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Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF:
ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. MORAN, USN
FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF ADMIRAL AND
TO BE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS; AND
LIEUTENANT GENERAL DAVID H. BERGER, USMC
TO BE GENERAL AND
TO BE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

Washington, D.C.

1   HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF:

2   ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. MORAN, USN

3   FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF ADMIRAL AND

4   TO BE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS; AND

5   LIEUTENANT GENERAL DAVID H. BERGER, USMC

6   TO BE GENERAL AND

7   TO BE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

8

9   Tuesday, April 30, 2019

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11   U.S. Senate

12   Committee on Armed Services

13   Washington, D.C.

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15   The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in

16 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James M.

17 Inhofe, chairman of the committee, presiding.

18   Committee Members Present: Senators Inhofe

19 [presiding], Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis,

20 Sullivan, Perdue, Cramer, Scott, Blackburn, Hawley, Reed,

21 Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King,

22 Heinrich, Peters, Manchin, Duckworth, and Jones.

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1   OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S.

2   SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

3   Chairman Inhofe: Our hearing will come to order.

4   We are very proud to have two of our nation's leaders

5   this morning present. And for the introduction purposes --

6   I appreciate both of you being here, but we have a request

7   from Senator Kaine to participate in the introduction of

8   General Berger. Senator Kaine?

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

2   VIRGINIA

3   Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair and to Ranking

4   Member Reed and to my colleagues. This feels different

5   looking at you from this angle.

6   Chairman Inhofe: Is it better or worse?

7   [Laughter.]

8   Senator Kaine: I am taking the Fifth on that one, Mr.

9   Chair.

10   [Laughter.]

11   Senator Kaine: It is a real honor for me to have the

12   chance to introduce Lieutenant General David Berger, who is

13   the President's nominee to be the 38th Commandant of the

14   Marine Corps. General Berger is a Virginian. His parents

15   live in Virginia and are here with us today. He spent a lot

16   of quality time in the Commonwealth of Virginia training at

17   Quantico and also a stint as a Marine recruiter in the

18   Roanoke area. We are very, very proud in Virginia to be the

19   home of training for every Marine officer and also the

20   National Museum of the Marine Corps at Quantico.

21   During his 38 years as a marine, General Berger has

22   served in many capacities, including deployments to Kuwait,

23   Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. After serving as

24   Commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific, he was

25   appointed to has current role as commanding General of the

1   Marine Corps Combat Development Command.

2   General Berger is well positioned, well suited to serve

3   as Commandant of the Marine Corps because of his Marine

4   service, but he is also well suited to work in joint

5   operations with the other service chiefs. In addition to

6   his Marine training, General Berger is also a graduate of

7   the U.S. Army Ranger Corps School, the U.S. Army Jump Master

8   School, and the U.S. Navy Dive School. I do not know

9   whether the Air Force did not have something that suited

10   your personality.

11   Finally, General Berger is no stranger to the

12   committee. He has testified before us often, especially in

13   the Readiness Subcommittee, and he has earned a reputation

14   before this committee for telling it like it is, which we

15   appreciate.

16   It is an honor to support General Berger, and I will

17   add in also my support for Admiral Moran for the CNO

18   position. To the committee, thanks for the opportunity to

19   introduce this fine public servant.

20   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Kaine. And we all

21   share your enthusiasm and your feelings about our two

22   leaders here today. It is an honor to have them both here.

23   And we would expect them, when they are recognized, to

24   introduce any family that is here with them.

25   We have our standard seven questions that have to be

 1 answered. They have to be answered audibly. So I am asking

 2 each one of you to respond in that way so we can get through

 3 this thing.

 4   Have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations

 5 governing conflicts of interest?

 6   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir.

 7   General Berger: Yes, sir.

 8   Chairman Inhofe: Will you ensure that your staff

 9 complies with deadlines established for requested

10 communications, including questions for the record in

11 hearings?

12   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir.

13   General Berger: Yes, sir.

14   Chairman Inhofe: Will you cooperate and provide

15 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional

16 requests?

17   Admiral Moran: I will.

18   General Berger: I will.

19   Chairman Inhofe: Will those witnesses be protected

20 from reprisal for their testimony and briefings?

21   Admiral Moran: They will.

22   General Berger: Yes, sir.

23   Chairman Inhofe: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear

24 and testify upon request before this committee?

25   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir.

1   General Berger: Yes, sir.

2   Chairman Inhofe: Do you agree to provide the

3   documents, including copies of electronic forms of

4   communications, in a timely manner, when requested by a duly

5   constituted committee, or to consult with the committee

6   regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in

7   providing such documents?

8   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir.

9   General Berger: Yes, sir.

10   Chairman Inhofe: And lastly, have you assumed any

11   duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to

12   presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

13   Admiral Moran: No, sir.

14   General Berger: I have not.

15   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you very much.

16   The National Defense Strategy directs our nation's

17   military to prepare for the return of the great power

18   competition. This means we have got to be prepared to deter

19   and, if necessary, to decisively defeat those near-peer

20   adversaries, and obviously, I am talking about China and

21   Russia.

22   In order for the Department of the Navy to achieve that

23   goal, our Navy and Marine Corps must be manned, trained, and

24   equipped appropriately. With our reduced defense budget

25   during the Obama administration and with the alarming speed

1   of the modernization of both China and Russia in

2   conventional and nuclear forces, it presents a formidable

3   threat to America and our allies.

4   Our next CNO and Commandant will be relied upon to

5   modernize our naval forces while at the same time rebuild

6   readiness. I urge you both to take a long view. Technical

7   risks must be better understood before procuring new

8   systems. Without better acquisition performance, which has

9   been a problem for many, many years, our challenges will get

10   worse and not better. We will fall behind and further

11   behind our competitors.

12   Admiral Moran, I am concerned that nine of 11 advanced

13   weapon elevators on the USS Gerald Ford still do not work.

14   Lead ship lessons do not appear to have been followed. I

15   talked to you about this before. This is not your fault,

16   but it is something that we addressed in some detail,

17   thinking we were resolving the problem back during the

18   consideration of the NDAA 2017. So we will talk a little

19   bit about that.

20   General Berger, the Marine Corps participated in the

21   counterinsurgency fight over the last 17 years and has done

22   extremely well. However, I am concerned about the toll that

23   it has taken on the readiness of the Marine Corps, our

24   equipment, and the training to deter and, if necessary, to

25   win against the peer threats like China and Russia.

1   Again, the two of you are not responsible for the

2   problems we have had in the past, but you are responsible

3   for the solutions that we look for during the course of

4   this.

5   Senator Reed?

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

2   ISLAND

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

4   I also want to welcome Admiral Moran and Lieutenant

5   General Berger to this confirmation hearing regarding their

6   nominations to be the chiefs of their respective services.

7   I want to thank both of you gentlemen for your

8   exemplary service to our nation and for your willingness to

9   continue to serve. I also want to thank your families, who

10   also serve along with you, for their dedication and support

11   which is so critical to the success of our military.

12   Admiral Moran, you have an exemplary record of service

13   and are well qualified to be the Chief of Naval Operations.

14   As the present Vice Chief of Naval Operations, you have been

15   intricately involved in all aspects of the Navy from

16   personnel to acquisition.

17   Lieutenant General Berger, you likewise have an

18   outstanding record of service. Currently serving as the

19   Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command

20   and Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and

21   Integration, you are well versed in shaping the Marine Corps

22   for the future, which will serve you well as the Commandant

23   of the Marine Corps.

24   Admiral Moran, if confirmed as Chief of Naval

25   Operations, you will be tasked with recruiting and retaining

1   a quality force and ensuring that force contains the

2   necessary structure and readiness levels to meet our

3   nation's current challenges and the posture to respond to

4   tomorrow's threats. The Navy is already challenged to

5   procure needed ships on time and on budget, and this

6   challenge will be compounded by the need to recapitalize the

7   ballistic missile submarine fleet that was built in the

8   1980s. In addition, if you are confirmed, you will have to

9   face the challenge of implementing programs to improve

10   readiness and professionalism in the Navy's fleet to avoid

11   preventable accidents like the USS McCain and the USS

12   Fitzgerald. Admiral Moran, I will be interested in your

13   vision of the Navy and how you go about making that vision a

14   reality.

15   General Berger, if confirmed as Commandant of the

16   Marine Corps, you will be tasked with recruiting and

17   retaining a quality force and shaping that force for new

18   roles against near-peer competitors, while maintaining

19   readiness to meet our nation's current challenges. This is

20   a daunting task for a small force in fiscally constrained

21   times, and again, I am interested in your plans for

22   accomplishing such tasks.

23   We live in tumultuous times and many core values are

24   being tested. I am concerned that such times can have a

25   corrosive effect on our military personnel. It has never

1   been more important that our Navy and Marine Corps have

2   principled leaders who promote respect throughout the ranks

3   and adhere to a moral code that can serve as an example to

4   all our sailors and marines. Admiral Moran and General

5   Berger, we all expect and demand, in fact, that you will be

6   those leaders. I am confident you will.

7   Again, thank you for your commitment to the nation.

8   Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

10   We will start with you, Admiral, and try to keep your

11 remarks brief. You will have ample opportunity to cover all

12 the subjects, I am sure. And we will follow with General

13 Berger. Admiral Moran?

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1   STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL F. MORAN, USN, FOR REAPPOINTMENT

2 TO THE GRADE OF ADMIRAL AND TO BE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

3   Admiral Moran: Thank you, Chairman Inhofe, Senator

4 Reed, and the distinguished members of this committee. It

5 is an honor to appear before you this morning as the nominee

6 for Chief of Naval Operations, and I am grateful for the

7 confidence expressed by the President of the United States,

8 our Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan, Secretary Spencer,

9 and of course, our Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral John

10 Richardson. The opportunity to continue serving this

11 country is, frankly, deeply humbling.

12   But before I get started, Senator, if you do not mind,

13 I would just like to acknowledge the fact that we lost an

14 important Navy man on Sunday, a true gentleman and a patriot

15 to this country. Senator Lugar was an important voice in

16 our national security issues during a long and distinguished

17 career. He will be missed by this body, I am sure, but even

18 more so he will be missed by his shipmates in the Navy.

19   As you know well, nominees do not get here alone. We

20 are supported and carried by many individuals and teams

21 along the way. And at the very top of that list is the lady

22 behind me, my wife Patricia. We have been together for over

23 36 years now, and she has been my rock and my foundation for

24 the entire time in my career in the Navy. And like so many

25 other Navy spouses, she deserves all the credit for raising

1   two amazing kids and for now keeping our three grandkids

2   perfectly spoiled.

3   [Laughter.]

4   Admiral Moran: Our son Will is here. He came in all

5   the way from San Diego. He also serves in the Navy, and he

6   is less than a month away from yet another deployment.

