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Before the

Subcommittee on
Readiness and Management Support

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON
NAVY AND MARINE CORPS READINESS

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

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6 U.S. Senate
7 Subcommittee on Readiness and
8 Management Support
9 Committee on Armed Services
10 Washington, D.C.
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12 The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:18 a.m.
13 in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Dan
14 Sullivan, chairman of the subcommittee, presiding.

15 Subcommittee Members Present: Senators Sullivan,
16 Fischer, Ernst, Blackburn, Kaine, Shaheen, Hirono,
17 Duckworth, and Jones.
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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. DAN SULLIVAN, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM ALASKA

3 Senator Sullivan: Good morning. This hearing of the
4 Subcommittee on Readiness and Management will come to order.

5 The subcommittee meets today to receive testimony on
6 the current readiness of the United States Navy and the
7 United States Marine Corps. I want to welcome our three
8 distinguished witnesses: the Honorable Kenneth Braithwaite,
9 Secretary of the Navy; General David H. Berger, Commandant
10 of the U.S. Marine Corps; and Admiral Michael Gilday, Chief
11 of Naval Operations for the United States Navy.

12 I would also like to thank Diana Maurer, Director of
13 Defense Capabilities and Management, and her team at the
14 Government Accountability Office for submitting the
15 requested statement for the record for this hearing. GAO is
16 an invaluable resource to our work on the committee.

17 Some of the issues that I would like to address and
18 cover today are COVID-19 and its impacts on the readiness of
19 the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps; the Navy and Marine Corps'
20 pivotal role in countering great power competition, as
21 highlighted in the National Defense Strategy; the Commandant
22 of the Marine Corps' bold, new Force Design and planning
23 guidance; a recent provocation of Russian military
24 exercises, massive Russian military exercises, in the
25 Arctic, and related to that, the role of the Navy and Marine

1 Corps as they play an increasingly important role in
2 protecting our strategic interests in the Arctic. Let me
3 touch on these briefly.

4 First, the impact of COVID-19 on Navy and Marine Corps
5 readiness. Over the last few months, this committee has
6 received frequent and productive briefings on COVID-19 and
7 on its impact on military readiness. As you are all aware,
8 COVID-19 reduced operations at Navy and Marine Corps depots,
9 canceled or postponed vital exercises such as RIMPAC 2020,
10 and changed the way in which we train our sailors and
11 marines. I am looking forward to an update on these
12 critical issues as it relates to the readiness of our Marine
13 Corps and Navy team.

14 Second, I would like to address the 2018 National
15 Defense Strategy and the Navy's and Marine Corps' role in
16 responding to the return of great power competition.
17 Released in 2018, the National Defense Strategy I believe is
18 still very much a bipartisan document and strategy which
19 prioritizes the return of great power competition
20 particularly with Russia and China, with China as the pacing
21 threat. Thus far, in responding to the NDS' directives, the
22 U.S. Navy and this committee have advocated for building a
23 355-ship Navy and has heavily and rightfully in my view
24 focused these investments on improving and expanding our
25 nation's submarine fleet, a key area of American strategic

1 advantage.

2 Third, as part of the Navy team's response to great
3 power competition, the Marine Corps, under the Commandant's
4 new planning guidance and his Force Design 2030 construct,
5 has keenly focused on how to address the NDS' pacing threat:
6 China. Specifically, General Berger has zeroed in on
7 transforming our Marine Corps into a slightly leaner but
8 more agile force. The Commandant's planning guidance calls
9 for revolutionary change to the Marine Corps, at least in
10 the Department of Defense terms, and I commend him for his
11 efforts on being one of the services' leading in terms of
12 trying to implement the NDS. But the Commandant's strategy
13 is not without its critics, and I would like to give the
14 Secretary and General Berger the opportunity respond to some
15 of those in this hearing.

16 I would like to also address a recent incident. I was
17 with the Secretary in Alaska where we saw a peer exercise of
18 great power competition, the recent very large military
19 exercises which took place inside the U.S. exclusive
20 economic zone off the coast of the great State of Alaska.
21 As some of you may already know, in late August the Russians
22 conducted a major war game near Alaska. Over 50 Russian
23 warships, about 40 Russian aircraft took part in these
24 exercises in the Bering Sea. It involved multiple practice
25 missile launches, submarines. The "New York Times" reported

1 last month in an article I would like to submit for the
2 record, a headline and byline, "Are We Getting Invaded?"
3 U.S. boats face Russian aggression near Alaska. Russia has
4 accelerated its provocative encounters in the North Pacific
5 harassing American fishing vessels in U.S. waters, sending
6 bombers towards Alaska's shores. I would like to enter this
7 into the record. Without objection.

8 [The information follows:]

9 [SUBCOMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Sullivan: But I would like, Mr. Secretary,
2 Admiral, an update on that, particularly the coordination
3 that we need to improve between the Coast Guard, the Navy,
4 and the Alaskan fishing fleets that were impacted by this.

5 Finally, I would like to have a broader discussion
6 today on the Arctic, as it has become an emerging area of
7 great power competition, and to better understand the Navy
8 and Marine Corps' role in protecting the Arctic homeland,
9 safeguarding the Arctic region's global commons, and as the
10 Navy and Marine Corps do across every part of the world. In
11 this regard, I am hopeful to hear some positive news about a
12 new Navy Arctic strategy, which this committee has been
13 encouraging all the services to produce Arctic strategies.

14 And I am hopeful that we could also have a discussion
15 on not only the support for building six polar class
16 icebreakers that our nation needs but the discussion that
17 the President started a couple months ago with his memo to
18 senior national defense officials on where and how we should
19 be basing polar class security cutters in America's Arctic.
20 And, Mr. Secretary, you and I have had a lot of discussion
21 on that.

22 Finally and perhaps most importantly in this committee,
23 I would like a prediction of who is going to win the Army-
24 Navy football game that takes place in a couple weeks. That
25 is going to be very important, gentlemen.

1 Thank you very much. I am looking forward to this
2 hearing.

3 And I would now like to hear from my friend and
4 colleague, Senator Kaine.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 VIRGINIA

3 Senator Kaine: Well, thank you, Chairman Sullivan. We
4 find ourselves in very, very challenging times, and it is
5 good that this committee's work has continued and will.

6 I want to welcome the distinguished witnesses. Thank
7 you for your service. We are looking forward to the
8 testimony and opportunities to exchange questions today.

9 And I echo the comments from Chairman Sullivan and
10 offer thanks to Diana Maurer for her work at the GAO.

11 I also want to do one other set of thank yous. This is
12 probably the last opportunity that we will meet either as a
13 subcommittee or even as a full committee prior to some
14 changes, and we are losing two colleagues, Senator McSally
15 and Senator Jones, who have served on the committee in a
16 wonderful way and on the subcommittee as well. They were
17 great public servants before they got here. They were great
18 public servants while they were here, and I am sure they
19 have great public service ahead of them. But I just wanted
20 to acknowledge each of them.

21 The chairman has done a really good job of putting the
22 issues kind of up on the board that we need to discuss
23 today: impacts on readiness from the ongoing pandemic, and
24 lessons learned along the way that will help us going
25 forward. What role will the DOD play in vaccine

1 distribution and what plans are being made within the Navy
2 family -- Navy and Marine Corps -- over vaccines and how
3 they will be deployed. Shipyard modernization plan and the
4 looming threats that our bases face from the effects of
5 climate change. I will not delve further into those now,
6 and I will save those topics for my questions. We want to
7 help the Department address what we need to do to be ready
8 to operate in this challenging environment and respond and
9 execute the full range of DOD responsibilities and missions.

10 I look forward to your testimony today and thank you.

11 Senator Sullivan: And I would like to begin the
12 testimony. Each of you will have 5 minutes to give an oral
13 testimony. Your longer statements can be submitted for the
14 record, if you so choose. Mr. Secretary, I would like to
15 begin with you, sir.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. KENNETH J. BRAITHWAITE, SECRETARY OF
2 THE NAVY

3 Mr. Braithwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 And before I begin, I would like to offer the
5 Department of the Navy's condolences to you, sir, for the
6 loss of your father, a great veteran of the United States
7 Navy, and our thoughts and our prayers are with you, sir.

8 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

9 Mr. Braithwaite: In May of 1943, American troops,
10 aircraft, and ships were sent to the Aleutian Island of Attu
11 to dislodge the imperial Japanese troops occupying our
12 American soil. These young Americans were dedicated and
13 brave, but unprepared and under-equipped. The only thing
14 that prevented the operation from ending in total
15 catastrophe was the fact that that landing was unopposed.
16 In short, we, the United States military, got lucky.

17 But that should never be accepted as good enough for
18 our fleets, our force, or for our nation. As Secretary of
19 the Navy, I am determined to ensure that our sailors and
20 marines are never again sent into a situation without the
21 right training, the right equipment, and the right
22 leadership.

23 Chairman Sullivan, Ranking Member Kaine, distinguished
24 members of the committee, we appreciate your efforts to
25 ensure funding stability over the past several years. This

1 stability has enabled a greater focus on readiness across
2 both services from the Navy's investments in shipyards and
3 aviation maintenance to the Marine Corps' modernization
4 initiatives within the Commandant's Force Design 2030.
5 These efforts are increasing our expeditionary deployment
6 capabilities and fleet readiness even in the face of this
7 COVID-19 and other global challenges. More importantly, we
8 are investing in the training, education, and resilience of
9 our personnel. They and their families will always be our
10 greatest resource.

11 As I discussed during my confirmation hearing, I was
12 concerned about the morale of the force and its underlying
13 effects on culture across the entire Department.
14 Thankfully, I found many efforts underway to address these
15 concerns, and in consistent engagements with our sailors and
16 marines around the globe, I have discovered our morale is
17 better than I thought it might be. But it can get better as
18 we direct the resources to make it better.

19 We must prepare today for tomorrow, and we must
20 continually adjust to the threat. Our existing fleet
21 structure operates on the premise that we still live in a
22 post-9/11 state where NATO's flanks are secure, the Russian
23 fleet is tied to the pier, and terrorism is our biggest
24 problem. That is not the world of today. And so as the
25 world changes, we must be bold, evolve, and change with it.

1 Instead of perpetuating a structured design to support
2 yesterday's joint forces command, we are aligning to today's
3 threat to meet the unique maritime challenges of the
4 Atlantic theater, we will rename Fleet Forces Command as the
5 U.S. Atlantic Fleet and we will refocus our naval forces in
6 this important region on their original mission, controlling
7 the maritime approaches to the United States and to those of
8 our allies. The Atlantic Fleet will confront the re-
9 assertive Russian navy, which has been deploying closer and
10 closer to our east coast, with a tailored maritime presence
11 capability and lethality.

12 Also, in order to improve our posture in the Indo-
13 Pacific, we will reconstitute the first fleet assigning it
14 primary responsibility for the Indo and South Asian region
15 as an expeditionary fleet back to the capabilities and
16 unpredictability of an agile, mobile, at-sea command. This
17 will reassure our allies and partners of our presence and
18 commitment to this region while ensuring any potential
19 adversary knows we are committed to global presence to
20 ensure rule of law and freedom of the seas.

21 We are determined today to make the bold changes
22 required to ensure that our forces are prepared to dominate
23 any potential battlespace and return home safely tomorrow.
24 As the great navalist, the 26th President of the United
25 States, Teddy Roosevelt, once said, a strong Navy is not a

1 provocation to war but the surest guarantor of peace.

2 We look to you, our Congress, for the strong oversight
3 partnership that has enabled our maritime strength ever
4 since Congress authorized the construction of our first six
5 ships, the mighty American frigates of 1794. So I would
6 like to take this moment to announce that the next
7 constellation class frigate will be named for one of those
8 original six, a name selected by our first President, George
9 Washington. The ship will be USS Congress to honor and
10 recognize the work that you and your staff do every day to
11 support our sailors, our marines, and the people of the
12 United States of America.

13 On behalf of the Department of the Navy, our marines,
14 our sailors, our civilian workforce, and their families that
15 serve at their side, thank you for what you do to enhance
16 our readiness.

17 I look forward to your questions.

18 [The prepared statement of Mr. Braithwaite follows:]

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1 Senator Sullivan: Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.
2 Admiral, would you care to make an opening statement,
3 sir?

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1 STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL MICHAEL M. GILDAY, USN, CHIEF OF
2 NAVAL OPERATIONS

3 Admiral Gilday: Yes, sir, I would.

4 Chairman Sullivan, again my condolences on your
5 family's loss. Your dad was not only a sailor but a great
6 friend of the Navy.

