mahoney: I believe that is why the chairman's
19 role as the global integrator is so important because of
20 those enablers that may not exist on a magenta line that
21 defines a COCOM.

22 Senator Kaine: Yeah. Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
23 Chair.

24 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator.

25 Senator Sheehy?



1 Senator Sheehy: Good morning, General.
2 Congratulations on your nomination. Great to speak with you
3 the other day at the Marine Corps welcome back reception.

4 Culture, war fighting, recruiting -- those are your
5 job. Those are Secretary Hegseth's job. As I expressed to
6 you, my core concern is our ability to fill the magazines,
7 build the ships, maintain the planes, and ensure that when
8 our war fighters go toe to toe with our next adversary they
9 have the platforms that they need and a 21st century
10 warfare, as we are seeing, is inherently a platform warfare
11 environment.

12 And right now our platform capabilities, although
13 exquisite on the drawing board and exquisite in the test
14 range, it is hard to scale them.

15 They are expensive and they are hard to replace, and my
16 sole focus on this committee right now is to ensure that the
17 next time we face off with an adversary and we have holes in
18 the bottom of the ocean and we have parachutes coming out of
19 cockpits because planes are being shot down we have the
20 ability to have a force that is attritable, that is
21 replaceable, scalable, and that can be done quickly in a
22 battlefield time frame.

23 So right now we have a shipbuilding industry that has
24 become sclerotic. Our ability to scale those and stabilize
25 requirements to produce ships repeatedly quickly is



1 challenged. That can also be carried over to our aircraft
2 manufacturing capability.

3 What are going to be your -- there has been studies and
4 op-eds and articles and hearings about this ad nauseam for
5 years and we have been talking about it, but nothing has
6 really changed fundamentally and the time for change is now.

7 We cannot continue to have commissions and studies and
8 papers and reports, and McKinsey and Rand and every other
9 consulting company comes in and gives us a thousand-page
10 report of how to fix it. We need to start fixing it. It
11 needs to start now.

12 So what is your day one, week one, year one plan to
13 begin fixing this industrial-based challenge so that we are
14 ready for the next war?

15 General Mahoney: Senator, thanks, and thanks for the
16 time in your office.

17 I have been on the JROC now for about two years and
18 some of the smartest people on the planet do the analysis --
19 do the gap analysis, the capability portfolio management
20 reviews.

21 What we need to do is make sure that that is done in
22 time that we have yet to consider. Eight hundred days, not
23 good. So there is a time aspect to it and then there is a
24 step change that needs to happen once you go from a solution
25 identification to bringing industry in and in my opening



1 comments I said all of industry.

2 We have been glued to, and in some cases rightfully so,
3 a small group of vendors that have come down from a larger
4 group in the past and we need to invite smaller, we need to
5 invite different, more innovative and fast-moving companies
6 into the acquisition process earlier.

7 That is the only way, I believe, that we are going to
8 see the step change that we require. So lower the barriers
9 to entry. Incentivize these companies to come in. Engender
10 competition, which will engender speed, which will engender
11 product -- greater capabilities and greater quality, and
12 from, you know, day one of the JROC I will pick up where
13 Admiral Grady left off and push those lines of effort
14 forward.

15 And, you know, I do not want to run on here too much
16 but I said earlier the requirements to resources continuum -
17 - the system, the gears that run -- we have to keep an eye
18 on that from the beginning to the end or one of the gears
19 will be coming disengaged or it will start running slow and
20 we will be back where we started.

21 One other point. The gold-plated in 800 days is not
22 sufficient when we can get the operationally relevant in a
23 very short period of time. It is, you know, like, the
24 acquisition Pareto principle.

25 Let us get the 80 percent solution in 20 percent of the



1 time at 20 percent of the cost instead of 100 percent 800
2 days later at some astronomical cost that we can neither
3 afford or control.

4 Senator Sheehy: Well, I agree with that 100 percent
5 and, you know, when it comes to the Navy I would rather have
6 a hundred frigates than five destroyers and we need to
7 accept risk again in our acquisition process.

8 In an effort to reduce risk we have created a process
9 that is focused on the process, not on the outcome. We need
10 to accept iteration as part of it, accept that each
11 iteration is not going to be perfect and we can continue to
12 refine that product.

