

**HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY IN REVIEW OF  
THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009 AND THE FUTURE  
YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM**

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**Thursday, February 28, 2008**

U.S. SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:34 a.m. in Room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Carl Levin, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Committee Members Present: Levin [presiding], Kennedy, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, Webb, McCaskill, Warner, Sessions, Collins, Chambliss, Dole, Thune, and Martinez.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Staff Director; and Leah C. Brewer, Nominations and Hearings Clerk.

Majority staff members present: Creighton Green, Professional Staff Member, Mark R. Jacobson, Professional Staff Member, Gerald J. Leeling, Counsel, Thomas K. McConnell, Professional Staff Member, William G.P. Monahan, Counsel, and William K. Sutey, Professional Staff Member.

Minority staff members present: William M. Caniano, Professional Staff Member, David G. Collins, Research assistant, David M. Morriss, Minority Counsel, Lucian L. Niemeyer, Professional Staff Member, Christopher J. Paul, Professional Staff Member, Sean G. Stackley, Professional Staff Member, Diana G. Tabler, Professional Staff Member, and Richard F. Walsh, Minority Counsel.

Staff assistants present: Fletcher L. Cork, Kevin A. Cronin, and Benjamin L. Rubin.

Committee members' assistants present: Bethany Bassett, assistant to Senator Kennedy, Jay Maroney, assistant to Senator Kennedy, Charles Kieffer, assistant to Senator Byrd, Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman, Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed, Bonni Berge, assistant to Senator Akaka, Richard Kessler, assistant to Senator Akaka, Christopher Caple, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson, Andrew R. Vanlandingham, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson, Jon Davey, assistant to Senator Bayh, Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb, Todd Stiefler, assistant to Senator Sessions, Mark J. Winter, assistant to Senator Collins, Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss, Lindsey Neas, assistant to Senator Dole, Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator

Thune, Brian W. Walsh, assistant to Senator Martinez, and Erskine W. Wells, III, assistant to Senator Wicker.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CARL LEVIN, U.S. SENATOR  
FROM MICHIGAN**

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. First, the committee welcomes Secretary Winter and General Conway back to the committee this morning. In addition, we'd like to welcome Admiral Roughead to his first posture hearing. You are well known to this committee. You served as chief of legislative affairs not too many years ago, a fairly short time, I think. Do you remember what years you were here as legislative affairs chief, if you want to admit this?

Admiral Roughead: I wouldn't want to admit that. I think it was in the 2000, 2001 time frame.

Chairman LEVIN. It's great to have you.

Admiral Roughead: It's great to be back, sir. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. We're grateful to each of you for your service, and to the valorous and truly professional men and women that you command and to their families, that we always remember when we extend our greetings and our gratitude to the men and women in uniform. We always remember to include their families, for reasons which you gentlemen are very well aware of.

You're faced with a number of critical issues that confront the Department of the Navy in balancing modernization needs against the costs of supporting ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In one notable case, the Nation is calling on the Marine Corps to surge additional forces to Afghanistan because of a refusal among our allies to support operations there.

General Conway's prepared statement highlights that at least 3200 marines will soon deploy to Afghanistan, without relaxing commitments elsewhere in the CENTCOM theater of operations. When I talked to General Conway the other day in my office, I asked him whether that failure on the part of allies to do their committed part had any impact at all on the morale of our marines. His answer was a very firm, stout, and immediate "No," and we recognize that. And if we can be doubly grateful to our marines for that kind of a response, we are.

The Navy's been contributing directly to the war effort in CENTCOM as well. In addition to the normal deployments of ships and aircraft in support of these operations, according to the Admiral's prepared statement the Navy has trained and deployed more than 17,000 individual augmentees, or Ias, to support these missions on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan. Again, not their usual duty, but no complaints, and we're tremendously grateful for that response.

As we visit these men and women we talk to them about that issue, and they are doing their duty, period.

General Conway: Thank you, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. These activities further stress our troops and represent challenges to our service members and their families. Again, let me express the thanks of every member of this committee and I'm sure every member of the Senate and every American for just how well and ably the men and women of the Depart-

ment of the Navy and their families are responding to these challenges.

A number of challenges facing the Department of the Navy center on acquisition programs. We have concerns about cost problems in the shipbuilding arena, most notably with the Littoral Combat Ship, or LCS, program. When we met here last year, the Navy had cancelled the contract for the second ship at the first of the two LCS contractors. Since that time the second LCS contractor ran into much the same cost and schedule problems that plagued the first LCS contractor and the Navy cancelled that contractor's second ship as well.

Changing requirements, poor cost estimates, inexperienced program managers, and poor supervision of the contractors' performance were among the causes of the overrun. Long ago, a famous study said: Don't monkey with requirements after signing a contract, because that leads to cost and schedule problems. I've heard through the decades that the Navy has learned that lesson, but it apparently still has not.

In Marine Corps programs, we saw significant cost growth on the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle, or the EFV program, last year. More recently, we've seen reports of significant problems in affording the VH-71 helicopter that will replace the current Marine Corps helicopters that support the President. We will need to understand what has caused those cost growth overruns and problems and what steps are being taken to correct them.

In the case of the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected Vehicle program, or MRAP, Congress intervened to accelerate this program enough so that the Marine Corps will complete filling its requirement for the MRAP vehicles in fiscal year 2008.

Another concern surrounds future force levels. We're facing the prospect that the current Navy program will lead to potentially large gaps between the forces that the Chief of Naval Operations has said that he needs and the forces that will be available to his successors. In one case, the CNO has said that the Navy needs to have 48 attack submarines to meet combatant commanders' requirements, but we are faced with the risk of falling well short of that goal for more than 10 years starting during the next decade.

Under current plans for tactical aircraft acquisition, the Navy is facing a shortfall of as many as 200 tactical fighters needed to outfit our aircraft carrier air wings. With shortfalls that large, we could be faced with drastically reducing the number of aircraft available on short notice to the combatant commanders, either because we've deployed understrength air wings or because we did not deploy the carrier at all because of those aircraft shortages.

The Navy has predicted that the reduction in carrier force levels to ten will not prevent them from maintaining the current capability to surge carriers under the fleet response plan, the so-called Six Plus One capability. If the Navy were not to have enough aircraft to outfit four of its ten carrier air wings, this would be a moot point in any event.

We look forward to the testimony of our witnesses this morning. We're very grateful again for their presence, for their commitment to this Nation, and to their fine work.

Senator Warner, I think this may be your last Navy posture hearing, unless we sneak in another one before the end of the year.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN WARNER, U.S. SENATOR FROM  
VIRGINIA**

Senator WARNER. Well, it wouldn't be a posture hearing. But I've enjoyed 30 years of being with you, Senator, on this posture hearings, and then 5 years prior thereto when I sat at that table. So it's been a very wonderful opportunity for this humble person to have had that experience.

I join you, Mr. Chairman, in the respect and homage we pay to the men and women of the armed forces, and today it's the Navy-Marine Corps team, and their families for their service to country.

Mr. Chairman, I was pleased when we visited the other day you told me about the centennial celebration for the Great White Fleet launched by Teddy Roosevelt 100 years ago, and how his aides said to him: Well, Mr. President, we've only got money to really get them halfway around the world. And the President said: That's fine by me; we'll get them there and we'll park the ships until Congress appropriates the money to bring them home.

So here we are. But I think those moments of history—and we reflect upon the Constitution, which says that this Nation shall maintain a Navy and raise an Army as we see fit in the appropriate time.

Today you r that a third of our fleet is under way at any one time, from the Western Pacific to the Arabian Gulf, sailing with the flag of freedom and hope, not only for our country, but for so many countries. We also see the trends in naval construction of other countries, notably China and now a rejuvenated Russian interest in their Navy, and that brings to mind the essential requirement of this country—and we must remember, in effect we're sort of an island nation, and we're dependent on a maritime strategy for our overall security interests.

Meanwhile, 25,000 marines are conducting our Nation's most pressing business in Iraq and Afghanistan, and more are on the way. So we salute you, General, and your forces. Today's hearing should ensure that we are doing all in our power so that they can meet that motto, the most ready at all times.

For the Navy and the Marine Corps, this comes down to ships and aircraft, ordnance and armor, and a trained force of sailors and marines equally ready for sea and ready for war.

The chairman covered several points and i'll just put that in the record as a part of my statement. But I say to the Commandant, I was impressed. I watched a piece last night, I believe it was on the Lehrer show, about your concern of the current armor and the weight of that armor and how that weight, not only of the individual's armor, but the armor that we put on vehicles, requires you to do some consideration about the future. I commend you for that. Certainly the up-armored Humvee has been a successful operation, and now the MRAP. But with that armor goes some loss of tactical mobility of those vehicles as well as the tactical mobility of the individual marine. Perhaps in your testimony you will touch on that decision that you've been making.

We also are interested in the recruiting and training. I'm the chairman and I will bring those into focus here.

As the Chief of Naval Operations, we're encouraged by the Navy's continued focus on the fleet response plan, on stabilizing your steaming dies and flying hours. I join the chairman with regard to the shipbuilding budget n, Mr. Secretary, we hope it is accurate and we're hopeful that we can maintain the goals that you've established for this coming fiscal year in the out years. That's the essential part of our responsibility here, is providing for an adequate force.

The 313 ships, Admiral, is still the goal, as it should be, of our fleet. We are also faced, as the chairman said, about the shortfalls in aircraft as we gap in for the Joint Strike Fighter, and we'll cover that.

But a "well done" to each of you gentlemen and those that you're privileged to have the responsibility to care for, both in uniform and the families, and a very significant civilian corps, Mr. Secretary, that you know well. I looked at your overall figures. It's 900,000 individuals in the Department of the Navy—

Mr. Winter: Yes, sir.

Senator WARNER.—that you're responsible for, uniformed and civilian.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:] [COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner.

Secretary Winter?

**STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD C. WINTER, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY**

Mr. Winter: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Levin, Senator Warner, and members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am here to present the Department of the Navy's plan to support our sailors and marines in their mission to defend our Nation against current and future challenges.

The President's fiscal year '09 budget will assist the Navy and Marine Corps in accomplishing their complementary and reinforcing missions while building capabilities necessary to meet future threats. One of the primary responsibilities of our Government is to provide for the Nation's defense. Those responsibilities include the critical requirements to organize, train, and equip the naval forces. For the vast majority of citizens, the only cost imposed on us is financial. America is able to provide for the National defense with such a minimal impact on the citizenry because we are blessed to have among us a generation of people, patriots all, who volunteer to serve. They are the ones who bear many hardships, accept many risks, and go in harm's way.

The pay and benefit funding levels in our '09 budget request reflect the compensation levels necessary to continue to attract and retain quality personnel in the Navy and the Marine Corps. Furthermore, although we are doing well in our overall recruiting and retention numbers, I emphasize the need for special pays and bonuses to meet critical sub-specialty needs such as our requirements for nurses, physicians, and explosive ordnance disposal personnel.

It is because of the hard work of our sailors and marines that we are making progress, fostering maritime security, defeating terrorist networks, progressing towards a stable Iraq, supporting the Afghan government, countering piracy and the proliferation of deadly technology, rendering humanitarian assistance, and strengthening partnerships around the world. Our sailors and marines have responded when called and superbly performed their many missions in our Nation's defense. It is truly an honor and privilege to work with them and support them as their Secretary.

The Department of the Navy's fiscal year 2009 budget meets the challenge of resourcing the Navy and Marine Corps team across a range of missions, from partnership building to combat operations. It invests in our ability to operate, sustain, and develop forces that are engaged in the global war on terrorism while preparing the force for the challenges and threats of the future.

We are requesting a total of \$149 billion, a 7 percent increase over the fiscal year 2008 baseline. This increase is driven by factors such as rising oil costs and the critical comprehensive growth of the Marine Corps. Our fiscal year 2009 budget reflects three key priorities, which are consistent with those of previous years. They are: first of all, prevail in the global war on terror; second, take care of our sailors, marines, and their families, and particularly our wounded; and lastly, prepare for future challenges across the whole spectrum of operations.

To help meet our first priority, prevail in the GWOT, we are adapting our force for current and future missions, to include growing the Marine Corps, shaping the force by recruiting and retaining the right people, and addressing critical readiness needs. Among the most critical readiness needs is the ability to train our sailors and marines for the threats that they may encounter. Unfortunately, our Navy has encountered increasing encroachments in our ability to conduct critical training. We recognize that there are on occasion impacts on the citizenry at large associated with such training. But these are necessary costs that are critical to the defense of the Nation. We take extensive precautions to minimize the impact of our training. We owe it to the American people and we owe it to those who serve to acknowledge that, as in all things in life, there are competing interests and tradeoffs and that we treat the risks of sonar operation at sea or the impact of jet noise the way we treat all public policy issues, balancing risks and costs against legitimate national security interests.

I greatly appreciate the support this committee provided us last year with respect to Miramar Air Station, thereby ensuring that our naval aviators can continue to receive vital training. I commit to you today that I will continue to keep you apprised of legal challenges and their implications for readiness that we face over the course of the coming year.

Mr. Chairman, if in the future we are unable to properly train our sailors and marines we will have failed to do our duty to them and to the American people.

Another critical issue I would like to highlight concerns doing right by those who go in harm's way. As Secretary of Defense Gates has stated, apart from the war itself we have no higher priority than to take care of our wounded. Our wounded warriors and

their families deserve the highest priority care, respect, and treatment for their sacrifices. Our '09 budget honors our commitment to ensure that our sailors and marines receive the appropriate care, training, and financial support that they need.

Finally, to meet the challenges of the future, the '09 budget provides for a balanced fleet of ships, aircraft, and expeditionary capabilities with the fighting power and versatility to carry out blue, green, and brown water missions wherever called upon.

Furthermore, I would like to note that, consistent with our commitment to assure affordability and timely delivery of capabilities, we have launched an acquisition improvement initiative to provide better integration of requirements and acquisition decision processes, improve governance and insight into the development, establishment, and execution of acquisition programs, and formalize a network to engage senior—excuse me—formalize a framework to engage senior naval leadership.

Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for the strong support this committee and the Congress at large has given our Navy and Marine Corps team. I want to thank you on their behalf. Our Navy and Marine Corps is a strong, capable, and dedicated team. I appreciate the opportunity to represent them today and I look forward to your questions. [The prepared statement of Mr. Winter follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Secretary.

Admiral Roughead, I guess you're next.

**STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL GARY ROUGHEAD, U.S. NAVY, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS**

Admiral Roughead: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Levin, Senator Warner, distinguished members of the committee: On behalf of our 600,000 sailors, Navy civilians, and families, thank you for your support and the opportunity to appear before you today. Together with Secretary Winter and General Conway, i'm privileged to be part of this leadership team, committed to our Nation's safety, security, and prosperity.

Today your Navy stands ready with the agility, the flexibility, and the competence to do what no other Navy in the world can do. Last week we successfully temporarily converted our sea-based ballistic missile defense capability to engage a failing satellite. Sea-based BMD is here, it is real, and it works.