7 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

8 Admiral Gilday: Ranking Member Kaine, distinguished
9 members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity
10 appear before you this morning with the Secretary of the
11 Navy, as well as Commandant Berger. My wife Linda behind me
12 joins me this morning.

13 To be effective, the United States Navy has to be able
14 to carry out two critical functions. The first is sea
15 control and the second is power projection. And both of
16 those missions are timeless. The Navy does not need to
17 reinvent itself. The manner by which we carry out those
18 functions and the equipment that we use to do it do change
19 over time, but as Admiral Nimitz said in front of a joint
20 session of Congress in October of 1945 at the dawn of the
21 nuclear age, he called those missions timeless. President
22 John F. Kennedy, in the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis,
23 said the same thing. So for me, sea control and the
24 capability to control the seas and to dominate the oceans is
25 my primary focus.

1 With respect to readiness, that covers two areas:
2 readiness today, which I believe is the focus of this
3 hearing, as well as our readiness tomorrow. And the budget
4 decisions that the Navy presents to the Secretary of Defense
5 really balance across three big areas that are aimed at
6 those two functions. That would be readiness, readiness
7 today and readiness to the future. That would be lethal
8 capabilities in order to control the seas and to project
9 power. And the last is capacity, the size of the United
10 States Navy.

11 Today in the midst of a global pandemic, we have about
12 100 ships deployed, and we have about 40,000 sailors at sea.
13 That ranges from the Arctic Circle to the Cape of Good Hope,
14 from the Black Sea in the Baltics to the Arabian Sea, the
15 Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific. Our cyber warriors are
16 standing vigilant watch right now as we speak. They are
17 joined by our silent service under the seas that continue
18 their constant patrols.

19 I would be remiss if I did not talk about the civilian
20 sailors who support us every single day so that we can
21 control the seas. Those are our shipyard workers. Those
22 are folks that work in production lines that keep our spare
23 parts rolling to the waterfront, to our aviation squadrons,
24 to our submarines, and to our ships. They are people that
25 provide the Naval Academy, our academic institutions like

1 the Naval Academy, the Naval War College, and the Naval
2 Post-Graduate School that continue to churn out the best and
3 the brightest that this nation has, and our boot camp which
4 is operating at double its capacity.

5 That said, the investments that keep that machine going
6 every single day are also balanced against investments of
7 the future. Think about hypersonics and laser energy. We
8 just shot down a UAV with laser energy at sea just last
9 months. We shot down an ICBM from a destroyer with a
10 standard missile just 2 weeks ago. So we are focused on the
11 future and what we need to do to get there.

12 Members of the committee, we are grateful for the
13 support you provide the United States Navy, our sailors, and
14 our families.

15 Again, I thank you for this opportunity this morning,
16 and I look forward to your questions.

17 [The prepared statement of Admiral Gilday follows:]

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1 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Admiral.

2 General Berger?

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL DAVID H. BERGER, USMC, COMMANDANT
2 OF THE MARINE CORPS

3 General Berger: Chairman, thanks for the opportunity
4 for us to appear this morning.

5 And from one marine to another, as we talked last
6 night, just know that if one marine hurts, all of us hurt.
7 So we are all thinking about you and your family.

8 And for the Ranking Member Kaine and the rest of the
9 members, this is a good opportunity and timely for us to be
10 here this morning to talk about readiness.

11 I am in the same spot as the CNO. I think readiness is
12 job one for a service secretary. But it is also a balance,
13 as he highlighted, of today's readiness, what we have to
14 provide combatant commanders now, this afternoon, balanced
15 against the force that we have to prepare for the future.
16 And the cold, hard truth of it is if you are a service chief
17 that every dollar you spend on a legacy piece of equipment
18 or on trying to prepare something for this afternoon is a
19 dollar that you have to consider for the future. This is
20 the tension that every service chief has always been
21 challenged with.

22 That said, I think you should be very confident -- this
23 subcommittee should be very confident that all your Navy and
24 Marine units that are deployed around the world are ready
25 this afternoon. They are ready for any crisis, any

1 contingency, and we are working very hard to make sure that
2 we are going to stay in front. There is no adversary that
3 is going to overtake us.

4 The readiness. I will just offer you I probably will
5 break precedent in my view of readiness, how I view it. I
6 do not view readiness as availability only. It is more than
7 just having a platform, a ship, an aircraft, a piece of
8 equipment available. I think you expect us to be ready in
9 terms of are you manned, are you trained, are you equipped,
10 are you ready for the threat. So when we think of
11 readiness, we are talking about readiness in terms of ready
12 for what, ready when.

13 I am also grateful for all the support this committee
14 has given us because 5, 6 years ago, we were in a tough spot
15 readiness-wise. We had rode the force hard and we needed
16 the resources to build our readiness back. And we are back
17 where we need to be thanks to the support of the members on
18 this subcommittee and the Congress writ large. So I am very
19 grateful for that.

20 Lastly, I would just touch on the same thing I think
21 that Admiral Gilday mentioned, which is our readiness in a
22 sort of unconventional way, and that is cyber readiness. Of
23 course, that is offensive and defensive. And I would just
24 highlight that because those threats clearly are not going
25 down. In fact, they are increasing. But you would be very

1 proud of the cyber mission force that every day is tackling
2 the challenges that you wanted to tackle. And on the
3 defensive side, I think we have all the means, the resources
4 in terms of the training and the people and the equipment to
5 prepare all our networks for the challenges that another
6 adversary is going to pose. So in both cases, I think we
7 are very focused on it, and that is going to be an enduring
8 task for all of us.

9 Chairman, I would yield the rest of my time to the
10 topics that you want to focus on, sir.

11 [The prepared statement of General Berger follows:]

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1 Senator Sullivan: Well, thank you, General.

2 I will just begin. I appreciate the comments about my
3 dad. You know, I come from a family with a long tradition
4 of naval service. My dad accomplished a lot in his life,
5 but his proudest accomplishment, no doubt, was his service
6 in the U.S. Navy. His cousin, Bruce Wilhelm -- he was a
7 naval aviator, an academy grad who won the distinguished
8 Flying Cross during the Cuban Missile Crisis. You can read
9 about that. He was actually highlighted in a movie. He was
10 later killed in a training accident. And finally, my dad's
11 uncle, Tom Sullivan, was a lieutenant in the Navy. He did
12 three Murmansk runs during World War II, some of the most
13 dangerous service in the U.S. Navy during the war.

14 And I mention the Murmansk runs. And, General, as you
15 know, it is the 70th anniversary of the Chosin Reservoir
16 battle right now. A lot of Americans do not know a lot
17 about that battle. But I mention that because those are
18 very important cold weather operations that our Navy and
19 Marine Corps did quite well at a critical moment in history.

20 So, Mr. Secretary, perhaps you can begin by talking
21 about the Navy's upcoming Arctic strategy to get back to the
22 roots whether Murmansk operations or Chosin Reservoir type
23 operations were -- we have a Navy and Marine Corps that can
24 operate well and protect America's strategic interests in
25 some of the coldest places in the world that are now

1 increasingly becoming the places where great power
2 competition are going to be taking place in the future.

3 Mr. Braithwaite: Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to.

4 As you know, I am a student of the Arctic, an advocate
5 for the Arctic. I first went to your great State as a U.S.
6 Navy pilot stationed in Adak, Alaska at the Naval Air
7 Station and flew ASW missions throughout the Arctic Circle.

8 Most recently, I was the U.S. Ambassador at the Kingdom
9 of Norway, and I spent most of my time above the Arctic
10 Circle right near Murmansk.

11 And I have seen with my own eyes how the Arctic has
12 changed in those 35 years. Today it is navigable 365, and
13 there are other nations in the world that have recognized
14 its importance to us. And it should be an alarm to all of
15 Americans as an Arctic nation that we should have a more
16 formidable presence to ensure rule of law and freedom of the
17 seas in that part of the world.

18 Most recently the USS John McCain was doing just that,
19 a freedom of navigation exercise, near the Bay of Peter the
20 Great and was engaged by a more assertive Russian navy.

21 The United States Navy, the United States Marine Corps
22 has had a recommitment to the Arctic. We operate in the
23 Arctic today much more than we have historically although,
24 as you know, the Navy has operated consistently in the
25 Arctic since the inception of our submarine force. It is

1 just that you cannot see our vessels. Today we need that
2 visible presence. As the Chief of Naval Operations talked
3 about just a few moments ago, power projection, sea control,
4 and the ability to ensure to our partners and allies and to
5 our own people that we, the United States Navy, have that
6 first and foremost in our minds.

7 We are about to release an Arctic strategy that you and
8 I talked about during our recent trip to Alaska and the
9 importance of how that blueprint will recommit ourselves in
10 a much more visible way to activities in the Arctic.

11 But we must recognize that if we do not step forward
12 quickly, those who have challenged us on the stage of great
13 power competition are there. I have seen it. Russia has
14 re-militarized the Arctic. China has recommitted itself to
15 build icebreakers to be able to move its product from its
16 homeland to Western markets in half the amount of time that
17 it has historically had to.

18 So the United States Navy, the United States Marine
19 Corps, Senator, is committed to being present in the Arctic
20 in a much more visible way than we have historically been.

21 Senator Sullivan: Can I ask just two quick follow-ups
22 maybe for you and Admiral Gilday? The Russian exercise that
23 I mentioned -- it did catch our fishing fleet by surprise.
24 I know that there has been an after-action. But you know,
25 our fishing fleet was ordered out of the EEZ, which of

1 course is our EEZ where they fish. They should not be
2 ordered out of that by Russians. They were buzzed. They
3 were harassed.

4 What are we doing in terms of an after-action to make
5 sure that that does not happen again? Our fishing fleet --
6 you know, my State is what I call the super power of
7 seafood. Actually over 60 percent of all seafood harvested
8 in America comes from Alaska's waters. What are we doing to
9 make sure that that does not happen again?

10 Mr. Secretary, do you have any follow-up on the
11 President's memorandum on icebreakers and home-porting those
12 in different parts of the Arctic?

13 Mr. Braithwaite: Well, again, as I mentioned, the USS
14 John McCain was just recently in the Arctic to ensure
15 freedom of navigation, and I would invite the Chief of Naval
16 Operations to go into a little more detail.

17 Some of it, of course, is classified as you and I have
18 discussed, and the CNO and I would be happy to talk with you
19 privately at any time that would be convenient to you, Mr.
20 Chairman.

21 You may know that I recently went to Finland to see the
22 icebreakers in question that the President has directed us
23 to purchase. We are looking within the Department of the
24 Navy of how we can facilitate that. Part of commissioning
25 those ships means that they become U.S. naval vessels, and

1 there are requirements that we have to U.S. naval personnel
2 in command of those vessels. So I have asked the CNO to
3 look into the process by which we can facilitate that.

4 You and I agree we need to build icebreakers. We
5 cannot build them as quickly as we need them. Today the
6 Coast Guard maintains two icebreakers, and that is all that
7 we have.

8 Senator Sullivan: And one is broken.

9 Mr. Braithwaite: Yes, sir. One is broken. So we do
10 need icebreakers, and the Navy recognizes -- it is not a
11 mission that is central to the United States Navy, but it is
12 one that we rely on the Coast Guard to provide. And in this
13 instance, per the executive order, we are looking at ways to
14 procure those.

15 CNO, do you have any thoughts you would like to offer?

16 Admiral Gilday: Thanks, Mr. Secretary.

17 Sir, in terms of the Navy's presence in the Arctic --
18 the Navy and the Marine Corps -- I would say that over the
19 past year, we have done some 20 exercises in the high north.
20 And so that ranges from unilateral, joint exercises that the
21 U.S. conducts alone, some of it in the training range in
22 Alaska, to bilateral exercises with some of our closest
23 allies and partners to multilateral exercises. And so now
24 our operations above -- in the high north are not
25 extraordinary, but they are beginning to become part of our

1 day-to-day business. And I think that is directly tied to
2 the National Defense Strategy, the Chairman's role as the
3 global integrator to posture the globe against those primary
4 competitors, namely in this case, China and Russia that
5 would include the Arctic.

6 With respect to the incident that happened in late
7 August, I share your concern, Senator. I actually meet with
8 the NORTHCOM Commander later on this week. I know they are
9 looking at what potentially happened with communication
10 breakdowns potentially to our fishermen, perhaps
11 miscommunication between agencies in the U.S. Government.
12 But U.S. fishermen should not feel threatened by another
13 nation in our own EEZ in terms of fishing. I think our
14 continued presence up there will have some blunting effect
15 to that, but I think perhaps more needs to be done,
16 including through the Arctic Council, to have honest
17 discussions about it.

18 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Admiral.