13 But gold-plated requirements in engineering to
14 perfection will create a brittleness in our acquisition
15 process that is going to remove the scale and speed that we
16 need.

17 So thank you for your focus on that. You have my
18 support. Thank you.

19 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Schmitt. Thank
20 you, Senator Sheehy.

21 I know you and I can see that far but not much further.
22 I think Senator Slotkin is next. Is that you down there?

23 Yes. Okay.

24 Senator Slotkin: Thank you, Chairman.

25 General Mahoney, welcome. Thank you for being here,



1 particularly on a solemn day. This was my first anniversary
2 of 9/11 in the Senate and I was heartened to hear the sirens
3 go off this morning at the exact times that the planes hit
4 and to hear -- there was a voice that came over, I think,
5 the entire campus noting that there had been a plane headed
6 for this building on that day. So I thought that was an
7 important reminder.

8 You are nominated to be the number two, the vice
9 chairman, so that means you will be the number two in the
10 country military advisor to the President of the United
11 States.

12 Our troops are intended by law to protect against
13 foreign adversaries and to never advance the interest of one
14 political party or their political agenda. That is one of
15 the things I think we can agree on that separates us from a
16 place like China.

17 You know, you will have that responsibility of giving
18 best military advice but also, as we discussed in my office,
19 representing the interests of the military and the
20 reputation of the military, which I know you have given your
21 life to.

22 I mean, you have done incredible service for this
23 institution that, as we discussed, really raised you to be
24 the four-star general that you are.

25 You are also coming from being the assistant commandant



1 to the Marine Corps and that means you oversaw the 700
2 Marines that deployed to L.A. along with the National Guard
3 without the consent of the governor out there in June and
4 July, and according to a report -- a DOD report that came
5 out through Reuters, it was a document that said --
6 entitled, "Los Angeles Civil Unrest Standing Rules for the
7 Use of Force," and it stated, quote, "that the very nature
8 of domestic operations, American military forces operating
9 in U.S. communities has such significant implications that
10 the mistakes of a few soldiers can have far-reaching social,
11 political, and operational effects."

12 And the document cites a cautionary tale of Marine
13 Corporal Clemente Banuelos who many years ago was on a joint
14 mission in 1997 in Texas and saw a high schooler with a
15 rifle. The high schooler was herding goats and ended up
16 killing that high schooler.

17 Can you walk me through? You know, you are now wanting
18 to be the number two military advisor to the President.
19 What issues did you raise when you got the order to send 700
20 Marines? What concerns did you have? What did you sort of
21 push and pull in that conversation to make sure to protect
22 both civilians but the reputation of the military?

23 General Mahoney: Senator, thanks. And when that order
24 came down our discussion was how do we accomplish the
25 mission and are we trained, manned, and equipped for it, and



1 that discussion went on very seriously from the commandant
2 right on down to the company commanders that were going to
3 go forward.

4 I will tell you that we trained to the standing rules
5 of the use of force. We trained de-escalation techniques.
6 We trained on the personal protective equipment, which I
7 would expect of Marines to do before they left the assembly
8 area.

9 And I will tell you that the deepest conversation and
10 the deepest concern with making sure that those Marines were
11 ready to execute orders professionally were those battalion
12 commanders and those company commanders to talk about
13 reputation of the cloth.

14 They would not step forward across the line of
15 departure until they were manned, trained, and equipped to
16 accomplish the mission that they had been given.

17 Senator Slotkin: So if you were asked -- you know, now
18 the President talks about sending troops to other places --
19 if you were asked to change the rules of engagement to
20 include arrest, detention of American citizens, hot pursuit
21 instead of, you know, tag teaming with law enforcement you
22 were asked to change those rules of engagement so that the
23 U.S. military would be engaging in what I believe to be
24 unlawful actions in the streets of America -- would you push
25 back on that or other illegal orders that contravene the



1 Constitution?

2 General Mahoney: Before I go too far down the
3 hypothetical here, which is reasonable, my best military
4 judgment in my position now or should I be confirmed will be
5 based on the facts and circumstances and the tasks that we
6 have been given and the effect that we are trying to achieve
7 and the training that we need in order to do it.