7   Our daughter Jessica and her husband John are traveling

8   up from Raleigh, North Carolina with their three sons, our

9   three grandsons, Benjamin, Teddy, and Lincoln, and we

10   thought it best that they not be here this morning. So they

11   are back at the house.

12   I am also very grateful that my brother Mike is here.

13   He is approaching 35 years of service in the Navy, and I am

14   very fortunate to be able to serve alongside him at this

15   moment.

16   I also want to honor my parents. Both were amazing

17   public school teachers and administrators. They were

18   coaches and mentors to thousands of young men and women.

19   And while they have passed on, their legacy of kindness,

20   compassion, and service guides me each and every day.

21   It is for all of them, my family and thousands of

22   classmates, shipmates, squadron mates from all over the

23   country in all parts of the world, that this calling is such

24   a great honor to be nominated for this position on their

25   behalf.

 1   It is a particular privilege to share this moment with

 2   Lieutenant General Dave Berger. We have just begun to get

 3   to know each other in preparing for this hearing, but I have

 4   learned in that very short time that we share a couple core

 5   beliefs. The first is the unique responsibility and

 6   capacity of naval forces to advance our nation's security

 7   and prosperity. The second is the importance of maintaining

 8   and continuing to build the most powerful naval force on the

 9   planet. And if confirmed, I look forward to working closely

10   with Dave to advance naval power together.

11   Today there are over 65,000 men and women who are

12   deployed forward, who are on the watch for the American

13   people and for each other. Every other sailor and Navy

14   civilian back home also stands the watch, training and

15   preparing to lead through the challenges and opportunities

16   that lie ahead. Many of you have recently visited these

17   young men and women at sea, on the ground in foreign

18   countries in hostile and friendly territory, and in the

19   world's busiest sea lanes. And I cannot imagine that these

20   young patriots, these volunteers, fail to impress you. In

21   every way, they embody a unique and truly American form of

22   service. They are your Navy team, a team that strives every

23   single day to grow and improve and live up to the nation's

24   expectations as they support and defend the Constitution of

25   the United States, to be warfighters, to be tested, and to

1   lead, to continually push forward confident and proud of

2   what they do.

3   So, if confirmed, my pledge to you and to them and to

4   our families is to work tirelessly to develop and deploy the

5   finest naval warfighting team anywhere. You have my word

6   that I will continue to devote myself to these sacred

7   obligations with everything that I have. And as a member of

8   the Joint Chiefs, I pledge to bring my experiences and my

9   military and personal judgment to bear and to provide my

10   best professional advice to the Secretary, the Chairman, and

11   the President.

12   To those ends, I will strive to deliver decisive and

13   ready and able forces whose power emanates from the genius

14   of our people and extends to a network of naval allies and

15   partners around the globe. This is what navies are all

16   about.

17   And finally, Mr. Chairman, I will always avail myself

18   to this committee and to the Congress at large as we work

19   together to safeguard our nation's security and prosperity.

20   Thank you, sir, and I look forward to your questions.

21   [The prepared statement of Admiral Moran follows:]

22   [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1   Chairman Inhofe: An excellent statement, Admiral

2   Moran.

3   General Berger?

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1   STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL DAVID H. BERGER, USMC,

2   TO BE GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

3   General Berger: Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed,

4   and distinguished members of the committee, thanks for the

5   opportunity to appear before you today. I am truly honored

6   to be nominated as the 38th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

7   Here with me today is my wife Donna who has given as

8   much to the Marine Corps over the past 38 years that we have

9   been married as anybody I know, including me. Through all

10   the deployments and all the PCS moves, she has been a

11   tireless advocate of military spouses and their families and

12   has immersed herself completely in every unit we have served

13   in, from the highs of the happy deployment homecomings to

14   the lows of combat losses and casualty assistance calls to

15   young spouses in the middle of the night. Not only is she a

16   great mother for our four sons, she saw two of her boys join

17   the Marines. One son went to Iraq, the other to

18   Afghanistan, and I honestly do not think Donna slept a full

19   night when each one was deployed.

20   Three of our sons are here with us this morning, and

21   Donna and I are really incredibly proud, like Admiral Moran

22   is, of each one of them and their families. They each have

23   made their own way in life, and their success is really

24   heartwarming to me and Donna.

25   Also with me today are my mom and dad. They are my

1   role models in life, and probably my biggest supporters.

2   I have a brother and a sister here and a whole bunch of

3   other family and friends as well. And Donna and I are just

4   really tickled that they could be here this morning.

5   I am grateful to this committee for your resolve and

6   your unwavering support for our service members and, as

7   Ranking Member Reed said, for their families. Our men and

8   women in uniform need to know that their nation is fully

9   behind them, and your actions reflect that steadfast support

10   from our citizenry. I know that we have the best trained,

11   the best equipped, best led force I have seen in my

12   lifetime.

13   We also have the very best leaders setting the tone out

14   in front of them, setting the personal example in everything

15   that they do, some of those commanders with full knowledge

16   that some of the decisions they must make in combat put

17   human lives at risk. It is humbling to just to serve among

18   their ranks.

19   General Neller, over the past 4 years, skillfully

20   guided our Corps through some challenging times as we

21   recovered from more than a decade of sustained combat in the

22   Middle East and shifted our focus back towards our naval

23   roots. That we have largely recovered our combat readiness,

24   while concurrently beginning to modernize the Marine Corps

25   for the future is a testament to the clarity of General

1   Neller's vision and his steady hand at the helm. And I am

2   grateful for his leadership, his mentorship, and his

3   friendship.

4   Your Marine Corps fills a unique role in the defense of

5   our nation. As General Krulak once said, we make marines

6   and we win battles. We typically do not win wars. Our goal

7   is always to go quickly. We will be first to fight and do

8   all humanly possible to prevent a crisis from becoming a

9   war. When it comes to national defense, your nation's

10 marines are the first responders and much is expected of

11 them. We must be ready at all times, highly trained,

12 expeditionary in nature. We must be both lethal and

13 compassionate or we will not have the luxury of choosing the

14 next conflict or the crisis. This nation demands the

15 highest professional standards of her marines. We are

16 accountable for our actions to you and to them. These are

17 not unreasonable demands, and we work very hard to keep our

18 honor clean.

19   If confirmed as the Commandant of the Marine Corps, I

20 will ensure that marines live up to the expectations of this

21 committee and the American people 24/7. I will ensure your

22 marines are always ready to go when called. But I will also

23 look after their welfare and care for their families so that

24 we return better citizens to society when they complete

25 their time in uniform. I will maintain a focus on proper

1 care and support for our ill and injured and those wounded

2 in combat. I could think of no greater honor than to

3 continue to serve among their ranks and lead them as the

4 38th Commandant.

5   Thanks again for the opportunity to appear before you

6 this morning, and I look forward to your questions.

7   [The prepared statement of General Berger follows:]

8   [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1   Chairman Inhofe: Well, thank you, General Berger.

2 Thank you for your service, for your opening statement.

3   Let us start with you, Admiral Moran. Senator Reed and

4 I have talked about this. We are going to have 6-minute

5 rounds as opposed to the normal 5-minute rounds. There are

6 a lot of things that we want to discuss.

7   But I am concerned about one thing more than the rest

8 that affect you, Admiral Moran, and that is this whole lead

9 ship concept. You and I talked about it in my office. We

10 have looked at this for a long period of time. I can

11 remember when we did the NDAA back in 2017. We addressed

12 this. In fact, just reading, one of the requirements says

13 you do not deliver a covered vessel until the Navy

14 determines that the vessel is assembled and complete. That

15 just has not been happening. It is not your fault. You

16 were not in on that deal, but resolving the problem is

17 something we are going to ask you to be addressing.

18   The last eight combatant lead ships cost a total of $8

19 billion more than the initial budget. Five were delivered

20 at least 2 years late with dozens of deficiencies. The

21 example that I like to use, because I was down there and I

22 have seen it, the Ford class was supposed to be delivered in

23 2015. It was finally delivered in 2017 at a cost of an

24 additional $2.5 billion over the budget, and the weapons

25 elevators still do not work. There are also other problems

1   with it, but those are the things -- obviously, unless you

2   deliver the ordnances, you are not going to be able to do

3   anything with that.

4   So what I would like to have you just briefly -- does

5   anything come to your mind right now as to a change that

6   could take place that could change our lead system concept?

7   Admiral Moran: Senator, thanks for the question.

8   Several things come to mind immediately, and one is in

9   order to be effective at building new programs, new

10   capabilities, is we have got to set the requirements early

11   and we have got to hold to those requirements and only make

12   adjustments when absolutely necessary. We have got to make

13   sure that we do not add risk to a program with layers of new

14   capabilities, new technology that have not been proven or

15   prototyped yet. And I think if we get those right, it will

16   reduce what you described at the front end.

17   Chairman Inhofe: I think you have brought us something

18   that is significant here because it is not all the fault of

19   a contractor out there. We change the rules, change the

20   criteria. It is just that this system has not been working.

21   So I think you are right on target on an approach, and we

22   will be following your progress as it takes place.

23   General Berger, first of all, let me compliment you. I

24   had a team over there in the South China Sea. We started

25   off in Hawaii. I am not the only one at this table up here

1   that does not like PowerPoints. And what you did, instead

2   of a PowerPoint, was something brand new. You had maps in

3   front of you and you kind of walked us through. So teach

4   somebody else how to do that to. Will you?

5   [Laughter.]

6   Chairman Inhofe: We know what happened. During the

7   last administration, the priorities were not on -- we had

8   our brigade combat teams -- only about 30 percent of them

9   could be deployed. The same thing with our Army aviation

10   brigades. I think that was 35 percent. Our F-18's that we

11   use that are in the Marines -- we only had 40 percent of

12   those that could actually be used in combat at that time.

13   And we saw this taking place. The general public was not

14   aware of this, but we were, at this table, aware of it.

15   They were down to 40 percent on the F-18's. I think

16   the Secretary of Defense has talked about 80 percent as an

17   expectation. Where are we now? We have done some

18   improvements in the last 2 years. Where are we on that?

19   General Berger: Senator, the 80 percent goal set by

20   the Secretary of Defense was for all the services, and we

21   have all been working hard to get there.

22   I think first I will say up front we would not be where

23   we are right now in terms of readiness in TACAIR or anywhere

24   else without the support of Congress and the oversight that

25   you provided to make sure we were spending it on readiness.

1   And it has happened. We are not where we need to be yet,

2   but we are on the right path.

3   Chairman Inhofe: Give me a percentage.

4   General Berger: On the F-18's and the F-35's together

5   for the Marine Corps, the goal is 80 percent. Last week,

6   F-18's hit 80 percent. The F-35's hit about 74 percent. I

7   think both the Navy and the Marine Corps are paying close

8   attention to it. There are things out of our control that

9   we cannot -- you know, we do not have a crystal ball. But I

10   think the path that we are on should make it doable later

11   this years to reach 80 percent.