19 Senator Kaine?

20 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 Secretary Braithwaite, I want to talk to you about the
22 announcements you have made today about the 1st Fleet and
23 the Atlantic Fleet. I will spend 1 minute on the 1st Fleet
24 and then minutes on the Atlantic Fleet.

25 So the 1st Fleet, as I understand your announcement --

1 it will take the sizable real estate that is now covered by
2 the Seventh Fleet out of Japan and divide it into two fleets
3 because of increased activity at the seam between the
4 Pacific and the Indian Oceans. Do I understand that
5 correctly?

6 Mr. Braithwaite: Yes, sir. That is exactly right.

7 Senator Kaine: And so this is something that you have
8 worked out with PACOM, with the 7th Fleet, and you are still
9 making decisions about manpower, but it will likely be an
10 expeditionary fleet without, at least at the start, a land-
11 based HQ. Is that correct?

12 Mr. Braithwaite: That is correct. Yes, Senator.

13 Senator Sullivan: Thank you. And that is to emphasize
14 the growing importance of this region and the strategic
15 alliances that the United States has with nations like India
16 and others in the Quad in that part of the world.

17 Mr. Braithwaite: That is exactly right, Senator.

18 As you know -- and you have traveled in that region --
19 it is vast. And for the 7th Fleet, which is home-ported in
20 Japan, although it is also a sea base, it has formidable
21 challenges to move all the way through the Western Pacific
22 down through the approaches of the Indian Ocean all the way
23 over to the Northern Arabian Gulf.

24 Senator Kaine: Let me move to the Atlantic Fleet
25 question, which affects Virginia significantly.

1 So the Atlantic Fleet was the fleet headquartered in
2 Norfolk until I believe Secretary Rumsfeld during the war on
3 terror reconstituted the Atlantic Fleet as the Fleet Forces
4 Command. And it was not just a name change. There were
5 some different areas of focus.

6 Right before I came to the Senate in 2011, the 2nd
7 Fleet, which was based in Norfolk and provided coverage in
8 the Atlantic, was decommissioned because the United States
9 perceived that Russia would no longer be a naval threat.

10 Well, not so fast. In 2018, during my service on the
11 committee, the Navy recommissioned the 2nd Fleet in Norfolk
12 because of the increased Russian threat in the Atlantic.

13 And so your proposal today to reconstitute the Fleet
14 Forces Command, which was focused on the war on terror to
15 the Atlantic Fleet, as I understand it, is to recognize the
16 reality of this increased Russian presence and the fact that
17 the great power competition is now sort of the dominant
18 concern of the National Defense Strategy. Is that correct?

19 Mr. Braithwaite: That is correct, Senator.

20 Senator Kaine: Let me ask this. My folks in Hampton
21 Roads will wonder whether reconstituting Fleet Forces
22 Command as the Atlantic Fleet will cause them either to lose
23 jobs or personnel or investment levels in that region.
24 Should they be worried about that?

25 Mr. Braithwaite: No, Senator. There are no loss of

1 jobs. There is no loss of revenue to the Tidewater region.

2 Senator Kaine: And I understand that you will be going
3 to the region to have discussions with folks in the area
4 about this proposal that you have announced today.

5 Mr. Braithwaite: I will. That is correct, Senator.

6 Senator Kaine: That is very helpful.

7 So if I understand now with the structure that you are
8 putting on the table, the Pacific Fleet would have the 1st,
9 3rd, and 7th Fleets reporting through it. Correct?

10 Mr. Braithwaite: That is correct. Yes, sir.

11 Senator Kaine: You are contemplating that the 5th
12 Fleet would still report through CENTCOM?

13 Mr. Braithwaite: That is correct.

14 Senator Kaine: The Atlantic Fleet would have the 2nd
15 and 4th Fleets reporting through it. Is that correct?

16 Mr. Braithwaite: That is correct, although we still
17 have --

18 Senator Kaine: You would suggest the 6th Fleet would
19 be reporting through U.S. Forces Europe?

20 Mr. Braithwaite: That is correct. Yes, Senator.

21 Senator Kaine: Because that fleet does so much in
22 tandem with NATO allies in that theater.

23 Mr. Braithwaite: That is correct.

24 Senator Kaine: Okay.

25 Let me ask now -- I will move to one other topic and I

1 will save the others for a second round. Vaccine
2 deployment.

3 Mr. Braithwaite: Yes.

4 Senator Kaine: So we are grappling with a lot of
5 vaccine deployment issues nationally, but also it is very,
6 very critical that vaccine -- thank goodness it is being
7 developed rapidly -- that the vaccine be deployed rapidly in
8 a way that will keep our military forces active and healthy.

9 Talk a little bit about the DOD discussions about
10 vaccine deployment issues and how you are approaching it.
11 And did you learn things with respect to how you did
12 testing, wide testing, through the DOD family that have
13 given you lessons about how to do vaccine deployment and how
14 to phase the deployment of vaccines throughout the Navy and
15 Marines?

16 Mr. Braithwaite: Yes, sir, Senator. So I am extremely
17 proud of the Department of the Navy. Both the Marine Corps
18 and our Navy have done a phenomenal job in the aftermath of
19 the lessons we learned from USS Teddy Roosevelt. And we are
20 applying some of those lessons in the testing, as you
21 mentioned, to what our rollout strategy will be around the
22 vaccine. Of course, some of those discussions are still
23 going on with the OSD team as we determine how quickly we
24 will get those vaccines, how quickly we will roll those out.
25 I know the CNO is in discussions with our Surgeon General to

1 how we will do that for the Navy, as well as the Commandant
2 for the Marine Corps.

3 I would invite the CNO if he had any thoughts on this
4 specifically to comment.

5 Admiral Gilday: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

6 Sir, there are two related but separate plans that are
7 in development right now very closely with the CDC. And the
8 first one deals with the distribution of vaccines. And so
9 there are two that DOD is looking at. One is Moderna and
10 the other is Pfizer. And as you probably know, the Pfizer
11 requires -- Pfizer's are going to be shipped in GPS-tracked
12 coolers --

13 Senator Kaine: Separate refrigeration, yes.

14 Admiral Gilday: Right. And once it is thawed, it is
15 good for about 5 days.

16 And so the Pfizer medicine will be distributed here in
17 CONUS at 10 different locations across the DOD. Every
18 medical treatment facility in the military will receive that
19 vaccine. And then we will also have three or four out-CONUS
20 overseas locations that will receive the Moderna vaccine,
21 which is allowed to be refrigerated for up to 30 days. And
22 so you have a little bit more flexibility.

23 So the second piece of this is the vaccination plan
24 itself. And it is kind of tied to lessons learned from
25 testing. We actually developed a prioritization for

1 testing. We were building the airplane as we were flying
2 it, as we were trying to get testing capability out.

3 This time we have a better sense of what that
4 prioritization structure ought to look like. And at the top
5 are health care workers and then emergency and safety
6 personnel at our installations, those people who are likely
7 to come in contact with people that are infected. And then
8 our strategic forces. So I think maybe your cyber mission
9 forces, the crews on strategic missile submarines, and then
10 the forces that will deploy within the next 3 months.

11 And so we have a good count of what those numbers are,
12 and if there is anything we are really good at, it is mass
13 immunization in the U.S. military. And so we feel pretty
14 confident, sir, that once we get the vaccine distributed,
15 that the vaccination piece, now that we have the
16 prioritization well thought out, will happen pretty quickly.

17 Senator Kaine: Thank you.

18 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19 Senator Sullivan: Senator Shaheen?

20 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 And thank you to each of you for being here this
22 morning and for your service.

23 Secretary Braithwaite, I want to follow up on the
24 conversation you and Senator Sullivan were having about the
25 importance of being able to operate in cold climates and the

1 importance of the Arctic going forward because in New
2 Hampshire, we have the U.S. Army's Cold Regions Research and
3 Engineering Lab. They do amazing research. And I wondered
4 to what extent you share that kind of research across
5 branches. Do you get information from the Army about
6 research that is being done at CRREL that would be helpful
7 to the Navy?

8 Mr. Braithwaite: We do. Of course, under a new joint
9 approach, the service secretaries and I -- we talk. The
10 service chiefs talk all the time. And our respective
11 research arms have exchange and interplay as well.

12 Senator Shaheen: Admiral Gilday, I appreciated your
13 comments on the importance of our civilian workers
14 especially at our shipyards. We have had the opportunity to
15 visit the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and everyone
16 appreciated that.

17 I am very interested in ensuring that the shipyard
18 optimization plan goes forward as envisioned. Are you
19 comfortable that the resources are going to be there to keep
20 that plan on time? And what has been the impact, if any, of
21 COVID-19?

22 Admiral Gilday: With respect to the plan, ma'am, it
23 has been a priority of the Department and certainly the
24 Secretary since he has been in the seat.

25 I will tell you, in terms of putting our money where

1 our mouth is, right now across the four public yards, we
2 have nine MILCON projects that are underway. So four of
3 those are up at Portsmouth. There is a couple in Puget
4 Sound and a couple more in Hawaii and so forth. But those
5 are progressing on track and funded.

6 Across the FYDP, we have outlaid \$3.5 billion, which is
7 not a trivial amount given the fact that -- this is for SIOP
8 -- given the fact that our typical MILCON budget a year is
9 about a billion. So \$3.5 billion over the FYDP. And that
10 is progressing pretty well with respect to the work and the
11 planning associated with it. There is a big project in
12 Hawaii that we just made congressional notification on a
13 week ago. So I am confident that we are heading in the
14 right direction, that is, the right degree of prioritization
15 and resources against the plan, ma'am.

16 With respect to workforce itself, so the workforce, as
17 you know, is an older workforce. And so we were very
18 conservative, particularly in the spring, and we wanted to
19 make sure that safety was our number one priority. And so
20 we did see probably with respect to production -- we saw a
21 dip in our production capability at the public yards with
22 respect to the work that was being done. It went down to
23 the 70s with respect to 70 percent of the workforce on the
24 job every day. That is now back at 90 percent.

25 When we look at lost man-days with respect to that time

1 period, it is about 2 percent of the man-days across the
2 four yards that we would expect to complete a year.

3 So we have mitigation efforts in place. That includes
4 overtime, which buys us back 2 or 3 percent. Contracting.
5 So going to local contractors outside of those public yards
6 that can do some of that work for us. And also, we have
7 mobilized about 1,300 reservists that have unique skill sets
8 that we could bring into the yard.

9 So the mitigation plan, again safety first. And right
10 now we are watching it very closely. But I think that we
11 are stable right now. I would describe our repair efforts
12 in the public yards as stable. I am very comfortable with
13 where we are.

14 Senator Shaheen: And so do you expect to be delayed in
15 terms of where we had hoped to be with the optimization plan
16 as the result of COVID?

17 Admiral Gilday: I have not seen any delays to MILCON
18 projects as a result of COVID. I am sure there have been
19 some slight delays but nothing that has popped a red flag at
20 my level to raise significant concern.

21 Senator Shaheen: Good. Thank you.

22 Also, this is I think both for you, Admiral, and for
23 the Secretary. One of the challenges that we have is our
24 shrinking industrial base as we look at the needs going
25 forward. And I assume that COVID is going to have an impact

1 on that. I know we have small businesses in New Hampshire
2 that are part of our defense industrial base in the State
3 that are facing real challenges as the result of this
4 pandemic.

5 Are you concerned about the impact of the pandemic on
6 more of those businesses that we are going to rely on for
7 our industrial base? And do you have any thoughts about how
8 we can do more to ensure that we have the support that we
9 need through the industrial base?

10 Mr. Braithwaite: So, Senator, as I mentioned to you,
11 you know, I am a product of Philadelphia and the shipyard
12 closure there and what a negative impact that it has had not
13 just on the greater Philadelphia region but on our
14 industrial base writ large across our country. We need to
15 protect every shipyard we have. The Chinese, ma'am, have 25
16 shipyards to our one. And I am a student of history. When
17 you go back and you see the element that kept the United
18 States capable during World War II, it was our industrial
19 might. It was our ability to build back the ships that we
20 were losing. We need to maintain the sacred industrial base
21 that we have today.

22 I would give kudos to our Assistant Secretary of
23 Defense, Jim Geurts, who has done an incredible job of
24 crafting a plan to look to those second and third tier
25 suppliers to ensure that there is consistency in getting the

1 product into the yards. As the CNO has indicated, our
2 shipyard workers, both in our public yards and in our
3 private yards, have done an amazing job of continuing to be
4 there engaged through the fact that they are dealing with
5 antiquated systems, they are dealing with older ships that
6 require more work, and especially in the midst of a global
7 pandemic. They have done a phenomenal job. As the CNO has
8 indicated, we really have not missed a beat. We will have
9 some slowdowns I am sure, and the CNO can go into some more
10 detail on that. But overall I believe that the Department
11 of the Navy has a great record under the leadership of Jim
12 Geurts of doing the work to ensure that we have consistency
13 to those yards.