8 That entire cascade of receipt of order to calling out
9 the tasks explicit and implied, building courses of action
10 so that the --

11 Senator Slotkin: I understand, but if something was --
12 and this is almost an issue of conscience at this point,
13 right?

14 We are relying on your issue of conscience that if you
15 were asked to do something that contravened the Constitution
16 and would greatly hurt the reputation of the military that
17 you -- and privately -- I do not need you to do it publicly,
18 but that you would stand up and push back and give your best
19 military advice against such actions.

20 General Mahoney: Senator, that -- and I will do that
21 publicly. That is an easy question. If I am ever put into
22 a situation where 38 years of an oath is put at risk to do
23 something different the answer is simple.

24 I will adhere to my oath to the Constitution. That is
25 what is expected from the chairman. That is what is



1 expected from the entire national command authority and from
2 the American people.

3 Senator Slotkin: I appreciate that. Thank you. I
4 believe my time is up.

5 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator.

6 Senator Budd?

7 Senator Budd: Thank you, Chairman.

8 General, it is good to see you. I enjoyed the time
9 last week in the office. Thanks to your comments in regards
10 to the solemnness of this day. Thanks for your willingness
11 and that of your family to continue to serve.

12 So one of my priorities in this role has been to reform
13 the foreign military sales process. In our travels to visit
14 with allies around the world that has been a continual point
15 of frustration.

16 We want them to get the weapons and the equipment in
17 places like Taiwan and the Philippines and we want it to be
18 done more quickly. One recommendation I have heard is to
19 bake exportability into the production of these technologies
20 at the outset of the development.

21 Now, that development is constrained by the
22 requirements that you would put into the process. So what
23 do you think about baking exportability into the
24 requirements?

25 General Mahoney: Senator, I just am not -- I just am



1 not a foreign military sales specialist but I will go to I
2 think the commonality between the defense industrial base,
3 what they produce, how they produce it, how quickly they
4 produce it, and foreign military sales.

5 I mean, the defense industrial base and the foreign
6 military sales industrial base are essentially the same
7 thing.

8 Senator Budd: So if we could just broaden the question
9 a bit. You may not be an expert on foreign military sales,
10 giving your best military advice do you think there are ways
11 that we could speed up the process and that we should?

12 General Mahoney: I think pursuant to the discussions
13 we have had today, yes.

14 Senator Budd: Thank you.

15 Let us talk a little bit about training. I know you
16 have a history as an aviator. You are familiar with the
17 limitations that the frontline units face, particularly with
18 their training ranges, threat replication, OPSEC protocols,
19 just to name a few.

20 These limitations impact the training and readiness of
21 the joint force for near peer conflict. So, if confirmed,
22 how would you approach overcoming these challenges?

23 General Mahoney: Thanks for the question.

24 As a career aviator we have run into restrictions in
25 airspace, restrictions in emissions, restrictions in the



1 physical space below you, what you can expend, how you can
2 expend it.

3 So the -- two ways to get beyond that, and that is
4 virtual and constructive elements of the training continuum.

5 You will never get, in my opinion, beyond the live
6 feedback, the live aspect.

7 But in order to sensitize and work out the longer-range
8 systems, the more exquisite systems, the systems that need
9 to emit and receive without tipping your hand and also
10 getting a workout we need to emphasize virtual and
11 constructive aspect as well.

12 So that live, virtual, constructive continuum, those
13 parts make up the greater part of the whole.

14 Senator Budd: Thank you, General.

15 So one of the provisions I led in this year's NDAA it
16 strengthens the department's ability to use tactical data
17 links, something I imagine you know a lot about,
18 specifically Link 16, and for testing and for training in
19 the national airspace system.

20 So can you speak about the importance of Link 16 in the
21 joint warfighting concept and the importance of preventing
22 bureaucracy from impeding the ability in how we train and
23 how we fight?

24 General Mahoney: Senator, this links back to the
25 discussion we just had about limitations on training ranges



1 and being able to use certain waveforms.

2 As an aviator I have been using Link 16 for a long
3 time. It is the data link system of record and it is
4 critical to joint command and control.