12   Chairman Inhofe: Okay. Well, that is a better answer

13   than I would anticipate in a short period of time. But we

14   also know that there is movement within that. So it is

15   going to go up and down and not maintain a percentage, and I

16   understand that.

17   Right now the Air Force is going through replacing the

18   KC-135 with the KC-46 after many, many years. The CH-53

19   Echoes came around in, I think it was, 1981, and now we are

20   looking at dramatic improvements, although the cost is

21   anticipated to be pretty high. Would you comment on this,

22   moving to the CH-53 Kilo model and why?

23   General Berger: Sir, just a couple quick thoughts

24   there to answer the question.

25   The 53K. First of all, the program has been

1   restructured based on the testing that was done over the

2   past 18 months by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy Geurts

3   and the vendor, Lockheed Martin. So that has been

4   restructured -- the program. And thanks to this committee

5   and Congress for authorizing a reprogramming of funds to

6   make sure that the testing could continue.

7   I am confident that that aircraft will meet our

8   requirements, and the requirements remain valid. It will be

9   the heaviest lift helicopter we own in the U.S. military.

10   It has greater range, greater speed, greater reliability

11   than the 53 Echo, which you mentioned is approaching 30

12   years right now. I am confident that the oversight means

13   are in place and both Secretary Geurts and the Marine Corps

14   leaders are watching it closely. But that is an aircraft

15   that can do what no other aircraft can. We need it.

16   Chairman Inhofe: Yes, we know. We hear the cost on

17   this, but initially we understand that the costs are going

18   to be higher. And I am concerned about that. When you just

19   look at it and you say $100 million for a helicopter when

20   right now we are at about $80 million for a strike vehicle,

21   so we want to follow that real closely, which we will be

22   doing.

23   Thank you very much.

24   Senator Reed?

25   Senator Reed: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1   Admiral Moran, in 2017, the Navy suffered two

2 horrendous accidents, the collisions involving the USS

3 Fitzgerald and the USS John S. McCain. And there were

4 significant investigations following through.

5   What did you learn from these investigations, and how

6 have you made these -- how have you tried to inculcate the

7 lessons learned into the fleet?

8   Admiral Moran: Senator, first of all, my heart

9 continues to go out to the families of those sailors who we

10 lost.

11   Secondly, as you know, we underwent two significant

12 reviews, one that was done by Admiral Davidson at the time,

13 a comprehensive review, looked at the entire fleet with a

14 focus on the 7th fleet where the collisions occurred, and

15 then the Strategic Readiness Review, which was commissioned

16 by the Secretary of the Navy, to look at the broader

17 cultural aspects and other pressures that may have

18 contributed to the collisions.

19   Out of those two reports, along with GAO

20 recommendations, the investigations themselves from the two

21 collisions, and our own IG, we brought forward about 111

22 recommendations to go after areas that all of those

23 investigating bodies looked at and said we needed to make

24 improvements on.

25   We immediately stood up through the TICOM, which is in

1   this case Vice Admiral Brown out in San Diego, to make sure

2   that first and foremost we took a look at the

3   recommendations that addressed the safe operations of the

4   fleet. Those were implemented quite early on but followed

5   up by Admiral Brown when he took over in January of 2018.

6   After that, we went after those recommendations that

7   looked at effective operations, and that is the bulk of the

8   recommendations that go into these reports. We are well

9   down the path, and by the end of this year, we will have

10   implemented all of those recommendations. And I say

11   "implemented" with a cautionary note in that we are not

12   calling them complete because we think we need 2 or 3 years

13   of run time and reevaluating and getting feedback to make

14   sure that the recommendations, as implemented, are being

15   effective to drive safe, effective operations and change the

16   culture of our fleet to be more willing to ask for help when

17   needed, ask for relief when needed, and give the COs more

18   time back to train their individual crews.

19   Senator Reed: Have any of these changes or the

20   incidents themselves affected the recruiting and retention?

21   Admiral Moran: No, sir. As a matter of fact, the

22   retention in 7th Fleet right now is about 30 percent higher

23   than the rest of the fleet. So just as an example, I think

24   we have addressed a lot of the problems. We have still got

25   a long way to go. There are examples of where we have

1   implemented something like fatigue management, and while

2   everybody is complying with the direction, I am not sure

3   they are as effective as they need to be, and we are going

4   to continue to go after that.

5   Senator Reed: Thank you.

6   Both Admiral Moran and General Berger, the Secretary of

7   the Navy submitted a top 10 list -- this is not the top 10

8   list you want -- of Marine Corps and Navy installations that

9   were most vulnerable to severe weather. Do you believe that

10   we should adopt -- i.e., the Department of the Navy and the

11   Marine Corps -- better installation resiliency planning and

12   guidance as a result of weather threats? Admiral Moran?

13   Admiral Moran: Sir, there is no question that we need

14   and we are developing a plan for greater resiliency.

15   Especially in areas where we have shipyards in communities

16   that share water space, share waterfront, those are really

17   important areas for us for obvious reasons. We are largely

18   a waterfront service. So climate change -- when there are

19   rising waters, they are going to be a problem for us if we

20   do not address them. So we are in the planning stages to

21   look at how to reinforce those areas.

22   Senator Reed: And General Berger.

23   General Berger: I would agree, sir. The two biggest

24   challenges are the rising water levels and severe storms

25   that roll up the coast and through our bases and stations.

1   I think the new standards for construction for military

2 construction are absolutely critical. When we recover from

3 a storm like we are now in North Carolina, we need to look

4 at the location of the buildings. We need to look at the

5 construction standards of the buildings to make sure that

6 they will survive what the climate is going to throw at

7 them. But absolutely it is an important factor for us, and

8 the standards for construction are very helpful.

9   Senator Reed: And following up in a more general way

10 with the chairman's questioning about acquisition programs,

11 over the last several years, the NDAA has given the services

12 more opportunity to participate in acquisition. Can you

13 give us a sense of whether we are headed in the right

14 direction, what is the dynamic between the Under Secretary

15 of Defense for Acquisition in terms of the service chiefs?

16 I will start with you, Admiral Moran. I only have a brief

17 time.

18   Admiral Moran: Senator, I think we have all the

19 authorities we need as a result of the work of this body,

20 and we appreciate that. And if confirmed, I will actively

21 participate in all the programs to make sure that we get

22 requirements right and that we can deliver on time.

23   Senator Reed: General Berger?

24   General Berger: I would echo that, sir. And having

25 gone through the process for the first time this wintertime

1   reviewing each major acquisition program, together with the

2   Navy and Secretary Geurts, it is a very deliberate process,

3   and I saw the service chief has a mechanism to weigh in on

4   the health of the program as very good.

5   Senator Reed: One just final point very quickly is

6   that one of the things that has impressed me more and more

7   is not just the cost of the platform but the sustainment

8   cost of platforms going forward. I think most Americans

9   would be startled if they realized that the sustainment

10   costs of an hour flight of a F-35 is $34,000. So that is a

11   little bit more than I think most Americans on the street

12   would assume was a cost to keep an aircraft aloft.

13   But thank you, gentlemen, both for your service.

14   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Reed.

15   Senator Wicker?

16   Senator Wicker: Mr. Chairman, these are two

17   outstanding nominees. It is great to hear from them today.

18   I want to ask about ship procurement. Congress

19   authorized and appropriated $350 million each for the LHA-9

20   and LPD-31 in fiscal year 2019. We provided these funds to

21   accelerate construction of these two ships and to pay

22   critical suppliers long lead time material that is needed in

23   some cases 150 weeks before construction.

24   General Berger, I have heard you say today that with

25   the leadership of people like General Neller, we have

1   largely recovered from some of the cuts we had to sustain.

2   You mentioned first to fight being the role of the marines,

3   decisive power. And yet, the recent OMB budget removed

4   amphibious ship production from the fiscal year 2020 budget

5   proposal. The proposal would be to put the LPD procurement

6   at 2021, LHA procurement at 2024.

7   When it comes to first to fight and decisive power,

8   General, can you explain to the committee in this

9   unclassified setting how an LHA with an F-35B squadron or an

10   LPD with a high mobility artillery rocket system expands the

11   effectiveness and utility of the U.S. amphibious forces? I

12   think we have the flexibility and we have the capability and

13   smarts to find a way to move money around and go ahead and

14   stick with the plan that we enacted last year.

15   General Berger: Sir, it is going to sound a bit

16   parochial, but I do not believe there is any more versatile

17   capability than an MBAR marine force on an amphibious ship.

18   And our requirement, as agreed to by the Department of the

19   Navy, is 38 amphib ships. That is the current amphibious

20   ship requirement: 12 big decks and 26 LPDs and LSDs or LPD

21   flight --

22   Senator Wicker: And I might interject that is the

23   opinion of General Dunford, Secretary Spencer, and Secretary

24   Geurts.

25   General Berger: Correct, sir.

1   And to answer your latter part of your question,

2   Senator, what those forward deployed naval expeditionary

3   forces -- for example, F-35's on a big deck -- do, I do not

4   know of a more effective deterrent. There probably are

5   equals, but I do not know of a more effective one as far as

6   a contact force forward that gives you a capability to

7   present a deterrence force. And if the adversary chooses

8   not to comply, then you can turn offensive very quickly.

9   Senator Wicker: Do you think we have the flexibility

10   in the DOD budget to ensure that LPD and LHA procurement

11   programs remain on track and that no funds from either LPD

12   or LHA procurement can be taken for other purposes?

13   General Berger: All I can tell you, Senator, is from

14   the Marine Corps' perspective, I know what the requirement

15   is. And I also know that the Secretary and the CNO have a

16   larger portfolio of requirements. Ships are part of that.

17   So the best I can do as service chief, if confirmed, I think

18   is make sure the Secretary, the CNO understand what the

19   Marine Corps needs and then have the discussion about the

20   greater needs of the Department of the Navy.

21   Senator Wicker: I appreciate that emphatic statement,

22   and I think that is helpful to the committee.

23   Let me ask both of you then, and I will begin with you,

24   General. The chairman alluded to this, the time during the

25   previous 8 years we had to deal with sequestration and

1   continuing resolutions.

2   What would be the effect this year on the requirements

3   that we have and your ability to be first to fight and

4   deliver lethality if we had to deal with a continuing

5   resolution at the end of this fiscal year or, even worse, go

6   back to sequestration which is in the statute today? Unless

7   we change the statute, we are back at sequestration. And we

8   have got a minute and a half. I will start with you,

9   General Berger, and then go with you, Admiral.

10   General Berger: Sir, and I will be brief. If it is a

11   continuing resolution, based on my experience, commanders

12   below us have to make hard decisions on what is in their

13   training plan, and they will have to probably delay some of

14   those or cancel them. Procurements are going to be delayed.

