HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON

U.S. POLICY AND POSTURE IN SUPPORT OF ARCTIC READINESS

Tuesday, March 3, 2020

U.S. Senate
Subcommittee on Readiness and
Management Support
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:29 p.m.,
in Room SR-232A, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Dan
Sullivan, chairman of the subcommittee, presiding.

Members Present: Senators Sullivan [presiding],
Fischer, Ernst, Kaine, Shaheen, and King.
OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. DAN SULLIVAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator Sullivan: The hearing on the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support will come to order.

The subcommittee meets today to hear testimony on U.S. policy and posture in support of Arctic readiness, which is a key topic.

We are pleased to have Under Secretary James Anderson here from the Department of Defense and the NORTHCOM Commander, General O'Shaughnessy.

This hearing is a long time coming. Five years ago today, to the day, I asked Secretary of Defense Ash Carter and then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, about the previous administration's 2013 DOD Arctic Strategy. Some of my colleagues will remember this so-called strategy. It was 13 pages, half of which were pictures, talked a lot about the environment, and it mentioned Russia once, in a footnote. Not very much of a DOD strategy. But, to his credit, during the hearing, Secretary Carter stated, "The Arctic is going to be an area of growing strategic importance." General Dempsey then added that, "The Russians have just taken a decision to activate six new brigades in the Arctic" -- four of them were stationed there -- "and to develop a new Arctic Command."
A lot has happened in the ensuing 5 years, but I actually think we've come a long way on some important issues. There is a lot at stake in America's Arctic, which is also home to my State, the great State of Alaska. From resource development and transportation routes, which are opening up due to receding sea ice, to the region's strategic location, keeping the environment protected, to the Arctic's cold-weather hardened but very warmhearted people, my constituents, some of America's most patriotic citizens, the Arctic is growing in its global importance.

Since this day 5 years ago, and under the leadership of my friend and mentor, Senator McCain -- the late Senator McCain -- and now under Chairman Inhofe, Congress has mandated two updates to the original DOD Arctic Strategy. They are much more significant and serious documents. The full Armed Services Committee has included over two dozen Arctic-related provisions in the NDAAs in the last several years, including, importantly, authorizing six polar security cutters for the Coast Guard, creating the need for a strategic Arctic port in the region, and requiring each service to detail how they're implementing the 2019 DOD Arctic Strategy.

In that same time, however, we've seen Russia's push all-in on controlling the Arctic. Russia has opened 16 deepwater ports, 14 airfields, built Arctic military bases,
and even formed a new Northern Command. In fact, Vladimir Putin has referred to the Northern Sea Route as the New Suez Canal and has made major military investments to ensure this route for Russia, and his government has even threatened to sink foreign vessels that do not have a Russian pilot on board or a Russian escort. The Russians also have built, now, 54 icebreakers, many of which are weaponized, some of which are nuclear. The United States, for our part, has two, and one is broken.

Secretary of State Pompeo, in a speech before the Arctic nations in Finland, stated, "These Russian provocative actions are part of a pattern of aggressive behavior in the Arctic."

Meanwhile, China has added themselves as a wannabe player in the Arctic, as well. Currently, China has two medium icebreakers. And, this December, they released plans to build their first heavy-class icebreaker. In early 2018, China released its own Arctic strategy -- the "Polar Silk Road," it was entitled -- in which they describe themselves as a, quote, "near-Arctic state." They created this made-up designation in spite of the fact that China is 900 miles away from the Arctic Circle. As Secretary Pompeo stated in his speech in Finland, "There are only Arctic states and non-Arctic states. No third category exists. And claiming otherwise entitles China to exactly nothing. In case our
Chinese Communist Party individuals who are watching, on behalf of the U.S. and Alaska and other Arctic nations, let me be clear on one thing. There is no such thing as a near-Arctic state." And that's not going to -- and I just want to repeat that again. No such thing.

Let me be clear about another thing, as well. Great-power competition is outlined in our Nation's National Security and National Defense Strategy, strategies that have strong bipartisan support in the Senate. That great-power competition is coming to the Arctic. Congress, in a bipartisan way, understands this. Secretary Pompeo certainly does. The media, as evidenced by headlines that I will introduce for the record, over the last year on the growing rivalry in the Arctic -- and I'm going to submit this for the record, all these headlines, without objection -- also is understanding this.

[The information referred to follows:]

[SUBCOMMITTEE INSERT]
Senator Sullivan: However, the one entity in Washington, D.C., that has been slow to recognize the challenges and threat in the Arctic is actually the Department of Defense. So, today we are holding this hearing focused on readiness in this important region of America and our military's readiness to respond. Simply put, we are not fully ready at all to conduct great-power competition in the Arctic or other cold-weather environments, like those found in most of the countries where the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy recognize there is going to be near-peer competition, like Russia and China and also North Korea. We're improving, but we've got a long way to go.

I want to thank both our witnesses again -- Secretary Anderson, General O'Shaughnessy -- for being here today to participate in this hearing.

I especially want to thank General O'Shaughnessy for his steadfast leadership, advocacy on Arctic issues. He certainly is not one of the people in the Department that needs to be reminded of the importance of the Arctic. I also want to thank General O'Shaughnessy for his decades of exceptional service to our Nation. Your great service is going to be missed, sir, and we thank you so much for everything that you've done for our Nation.

With that, I'd like to turn it over to my friend and
colleague, Senator Kaine.
STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And welcome, to the witnesses.

I'm very glad we're having this hearing. This is the first hearing this year of the Readiness Subcommittee. We'll be busy in the next couple of months. I had the opportunity, over the last recess, to visit the shipyard in Pearl Harbor. And, you know, so whether it's the Shipyard Industrial Optimization Plan, whether it's workforce training, I mean, these are the kinds of issues that we grapple with, and I'm really glad that Senator Sullivan has pulled this hearing together today, because I know many of the committee members -- I know Senator King has done a lot of work on Arctic issues. I haven't. So, I'm looking forward to really climbing the learning curve.

When Secretary Seward helped purchase the Arctic from Russia during the Lincoln administration, they called it Seward's Folly. And it wasn't too long after that that they realized what a genius move it was. And I think we're realizing, every day, more reasons that it was a genius move, and certainly the melting of the Arctic and the open sea lanes is turning it into an area where -- thank God we're an Arctic nation, but it only is a genius move if we take advantage of it.
I was at Elmendorf Air Force Base in April with a CODEL on our way to Korea and North Vietnam -- or Vietnam -- and we had a lengthy discussion. They were really making the case for Arctic investments. I'm not going to talk about one of my pet issues today, just because it's probably not that productive, and that's the -- we were getting strong advice during that visit and during a subsequent visit to INDOPACOM that, "Why doesn't the U.S. ratify the U.N. Convention on Law of the Sea?" Because our allies, both Arctic nations like Russia and those claiming to be near-Arctic -- and, you're right, there's no such category -- they use their ratification of the treaty to assert claims in the Arctic that we cannot assert, absent being a signator, nor can we undertake defensive posture to illegitimate claims that are asserted without being a signator. We have to get other nations to, sort of, do it. It would be better -- I think we'd be more successful if we did that ourself. But, we'll save that for another hearing.

We have paid attention to the need for icebreakers, but the posture and readiness is much more complicated, as Senator Sullivan mentioned. How are we training our forces to be able to fight and operate in the High North? How do we make sure that there are not gaps between NORTHCOM, EUCOM, and PACOM, each of which have critical responsibilities? We want to make sure that the -- nothing
falls through the cracks there as they work together in coordination. Planning for other capabilities, improved communications, for example, that have some specific needs in the Arctic zone. And then, how are we cooperating with allies, Canada and other Nordic countries, who have been good allies in a number of ways?

So, that's what we're hoping that we will address today. I think it will be a good discussion. I look forward to it.

And I thank the Chair for pulling this hearing together.

Senator Sullivan: Great. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

And I want to, again, welcome our witnesses. And you each will have 5 minutes for your opening statement. You can submit a longer statement for the record.