But that is only part of what your Navy delivers to the Nation. We recently deployed the first converted strategic submarine for SEAL delivery. 2800 sailors set sail to patrol in the Mediterranean and Middle East, and the three ships of our Africa Partnership Station conducted four port calls in West Africa.

What you saw last week was just a small part of what your Navy does in executing the maritime strategy, a strategy that is more than just a glossy brochure. Four carriers last year anchored our presence in the Arabian Gulf. SSBNs patrolled as silent deterrence. Three carrier strike groups massed in an array of joint power, exercising sea control in the western Pacific in Exercise Valiant Shield. F-A-18 Hornets increased projected power ashore in Operation Enduring Freedom when the Air Force F-15s were grounded. Ships patrolled the Horn of Africa, enhancing maritime security against piracy. USNS COMFORT and USS PELLALOU provided proactive

humanitarian assistance to tens of thousands in South America and Southeast Asia. The USS KIRSAGE Expeditionary Strike Group rushed to provide disaster relief to Bangladesh in the aftermath of a cyclone.

We are out and about, doing essential missions for the Nation. But as you so well know, our operations come at a cost to our people, our current readiness, and the future fleet, those are my three areas of focus. Our people, our sailors, our marines, our Navy civilians, and their families know they have your support. We must continue to invest in their futures and in the young men and women of America who will follow in their wake. As a Nation at war, our utmost responsibility is to our wounded warriors. I am proud of and committed to the Safe Harbor program, which has dedicated staffs and teams individually tracking and meeting the needs of those heroic sailors and their families.

In the context of this generational war, however, investing in the health of our force must go further. The health care we provide, especially for traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as the President's support for child care, hiring preferences for spouses, and family education benefits, will bring welcome relief to the military families and assist us in a very challenging recruiting and retention environment.

Likewise, increasing the throughput of the U.S. Naval Academy is an important investment in our future leadership, especially as Marine Corps end strength grows.

But supporting our future force cannot be done without readiness to fight today. To this end, quality shore installations, responsive depot-level maintenance centers, and unfettered ability to train responsibly are necessities. Where area access and short support is denied, the Commandant and I have been moving forward with a sea basing alternative. These elements are essential to support our fleet response plan, which has enabled us to meet requirements, and will sustain us through a requested temporary carrier force level adjustment.

Of my three focus areas, building tomorrow's Navy to be a balanced, appropriately sized force is the most immediate imperative and challenge. Fiscal realities, operational strain on our ships and aircraft, and necessary decommissionings are contributing to the risk we assume. Achieving the 313-ship floor at current funding levels will require us to improve processes, collaborate with industry, and make difficult decisions in the near term.

I am pleased that the first two DDG-1000 contracts have been awarded. The technology embedded in that ship will advance our surface combatants of the future. I remain strongly committed to funding those programs that provide critical capabilities to our forces. There is no substitute for the Littoral Combat Ship in closing a littoral capability gap. Current F-A-18 Hornets are needed to assuage a 2016 strike fighter shortfall. Surface combatant superiority will be maintained through DDG-51 modernization. Multi-mission maritime aircraft will recapitalize our maritime patrol antisubmarine warfare capabilities, and space ballistic missile defense will ensure future theater and national defense and enable access.

These critical programs for our future fleet require appropriate disciplined investment now. The 2009 budget and its associated force structure plans will meet our current challenges with a moderate degree of risk. Clearly we have many challenges, of which building tomorrow's fleet is the greatest. But with these challenges, it is our opportunity to have a fleet which will defend the Nation and assure our prosperity for generations to come.

On behalf of our sailors, Navy civilians, and our families, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today, and thank you for your support for what we do today and what we will do tomorrow. [The prepared statement of Admiral Roughead follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Admiral.  
General Conway?

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL JAMES T. CONWAY, U.S. MARINE  
CORPS, COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS**

General Conway: Chairman Levin, Senator Warner, and distinguished members of the committee: I have pledged to always provide you with forthright and honest assessments of your Marine Corps and I bear that in mind today as I r to you on the posture of our service.

In the written statement I provided you a list of priorities that would enable your Corps to best serve our Nation's security interests, both today and in the uncertain future. But in brief, our young warriors in combat are my number one priority. Those magnificent patriots have been extremely effective in disrupting insurgents and the al-Qaeda in the al-Anbar Province. In the spirit of jointness, I must note that it hasn't been just marines, rather marines, sailors and soldiers, a composite effort over time, that has brought success to the al-Anbar.

Quiet in their duty and determined in their approach, your marines are telling us loud and clear that wherever there's a job to be done they'll shoulder that mission with enthusiasm. They're tough and they'll do what it takes to win.

We are still supporting the surge in Iraq and have already shifted from population protection to transitioning security responsibilities to Iraqi security forces. They are actively stepping up to the task. Though it may not be our core competency, marines have addressed the Nation- building aspect of our duties with enthusiasm and determination.

As you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, in answer to the most recent call from the Secretary of Defense, we are also deploying more than 3400 marines to Afghanistan. your marines will assist the joint force in either gaining or maintaining momentum there. We fall in on our expeditionary ethos of living hard and fighting well as part of the air-ground team.

I've just returned from a visit to Iraq and Afghanistan n, ladies and gentlemen, i'm pleased to r to you that your marines are demonstrating amazing resiliency in the face of multiple deployments to dangerous lands. In spite of a one to one deployment to dwell regimen that has virtually no chance of getting better until fall, the factors that we track monthly to determine health of the force, that include desertion and UA rates, suicide, divorce, child or spousal

abuse, and not least reenlistment rates, are all as good or better than they were in 2001.

We do have a significant issue with our families. Simply put, they are proud of their contributions to this war, but they're tired. We owe it to those families to put our family service programs onto a wartime footing. For too long our programs have been borne on the backs of our volunteers—acceptable during peacetime, but untenable during a protracted conflict. The Congress has been exceptionally supportive in enabling us to make good on the promise to do more.

Of course, we look beyond today and our obligation to the Nation, and we have learned lessons in trying to build the force as we fight. In response to a clear need, we are growing the Corps to 202,000 marines. We do this without lowering our standards and we are ahead of our goals. During the last fiscal year we needed to bring aboard 5,000 additional recruits. We actually grew 7,000 additional marines, 96.2 percent of them high school graduates.

But more than just manpower, the growth requires training, infrastructure, and equipment to meet the needs of our Nation. You've helped us meet those requirements with steady support and encouragement, and for that we thank you. Though our capacity is currently stretched, the Marine Corps retains the mission to provide a multi-capable force for our Nation, a two-fisted fighter, if you will, able to destroy enemy formations with our air-ground team in a major contingency, but equally able to fall back on our hard-earned irregular warfare skills honed over decades of conflict.

By far the most complex of our Congressionally mandated missions, amphibious operations, requires deliberate training and long-term resourcing to achieve a high level of proficiency. The operational expertise, the special equipment sets and the amphibious lift are not capabilities that we can rapidly create in the face of a threat.

Finally, on behalf of your marines, I extend great appreciation for your support thus far, and I thank you in advance for your efforts on behalf of our brave servicemen and women in harm's way. I assure you that the Marine Corps appreciates the increasing competition for the Nation's discretionary resources and will continue to provide a tangible return for every dollar spent.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. [The prepared statement of General Conway follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, General.

Let's try an 8-minute round.

Secretary, I made reference to these huge cost overruns that have dogged our acquisition programs. Are you making systemic changes to try to overcome those?

Mr. Winter: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Two specific areas that I would highlight, one of which has to do with the overall processes that we go through within the Department to establish a program, and in particular to ensure that all the requirements are properly defined and completed prior to the initiation of advanced development activities.

We're also going through a very significant activity to assure that we have the right work force to be able to both manage and oversee the acquisition activities themselves. This includes everything from

the numbers to the appropriate training of the individuals that are put into the specific roles.

Chairman LEVIN. Is there ever any accountability for the failure to meet these cost estimates?

Mr. Winter: the accountability is imposed both within the Navy team itself as well as with the contractor community. One of the things that we try on the contractor side is to provide appropriate incentives that give the contractor financial inputs should they fail to meet the appropriate financial and schedule targets.

Similarly, in the military side, in terms of the acquisition community, this is a major factor that we use in the evaluation of people relative to their future assignments and future careers.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, I made reference to the folks, your Navy personnel who are serving not in their regular billets. Instead, they're being used as individual augmentees. Do we have some way of assessing the impact of that on readiness or in other areas?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir, Senator, we do. We have been assigning our sailors and individual augmentees for a couple of years now n, as someone who in a previous assignment was responsible for the mg, direct management of that, we have created a structure and oversight to properly pair the individual with the mission to be accomplished when they go forward, and at the same time as we're doing that we look at what effect that individual will have on the readiness of the sourcing command.

What I have found is that the process that we have in place, the way that we identify, allows us to put the appropriate capability forward while not diminishing the readiness of our fleet.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, you made reference to the recent use of a modified missile defense interceptor, Standard Missile 3, along with a modified version of the Aegis ballistic missile defense, the BMD system, to shoot down that failed satellite. Can you confirm that the modifications that were made to the interceptor missile and the Aegis weapons system were unique, one-time modifications exclusively for this one mission, and that the Aegis ballistic missile defense system could not perform its required missile defense mission with those one-time modifications?

Admiral Roughead: Those were one-time modifications, Senator, that were done on a finite nb of missiles. The missiles that were not used in this mission will be reconfigured back to the anti-ballistic—to the ABM configuration.

Chairman LEVIN. In terms of the Aegis BMD system, can you confirm that that system which was deployed does not have the capability to shoot down satellites, with the one exception of that unique mission?

Admiral Roughead: I can confirm that, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Secretary and Admiral, in your written statements you made reference to the importance of United States approval and accession to the Law of the Sea Convention in order to carry out our maritime strategy. We've held a hearing on that convention. The Foreign Relations Committee has voted it out of committee. It's on the calendar.

Can you just briefly indicate here publicly orally that you do support that convention?

Mr. Winter: Yes, Mr. Chairman, i'm supportive of that. I think it's important that we have a seat at the table as part of that convention and have an opportunity to engage with the other members, signatories to that convention, as the convention evolves over the years to come.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, do you join that?

Admiral Roughead: I do, sir. And I can attest from my command positions in the Atlantic and Pacific that by not being a party to that treaty, it actually inhibited the activities that we could pursue with other navies.

Chairman LEVIN. Is the administration committed at the highest levels to pursuing Senate approval of the ratification of the Law of the Sea Convention in this session of Congress? Mr. Secretary?

Mr. Winter: Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, do you know?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. General, let me ask you about the issue which was referred to at some length in this morning's Washington Post, which has had other references as well, and that's the question of Anbar Province, its success in turning against the extremists which you made reference to, and for which everybody is obviously pleased and grateful.

The movement, which is called in various places and times the Sunni Awakening, or Concerned Local Citizens, or Sons of Iraq, is according to a nb of reports, including this morning's paper, fraying somewhat and could collapse because few of their members—too few of their members are being offered positions in the Iraqi security forces, there are limited opportunities for other jobs, and they're being targeted by Al-Qaeda and they're being—they are distrusted by too much of the Shia-dominated government, and they have been complaining of insufficient support by the U.S.

In the mean time, that provincial powers law which calls for provincial elections to be held by October 1 and was seen by the Sunni Arab community as a way to gain political power, has been vetoed by the Shia member of the presidency council, we read yesterday or the day before. I just would like to ask you this question because you and your troops have played such a key role in Anbar and the success that has taken place there.

Are you concerned that those Sunni Arabs may once again take up arms against the coalition, become insurgents again, which of course would then threaten to unravel many of the gains which have been achieved during the surge.

General Conway: Sir, i'm not concerned that that could happen in the near term, but we are concerned about some of the things you cite and about some of the things which you read in the article this morning. There have been significant security gains and there is, even as we speak, the tribal frictions now as they elbow for power at the provincial level, but also as they endeavor to plug in at the National level.

We're conscious of those things. We have people dedicated to working those things with the central government in Baghdad, to try to ensure that they understand the value of incorporating Sunnis into the government if we are to see one Iraq stay together in the future.

So we monitor those things. We try to mitigate those things through discussion. We talk to the value of synergy, of all of the tribes and all of the political parties coming together as they plug into Baghdad. But we're not concerned that there is any near-term danger of a return to the levels of violence that we have seen.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you have a concern, is it fair to say that unless those problems are addressed that there could be a significant problem in the longer term?

General Conway: Sir, I think that's fair. We have always talked about the three legs of the stool: the security, the economics, and the political. We can, in our current role of providing security and doing some nation- building in the province, help most with the security and the economics. We are less able to be involved in the political aspect of things, although we engage where we can.

We certainly are pushing to keep the provincial elections the 1st of October, because we think that will be a significant advancement on behalf of the Sunni tribes out west and an opportunity for them to again further engage with the central government.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator Warner?

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, let's return to the shipbuilding budget, the out year objective of 313 ships. Clearly, in your position you have first drawn on an extensive background prior to coming to the Navy secretariat of managing major programs for the very top levels of our defense structure, TRW and Norfolk and others. How confident are you that in the out years you can reach, or perhaps I should say a successor to you could reach, the 313 level? And what steps are you putting in place to ensure that that takes place in the out years?

Mr. Winter: Senator, I think that as we take a look out in time our understanding obviously is much better in the current years, in the near years. I'm confident that we have a viable program for '09 and for the immediate years around that. As we go out further in time there are a number of uncertainties associated with everything from the cost of production to the overall requirements that have yet to be defined for many of the future systems, programs like the Ohio class replacement, programs like CGX, which is still in the process of going through its early definition phases.

I am hopeful that we will still be able to obtain a 313-ship target in a timely manner, but that is going to require a significant effort on the part both of the Navy and industry to work together, to make significant changes to the acquisition process, including in particular stabilizing requirements, and having, if you will, a limit on our appetite for those requirements as we go through program definition.

Furthermore, significant effort is going to be required, I believe, to modernize our facilities for the construction of ships and the combat systems that go on them. That investment is going to require, I believe, a concerted effort on the part of both the Navy and industry.

Senator WARNER. You're going to put in place a series of benchmarks that have to be made by you and your successors, and in

what year do you hope to obtain, what fiscal year, the level of 313 ships?

Mr. Winter: We've laid out the program right now into the 2020—

Admiral Roughead: 2019 is when they cross.

Senator WARNER. 2019 is the year.

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir.

Senator WARNER. Is that predicated on some significant top line readjustment in the allocation of resources by the Secretary of Defense between the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force?

Mr. Winter: Sir, that has a number of assumptions in it. It does assume an average expenditure of about \$15.8 billion a year in '07 dollars to be able to accomplish that. That is more than what we're spending right now, but hopefully it is an amount that is achievable within the current allocation process.

There are aspects that I would like to note are not included in that estimate. It does not include the costs associated with nuclear power for future surface combatants and it does not include the cost estimates associated with Ohio class replacement.

Senator WARNER. Well, it's a challenge, but I think it's imperative that we meet that challenge in view of the fact that other nations now recognize the importance of having significant maritime capabilities in their military forces.