14 Admiral Gilday: Thank you, sir.

15 Just a couple of comments to amplify some things that
16 the Secretary said.

17 I think that the apprenticeship programs that we have
18 that are associated with each of our shipyards and local
19 community colleges, whether it is Hawaii or Washington or
20 New Hampshire or Virginia, have been phenomenal. And so
21 those 4-year programs that produce some of the best and
22 brightest in the yards that hopefully we can keep around for
23 30 years, because it is a family business in many cases --
24 it is eye-watering to meet those young people. Actually
25 they are not just young people. They are people from all

1 walks of life, and some of them are middle-aged that just
2 have decided that they want to give more back to the
3 country.

4 But that program collectively produces about 1,000
5 workers a year, and over the past 3 years, we have increased
6 the number of shipyard workers from about 33,000 to almost
7 37,000. So we have been on the increase. And we are
8 changing that demographic. As you know, there are either
9 young people in the shipyard or there is older people in the
10 shipyard, but we missed a generation, and so we are trying
11 to rebuild.

12 I am very optimistic about where we are headed with the
13 workforce. And when you visit those shipyards -- and I know
14 that you do -- it is an uplifting experience when you meet
15 those people, salt of the earth, and they love what they are
16 doing.

17 With respect to the supply chain, that remains a
18 concern for us. Senator Kaine mentioned this during his
19 opening remarks. With respect to opportunities that we have
20 seen during COVID, the relationship that we have, the
21 opaqueness that has dissolved with vendors during COVID, has
22 been something that I have not seen in my career. Again, as
23 the Secretary said, Assistant Secretary Geurts can speak to
24 this in more detail. But we have our eye on more than a
25 quarter of a million parts, and you know, it only takes one

1 to take down a ship or an aircraft or a submarine. But we
2 have our eye on those vendors that are struggling and other
3 vendors that have stepped up to fill the gap in places. And
4 so we have seen a bit of both. We have seen some failures
5 that have been troubling. We have also seen some great
6 innovation.

7 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. Certainly ensuring
8 that those businesses get paid as expeditiously as possible
9 is really important right now. And I know that that has
10 been a focus of DOD. So thank you.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Senator Sullivan: Gentlemen, I am going to have to
13 step out for a brief minute. Senator Kaine will be taking
14 over, but I am sure we are going to have a number of
15 additional questions. We have a number of Senators on the
16 line as well. So I am going to next call on Senator Hirono.

17 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and before
18 you leave, I would like to also extend my condolences to you
19 for the loss of your dad.

20 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

21 Senator Hirono: Mr. Secretary, you were talking a bit
22 about the Arctic. This will be a yes or no question. Is it
23 time for the United States to ratify or the Senate to ratify
24 UNCLOS, Mr. Secretary?

25 Mr. Braithwaite: Senator, I think we need to do some

1 more work to make sure that it is the right time, to be very
2 honest with you.

3 Senator Hirono: UNCLOS has been hanging around for
4 decades. And I would say it is the right time, especially
5 as I think our country is disadvantaged by not being part of
6 UNCLOS especially as the Arctic is seeing a lot more
7 activity, shall we say. And I think one of the reasons that
8 the Arctic has become navigable is because of global
9 warming.

10 For General Berger, I would like to offer my
11 condolences, General, for the eight marines and one sailor
12 who tragically perished in an AAV accident at the end of
13 July. And I realize that the investigation is occurring.
14 Can you tell me when the investigation into this accident
15 will be completed?

16 General Berger: The initial portion of the
17 investigation is done, ma'am. And I think probably within
18 30 days the endorsement chain will be complete.

19 Senator Hirono: So since the initial phase has been
20 done, can you tell us what led to this accident very
21 briefly?

22 General Berger: I cannot, ma'am, because I have not
23 seen the investigation. As long as it remains in the
24 endorsement chain, in respect of the due process, I do not
25 poke into that.

1 As you are well aware, ma'am, we took initial measures
2 within the first 30 days, but as far as the final
3 recommendations, the final opinions and recommendations, I
4 have not seen them yet.

5 Senator Hirono: So I know the vehicle that was
6 involved in the accident is to be replaced by the ACV. So
7 we probably would need to get some kind of an update on how
8 all of that is going.

9 Mr. Secretary, I do not want to get into a long
10 discussion with you, but it came as news to me that I
11 thought I heard you say that you are taking some ships from
12 the 7th Fleet based in Japan to be located in the Indian
13 Ocean. Is that what you said? This is a proposal or is it
14 already being implemented?

15 Mr. Braithwaite: No, Senator. That is not what I
16 said.

17 We are going to re-commission the 1st Fleet, which like
18 the 7th Fleet would operate in the greater Pacific region
19 under the command and control of the United States Pacific
20 Fleet headquartered in Hawaii. It would not necessarily
21 take ships from the 7th Fleet or from the 3rd Fleet. It
22 would be a sharing. That is how our numbered fleets operate
23 predicated on the demand and the threat that emanates in the
24 part of the ocean in which those respective fleets operate.

25 The 1st Fleet would be expeditionary. We are still

1 determining from where that fleet would operate from. But
2 its major focus would be on the Western Pacific and the
3 Eastern Indian Ocean.

4 Senator Hirono: So, Mr. Secretary, is this the
5 proposal or has the decision already been made to do this?

6 Mr. Braithwaite: The decision has been made, yes,
7 under my Title --

8 Senator Hirono: Did I hear you say that this was in
9 consultation with INDOPACOM people?

10 Mr. Braithwaite: It is in consultation with INDOPACOM
11 through the Chairman's office and the Office of the
12 Secretary of Defense.

13 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

14 Now, you were asked some questions about the importance
15 of the continuation of the modernization program at the
16 shipyards, and so I just want to reiterate my support of the
17 importance of going ahead with those plans even though I
18 know with COVID we have had delays, et cetera because of
19 manpower issues relating to COVID.

20 Let me turn to you once again. You visited Palau which
21 was I think -- I think that was very important. You were
22 the first, I believe, Secretary of the Navy to visit Palau
23 in October. And you emphasized the importance of U.S.
24 military presence in the Indo-Pacific as, of course, China
25 continues its destabilizing activities in the area. So the

1 recent activation of the Marine Corps' Camp Blaz in Guam is
2 also an important part of the military's force laydown in
3 this region.

4 I wanted to ask you, can you provide some insight into
5 how the U.S. and Palau can build on our partnership with
6 Palau through joint use facilities in the Pacific? Because
7 I believe the new President of Palau has written to us
8 saying that he would welcome that kind of effort.

9 Mr. Braithwaite: Yes, Senator. Thank you for the
10 question.

11 I had never been to Palau before.

12 Senator Hirono: Oh, I am sorry.

13 Mr. Braithwaite: No, no. I went as Secretary of the
14 Navy. It is a beautiful country. I had never been there
15 before. I was a Navy pilot and I flew extensively
16 throughout the Western Pacific, but I had never been to the
17 beautiful islands of Palau. And what a gorgeous country it
18 is.

19 The thing that struck me -- I went in the wake of
20 Secretary Esper. He and I had discussed the opportunity to
21 not only reassure those who are partners and allies like
22 Palau, who is on the cutting edge, the tip of the spear of
23 Chinese aggression in that part of the world --

24 Senator Hirono: Yes.

25 Mr. Braithwaite: -- that we are with them.

1 I personally went with members of my team to look at
2 the infrastructure there to see how we could support U.S.
3 naval vessels operating periodically from there.

4 During my trip, I also visited Guam, Senator, and the
5 same reasons to see how we could ensure a more forward
6 presence of naval forces and enhance our presence there.

7 That process is ongoing. Palau continues, as you have
8 said, to be receptive to receiving more U.S. naval vessels.
9 While I was there, we had some operating in the region. I
10 was able to interact with them, and the support that they
11 received was again indicative of Pacific island nations.

12 Also, as I think through the uniqueness of Palau, they
13 are COVID-free, Senator, and one of the things that we are
14 dealing with now is our sailors, our marines have been
15 deployed on ships without any port visits. You know, it was
16 kind of one of those additional bonuses of my trip by Palau
17 where we have forces operating at sea who are COVID-free.
18 It would be almost bubble to bubble to be able to see our
19 ships go into Palau.

20 So all of those things indicate that Palau is a nation
21 that we need to continue to support and recognize their
22 partnerships, their friendships with us and how we can
23 enhance that.

24 Senator Hirono: Yes. I hope that we can do more with
25 all of our compact nations. That would include Palau, the

1 Marshall Islands, and the Commonwealth of Micronesia.

2 So yes? Is my time being called?

3 Senator Kaine [presiding]: I need to move to Senator
4 Duckworth, Senator.

5 Senator Hirono: Okay. Thank you so much.

6 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Senator Hirono.

7 Senator Hirono: I will submit other questions for the
8 record.

9 Senator Kaine: Senator Duckworth I believe is with us
10 via Webex.

11 Senator Duckworth: Yes. Thank you so much, Senator
12 Kaine.

13 I want to open by acknowledging the Department of the
14 Navy's leadership in removing the Confederate flag from Navy
15 and Marine Corps installations. Commandant Berger, you
16 specifically led the way for other military services in a
17 move that I felt displayed great concern for all of your
18 marines and sailors and great personal moral courage. Your
19 expectation that the marines and sailors assist you in
20 rooting out symbols that cause division in the ranks sets a
21 clear standard of leadership, and this is a readiness issue
22 and I think you have made that very clear.

23 Additionally, your recognition that the Confederate
24 arm's battle flag can cause feelings of -- and I quote --
25 pain and rejection clearly states a truth that other senior

1 leaders have failed to acknowledge for so long. The
2 Confederate flag was carried by those who took up arms
3 against the United States to keep black Americans in chains.
4 It is imperative that all of our service members feel
5 welcomed and valued. Banning displays of the Confederate
6 flag shows respect for black service members who already
7 face well documented barriers to service in the military and
8 inclusion in the ranks.

9 Commandant, your actions represent one of the many
10 important steps that our armed services can take to improve
11 the inclusion of all service members, as well as discipline
12 and unit cohesion. I applaud your leadership.

13 And I also applaud you, Admiral Gilday, for your
14 subsequent call for a Navy order banning the display of the
15 Confederate flag from public spaces aboard Navy
16 installations.

17 Now that we get into my question, I actually want to
18 focus on a region that is personally important to me,
19 Southeast Asia in particular. The National Defense
20 Strategy, the NDS, focuses significant attention on
21 countering the rise of China and our own readiness to
22 operate in this large, geographically diverse, distributed
23 and maritime region is absolutely key to executing the
24 vision that is laid out in the NDS.

25 General Berger, I was pleased to see your

1 acknowledgement in your written statement that our
2 operational logistics system, both ground and aviation, is
3 insufficient to meet the challenges posed by peer and near-
4 peer conflict especially in the Indo-Pacific. I am very
5 concerned about our ability to sustain our troops while they
6 execute the vision of warfighting that is laid out in the
7 NDS, but the logistics function of warfighting receives far
8 less attention than fires and maneuver. Your admission that
9 the Marine Corps has work to do when it comes to logistics
10 gives me greater confidence that you are thinking
11 realistically about this problem set.

12 I think that your recognition of readiness,
13 particularly in the Indo-Pacific, implies more than simply
14 maintaining legacy equipment is a really important one. Our
15 services plan to operate in smaller and more distributed
16 formation across a large and geopolitically complex region,
17 perhaps with limited COMs, it is clear that the military
18 services will have to rethink the way they sustain
19 warfighters in theater.

20 General Berger, from your perspective what are the
21 biggest challenges to reforming the Marine Corps' current
22 operational logistics [inaudible] to meet the needs of
23 distributed [inaudible]? Sorry for the long [inaudible].

24 General Berger: I think I understand the question,
25 Senator.

1 We have a big challenge because of two factors I think.
2 One is the distances, which you highlighted. The second is
3 that we have enjoyed a protected back side in terms of our
4 logistics chains for 70 years. We have not been challenged.
5 We are now. We have to assume that any adversary is going
6 to contest our logistics supply chains.

7 So in terms of what do we have to do about it, I will
8 offer just two or three thoughts.

9 First of all, we got to be able to distribute laterally
10 at the tactical to operational level, sustainment, supplies,
11 equipment, people in a way we have not been challenged to do
12 in the past, and we got to do it, again, in a contested
13 environment. And by contested, I mean in a region where an
14 adversary can see us and can interdict you. So we have to
15 have everything from the surface craft to the aircraft and
16 probably in the future I would suspect a fair portion of
17 that would be in unmanned. We have to have better
18 distribution mechanisms than we have right now.