5 So accommodations that can be made to use that
6 waveform, to use that data link so that we are expert at it.

7 Once again, we do not get under center with no reps with
8 the data link across the systems is extremely important.

9 Senator Budd: Thank you, General.

10 A different topic. In your understanding who currently
11 owns the DOD's requirements for joint protection from
12 unmanned aerial systems?

13 General Mahoney: I am sorry, could you repeat? The
14 joint --

15 Senator Budd: Yeah. Unmanned aerial systems. Who in
16 the department owns that and is in charge of it?

17 General Mahoney: The air --

18 Senator Budd: Let me preface it just a little bit
19 more.

20 I understand that NORTHCOM acts as a synchronizer here,
21 kind of a consultant on that. But as you see it right now
22 are you satisfied with the jointness of the requirements and
23 the solutions moving forward in regards to unmanned aerial
24 systems?

25 General Mahoney: This is an area where maybe we were



1 slow on the get-go but we are moving very, very quickly. We
2 have service executives and we have a combined joint task
3 force for UAS and for counter UAS and I am happy that we are
4 moving at speed now and everybody in what was kind of
5 ungoverned space is starting to move in the same direction.

6 Senator Budd: Thank you. I appreciate your
7 willingness to serve. I look forward to supporting your
8 nomination.

9 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator Budd.

10 Senator Duckworth?

11 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 General Mahoney, thank you for your service, obviously,
13 and thank you for our great conversation this week.

14 I could spend my time with you discussing real security
15 challenges facing the joint force but I am instead forced to
16 address the unthinkable.

17 Following up on Senator Slotkin's question about
18 deploying military to our nation's cities, the President of
19 the United States has actually declared war on Chicago and
20 is threatening to send troops there.

21 Not against a foreign enemy, not in response to an
22 armed attack, not in response to a natural disaster or riots
23 in the streets. He is simply declaring war on an American
24 city.

25 General, do you think it is appropriate for our troops



1 to be performing policing duties on Americans on U.S. soil?

2 General Mahoney: Senator, I think the appropriate use
3 of the military is to protect all Americans under all
4 circumstances.

5 Senator Duckworth: Answer my question, General. Do
6 you think it is appropriate for our troops to be used to
7 perform policing duties on Americans on U.S. soil?

8 General Mahoney: Policing duties is not a direct
9 mission that I am aware of, certainly not for the Marine
10 Corps.

11 Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

12 The President seems to think so. He has declared war
13 on Chicago. He is puffing his chest, brazenly threatening
14 to use the military to stage chaos and fear in our
15 communities so he can swoop in and normalize having military
16 personnel on the streets of America.

17 This is political theater that our fine men and women
18 in uniform did not sign up for.

19 General, if confirmed and the President asked the
20 military to deploy to an American city would you
21 unequivocally advise against a military engaging
22 domestically in arrests, detentions, and violations of civil
23 rights?

24 General Mahoney: Senator, I would comply with the law.
25 I would comply with my experience of 38 years and my oath



1 that I have taken to the Constitution. I cannot imagine any
2 situation where our task would be to violate any American
3 citizen's civil rights.

4 Senator Duckworth: Okay. I have directly heard from
5 constituents who are scared that our nation's armed forces
6 will come to their door, that uniformed troops will come to
7 their child's school, to their workplace, to be arrested, to
8 be thrown into unmarked vehicles and pulled onto a military
9 base to be detained there.

10 Trump is intentionally blurring the lines between the
11 military and the police to intimidate those who dare to
12 speak out against his harmful policies.

13 This separation of our military and the police forces
14 is core to our Constitution, which everyone in uniform
15 including you and me and my colleagues on this dais have
16 sworn an oath to defend.

17 Our Founders enshrined protections in our Bill of
18 Rights to protect Americans from this kind of abuse after
19 the British army invaded homes and engaged in unreasonable
20 searches and seizures.

21 As a daughter of the American Revolution whose family
22 has fought for this nation from its founding, I am horrified
23 that President Trump is shredding the Constitution to turn
24 our nation's military against Americans.

25 Everyone deserves to feel safe from crime but our



1 nation's military is not the best tool to fight it. That is
2 what the police are for.