Secretary Anderson, we will begin with you, sir.

You're recognized.
STATEMENT OF JAMES H. ANDERSON, PERFORMING THE DUTIES OF DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY

Dr. Anderson: Thank you, Chairman Sullivan, Ranking Member Kaine, distinguished committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of a hearing on U.S. policy and posture in support of Arctic readiness. It is a privilege to be here, together with my colleague, and to speak on behalf of the Office of Secretary of Defense.

The Department assesses long-term threats, risks, and challenges within the global context of the National Defense Strategy, the NDS. The NDS was released in 2018, and it is the Department's guiding document, which articulates key military-related challenges facing our Nation.

The NDS is clear that the primary challenge to the United States security and prosperity is the reemergence of long-term strategic competition with great powers. As the Strategy makes clear, the threats posed by China and Russia are immediate, pressing, and of an order of magnitude that sets them apart from other challenges. We are seeing this competition play out in varying levels of intensity in key areas of the globe, including the Arctic.

The 2019 DOD Arctic Strategy is anchored in the priorities of the NDS and frames the Arctic in a broad geopolitical context. The Strategy recognizes that competition in the Arctic is important and it is one
dimension of a broader global competition with China and Russia.

We also acknowledge that the character of competition varies between China and Russia, as they have vastly different geography, interests, and capability related to the Arctic region. Addressing competition in the Arctic requires the Department to effectively implement the NDS, as well as to take specific steps in the Arctic using a whole-of-government approach, further supplemented and reinforced by allies and partners.

The Department's end state for the Arctic is a secure and stable region, where U.S. national interests are safeguarded, the U.S. homeland is defended, and nations work cooperatively to address shared challenges. This end state recognizes the distinctive and historic characteristics of the Arctic security environment. It also reflects the deliberate decisions made by Arctic nations to generally engage constructively on shared challenges in the region.

The immediate prospect of conflict in the Arctic remains low, but the Department maintains a clear-eyed approach to our competitors' activities and their implications for U.S. interests and our military operations. In making these assessments, we begin with the fundamental difference between Russia and China: Russia is an Arctic nation, China is not. Russia and China are both
increasingly active in the region, although in different ways, for different reasons, and with different implications for U.S. national security.

Russia's military investments in the Arctic contribute to its territorial defense, but may result in greater operational risk to forces that access the region. China seeks a role in Arctic governance, despite it not having territory claims in the region. There is the distinct risk that China may repeat predatory economic behavior in the Arctic that it has exhibited in other regions. Our focus is on achieving defense objectives, rather than seeking to duplicate the capabilities or approaches of our competitors.

The DOD Arctic Strategy establishes three defense objectives, derived from the NDS, which guide the Department's approach in addressing competition in the Arctic: defend the homeland, compete when necessary, and ensure common domains remain free and open. Our network of allies and partners are the cornerstone of the Department's approach to the region, and a clear strategic advantage for the United States.

Six of the seven other Arctic nations are either NATO allies or NATO-enhanced opportunity partners. Our allies and partners share the United States interest in maintaining a rules-based international order, including in the Arctic region.
Although the Arctic presents unique challenges to the Department, we believe we have the right strategic approach and a strong network of allies and partners to navigate this challenging and changing environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Anderson follows:]
Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Secretary Anderson.

General O'Shaughnessy.
STATEMENT OF GENERAL TERRENCE J. O'SHAUGHNESSY, USAF,
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND AND NORTH AMERICAN
AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

General O'Shaughnessy: Well, Chairman Sullivan and
Ranking Member Kaine, and distinguished members of the
committee, I'm truly honored to be here today as the
Commander of U.S. Northern Command and North American
Aerospace Defense Command. And I'm also pleased to testify
alongside Dr. Anderson, and congratulate him on the White
House's intent to nominate him as Under Secretary of Defense
for Policy.

And, Chairman Sullivan, thank you for allowing us to
submit our written statements for the record.

Senator Sullivan: Without objection.

General O'Shaughnessy: USNORTHCOM and NORAD are
charged with executing the National Defensive Strategy
number-one objective: defend the homeland. And our
adversaries have watched, they've learned, they've invested
to offset our strengths while exploiting our weaknesses.
They've demonstrated patterns of behavior that indicate
their capability, their capacity, and their intent to hold
our homeland at risk below the nuclear threshold. And the
changing security environment makes it clear that the Arctic
is no longer a fortress wall and the Arctic Ocean is no
longer a protective mode. They are now avenues of approach
to the homeland.

The increasing commercial and adversary presence in the Arctic has created an immediate need to build Arctic awareness, enhance Arctic operations, and strengthen the rules-based order in the region. To meet this challenge, we need to invest in a capable and persistent defense that can deter adversaries, protect critical infrastructure, enable power projection forward, and prevent homeland vulnerabilities.

To deter, detect, and defeat the threats arrayed against the homeland today, USNORTHCOM and NORAD are transforming our commands and our way of thinking. We cannot defend the Nation against 21st-century threats with 20th-century technology. We must be able to outpace our adversaries using a layered defense infused with our latest technology. The Strategic Homeland Integrated Ecosystem Layered Defense, or what we're calling SHIELD, is the architecture we need to defend our homeland against adversary threats. And the Arctic, particularly Alaska, has a critical role to play in SHIELD.

As such, our layered defense needs to establish awareness in all domains, from below the Arctic Ocean to the highest levels of space where we're at risk. We need a layered sensing grid with sensors in all domains which can detect and track threats from their point of origin long
before approaching our sovereign territory. In other words, it requires the ability to identify and eliminate the archers before the arrows are released.

We need an adaptable architecture for joint all-domain command and control capable of fusing a myriad of sensors across the globe into accurate, decision-quality threat information and at the speed of relevance for effective command and control. The DOD, in coordination with the United States Air Force in the lead, is using the 2021 budget to further this capability of JADC2.

And lastly, we need the ability to deploy defeat mechanisms capable of neutralizing advanced weapon systems in order to defend our homeland.

We have put great effort into industry coordination within these areas. However, more needs to be done to keep pace with the advancing threats to our homeland. We need to ensure we have complete awareness of what is happening in and around the Arctic and our Nation, and have the ability to defeat all relevant threats. A successful strategic approach is enhanced by cooperation with allies and partners. We are strengthening our Arctic alliances, stretching from Finland to the far reaches of Nome, including our indigenous partners, in order to compete when necessary to maintain favorable regional balances of power and ensure common domains remain free and open. Together,
we are stronger, as highlighted by our great binational NORAD Command with Canada, and we are mindful of the gravity of our mission and the trust that you have placed in us. Aligned with the Department of Defense Arctic Strategy and capturing our sense of urgency, we at USNORTHCOM and NORAD, have declared 2020 as a year of homeland defense, and are moving forward with the implementation of a layered defense ecosystem called SHIELD, in which the Arctic plays an absolutely critical role. You and the committee should have the great faith in the men and women at USNORTHCOM and NORAD, because, together, we have the watch.

Thank you for your support. And I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General O'Shaughnessy follows:]
Senator Sullivan: Well, thank you, to both our witnesses.

I'm going to defer my first 5 minutes of questioning to Senator King, who I know has another commitment but is also -- had a strong interest in these Arctic issues, and I want to make sure he and other members have opportunity to ask questions. But, I appreciate him being here, very much.

Senator King.

Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your taking the initiative to move this issue forward, to keep it in front of us, and to call this important hearing.

General, any evidence of China-Russia cooperating in the Arctic?

General O'Shaughnessy: Senator, we certainly see areas where China and Russia are cooperating at large, and we do see some areas where China and Russia are cooperating specifically in the Arctic. You look at the investment, for example, that China has made with Russia in the Arctic. We do have some concern of that, but we also have independent concern with each of the activities that we see from China --

Senator King: But, their primary motivations seem to be separate. The Chinese are mostly economic, the Russians are defensive and military?

General O'Shaughnessy: That's broadly correct,
Senator. The only thing I would add to that is, because of -- 20 percent of the Russian GDP nominally comes from the Arctic, that the Chinese investment will play a critical role there, as well.