19 From the operational to strategic, we have enjoyed a
20 secure line all the way back to CONUS, as you pointed out
21 for years. It has not been challenged. That is now
22 becoming a problem. From the strategic to the operational,
23 we got to push the supplies forward, and then operationally
24 at the tactical laterally, we are going to need different
25 means to move supplies and equipment and people laterally

1 within the second or first island chain or within Europe or
2 within CENTCOM.

3 Senator Duckworth: Well, thank you.

4 So are there policies or programs that my colleagues
5 and I should be considering at our level to address these
6 challenges and better adapt to an environment and style of
7 warfighting that is very different from what we have seen in
8 Afghanistan and Iraq? So what can we do here at our level
9 here in the Senate in terms of particular programs that will
10 help you basically bring your readiness level in those
11 logistical networks, especially when you are talking about
12 doing it horizontally in a contested environment? What can
13 we do to support you? Are there particular programs that
14 you would emphasize?

15 General Berger: There are, ma'am. I think the
16 combination of oversight and resourcing for our unmanned
17 surface and aerial systems is probably the biggest area. I
18 am sure there are others. But you asked me here, I would
19 say that one comes to mind. We have to move very quickly to
20 develop and field the unmanned surface vessels and unmanned
21 aerial systems that will move those supplies because we will
22 never get there if we rely only on manned systems.

23 We have a lot of learning to do there. We have a lot
24 of experimentation to do there. But if there is one area I
25 would ask for support there, that would be it.

1 Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

2 Admiral Gilday: As the CNO, can I add --

3 Senator Kaine: Admiral Gilday, do you want to weigh
4 in? Admiral Gilday, you can weigh in and then I will move
5 to Senator Jones, if that is okay, Senator Duckworth.

6 Senator Duckworth: Yes. My next question was actually
7 going to be to ask Admiral Gilday for his input. Thank you.

8 Admiral Gilday: Thank you, ma'am. I appreciate the
9 opportunity to amplify on what General Berger so eloquently
10 spoke to.

11 We have a legislative proposal right now in
12 consideration by -- in conference with the NDAA that would
13 allow the Navy to buy used sealift vessels instead of
14 investing in new sealift vessels to increase the number of
15 used vessels that we can buy. As you know, that is a
16 growing capability gap for us, as you highlighted, and we
17 need to close it quickly. We can do so at a tenth of the
18 cost by -- we have already done the market analysis. We
19 know which ships we would go after at a tenth of the cost of
20 buying new. So for \$30 million instead of \$300 million with
21 a minor upgrade in a U.S. shipyard, we will have the sealift
22 that we need to move ground forces where they need to be in
23 order to bring effects to bear.

24 The other thing I would mention is the Future Naval
25 Force Study Assessment that was completed recently and will

1 be briefed to staff up here on the Hill tomorrow. One of
2 the big takeaways I think are logistics vessels, and the
3 numbers increase significantly with respect to the
4 requirement. And I think it is noteworthy and something
5 that we at the Department need to put a higher priority on
6 with respect to procurement.

7 Thank you, ma'am.

8 Senator Duckworth: Thank you. [Inaudible] we do not
9 have enough hulls in the water nor heavy lift capabilities.
10 And that is it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 Senator Kaine: Senator Jones?

12 Senator Jones: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Let me first -- I want to echo Senator Duckworth's
14 comments about the removal of the Confederate battle flag
15 and those symbols. In my career, I have seen, especially
16 coming from a State like Alabama, words matter. Symbols
17 matter. And they can have deadly consequences on occasion.
18 So I appreciate your efforts without an act of Congress to
19 remove those symbols.

20 I want to talk just a moment about readiness in a
21 different way, not from adversaries attacking or whatever,
22 but from security on our own installations here in the
23 United States on our soil. 1 year ago this coming Sunday,
24 there was a shooter, a terrorist attack at the Naval Air
25 Station in Pensacola, Florida. I met a few months ago with

1 Ben Watson and his son Adam to talk about their terrorist
2 attack.

3 Ben's son, Ensign Kaleb Watson, was the officer on deck
4 that morning and was one of the first people the shooter
5 encountered. And though he had been a captain of the rifle
6 team at the Naval Academy, per installation rules Kaleb did
7 not have a weapon that day. He and two other young men,
8 Airman Mo Haitham from Florida and Airman Apprentice Cameron
9 Walters of Georgia, died that day. Ben and his wife Sheila
10 wanted to be here today but were unable to because of COVID
11 restrictions, but they are watching in Alabama. And I
12 believe and Kaleb's family believes that things could have
13 been different that day in December of 2019. Things should
14 have been different.

15 Secretary Braithwaite, you and I have talked about this
16 some. For one thing, the law enforcement officer who drove
17 Kaleb to the hospital with his injuries got lost on the
18 base. That just should not happen.

19 Now, my office has been asking the Navy since April 6th
20 about its investigation report. We finally got that last
21 week, a week and a half ago, a redacted version. And one of
22 the things that was clear, even before the report came out,
23 is this has happened too many times on our military
24 installations. Too many American troops have lost their
25 lives to shooters on U.S. military bases on U.S. soil. As

1 someone in the Senate like Senator Kaine and others who send
2 folks to the academies and they are going to be on these
3 bases, as someone who encourages our young men and women to
4 join the armed forces to serve their country, that is
5 disturbing that we are putting them in harm's way at a place
6 where they should be most secure.

7 There have been investigation reports about all of
8 those instances and shootings, and there have been
9 recommendations. What we see from the Pensacola report is
10 that many of those are just not being followed, especially
11 with regard to planning, training, and assessment of
12 response plans for situations just like this. And I for one
13 believe that is inexcusable.

14 Ben and Sheila Watson are watching today from Alabama,
15 and they have made it their mission to do everything they
16 can to prevent losing more of our sons and daughters. I
17 tried to help in my time here on the Armed Services
18 Committee.

19 So I asked for the committee to include in the Senate
20 version of the NDAA language that would require the
21 Secretary of Defense to implement within 90 days of all
22 applicable security -- emergency response recommendations to
23 protect military installations and language requiring the
24 Secretary of Defense to ensure that each installation
25 conducts or develops a plan to conduct live emergency

1 response training with first responders. I very much hope
2 that those requirements make it into the final bill that we
3 are going to see shortly.

4 I am going to ask each of you today -- and this is just
5 brief answers because I have got a couple more I would like
6 to ask -- can you tell me that it is currently a priority --
7 currently a priority -- to make absolutely certain that on
8 every Navy and Marine Corps installation, that all
9 applicable security recommendations and regulations have or
10 will be implemented and followed? And if that is not a
11 priority, would you commit to making one? Secretary
12 Braithwaite?

13 Mr. Braithwaite: Senator, first and foremost, Kaleb is
14 a hero. I was in Pensacola 2 weeks ago with the leadership
15 there, and I was in the very place where Kaleb was shot. I
16 cannot imagine the anguish that his family, being a father
17 myself, must feel.

18 In 31 years in uniform of our country as a naval
19 officer, every time I went aboard a base, I always felt
20 safer because I presented my ID card. And although there is
21 no easy answer to this, we are committed to ensuring that we
22 get to the root problem of all of these. In some instances,
23 it is because people do have guns on our installations. In
24 other instances, it is because people do not have weapons on
25 our installations.

1 So we are working diligently to figure out the right
2 approach to this so a hero like Kaleb Watson never loses his
3 life.

4 Senator Jones: I will come back to the other two real
5 quick, but I want to follow up on the comment about the
6 weapons.

7 One of the recommendations is that there be a uniform
8 policy with regard to weapons on there. Is that something
9 that you intend to try to follow to develop a uniform policy
10 of weapons on base?

11 Mr. Braithwaite: Well, the uniform policy -- I mean,
12 we are one Department of the Navy, and it should be uniform.
13 But remember, the shooting in Pearl Harbor was just the
14 opposite. It is because the individual who was on duty had
15 a weapon and used that weapon to attack others with it. So
16 again, there is not an easy answer to say one or the other.

17 What we are committed to is ensuring that those people
18 who are armed are appropriately trained, that there is the
19 cross-integration both on base and off base so what happened
20 in Escambia County does not happen again on any other base.
21 That is what we are committed to do.

22 Senator Jones: Mr. Chairman, if you could bear with
23 me, I would like to just get a quick answer from Admiral
24 Gilday and General Berger on the question about a commitment
25 to the security of those installations and following those

1 recommendations. Admiral?

2 Senator Sullivan [presiding]: Sure.

3 Admiral Gilday: First of all, Senator, I completely
4 agree with you that the incident was inexcusable.

5 Secondly, taking a deeper look at this, besides as you
6 mentioned the MOUs that we are looking at and the training
7 that we are doing with first responders at all our
8 installations now that we had not been doing to the degree
9 we should have been doing is underway regardless of whether
10 any legislation comes out.

11 And the third thing is I commit to you, sir, that this
12 is a priority for the Navy.

13 Senator Jones: Thank you.

14 General Berger?

15 General Berger: Senator, I can affirm the same. It is
16 a priority right now. It will remain a priority.

17 Senator Jones: Thank you all.

18 Mr. Chairman, let me say, first of all, it has been an
19 honor serving on this committee for the last 2 years with
20 both of you and all the other members of this subcommittee,
21 as well as the general committee. I will miss it, but I
22 know the work is in good hands.

23 And, Mr. Chairman, let me say to you specifically, let
24 me also offer my condolences. I lost my dad about 11 months
25 ago. He was also a Navy guy. So I feel the pain and I feel

1 the loss, and it can never be replaced.

2 So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Senator Jones. Thanks
4 for your kind words.

5 And thanks for your great service on this committee.
6 You know, I think the witnesses know there are certain
7 Senators who dig into these issues, really care. The issues
8 of civilian oversight for our military are critical, and you
9 certainly have been one of those and we appreciate your
10 service. We know that you have a lot left in terms of
11 giving to your country and your State. So thanks very much
12 for your great service on this committee.

13 Gentlemen, I would like to continue with a second round
14 of questioning. And, General Berger, I would like to dive
15 in a little bit more with regard to the Force Design 2030
16 plans that you have put forward that I highlighted in my
17 opening remarks. And to be respectful and also to give you
18 an opportunity, as you know -- and I think this happens
19 anytime someone is trying to break glass in terms of a
20 broad-based strategy that recognizes challenges that are new
21 and very significant. I happen to agree wholeheartedly with
22 the National Defense Strategy and the National Security
23 Strategy of this administration. I think one of the
24 unwritten stories in the media is how bipartisan the support
25 is for that strategy. But then the services now have to

1 start implementing it, and I think that is always a
2 difficult challenge.

3 I think the Marine Corps, under your leadership, has
4 really taken that to heart, and I happen to appreciate it.
5 But it is not, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, without
6 its critics. I am going to read just a couple lines from a
7 detailed piece in "The National Interest" from former
8 Secretary of the Navy Jim Webb, who has a lot of respect in
9 the Marine Corps, of course, as a combat veteran from
10 Vietnam. But he says a couple things in his piece. Quote:
11 After the centuries it took to establish the Marine Corps as
12 a fully separate military service, this new strategy could
13 reduce its present role by making it again subordinate to
14 the funding and operational requirements of the U.S. Navy.
15 That is one criticism.

16 Another, he talks about the plan to dramatically alter
17 the entire force structure of the Corps to focus on China,
18 ignores the unpredictability of war. And he also says there
19 is no greater danger in military strategy than shaping a
20 nation's force structure to respond to one specific set of
21 contingencies, giving an adversary the ability to adjust and
22 adapt beforehand.

23 Do you want to comment on those comments? I know there
24 are some other former commandants who have also been
25 critical, and I want to offer this as an opportunity for you

1 to make the case of what you are trying to do with the 2030
2 Force Design.

3 Mr. Braithwaite: Mr. Chairman, if I may --

4 Senator Sullivan: Sure, Mr. Secretary. As the
5 Secretary of the Navy, you certainly -- both of you -- I
6 would welcome really all three of you. Former Secretary
7 Webb obviously incorporates the Navy in general. So I would
8 welcome -- actually it is a good point, Mr. Secretary -- all
9 three of you to respond.

10 Mr. Braithwaite: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to
11 say first and foremost, Secretary Webb is an incredible
12 patriot and a great American.