General, I'm going to follow onto the line of questions by the chairman with regard to Afghanistan. I suppose that theater concerns this Senator the most of all the challenges that face us today. The marines are heading in in significant numbers, the thought being perhaps the success that the marines had in al-Anbar can be used as a blueprint to try and achieve greater success in Afghanistan.

Would you address that concept and your own professional judgment as to whether or not there is a transferability of that strategy in al-Anbar which has been successful, for what in my judgment is a continuing serious, in some ways deteriorating, situation in Afghanistan, with the ever strengthening resurgence of the Taliban?

General Conway: Sir, I don't think there's a direct transfer because the missions will be slightly different. That those marines will take in lessons that come right from our small wars manuals and the decades of dealing with third world countries, if you will, I think will be extremely valuable. But whereas in al-Anbar we owned ground and had responsibility for all of the villages and all of the cities, neither the battalion that's going in nor the MEU will be assigned primary responsibility for ground. The MEU we believe will be used as a response task force, immediately commanded by the commander of ISAF, valuable we think particularly during a spring offensive if we see one, valuable if we decide to launch our own spring offensive against Taliban locations.

The battalion coming off the West Coast will be primarily involved with training police and the army, and their utility will be at the various police stations throughout their region of assignment, in terms of securing the area to a degree that these people can operate with the populace.

Senator WARNER. So the first battalion would be in the nature of a 9–11 force, to go anywhere within Afghanistan to confront high level insurgents?

General Conway: I think that's fair, sir.

Senator WARNER. That's interesting. And the second primarily for the training of the Afghan forces?

General Conway: That's correct, sir.

Senator WARNER. Now, I mentioned the very interesting piece that I saw last night. You're readjusting your order for the new MRAP, is that correct?

General Conway: No, sir. If you're talking about the protective vest, the individual armor—

Senator WARNER. Let's go vest and vehicle.

General Conway: Yes, sir.

Senator WARNER. Whichever one you want first.

General Conway: Sir, we did adjust our requirement for MRAP. We initially asked for 3700 vehicles and the thought process was a one for one replacement of our up- armored Humvees with the MRAPs. The up-armored Humvees were simply not standing up to under-body explosions to the degree that we had hoped would be the case, and the MRAP had proven itself over time with the ability to do that.

What we have discovered as those MRAPs have started to arrive in theater in large numbers is that, particularly out west, they are not able to cross some of the bridges that aren't that well built.

Senator WARNER. Because of the weight?

General Conway: Yes, sir, exactly. They are heavy vehicles, 4800 pounds—48,000 pounds with the heaviest of the lot.

They also don't maneuver as well off road. So what we've found is that those patrols need to be a combination of MRAPs and up-armored Humvees in order to be most successful and to accomplish the mission. So we have reduced our buy to something more on the order of about 2300 vehicles, and saving we think in the process about \$1.7 billion for the Government.

Senator WARNER. Now, what about the utility of that vehicle with your forces in Afghanistan?

General Conway: Sir, we think there will be some utility. When I was there I looked at in fact the arrival of the first 36 vehicles. We think there will be a total of about 38, something less than 40. It is not as applicable in large portions of the Afghan terrain even as it is in Iraq, because of the mountainous nature. But there are roadways there, there are some desert plains there, where we do think it will have value, and we fully intend to use it with our engineers, our route clearance people, and our EOD personnel clearing IEDs.

Senator WARNER. Let's conclude my time with the vest situation. That's been a very controversial subject here in the Congress and certainly in the minds of the public. Where are we in your judgment on the amount of armor that we can expect to put on, protective armor or whatever you wish to call it, for the average marine, and are you going to make an adjustment once again in the type of vest that you think is best suited for the combat situations?

General Conway: Sir, as a former marine I think you know that there is always a tradeoff between weight and protection and the

mobility of the individual marine, and we continue with that dynamic even today. We think that the vests that we have protect our people exceedingly well.

What we are hearing now from the marines in the fleet in the marines in Iraq and Afghanistan is they don't like this most recent vest because it is three or four pounds heavier than the vest that replaced it. It takes, depending on how you put it on, it takes two people to put on the vest. It has a quick release element that the old vest did not have, but when a marine straps his rifle that quick release capacity is diminished or disappears.

I wore it myself on my visit to the theater over Thanksgiving last year and, frankly, I have a big head and big ears and it's painful putting it on and taking it off, and marines have evidenced that same thing.

Senator WARNER. Well then, where do we go from here? Are we going to go back to the previous vest and produce more of that?

General Conway: Sir, what I have done is told my commander at Quantico who handles such things to simply stop purchase on the remaining 24,000 vests. We need to go back and investigate. There were over 100 marines who field tested the vests for us back in 2006 and declared it good to go, if you will. But we're not getting that same report from the marines in theater who now wear it on a daily basis in combat.

So I think we need to reassess at this point. I assure you, sir, there is no loss of protection either way, with either the old vest or the new vest. It's just a question whether or not we have made an advancement in this.

Senator WARNER. Are you working with the Army? Are you sharing that experience?

General Conway: Yes, sir.

Senator WARNER. Are they experiencing the same problem with this vest?

General Conway: Sir, I don't know that. I'm just back from the theater and my guys at Quantico are reinvigorating the discussion.

Senator WARNER. It seems to me that answer is important to achieve. There should be some parallelism between because the missions are comparable.

General Conway: It's my belief, sir, that the Army has not invested in what we call the OTV, which is this latest variant, that they're still wearing the vest that we were stepping away from. We thought that this new vest that ostensibly carried the weight better on the hips and gave us slightly more protection was again a step up. I am not absolutely certain of that today.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner.

Senator Kennedy?

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning again. General Conway, according to the recent press reports an internal Marine Corps study found that the general in command of our marine forces in western Iraq sent an urgent request 3 years ago this month over 1,000—for over 1,000 MRAPs, but the urgent request was apparently lost in the bureaucracy and never made it to the senior levels of the Marine Corps. As we know, it took the Secretary of Defense's intervention in 2007

to fix the broken bureaucracy and get a sufficient number of the MRAPs to our forces in Iraq.

Secretary Gates said last June: “The way I put it to everyone is that you have to look outside the normal bureaucratic way of doing things and so does industry, because lives are at stake. For every month we delay, scores of young Americans are going to die.”

The recent Marine Corps study itself states that: “If mass procurement and fielding of MRAPs had begun in 2005 in response to the known threats, as the Marine Corps is doing today, hundreds of deaths and injuries could have been prevented.”

The Marine Corps now has questioned the press report, saying that that study was not an official Marine Corps study and that its conclusions are the investigators’ own. Recently, General Magness, Assisting Commandant of the Marine Corps, stated: “I don’t think the study stands up to the facts about what we did, about what the industry was capable of doing, and why we did what we did. I just don’t think it’s accurate.”

A Naval Audit Service report last September, however, supported the marine study and its accusations of inefficiency when it concluded that the Marine Corps had not established adequate oversight for the urgent need of its forces.

2 days ago, the Marine Corps finally began to acknowledge the seriousness of the study’s conclusion and asked the Pentagon’s IG to explain the allegations. It seems, however, that the Marine Corps is still focused on downplaying the issue of getting the MRAPs to Iraq and missing the bigger issue, which is the Marine Corps bureaucracy.

As the study concluded, the MRAP is just one current —this is the Naval Audit. “As the study concluded, MRAP is just one current example of how a loss of time had direct and measurable consequences on the battlefield. Marine Corps combat development organizations are not optimized to provide responsive, flexible, relevant solutions to commanders in the field.”

The Naval Audit report last September agreed, stating that “the Marine Corps bureaucracy was broken and the ability to accomplish the mission could be undermined and the delivery of the equipment delayed.”

So could you tell us about how you explain the differences between the marine statements that dismiss the MRAP study’s conclusion and the Naval Audit report that the Marine Corps bureaucracy is broken in dealing with the—

General Conway: Yes, sir, I’d be happy to. Sir, first of all, I would not characterize the series of events just as you describe. First of all, we asked the marine, former marine, now a GS-15, who works for us to write a letter to his boss to explain to his boss his concerns that we had read about in the media or had been advised about from Senators on the Hill. That—

Senator KENNEDY. This was done when?

General Conway: It’s been done recently, sir. I think within the past several weeks.

But going back to the issue of the MRAP request, sir, in 2005, February of 2005, were Major General Dennis Halick sitting in this chair, who was the officer who signed off on the request, he would tell you that he was asking for up-armored Humvees, M-1114s. We

had a few at that time, but we had very little. He felt like that was the armor of choice and the vehicle that we needed for all of our marines when he signed off on the request. He had little knowledge of what an MRAP was at that point.

That's the second point I would make to you, sir, is that at that point there were probably half a dozen of the actual MRAP vehicles, the Cougars with the V-shaped bottom, in the theater. We were having maintenance issues with some of those vehicles.

At that point, sir—and this is I guess the third point—only about 10 percent of the attacks that we were seeing, and in most months less than that, were under-body explosions. What General Halick was concerned about were the side of the road explosions that were destroying our vehicles and killing marines.

So to say that we knew at that time that a vehicle that had far from proven itself, against a threat that was by no means the major threat, was what we needed to buy for is I think in some regards some excellent 20–20 hindsight.

Senator KENNEDY. Well, the point that is made is the fact that here's the Naval Audit Report No. 1 recommends that by April 30 you promulgate a Marine Corps order defining the roles, responsibilities, and desired outcomes of urgent need process. So obviously they made a finding and a judgment that the process and procedure at the current time is not working well, at least according to this naval report.

Now, what is the—where do you stand with promulgating that, this order?

General Conway: Sir, we have put something out on that in the wake of that report, and I will be the first to acknowledge that no bureaucratic process is without means of improvement. The Secretary works hard with us with Lean 6 Sigma—

Senator KENNEDY. I don't. You put something out. Explain that to me. I don't understand what's putting something out.

General Conway: Sir, in the wake of the report coming—

Senator KENNEDY. This says promulgate—this is their recommendation, is by the 30th you promulgate a Marine Corps order defining the roles, responsibilities, desired outcome for the process, which is the urgent need process.

General Conway: Yes, sir.

Senator KENNEDY. Has that been done yet?

General Conway: Yes, sir, it has been done.

Senator KENNEDY. It has been done.

General Conway: And I would add further, sir, that we have asked for, in the wake of this issue, I guess, sort of coming to light once again, we have asked for a DOD IG investigation, because we think when the facts are fully known that they will—

Senator KENNEDY. When was that done?

General Conway: Within the last 10 days, while I was on the trip to Iraq.

So that all the facts can be brought to bear, and we think that the conclusion will be that well-intended men, very much concerned about the welfare of the marines, made prudent decisions at the time to bring forward the best capability we could to protect our people in combat.

Senator KENNEDY. Well, if you look at the—and I want to move on, the time here—the whole process—it appears that it took the Secretary of Defense’s intervention in 2007 to get the—to have the order. This is what Gates himself said: “The way I put it to everyone is you have to look outside the bureaucratic way of doing things, and so does industry. Lives are at stake.”

And the audit makes that recommendation for the marines to date. I understand what you’ve said now is that you issued the response to the Naval Audit Report No. 1.

General Conway: Yes, sir.

Senator KENNEDY. That has been done.

General Conway: Sir, if I could, with all due respect to Secretary Gates, when I became the Commandant in November of ’06, at that point our commanders were advocating that we replace our up-armored Humvees with the MRAP vehicle. That became my theme then for purchase of those vehicles.

If I could offer another quote, it was when I had said that by that point in time that we had had 300 under-body attacks against the MRAP and had not lost a single marine or sailor, the Secretary was impressed with that quality of the vehicle and then made it his number one priority in the Department.

Senator KENNEDY. Well, my time is up. I’m interested in the process of the request that was made and how the marine bureaucracy responded to that urgent request. I think you’ve answered the question with regards to the desirability of that particular system and alternative systems. But that doesn’t get away from the underlying point about whether the system is functioning and working when these urgent requests come up which are necessary.

I’ll look forward to looking through the report.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Kennedy.

Senator Collins?

Senator Collins: Thank you.

Admiral Roughead, there’s been a lot of discussion about the cost of the DDG-1000 and some House members are quoted in Defense Daily today as going so far as to suggest the diversion of funds from the budget in order to buy other kinds of ships. What is often overlooked in the discussion of the DDG-1000 are three factors: one, that the requirements are actually for 8 to 12 DDG-1000s rather than the 7 that is in the long-term plan; second, the technological advancements that have been incorporated into the ship, that will give the Navy much-needed capabilities; and third, the cost savings that will result when you look at the life cycle cost from the much smaller crew size for the DDG-1000. If memory serves me correctly, I believe that the DG-51 requires 338 sailors and we’re looking at a crew size of only 142 sailors for the DDG-1000.

Could you comment, please, on the capabilities issue, the requirements, and the cost?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, Senator, I will. The DDG-1000 introduces more new technology that will inform our future Navy combatants than any other ship class that we’ve ever fielded. The new technologies that we have put into that, the most significant one I believe is what you mentioned, reducing the crew size. Our ships of the future must have smaller crews.

With respect to some of the press reporting that I have read about using the DDG-1000 to perhaps be used, the resources for that to be used for other ship classes, I'm very concerned that we do not disrupt our combatant lines. Right now we are developing a new fleet of ships. If you look across it from submarines to combatants to amphibious ships, we are introducing all new classes. The Virginia class is coming on line. It's a great submarine. The prices are coming down. We're doing the right thing there.

The LPD-17. Even though we had some growing pains when that ship came out, we're now in the process of getting into the flow of that ship, and in fact on Saturday I'm going down to participate in the christening of New York, our most recent LPD-17. The TAKEs, that line is moving well.

The areas where I am most concerned about are in our combatant lines: the DDG-1000, our new destroyer, and where we will take that ship to bridge to the new cruiser that we're beginning to work on now, but also the Littoral Combat Ship.

I believe with the stability that we have in submarines, amphibious ships, and auxiliary ships, we really need to allow our combatant build programs to take root, grow, stabilize, and move us into the future. So I very much want to do as much as we can to get the stability in our combatant lines for the future.

Senator Collins: And that's also very important in terms of the transition from the DDG-51 line to the DDG-1000. We do need to make sure that that is managed very appropriately in order to avoid a gap in the work at the yards, which could cause the loss of skilled workers. Once you lose that capability, it's gone forever; and I know that you and Secretary Winter share my concern in that regard.

I want to associate myself also with the concerns expressed by Senator Warner about the need to stay on course for the 313-ship fleet, which you have appropriately described as the floor, the minimum that we need. Part of the strategy for achieving that goal is modernizing in order to extend the life of the DDG-51 Arleigh Burke class of destroyers.

First of all, how important is that modernization plan to achieving the 313-ship fleet?

Admiral Roughead: That is very important to our 313-ship fleet, and it's also very important to the relevant capabilities that we're going to need in the future. DDGs are great ships. I speak from experience, having put one in commission myself as a commanding officer. But also, it was a DDG that was the backup ship for the Lake Erie when they shot down the satellite—again, attesting to the versatility of the ship and the capability of that ship.