3 But Trump slashed at least \$800 million from
4 initiatives to prevent local crime, curb illegal guns, and
5 support victims of crime.

6 So let us be clear. Donald Trump does not care about
7 crime. You and I, General, both know how costly it is for
8 our military to take our eyes off the ball, and I
9 appreciated your commitment to me, if confirmed, to ensure
10 the joint forces focus on the Indo-Pacific, an area where
11 you have substantial experience both on deployments and in a
12 leadership role.

13 I am concerned that forcing the military to turn
14 against their fellow Americans takes away time, attention,
15 and resources from innovating and solving the security
16 challenges in the Indo-Pacific.

17 We know the military can do its job but I do not think
18 our military should be patrolling the streets as they are
19 here in D.C. where they are spending their time with their
20 M4s picking up garbage.

21 While our troops are focused on policing, who is
22 guarding us against foreign threats? What risks to our
23 national security are we willing to swallow?

24 We have already seen our adversaries taking advantage.

25 But President Trump will not stand up to Putin so he is



1 picking a fight with Chicago.

2 The military will always answer the call to protect and
3 defend the Constitution of the United States. But you and I
4 both know that if the military has to support this dangerous
5 distraction and execute all of its core missions at the same
6 time it will stretch our military too thin.

7 You are more than qualified for this position, General,
8 but I am deeply concerned that there will be a price to be
9 paid by our troops and the American people for this
10 President's hubris and this President's attempts to
11 normalize putting troops on the streets in our city, and I
12 hope that you will stand up and advise against, as you have
13 already committed to doing, misuse of our military and
14 unconstitutional use of our military.

15 Thank you. I yield back.

16 Chairman Wicker: Thank you, Senator.

17 Senator Gillibrand?

18 Senator Gillibrand: Mr. Chairman, thank you for the
19 opportunity to talk here today.

20 General Mahoney, I echo some of the concerns that were
21 mentioned by Senator Duckworth. We are in a time of grave
22 risk, challenges, adversaries rising, the investments that
23 China have made over the past 15 years in militarization,
24 the war in Ukraine, the war in the Middle East.

25 These are huge pressures on United States citizens and



1 United States security and security of our allies and the
2 most important job that you have is to express advice and
3 guidance to the President of the United States that is based
4 on your years of acumen, study, and experience and we need
5 you to understand that you could be the difference between
6 an action that is harmful and an action that is helpful
7 based on your years of experience.

8 And so my fundamental question to you is are you
9 prepared to stand in the breach of a terrible decision and
10 the right decision for the national security and for the
11 United States?

12 General Mahoney: The direct answer, Senator, is yes.

13 Two sub bullets. I commit to you to adhere to the oath
14 that I took as a second lieutenant and that I have repeated
15 right up until four star.

16 And the second point is if there is divergence from
17 that oath I will speak out.

18 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you. Thank you very much,
19 General.

20 This is the most important job you will ever do in your
21 career and the responsibility on your shoulders is
22 significant.

23 So we as the Senate, as the Armed Services Committee,
24 will be trusting in you to give us unfiltered advice, to
25 give the President of the United States unfiltered advice,



1 and to not stand down when opposed by people in the
2 administration who disagree with you.

3 You must stand forthrightly and always give the right
4 advice.

5 General Mahoney: I commit to that, Senator.

6 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you very much.

7 A second question I just want to address with you -- we
8 have a rising issue of unmanned aerial drones. We have a
9 rising challenge of drone incursions over military bases
10 such as Langley. We have drone incursions now over allies
11 that we just -- is most recently in the news.

12 We need a policy with regard to our own national
13 security about how we are going to use drone technology, how
14 we are going to defend against drone technology, and in my
15 opinion the biggest blind spot we have in the United States
16 is domestic blindness.

17 We do not have a solution if an adversarial drone is
18 hovering over a major city or a major sporting event or a
19 major musical event.

20 We do not have a policy if adversarial drones are
21 hovering over Langley for two weeks straight with no
22 recourse and no decision being made to do something about
23 it, and we do not yet have all the technology and investment
24 that we need to make sure that we can prepare and respond
25 appropriately to know who are manning those drones -- if it



1 is an adversarial nation, if it is a terrorist organization,
2 if it is a spy network.