Senator King: By the way, I think, if we're going to take a lesson from China declaring itself a near-Arctic nation, I'm declaring Maine a near-Caribbean nation, just -- [Laughter.]

Senator King: You know, there's -- it works just as well.

I'm worried about the operational seam that we've got -- we've got three of our combatant commands that come together, and I just want to be sure --

Senator Sullivan: We have a chart for that, if you want to explain it --

Senator King: Yeah.

Senator Sullivan: -- a little bit more.

Senator King: Okay. Well, I don't want to steal your -- but, it's a very serious concern. I just want to be sure that the three combatant commands are absolutely seamlessly working together so that, in time of some crisis or difficult situation, we don't have a confusion of leadership. Can you assure me on that?

General O'Shaughnessy: Senator, I will do two things. First, I would acknowledge there -- the seam is the lines on
the map, but I will assure you that we are working closely
together. One of the things that does help that, as the
NORTHCOM designation as the advocate for capabilities within
the Arctic gives us a lead role to try to bring these teams
together. And I will say constant and regular
communication, especially between NORTHCOM and EUCOM, as we
look at the threats residing within the Arctic and through
the Arctic. And we actually exercise that muscle. When I
say that, I mean the transfer of forces back and forth, the
seamless ability to command and control those forces, as
well as just looking, not only with our allies and partners
and friends, but how that we actually integrate together. I
use an example: I went to the U.K. to go to the staff talks
with the U.K. as part of our tie-in with EUCOM forces, met
with Denmark leadership, and we also, operationally, are
back and forth with our exercises, et cetera. So, I should
give --

Senator King: That's what I was going to hope, that
there are exercises to clarify "what happens if" as to who's
in charge and who's calling the shots.

General O'Shaughnessy: Absolutely, Senator. And the
way we look at it is, although -- there is a line on the
map, of course, but that line does not actually exist there.
And so, we want to make sure that our forces, as they
operate, and not limited because of a line that we
arbitrarily put on the map.

Senator King: Now, you mentioned NORAD a couple of
times, and mentioned Canada. The bulk of the shoreline,
outside of Alaska, is Canada. Are they engaged? Are they
taking this seriously? Are they having hearings like this?

General O'Shaughnessy: Senator, absolutely. In fact,
I think, as the Trudeau administration has regained the --
post the election, regained power, one of their focus areas,
in fact, is the Arctic. And so, with the NORAD -- under the
NORAD construct, of course, we're fully engaged with our
Canadian partners, and see a resurgence in that partnership.

Senator King: Dr. Anderson, I met with the U.S.
Ambassador to Denmark recently. I think it's good news
we're opening a consulate in Greenland. I think that's a
positive development. Of course, Thule Air Force Base is an
important outpost up there.

Finally, I urge you to go to Iceland. Iceland may be
the second-most strategic place in the world. It's right in
the middle of --

Senator Sullivan: And what is the most strategic place
--

Senator King: I think it's -- it's one of those other
States that up in the --

Senator Sullivan: Okay, I'm just checking.

[Laughter.]
Senator King: It's the one Billy Mitchell designated.

Was that before or after his court-martial that he made that?

Voice: It was before.

Senator King: I see, okay. This has been going on for 6 years.

[Laughter.]

Senator King: But, Iceland is a tremendously strategic spot. It's an unsinkable aircraft carrier right in the middle of the -- of that -- of the gap, Greenland to England. And we, I think, mistakenly left it, left Keflavik, in the early part of this century. And I just hope that you'll keep Iceland in mind, keep the rotational going, and perhaps think about a more permanent kind of presence there because of its strategic position, particularly with regard to Russian submarines.

Dr. Anderson: Oh, absolutely concur on the strategic importance of that area, both Denmark, Greenland, and Iceland, and the U.K., the -- the GIUK gap, not only for subsurface submarine activity, but also for access to the European theater and defense also, obviously, of the homeland. So, certainly concur with your assessment.

Senator King: Thank you.

Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you for the courtesy. I do
have to go to another committee meeting. Thank you.

Senator Sullivan: Absolutely.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you both for being here.

I want to make sure I understood you correctly, Dr. Anderson. Did I understand you to say that the potential for conflict in the Arctic is low? Or did I misunderstand that?

Dr. Anderson: That is what I've said. Presently, our assessment is that the potential for conflict, near term, is low.

Senator Shaheen: There was an interesting piece on -- I think it may have been 60 Minutes within the last couple of months, about Russia's activities in Norway and the Arctic region, and the threat that they pose to NATO. And I guess I'm puzzled by that comment, given everything that the Chairman said, and given that piece and what else we have learned about Russia's activities in the Arctic, why we're comfortable that the potential for conflict is low. And I don't know if you want to answer that, or General O'Shaughnessy. Which of you -- maybe both of you could answer that.

Dr. Anderson: Well, maybe I can expand a little bit.

We're certainly in a competition with the Russian
Federation. There is no question about that. And that
competition, you know, spans a spectrum of information and
diplomacy and economics, export controls, the Russian
espionage, and so forth, and so forth.

But, when I was saying the potential for conflict is
low, what I'm referring to there is actual no-kidding
kinetic conflict. And, in that sense, presently, we assess
that to be low. Now, we are very mindful of Russian
capabilities, Russian intent, and -- over the medium term
and the long term -- and we are very clear-eyed about what
we must do in order to deter Moscow from any thinking or any
-- any belief that they may have something to gain by
military activity.

Senator Shaheen: Good. Well, I'm glad we're clear-eyed, because I would hope that we are not caught off guard
by what Russia is doing, as we were in Georgia and as we
were in Ukraine.

I want to go to what we're doing to prepare for cold-weather activities. We have the U.S. Army Cold Regions
Research and Engineering Laboratory in Hanover, New
Hampshire, which I think does very good work. They are
trying to do everything possible to make sure that we can
operate in cold-weather climates. But, I wonder if you
could -- either of you could provide an update on what the
Army's doing in response to the DOD Arctic Strategy that was
published in June of 2019 to take advantage of CRREL, in
Hanover, and the other things we need to do to prepare.

Dr. Anderson: So, I can -- happy to start there. I
mean, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a -- kind of a
research facility right outside of Fairbanks, where they
look at a variety of scientific and engineering challenges
that pertain not only to Alaska, but to the Nation as a
whole. So, that would be one example.

Clearly, the Army has forces, Active Duty and
reservists, in Alaska. They train, more generally, for
cold-weather environments. So, I think, you know, across
the board, as with the other services, they take the
potential challenges and the existing challenges of
operating in that harsh and demanding environment very
seriously.

General O'Shaughnessy: Senator, what I would add to
this is, what I have seen just over the last couple of years
is a relative rapid rise in each of the services'
participation in preparation to actually operate in the
Arctic. And that includes, of course, the Army as a key
force.

The examples that I would use is, as we find other
areas of the world you can deploy to with your current set
of equipment, with your -- with the normal training that you
would have, maybe, at home station, the Arctic is not like
that. You have to specifically train to be in the Arctic.
You have to have the right gear, just as you mentioned. You
have to -- and it's everything from your clothing to your
facilities to even, you know, the oil you use in your
machinery. And if you haven't been up there actually doing
it, actually training that way, you will not be prepared to
operate in the Arctic. So, I'm really pleased that I see an
increased activity in the Arctic training, not just within
-- certainly in Alaska, JPARC Range, as an example, a great
training opportunity for our force -- but even with our NATO
partners, as well. And we see more and more, for example,
Army deployments to our NATO partners to be able to operate
in that environment. We see the Navy sailing in areas that
they haven't sailed in decades. We see the Air Force
committed to continuing to operate in this. And we see the
Marines also preparing and participating. For example,
Arctic Edge, which we have just -- ongoing, just starting
right now, we see over 1500 personnel participating in that
Arctic-focused exercise.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, can I ask one more question?

Senator Sullivan: Absolutely.