15   New starts you cannot do under a continuing resolution. And

16   the worst part about it for us is the unpredictability. You

17   do not know how many or how long the continuing resolution

18   will last. So at best, you try to hold your head above

19   water with what you have got. But what really happens is an

20   erosion of readiness and in jeopardy is procurement. If it

21   is a BCA, sir -- and very quickly -- it is even more

22   catastrophic.

23   Senator Wicker: And Admiral Moran.

24   Admiral Moran: Senator, to add to what General Berger

25   articulated there, I will definitely pile on with the

1 stability of a capital-intensive force like the United

2 States Navy and the Marine Corps, with large contracts on

3 large ships and submarines and aircraft, really affects our

4 vendor base, really affects industry. They need stability

5 and they need predictability to be efficient, to hire

6 appropriately, and then to be able to maintain our equipment

7 is also affected by CRs and most certainly under a BCA.

8   Senator Wicker: And that absolutely affects the

9 recovery that the General was giving General Neller credit

10 for largely effecting.

11   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. That is correct.

12   General Berger: If I could add just one final thought,

13 sir. What would happen is, especially in the naval service,

14 we would make sure the next deploying forces are ready to

15 go, and we would triage everything else in the service to

16 make sure they are ready to go. But readiness in the rest

17 of the fleet non-deploying would start to fall off.

18   Senator Wicker: Thank you, sir.

19   And thank you, Mr. Chair.

20   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Wicker.

21   Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22   Admiral Moran, General Berger, thank you both for your

23 service and congratulations on your nominations.

24   I would just like to add, before I go to my questions,

25 my concerns to Senator Wicker's about going back to a

1   situation as you both described that would put us where we

2   were before the last couple of years when we were able to

3   get some budget certainty. I think that would be a disaster

4   for our men and women serving, and it is important for this

5   committee and this Congress to provide leadership and to get

6   agreement so that we can move forward with a budget that

7   people can count on.

8   Admiral Moran, I was encouraged by a recent memo that

9   was drafted by Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan that

10   directs the MILCON projects with fiscal year 2019 award

11   dates to be exempt from having their funding diverted to pay

12   for a border wall.

13   I know you have been to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

14   I have had a chance to be there with you as we looked at

15   those three projects that had to do with expansion of the

16   dry dock capacity that are there. Can you talk about why it

17   is so important for us to be able to expand our dry dock

18   capacity to be able to maintain the attack submarines that

19   are so important to our Navy?

20   Admiral Moran: Senator, I can. And my compliments to

21   Portsmouth. They do a fabulous job on our nuclear

22   submarines up there. It is a vital base for us in terms of

23   recovering from a very significant issue with our submarine

24   force and getting maintenance done on time.

25   As you know, the SSN force takes third priority against

1   the ballistic missile submarine force and the carriers. So

2   when the public yards that do a lot of our work get backed

3   up by some of that work, the SSN force is suffering from

4   that. And we are seeing that today -- the effects of that.

5   The work and the projects to expand the dry docks in

6   Portsmouth and other places are really important because we

7   are now starting to see Virginias come in. It is a ship

8   that has a different requirement in those dry docks. So not

9   only is it to address the Virginia class, but it is also to

10   address the shortfall in capacity that we are seeing around

11   the fleet in our public yards so much so that we have

12   expanded in to some of the private yards to do some of this

13   work just out of need.

14   Senator Shaheen: Thank you. I agree. Any delay in

15   getting those projects going is going to have an impact on

16   our ability to maintain the submarines we need.

17   General Berger, in his opening statement, Chairman

18   Inhofe talked about the challenge of balancing our

19   operations in Afghanistan and Iraq with the competition we

20   are facing from China and Russia. As I think I said to you

21   when we met, I joined Senator Reed and Senator Jones on a

22   trip to Iraq and Afghanistan over the last 2 weeks and saw

23   firsthand the impressive work that is still going on there

24   by our men and women who are serving and what they are doing

25   to keep ISIS from coming back in Iraq, to continue to combat

1   the threat of al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

2   But can you talk about the challenges that it presents

3   for us to have those continuing operations when we are

4   trying to ramp up to address what is happening with Russia

5   and China?

6   General Berger: Yes. Rotation of forces that you were

7   fortunate enough to visit is on a regular basis, and they go

8   through a pre-deployment training program, ma'am, that is

9   deliberate, and it is focused on the assigned mission that

10   they are going to have there, which is not necessarily their

11   core mission, but it is what they will have to do while

12   deployed.

13   Many of the skill sets are transferable. Some are

14   unique, as you are alluding to. Overall, we balanced the

15   force based on the maritime deployment requirements as

16   amphibious ready groups and marine expeditionary units

17   against the requirement to fulfill our commitment in the

18   Middle East. I am confident the units that go there -- and

19   I know who they are -- are well trained. I am also

20   confident that when they return, they will get right to work

21   on the skill sets that atrophied because of their unique

22   focus on a counterterrorism mission.

23   Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

24   You both talked about the challenges of addressing the

25   changes that are happening because of our climate. And I

1   think you referenced, General Berger, construction

2   standards. As you both are looking at the construction

3   standards, the need to have a plan that is more resilient

4   that addresses how to respond to these storms in the future,

5   are you also looking at efficiency as part of any rebuilding

6   or the efforts that are going on to respond to climate?

7   Admiral Moran: Yes, ma'am. I will start.

8   We have some efforts going on on the energy front alone

9   to try to reduce the reliance on current energy levels. So

10   those efforts, unfortunately, are first to fall off when we

11   get challenged on the MILCON side or reprogramming side.

12   But we continue to plan for that so that we are more

13   effective at our installations, to include the yards.

14   Senator Shaheen: And can you also talk about the cost

15   benefit of that?

16   Admiral Moran: Well, certainly cost benefit to

17   reducing energy requirements. Yes, ma'am.

18   Senator Shaheen: General Berger?

19   General Berger: I did not know much about that aspect

20   of our bases and stations, frankly, until I was at Twenty-

21   nine Palms, and when you are a base commander and you look

22   at the energy bill, you get smart on that real fast.

23   The standards written into them, as the Admiral said,

24   are now part of the design, and the lead is silver, gold.

25   The ranking system is very effective. And the return on

1   investment for the base commander is huge if he monitors it

2   closely.

3   Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Thank you both.

4   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

5   Senator Cotton?

6   Senator Cotton: Gentlemen, thank you both for your

7   service to our nation and for being willing to answer the

8   call to serve once again. Thank you in particular to your

9   wonderful spouses and all they have done to enable your

10   service and the example they have set for our military

11   spouses in both the Navy and the Marine Corps.

12   Admiral Moran, I want to talk a little bit about the

13   Truman. We have already explored this with Secretary

14   Spencer and Admiral Richardson. But the budget request,

15   obviously, proposes not to conduct the midlife refueling of

16   the Truman. So that means that we will be down a carrier

17   for about 25 years up until I think the late 2040s until we

18   build that out. So that gets us below our requirement of 12

19   carriers.

20   I just want to get your thoughts on this decision and

21   the extent to which it reflects some new strategic thinking

22   about the way we fight joint war, to the extent it reflects

23   the constrained budget that the Navy has had for several

24   years because of the Congress.

25   Admiral Moran: Senator, I think you captured both of

1   them in your question. There is a strategic shift in how we

2   are approaching the way we fight. It is called distributed

3   maritime operations. In a nutshell in a simple way, think

4   about just spreading the offense out over a greater playing

5   field in order to have multiple attack threat vectors to

6   adversaries that would want to challenge us at sea.

7   So to do that, we believe we are going to need to

8   modernize our force in a way that we have not thought of in

9   the past, especially in the unmanned arena. We certainly

10   have seen the benefit of unmanned aviation over the last 17

11   years of combat. We clearly believed that unmanned undersea

12   and unmanned surface will help us expand those threat

13   vectors in the future at a lower cost because of the

14   requirement not to man them.

15   So in order to do that, we needed to find money because

16   we felt like we needed to move this time around, on this

17   budget. We needed to go find the money to be able to do

18   modernization and experimentation, prototyping, R&D for the

19   things that we should be delivering in the next 5 to 10

20   years. Truman is a big bill in the FYDP, and looking at

21   that as a way to offset these requirements and investments

22   that we wanted to make, that is where this decision came

23   from.

24   Senator Cotton: Congress may not be good at many

25   things, but one thing it is good at is finding money. If

1   the Congress found money to both refuel the Truman and

2   continue on the new Ford class carrier program, I assume

3   that is not something the Navy would decline. Is that

4   correct?

5   Admiral Moran: No, sir, we would not decline more

6   money. But to the earlier question about CR and

7   sequestration, we have a mindful eye that that is on the

8   horizon, and even if you added money, I think we would have

9   to be very careful about how that money was allocated.

10   Senator Cotton: Well, that is a bigger question. I

11   hope we do not get there, but we will burn that bridge when

12   we get to it.

13   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir.

14   Senator Cotton: I want to talk to both of you about

15   pilot retention. It is an issue on which I have focused in

16   the Air Force. We have seen some of the same issues in the

17   Navy and the Marine Corps now. I would just like to hear

18   from you what we are doing to retain these pilots after we

19   spend so much time and money in training them. General

20   Berger, do you want to start with Marine Corps efforts?

21   General Berger: On the front end, Senator, recruiting

22   always has been a focus. I think now even more so, not

23   specifically the numbers but we may lengthen the time of

24   service of that their initial obligation is so that we can

25   train and then get the benefit on the back end because, like

1   you mentioned, their pipeline for training is longer than it

2   was 10 years ago.

3   On the retention side, very targeted bonuses,

4   incentives for them to stay. I think there is no question

5   within the Marine Corps. We know the competition from the

6   airlines is here now and it is not going to go away in a

7   year.

8   The third part, though, Senator, is the readiness

9   improvement in our platforms is critical in retention

10   because pilots come in to fly, and if we cannot give them

11   but 6 or 7 or 8 hours a month, after a while that gets

12   really frustrating. The recovered readiness, in other

13   words, on our aviation platforms is huge. The more they

14   fly, the happier they are, the better we are as a service.

15   So we have to keep readiness high. It is directly related

16   to retention.

17   Admiral Moran: Senator, I completely agree with

18   General Berger especially on the last point. There is

19   nothing more disincentivizing to an aviator than not being

20   able to fly. And it is more than that. It is having to go

21   through two or three airplanes on a pre-flight just to get

22   one that will fly. And that is where we were several years

23   ago, and thanks to this Congress and the RAA in 2017 and the

24   continued funding steady stream, we have been able to

25   recover there in many areas. We have still got a ways to

1   go. But that is the number one disincentive for our

2   aviators from all platforms, all type model series.