13 Senator Sullivan: He is, no doubt.

14 Mr. Braithwaite: -- and an individual I hold in
15 extremely high regard.

16 Senator Sullivan: He is a former member of this
17 committee.

18 Mr. Braithwaite: Yes, sir, and an incredible
19 accomplished marine, a graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy
20 where I was fortunate to follow in his wake, and a gentleman
21 who I consider a friend and somebody that I have had
22 discussions with.

23 But I would say that General Berger is a visionary.
24 And I could not say this during my confirmation hearing
25 because I was told to throttle back a little bit. But I

1 generally do not throttle back, Senator. I lean in pretty
2 heavy when I know and believe in my heart and in my head
3 something is right. Dave Berger is the visionary that the
4 Department of the Navy needs today. It is his vision and
5 his humble leadership of going up against all of the
6 challenges that he has now encountered to see something come
7 to fruition that is long overdue.

8 The world has changed in the last 20, 40, 60 years, but
9 what has been proven is the concept that a combined
10 Navy/Marine Corps team, not one subordinate to the other.
11 The Marine Corps and the Navy in the Commandant's vision are
12 one equal paired together. His vision gives a combatant
13 commander another tool in the toolbox in order to fight the
14 fight if you have to do that, that takes the Marine Corps
15 from being land-centric to being a capable amphibious force
16 again. His vision is predicated on those of Commandant
17 Russell and Commandant Fuller who, through the fleet marine
18 force concepts of the 1930s, created the success of the
19 amphibious marine oriented combat capabilities, coupled with
20 the United States Navy, and being able to take the fight to
21 the Japanese and win World War II.

22 So I wanted to be on record to say as the Secretary of
23 the Navy, I am proud to be with our Commandant whose vision
24 is the one that we need for the challenges that we see
25 emerging in great power competition.

1 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

2 Senator Kaine, if you are okay with it, I am going to
3 go a little long for General Berger and Admiral Gilday to be
4 able to respond and add to what the Secretary said.

5 You know the criticisms, General. If you can take this
6 opportunity to address what former Secretary Webb and others
7 have been saying and how you, Admiral, view this new force
8 design for the Marine Corps.

9 General Berger: Chairman, I think the feedback -- my
10 view -- the feedback from Secretary Webb and others is
11 helpful. This is elevating the discussion. This is an
12 ongoing debate that will continue for years. So it is not
13 hurtful. It is actually helpful.

14 I met with Secretary Webb, as I have with the others
15 who want to provide feedback. So I met with him in
16 Arlington, and we talked for probably 2 hours. I did not
17 know him that well, but it was a great discussion. I know
18 him now, did not know him that well before.

19 We talked in three broad areas. First of all, does the
20 Marine Corps need to change? Second, if it does, does it
21 need to change now? And the third part was the changes that
22 we are considering right now, the direction we are headed --
23 are those the right changes? So in basic order kind of
24 marine-like, we broke it down into three categories.

25 I did not see any daylight between us on do we need to

1 change. To the point you made earlier, we have to change.

2 Now, do we need to change now or can we wait to change
3 in a year or 2 when things are a bit clearer? This is as
4 much a judgment call as anything, but my assessment is we
5 cannot wait. We have adversaries that are moving quickly.
6 If we wait a year or 2 for a clear, 90 percent picture, we
7 will not catch up. In my opinion, we cannot wait.

8 So then it came down to the changes themselves, which
9 you highlighted. Here there are going to be differences of
10 opinion. But what I emphasized to him is this is just --
11 where we are right now is on the front end not the back end.
12 We have a lot of experimentation, a lot of learning to do.
13 We cannot wait to move out.

14 We had a great, healthy discussion, and I take all the
15 input from everybody else not in a negative sense but in a
16 positive sense. It elevates the discussion. But in my
17 assessment, my professional opinion, we have to change. We
18 have to move out now, and we have to preserve enough to
19 learn in the future over the coming years to make sure we
20 get it right.

21 Senator Sullivan: Thank you. General.

22 Admiral, would you care to comment?

23 Admiral Gilday: Thank you, Senator.

24 I go back to what I said in my opening statement, sea
25 control and power projection. And so Nimitz said it was

1 timeless. President Kennedy said it is timeless. If you
2 look at the missions of the NDS today, they require those
3 functions from the Navy and Marine Corps team.

4 What General Berger is doing is giving us another, as
5 the Secretary said, tool in the toolkit so what changes
6 today is not only what we fight with but how we are going to
7 fight. And we have to look at that fight in every domain
8 from the seabed to space. The Marine Corps brings a
9 terrestrial capability to the problem of sea control, a
10 function that we still value.

11 If the nation believes that we need a United States
12 Navy and a United States Marine Corps forward so that the
13 fight stays forward and not in this country, then that is an
14 investment that you want to double down on because what
15 General Berger is bringing is an asymmetric advantage to
16 that particular function, something that the enemy is going
17 to be -- it is going to be difficult to find, difficult to
18 pin down, and difficult to take on. It gives us many more
19 options. It presents more options, as the Secretary said,
20 to a combatant commander to confuse an enemy and to come at
21 him with multiple vectors, with multiple tools in the
22 toolkit.

23 So it goes without saying, Senator, I am a huge
24 supporter. I think we are headed in the right direction.
25 That is not to say that there still will not be friction

1 within the Department of the Navy in terms of where we put
2 our next dollar with respect to capabilities, and you will
3 be asking the same question on whether a capability for the
4 Marine Corps with respect to sea control is worth it or
5 whether you get more flexibility, more maneuverability,
6 better effects through another investment. So I think we
7 have to be open-minded about that, and I think we have to
8 look at, at the end of day, the capability gaps you have to
9 close in order to give you sea control.

10 Senator Sullivan: Great. And your point, General, I
11 think is a really good one, that all of this, whether it is
12 from former Secretary Webb, former Senator Webb as well, and
13 former commandants, it does elevate the discussion. I think
14 the discussion also needs to be here which is why I have
15 highlighted it in terms of the Armed Services Committee's
16 civilian oversight responsibilities, and I think it is going
17 to continue. So I appreciate -- this really is kind of the
18 beginning of an important discussion at the highest levels
19 of our government because it is a really important
20 undertaking that the Navy and Marine Corps are advancing
21 right now as part of our National Defense Strategy, and I
22 commend all three of you for the seriousness with which you
23 have undertaken this at this moment.

24 Senator Kaine?

25 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I am glad

1 you took extra time on this question because I think it is a
2 very, very important one.

3 General Berger, I want to echo comments made by
4 Senators Duckworth and Jones about your courage in taking
5 the stance you took last spring with respect to display of
6 the Confederate battle flag on Marine installations. And
7 because you have such family ties to Virginia, this was not
8 a decision taken by an outsider or imposed by somebody who
9 does not deeply understand the dimensions of this issue.
10 And frankly, your ties to Virginia I think are such that the
11 decision that you made and the way you articulated it
12 maximized the acceptability of it within your ranks. And so
13 I want to echo those comments.

14 Your willingness to take courageous stands when you
15 need to bears upon this last question as well. Change is
16 needed. Should change happen now or can we wait on it? I
17 think the answers to those first two questions -- I think
18 you have answered them correctly. Exactly the dimensions of
19 all the change that is needed, that is a profitable area for
20 a lot of discussion now and in the future. But your
21 willingness to take big steps forward is one of the reasons
22 that you are in the position that you are in and that we
23 have confidence in your leadership.

24 A few questions. The Navy has developed a shipyard
25 infrastructure optimization plan, and that was to deal with

1 this lack of capacity at shipyards. The original plan was
2 estimated as a \$21 billion investment over 20 years. The
3 GAO suggests that is likely an underestimate because a
4 number of costs were probably not included in the original
5 estimate.

6 So I guess, Admiral Gilday, what I would like to ask
7 you, is the SIOP still on track with respect to both time
8 and funding? And if so, why are we not seeing it in
9 budgetary requests to Congress?

10 Admiral Gilday: Sir, I would argue that we are. I
11 mean, as I talked about the investments in nine MILCON
12 projects underway right now, \$3.5 billion in MILCON at the
13 four shipyards themselves invested over the FYDP, typically
14 we are spending a billion a year on MILCON. And so I think
15 relatively speaking we are, sir, making it a high priority.

16 And we understand the importance of it. These dry
17 docks on average, as you know, are over 100 years old, and
18 we have neglected them for too long. And this is a
19 strategic decision by the Department to make this a priority
20 and put the money where we need to or we cannot sustain the
21 fleet of the future. As you know, we are challenged to
22 sustain the fleet that we have now.

23 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Admiral.

24 Mr. Secretary, the fiscal year 2020 NDAA required the
25 Department to submit military installation resilience plans

1 to help our bases prepare for extreme weather events,
2 whether it is sea level rise in Hampton Roads or whether it
3 is drought or wildfire conditions in other parts of the
4 country. In the wake of destruction observed over the last
5 several years at Camp Lejeune, China Lake, and elsewhere,
6 has the Department completed any military installation
7 resilience plans, and when can we on the committee expect to
8 see them?

9 Mr. Braithwaite: Senator, thank you for that question.
10 You and I spoke about this in detail both during my
11 confirmation hearing and in meetings between now and then.

12 Our Department has looked into this. I mean, the
13 devastating destruction of Hurricane Florence on Camp
14 Lejeune or the earthquake at Naval Air Station China Lake --
15 you all have been wonderful to help offset our losses there
16 so that we can rebuild some of those structures. As you
17 know, Senator, a lot of those structures on our military
18 bases are old. They are antiquated. They were built before
19 there were codes in place to ensure that our buildings could
20 withstand a hurricane of a certain severity or an
21 earthquake.

22 So we are in the process of developing the plans. Our
23 installations are working on those. I do not know if the
24 CNO has any specific thoughts on this or the Commandant, but
25 it is important to us as we look forward because we cannot

1 be a ready force unless we ensure that we are operating from
2 bases that are resilient and those homes on those bases
3 where our dependents live, which of course have a personal
4 impact on our readiness, have the ability to sustain damage
5 as well.

6 Senator Kaine: Can I ask either Admiral Gilday or
7 General Berger? Do you know when any of these plans are
8 likely to be done so that we can review them on the
9 committee?

10 Admiral Gilday: Sir, I do not. I am not satisfied
11 right now, where we are, the pace that we are acting on
12 these plans. There are discrete projects that we have
13 ongoing, one down in Norfolk Naval Shipyard right now in
14 terms of dealing with the rising water tables in the
15 vicinity of the dry docks as an example, others at the Naval
16 Academy where we are seeing rising water levels. So we are
17 reactive and not proactive.

18 And I owe you a better answer for the Navy, and I owe
19 the Secretary a better answer as well in terms of when we
20 can present those plans to both him and you.

21 Senator Kaine: General Berger?

22 General Berger: Sir, some of them are complete, not
23 all. And we prioritized the ones that we had to do first,
24 which is Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where we had to
25 rebuild. So every contract in the last 18 months that you

1 all have resourced to rebuild Camp Lejeune is to the new
2 regulations for resiliency. They are prioritized. We will
3 provide you the detailed breakdown, sir.

4 Senator Kaine: That would be helpful. I think this is
5 a serious matter for the committee because the resilience
6 plans will enable us not just to exercise oversight on are
7 you trying to be resilient, but it will help us prioritize
8 investments. We would hate to rebuild something in a way
9 that is substandard and does not really meet the conditions
10 that are likely to be there in 10 or 20 years. Rebuilding
11 one off or being reactive one off to dangers or emergencies
12 is not the same as having a forward-looking plan that is
13 likely to involve a more efficient use of the dollars that
14 are so competitively sought. So I would like follow-up on
15 that from both the Navy and the Marines.

16 Here is the last question I would like to ask. I am
17 over, Mr. Chair, but with an indulgence. And I would like
18 each of you to address it. It is sort of like a lessons
19 learned during COVID question.

20 COVID and the pandemic has been horrible. The death
21 toll, the economic effect -- it has been horrible.
22 Nevertheless, even in a horrible time you learn some
23 lessons. Americans are doing much more telehealth than they
24 did before, and that has actually had some significant
25 benefits for people who might have a hard time accessing

1 health care institutions because they live so far away. We
2 have been able to do some committee work virtually. So
3 there have been some lessons learned that we would not want
4 to just snap back to the status quo ante when this public
5 health emergency is over.

6 In each of your spaces, I would love you to talk about
7 maybe some lessons learned since the beginning of March as
8 we have dealt with COVID that you think could be -- that
9 could lead to sort of continuous improvement or changes you
10 have had to make that you will not want to undo when we are
11 over this public health emergency. And if you could each
12 address that question, that is the last question that I
13 have.

14 Mr. Braithwaite: Senator, thank you. I will answer
15 the question first because I will tell you that I believe
16 the Department of the Navy, both the Marine Corps and the
17 United States Navy, have done an incredible job.