3 That is the kinds of intelligence that we need to be
4 able to have a policy that is effective. I would like your
5 commitment that you will work with this committee on a very
6 robust drone policy about how to keep civilians safe over
7 large gatherings such as sporting events and concerts as
8 well as our men and women who serve in the armed services
9 when they are hovering over our important intelligence
10 sites, important military sites, important equipment sites.

11 I need to have the commitment that you will take this
12 as seriously as the proliferation of war that it could well
13 be.

14 General Mahoney: Senator, you have my complete
15 commitment and you just described the tapestry of how we
16 need to go about it.

17 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
18 Chairman.

19 Senator Budd: [Presiding.] Senator Kelly, you are
20 recognized.

21 Senator Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 General, great seeing you again. Good to see an A6
23 intruder pilot here in front of the committee. I love that
24 airplane.

25 I want to discuss electronic warfare with you. As you



1 know, we face a lot of challenges in the Western Pacific.
2 The EW environment is changing dramatically, and to be
3 successful in a conflict we are going to have to utilize
4 some nonkinetic capabilities as well beyond what we can
5 today and that means we need to be able to test and
6 experiment and train, all in a realistic operational
7 environment across all domains against emerging technologies
8 and peer threats.

9 That is why in the fiscal year '26 NDAA we added a
10 provision to carry out a demonstration of a joint multi-
11 domain kinetic and nonkinetic testing and training
12 environment across the services by connecting existing
13 ranges and training sites in the Western states so stitching
14 these things together.

15 And we have seen efforts like the Western Regional
16 Range Complex where it can provide warfighters with
17 realistic training in both very complex and congested
18 multiple domain and electronic magnetic spectrum
19 environments through a combination of advanced live and
20 virtual and constructive environments with advanced modeling
21 simulation all together with the relevant threat systems.

22 So in your view, General, how important is it to have
23 joint multi-domain testing and training environments that
24 blends kinetic and nonkinetic efforts and effects to enable
25 realistic training?



1 General Mahoney: Senator, it is critical and it is not
2 an option. Back in the A6 days we used to be pretty good at
3 this, of penetrate, exploit, using the EM spectrum, whether
4 it was EA6Bs, whether it was F-111s, and we got out of that
5 business for a long time, probably for the right reasons.

6 But all the things that you indicate, and going back to
7 Senator Budd's point about training, live, virtual,
8 constructive, stitching together the ranges, having the
9 ability to emit and receive and work out the systems is
10 critical. It is not a choice.

11 Senator Kelly: And can you talk a little bit about how
12 this applies to a conflict with China, which I do not
13 believe is inevitable, but a conflict with China in the
14 Western Pacific?

15 General Mahoney: Use of, exploitation of, and the
16 ability to manipulate the EM spectrum is part of your
17 warfighting function of fires, of intel, et cetera, and you
18 have to be able to do that in the way that you just spoke
19 about from a training perspective in order to apply it
20 should we have to fight.

21 Senator Kelly: And what are some of the challenges to
22 getting this established here in CONUS and how are we going
23 to overcome these challenges?

24 General Mahoney: If confirmed as the chairman of the
25 JROC this would be one of the key operational problems that



1 we pursue, which is electronic warfare more specifically but
2 electromagnetic spectrum. You can use the word dominance or
3 exploitation.

4 So in my position, should I be confirmed, this would be
5 an operational problem that we will hit head on.

6 Senator Kelly: You know, I think it is a multi-
7 department approach here. We are going to have to work with
8 the FAA. We have already started to do some of that.

9 But to be able to get this airspace appropriately
10 stitched together and also even beyond the EW, you know,
11 training as weapon systems become more advanced, you know --
12 well, air-to-air missile systems are becoming longer range
13 so we need bigger ranges. The stick is longer.

14 We cannot have guys, you know, having to turn and just
15 immediately take a shot virtual or real and then immediately
16 turn around and try to do it again. I mean, that gets, you
17 know, really challenging.

18 I have another question about -- you know, like, before
19 I was an A6 guy I was at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.
20 Talk a little bit briefly in my remaining time about how
21 important it is for us to rebuild our U.S. Merchant Marine
22 when you are considering logistics across a 5,000-mile
23 Pacific Ocean.