3   But all of the other avenues that General Berger

4   related to in terms of bonus authority, recruiting, those

5   sorts of things are being actively pursued. And we got

6   plenty of authority from Congress to be able to execute

7   that.

8   Senator Cotton: Good. I am glad to hear that. This

9   is actually one case where I think throwing a lot of money

10   at the problem will not make a difference. Those bonuses

11   are nice. We should reward our service members, especially

12   in the most skilled positions. But, General Berger, as you

13   said, we are never going to be able to pay as much money as

14   an airline, and your young pilots joined the Marine Corps

15   and the Navy to fly high performance aircraft against bad

16   guys in defense of our nation, not to make a little bit more

17   money, even though that is welcome. I bet Lieutenant Moran

18   might not have stuck around to be Admiral Moran if he only

19   got 4 or 5 hours of flight time a month and spent the rest

20   of his time making PowerPoint slides. So I am glad to hear

21   that you recognize that part of making sure that we retain

22   the world's best pilots in the Navy and Marine Corps.

23   Thank you, gentlemen.

24   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Cotton.

25   Senator Blumenthal?

1   Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

2   And I want to join in thanking you both for your

3 extraordinary service and your families'.

4   General Berger, when we talked about the Marine Corps

5 Special Operations Command, MARSOC, at one of the

6 subcommittee meetings, you indicated that you wholeheartedly

7 support this national asset. And in fact, it is developing,

8 as you said, quote, further and faster than most thought

9 possible. End quote. I assume that MARSOC will continue to

10 be a priority of yours as Commandant.

11   General Berger: That is correct, Senator. It will.

12   Senator Blumenthal: And do you agree with General

13 Neller that much of what your service does in the future

14 will not be against a near-peer adversary and that, as you

15 say, the Marine Corps must be versatile and nimble in

16 responding to challenges of battles as an expeditionary

17 force?

18   General Berger: As I mentioned in the opening,

19 Senator, my experience is we will not forecast, we will not

20 predict what the next crisis is. And I think you require

21 our naval service to be ready to operate against any threat

22 anywhere across the range, from a noncombatant evacuation or

23 a typhoon recovery all the way to the high end. We do not

24 have the luxury of picking a single threat and training

25 against it. We know what our peer pacing one is, but we

1   have to be ready to operate across the spectrum.

2   Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

3   Admiral Moran, you stated in your advance policy

4   questions that one of your priorities is going to be

5   hypersonics, which raises a larger strategic question about

6   our naval assets. We now invest in carrier strike groups

7   and amphibious ready groups that are built around a very

8   limited number of extraordinarily costly and difficult to

9   replace ships. My concern is that hypersonics and other

10   advancing means of warfare make them more and more

11   vulnerable. We are investing in naval assets in immense

12   amounts that still are very susceptible to attack.

13   The current budget in this year's request includes $2.6

14   billion for funding the hypersonics programs. The American

15   people have little or no understanding of the dangers

16   involved in the hypersonic glide missile that, for example,

17   the Russians are developing that they can attach to an

18   intercontinental ballistic missile to achieve highly

19   maneuverable delivery mechanisms that, again, place at great

20   risk our assets at sea.

21   I wonder if you could talk a little bit about whether

22   the Navy is reevaluating and reconsidering this strategic

23   approach. We are building two more carriers. One of my

24   colleagues, Senator Cotton, just questioned about the

25   Truman. I am wondering whether we do not need to have a

1   complete reconsideration of our strategic investments in

2   light of these increasingly frightening threats to our naval

3   assets.

4   Admiral Moran: Senator, thanks for the question.

5   A couple things. First, we are in the midst of a 2019

6   force structure assessment. It will be done near the end of

7   this year. That will be informed by current and future

8   threats. It will be informed on demand. It will be

9   informed by the National Defense Strategy, and it will be

10   informed by the capability road maps that we have in play

11   now and which we are forecasting to bring in the future. So

12   I think we are going to wait to see what that force

13   structure assessment says about the mix of platforms that we

14   think we are going to need to be able to fight in the

15   future. So I promise to you, commit to you that I will

16   bring the results of that force structure assessment back to

17   this body, if confirmed.

18   Senator Blumenthal: But some of our investment in

19   those platforms is already well underway.

20   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir.

21   Senator Blumenthal: And some of it may be rendered I

22   will not say useless, but at least requiring reevaluation by

23   the assessment that you are doing right now.

24   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. Senator, we have, for years,

25   evaluated the threats to the aircraft carrier and our other

1   ships in our strike groups to be able to deal with those.

2   So I think you would agree that our engineers and our labs

3   are remarkable at finding solutions to some of these

4   problems and challenges that come before us.

5   The aircraft carrier, as Admiral Davidson stated in his

6   testimony and the CNO and the Secretary have both testified

7   to, is the most survivable airfield that we have today

8   anywhere. And we project it will be that way well into the

9   future. There is a highly classified brief that I would

10   enjoy bringing to you and other members of this committee so

11   that you can see the kind of investments that we are making

12   in protecting the survivability of the aircraft carrier.

13   Senator Blumenthal: I think that brief -- and I

14   welcome your suggesting it -- would be not only valuable but

15   absolutely essential to us.

16   But equally so, we need to share some of this

17   information with the American people. Everything that I

18   have mentioned today -- and I cannot go much more into

19   detail -- is publicly available, but the vast majority of

20   knowledge that we have about what the Russians are

21   developing and perhaps other powers is classified. So they

22   know what they are developing. We know what they are

23   developing. They know we know what they are developing.

24   The ones in the deepest dark are the American people, and

25   they need to understand it.

1   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. We owe you a better

2   narrative.

3   Senator Blumenthal: Thank you very much.

4   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

5   Senator Rounds?

6   Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7   Gentlemen, first of all, thank you both for your

8   service to our country and to your families for the

9   sacrifice that they also offer.

10   Admiral Moran, I most certainly appreciated the phone

11   call that we had the other day concerning a couple of items.

12   First of all, with regard to the situation today with

13   nuclear attack submarines, Senator Shaheen brought the issue

14   up once again, and I just want to do a follow-up with you on

15   that.

16   The USS Boise, as an example, has been tied up and is

17   now moving into dry dock I believe. But we are talking

18   about a 6-year period of time minimum for the refueling.

19   You have got three other nuclear attack submarines that are

20   in a similar situation that are still waiting. That does

21   not say much with regard to how, even if we have a 355-ship

22   Navy in the future, we are going to be able to maintain

23   them.

24   Is there a long-term plan to address the challenge of

25   the facilities needed to actually maintain a 355-ship Navy

1   in the future?

2   Admiral Moran: Sir, there is a plan. It is called the

3   Shipyard Optimization Plan. It is a $21 billion effort over

4   20 years that goes after several efficiencies in our public

5   yards. We are, of course, encouraging our private shipyard

6   maintainers to also invest in their own capacity because we

7   are doing some of that nuclear work in private yards today.

8   So that combination of public and private partnership here

9   when it comes to our shipyards is going to be vital into the

10   future.

11   You are absolutely right on the SSN backlog that

12   exists. Earlier we talked about the prioritization of

13   nuclear maintenances with our SSBN force and our carrier

14   force and then SSNs. So we have to fix the front end first.

15   And the good news is we are starting to see some progress

16   here and important progress on our SSBN force and our

17   carrier force. We have had a couple carriers actually on

18   the west coast come out early from their availabilities.

19   That is a first in a long time. That is important, but we

20   have got a ways to go on the east coast and there are some

21   efforts going under way there.

22   Senator Rounds: I think part of what the question is

23   recognizing that there is a plan in place. My question

24   really is do we have the resources to execute the plan, or

25   is it a plan which is simply on the shelf and it needs to be

1   implemented?

2   Admiral Moran: Sir, the plan is in the budget. It is

3   funded to the Shipyard Optimization Plan. Of course, we are

4   anxious about where 2020 will land at the end of the day and

5   whether we can continue on that effort.

6   Senator Rounds: And so what you are telling us is that

7   if we do not stick to the budget plan that we have got with

8   the appropriation plan that we have got, if we revert back,

9   basically we have assets out there that would not be

10 serviceable in the future that we need and that would

11 otherwise be a waste of taxpayer money if we are not able to

12 get them serviced and back into operation again.

13   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. The momentum we have started

14 here in the last couple years, thanks to this body and the

15 additional money for readiness, will be lost if we go into

16 an extended CR or sequestration levels next January. No

17 question.

18   Senator Rounds: The F-35C's that right now we are

19 implementing -- and I know there has been a discussion about

20 fourth gen and fifth gen and the right mix and so forth.

21 But I think anybody would suggest that if we could get fifth

22 gen in place, we would prefer to have more fifth gen rather

23 than new fourth gen fighters. Is that a fair assessment?

24   Admiral Moran: It is a balance discussion, Senator.

25 We have got a lot of investment in our Super Hornet fleet.

1   We have got new capability coming out with that aircraft.

2   And the way we operate off the aircraft carrier in the air

3   wing component allows for a 50/50 fifth/fourth gen mix, and

4   that is the program we are headed for. We think that is the

5   right balance for the carrier aviation side, and when you

6   combine that with what our partners in the Marine Corps can

7   bring, it is a pretty powerful capability.

8   Senator Rounds: Thank you.

9   Finally, I just want to touch base on cyber for just a

10   minute. I was impressed with the fact that the Navy came

11   out with a report laying out their current challenges with

12   cyber. There was some criticism of just how direct it was.

13   But I found it rather refreshing that the Navy would

14   actually lay out what I think every single branch has for

15   challenges with regard to cyber and in working with their

16   contractors and so forth.

17   Where are we at with regard to the implementation of

18   the changes that have been recommended within that blue

19   ribbon report?

20   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. It is a very important

21   report on an incredibly important topic. And there are

22   multiple layers of that report. There is the unclass

23   version that has been provided here, and there is also a

24   higher level classification that dives a little deeper into

25   that, which if you have not received a copy, I will make

1   sure you do get one.

2   I think that the Under Secretary and the Secretary have

3   done is brought on one of the authors of that report to help

4   us navigate our way through building a plan to go after the

5   specific recommendations that were made in that report to

6   reinforce our security posture for cyber and also take a

7   look at other capabilities that are resident within our

8   cyber domain.

9   Senator Rounds: Thank you. Once again, I think it was

10   refreshing that the Navy took the lead. I know that there

11   were some recommendations that would be coordinated not just

12   within the Navy but others within the Department of Defense

13   and that there may be some additional positions that are

14   being asked for that the other departments may otherwise

15   need in order to coordinate effectively the cyber protection

16   systems that need to be in place not just in the Navy but

17   across DOD. Thank you, gentlemen.