It will be important for us to conduct that modernization, to upgrade the capability and extend the life of those ships, so that we don't have to take them out before they're due.

Senator Collins: I want to encourage you to examine both the cost and schedule advantages of doing that modernization at the building yard rather than the home port. I think there's significant evidence that suggests there would be considerable cost savings to the Navy as well as efficiencies in doing that, and I look forward to working further with you and Secretary Winter.

Finally, let me just thank you, Admiral Roughead, for coming to Maine to visit Bath Iron Works and to visit the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. I know you were impressed with what you saw and I very much appreciated your including Maine as you've been getting out across the country to visit naval installations and yards.

Admiral Roughead: Well, thank you, Senator, and thank you for taking time from your schedule to be with me during that visit. It really was good to get out and see the quality of work that's being done, the commitment not just of the leadership in the yards, but, as in all cases, it's the individual on the line that's actually doing the hard work that makes a difference, and that was apparent during my time up there.

Senator Collins: Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Collins.

Senator Lieberman?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks, gentlemen, for your testimony and for your service.

General Conway, I think that the two exchanges that you had with Senator Warner and Senator Kennedy over the MRAP and the up-armored Humvee were very important. Perhaps we in Congress have something to learn from them. I think we have been so concerned not only about the vest that you talked about with Senator Warner, but about the exposure of our personnel to the impact of the IEDs, the bombs, that we rushed with a lot of good intentions to authorize and appropriate at a very high level for the provision of the MRAPs. And I'm hearing you say something really very, in some ways tough, but very practical and reasonable, which is that in the experience of the Marines the MRAPs don't perform—are not right for all the missions we're asking you to perform and in fact may not protect against some of the other kinds of vulnerabilities. In other words, I think 10 percent was what you said was the percentage of attacks from underneath, and obviously the up-armored Humvees also protect from attack from the side.

So that I admire you for cutting back on your initial request for the MRAPs because it may be as I hear you that really we may have overdone it in real and practical terms, not only in terms of your performance of the mission, but protecting the safety of our personnel, and that what's needed ideally is a mix of vehicles, the MRAP, the up-armored Humvee, and maybe something else. I don't know the extent to which the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle that is being worked on now may fill a role there.

So I just wanted to thank you for what you've said and what you've done, and I think maybe there's a lesson in it for all of us.

I don't know whether you want to respond to that briefly.

General Conway: Sir, I would only say that I look on the evolution of the MRAP creation and testing and purchase as one of the real success stories that have come out of what's happened. It took the Congress, it took the DOD, it took the industry to provide the vehicles in the rapid state that they did. And sir, we have still yet to lose a marine in an MRAP to an under-body. It is an amazing vehicle against that niche kind of capability, and I think I can speak on behalf of my Army brothers and say that they're equally satisfied.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General Conway: But you are exactly correct in that it's not a vehicle for all places and all times. And sir, as I look at the particular culture of our Corps, we're light, we're expeditionary, we're fast-moving and hard-hitting. And although an MRAP still may be in our future in another battlefield, it doesn't transport well.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes, it doesn't transport well if it's—I agree with you. I'm certainly not questioning the MRAP program. I think it's had great utility, and I appreciate your saying that we turned it around quickly.

But your point is well taken. If it doesn't travel well, if it's too heavy to go over some bridges, if it doesn't operate well off road, and if it doesn't protect against some of the other threats to our troops, then I think what we're looking for is a mix of vehicles to allow you and the Army to carry out the missions we've asked you to carry out with maximum protection of our troops.

General Conway: I think that's exactly right, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. I appreciate that very much, and I think it's something we have to take into consideration.

I want to go back to the size of the fleet, the goal of 313. What are we at right now, just as a matter of record? How large is the fleet?

Admiral Roughead: 279 today, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. So in the most direct sense, does that mean, since we're at 279 and our goal has been to be at 313 ships in our Navy, that we are vulnerable, we're in some danger? Are you unable to carry out some of the missions, Admiral, that the country is asking you to carry out?

Admiral Roughead: Well, Senator, I would put it into two different categories. One is that in combat operations I would say that the size of the fleet today puts us at moderate risk, and by "moderate risk," there would be likely success, but it may require longer time, it may require more resources, and it could require some changes in the plans that we would normally use to go after a particular problem.

But I also believe that in the world that we live in today and the strategy that I believe that we as a Navy and a Marine Corps and even a Coast Guard must pursue, that we have to be out and about. The types of operations, the importance of maritime security on our prosperity and the way that the goods and resources flow around the world, that numbers become a capability in themselves, and we have to be there to assure the sea lanes that supply our country and that allow us to export our goods; and also to be able to have the types of ships and the balance in our fleet for the various missions that we perform.

The one area that I am most concerned about today is the area close to shore, the littoral areas, the green water. That's what the Littoral Combat Ship is about. The other ship classes that we have are complementing current capabilities and are upgrading those current capabilities. The LCS is about an area that we are, quite frankly, deficient in.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, I appreciate the directness of the answer. You know, moderate risk is I think ideally more risk than any of us should want you and our country to face, so that it does

make the point, though that the absolute dollars in the requested Department of Defense budget are large, in my opinion they're not enough and we remain at a percentage of GDP, that is spending on defense, which is historically low, considering that we are at war, we're at active war, and we're facing the rise of other great powers—Russia, China—who we obviously hope we'd never get into hostilities with, but are putting a lot of money into military acquisitions, including ships for their fleet.

Let me ask you about the Littoral Combat Ship, just to remind us what the numbers are. Of the 313 goal, how many are intended to be in the LCS category?

Admiral Roughead: Our objective, Senator, is 55.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So that's a pretty significant number.

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Just for the record, you've cut back because of the problems in acquisition and development on what you're going to ask for this year, right, for the LCS?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir, that's correct.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Just remind us again of what the reduction there is?

Admiral Roughead: We reduced our intention this year by four Littoral Combat Ships and that is the adjustment in this year's current budget proposal.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So do you worry that the increasing cost of the ship will make it impossible for us to attain the 55 number goal for the LCS that is part of that 313?

Admiral Roughead: Getting control of the cost and indeed bringing the cost of the ship down is a very high priority, and that's what we're working on with the Secretary's leadership, and the decisiveness in cancelling the LCSs three and four was not an easy decision, but I believe it was in the best interests of the program.

I look forward to being able to take the '08 ship and the two LCSs that we have in '09 and being able to put together an acquisition strategy that allows us to move forward, that allows us to acquire those ships, so that we can get them out, get them operating, because I do believe they are going to be workhorses of the future for us.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I agree. So at this moment you would hold to the 55 LCS goal that's part of the 313?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir, my objective remains 55 LCSs.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And the 313 remains not only your goal, but a goal that you think will meet our defense needs, our National security needs?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir, and I would say that it is the minimum number of ships that we will need for the future.

Senator LIEBERMAN. It's very important to say that, right.

Thank you. My time is up. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Thune?

Senator Thune: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, Admiral, General, welcome. I'm always impressed at the tremendous ability and resilience of our men and women in uniform, and the Navy and Marine Corps certainly are great examples of that. And although in South Dakota we don't have a lot of

shoreline, coastline, or beaches, I still have a great interest and making sure that our sailors and marines are well equipped and well trained.

Secretary Winter, in your prepared testimony you discuss the recent readiness and training challenges that the Navy faces with a Ninth Circuit court decision regarding the Navy's—I should say—yes, circuit court—regarding the Navy's use of active sonar off the coast of California to train strike groups before deploying. From what I understand from your prepared statement, the Navy is still subject to an injunction on the use of this sonar issued by the court, despite the President granting an emergency exemption.

As the ranking member of the Readiness Subcommittee, I'm concerned about the effect that this injunction may be having on predeployment training. What effect is this injunction having on your current ability to conduct predeployment training, particularly as it relates to countering these modern super-quiet diesel electric submarines?

Mr. Winter: Thank you, Senator, for the question. Right now the orders that we've received from the court impose several additional conditions on our use of sonar for training and exercise activities in the southern California operating area which we believe would have a significant deleterious effect on the efficacy of those training activities. They basically increase the requirement for shutdown of the sonar when a marine mammal is seen from what has been our practice of 200 yards to a 2,000-meter requirement, which is over a factor of 10 increase in the area that we have to shut down under such circumstances.

Similarly, there are certain water column conditions, what's known as surface ducting conditions, under which we would be required to reduce the sonar power by 75 percent whether or not a marine mammal was present.

Those types of constraints we believe would significantly affect our ability to conduct the type of training activities that are crucial to preparing our fleet prior to deployment.

Senator Thune: Admiral Roughead, I have a question in relation to the encounter by the Navy with five Iranian speedboats that occurred last month in the Strait of Hormuz. According to a January 12, 2008, article in the New York Times, a 2002 war game indicated that small, agile speedboats could swarm a naval convoy and inflict devastating damage on our warships.

To the extent that you can discuss this in an open setting, what is the Navy doing to prepare to meet this type of threat?

Admiral Roughead: Senator, as you would understand, I won't get into the particular procedures that our ships and crews use. But first off, I'd like to just mention the competence and the training of our crews and the commanding officers are what I believe kept that situation under control.

As part of our training for our crews as they prepare to deploy, we present them with scenarios that are very similar to that which would be encountered around the Straits of Hormuz and other littoral areas such as that. We employ simulators as well, again to just be able to take them through a variety of responses. But as we operate in environments like that we employ all dimensions of our naval power, not just the capabilities that we have on our

ships, but also our airplanes, those that are embarked on the destroyers and other combatants, but also the ships—the aircraft of our air wing. So it's a total capability that we bring in. Our awareness, our situational awareness, adds to our understanding of what is developing.

But again, I come back to the fact that it really is the training, the competence, and the discipline of the young men and women who are operating our ships at sea that make all the difference.

Senator Thune: And I absolutely would agree with that with regard to the incident in January. I guess the question with regard to the simulation and how that played out when you gamed it out—do you have a concern about our flexibility, our ability to react to that type of a threat, which seems to be where our adversaries in that region are headed.

Admiral Roughead: Senator, I have confidence in our sailors and our commanding officers, but I am concerned about the type of behavior that is allowed to be taking place. When the leadership of Iran lauds the crew that captured the Royal Navy sailors, I think that that just engenders an attitude in the Revolutionary Guard units that has the potential to escalate, elevate, and perhaps make behavior like this more routine.

Senator Thune: Secretary Winter, the Navy recently rolled out a new maritime strategy. Could you highlight the major points of that strategy and where you think we have the big gaps in our ability to execute it?

Mr. Winter: Well, I think the new maritime strategy really represents a long-term commitment on the part of the Navy to partnership building, to maritime security as a common objective of all maritime nations, and also recognizes the importance of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as mechanisms to assist our ability to develop the relationships with other nations, other navies, and be able to represent our country around the world.

It also continues, if you will, all the current aspects of dissuasion, deterrence, and supremacy at sea that have been a hallmark of our Navy ever since.

Senator Thune: Admiral Roughead, there has been a lot written about the development of the Chinese and Indian navies, as well as other emerging threats. How would you characterize the submarine threat that other countries pose and how ready is the U.S. to deal with it?

Admiral Roughead: The proliferation of submarines globally is occurring at a very, very rapid pace, and it's more than just numbers. The sophistication and the technical advancements that are being made in quieting submarines, making them harder to find, creating air-independent propulsion systems that allow submarines to remain under water for very long periods of time, add to the challenges of anti-submarine warfare and get to the point that the Secretary was making about the need to be able to train against those types of threats.

In the days of the Soviet navy, we looked for their submarines by listening passively and we could detect where they were and get a position on them. In the case of these very sophisticated smaller advanced diesel submarines, active sonar is how we find them, ac-

tive sonar is how we localize them and active sonar is enabling how we will kill them. And we must be able to train realistically.

We can do that while being good stewards of the environment. In fact, the United States Navy more than any other organization has invested in marine mammal research, more than any other organization in the world. We can do both and our record speaks to that.

Senator Thune: Mr. Secretary, do you have any indication of if and when that injunction by the court might be lifted with regard to the training exercises?

Mr. Winter: Sir, we had oral arguments yesterday in California. We expect to get a ruling by the Ninth Circuit some time next week, and we'll have to from there. I do expect, however, to see continuing challenges on a wide variety of fronts associated with our use of sonar techniques.

Senator Thune: I see my time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Thune.

Senator Bill Nelson?

Senator Bill Nelson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, gentlemen, and thank you for your public service to our country. I get to visit with you, Mr. Secretary and Admiral, probably more than you would want me to visit with you, and I thank you for the continuing saga with regard to making Newport nuclear—making Mayport nuclear, and we're awaiting the EIS and so thank you very much.

I'm in a couple of minutes—and he may be in the room—I'm going to be visiting with our commander of Southern Command and, as I have discussed with both of you, the recommendations that are coming up to you, Mr. Secretary, from the Admiral about the reactivation of the Fourth Fleet. You may want to share your thoughts with the committee about that, and then specifically I'd like to ask if you will make the request for the appropriate funding in order to make the necessary improvements at Mayport for the Fourth Fleet that would support Admiral Stravidis as we project our American presence throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Admiral Roughead: Senator, as you know, I've been out I the fleet for the last few years, and as I've looked at the world we're going to operate in and I look at the strategy that I believe is right for our time, it became apparent to me that we had to make some adjustments in our command and control structure, and from that came the Fourth Fleet recommendation that I've made.

It will better align Admiral Stravidis's naval activities and operations with the way that we're doing them in other parts of the world, very similar to Fifth Fleet and Sixth fleet. So I believe the time has come to reactivate that and it will provide for much more effective operations and more cooperative activity, particularly in the Southern Command area of operations.

I would say, however, that the Fourth Fleet is a command structure and, similar to the Sixth Fleet in Europe and the Fifth Fleet in the Middle East, they will be receiving forces from other naval commands and operating them in the Southern Command area of operations. So with regard to any improvements in Mayport, those are more driven by the environmental impact statement that I'm

pleased we're going to have out here soon for public comment and decision in January of '09, and also the outcome of what I've asked my staff to do, and that is to look at what is the right strategic laydown and where should we have our Navy forces positioned in the United States.

Senator Bill Nelson: So that EIS is not only going to be for nuclear-capable, but it's also going to be for whatever additional activities you would have with the Fourth Fleet?

Admiral Roughead: What the EIS is looking at are a range of force package options for Mayport. There are 13 options that we're going to look at and range everywhere from combatants to carriers, and that will be a very informative document for us.

Senator Bill Nelson: Mr. Secretary, what's this in the chain of command? Is it coming from the Admiral up to you and then it goes to Secretary Gates? Is that what happens?

Mr. Winter: Yes, sir. I've taken a preliminary brief on it. I've asked a number of questions, particularly with regard to exactly how we will evolve this structure. As the CNO commented, this is principally a command and control element. This is a staff group that we're talking about. Most of that staff currently resides at Mayport. Is that the right place in the long term to support the Southern Command down in Miami? How do we want to work all of that? All has to be determined yet.

Once we go through that process, then we will go and take it forward to SECDEF.