Senator Shaheen: So, global warming is obviously
having an impact on the Arctic. And it's an impact not just
on the sea lanes that will be open for longer periods of
time because of icemelt, but also on permafrost and what
that's doing to the infrastructure in the Arctic. Can you
talk about what we're planning to address that and with --
in terms of cost, and whether there are other -- there's
other potential for conflicts that may be happening because
we're going to see those sea lanes open for longer periods
of time, and the ability of some of our competitors to get
up there and present challenges to the United States and our
allies?

Dr. Anderson: So, I'm happy to start with that. I
mean, as has been mentioned, fortunately we're -- we do have
a icebreaker program underway. And, you know, it's -- we
have six, total -- three heavy, three medium -- that are in
the pipeline. That will help with some of the increased
hazards that -- resulting from warming trends. With respect
--

Senator Shaheen: Can I -- I'm sorry to interrupt, but
how many of those are operational now?

Dr. Anderson: So, right now we have one heavy that is
operational, the Polar Star. It -- there's another one, a
Polar Sea, but it is tied up at port and being cannibalized
to keep the Polar Star operational. Then we have one medium
one, the Healy. They both date back to commissionings back
in the 19- -- late 1970s. But, fortunately, we have some
new ones that are coming forth. So, there is that piece of
it. I would say, on the military installations and -- you
know, every military installation up in the High North, in
Alaska, you know, they have -- they are looking very closely
at the permafrost, the thawing, other environmental hazards.
Not related to climate change, but Alaska suffered an
earthquake in the fall of 2018. So, all these sort of
ecological/environmental implications are something that
commanders are dealing with.

I don't know if my colleague would like to expand a
little bit.

General O'Shaughnessy: Sure. First, let me mention
the Polar Security Cutter Program. That is incredibly
important, I think, to the Department of Defense, although,
obviously, it's our great Coast Guard brethren who will be
doing that. But, it's also worth noting, as we look at the
-- those coming online, that their first ones will -- first
one will go to the Antarctic. Right? And so, we have to
keep that in mind with respect to the timeline that we're
dealing with here, with respect to when they're actually
going to be relevant to the Arctic. And I think that's a
key part. $551 million this year, though, from the
Department of Defense budget, supporting that program. So,
I'm very pleased that that continues to go forward, but I
can't emphasize enough how important it is to keep that on
timeline.
To your point about some of the effects that we are seeing, whether it be from the diminishing sea ice, the permafrost -- I'll use Barrow as an example, and one of my trips up there. What I see when I -- when we go up there is, it's -- there's a common set of challenges that we're faced with. And when I go there and see -- it's not only the military installations that are challenged now, it's the local population, it's indigenous people, it's the local infrastructure. And so, to me, this is something we can work together, and we can find ways that -- for example, the road going to our -- one of our key radar sites there is the same road that the villages use. And so, how do we approach this together? Because they're very real impacts. And so, we have to ensure that we maintain our readiness, that we maintain our ability to keep those military installations operating, whilst at the same time I think we can partner with our local people and communities to see how we can get after this together.

But, to your point, it -- when you get out there and see it, it is very real, the impacts that we're seeing, and we have to make sure that's part of our cross-check, going forward.

Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you.

Thank you for the additional time, Mr. Chairman. That raises a whole bunch of other questions, but I'm already
Senator Sullivan: Senator Kaine.

Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And I just want to follow up on some of the climate questions. I was able to go with Senator Heinrich into the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge a couple of summers ago, and we were on Kaktovik, which Senator Sullivan knows well. And the melting of sea ice has put polar bears ashore. And also, the sea ice served as an anti-erosion buffer to -- just the erosion of tidal action; and now that sea ice has melted, erosion -- moving the little airstrip. We were in Arctic Village, which is an Athabascan village at the far south part of the range, and they're talking about caribou migration is so different than what it was that the traditional hunting of the caribou nearby -- it's very hard to get to the caribou in many years now.

So, I'm -- I guess I want to know this. What planning assumptions do you put in as you're looking at this? You know, the National Defense Strategy, the NDS, much of it, as stated by -- has to be sort of an irreversible -- we're going to be in great-power competition for a long time. And if that's the case, we're not going to change quickly. You have to make some planning assumptions about climate, whether it's permafrost, sea icemelt, rising sea levels, warming temperatures. What assumptions are you putting into
your planning documents about the effect of climate change
and then how it affects the environment in which you need to
operate?

Dr. Anderson: I think a big part of this has to do
with building in resilience to military installations, new
ones and refurbishing old ones.

Senator Kaine: But, what -- and I get that, but,
before I get to resilience, because we do resilience
planning at Norfolk, too -- you do resilience planning based
on an assumption. You know, there's going to be a 2-
percent rise in temperature in the next 30 years, or the,
you know, flooding will become more common in the streets.
So, you do resilience planning based upon assumptions. Is
there a document that you use, as you're making plans for
operations in and through the Arctic, where you are making
some assumptions sort of based on most reasonable-case
scenarios about climate effects?

General O'Shaughnessy: Yeah, Senator, I would say that
there's multiple inputs, if you will, to the planning
process, all the way from NOAA and what they're able to
provide us. What we're seeing clearly, working with the
Corps of Engineers very specifically, on what we're seeing
and what we can expect to see as that continues to -- those
effects continue to enhance --

Senator Kaine: If I wanted to get a document, read it,
and see the assumptions that you're making, what is that
document? Where could I get them?

General O'Shaughnessy: Senator, I think it's multiple
documents, and we can certainly provide those to you,
multiple sources that we're using to compile together the
effects that we're expecting.

Senator Kaine: I'll ask that one for the record,
because I'd like to take a look at that.

[The information referred to follows:]

Senator Kaine: General O'Shaughnessy, you stated that
your number-one unfunded requirement is a request for $130
million to provide, quote, "an initial Arctic communication
capability." Tell us what that capability would give to
NORTHCOM that you don't have now.

General O'Shaughnessy: Thank you, Senator.

One of the things that we find -- very simple things
become hard, and one of those is communication, when you're
in the Arctic. If you're above about 65 degrees north, your
satellite communication starts to diminish, and above about
70 it becomes extremely limited, except for some of our more
exquisite capability -- for example, with submarines, et
cetera.

Senator Kaine: Right.

General O'Shaughnessy: And when we look at this, we
find that you could go about this with a -- say, a DOD
project to bring communication, but, what we find is, this
commmercial world is getting after this with the
proliferation of LEO. And so, we find that a partnership
with the commercial world might bring us some capability
sooner, significantly sooner.

And, as we see, for example, the work that OneWeb and
Starlink are doing to proliferate LEO with satellites that
will provide literally the same connectivity that you get in
your home right today, broadband connectivity that would
then be available in the majority of the Arctic, we see that
as an amazing game-changing capability, all the way from,
just, our basic communication, but also, all of our sensors
right now have limited ability to connect in and are --
frankly, are not that resilient. And so, it gives us the
resiliency, it gives us ability to communicate. Think about
search and rescue, think about -- all the things that
normally would be easy become very hard in the Arctic. And
then there's a whole aspect that's on the civilian side, in
the impact to industry, the impact to the indigenous people,
of having that connectivity. So, we think, again, shared
challenges, shared solutions. We think a commercial
partnership would be key to this.

Senator Kaine: Well, I'm very encouraged, because I
don't think we need to build our own, sort of, exquisite
capacity when there's commercial opportunities that are
better. As long as we can protect, you know, the security of information, I think that's very positive.

I want to ask you one more question, and then I know Senator Sullivan has many, and I'll probably come back to ask one further in a second round.

Talk to us about the -- we talked about the seams between EUCOM, PACOM, and NORTHCOM -- talk about the collaborative work that you do with the Coast Guard. So, within the family, the Coast Guard search-and-rescue capacity, the Coast Guard's ice cutters -- so, talk about the relationship with the Coast Guard.

General O'Shaughnessy: Senator, first, I'd highlight just the great coordination, not just within the Arctic, but at large, between the Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security --

Senator Kaine: Yeah.