18   Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

20   Senator Kaine?

21   Senator Kaine: Mr. Chairman, can I swap places with

22   Senator King to accommodate him to get to another hearing?

23   Chairman Inhofe: That is acceptable.

24   Senator King: Thank you, Senator.

25   Title X, section 151(b), the Functions of the Joint

1 Chiefs. The first thing that is listed is military advisor

2 to the President. That is the function of the Chairman, but

3 it also is the function of the members. I think that is

4 your most important job. Will you commit to this committee

5 and to me that in this position, you will provide your best

6 unvarnished, truthful advice based on your deep military

7 experience to the President of the United States, to the

8 National Security Council in all situations involving the

9 possible use of military force? Admiral Moran?

10 Admiral Moran: No question, Senator.

11 Senator King: General?

12 General Berger: Yes, sir.

13 Senator King: I have one bit of homework, although I

14 suspect you have already done it. I think anybody entering

15 a position that you are entering should read H.R. McMaster's

16 book, "Dereliction of Duty." It is a classic study of a

17 failure of policy during the Vietnam era and it focuses very

18 specifically on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. So I cannot

19 emphasize enough how important this is, and your terms are 4

20 years. So you will certainly be advising this President for

21 2 years, perhaps for 4 years, or perhaps another President.

22 So this is not President-specific. But I am just suggesting

23 that your absolutely truthful advice, again based on both of

24 your extraordinary careers, is what the country needs and

25 demands. And I appreciate your commitment to that.

1   Admiral Moran, you started off -- I think it was

2   Senator Reed who asked about the Fitzgerald and the McCain.

3   And you know that I have had a deep interest in that. You

4   indicated that you are satisfied that the steps are being

5   taken, that progress is being made.

6   I want to be a little more specific. Do you have the

7   metrics, do you have the measurements? Do you believe that,

8   for example, staffing, training -- I do not want to take

9   assurances from a captain or from somebody in the middle of

10 the chain of command. Do you have confidence that the

11 changes that are necessary to avoid tragedies like that are

12 actually underway?

13   Admiral Moran: Oh, absolutely. I know you have asked

14 for those metrics on a quarterly basis, and I will commit to

15 you you will get them.

16   Senator King: Thank you.

17   Admiral, you were in the personnel business for a

18 while, as I recall, and we talked about this. And one of

19 the issues that you raised at that time was the narrowing of

20 the base of the military, of the volunteer military. I

21 think you said something like 84 percent of the people on

22 active duty today come from military bloodlines. There also

23 is a regionalization of the military. There are no active

24 duty military bases in the Northeast, for example. I worry

25 about the separation of the military from the remainder of

1   the society. Is this something you think that we need to

2   address?

3   Admiral Moran: I think it should always concern us

4   that the narrow slice of America that is participating in

5   defense of the country continues. We need to expand that.

6   And that is to take nothing away from the military

7   bloodlines, the young men and women who come in. They are

8   incredible. But we do need for the rest of America to

9   participate in this.

10   So we have got to reach out more, and we are doing that

11   through several different means. A lot of it is being done

12   virtually because that is how we reach young men and women

13   today to at least start the process. That is having an

14   impact on this regionalization discussion you talked about,

15   but we have got so much more to do on this.

16   Senator King: General, do you have thoughts on this

17   subject?

18   General Berger: I think, Senator, the most visible

19   symbols of the military around the U.S. in my opinion are

20   reservists and their reserve units and recruiters, frankly.

21   Those are the ones that are the most visible.

22   But to your point, the service has an obligation to

23   actively communicate with the public. Those are visible

24   presence out in the communities, but we have an obligation

25   to communicate with the people about what their taxpayer

1   dollars are getting for their defense and why what we are

2   doing is so important. I do not think that is something we

3   can ever take for granted, in other words. We have to do

4   that proactively. It has to be part of our jobs.

5   Senator King: I appreciate that. And I think

6   broadening your reach in terms of recruitment -- the citizen

7   soldier is a part of the history of this country. My worry

8   is that the military is over here and the public does not

9   have that much connection with what it is you do, what your

10   values are. So I commend you for those efforts and I think

11   you said active measures. This is not going to happen by

12   itself.

13   Finally, Admiral, a plea. We have had testimony in

14   this committee over the last several years about drug

15   shipments coming into the United States via the water, via

16   the ocean and that we only have the assets, the ships, to

17   interdict 25 percent of the shipments we know of. And I

18   would urge you to work with the Secretary, to work with the

19   staff to devote greater assets. And they do not have to be

20   big destroyers or aircraft carriers. They could be frigates

21   and smaller vessels to work on this horrendous problem which

22   is killing Americans every day. Since this hearing started,

23   about six Americans have died of overdoses just in the last

24   2 yours. So I hope that this is something you can look at.

25   It is not China and it is not Russia and it is not anti-

1   submarine warfare, but it is a deadly attack on this country

2   that we can do something about simply by the allocation of

3   sufficient assets. Is that something you are willing to --

4   Admiral Moran: Absolutely, yes, sir.

5   Senator King: Thank you.

6   Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator King.

8   Senator Ernst?

9   Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10   And, gentlemen, thank you very much for stepping

11   forward and taking on, hopefully, additional levels of

12   authority. I want to thank your family and friends for

13   being here today as well. Welcome to all of you.

14   Gentlemen, both of you have talked a little bit about

15   emerging threats, and I want to do a little deeper dive

16   there. Admiral Moran, you stated that, if confirmed, you do

17   intend to continue the Navy on a path forward towards a more

18   agile, sustainable, and capable naval force to meet new and

19   emerging threats. And, General Berger, you stated that, if

20   you are confirmed, your goal would be not merely to meet new

21   and emerging threats, but to maintain a margin of overmatch

22   over potential adversaries.

23   So, gentlemen, if you would each maybe describe what

24   you believe to be the most threatening emerging adversary or

25   capability that might be out there and then how do we

1   compete. And, General Berger, to your words, how do we

2   overmatch in those areas? Admiral Moran, if we could start

3   with you, please.

4   Admiral Moran: Yes, Senator. We quickly go classified

5   on capabilities. I would love to come back and talk to you

6   in a different setting on specifics.

7   But I think we have already mentioned some of the high

8   technology efforts that are underway across the globe on

9   hypersonics, lasers, and to a large extent, this issue of

10 cybersecurity and our ability to communicate with

11 authoritative information so that we can make decisions that

12 are clear and compelling.

13   So there are several areas that we want to maintain our

14 asymmetric advantage. For us, we believe undersea is where

15 we have a significant advantage and we need to continue to

16 pace that so that others do not catch up.

17   Part of that is capacity. As you know, we are well

18 below our requirement of 66 SSNs. The path to recover is

19 not a fast path. It is limited by industrial capacity. It

20 is limited by workforce capacity.

21   So those things will be front and center as we take the

22 Navy forward in the future, among many other aspects of the

23 future air wing, how it looks, and the kinds of capabilities

24 we are going to be able to bring to be able to reach the

25 adversary at greater range so that we do not put our forces

1   at unnecessary risk, partner with our joint forces to be

2   able to deliver from multiple different attack vectors. And

3   I think that is what I am most excited about working with

4   General Berger on is developing those CONOPS in the future

5   so that this team at least is able to answer the nation's

6   call when it comes.

7   Senator Ernst: Outstanding. Thank you, sir.

8   General Berger?

9   General Berger: I think, Senator, well documented,

10   well covered is the fact that both Russia and China watched

11   us pretty closely over the last 15 years, modernized, and

12   frankly focused against a single adversary, us, for a decade

13   and a half or more. And when you can do that and you do not

14   have global commitments like neither of them have, you can

15   make up some ground, which they have.

16   I think the cyber threat that my battle buddy, Admiral

17   Moran, mentioned, absolutely we assume it is there every day

18   right now, and we assume they will go after that early on

19   and constantly because some of our leaders have spoken of

20   that as a center of gravity or a critical capability for the

21   U.S. So they will absolutely go after our networks for

22   sure. So we have to harden that, and we have to train our

23   people and change their behavior to, frankly, treat the

24   network a little different than they treat it at home.

25   On the how do you maintain overmatch, there is a

1   hardware technical aspect to that and a classified aspect.

2   But in this forum, ma'am, I would say people and training,

3   although not always talked about first, sometimes we talk

4   about platforms and equipment. I would tell you people and

5   training -- that is where it begins. Having the very best

6   people in the Navy and the Marine Corps with the very best

7   leaders in front of them and really hard, challenging,

8   realistic training, that is how you maintain a margin. In

9   other words, even if your equipment is peer-to-peer, we have

10 to train harder. We have to recruit and retain the very

11 best.

12   Senator Ernst: I appreciate that.

13   So bottom line, we have talked a little bit about

14 unmanned systems, hypersonics, cyber. Artificial

15 intelligence would fall into this area as well. Just bottom

16 line, if we fall into sequestration, we can guarantee all of

17 that stops. Correct?

18   Admiral Moran: It certainly slows down to a point

19 where we will fall further behind in some of those areas.

20 Yes, ma'am.

21   Senator Ernst: General Berger, just very briefly

22 because I have 1 minute left. Earlier this month, the Corps

23 concluded an experiment integrating female recruits into an

24 all-male unit for their initial training at Parris Island.

25 Can you just give me a quick overview? And if confirmed,

1   based on those results, would you pursue further gender

2   integration during Marine Corps basic?

3   General Berger: That company graduated a few weeks

4   ago. It started with about 50 females as part of the

5   company, as you are probably aware, ma'am.

6   We measure the same things in every company that goes

7   through there, how well they did physically, how many

8   injuries they had, all those sorts of things.

9   The statistics, to answer immediately your question,

10   for this company where the same as every other company, a

11   few areas higher, a few areas lower, but it went great. The

12   program of instruction that we use in the Marine Corps we

13   did not change. We just changed where they were billeted.

14   And it all worked out.

15   I talked to the Commandant this morning about it and

16   the results of it. What I asked him is, I said, you know,

17   we have to look at this perhaps for next year, and he said

18   absolutely. So I think it is a discussion he and I will

19   have and the Marine Corps will have. But the class that

20   entered in January and graduated a few weeks ago did very

21   well.

22   Senator Ernst: That is good to hear.

23   Thank you very much, gentlemen. I look forward to

24   supporting you. Thank you.

25   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Ernst.

1   Senator Peters?

2   Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3   And thank you, gentlemen, for your past service and

4   your willingness to continue to serve.

5   My first question is for Admiral Moran. You talked

6   about unmanned surface vessels earlier in some questions

7   that were given to you. And I know the Navy's budget

8   request, 10 large unmanned surface vessels across future

9   defense plans, planning at two per year beginning in fiscal

10 year 2020. It is clear the Navy embraces these benefits.

11 You talked about some of those benefits in a previous

12 question.

13   But my question to you is given the fact that money is

14 not unlimited -- we do have constraints and those

15 constraints will be there going forward, particularly given

16 the deficits that we are running in this country right now.