Senator Bill Nelson: Is that interrelated with the EIS or is that a command decision about where you locate the support group?

Mr. Winter: I do not view this as having any material impact on the EIS or vice versa.

Senator Bill Nelson: I see. Well then, I must have been mistaken. I thought that the recommendation coming up was that the Fourth Fleet would be headquartered at Mayport.

Admiral Roughead: Senator, the Fourth Fleet is a headquarters, much like our Sixth Fleet is in Europe and our Fifth Fleet is in Bahrain. It is a headquarters organization that in the case of Fourth Fleet will be the merging of Naval Forces South and the Fourth Fleet into the headquarters element.

Senator Bill Nelson: And I thought that recommendation that was going up was to be at Mayport. Is that the recommendation—is that the recommendation that has to go up through the civilian leadership?

Admiral Roughead: The recommendation, sir, is to take the NAVSOUTH staff and redesignate them as NAVSOUTH and Fourth Fleet, and that they currently reside in Mayport. My recommendation is that that redesignation occur, but that as we look at force laydown, where command and control structure will be in the future, I believe we should be looking at what is the best way for us to position and operate our Navy, and that will all be part of the look that I'm doing.

Senator Bill Nelson: So long term, that's a decision still to be made in your recommendation?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir. I think that we should be taking a good look at the overall force posture and positioning and where is the best place to put our forces.

Senator Bill Nelson: All right. Admiral, let me ask you about the Reliable Replacement Warhead, which was going on the submarine-launched ballistic missiles. The first version of the RRW was something of a rebuild of the existing W-76 nuclear warhead. But now the question is is there a slow-up on the RRW. So what's the impact on the rebuild of the W-76?

Admiral Roughead: Senator, if I could take that question for the record, I'd like to do that and get back to you. [The information referred to follows:] [COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator Bill Nelson: Okay. We've got that issue in front of our Strategic Subcommittee, which we're going to have to answer that.

I would also want to ask you if you would take for the record the question of the Standard Missile 3 inventory, as well as the Standard Missile 3 Block 1B over the Block 1A.

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir. [The information referred to follows:] [COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator Bill Nelson: It's going to have a considerable improvement and we need your advice as we get into this. And speaking of the Standard missile, congratulations to you.

Admiral Roughead: Thank you very much, sir.

Senator Bill Nelson: You hit the bull's eye and you did a service, and I think it's appropriate for somebody like me to say that, even though people jump to conclusions, the fact is you had a schoolbus-sized defense satellite that was tumbling out of control, along with a 1,000-pound tank of hydrazine that could survive reentry, and the fact that you hit it and busted it into all thousands of pieces will cause the—number one, the orbit to degrade a lot quicker; and number two, much more manageable and therefore less likely that pieces survive the searing heat of reentry; and number three, you busted open the tank, so the likelihood of a tank filled with hydrazine—which did happen, by the way. The small hydrazine tank survived the reentry in the destruction of the Space Shuttle Columbia all the way to the Earth's surface. So for that third reason, you are to be congratulated in improving the safety of the conditions. Thank you.

Admiral Roughead: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Bill Nelson: Thank you very much.

Admiral Roughead: I couldn't be more proud of our sailors and our civilian engineers that put all that together. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson. And Senator Nelson's comments and congratulations I'm sure reflects the feelings of all of us.

Admiral Roughead: Thank you very much, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Martinez, an uninterrupted turn from the chairman today.

Senator Martinez: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, we can work as a team when need be. I thank you.

I want to add my word of congratulations. I really think it was a remarkable thing. From time to time there are things that happen that completely capture our imagination and that one is an amazing feat. So well done.

Admiral Roughead, we have talked about the expanding Navy and the need for a 313-ship Navy, which as you know I fully support. One of the things that has been mentioned along those lines

is the possibility that the Navy should be an all-nuclear surface fleet, and I wonder if you can articulate for us your thoughts on that issue.

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir. Nuclear power offers advantages. Nuclear power is also a more expensive initial cost as we build ships that have nuclear propulsion. I believe that as we look at the ships of the future we should look at varying types of ways to propel and to power those ships, and nuclear power is one of those things that we should look at.

That said, for all ships to be nuclear my great concern is that it would become a question of affordability, and we have to look at that. We have to look at more than just the fuel cost. We have to look at how much it will cost us to maintain those ships, how much it will cost us to manage those ships, because I believe that as nuclear power has a resurgence in the civilian commercial applications that many of those companies know where the best operators and where the best engineers are, and that's in the United States Navy.

Senator Martinez: So your concern is cost, which when compared to the cost of fuel alone does not tell you the whole cost, which has to do with the increased maintenance, and also you think that you could have simply a manpower issue in terms of competing with the private sector for increased demand for nuclear?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir. We have to look at the whole dimension of it and then make the best decisions that we possibly can.

Senator Martinez: So you want the flexibility, in other words—

Admiral Roughead: Absolutely.

Senator Martinez: —to increase our Navy with whatever power station you think is the most suitable at a given point in time?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir.

Senator Martinez: Mr. Secretary, good to see you again.

Mr. Winter: Good to see you, sir.

Senator Martinez: I wanted to ask you—we've talked about the Littoral Combat Ship and how important it is. I really would like to get an update from you on that program. You know, where are we, what steps you've taken to correct the deficiencies. The Admiral and I have discussed the need for us to get this one right as we look to getting that 313-ship Navy. So bring us up to speed on where we are on the procurement, on the ship models, and that kind of thing?

Mr. Winter: Yes, sir. At this point in time we are focusing on really two aspects, one of which is the two ship hulls that are being constructed right now, one in Marinette under the Lockheed prime contract and the other down in Barstow down in Alabama under the General Dynamics contract. Both of those ships are coming along. We are right now conducting somewhat limited power train tests up at Marinette with the LCS-1. We're somewhat limited because of the ice buildup at this time of year in the lake there, and we are fully expecting to be able to initiate the full range of sea trials once we get past the ice season there, most likely in the April time period.

With the LCS-2, which is down in Alabama, we're in the process of completing the construction there to the point that we can get it into the water later this spring. That is still our current forecast

there and we fully expect to be able to conduct at least the initial range of sea trials with her later this year.

At the same time—

Senator Martinez: What time frame of the year? This summer, perhaps?

Mr. Winter: Probably in the summertime, yes, sir.

At the same time, we have proceeded very well on the mission modules. We've already taken delivery of the first of the mine warfare modules. That has been delivered. We also are fully expecting to have the first of the surface warfare and the anti-submarine warfare modules delivered this year. All of that gives us a good basis for conducting the full range of mission tests that we'd like to be able to do with both of these vessels.

At the same time, we're preparing to start a round of acquisition which would enable us to acquire three additional vessels under a fixed price incentive type contract. Those three vessels would include the one that was previously approved for fiscal year 2008 and the two that we're requesting in the year of current interest, fiscal year 2009.

Senator Martinez: Thank you, sir.

General Conway, we've discussed this morning here the increased presence in Afghanistan with 3200 marines. I'm not sure if it was asked, but if not I'd like to be sure that I'm clear. My concern is that from reports that I hear of an increasingly deteriorating situation in Afghanistan from the security standpoint, that this type of force increase may not be sufficient and that perhaps additional forces may be needed in Afghanistan in the near future.

Aside from the great concern that I have about the lack of participation in real fighting from our NATO partners, can you tell us where you see the Afghanisteni force needs going in the near term and the far term?

General Conway: Sir, I think your analysis is probably correct. When we visit there people are generally pretty satisfied with what they see happening in Regional Command East, which is up against the Pakistani border and is in the northeastern portion of Afghanistan. They are less comfortable with conditions in the south. The drug fields still operate relatively freely there. There are what they call rat lines in from what some would consider safe haven across an international border. Taliban actually control some ground and some would say it's the heart of the Taliban. You have families there who have sons fighting as a part of the Taliban.

So I think RC South is still very much an unclear picture at this point, and whether or not enough troops have now been committed, both coalition force troops, who in some cases are doing very good work, and now marines in addition to the soldiers that have been there, will be sufficient I think is uncertain at this point, sir.

Senator Martinez: Have you—and I know the Secretary has been traveling a lot recently and has made his case to our NATO partners. But can you tell us anything about the level of cooperation that you might anticipate in what is a NATO mission from other NATO countries in terms of participating in the actual difficult work that is necessary there?

General Conway: Sir, I cannot talk about any increased participation. What we do know is that the Canadians publicly are asking

for additional troops. They think that there is a need for additional troops, especially if our marines pull out in October, which is planned at this point. The British we see are there. They have a replacement scheduled, a rotation that will replace the people that are there now with a parachute brigade, for all intents and purposes.

So we think that the resolve is still readily evident on the coalition forces that are there now for at least the rest of this calendar year. Again, sir, I would not want to presuppose beyond that.

Senator Martinez: Thank you, General.

My time is up, but let me associate myself with Senator Nelson's comments as they relate to the situation in Mayport and our great desire to continue to see a very vibrant naval presence there going into the future. We've discussed it ad nauseam. I'm sure you know my points on that, but I did want to associate myself with the Senator's comments. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Martinez.

Senator Reed?

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

Thank you, gentlemen. Admiral Roughead, the Navy has the requirement to start detailed design for the next class of ballistic missile submarine. In fact, we have to start doing that pretty soon since I think 2019 is the target date to begin construction. What are you doing to start that research, development, design program in the budget, this year's budget?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir. As you know, we have to start looking at that, and we are beginning to move forward with initiatives to work a design process, as well as work cooperatively with the U.K. government, which has a more urgent need than we do. So we are moving forward in that regard.

Senator Reed: One of the problems I think is not in terms of just the delivery of the submarine in the future; it's the maintenance of the R and D force, which is fragile. If we don't keep investing, these are skilled individuals who will leave and go off by necessity. That is I presume a concern that you have and that will motivate your actions.

Admiral Roughead: Very much so, yes, sir.

Senator Reed: Mr. Secretary, can you describe the acquisition strategy for the rest of the seen ships in the DDG-1000 program?

Mr. Winter: Yes, sir. At this point in time we have not definitized the acquisition strategy for the rest of the ships. We will be developing that this year and going through the normal approval process on that.

Senator Reed: When do you anticipate informing the Congress about the results of the analysis of alternatives and design decisions for the CGX?

Mr. Winter: Sir, we're still in the process of going through that right now. I will say that, based on the preliminary reviews I've had, we still have a ways to go on that, and I will be hard-pressed to give you a definitive date at this point in time.

Senator Reed: Is it your intention to leverage the investment in existing hulls by re-using DDG-1000 hulls in your planning? Is

that one option at least? I know you can't reach a definitive judgment. Is that an option?

Mr. Winter: Sir, it's one of our principal objectives, is to maximize reuse of everything from hull forms to individual componentry on all of our ships, and to the extent that we can use improvements and new technology that is being developed in other programs we will endeavor to do so.

It is at this point in time, sir, though, just one of a series of options.

Senator Reed: Yes. With respect to the DDG-1000 hull and the construction of the CGX, can you do that with nuclear propulsion, as required by the National Defense Authorization Act of '08?

Mr. Winter: That is one aspect that we're looking at. We do believe that we can accommodate a reactor plant in that particular hull form, but that is something that still needs to be fully developed.

Senator Reed: Thank you.

General Conway and Admiral Roughead, in general do you think we are putting enough money into the research and development to support both shipboard operations and expeditionary forces? Commandant, you first, and then the General.

General Conway: Yes, sir, I do. I don't—we have a very active warfighting lab that works with the Navy research labs. We reach out to commercial and educational institutions with our research. So I think that we are, sir.

Admiral Roughead: I agree with that, Senator. Just coincidentally, this week I directed the president of our Naval War College to reinstitute the Title 10 war game so that we can at an operational level begin to look at some of the concepts that are important to General Conway and I, particularly in the area of sea basing, because I really value the intellectual capital that we have in Newport.

Senator Reed: Rhode Island.

Admiral Roughead: In Newport, Rhode Island, absolutely, yes, sir. And that adds to not just the R and D, but really the operational perspectives that must be brought to bear.

Senator Reed: Let me raise a final question. That is, I understand that the Navy is essentially allocating 50 accessions from their ROTC or Naval Academy programs to the Marine Corps this year. Is there any plan going forward or contemporaneously to make up for that?

Admiral Roughead: Senator, one of the things that we are requesting this year is to grow the size of the Naval Academy by 100 midshipmen. It will be done over a period of 4 years. That really is in support of the Marine Corps requirement and I'd seek your favorable consideration.

Senator Reed: Well, as long as they're coming out for the archery team that's fine.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Let's see. Senator Wicker I believe is next. Senator Wicker?

Senator Wicker: Thank you. Thank you very much. I appreciate it, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, let's talk about LPDs. Mr. Secretary, the purpose of the LPD is to load, transport, and unload marines, as well as their assault equipment, such as helicopters and other vehicles, for amphibious warfare missions. I notice, Admiral Roughead, that the LPD is number two on the Navy's unfunded priority list and, General Conway, it's the Marines' number one unfunded priority. I'd like to see that moved up, moved up a little.

I know that we have competition between the needs and our ability to finance them. But I am concerned about our ability to provide continuous global posture as outlined in the naval strategy without additional investments in these large-deck platforms.

If you couple the fact that the fiscal year 2009 budget outlines a 5-year shipbuilding plan and relies heavily on 3 new platforms, which brings a large degree of risk to an already complicated production strategy, with the growing Marine Corps, which I support and which most people support, it seems to me that additional LPDs are going to be necessary.

As I understand it, there are nine of these ships that have been authorized in appropriated in last year's act. \$50 million in advance procurement was appropriated for the tenth ship, but it is not funded in the budget request. I'll ask each of you to comment on this. How many expeditionary strike groups does the Marine Corps have a validated requirement for? As a matter of fact, somebody tell us for the record, what comprises an expeditionary strike group?

Admiral Roughead: The expeditionary strike group, Senator, is comprised of—

Senator Wicker: One strike group.

Admiral Roughead: One strike group. One strike group will have a large-deck amphibious ship. It will have surface combatants capable of firing Tomahawk missiles, and on occasion we will couple a submarine with that strike group.

Senator Wicker: But an LPD is an integral part of this expeditionary strike group, is that correct?

Admiral Roughead: That is correct.

Senator Wicker: So isn't it a fact that we have a requirement, a validated requirement for 11 of these strike groups?

Admiral Roughead: General Conway's requirement is for 11 LPDs as part of an 11-11-11 mix. I concur with the requirement that he has set forth. With regard to the prioritization with the LPD on my unfunded program list, it is number two. Number one on my list are the P-3 airplanes that we have experienced cracking in the wings, and I've had to ground 39 of them in the last couple of months. The P-3s are our premier anti-submarine warfare airplane, so they're important to us in that mission. They're also being used very extensively in Iraq because of their intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capability that they have, and for that reason I have put the P-3s as my number one priority.

Senator Wicker: Number one unfunded—

Admiral Roughead: Unfunded priority.

Senator Wicker: —priority.