General O'Shaughnessy: -- across the board. In fact, what I often tell is, I actually meet with the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security as or more often than I meet with the Secretary of the Department of Defense. And I meet with the Secretary of Defense quite often. So, it's a great partner and collaboration, really, across the board.

But, specifically to our Coast Guard partners, Karl Schultz and I -- it's an example of our great program -- we went to Capstone together years ago. We were close friends
ever since. But, that brings a perspective of collaboration from the start. And what we find is, we have -- again, it's these shared challenges and shared work together. As we see the diminishing-ice opportunities that are there, whether it be because of civilian traffic or whether it be the northern sea route and some of the challenges --

Senator Kaine: Right.

General O'Shaughnessy: -- we think we might face with our adversaries, that partnership with the Coast Guard is the key partnership in the Arctic. And I think as we continue to let the polar security cutter -- it's called the "polar security cutter" for a reason, and that middle part of that's security, because it's part of our national security. And whether it's Department of Defense or Department of Homeland Security, that collaboration together is going to be incredibly important. As we go forward and finding those things that we can do together right from the very beginning, we find an incredible synergy.

Senator Kaine: Just one comment, and then to, Senator Sullivan, we have this quirky thing last year, when we had the shutdown, where, you know -- you know, it did -- folks in the military were getting paid, and folks in the Coast Guard weren't, even though they're all part of our defense mission. It just so happens the Coast Guard, because they report up through DHS, were often on joint exercises with
Navy and other military, and they were the ones that were not getting paid, which, you know, God willing, that never happens again, because if it does, and it starts to be a recruiting challenge, like, "Well, why would I want to go to this side of the house if I'm going to be at risk, and I would be less at risk on the DOD side." So, recruiting, retention, our Coast Guard is really necessary to our defense mission, and maybe more in the Arctic than anywhere else.

Senator Sullivan: Right.

Senator Kaine: And there's inequities in there that we have to be careful about, going forward.

General O'Shaughnessy: And, Senator, if I might make one comment, if you'd indulge me. One example -- we have many coastguardsmen on our staff.

Senator Kaine: Right.

General O'Shaughnessy: And they're key and critical to that. I'd make a highlight. I have, actually, one right -- sitting right behind me, Ken Boda -- Captain Ken Boda.

Senator Kaine: I thought I noticed --

General O'Shaughnessy: Right?

Senator Kaine: -- a different color uniform in --

General O'Shaughnessy: Why is that important? They bring a different perspective, but an equally important perspective, as we go forward. Captain Boda was actually
the XO on the Polar Star. He served on the Polar Sea. He was on the Healy. And so, having that on our staff to inform us as we are the advocates for the Arctic is priceless. I mean, literally priceless. And so, that coordination that we have, and the collaboration, where Karl Schultz is sending us his very best people to serve on our staff, to make sure that we can, in fact, as we go forward, looking at this together with our Coast Guard partners.

Senator Kaine: Excellent. Thank you.

Senator Sullivan: Well, as the Chair of the subcommittee in charge of the Coast Guard, I'm also very interested in these issues, as well. And we're actually working on a Coast Guard bill, kind of pre-conferencing it right now with the House, that has a pay-the-Coast-Guard provision that I'm very, very adamant about, that that, what you just mentioned, Senator Kaine, won't happen again.

Let me begin with a couple followup questions.

So, it is NORAD and NORTHCOM's number-one focus on the unfunded priority list that Senator Kaine just mentioned, which is the Arctic coms. And again, that deals with homeland defense, these avenues of approach. Just so I'm aware, General, is that part of, or different than, the SHIELD layered defense that you're talking about?

General O'Shaughnessy: Senator, that's part of it.

Part of the attempt that we're trying to do is, rather than
buy individual systems that are stovepipe and try to solve one problem, we're really approaching this, with SHIELD, with this architecture that could come together that could give us that domain awareness ability to command and control and the defeat mechanisms across all the threats, from ballistic missiles all the way to counter-UAS. And that communication piece of that, so this unfunded priority we have for communications in the Arctic, would be a key part, and be -- insert into our ability to work SHIELD.

Senator Sullivan: And that, of course, protects the avenues of approach to the entire homeland, not just an Alaskan-focused issue, correct?

General O'Shaughnessy: Senator, you bring up a incredibly important point. As we do talk about the Arctic, we must remember, it's not just about the Arctic. It's about our homeland, it's about United States of America and, on the NORAD side, United States and Canada, and protecting our sovereign territory, and having the means to operate in battlespace that is now, as we see advancing adversaries, they have the capability that -- and the intent to operate there. We must have the same ability to operate if we're going to be able to defend our Nation.

Senator Sullivan: And, look, I want to thank you. You've done a great job, certainly in my State. I think the very important constituents of mine, the Alaska Native
population, the Alaska Federation of Natives, have all
honored you, I think, even with your own Native name, which
is a rare and distinct honor.

But, on this Arctic coms piece, too, can you just
unpack, a little bit more, the potential that has for
coverage in some of the communities in my State, which, as
you know, General, it's not just a coms issue for the
military, a lot of the communities in Alaska don't have
nearly the Internet or telecoms coverage that the vast, vast
majority of the Lower 48 accept and take for granted. How
can this unfunded priority also help in that regard?

General O'Shaughnessy: Yeah, thank you for letting me
highlight that, Senator.

And I'd start -- I've actually had the incredible honor
to actually have four names --

Senator Sullivan: Wow.

General O'Shaughnessy: -- the indigenous --

Senator Sullivan: That's more than me.

General O'Shaughnessy: -- Alaska.

[Laughter.]

General O'Shaughnessy: And we've had great partnership
with AFN.

Senator Sullivan: Great.

General O'Shaughnessy: And part of that, I think, is

because we really see this as falling -- finding those areas
of common challenges that we can work together. And we find, the more that we peel the onion back, and that the more things we actually find, that we have these common interests, and we can get after it together.

To your point about this communications that work and -- we can look at this from a couple different aspects. One is, just think about each of the individual villages that are currently cut off, that could -- you know, the schools, the health facilities, the first responders, if they had the ability to actually communicate.

Senator Sullivan: Yeah.

General O'Shaughnessy: But, then, from a more selfish interest of the Department of Defense, think about if we could link all those together with search-and-rescue capability, with the ability to tie in those villages to part of our infrastructure, maybe looking at some of the work that we've done with the -- on the Canadian side, with the Canadian Ranger Program, and really taking full advantage of that expertise, 10,000 years of understanding the Arctic, and how do we leverage that into our capability, capacity. So, again, I see the future. I see so much -- so many opportunities specifically to the communications package that we're looking to address. Part of it is, in the end, it's a business. It's -- we're looking in -- to go to the commercial. So, the more participants we can get
within that, the better business case we have. So, again, we can look at it either from an altruistic standpoint, if we want to work with our partners, or we can look at it, even from our own self-interests in mind, having more people part of this process actually makes a better business case. And if you're OneWeb or you're Starlink, you're much more interested if you have a bigger population. Same as the reason why we're working with industry to try to get the industry interested in this, as well, because then it's more paying subscribers, if you will, that will really allow this to take off. And I think we are on the verge of being able to make this happen, and I think it'll be game-changing for the military, I think it'll be game-changing for the local populations. I think it would be game-changing for our partners, like the Coast Guard, to be able to communicate, and on and on and on. So, I really want to continue to pursue this capability.

Senator Sullivan: Great. Well, I think you have done -- in both your -- full committee and this committee, your testimony has done a good job of highlighting the importance of that. I certainly am going to make a press in the NDAA, and I hope my colleagues will recognize the importance of it. So, thank you for that. I think it's been very well articulated, and I'm hopeful that we can get that number-one unfunded priority for NORTHCOM actually funded by the DOD.
Mr. -- Secretary Anderson, I'm going to press a little bit. I think your point on six of seven of the Arctic nations are allies -- that's actually a really good point. I've been a little bit frustrated, as you probably gathered from my opening statement, with regard to the Pentagon's approach to the Arctic. I think there's areas where the Congress leads and the Pentagon follows, where the Pentagon leads, the Congress follows. I think this is -- unfortunately, been the former. And I think we're starting to see, with advocates like General O'Shaughnessy, a focus in the Pentagon that's needed, because this is strategic terrain that is becoming more and more important. That was what former Secretary Mattis mentioned.