18 You know, this caught the Department off guard, as it
19 did the entire world. And the Navy, in particular,
20 struggled through some of the early weeks of this because
21 the close proximity in which our sailors live aboard ship
22 made this a real threat to our ability to operate at sea.
23 And that was even more important aboard -- or more
24 challenging aboard our submarines.

25 Admiral Gilday has done an incredible job to lead the

1 effort to not only identify ways to mitigate the risk but to
2 keep our ships operating. We have over 100 ships today that
3 are at sea deployed, and there are cases of COVID aboard
4 some of those ships. But he and the leadership of the Navy
5 have done an incredible job. It is an amazing story of
6 resiliency to be able to address the issue, to isolate the
7 issue through contact tracing, through all of the protocols
8 that the CDC and NIH have put out through social distancing,
9 masks. When I go aboard a ship, everybody is masked up. I
10 will let the CNO talk to more of the details. But we are
11 today a better force prepared for nuclear, biological,
12 chemical warfare in the future because of the lessons we
13 have learned from this pandemic.

14 And as you and I talked about, you know, carbon
15 footprints and the ability to have our workforce telework,
16 that is another great -- we have finally busted through the
17 fact, as a former military guy, you got to form up in front
18 of the flagpole every morning to get credit for actually
19 being on the job. I think we have thought beyond that now
20 to a point where we are more realistic in the fact that we
21 can do work from afar, we can be productive.

22 But I would invite the CNO who, believe me, is an
23 incredible leader who has done an incredible job on this.
24 And I am very proud to be his wingman.

25 Admiral Gilday: Thanks, sir.

1 Sir, a couple things. One of the things that strikes
2 me the most aboard ship right now is just the change in
3 behaviors. It is almost like cultural change onboard ships
4 because, as the Secretary said, you are operating in such
5 close quarters, and your success or failure comes down to
6 individual responsibility. So that means that every sailor
7 now understands that as a leader at whatever level they are
8 at on a ship, that they have a responsibility to their
9 shipmates that is tangible. And they also have a
10 responsibility to hold other people accountable if they are
11 not following the protocols and the standards that they
12 should be. So with respect to the culture of excellence
13 that we want to have in the Navy and the kind of leadership
14 that we want people to exhibit, I think that has been a
15 positive.

16 There have been a lot of second order effects to
17 telecommuting. So excess capacity with respect to leased
18 spaces where we can recoup over \$100 million a year in
19 spaces that we just do not need. So another byproduct has
20 been a realization of -- I think a better realization of
21 what is core and what is non-core in terms of what we really
22 need to be focused on and working on and how we use that
23 teleworking force.

24 Another is an acceleration of IT capabilities. I do
25 not want to say the specific company, but capabilities that

1 would have taken us -- you can imagine -- years to field
2 that have been accelerated by the Secretary of Defense to
3 weeks and months that have put us in a much better place.

4 And I will also mention real briefly training at sea.
5 Because now we operate in COVID bubbles, we have said, well,
6 gee, why are we just in kind of a single production line
7 with ships to get ships trained and qualified. Why can I
8 not do that with six ships at once, get a lot more out of
9 the trainers, become a lot more efficient, and actually
10 increase the numbers of ships that I am generating for the
11 Secretary to present to the Secretary of Defense to use out
12 there at sea? And so I think overall it has caused
13 everybody to think a little bit more innovatively and to be
14 a little bit more efficient in terms of how they think about
15 using their time.

16 Senator Kaine: General Berger?

17 General Berger: Sir, I will be pretty short.

18 This is a virus, not the first virus that your military
19 has operated in. The pandemic is once every 100 years, but
20 this is not an operating environment that is new. You would
21 expect us, in other words, not to take a knee but to operate
22 through it, and that is what has happened.

23 A couple of things to highlight. You asked for lessons
24 learned. There is not an exercise or training event that we
25 do in the military we do not take away nine days to Sunday

1 afterwards. We do after-action reports like nobody else,
2 and we have a long list. I will just mention one or two.

3 Recruit training. We had to continue recruit training,
4 but we cannot be taken to our knees. So what we learned
5 that we were going to continue, to your question, Senator,
6 is spread out the racks in the squad base, put washstands
7 outside the chow hall, take specific measures that we are
8 going to keep in place afterwards because normally,
9 typically every officer candidate class, every recruit
10 training class gets some kind of crud in the first 2 weeks
11 and it shuts them down. We have not had that problem. Why?
12 Because we are basically quarantining them for 2 weeks
13 before the first day of training. Why would we not consider
14 continuing that later on so that when training starts,
15 everybody can train instead of half the squad being sick?
16 So to your point, some of these measures we need to keep in
17 place afterwards.

18 And I will just finish with I would echo the same as
19 Admiral Gilday. This committee, this subcommittee would be
20 very proud of the small unit leaders. This is where
21 discipline matters. We have not had large outbreaks because
22 we are a disciplined force. We follow orders. We very much
23 trust our leaders, and they have not let us down.

24 Senator Kaine: Mr. Chair, I am so glad I asked that
25 question.

1 Senator Sullivan: Yes, a great question.

2 Senator Kaine: That is really important.

3 One of the first visits that I did when we were in our
4 kind of initial months of COVID and when we were home during
5 April and the Senate was closed was I went to the VA
6 hospital in Richmond, the McGuire VA, which is dealing with
7 a lot of these issues. And it did not really strike me
8 until I walked into that massive facility that there was not
9 a single thing that they did that they did not have to
10 rethink. I mean, touching an elevator button, the
11 arrangement of tables in the cafeteria, how do you check in
12 if you are a patient coming in. Every last thing that is
13 done in that facility, which is tens of thousands of square
14 feet -- it is massive -- they have had to rethink. And
15 onboard a ship or a sub, close quarters, people working in
16 such close proximity to each other, that is even magnified.

17 But I just think it is really important for us in this
18 committee and across the board that we do the lessons
19 learned. It would be foolish if we went back to the status
20 quo ante. One of the things we did, for example, is we used
21 to, as a Federal Government, reimburse telehealth visits at
22 a lower reimbursement rate than office visits. We made an
23 emergency change to allow an equalization of reimbursement
24 rates for such visits, and that has dramatically advanced
25 telehealth. It would be foolish to go back to the status

1 quo ante when this is done because then we would sacrifice
2 all that learning and slide back to a second best.

3 So there is going to be a lot of need for us to look at
4 the changes that have been forced upon us and say, hey, this
5 needs to be the going-forward norm. There are some things
6 we will be glad to let go, but there is also, as you point
7 out, General Berger, why would you not have a 14-day
8 quarantine period now forever to avoid just the common kinds
9 of infectious viruses or whatever that can take down a
10 recruiting class early in their time in. So we are going to
11 really need to do this, and you guys have offered some great
12 examples that can, I think, inspire that work. So I really
13 appreciate it. Thank you.

14 Senator Sullivan: Yes, a great question and great
15 answers.

16 General Berger, I mentioned I did see I think it was a
17 "New York Times" article or something that talked about the
18 changes to Marine Corps recruit training, how it is still
19 working, and in my view some of the best recruit training
20 anywhere in the world. So kudos to the Marine Corps and the
21 rest of the Department of the Navy for doing such great
22 work.

23 I am going to end here with just a couple additional
24 questions. I appreciate the patience of the three of you
25 gentlemen.

1 General, I wanted just one additional question on the
2 Force Design. You speak in your testimony of modernizing
3 Marine Corps infantry and recon units. And as an infantry
4 and recon officer myself and I am a MARSOC marine officer
5 currently, I am interested in what you stated in your
6 testimony that we are modernizing our infantry battalions
7 and traditional reconnaissance units to create a more
8 distributable formation with much greater organic lethality
9 in accordance with units traditionally associated with
10 special forces and commando units.

11 Can you unpack that a little bit more in terms of,
12 again, your Force Design and what Marine infantry and recon
13 units can anticipate in MARSOC as well?

14 General Berger: Senator, like you, I have the same
15 background.

16 Senator Sullivan: Yours is a little bit more
17 distinguished actually -- a hell of a lot more
18 distinguished.

19 General Berger: We have common ground.

20 I believe if we are going to compete and we are going
21 to deter, first of all, then much of who has an advantage is
22 decided in the reconnaissance/counter-reconnaissance sort of
23 effort that both sides in any competition are going to do.
24 I think we were relying more and more and more on your
25 forward expeditionary forces to paint a picture of what is

1 happening in front of them because deterrence is really the
2 foundational element of the strategy. To do that
3 effectively, you have got to have good reconnaissance
4 forward to understand what is happening in front of you to
5 give decision-makers the space, the situational awareness to
6 make good calls.

7 As we reshape the Marine Corps, we will reshape our
8 reconnaissance effort and our reconnaissance units and
9 infantry units as well. Infantry training will be longer.
10 The product of infantry training on the enlisted side will
11 be at a higher level than we are producing right now. Right
12 now, in other words, you complete basic training and you go
13 through infantry training. You join your first unit. The
14 rest of the way is on the backs of the platoon sergeant in
15 that first platoon. We need to take that marine to a higher
16 level so that the whole platoon, the whole battalion can get
17 to a higher level. And we need to get to that higher level
18 because they are going to be more distributed. We are going
19 to rely on them to make higher level decisions.

20 As you know, sir, from your service, we ask captains to
21 make decisions now that lieutenant colonels, battalion
22 commanders made a decade ago. Why? Because they have the
23 capabilities now. We have to get them to a higher training
24 level now.

25 So infantry training both on the officer and enlisted

1 side, more extensive, longer. Reconnaissance forces, better
2 capabilities, a deeper reach, and the ability to commit to
3 communicate, to sense, and to distribute what they are
4 sensing back and laterally to the rest of the force. I
5 think you are going to see a lot of our investments in
6 ground, aerial, and surface reconnaissance so that we can
7 give the combatant commander, the fleet commander a better
8 picture of what is in front of us.

9 Senator Sullivan: Great. Thank you for that.

10 Mr. Secretary, we talked briefly on the Arctic and
11 icebreakers. I wanted to dive in a little bit more.

12 You know, I authored language in the NDAA a couple of
13 years ago that Congress put forward the authorization to
14 build six polar class icebreakers between the Coast Guard
15 and the Navy. And as I mentioned, the President put forward
16 a memo a couple months ago on how we operationalize that,
17 what ways we look at that, and then importantly from my
18 perspective, where you would want to home-port some of these
19 polar class icebreakers that in my view should have much
20 more than just icebreaking capability, should have
21 intelligence capability, should have weapons capability, the
22 way the Russians are certainly viewing their massive
23 icebreaking fleet. I think the latest number is 56, and as
24 you mentioned, we have two. One is broken. So we have a
25 long way to catch up.

1 But on this issue, to me it is a no-brainer that you
2 would at least home-port some of these icebreakers that we
3 are building in the Arctic of America.

4 And you and I had a great visit when you came up to
5 Alaska. I really, really appreciated that. I know my
6 fellow Alaskans certainly enjoyed meeting you in Ketchikan
7 and Adak and Kodiak and Anchorage.

8 But do you have a view on this? The President has
9 actually asked his national security team. I have talked to
10 you, the SECDEF, National Security Advisor, the Commandant
11 of the Marine Corps -- or I am sorry -- Commandant of the
12 Coast Guard. I am a little bit biased, but I think it makes
13 strategic sense for America. If you are going to have
14 icebreakers, you need to base them in the place where the
15 action is and that is the Arctic not in Florida or other
16 places where there is no ice. Do you have a view on where
17 we should be basing these? I know the President has asked
18 that in the memo.

19 Mr. Braithwaite: Mr. Chairman, I always have an
20 opinion. You know that.

21 Senator Sullivan: Good. Love to hear it especially if
22 it is the right answer.

23 [Laughter.]

24 Mr. Braithwaite: However, as you and I also discussed,
25 the United States Coast Guard does not fall under the

1 command and control of the Department of the Navy.

2 Senator Sullivan: I am asking you in your personal
3 opinion.

4 Mr. Braithwaite: Of course, we could change that. You
5 could change that and I would be happy to incorporate the
6 Coast Guard as part of the Department of the Navy --

7 Senator Sullivan: I am not committing to that right
8 now.

9 Mr. Braithwaite: -- as a sister maritime service. I
10 think that would be wonderful. It does not take anything
11 away from Homeland Security, but I love the Coast Guard.
12 They are incredible partners, and we would like to see them
13 get all the resources they need.

14 I have seen some of the efforts in the shipbuilding
15 when I have been down to Huntington-Ingalls and building a
16 new national security cutter.