Well, how are we going to meet these requirements without the number one and number two requirement, and for you, General

Conway, for your number one unfunded priority? How are we going to meet the requirement of 11 strike groups without those?

General Conway: Well, sir, first of all, we are short. But let me couch perhaps the same conversation just a shade differently. We see that a minimum two brigade across-the-shore requirement is how we arrive at the numbers of ships that we need. You're certainly correct in that the ESGs are afloat, they serve a very valuable purpose, but 9 or 11 ESGs do not make an amphibious assault force.

So we have analyzed what our two brigades look like, the amount and the numbers of ships that it would need to carry those brigades, and at this point we are a little short. Now, as Admiral Roughead mentioned, we've had some tremendous discussions with the Navy. We have come to agreement on the numbers of ships, 33 to make 30 operational ships, in order to give our Nation that very necessary capability. And the Navy has looked at a way to extend some older ships that give us that 30 number for some period on through the fiscal year DP, the 5 year defense plan.

Our only concern with it, however, is that we have already through previous agreement, previous CNOs and previous commandants, agreed on the 30 ships. That still represents about a 20 percent shortfall that those brigade footprints would require. If we go with the old ships instead of newer ships, that shortfall becomes about 29 percent, and we think there's a risk inherent with that that just concerns us greatly with the ability to provide that kind of capability to the Nation. Ergo, it being our number one unfunded priority.

Senator Wicker: Well, thank you very much. And I would just simply—I would suggest you've got the gist of my question. We put the \$50 million in for advanced procurement for the tenth ship last year and I would just hope that this Government somehow could find the ways and means to go ahead with the tenth ship in short order.

Now, General Conway, let me shift in the time I have remaining and ask—let me follow up on Senator Martinez's question about Afghanistan. Regional Command South is troubling, as I understand your testimony to be. And this is what I understand also from some of my colleagues who recently returned from Afghanistan.

I think it's important that we paint a correct picture about what's going on there in Afghanistan. I think the testimony was that the Canadians are asking for additional troops. I suppose you mean they're asking our NATO allies for additional troops? Is that what—

General Conway: I think that's a fair statement, sir. They are saying that there is a need for a thousand additional troops and six additional helicopters. And the Canadians—

Senator Wicker: That's what the Canadians are saying. Do you agree with that? Is there a need for more than that thousand to get the job done?

General Conway: Sir, I think it remains to be seen. We're in a period at this point of lesser amounts of activity. Those 3400 marines are not on deck yet. I do think that a battalion of marines—

Senator Wicker: I'm sorry. We're in a period of lesser activity?

General Conway: Yes, sir, because it's winter there and there are heavy snows. The Taliban are historically less active during these months.

But I think springtime will be another story. I was going to say, sir, that a battalion of marines in Afghanistan we feel as the joint staff is probably going to have more effect than a battalion in Iraq because of the nature of the threat and the numbers that we face. Sir, we don't know yet what the outcome of those 3400 marines are going to be in the south. But the Canadians, who command RC South, would like to see a continuation of that kind of force structure on through beyond this calendar year and that's what they're asking for, to whatever nation that can help them to carry on the fight.

Senator Wicker: Those would be NATO nations.

Let me just—the staff has handed me a nice little card and I know that my time is drawing to a close. But I would just observe, this is a crucial moment for NATO and I would say this publicly to anyone that's listening to the sound of my voice. Our entry into Afghanistan was not controversial, as Iraq was later on. It followed 9–11. The world was with us, and NATO all agreed to hold hands and do this together.

I would simply suggest that there are a lot of people observing the situation that are wondering if everyone in NATO understands what the agreement was and what the alliance is about.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator Akaka?

Senator WARNER. Mr. Chairman, would you allow me to commend my colleague. I agree with your comment with regard to NATO. We should not forget that background.

Senator Wicker: Thank you, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. I think there's probably a consensus on this committee as to what you just said, Senator Wicker. We've spoken out on that issue, as has the Secretary of Defense, and your comments I think are right on target about the obligations of NATO that have not been met.

Senator Akaka?

Senator Akaka: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me, Secretary Winter, Admiral Roughead, General Conway, aloha and welcome to this hearing on the Navy's fiscal year 2009 defense authorization request hearing. Also I want to thank all of you for your service to our country, and also thank all of those you command for their service to our country. We really appreciate all of that.

Secretary Winter and Admiral Roughead, my question has to do with Guam. Decisions have been made already to send 8,000 marines to Guam by the year 2014. This move coincides with the overall buildup of U.S. military facilities on Guam as it becomes a key strategic location in the Pacific. Your 2009 budget request includes \$34 million to continue planning and development for the National Environmental Policy Act, which requires an environmental impact statement.

I understand that DOD is making steady progress with their environmental impact assessments. Other agencies such as the De-

partment of the Interior do not have the funding necessary to complete their own EIS requirements for Guam. Secretary Winter and Admiral Roughead, if these other agencies are unable to find the funding necessary to complete their EIS requirements, my question is what impact will this have on the proposed time line?

Mr. Winter: Well, sir, first of all thank you for the question. I would note that we have gone a long way over the last several months in terms of developing the inter-agency coordination necessary to bring in the other Departments. In particular, Secretary Kempthorne has been a major player in terms of bringing Interior into this act as part of their responsibilities for insular affairs and having explicit responsibility for Guam.

I believe that the ongoing activities that are needed to support the overall both EIS development, the environmental impact statement, and the master plan development have all been identified. We are hopeful that they will be funded in a timely manner. I know that there's been a lot of effort going towards that direction. I cannot give you an explicit statement of what would occur if any specific component was unable to support the activity, but I can give you the assurance that we are working with all the other agencies in a very direct manner, and should any specific issue come up of that nature we would be more than pleased to inform you of that.

Senator Akaka: Admiral?

Admiral Roughead: Senator, there's nothing I can add to the Secretary's statement.

Senator Akaka: I would then say that should other agencies not provide this information there may be a reconsideration of the time line.

Mr. Winter: Yes, sir.

Senator Akaka: Admiral Roughead, the Pacific is likely to increase in relevance for U.S. national security and for the U.S. Navy. As China becomes a greater economic and military power and as operations against radical extremism continue in places like Afghan and Pakistan, this certainly is a huge concern. Personally, I just want to say I would tell you that Admiral Keating has made some great moves and has been able at least to be able to converse with the Chinese authorities.

Given the importance of the U.S. Navy power projection in the Pacific and the shifting of 8,000 marines to Guam from the Third Marine Expeditionary Force, is there consideration, Admiral, for basing the new USS Gerald R. Ford at Pearl Harbor, given its strategic geographical advantages?

Admiral Roughead: Senator, as you know, in recent years we've realigned our carrier force, put most of it in the Pacific. The same with our submarines. As we look to the future and the delivery of the Gerald Ford, which will be an aircraft carrier of great capability, we will factor that capability into the force structure and basing plans for the future.

Senator Akaka: General Conway, in your statement you mention the importance of maintaining proficiency in the most enduring and traditional of Marine Corps missions, and that's the amphibious forcible entry. I'm concerned about the current operational stretch on the Corps and their readiness to conduct these types of

operations that are so different from the missions our marines perform with such courage today, and many of course on the ground.

Given the increased Taliban activity in Afghanistan and the U.S. response to send an additional 3,200 marines to that country, what is the biggest challenge facing the Marine Corps ability to prepare for high intensity amphibious operations over the next years, so that we don't find ourselves in a situation where we're underresourced you or neglected the core competency of the marines?

General Conway: Sir, our biggest challenge is to be able to create sufficient dwell time for our marines and sailors so that we can get back to some of those training venues that give us such a multi-capable capacity to do the Nation's work. When we're home now, we're home for 7 months and, quite frankly, some of that is used in leave time at the front and at the beginning, but the rest of it is devoted towards counterinsurgency training. As a result of that, we are not doing amphibious training or exercises. We are not doing combined arms live fire maneuver, which would be the extension of an amphibious operation once you're ashore. We are not doing mountain or jungle training except by exception.

So your concern is my concern, sir. We traditionally have had a cadre of very experienced officers and senior staff NCOs who understood amphibious operations. I'm afraid we're losing that capacity and I don't know—we've been away from it now for 5, maybe 6 years. I don't know that you get it back in 5 or 6 years. I think there is an additional time requirement out there to develop and provide experience levels to those kinds of marines.

Senator Akaka: Well, let me ask my final question to the Secretary. The strategic importance of Guam in the Pacific has led to increased investment in Navy and Air Force base facilities and equipment as more U.S. military capabilities are being transferred there. In an effort to make the best use of limited resources, part of the BRAC 2005 recommendation was to realign Anderson Air Force Base by relocating the installation management functions into a joint basing effort led by the Navy. How is this realignment proceeding and what are your recommendations for the development of future military capability on Guam?

Mr. Winter: Well, Senator, I would observe that the cooperation that I have seen on Guam between both Navy and Air Force senior personnel is probably as good as anyplace else in the services. I think that they are evolving that concept very well. We are doing an integrated planning activity as we develop the master plan, which incorporates not only Navy and Air Force activities, but also Marine Corps requirements associated with Anderson and the related areas.

I think that as we evolve over the next several years there is all the possibility of making this perhaps one of the best cases for integrated joint basing.

Senator Akaka: Thank you. I thank you all for your responses.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

Senator Sessions?

Senator Sessions: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Winter, you and Admiral Roughead I think have been very articulate and firm in your affirmation of the Navy's plan to make sure we have 55 Littoral Combat Ships as a part of the 313-ship Navy, and it's just a critical component of our defense capability. It's a new high-speed ship that would utilize less sailors and have more capability and be able to go into areas that we've never been before effectively and could have multiple capabilities, and maybe even as years go by we see even greater capabilities for that ship and we might even need more.

But I was really taken aback last year when the subcommittee zeroed out funding for that. You, Secretary Winter—and I can't complain. I believe persons in your position have to stand up and make sure costs come in on line. But we've now cancelled ships from both competitors. I guess I'm asking you—and Admiral Roughead, you headed legislative affairs. I just hope that you realize that it's going to take perhaps some extra effort to make sure that our members of the Senate and House are aware that, even though you're being vigorous and aggressive on costs and have delayed production and done some things, that you remain committed to this program.

Would you share your thoughts, Secretary Winter?

Mr. Winter: Thank you very much, Senator. I would like to underscore your comment there relative to the critical importance of LCS. I would note that, as opposed to many other of our shipbuilding activities, where we are modernizing and replacing older vessels of similar types, that this represents truly a new capability and a capability that we have no alternative mechanism of providing at this point in time.

It is not just a matter of the speed, as you pointed out, but also the flexibility of the mission, the shallow draft and the appropriateness specifically for an evolving and increasingly important domain that we have to be prepared to fight in, the littoral.

With regard to the specifics of the acquisition program that we've been engaged in, one of my objectives has been to ensure that we're able to acquire these vessels in a cost effective manner and a timely manner. One of the things that became fairly evident last year was that we were proceeding at a rate which was in advance, if you will, of our knowledge and understanding of the vessels. The specific actions that I took were with the objective of being able to put the program into a more studied and appropriate development process.

I think we now have very good focus on both the individual vessels as well as the mission modules. We are proceeding at a good pace into the development and trials of both of those, and I fully expect that we will come out of this with an exceptionally good product and a capability that will provide excellent service for our Navy for many years to come.

Senator Sessions: And your strong action that you took does not reflect any doubt of the ultimate ability of the ships being considered to meet the goals and requirements of the Navy?

Mr. Winter: No, sir. If anything, I think we're going to wind up with two very good alternatives here, and exactly how we sort through that perhaps abundance of riches and options is something that we will have to deal with in the future. But I'm very com-

fortable that we have two very good viable designs, either one of which has good prospects for fully meeting our objectives in the littoral.

Senator Sessions: Admiral Roughead, would you likewise affirm that, even though the Navy has put its foot down on some cost and other issues, that that in no way reflects a lack of confidence in the capability of these vessels and the need that the Navy has for it to be a part of the fleet?

Admiral Roughead: Absolutely, Senator. I believe that we have had to fill this gap that we have and the Littoral Combat Ship does that for quite some time. I have visited both variants on two occasions in the last 8 months. My visits to that ship only increased my commitment to the program, and I believe that the decision that was made with regard to LCS-3 and 4 reflects a commitment to the program and the need to get the costs under control so that we could have the program.

Senator Sessions: Well, we know part of the cost problem was Navy additional requirements, and that all is not the contractor's fault when the buyer wants to add more and more capabilities. I think in the future, would you not agree that we could do better in making sure Congress has a fair picture of the actual costs of a product when you recommend it?

Mr. Winter: Most definitely, sir. One of the changes that we put in place over this past year is a formal set of gate reviews that mandate that explicit discussion, so that we have a definitive set of requirements, not just the top level, but a complete set of requirements, in a timely manner and are willing to commit to stability in those requirements during the course of acquisition.

Senator Sessions: I would just note, I know the Navy since I guess the beginning has favored the Law of the Sea Treaty, the LOST Treaty we call it. I'm not here to argue all of that, but I would just say to you I have a broader responsibility. This is an organization that gives us I think for the most part just one vote out of 100 and something nations. It creates the possibility of an international taxing body on American corporations and businesses. It deals with many things that affect the seas. We even had lawsuits over nuclear power plants, trying to block plants on land because somebody argues that it might be a part of the sea. It creates international courts that we are bound to follow. We've got perhaps enough courts already in our country, and creating that.

I just wanted—and environmental concerns. Someone could argue that this or that action might impact the environment of the sea, and we could have an international body blocking something that our environmental agency has approved in the United States.

Also I would suggest that a hostile group over some political, international, military issue who was unhappy with the United States could at times generate enough votes to create rules that might block the military from doing things that we've historically been able to do.

So I just want to say that I have some—I think we need to look at it carefully. That's why probably it hasn't been passed yet. And it also has sovereignty issues that are not minor. We need to think those through.

General Conway, I was honored to visit you and interact. I don't know whether you've had the opportunity to talk about it, but I remember the briefing we had in I believe 2006—Senators Warner and Levin were there—that was so troubling, by the marines about some of the difficult things in al-Anbar with the Al Qaeda group. Within months, it seems, General Gaskins and his team had begun to negotiate with very local leaders, not regional leaders, not Baghdad leaders, but local leaders, tribal leaders, city mayors, and agreements were reached, and all of a sudden persons who had been helping the Al Qaeda were now helping us. It really has been the model of this dramatic reduction in violence, 60, 70 percent, we've seen in Iraq.

Would you agree with that, that that was a key part of the change that's happened in Iraq? And would you say to us that if we have—that legislation that would direct that you could only use force against Al Qaeda would be impractical in the battlefield, as has been proposed? I don't think we're going to vote on that now. Maybe it's pulled down. But we had legislation up in the last few days that would have said you've got to identify one group or another and you can only attack this group and not another.

Any comments you would have?

General Conway: Sir, the last question first: I would not want to put restrictions on the battlefield commanders or, more importantly, those NCOs that have to make split of the moment decisions that result in lives being lost or saved.