17 So my question is how do you see the introduction of

18 unmanned platforms impacting force structure. What is kind

19 of your vision going forward? What is the give and take

20 that we have with our current force in terms of now new

21 technology being introduced? What does that look like going

22 forward in your mind?

23   Admiral Moran: Sir, the first couple ships that we

24 have got in the budget we need to get after so that we can

25 experiment with these to test out the concepts that we

1   believe they are capable of doing, looking at different

2   types of capabilities to put on those unmanned surface

3   vessels. We are also doing the same thing in the undersea,

4   as I think you know.

5   Down the road, if these capabilities prove out to be as

6   effective as some other current manned capabilities, then

7   they would start to add to and complement the manned

8   platforms that we have and would be part of our battle

9   force. So I think we have to look at this carefully. We

10 are a long ways away from understanding just how effectively

11 we can operate unmanned surface vessels in a very congested

12 ocean, especially in parts of the world where we operate day

13 to day. So all of those will be examined as we move this

14 deliberately but aggressively forward in the next couple

15 years.

16   Senator Peters: I want to pick up on that point

17 "aggressively." We know what is happening with autonomy on

18 the commercial side with vehicles and self-driving cars,

19 which are going to be with us a lot sooner than I think

20 people realize.

21   We also know our adversaries are moving in that

22 direction very quickly and that you can move unmanned

23 platforms out at a much more cost effective way and

24 lethality is present as well.

25   So speed I think is critical. Would you agree?

1   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir, I do.

2   Senator Peters: How are you working with the private

3 sector and academia in these areas? Is this primarily a

4 Navy function, or are you casting a fairly wide net and

5 bringing in expertise?

6   Admiral Moran: Yes. We are casting a very wide net

7 through our labs, through our engineers, through Office of

8 Naval Research. Academia is very much a part of these

9 discussions, and I think most members here are aware that

10 our labs talk extensively to academia. There is a lot of

11 research and development that goes on through them that I

12 think is very important as we continue to pursue this

13 capability.

14   Senator Peters: Thank you.

15   General Berger, your current position as Commander of

16 the Marine Corps Combat Development Command, which describes

17 itself I think as, quote, the institutional intellectual

18 epicenter for the evolution of the Marine Corps. So in

19 responding to a question from Senator Ernst, who I serve on

20 the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee with, you

21 talked about some of the emerging threats and capabilities.

22   But my question for you is doctrine. You have thought

23 a great deal about that. And given the change of warfare,

24 which will likely be dramatic in the years ahead from the

25 autonomy we talked about to hypersonic missiles, et cetera,

1   what do you see as some of the challenges to doctrine and

2   how do you think about that going forward?

3   General Berger: Doctrine we think of as evolutionary.

4   To your point, it is a tough match in today's world as fast

5   as things are changing. I think the way that we are

6   approaching it now -- and we will see how that goes -- is as

7   fast as possible move the concepts for how we are going to

8   operate as a naval force, Navy plus Marine Corps force, move

9   those concepts forward and experiment really, really

10   aggressively. The doctrine will lag I believe, but if we

11   slow down the experimentation in the concept process to the

12   pace of doctrine, we will fall behind.

13   I think the effort that Admiral Merz and his team in

14   the Navy and the Marine Corps has done over the past year,

15   year and a half in really moving forward how distributed

16   maritime ops will work, having advanced naval technology,

17   exercises and demonstrations where vendors can bring their

18   stuff, and we just put marines and sailors in front of them

19   and say this is what we got to be able to do, what do you

20   got that is close to that, that is how we are going to move

21   fast. We will bring doctrine along, but we will not allow

22   it to drag us down like an anchor.

23   Senator Peters: The current Marine Corps operating

24   concept is from 2016, which was before the National Defense

25   Strategy was published. Do you see a need to revise that,

1   and what would be your timetable?

2   General Berger: We are looking at that, Senator. But

3   in the interim since 2016, two documents on the Navy and

4   Marine Corps side have helped flesh out what the Marine

5   operating concept sort of hinted at, and that is littoral

6   operations in a contested environment and expeditionary

7   advanced space operations. So although the Marine operating

8   concept was sort of the beginning part of that, the two

9   follow-on documents and distributed maritime operations,

10   they have all taken the idea further in advance. So I do

11   not know at this point if we need to rewrite the MOC. The

12   follow-on documents have helped a great deal.

13   Senator Peters: Thank you, gentlemen. Appreciate it.

14   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Peters.

15   Senator Sullivan?

16   Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17   And I want to thank, Admiral, General, both of you for

18   your decades of service and the service of all your family

19   members. Great to see so many here. Thank you for

20   answering the call in these important positions.

21   As the chairman mentioned, the National Defense

22   Strategy emphasizes the return to great power rivalry with

23   China as the pacing threat and the Indo-Pacific as the

24   primary theater. In this committee in the last three NDAAs,

25   it has not only emphasized that but has also emphasized and

1   required the Department of Defense to do much more with

2   regard to a strategic focus on the Arctic and our forces

3   there. So what I want to do is focus a little bit of my

4   questions in these two areas.

5   Despite the NDS focus and the discussion of the Arctic

6   here, the force posture of the Marine Corps in particular

7   but also the Navy in that region to a lot of us seems stale.

8   And by that, I mean it is pretty much, if you look at what

9   the end of World War II left with regard to force posture,

10   that is where our forces are pretty much right now. Would

11   you agree to work with this committee on looking at ways in

12   which to optimize the force posture of the Navy and the

13   Marine Corps in the Arctic and in the Indo-Pacific?

14   Admiral?

15   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir, absolutely. We look at this

16   in a strategic laydown methodology.

17   Senator Sullivan: Do you agree that the force posture

18   is stale? It has not been looked at in an appropriate

19   manner to match the NDS?

20   Admiral Moran: To your point, Senator, the reemergence

21   of great power competition has woken us up to take the

22   cobwebs out from lack of really paying attention or I should

23   say being able to exercise our force to be ready for that

24   kind of competition again in the future. So it is

25   appropriate for us to continue to look at the force posture

1   in the Indo-Pacific.

2   Senator Sullivan: General, do you agree with that in

3   terms of the force posture and how we need to update it?

4   General Berger: I think Admiral Davidson highlighted

5   that as well in his testimony, and the ongoing DPRI effort

6   to reposture the force is part of that discussion.

7   Senator Sullivan: We look forward to working with you-

8   - this committee -- on doing that. There has been a number

9   of us who have been very focused on it. I think we are a

10 little bit slow on this one.

11   Let me ask -- I actually believe that the current

12 Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant, General Neller,

13 agree with that and the need to look at reexamining our

14 force posture.

15   Admiral Moran, I wanted to just get your commitment to

16 work with this committee and the Secretary of the Navy on a

17 number of things he has committed to both in testimony and

18 in a recent "Wall Street Journal" article where he talked

19 about the need for freedom of navigation operations in the

20 Arctic, which we have not done in quite a long time, large-

21 scale amphibious exercises again in the Arctic, places like

22 Adak, looking at warming up the Adak Navy base with regard

23 to P-8's, and the need for strategic Arctic ports. He has

24 looked at all these issues. He has committed to work with

25 this committee on these matters. Will you commit to work

1   with us, if confirmed, on these issues as well?

2   Admiral Moran: I do, Senator.

3   Senator Sullivan: And how about a commitment, if

4   confirmed, to come to Alaska with me to look at the

5   strategic terrain of the Arctic and really the gateway to

6   the Asia-Pacific as well in many of these areas?

7   Admiral Moran: Sir, I would love to go back to Adak.

8   I was there in September of this past year, and

9   unfortunately, the mothball state of that base did not make

10   me feel real good.

11   Senator Sullivan: Yes. It makes you feel kind of sick

12   at your stomach when you look at how strategic that base is

13   with regard to the gateway to the Arctic and the Asia-

14   Pacific. It is a lot further west than Midway and other

15   places. A lot of people do not know how far west that base

16   is.

17   General, I want to thank you very much for joining me

18   in Alaska just last week and taking the time to come to my

19   State. I know you have been up there before.

20   The Marine Corps, as you know, has a proud and

21   distinguished history of serious cold weather operations,

22   whether Chosin Reservoir or Inchon. Every clime and place

23   is part of our hymn.

24   General Neller has been concerned about how the Marine

25   Corps has lost its ability to conduct large-scale operations

1   in the cold weather. You may have seen -- and I would like

2   to submit this for the record, Mr. Chairman -- the U.S.

3   Naval Institute had an article about the Marine Corps'

4   recent 24th MEU exercises with regard to cold weather ops

5   where a lot of challenges came out.

6   [The information follows:]

7   [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1   Senator Sullivan: So General Neller and the Secretary

2   of the Navy have been interested in significantly increasing

3   training and deployment opportunities in Alaska to help

4   address what I think most would agree is kind of an atrophy

5   of Marine Corps skill sets in terms of cold weather

6   operations.

7   Would you commit to work with this committee on looking

8   at the opportunities to do more training in Alaska, more

9   training at JPARC? As you know, the National Defense

10   Strategy has Russia, China, North Korea as some of our

11   biggest adversaries that we need to focus on. These are

12   cold weather, mountain terrain areas. Would you commit to

13   continuing those policies to look at those opportunities

14   with this committee?

15   General Berger: Senator, I will commit to work with

16   the committee closely on any kind of training that benefits

17   our combat readiness. Yes, sir.

18   Senator Sullivan: How about more specifically?

19   General Neller focused on having no less than seven Arctic

20   cold weather battalions in the Marine Corps. He talked

21   about Marine Corps planning was looking at rotational forces

22   through Norway and Alaska to reestablish this very important

23   fighting skill. Would you commit to working with this

24   committee on fully exploring those opportunities and needs

25   of the Marines?

1   General Berger: Senator, I think, if confirmed, I

2   would do the same thing as General Neller, which is look at

3   what the nation, through the Secretary and Chairman,

4   requires of the Marine Corps, figure out where we are

5   meeting that mark in terms of capability and capacity and

6   where we are not. I will absolutely commit to working with

7   the committee on any areas where in my view and the Marine

8   Corps' view we do not have the --

9   Senator Sullivan: Do you think the Marine Corps'

10   extreme large-scale cold weather skill in mountainous

11   terrain has atrophied over the last 20 years?

12   General Berger: 20 years ago, I do not know the

13   capacity, how many battalions were trained in cold weather.

14   I know it is a critical training requirement for the Marine

15   Corps, as is operating in the jungle, and it is not

16   transferable. It is a skill that if you do not practice it,

17   it will atrophy fast.

18   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Sullivan.

19   Senator Kaine?

20   Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21   And thanks to the witnesses.