One thing that I wanted to mention to you. You know, in the first serious DOD Arctic Strategy, they talked about how we need to protect our sovereign territory, our sea lanes, through Freedom of Navigation Operations, kind of like what we do in the South China Sea. And actually, we do FONOPs all over the world. I've asked, particularly, our Navy leadership -- this is the goal, this is the stated strategy, this is what DOD says it's going to do. However, it appears to me, with the lack of icebreakers -- one heavy -- that -- and even ice-hardened Navy shipping -- that the ability to do FONOPs in this key part of the world to protect America's strategic interests are quite limited.
You know, I like to brag about the fact that I had five uncles and great uncles who served and fought in World War II. One of my great uncles was a lieutenant in the Navy, did three Murmansk runs. It was a very dangerous Navy duty during World War II. And that was all Arctic operations with the U.S. Navy. I'm not sure the U.S. Navy can pull that off again right now.

What is your sense of the ability -- now, granted, we're starting to build icebreakers, but we don't even have ships that can plow through ice, or ice-hardened ships. The Department of Defense has said we're going to do Freedom of Navigation Operations. Putin has said that the Arctic is the new Suez Canal that he's going to control. He has 54 icebreakers. He's got all the cards. What are we doing to push back on that situation, when our Strategy clearly states that we should have the ability to do FONOPs?

And, by the way, in one of the hearings that we had with the CNO of the Navy, he said, "Well, Senator, we -- we're up there a lot, the Navy is." I'm like, "Really? How? Where?" "With subs." Well, I think it's great that we've got subs up there, but a sub is not a FONOP. You can't see a sub. The whole point of a FONOP is to demonstrate presence. So, how do we address that, Mr. Secretary? Because I think we're sorely lacking in that realm, as of now, even though it is part of the Strategy.
Dr. Anderson: So, the -- I mean, exercising Freedom of Navigation Operations is certainty something that's central to the Department and to the Nation. And we do this around the globe, in some areas certainly more than others, as your question suggests. I cannot, you know, telegraph when we're going to do FONOPs in the Arctic, but I will --

Senator Sullivan: Yeah, well, my question is, Can we do FONOPs in the Arctic?

Dr. Anderson: Yes, sir.

Senator Sullivan: Very different question.

Dr. Anderson: Understood. So, I do -- depending on --

Senator Sullivan: What's the answer?

Dr. Anderson: The Arctic, as, sir, the map behind you suggests, is actually a quite large area, and I think we -- the Navy does have the capability, in, sort of, ice-free areas, to do FONOPs in a very limited capacity, or more limited capacity, in those that might be congested with ice. We've already talked about, you know, the limitations there.

But, it's something that -- of course, as a matter of principle, we take issue with any excessive maritime claim. We submit to Congress every year an annual report of those nations that are claiming excessively. And we do quite a number of FONOPs around the world. But, I take your point, and certainly acknowledge that we do have limitations in the Arctic right now.
Senator Sullivan: And are we focused on trying to address those?

Dr. Anderson: I think the Cutter Security Program with the Coast Guard, the development of those icebreakers is certainly a large part of that.

Senator Sullivan: How about ice-hardened Navy ships?

Dr. Anderson: So, my understanding is that the Navy has looked at this, and they have assessed that, to exercise their Arctic Strategy, they do not have a requirement for ice-hardened ships.

Senator Sullivan: Do you think that is even remotely logical?

Dr. Anderson: Again, looking at the -- at certain places in the Arctic, we can certainly -- and we do operate both in the surface and the subsurface and above the air, to demonstrate our overflight rights and our maritime freedom of the seas. But, there are limitations.

Senator Sullivan: Yeah, I don't think that's logical. I think the days of the Murmansk runs, which is a proud history of the U.S. Navy that I'm proud that my family participated in, couldn't do them right now. And that's -- we're going to wake up one of these days and recognize that that's a severe limitation. And we've been beating the drum here, but I think we've got a lot more work to do.

Senator Kaine.
Senator Kaine: A couple more items. So, I want to pick up on this "six of seven" comment, Dr. Anderson, in your testimony. I thought that was interesting. Six of the seven other Arctic nations are either NATO allies or NATO-enhanced opportunities partners. The Arctic Council excludes military and security issues from its mandate. We do other work there. But, talk a -- I hadn't really thought about the fact that the Arctic nations are generally NATO allies or security partners. So, what is the current status? And this question is actually for either of you, about just, you know, the mil-to-mil cooperation between us and those NATO allies and partners on Arctic issues. Are they taking it seriously? Are they making the investments? Do we do wargaming and other exercises to the extent that we should?

Dr. Anderson: So, I would say absolutely yes, with the case of our NATO allies and those enhanced partners. To cite a -- kind of a current example, right now Norway is leading the charge up to a major exercise that's going to run from 12 to 20 March, entitled Exercise Cold Response. There'll be some 15,000 allies and partners, including some U.S. forces, involved in that exercise. Norway is -- you know, it brings some strong capabilities to the table. They are going ahead with the F-35. We have a very strong bilateral relationship with Denmark, with our access to
Greenland, as mentioned earlier, with Thule. With --
Iceland also provides certain other contributions with some
non-NATO partners, with the Fins and the Swedes. Very
strong relationships there. And a strong relationship
between them and NATO itself. This manifests itself in a
wide variety of sort of bilateral efforts and also key
leader engagements.

So, I would say, in short, it's -- we need them, and we
exercise them -- with them in a robust way. And this
provides us a distinct and clear advantage over the Russian
Federation in the competition space regarding the Arctic.

Senator Kaine: I mean, that is something that we need
to always remember, that we have these networks of
alliances. And Russia and China just -- that's not the way
they do things. They can purchase friendships through
transactions, but they don't have the real networks of
alliances that we have. And that's strong.

I am worried, though, about Russia. There's an awful
lot of a northern route around Russia. And so, what are we
thinking about when Putin says, "Hey, look, this is the new
Suez Canal, the route from the Pacific over to the North
Atlantic. You know, if you don't either have, you know, a
Russian ship or you're not escorted by a Russian, we're
going to cause you trouble, we're going to pay -- you're
going to have to pay a big toll to us to do it"? Is that
something that we just have to accept, or what are -- what
are the thoughts of the U.S. and our allies in the Arctic
countries about how we would maintain open sea, you know, that
is essential adjacent to the northern border of Russia?

Dr. Anderson: I would -- I'd say, broadly, that, you
know, those type of Russian claims, you know, where they
demand to have escorts on ships or they insist on putting
pilots on ships, I mean, that is completely unacceptable,
and, you know, our State Department has the -- kind of, the
diplomatic lead on that to take issue in the appropriate
forum. So, that is not something that we accept as the
status quo.

Senator Kaine: Okay.

General O'Shaughnessy: And, Senator, I --

Senator Kaine: General O'Shaughnessy?

General O'Shaughnessy: -- I would just add to that.

It's -- and I think it does start, as the Secretary
mentioned, as, you know -- look, watching Secretary Pompeo,
in May at Finland, where he very clearly articulated that.
I think that's where it starts. But, then we have to
continue to show -- because our lack of presence is a
statement unto itself. And so, continuing to work with our
allies and partners with respect to continuing to enhance
our ability to operate there and actually operate there.
For example, our tie-in with Denmark is an example where
their Arctic Command has partnered with us at NORTHCOM, which defies the seams mentioned earlier, with respect to COCOMs, but -- and we're, you know, sharing information back and forth, we're doing exercises together. And so, those things are the start of it. But, also, we're doing roundtable -- for example, the Arctic Council, of course, is not military, by design --

Senator Kaine: Right.