With regard to your earlier observation, I think that's right. I would say that General Gaskin and his folks, the marines and soldiers and sailors there, did a wonderful job during that rotation. But they had the same theme during that period as we had from 2004. So I credit all those rotations that were through those cities and that surrounding countryside with maintaining the presence, maintaining their patience, their discipline, and trying to work with the Sunni sheiks to show that that we were not their worst enemy, but the Al Qaeda was.

I think when the Al Qaeda finally overplayed their hand through the murder and the intimidation, wanting to intermarry and so forth, the sheiks finally decided collectively they had had it up to here. When they came to us to say, we will turn on them and slaughter them with your assistance, we were only too happy to say, we think that's the right thing to do. And that's when you saw the province turn. It was a west to east movement, but it has continued east on now to Baghdad and places north and south of Baghdad, and I see that as very positive.

Senator Sessions: Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Senator Sessions.

Senator Webb?

Senator Webb: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First I would like to say—it was mentioned earlier—this is Senator Warner's last Department of the Navy posture hearing, at least as a sitting Senator, and I want to express all of the appreciation I can muster for the years of service that the senior Senator from Virginia has given our country, first as a marine, then in the Defense Department, and finally here in the Senate.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, I was a 25-year-old marine my last year in the Marine Corps on then Under Secretary and Secretary of the Navy Warner's staff, and am pleased to have an association with him since that time. I think it can fairly be said that there is no one wearing the uniform of the United States military today whose military life and wellbeing has not been affected by the dedication of the senior Senator from Virginia. So we will look forward to working with you in many other capacities.

Senator WARNER. I deeply am humbled by the comments that you make, my good friend. I thank you.

Senator Webb: Thank you, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Webb, also. I tried in a very inadequate way to express those sentiments earlier today, and I appreciate your—

Senator Webb: I certainly wouldn't want to add to what the chairman said.

Admiral Roughead, I have said many different times, you're familiar that I not only support the growth of the Navy to 313 ships; I think we need to work really hard to figure out what the best number can be. It may be higher than that. I personally believe it should be higher than that. We have major strategic concerns around the world that I think have been in some ways atrophied because of the focus that this country has had to have in recent years on the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and there is no substitute for a tangible presence of the United States Navy in times of crisis when we have strategic concerns around the world.

You hear how the members feel about that. Everybody seems to want ships homeported and everybody seems to want to build ships, so let's see what we can do to work together to get efficient shipbuilding programs and to streamline the process so that we can have the best strategic defense of our country.

General, I would like to follow on a bit from what Senator Akaka began talking about this shift in our assets in the Pacific, the situation particularly from Okinawa to Guam. But I would like to hear more of your perspectives on that. I've been involved in it at one level or another for a very long time.

One question that came up that I hope you can give us some further light on for the committee here is this aviation facility on Okinawa that was scheduled to be built offshore on the far northern part of the island. I can recall when I was visiting Okinawa a few years ago as a journalist there was a good bit of support, at least from what I could tell, for moving it. Then there was something about a lawsuit that originated in the United States that would interrupt the construction of this facility. Can you help us out on that?

General Conway: Sir, if I can, I will talk briefly about the facility and then ask the Secretary if he'd like to comment, because it is very legal and he and his lawyers have been discussing it in detail.

The facility is called the Fatima Replacement Facility. It would be built offshore, you're correct, sir, off Camp Schwab in a coral area there, to replace the one we have at Fatima, move it from a less populated area to an area offshore. We're asking for a similar type of facility that would take aboard both our helicopters and our C-130s for sort of inter-theater lift.

It has been seeing recent problems with the finding of the Ninth Circuit, and I'd ask the Secretary.

Mr. Winter: Yes, sir. Senator, I appreciate the question. What has transpired here is that a group of individuals, principally from Japan but with a small group of plaintiffs from the United States as well, have argued that the National Historical Preservation Act applies in this circumstance, that, notwithstanding the fact that the government of Japan is responsible for the actual construction activity and that the government of Japan is undergoing their equivalent of a NEPA process with their style of environmental impact statements, that it is incumbent upon us to deal with the dugong, which is a manatee type of animal which has been designated by the government of Japan as a cultural treasure, and it is therefore argued that the Okinawan dugong is subject to protective measures under the National Historic Preservation Act, which is one of the few acts which does constrain activities outside the United States.

Senator Webb: Would you say this is going to interrupt the construction of the facility?

Mr. Winter: It has the potential, sir, of disrupting the activities. It constrains our ability to provide the final approvals on the process, and I am concerned about in particular the schedule impact. Notwithstanding what we believe is a good likelihood of success in the final adjudication of this, the time period that it's going to take is going to be significant.

We are currently evaluating our options to be able to continue in parallel, at risk if you will, in particular given the fact that the government of Japan has the principal responsibilities here.

Senator Webb: Thank you. We'll look forward to working with you to help resolve that, I hope.

The final disposition, General, of the assets, what would that look like, between Guam and Okinawa, Japan?

Admiral Roughead: Sir, what we'd like to see is about 10,000 on Okinawa, about 8,000 on Guam. We're proposing that as a part of the initial agreement that we also be able to distribute some of our forces to Hawaii. In the end what we would like to do is effect a brigading, if you will, of those locations in the Pacific, with the primary headquarters on Guam, but with the air wing and CSS headquarters located—air and wing headquarters located elsewhere, so as to be able to respond to some need in the future by the combatant commander.

Senator Webb: It's absolutely essential for us to keep forces in that region, not only for that region, as you know, but for maneuverability throughout that part of the world.

General Conway: I wholeheartedly agree, sir.

Senator Webb: Have you looked at Babelthaup?

General Conway: Sir, not as a basing.

Senator Webb: Great training area.

General Conway: But our commander in the Pacific is developing what he optimistically calls a Twentyninepalms of the Pacific, and he is looking at the Palaus, the Marshalls, opportunities to train and perhaps even put a station, if you will, on some other nations, where we would visit and bring the camp to life and then put it in a cooldown status when we leave.

We think that there are going to have to be additional training opportunities because Guam is simply not that large and probably the best you're going to be able to do on-island is company size.

Chairman LEVIN. Would you help us with "Babelthaup," please?

Senator Webb: Mr. Chairman, we ought to have a discussion about this. The first book that I wrote when I was 27 years old postulated that we should realign our military bases in the Pacific with a very heavy axis on Guam and Tinian. And during those discussions actually Lou Walt, General Lou Walt, had gone out into the areas where the Marine Corps had operated in World War II. In the Palau Island group there's an island called Babelthaup, which is very difficult to spell. But he had recommended that as a training area.

Chairman LEVIN. The reason I ask was to help our reporter. I also must confess ignorance. I had never heard the term before.

Senator Webb: We'll get back to you for the record on that. I think there's a t-h-a-u-p on the end of it.

Chairman LEVIN. That will give us another reason to go back and read your book, though.

Senator Webb: I can summarize it for you very quickly.

Admiral, you mentioned something here about the Naval Academy increasing in size in order to resource the growth in the Marine Corps? Am I hearing you correctly?

Admiral Roughead: That's right, Senator. We would like to take the Naval Academy brigade strength from 4300 to 4400, because of the increased number of officers that are being commissioned into the Marine Corps in support of the growth.

Senator Webb: What percentage of the Naval Academy now goes into the Marine Corps?

Admiral Roughead: We're not set on a percentage. I think if you were to run the percents it's almost 30-plus percent a year that are now going into the Marine Corps.

Senator Webb: That's incredible. When I look back, when we had a 4100 midshipman brigade and the Marine Corps was 190,000 going into Vietnam, I think they had about a 6- 3/4 percent were going into the Marine Corps. Then the Marine Corps went from 190,000 to 304,000 during Vietnam and they went up to 10 percent. And when it was at 200,000 when I was in the Pentagon, I don't think it was much higher than 10 percent.

Admiral Roughead: It was about 16 percent when I was the Commandant there.

Senator Webb: What you're really seeing is the impact of a reduction in the size of the Navy, I think, with those percentages going over.

These people don't go through regular Marine Corps OCS, do they, General?

General Conway: they do not, sir, any longer. They do go to Quantico if interested in a Marine Corps option for a 3-week period after their third year.

Senator Webb: But when it grew to—Mr. Secretary, when it grew above 10 percent when I was Secretary of the Navy, I mandated that those Naval Academy midshipmen who wanted to go in the Marine Corps should go through the bulldog program the same as the ROTC midshipmen, and I think that was—at the time it was

done because we were looking at the class standing of Naval Academy midshipmen in basic school and it had gone way down.

We don't ever worry about the people at the top. They're always going to do well, the people who are really motivated. But when you have that high a percentage, I would be curious as to see what the spread looks like. You want to make sure that everybody's motivated. The Marine Corps has a different perspective than a lot of different areas.

General Conway: I can talk to that myself, sir, if you would like. When I was CO at the basic school I did a like study and, as you might imagine, our MECP program, Marine Enlisted Commissioning Program, was absolutely producing the best students, NROTC and PLC a distant second. At that point Academy was about the same as OCS, and that was troubling to us.

We started a series of engagements, and I can tell you, sir, it's quantum better today. Their performance today is akin to their intelligence levels and the 4 years of experience they've gained at the Academy.

Admiral Roughead: Senator, I'd say it turned around when I was the Commandant at the Naval Academy. [Laughter.]

Admiral Roughead: But I would also say that, in addition to supporting the Marine Corps growth, the Naval Academy remains one of the primary institutions where we get our technical base from. So that's why the growth is important. It can't be zero sum and that's why we need the growth.

Senator Webb: Having had an engineering degree shoved down my throat during 4 years at the Naval Academy, I know what you mean about technical requirements. But I'd kind of be curious to see those numbers, actually.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Webb.

Senator McCaskill?

Senator McCaskill: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to say that no one has been more of a gentleman and more of a class act in terms of a Senator since I arrived here than Senator Warner. It's a wonderful time when we can get past all that party label stuff and acknowledge this. It's what makes this place good for our democracy. So I certainly echo the warm sentiments that Senator Webb had.

Senator WARNER: I thank my colleague.

Senator McCaskill: Thank you.

I note in your testimony, Admiral, that you're concerned about the tactical aircraft inventory shortfall. The older F-18s are being used, as you well know, far beyond their original design. I know your inventory is really challenged by the delays in the Joint Strike Fighter, and we're talking about now, depending on who you talk to and depending on whether we want to be very optimistic or whether we want to be overly realistic, somewhere between 2, 3, 6-year delays.

The Carrier Air Wing 7 it's my understanding is missing all of its tactical aircraft at this point and is playing kind of a shell game to cover its mission responsibilities. I think your inventory models predict at best a 70-aircraft shortfall during this transition to JSF.

My question is, would you comment on your plans in fiscal year 2009 and beyond to fix the shortfall? Do we need to strongly consider a new multi-year procurement of F-18s to fill in the gap in terms of these carrier deck shortfalls, particularly in light of our mission in that regard and the National security concerns?

Admiral Roughead: Senator, thank you very much for the question. The Joint Strike Fighter is going to be a capability that will add greatly to our Navy capability in the future. That said, as I look at how we are using our strike fighter aircraft, we're using them at quite a rate. In fact, we have a study under way currently to see if we can stretch out the life of the Hornets that are in service today.

As I look at our future air wing—and your number is very close to ours. We're saying it's 69. We believe in the 2016 time frame that we will have a dip. We have to look at what are the mitigators for that. I do not believe we can stretch the Hornets any more than we're seeking to do right now.

But as we go into preparation of our fiscal year '10 budget this is something that is foremost in my mind, because our ability to project power around the world is a function of our carriers and a function of our air wings, and we have to make sure that we have the capabilities that we need.

Senator McCaskill: Well, I'm encouraged that you're looking at that, and I certainly—obviously, I think we have a lot to be proud of in the F-18. It's under budget and on time and it has been a great aircraft for its purpose. Frankly, having a few more of them around during this transition period of time I think is not something that we should shy away from, particularly realizing the gap that's coming.

Admiral Roughead: It's a great airplane and I'm pleased we've been able to transition it into an electronic attack variant that I think will be very valuable to us as well.

Senator McCaskill: It's terrific.

Also, the only other question I had today for you— and frankly, any of you can speak to this. I know that Senator Kennedy talked about the MRAP problems in terms of the availability. I'm concerned about the whistleblower. I'm concerned about Franz Gale. And I would like some reassurance from you that Mr. Gale is not going to face any adverse employment decisions or actions because of his whistleblowing in regard to the study that was done, that has now come out in part of the public discourse.

General Conway: Ma'am, he works for the Marine Corps. I have purposely stayed at arm's length from that discussion. I have never met Mr. Gale or Major Gale.

There is, I will say, I guess, an investigation under way to determine whether or not he has complied with the guidance that was given to him by his boss. We are making every overture to ensure that we don't violate any aspects of his whistleblower status. But if it's determined that Mr. Gale has done something other than what his leadership and his bosses have instructed him to do, then that outcome will have to be determined, as to what happens to Mr. Gale.

Senator McCaskill: Well, I know that General Magness recently referred him, referred this to the DOD IG, which I think is an ap-

propriate move. I just, I know how hard it is internally to be careful in this regard, and I know that there are some whistleblowers who have not followed direct instructions and who have gotten out in ways that maybe they shouldn't have.

But the impact that dealing negatively with whistleblowers has on the entire operation is something that we really need to avoid. Whistleblowers are so important to accountability, regardless of whether we're talking about a bureaucratic agency that's dealing with the taxpayers or whether we're talking about the military. I just want to make sure that I didn't leave this hearing without expressing to you how strongly I feel and how closely I'll be watching to make sure that any whistleblower, and this whistleblower in particular, is treated with respect and deference and under the letter of the law in terms of any potential adverse consequences because of what he did.

I just think it's tremendously important and I just didn't want to leave the hearing without expressing that in very strong terms.

General Conway: I do appreciate that and I can assure you from my leadership position he will be treated in accordance with the law.

Senator McCaskill: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCaskill.

Admiral, I think you made reference to the number of P-3s that are grounded.

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. As 39?

Admiral Roughead: 39 is what we've grounded.

Chairman LEVIN. What's the total number of P-3s we have?

Admiral Roughead: Senator—

Chairman LEVIN. Is that a third? What percentage is that?

Admiral Roughead: That's about a third of what we have operational.

Chairman LEVIN. You can get us the precise number for the record, just to get some idea of that. [The information referred to follows:] [COMMITTEE INSERT]

Admiral Roughead: I will get back to you.

Chairman LEVIN. By the way, we'll just have a brief second round for those who want to ask some additional questions.

On the MRAPs, General, your decision on the MRAPs, which is totally understandable, you explained it very well as to the various missions and what vehicles you need for which missions. When you purchase less or fewer MRAPs than expected, does the Army need the ones that you did not buy, do you know, and does that speed up delivery to the Army of their requirement because you're not going to be using all of the ones you originally planned on? Does that have any impact positively on the Army?

General Conway: Sir, potentially, in that there would have been a distribution over time of those that were built that was depending upon the needs of the units in theater. Frankly, a part of our determination to recommend reduction of our buy was that we were not seeing the contacts in the west that the Army was still having, Baghdad, Diyalah, and up towards Mosul.