17 You know, as far as home-porting those ships, if they
18 fell under the control of the United States Navy, of course,
19 we would home-port them closer to where they would be
20 required to fulfill their mission. But I am not in a
21 position, Mr. Chairman, to make a determination for the
22 Coast Guard on where they should put those icebreakers.

23 If we are the ones who end up operating those
24 icebreakers, I think as the executive order has indicated,
25 that is something that we, the Department of the Navy, would

1 come back and work with you, Mr. Chairman, on figuring out
2 the best placement where we would have the kind of support
3 -- I know going into Kodiak, I was extremely impressed with
4 the Coast Guard facility there, meeting with the station
5 commander, again a phenomenal base with the infrastructure
6 to support additional ships being home-ported there.

7 So, again, there are a lot of options here, but there
8 is a lot of work to be done. And unfortunately, it is not
9 an A to Z quick answer.

10 Senator Sullivan: I am going to press you a little
11 bit. Do you have a personal opinion on this issue of where
12 you would home-port icebreakers --

13 Mr. Braithwaite: So, Mr. Chairman --

14 Senator Sullivan: -- to defend America's interest in
15 the Arctic?

16 Mr. Braithwaite: You and I both served. You still
17 serve in the uniform of our nation. So for 31 years, I wore
18 the cloth of the U.S. naval officer very proudly. And in my
19 role as now the Secretary of the Navy, I still fall under
20 the command and control of the President of the United
21 States and I have to follow the lawful orders of those
22 appointed over me. So, again, as the Secretary of the Navy,
23 I have personal opinions and I have professional
24 requirements of how I conduct myself each and every day.

25 So in this case, the Coast Guard has the authority to

1 operate those vessels, and I think they are the ones who
2 would have to determine where they wanted to home-port them.

3 Senator Sullivan: Let me turn to -- Senator Kaine, I
4 just have a couple more questions.

5 Mr. Secretary, on the USS Bonhomme Richard, I guess the
6 Navy made the decision just a few days ago that this is
7 going to be a ship that is decommissioned. Can you just
8 give us a little quick understanding of what actually
9 happened -- it is obviously an issue that this committee has
10 a lot of interest in -- and then why you made that decision
11 recently on the decommissioning and what that does to our
12 capability both from a Navy and Marine Corps perspective?
13 That is quite an important ship.

14 Mr. Braithwaite: Absolutely, Senator. So, first of
15 all, the investigation is ongoing, and our NCIS have done a
16 remarkable job in working through all the details of
17 something that is not straightforward. There was such
18 extensive damage on that ship. Both the Chief of Naval
19 Operations and I went out to visit the ship shortly after
20 the incident. And the amazing performance of the crew to
21 save that ship -- what they did is just remarkable and a
22 testament to the training that they receive in damage
23 control and firefighting.

24 I am a businessman, Mr. Chairman, and at the end of the
25 day, there is a return on investment, and the return on

1 investment of what it would have taken to rebuild that ship,
2 working very closely with the Secretary of Defense, Dr.
3 Esper wanted to see that ship come back and for all the
4 right reasons to send the right message to say, you know, we
5 do not give up our ships very easily. We have a battle flag
6 that hangs in Memorial Hall at the Naval Academy that says
7 don't give up the ship. But using logic and looking at what
8 it would have required to put that ship back together, it
9 would have been a foolish investment of our American
10 taxpayer dollars to invest in a ship that was over 20 years
11 old instead of looking at the options of building another
12 ship in the future that would have more relative
13 capabilities embracing the technologies that are emerging.

14 So I would invite the CNO to go into some of the
15 particulars of what we have determined. The ship was not to
16 deploy until 2022. So talking with the Commandant about how
17 we can ensure that we have the right assets to come in in
18 the deployment plan and to offset the loss of the ship, we
19 are working all those now. But, CNO, do you have any
20 thoughts about the Bonhomme Richard?

21 Admiral Gilday: Thanks, sir. Just a couple.

22 So, sir, the ship is 22 years old. About 60 percent of
23 it was so heavily damaged it would have to be replaced. If
24 we try to rebuild the ship into an LHD, return it to its
25 original state, it would take 5 to 7 years. It would be

1 straining the industrial base. We think there is one
2 shipyard on the Gulf coast who could do that kind of work,
3 and it would cost almost as much as a brand new ship.

4 If we took a look at other options like repurposing it,
5 could it be a command and control ship, could it be a
6 hospital ship, could it be a sealift vessel, it costs us
7 less money to buy one new than it would be to restore or to
8 repurpose Bonhomme Richard to another function.

9 And so for those reasons, sir, the \$30 million to
10 decommission was the best decision I think. And the
11 Secretary has all the consequential decisions come to his
12 desk. And I supported that recommendation that we decom
13 her.

14 In terms of near-term impacts operationally, we have
15 mitigated those. I think longer term -- let us say out to 3
16 to 5 years -- we are taking a look at what those other
17 options could be. Do we accelerate the production of a big
18 deck vessel? What would that mean with respect to the
19 amphibious force that we are building for the future? You
20 know, what are the priorities that we want to take a look at
21 within the Department? What is the demand signal from the
22 Secretary of Defense and the combatant commanders for those
23 vessels. So that is work to be done that is ongoing right
24 now, but in the near term, there will not be any operational
25 impact. We have mitigated that with moving some other

1 deployment schedules around.

2 Senator Sullivan: Great. Thank you for that answer.
3 And we are going to look forward to the report when it is
4 done, both if it is classified or unclassified, on what
5 happened and some of the actions. I know there were a lot
6 of sailors that undertook very heroic actions to save that
7 -- tried to save that ship.

8 Let me ask another for all three of you gentlemen. As
9 you know, here in the Senate we have got a number of
10 important bills that we are trying to finish up prior to the
11 end of this Congress, both the COVID relief bill and the
12 NDAA and a final appropriations bill. Importantly, that is
13 going to have military appropriations, but it is not for
14 sure we are going to be able to get there. There is a lot
15 of work that is being done to try to get a compromised
16 bipartisan bill. If we do not get there and we have to
17 settle for a continuing resolution, which is certainly not
18 ideal -- it is better than a government shutdown, but it is
19 not ideal -- I would like the three of you to weigh in on
20 what you think the impacts of a CR would be on Navy and
21 Marine Corps operations. I think sometimes it is not well
22 understood that even though it is continued funding, it is
23 very, very disruptive for our military operations and
24 readiness, which is the whole point of the oversight of this
25 subcommittee.

1 Mr. Secretary, we will start with you.

2 Mr. Braithwaite: Absolutely, Mr. Chairman. And
3 really, thank you for this question.

4 When I worked on the Hill, we rarely ever had a CR. I
5 worked for Senator Arlen Specter. And passing our
6 appropriations bills, our authorizing bills is extremely
7 important especially to an organization like the Department
8 of the Navy. So this does impact us.

9 And we are looking at ways now that if in fact we do
10 have a CR, how we minimize the impact. But it will affect
11 readiness. We asked for an anomaly, and it appears that we
12 have received that to continue to build the Columbia class,
13 our follow-on SSBN, to replace the Ohio class. Without that
14 anomaly, we would not be able to replace the Ohios, which
15 are 35-40 years old. So on behalf of the Department, we
16 would like to thank Congress very much for that relief.

17 But the particulars of this -- I mean, the way that we
18 operate our fleet, steaming hours, flying hours, all that
19 will be impacted. Pay to our sailors, to our marines --
20 there will be significant impact, you know, in the hazardous
21 and special pay spaces.

22 I would invite the Commandant or the CNO to talk to
23 some of the more specifics of what they see is the
24 operational leads for their respective services.

25 Senator Sullivan: Admiral?

1 Admiral Gilday: Yes, sir. So as the Secretary
2 mentioned, across a number of accounts, you begin to see the
3 effects accumulate over time. So with a 72-day CR, it is
4 about \$1 billion. It primarily affects our operations and
5 maintenance accounts. So think steaming hours, flying
6 hours. You want to keep these people, in the era of great
7 power competition, on the cutting edge and the best that
8 they can be, and you cannot when you are dealing with fiscal
9 year 2020 levels of spending.

10 You see that begin to manifest itself more acutely at
11 the 6-month point where we have decisions to make with
12 respect to moving money around with the next steps with the
13 USS Gerald R. Ford, an aircraft carrier that we want to get
14 operational in fiscal year 2022, as fast as we can, or with
15 the ongoing overhaul on George Washington, a refueling
16 overhaul, or a new start overhaul on the John C. Stennis, a
17 carrier that is waiting to go into maintenance. MILPERS.
18 You begin to see the effects more acutely in those accounts
19 as well where you cannot hire the people you want to hire in
20 numbers to get to where you want to be at the end of the
21 fiscal year.

22 A 12-month CR -- the impact of that is in the order of
23 about \$18 billion for the United States Navy across a number
24 of accounts. So over time you begin to see significant
25 impact with respect to both near-term readiness and

1 investments that we are trying to make in the future.

2 Senator Sullivan: General, do you have anything to add
3 to that? That is a really staggering number you mentioned,
4 \$18 billion.

5 General Berger: Chairman, I think if you asked any
6 leader who has anything to do with executing the budget if
7 you could have one thing, what would you ask for, they would
8 say stable, predictable funding. They would not ask for a
9 dollar amount. They would just say some predictability,
10 some stable, predictable funding.

11 I would boil it down in the same two buckets as the
12 CNO: readiness and modernization. We will get by. We have
13 gotten by so far on this CR on readiness without any
14 negative impacts. It will begin to impact going into the
15 next few months. And the CNO just really accurately
16 highlighted those areas. They are similar to ours.

17 My bigger concern, frankly, or my major concern is
18 modernization. We are turning our ship to make a Marine
19 Corps that we will need 10 years from now. That involves
20 new starts. If we do not have the appropriations bill on
21 time, you are going to delay the modernization in the Marine
22 Corps and to the detriment of our readiness. It is going to
23 be for us sort of a double whammy. Not a good picture.

24 Senator Sullivan: Thank you. I appreciate it.

25 I have one final question, gentlemen. And again, I

1 appreciate the comments about my father. One of the
2 favorite things I got to do with him every year was go to
3 the Army-Navy game. And as a member of the Board of
4 Visitors of the Naval Academy, I was honored to be appointed
5 by that by the former chairman of this committee, Senator
6 McCain. So it looks like the game is going to continue,
7 which is great, and I would appreciate a prediction. If you
8 cannot make it in your professional capacity, Mr. Secretary,
9 maybe your personal view on who is going to win that game.
10 It is a very important question for the nation. And if the
11 other two uniformed leaders, the Admiral and General, also
12 have a view, I would welcome that.

13 Mr. Braithwaite: So, Mr. Chairman, as a proud member
14 of the United States Naval Academy class of 1984, my
15 personal and professional opinion on this one converge. We
16 will beat Army at West Point. We have a record of playing
17 there three times. The first Army game in 1890, the Navy
18 won, and we played it at West Point. We went back to Army
19 during World War II when we were under some of the same
20 pressures as we are today with COVID.

21 And when Secretary Ryan McCarthy and I talked about
22 where we should play the game, we were committed to ensuring
23 that every cadet and every midshipman would get to attend
24 that game. Being a Philadelphian, I live about an hour
25 outside the city, it is always great to go back to

1 Philadelphia, but Philadelphia would not allow us to go
2 beyond 7,500, which does not cover all of the corps cadets
3 or the brigade of midshipmen. So Secretary McCarthy and I,
4 working with the CNO and the Army Chief of Staff and the
5 respective superintendents of both the United States
6 Military Academy and the United States Naval Academy,
7 determined that we will play the game even if we have to
8 play it in a parking lot outside the Meadowlands. This is
9 an uninterrupted tradition that has gone on since 1890 in
10 the midst of the Spanish influenza, World War I, World War
11 II, and we are not stopping now.

12 So Navy will beat Army on December 12th once again for
13 the fourth time that we play at West Point, Army's home
14 team. That is why we went to West Point. Go Navy. Beat
15 Army.

16 Senator Sullivan: Are there any dissenting opinions
17 from the Admiral and General on that view?

18 Admiral Gilday: No, sir.

19 Senator Sullivan: I did not think so.

20 Well, listen, gentlemen, I appreciate very much your
21 time and your professionalism and your service to our
22 nation. This has been a very, very informative hearing. I
23 know that there will be additional questions for the record.
24 We will keep the record of this hearing open for 2 more
25 weeks for additional questions, and the committee asks

1 respectfully if you get QFRs, if you could try to get them
2 back to the committee in short order, again we appreciate
3 it. And thank you for your service.

4 This hearing is now adjourned.

5 [Whereupon, at 11:17 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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