General O'Shaughnessy: -- but we're able to use, kind of, the Arctic Security Council to go and talk through those security issues, to actually have that dialogue with our allies and partners with respect to the very challenges that you mentioned, Senator.

Senator Kaine: Great. Thank you.

That's all my questions.

Senator Sullivan: Thank you. And I'll probably go for 5 to 10 minutes.


Senator Sullivan: Well, let me close out with a few more questions. This has been a very informative hearing. You know, gentlemen, we're talking FONOPs, which is really, in essence, power projection, which is what our military is, in many ways, all about. But, as you know, power projection also relates to infrastructure and the
ability to have ports and other infrastructure that can
support military assets.

General O'Shaughnessy, you know the challenge in
Alaska. The closest strategic port that could actually
handle, say, a Arleigh Burke-class Navy ship or a polar-
class icebreaker, is about 1500 nautical miles from the
Arctic Circle. So, that would be about the equivalent of
having, you know, Fort Lauderdale cover the entire eastern
seaboard up to Boston, in terms of port capability. We
wouldn't accept that. But, somehow we accept that in the
Arctic. So, it's the Port of Anchorage or Dutch Harbor that
could handle ships that are the size that can project power.
And I'm not even talking an aircraft carrier. I'm talking
just destroyers and icebreakers.

So, previous Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer,
former Secretary Richard Spencer, had been to Alaska twice
with the Commandant of the Coast Guard. He clearly has
advocated for and said we need a strategic Arctic port.
This committee, two different times, has passed legislation
highlighting the need for a strategic Arctic port that can,
essentially, provide a base where a Navy ship or a
significant-size national security cutter or polar security
cutter can pull up, resupply, refuel. And we don't have any
of that along the entire Arctic area of responsibility on
the west coast of Alaska, and yet, as we've already
discussed, Russia has probably close to a dozen or two dozen
of these kind of ports. What's your assessment and your
personal opinion, as the advocate for the Arctic, on the
need for strategic Arctic ports, whether it would be Nome or
Port Clarence, these places that you've become familiar
with, or reopening -- which the former Secretary of the Navy
was also interested -- Adak, which is a very strategic
location, the gateway to the Arctic, a critical potential
base with a deepwater port with regard to our Asia-Pacific
interests -- can I get your assessment -- actually both of
your -- gentlemen -- on the need for a strategic Arctic
port, which this committee and the NDAA have twice said is
something that is important?

Dr. Anderson: So, I'll start on that. As -- we are
working on Section 1754 -- or 1752, which is in the NDAA
provision, to look and assess for the need of strategic
ports. So, that report is -- we're starting on that. We're
going to deliver that by June. You know, I'd certainly
grant, in a matter of principle, ports are important, but
I'm going to reserve judgment until I see the results of
that analysis.

What's also going on is a particular study that the
Army Corps of Engineers, as you know, is doing on Nome.
They have a draft report, which has been issued, I think, in
December. And we're awaiting, kind of, the final report
there to see what are the options, the cost benefits of
deepening that existing port so that it could accommodate
larger vessels.

Senator Sullivan: So, Mr. Secretary, just -- and then
I'd like to hear from General O'Shaughnessy -- your personal
military judgment. Doesn't necessarily have to follow the
Secretary's. But, I will say, this is kind of round two of
this. This is a classic example where the Pentagon has come
back to us, saying, "Aw, you don't really need anything." I
mean, no kidding? I think that's fundamentally ridiculous.
Of course you need some kind of port infrastructure capacity
that can handle the very ships that we need to protect our
sovereignty. We can't even do FONOPs in the region. We
need a place to be able to -- I'm not asking for a Navy base
or any -- I'm just saying a place to park ships. Fifteen-
hundred nautical miles away from where the action is, and we
find that acceptable. I certainly hope -- I certainly hope
the Pentagon is not going to come back, after studying this
again, saying, "There's no need." I had breakfast with the
Secretary of Defense today. I don't think that's his view.
So, you guys might want to run that up the food chain before
you come back to this committee again and say, "Eh,
infrastructure looks fine." The infrastructure is not fine.
It doesn't exist. And we need it to exist.

General, what's your view on this?
General O'Shaughnessy: Well, first, Senator, when I think -- the infrastructure part you mentioned is not just the port, but the broader -- I mean, this is a microcosm of the broader challenge with the infrastructure that we have to work in the Arctic. That said, specific to your questions on the port, I would say, one, I look forward to working on the response with our colleagues, due in June, and then the following report, 90 days thereafter. And so, that is a great opportunity for us to really expand on this.

I will say, we have a stated requirement for fuel north of Dutch Harbor. And where that becomes important, as you mentioned, not only Anchorage, but Dutch Harbor, not -- does give you some capability, but it's --

Senator Sullivan: Dutch Harbor is quite, quite, quite a ways from --

General O'Shaughnessy: It's, what, 1,000 miles --

Senator Sullivan: -- Bering Strait.

General O'Shaughnessy: -- from Barrow, as an example.

Senator Sullivan: Yeah.

General O'Shaughnessy: Right? So, that's -- and part of the -- one thing we have to look at is, it's not just getting a ship to Barrow, it's its ability to continue to operate once it gets there, and not just have to turn around and go get gas.

As I mentioned, I have Ken on my staff, and he's been
very helpful as we look at some of the challenges, because we do have capability now, for example, at Nome, where we're able to get gas part of the year, but we use barges, and we go back and forth. And so, that's --

Senator Sullivan: Again, that's not the same as the ability --

General O'Shaughnessy: No, and --

Senator Sullivan: -- to pull a ship up, that we expect in I don't know how many eastern seaboard ports along America's eastern seaboard, where you can do that with a Navy ship or a Coast Guard cutter. Right now, you can't do it anywhere in the entire U.S. Arctic. You can't pull a ship up --

General O'Shaughnessy: Sure.

Senator Sullivan: -- to resupply or get fueled without barging. So, I think we really need to look at this, gentlemen, and take it seriously.

General O'Shaughnessy: And the challenges you submit there are quite real. And when you look at -- for example, about a third of the time that the port is actually open in Nome, for example, when we're doing these barge ops, you can't do it because of the weather, and the winds over 10 knots, and the sea states, and whatnot. So, we just -- we have to look at the detail --

Senator Sullivan: Well, you would be able to do that,
obviously, if you had a port.

General O'Shaughnessy: Exactly. And so, one of the things we've done, just to preserve options as we do go forward, is, we work with the Corps of Engineers. And, as we do look at the Nome study -- and we're not saying Nome is an answer, or if there is an answer, but when we look at that study, we ensured that they kept the 40-foot draft as part of that proposal. To your point about the 40-foot draft would allow us to work DDGs, the polar security cutter, et cetera, as we go forward here, at least so we have the numbers, we have the understanding, so we can continue the work we're doing.

But, then, as we look at, also, the common challenges we have, this is yet another example of -- we have, both from the military standpoint, certainly with the use -- with a facility such as that, we look at the commercial side that would have uses such that. And so, we see this -- this is a shared effort, going forward. And that's the way I think we should look as -- both within the Department of Defense and the broader Federal Government, and then the local government, as we make these analysis about the necessity for a port and what that would look like, I think we have to look broader than just the pure DOD military application. And, sir, I thank you and Senator Murkowski for the work that you've done with the Civil Work Act and the bill that
you put on -- there that allows to look at those with a national security lens as we go forward.

So, I look forward to continuing to work this issue. This is an important issue. And I think you've hit some of the key parts that we know we need to work on infrastructure at large, and clearly this is part of it. I've had the great opportunity to talk to the harbormaster, example, Joy, talk to her just to really understand the details so I can inform OSD and advocate for what we really need, not just to be able to get there, but then to be able to operate once we're there.