So the answer I think is probably yes. That said, when we considered the reduction we looked at the impact that it would have on industry. We didn't want them to have bought up steel and transmissions and tires for a vehicle that we would suddenly say that we didn't need. And there was no impact there.

Chairman LEVIN. That would be a second question. But as far as the Army, you're not sure whether or not that brings them quicker to their requirement?

General Conway: I think it's fair to say that it will, sir, because all those built on this last buy, which I think was December of this last year, will be Army. There will be no Marine vehicles in there.

Chairman LEVIN. I'd like to talk to you about your troop levels. General, as I understand it in CENTCOM now, in Iraq and Afghanistan, you now have eight battalions; is that correct?

General Conway: Sir, today as we speak we have eight battalions, that is correct.

Chairman LEVIN. And it's your intention to increase that to ten by March or in March? Is that your general plan?

General Conway: Sir, it gets complicated, but our committed battalions will be ten in March, because you will have the eight in Iraq and two more battalions, of course with the MEU headquarters and the support elements, going into Afghanistan. So from March through May the commitment will be ten battalions.

Chairman LEVIN. Then in May you're going to be bringing back two battalions as I understand it?

General Conway: That is correct, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. And then you'll be staying with eight through October?

General Conway: That is correct, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, is it your plan to draw down below eight in October? Is that your current plan?

General Conway: Sir, the conditions under which the Secretary of Defense approved the request for forces was such that the deployments to Afghanistan represent 7-month deployments, which is our norm, for both the MEU and the battalion. So ostensibly those forces will be coming out in October of this year.

Chairman LEVIN. Is it fair to say then that is what the current plan is, but it could be changed?

General Conway: Mr. Chairman, that's exactly right.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, on that Law of the Sea Convention that we made reference to—and I'm delighted to hear the administration is going to strongly support the ratification of that convention. It's my understanding that the Foreign Relations Committee voted that out again this Congress, and I'm wondering whether any of you or either of you may have testified before the committee, or was that your predecessors?

Admiral Roughead: I did not testify. I believe Admiral Mullen testified, and I know Admiral Clark—

Chairman LEVIN. He testified, okay.

Senator WARNER. And very strongly, if I might say, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. That's great.

I'm urging again that this convention be brought to the floor. I just think it's long overdue. It's got great value in terms of the

Navy, the way in which we can have orderly processes at sea working with other nations. My dear colleague Senator Warner was the person who actually signed the treaty, I believe, as I remember—

Senator WARNER. Actually, when I was Secretary—

Chairman LEVIN. —on behalf of the country.

Senator WARNER. When I was Secretary of the Navy, I was the delegate for the Secretary of Defense to the Law of the Sea Conference in Geneva. And it was about 36 years ago that I performed that service. It was someone different than the Incidents at Sea.

But I commend you, Mr. Chairman, for bringing up this question of this treaty. It's important for the United States of America if we're going to continue to lead as the major maritime power, and we now have before us today the current team that's in charge of the Navy and they give unqualified support to this treaty. So thank you for bringing it up.

Chairman LEVIN. I thank you. There's a wonderful picture of Senator Warner, if you have a chance to see it, when he was just a couple years younger, when he was, on behalf of the United States of America, initialing or signing fully that agreement. It's a wonderful bit of naval history, an important part to security, stability on the seas. It's a great history and I hope that we're able to confirm this while Senator Warner's still in the United States Senate.

But a number of the benefits of the Law of the Sea Convention which have been cited were: the right of unimpeded transit passage through straits that are used for international navigation; a framework for challenging excessive claims of other states over coastal waters; and the right to conduct military activities in exclusive economic zones.

Admiral, I believe you have said that the convention provides a stable, predictable, and recognized legal regime that we need to conduct our operations today and in the future.

Admiral Roughead: Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. So I wanted to get all that in the record because I will be asking the Majority Leader to bring that convention to the floor.

The only other question I think I have is about the EFV, the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle. General, let me just ask you about the funding for that vehicle. You are as I understand—that is really kind of the missing piece in your over-the-horizon assault goal. It's been in development, this vehicle, since the early 90s. There was a cost breach of the Nunn-McCurdy which occurred last year. That resulted in a delay. But there's a funding shortfall, as I understand it; is that correct, in that, or is that not a funding issue at the moment?

General Conway: Sir, I think at this point it's a developmental issue more than it is a funding issue. We have reduced our requirements by half in order to have just those vehicles that we sense that we have to need. We accept fully the reason why the Navy would not want to close closer than 25 miles to an unfriendly shore. So you're precisely right, we've got to find some way to bridge that distance and do it quickly.

I'd ask the Secretary, sir, if he would have any comments about the funding or the development.

Chairman LEVIN. Maybe you could comment on it. Mr. Secretary, is there a funding issue or is that a different problem?

Mr. Winter: No, sir, I believe the issue here that you're referring to is a developmental one, where we went through the test and evaluation activities last year. While the vehicle was able to perform the vast majority of its objectives, the reliability was far from what we were looking for. So we went and took the program and said we needed to do a design for reliability and maintainability, with the hopes of being able to come up with a configuration that would reflect those types of improvements, give us the ability to maintain this critical asset on board ship, and have the availability and reliability that we expect out of a vehicle of this type, and make all of those changes before we went into production.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

General Conway: Sir, if I could add one thing. We've talked some about the growth of other navies. I am going to China that the end of next month. I'm invited to go out and ride aboard one of their new amphibious ships and then to be taken ashore in their equivalent of the EFV, that will ride well above the wave height at something exceeding 25 miles an hour.

Chairman LEVIN. That's great. And I think, by the way, these mil to mil contacts are valuable for all kinds of reasons, and that's a perfect example of it.

General Conway: Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Warner?

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, every now and then we should acknowledge the support that we get from our staffs. I wanted to thank a member of your staff, Fletcher Cork, for recognizing when the hearing started that temperature in this room was 64 degrees, and we have now got it up to 70.

Chairman LEVIN. The conversation has not been heated at all. [Laughter.]

Senator WARNER. It's just the foresight of a very able staff member.

Chairman LEVIN. New technology in operation here.

Senator WARNER. It's your staff.

Chairman LEVIN. We want to thank you for recognizing my staff.

Senator WARNER. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. They've done some other important things as well. Not recently. [Laughter.]

Senator WARNER. Notice all the laughter emanated on your side.

I want to talk a little bit about the family structure, which is so important to each and every one of those, family member, be it male or female, that's proud to wear the uniform. That is that, Admiral, I understand that you recently requested the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to hold a tank session of the senior military leadership to address military health care costs and DOD medical issues. I hope that that will come to pass.

We're fortunate in the Department of Defense to have the services of a man by the name of Dr. Cassales. You're familiar with him?

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir, I know him.

Senator WARNER. Extraordinary achievement in the private sector as a cardiac surgeon. And he's heading up the team. He will undoubtedly be integral to this study.

But tell us what you hope to achieve from bringing this up with your fellow members in the tank. Then, General, I'd like to invite you to address the same question. Because we have tried to improve the health care. This committee has taken the leadership over many years. We did TRICARE for Life legislation. We had the very serious problem of, I just call it, the Walter Reed syndrome, which awakened all of us to the need for further study. Now I think you're carrying it to another level.

Admiral Roughead: Yes, sir. My motivation in recommending to the chairman that the chiefs talk about health care really stems from a couple of things. One is that as we look at what our people value, what our sailors and their families value, the surveys always point that health care is at the very top of the list.

It is also true that the costs of health care are significant and that they are squeezing and putting pressure on budgets in ways that were not envisioned years ago.

But most importantly, when you combine these things, and as we make adjustments in how we deliver care, whether it's privatized or direct care, I believe that the chiefs must have a discussion as to what the nature of our operational health care will be, and in the case of the Navy and the Marine Corps we're an expeditionary force, we're a deployed force. So as we make changes to health care systems and how we budget for that, what effects does that—what effect does that have on the operational dimension?

I believe that it's the chiefs that must have that discussion. We can talk about the business plans and other things in other fora. But we collectively as services, and as we become more joint in the providing of health care, I think it's time that we have this discussion. And it's not aimed at any particular area.

Senator WARNER. I strongly commend you for that initiative.

Would you like to add your perspective?

General Conway: Sir, there's two or three points I'd like to offer. One, we with Navy medicine I think are doing a very good job with our wounded warriors. That includes PTSD and TBI, although we continue to I think do some discovery learning in terms of techniques. There is no lack of effort to provide the best possible medical care.

The Navy has a forward-deployed footprint. The Admiral mentioned that they're expeditionary. They are. They're forward with us with teams sorting out these things really now in both theaters, and that's as it should be. What happens as an indirect result of that, and I'm attempting to manage it through discussions with the families and so forth, is that there is a shortfall in some of the hospitals and clinics. Our people wait a little longer, but they still get great treatment when they get in, and we're helping our families to understand that.

One area that I find, though, that I think we need to place increasing attention and increasing concern are for those exceptional family member programs. We have stories out there of a first sergeant living in his mother's home, mother-in-law's home, with his wife and two children, one of whom is an exceptional child. He is

paying \$80,000 a year for that treatment to that child and that's where all his income is going. He's a devoted parent.

But the care that's being offered for some of our exceptional family members through the TRICARE system that we have now I think needs to take a closer look at those specific concerns and help these families, because they're having tough times otherwise.

Senator WARNER. Well, they look to you as the uniformed boss. But I would like to invite Secretary Winter to follow on to the General's observation. I commend you for your recognition of the Navy-Marine Corps family as they've endured these high operational tempos, the initiatives you have outlined, adding 4,000 child care spaces, authorizing 100,000 hours of respite care for families of deployed service members, enhanced programs for children and youth, indeed at a price. Tell us a little bit about those initiatives?

Mr. Winter: Well, sir, as has been said many times, we recruit sailors and marines; we retain their families. Ensuring that we're able to provide for an appropriate lifestyle and an appropriate environment for our families there is of absolute importance. Doing that at our fleet concentration areas has been a major objective here. It has been somewhat easier, if you will, in those areas than it has been at some of the more farflung places that we operate, and in particular a little bit more challenging, obviously, for those families associated with our individual augmentees and reservists that have been called up for active duty.

What we're trying to do right now is to develop a whole range of programs and processes that can address the full spectrum of those families. The child development center investments that you referred to are a major part of that. That happens to be one of the highest priority items any time we go out and conduct surveys of families as to what is really important for them. Similarly, being able to provide the full range of support from the fleet and family service centers is increasingly important.

What we've been doing of late, in addition to those activities, is affording mechanisms for families that are not co-located, that are not in those fleet concentration areas, to participate in—the call centers, the Internet web sites, the other mechanisms that we've been able to identify, to be able to make sure that our families are taken care of and know how to get the resources that they need, no matter where they live.

Senator WARNER. I want to thank you for that initiative.

Gentlemen, I'd like to—my last question, Mr. Chairman. It's interesting, this July will mark 35 years of the all-volunteer force. Too much has been said about me here today, but I was privileged to be in the Department of Defense in your position in July of 1973 when the draft ended. And we took a deep breath—I say “we”; the whole of the United States, and particularly the military leaders, civilian and uniformed—to try an experiment that no other nation had ever tried. And it has worked magnificently.

As a matter of fact, I think it has worked better than any of us at that time had the vision to foresee. We've got to protect it. And I'd just like to wind up this session by hopefully receiving your assurances that in your collective professional judgment, if all three will respond to the question, that the all-volunteer force is very much alive and well and even strengthening.

Mr. Secretary?

Mr. Winter: Yes, Senator. I would argue it is not only necessary, but it is clearly possible. We just need to take care of our service members and their families, and I think this Nation will continue to support us.

Senator WARNER. Admiral?

Admiral Roughead: Senator, in June of 1973 you spoke at my graduation.

Senator WARNER. At Annapolis.

Admiral Roughead: And you headed me fair, as we say in the Navy. And I'm honored that you're here at my first posture statement.

The reason I bring that up is because of your leadership and your concern for the men and women of our Navy. That today I serve in the best Navy I have ever served in, and it's a function of the all-volunteer force, the care that you and this committee, the attention and the thought that goes into truly creating an environment where our young men and women can come and be fulfilled personally and professionally, has made our Navy what it is today. And I thank you and I thank the committee for everything that you do.

Senator WARNER. General?

General Conway: Sir, I joined the Marine Corps in 1971 in the operating forces. That was before the all-volunteer military. There is no comparison between today's military and the people we had in our ranks at that point, absolutely no comparison.

I would offer that a small all-volunteer military is really put to the test in a protracted conflict such as we see here now. But use of our Reserves I think across all services has helped to mitigate that, and we're managing that, I think effectively, in many instances.

I would end, sir, by saying, however, that we're now a country of over 300 million people. Less than 1 percent of our numbers wear the uniform at any point in time. That is our warrior class. That's our insurance against all those things out there that could in some way do damage to our country. I would only ask that you continue to support and sustain those people to the best of your ability, because we owe them a great deal.

Senator WARNER. I want to thank you for those comments. As a matter of fact, I leave the floor—I leave here to go to the floor at 2:00 o'clock to join Senator Webb, who's really been a leader in so many initiatives in the short time he's been in the Senate, to put forth legislation to strengthen and broaden the GI Bill.

When I reflect on my modest career, it would not have been achievable had I not received a GI Bill education for modest service in World War II and a law degree for again modest active duty in the Marine Corps, this time during the Korean Conflict. I think this generation is entitled to the same benefits as my generation had. And that educational program was probably the best investment that the American taxpayers ever made. It started in 1944.

I mention that only because in my judgment the initiatives of Senator Webb and others who joined on this field are going to strengthen and solidify the foundation on which the all-volunteer force exists. I think it's an important step. Sleep with one eye open.

We cannot ever revert back to the draft in my judgment, absent some extraordinary unforeseeable situation.

You remember, General—and I think probably, Admiral, you saw the vestiges of the draft—the problem that we had, the disciplinary problems, because there were just individuals who were there, not because they raised their hands and volunteered, as does every single person in uniform today. They are there because they had the courage and the willingness to raise their hand and said “I volunteer.”

So sleep with one eye open and guard it.

I thank you again, Senator, for your comments.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner. A lot's been said about you today.

Senator WARNER. Too much.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, no, not enough. A lot more is going to be said about you in the months ahead. But most importantly, it's not just what you've contributed to the security of this country, representing your beloved Commonwealth, but we're going to look forward to many, many, many, many more years of your contribution to the security of this country after you leave this particular place early next year.

Senator Warner and I have exchanged this gavel many times as chairman. I think we've each been chairman three times now. I'm just wondering if, Senator, since this is going to be I think your last posture hearing, unless we can slip in an additional one just for old time's sake before you leave, I wonder if you would gavel this hearing to a close.

Senator Warner [presiding]: Well, this is an unexpected pleasure. Thank you. A third of a century of my life has been with the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, and with our military, and I wouldn't be here today for what they did for me, and I don't think I've done in return that much for them. But I thank you for this honor.

Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:36 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]