24 General Mahoney: You know, you want a new idea read an
25 old book and look at the Merchant Marine and how they



1 enabled victory in World War II.

2 We need to take that not as an exact model but as an
3 exemplar of how we need to build back merchant shipping,
4 merchant sailors from the master --

5 Senator Kelly: All right. Thank you, General.

6 Senator Budd: Thank you, Senator Kelly.

7 Senator Warren?

8 Senator Warren: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
9 congratulations, General Mahoney, on your nomination.

10 This administration's politicization of the military
11 undermines our democracy and is a betrayal of the men and
12 women who signed up to put their lives on the line to
13 protect this country.

14 The Posse Comitatus Act is clear that the military
15 generally should not be used for domestic law enforcement
16 activities. But the Trump administration has deployed the
17 military to perform law enforcement functions in Los Angeles
18 and Washington, D.C. and threatened to send troops into
19 Chicago, Baltimore, and New Orleans.

20 When Secretary Hegseth came before this committee in
21 June I asked him how many American cities he would deploy
22 troops to and he would not rule out any number, even if
23 those missions put our military readiness at risk.

24 General Mahoney, if you are confirmed you will be
25 responsible for overseeing joint military requirements. If



1 this committee asks for your best military judgment on
2 whether these operations are hurting readiness will you
3 share any concerns with us?

4 General Mahoney: Senator, I will.

5 Senator Warren: Okay. I appreciate that.

6 A U.S. district court recently ruled that the Trump
7 administration willfully -- that is their word -- violated
8 the Posse Comitatus Act during the troop deployment in Los
9 Angeles. Arrests and detention should only be performed by
10 civilian law enforcement, not the military.

11 But the court found both bystanders and federal
12 agencies, including the military commander, were unable to
13 distinguish the members of the military from federal law
14 enforcement agencies.

15 General Mahoney, federal courts may soon find that
16 deployments to Washington, Chicago, and Baltimore were
17 illegal. If confirmed, will your military advice be to act
18 in accordance with the findings of federal courts?

19 General Mahoney: Senator, they will. In the fullness
20 of a judicial process, if something is found legal or
21 illegal the advice will be based on that finding as a
22 conclusive finding.

23 Senator Warren: Okay. You are going to follow the
24 courts then?

25 General Mahoney: That is correct.



1 Senator Warren: All right.

2 So earlier this year the Trump administration took \$1
3 billion that Congress had appropriated for barracks
4 renovations and redirected that money for border operations.

5 This is funding meant to address barracks that have become
6 completely unlivable, places with overflowing sewage and
7 fire systems that do not work.

8 You provided testimony to the Readiness Subcommittee
9 earlier this year that investing in quality of life, quote,
10 "specifically our barracks for our Marines," close quote,
11 are key investments, quote, "if we are going to count on
12 them to generate a lethal force."

13 But the cost of asking the military to police American
14 communities is only going to grow and eat into funds that
15 are specifically designated by Congress to support our
16 troops.

17 So, General Mahoney, will you commit to providing this
18 committee with your best military advice if you believe that
19 funding is being moved without congressional authorization
20 in a way that undermines service members' quality of life?

21 General Mahoney: Senator, I commit to giving you my
22 best military advice on all issues, this one included.

23 Senator Warren: I appreciate that.

24 You know, it is completely un-American to unleash our
25 troops on U.S. cities over the objections of their



1 democratically elected governors and mayors.

2 This President recently posted that Chicago will,
3 quote, "find out why it is called the Department of War."
4 While he has since denied that he meant to declare war on
5 our own citizens, make no mistake, this is dangerous.

6 We cannot let the military become a political weapon to
7 intimidate our communities and I urge my Republican
8 colleagues to wake up and stop the President and the
9 Secretary from grossly abusing his authority and abusing our
10 military.

11 Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

12 Senator Budd: Thank you.

13 This concludes today's hearing. I would like to thank
14 our witness for his testimony. For the information of
15 members, questions for the record will be due to the
16 committee by 12:00 p.m. on Friday.

17 We are adjourned.

18 [Whereupon, at 11:21 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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