Senator Sullivan: Well, I think that's a really insightful answer. And I do want to mention -- and I think the Corps has been working well with this -- just the way in which this study's being done. As you know -- and you know, Mr. Secretary -- it's actually being partially funded by the Corps and partially funded by the City of Nome. So, they're all-in to even help the DOD actually do the study. And my view, long held, as you have on the East Coast, I think it's a series of ports that we should be looking at to protect our -- America's strategic sovereign interests along western Alaska, whether it's Nome or Port Clarence or Kotzebue or even up in Barrow, that can handle these kind of ships, which, again, is something that I believe is kind of expected, accepted, just a given on the East Coast, and even
most of the West Coast, but not in America's Arctic. And I think we need to start working to change that.

Related to that, as we look to -- the Coast Guard has announced that the first two polar security cutters will be based in Seattle, where the one that's functioning, the one that is broken, are currently homeported. Beyond that, my own view -- and maybe this is more of a Coast Guard view -- or Coast Guard issue, where, as I mentioned, I chair the subcommittee in charge of the Coast Guard -- but, I think it would make sense, beyond that, to have these other Coast Guard security cutters based in a place that needs them.

You mentioned the Antarctica mission. To me, that's not the priority for America. The priority for America is defend our own sovereignty. Do you have any views on that, General, in terms of going forward -- granted, this is a little bit further out -- but to have Coast Guard assets, particularly the polar security cutters, based in the Arctic, that can respond to the needs and missions there?

General O'Shaughnessy: Well, Senator, I certainly wouldn't tell the Coast Guard, you know, where to base their force, but what I would say is --

Senator Sullivan: But, you are the advocate for the Arctic.

General O'Shaughnessy: For the Arctic. And, as such, and with our partnership with the Coast Guard, what I would
advocate for is the presence. Right? And so, whether that
means that they base it in Alaska or they just make the
presence available in Alaska, clearly some work to be done
there. But, what we have to make sure we have is that the
time that it's actually available to do missions needs to be
part of that calculation.

Senator Sullivan: Good. Thank you.

I have one final question. And it relates to this
previous posterboard we had, dealing with the gaps in the
different COCOMs. There has been some discussion -- and I
think it's at fairly senior levels within the Department of
Defense -- that, if you look at the significant Alaska
military-based forces -- Alaska-based military forces -- as
you know, they're operationally -- they're OPCON to PACOM.
And yet, right now we have, for example, the 1st Stryker
Brigade that's in Iraq. And, as you know, we're getting two
squadrons of F-35s here, starting in a couple of months.
And to address this issue of seams within COCOMs, what's
your sense on whether or not the specific Alaska-based
forces that are in NORTHCOM, OPCON to PACOM, biggest threat
from EUCOM, and critical role, given Alaska's role in
missile defense, to STRATCOM, what's your sense about a more
service-focused orientation on operational control of these
forces as a way to make them much more of a global force
ready for deployment, given their strategic location and
their ability to deploy in several different theaters, not just PACOM? Do you have a sense on that? I know it's a topic that's being discussed at the senior levels of the Pentagon.

General O'Shaughnessy: Right. I would just say, broadly, that, as we look at this, I think we have to look at it from a new lens. Right? I think the current alignment --

Senator Sullivan: From what? I'm sorry.

General O'Shaughnessy: A new lens. The current alignment was in a different security environment. And so, I think, as we look at the security environment we find ourself today, as articulated by the NDS, very clearly talks about the changing nature of our adversaries that can hold us at risk. And, as we look at that, our ability to respond to that, I think we have to look at the UCP at large -- Unified Command Plan at large -- and then the assignment of forces within there.

Senator Sullivan: Do you have a personal opinion on this?

General O'Shaughnessy: My personal opinion, and which I've shared with the senior DOD leadership, is, I do believe that those forces that are currently within my AOR, but then assigned to a different COCOM, ought to be service-retained. And, by that, I'm not saying we need to own them in
NORTHCOM. I'm just saying we give the Secretary of Defense the flexibility by retaining them in the services, and then they can be assigned -- allocated as they need to, based on the current --

Senator Sullivan: Mr. Secretary, do you have a view on that? I know it's a kind of a complicated topic that does relate to the almost unique aspects of the strategic location of the Alaskan forces. They can get anywhere in the northern hemisphere in about 7 hours. But, also, the seams that I talked about with regard to the different COCOMs, and how that plays out with the ability to use them for global force protection and global force deployment.

Dr. Anderson: So, I would say, generally, I'm -- you know, I'm aware that the UCP is reviewed every couple of years, and this is exactly the type of seam issue that is deserving of attention. I would also say, generally, that, you know, there's an emphasis within the building to sort of make sure that we have the appropriate-size -- right-size immediate-response force and contingency response force. So, in that context, I tend to align my thinking, in a -- kind of a preliminary sense, with what the General just articulated, in terms of having those forces assigned to the service.

Senator Sullivan: Final question. And I asked this today, at the broader hearing, from the Secretary of the Air
Force and Chief of Staff of the Air Force on the -- in the full committee. And this goes to the question we were just talking about. But, given the strategic location of Alaska, the Air Force is looking at its OCONUS bed-down decision of the KC-46. The Secretary of Defense has testified that if you colocated KC-46s that are at the seams -- PACOM, EUCOM, NORTHCOM, STRATCOM -- colocated with over 100 fifth-generation fighters, which we will be having in Alaska, here, in the next 2 years, you would have a message of extreme strategic reach to our potential adversaries on what they see in Alaska -- KC-46s colocated with 100 fifth-gen fighters. Do either of you have a view on that? The other locations the Air Force is looking at are purely in the PACOM region. And again, it kind of cabins the ability for strategic reach when you put an asset like KC-46s solely in one AOR, when, as you know, your colleague, the TRANSCOM Commander, recently said that the KC-46 refueling capability was their most stressed asset that they have for their global force-protection capabilities. Do you have a view of that, General? Personal opinion?

General O'Shaughnessy: Yeah, Senator, what I would say is -- I'll leave the basing decision to the Air Force, as there's a lot that would go into that, but what I will absolutely agree with you on is the strategic value of having access to them from Alaska. And, as you mentioned,
you tie it to that fifth-gen, it does make a powerful statement. And one of the things I was really shocked at when I was in PACAF, that I didn't realize -- as we were looking at deployments, it was actually quicker to go from Alaska to a regional right in EUCOM than it was to go, say, to the South China Sea. And so, that really -- it was kind of eye-opening to me to really understand the -- you know, we you look at a traditional map a lot, and it doesn't convey the strategic value of Alaska, as articulated by Bill Mitchell in 1935, as you mentioned, first point.

And then, the second point, I think, as you mentioned, is the leveraging, not only the ability to deploy, but also the ability to train. And you look at the JPAR and the ability to operate there. One of the continuous challenges we have is the ability to get tanker support for those operations that are happening at JPARC Range. And as we see, hopefully, an -- a steady increase in our use of the JPARC Range, not only for the fifth-gen Center of Excellence, but I would start thinking about, as a Arctic Center of Excellence -- Senator Sullivan: Yeah.

General O'Shaughnessy: -- of using that there. I see the value of having that tanking capability there, as well.

Senator Sullivan: Great. Thank you,

Mr. Secretary, do you have a view on that -- Under
Secretary Rood -- you know, this is an Air Force decision. He was in Alaska about 2 months ago, and, I think, saw the strategic rationale of that colocation that the Secretary of Defense testified would show our adversaries extreme strategic reach. Do you have a view on that yet, sir?

Dr. Anderson: I would certainly concur with the Secretary of Defense and his assessment there. The Chairman also testified, in so many words, so he sent a powerful message, that, indeed, if they were colocated, that they would have that reach, and it would be powerful message.

Senator Sullivan: Great.

Well, gentlemen, thank you very much. I want to thank Senator Kaine for his patience on this hearing. It's a lot of questions from me, but I think it's very informative.

For both of you, really appreciate all the work.

If members have additional questions in the next 2 weeks, they will submit them for the record. If you can, respectfully, answer those as quickly as you can, that would be much appreciated.

Otherwise, very informative. Again, General O'Shaughnessy, I can't thank you enough for your great service to our Nation, my State, the people of Alaska, but the people of America, and, of course, the people -- men and women of the Air Force.
This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:46 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]