22   I just returned with eight other Senators from a CODEL

23   led by Senator Leahy to Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska,

24   Korea, Vietnam, Guam, and INDOPACOM in Hawaii. And I just

25   want to say it was an amazing visit, a lot of takeaway, some

1   for this committee, some for Foreign Relations, strong,

2   passionate advocacy for U.S. ratification of the Law of the

3   Sea Treaty because of opportunities that we are missing in

4   the Arctic and also a need to challenge Chinese island

5   building in the East Sea off the east coast of Vietnam, a

6   lot of discussion about aircraft carriers. In Vietnam, we

7   are advocating for another aircraft carrier visit. There

8   has been one before in Danang harbor.

9   And so I know Senator Cotton asked some questions about

10   the Truman decision but, Admiral Moran, I just kind of want

11   to underline those. When we have strategic discussions

12   either in this setting or classified, we are often being

13   told that especially in the INDOPACOM area that our carriers

14   are one of the most important parts of our arsenal. And so

15   when we have that briefing on the strategic side and then we

16   see a budget that proposes to start to move toward not

17   refueling the Truman and mothballing it at sort of its half-

18   life, I think there is a lot of questions on both sides of

19   aisle in the committee. It is kind of a head scratcher for

20   us. So I suspect that we will be discussing that pretty

21   heavily as a committee this month when we work on the NDAA.

22   I wanted to ask you about a question that you and I

23   talked about briefly yesterday. There have been a series of

24   reports recently, one following the NATO Trident Juncture

25   exercise in November 2018 in the Baltics and then one more

1   recently that Russia is now using cyber attacks to go after

2   the GPS systems of our own military assets but also

3   commercial shipping. There were attempted cyber attacks

4   during the Trident Juncture exercise in Norway and in the

5   Baltics and Finland, the areas there, but there has been a

6   more recent report in March of a fairly systematic analysis

7   of Russian cyber attacks on GPS systems.

8   I know the after-action report on the Fitzgerald and

9   McCain collisions concluded that there was no cyber attack

10   on the systems of those ships that led to those collisions.

11   Were you able to rule out whether there had been any cyber

12   attack on the GPS systems on the commercial vessels that the

13   Fitzgerald and McCain collided with?

14   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. I have a classified response

15   for you that I will provide to you and your staff.

16   But in general, we looked at the functionality of the

17   commercial GPS system in the Pacific at the time of the two

18   collisions, which would have affected both the commercial

19   vessels and the United States Navy, and that did not occur.

20   I cannot confirm for you whether there was hacking onboard

21   the commercial vessels. That is not within our purview to

22   investigate.

23   Senator Kaine: Right.

24   Admiral Moran: But based on the tracks and based on

25   the investigation, we do not see evidence of that.

1   Senator Kaine: Let me ask, without going into details

2   about what you are doing, knowing that Russia is engaged in

3   cyber attacks on GPS systems of ships, are you comfortable

4   that the Navy and our military more generally is taking the

5   steps that we need to do to protect ourselves and also to

6   offer information to commercial vessels to protect

7   themselves against these kinds of cyber attacks which can

8   have very dangerous consequences?

9   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. I am comfortable. But to

10   the premise of your question here, the Russians are bad

11   actors in this area and they are coming after us in every

12   conceivable way to make it more challenging, more difficult

13   at sea and in other places. GPS is one method. But I am

14   comfortable we are technically answering the mail on this

15   system.

16   Senator Kaine: I appreciate that. And it may be in a

17   classified setting, we will want to dig in further to

18   exactly how we are countering this threat.

19   I appreciate both of you here together. I think as we

20   are doing an assessment of force structure and how to get to

21   a 355-ship Navy and we are looking at manned and unmanned

22   and surface and sub and amphib and destroyers and carriers

23   and all the platforms, I just want to make sure that the

24   Navy and the Marines are completely on the same song sheet.

25   When the plan is developed and when we are asked to fund

1   that, I definitely want you two to be exactly in the same

2   position, feeling that the plan is as it should be.

3   General Berger, I have a question or two for you. I

4   read an article recently that I was very interested in

5   written by a major, Major Spader, in a publication that I

6   was not familiar with before, but it was just an interesting

7   article. The publication is called "War on the Rocks," and

8   the article -- and I am sure you are familiar with it --

9   "sir, who am I, an open letter to the incoming Commandant of

10   the Marine Corps." I do not want to summarize it because

11   there are a lot of good points in there. But I think maybe

12   a main point is the Marines are our Swiss Army knife, they

13   do everything. But sometimes trying to be everything to

14   everybody is a real challenge. And so marines have to be

15   first to fight, and you have to be flexible in dealing with

16   the challenges. We focused on terrorism. Now it is great

17   power competition. But the bombing in Sri Lanka shows that

18   ISIS is -- if they are not holding a caliphate, they are

19   nevertheless still active all over the globe.

20   How do you approach that question of not wanting to

21   just be everything to everybody as a nominee to be

22   Commandant?

23   General Berger: It was a fascinating article. There

24   are more venues now for creative people to write, and they

25   are all good. I think they ask questions that were asked

1   internally, but now there is a means for them to ask out

2   loud.

3   The basics of it for me, Senator, to answer your

4   question, we know what our pacing threat is. That does not

5   mean necessarily we are arming up to go after them or them

6   after us. But that is the bar we must measure ourselves

7   against. All other missions are not subsets of that, but if

8   we have the force that matches up against a peer adversary

9   and maintains a margin of overmatch so that it is not a fair

10   fight, like General Dunford says, as long as we are there,

11   we can adapt that force to do any other mission we are

12   assigned. But the opposite is not true.

13   Senator Kaine: Thank you.

14   Thanks, Mr. Chair.

15   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator.

16   Senator Perdue?

17   Senator Perdue: General, I appreciate your comment.

18   We never want to send our kids into a fair fight, and you

19   have said that repeatedly in here.

20   27 March 1794, this Congress passed the Naval Act of

21   1794, and it authorized six ships to be built, the first six

22   ships in our history. They happened to be frigates, and

23   that was a very controversial decision, as I understand, at

24   that time.

25   Today, I would like to talk about two things real

1   quick: the need and then our ability to fund it. Those six

2   ships cost us $688,000. Today we are in a different game.

3   I would like to talk about first the buildup that China

4   has and how we can have that overmatch, General, both in the

5   Marines and in the Navy, Admiral, when in 30 years, we are

6   seeing that they are going to have about 100 more ships in

7   total.

8   Professor Andrew Erickson of the Naval War College has

9   actually said that this estimate is that they will be

10   quantitatively larger and qualitatively on par with us by

11   2030. Do you both agree with that statement? And if so,

12   how do you plan to deal with the fact that they are able to

13   bring ships quicker and cheaper to bear than we are in the

14   procurement process? They are not limited by the funding

15   things that I want to get to in a second. So if you will

16   address that, and I would like to hear your response from

17   both, if you do not mind. Admiral?

18   Admiral Moran: Senator, great question. I think it is

19   pretty clear to all of us that our military advantage over

20   the last 17 years in this great power competition against

21   high-end adversaries like China -- potential adversaries

22   like China -- our advantage has eroded in many different

23   ways, both in terms of quantity and in terms of

24   modernization. The quality of our force that is modernized,

25   trained, manned, and equipped the way we are on a path to do

1   right now I would take anywhere anytime against anyone who

2   wants to take us on. Together, not just the Navy and Marine

3   Corps team, but the joint force and the Air Force and the

4   Army -- it is incredibly powerful in this great power

5   competition. So we have to maintain pace on modernizing the

6   fleet with capabilities that can counter the capabilities

7   that are being generated by China --

8   Senator Perdue: And you are confident then by 2030

9   with the NDS strategy right now, 355 ships, that we can do

10   that with a 100 deficit to China's capability.

11   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir, I do.

12   Senator Perdue: Thank you.

13   General?

14   General Berger: Sir, the technological part of it --

15   there is obviously an unclassified and a classified portion

16   to that answer.

17   And I mentioned it before, so I will not cover it

18   again, the importance of realistic training and ability of

19   the Navy-Marine Corps team to operate together and as a

20   joint force. No one can compete with us right now on that

21   level. Now, they are going to work hard to get to us, but

22   right now, we can operate in a way that they cannot. But we

23   should not take for granted and we should not sit on our

24   laurels either.

25   The middle ground, of course, between us is partners

1   and allies, which you did not mention, but we have to work

2   hard to make sure we are the best partner, the best ally

3   every single day every week. So it is partly a function of

4   system versus system, numbers versus numbers, but there is

5   another aspect to it in terms of who can help a region

6   maintain a security framework that exists that is so

7   successful. Right now, it is the U.S. We have to work hard

8   every day to ensure that the partners and allies in Admiral

9   Davidson's case in INDOPACOM and the other combatant areas,

10   that no matter how far another country advances, that that

11   collective framework is strong enough to deter any bad

12   actors.

13   Senator Perdue: Yes, sir.

14   I wish we had more time. But on the funding side of

15   this, I want to address this. Senator Wicker brought it up,

16   but I want to highlight it again and get your response to

17   just two quick questions, if you do not mind.

18   First, Admiral, in terms of procurement, we actually

19   have some flexibility, you have some flexibility to go

20   multiyear. When it comes to O&M, you do not. Would you

21   agree to go through a pilot program that would allow some

22   flexibility with regard to operation and maintenance

23   funding?

24   Admiral Moran: Senator, I would be delighted to have a

25   pilot that we could exercise that concept against because I

1   think it would send a very strong message to industry

2   partners that we are going to commit to them at a higher

3   level than we can do under the current --

4   Senator Perdue: Probably save some money too. Would

5   you agree?

6   Admiral Moran: No question.

7   Senator Perdue: In the last 45 years since 1974 when

8   the Budget Act was put in place under which we fund our

9   government today, including our military, we have used a

10   continuing resolution 187 times. I would love for both of

11   you -- and I have asked every person in uniform that comes

12   before this committee and the Budget Committee -- to help us

13   understand, because I am not sure that we do, how

14   detrimental that really is. We have 34 working days. We

15   are staring down the barrel of a gun right now this year.

16   For the last 2 years, we have been able to avoid continuing

17   resolutions. I think that has played some significant role

18   in your ability to recover on the readiness front.

19   However, we could lose all of that momentum in my

20   opinion, having been around this now for 4 years. I believe

21   we could lose a lot of that momentum just this year if we

22   are not able to fund by September 30th and we end up doing a

23   CR. I have even heard people here talk politically about

24   using a CR through the 2020 election, which would be

25   November of next year.

1   Can you both help us understand how detrimental that

2   would be to what we are doing with readiness and also trying

3   to rebuild our Navy and Marine Corps?

4   Admiral Moran: Senator, we do not even like talking

5   about it. It is so devastating to our ability to plan and

6   program and have predictable outcomes in the future.

7   Senator Perdue: Would you both provide the committee

8   -- get your staff to provide the committee that would give

9   us a summary of how that would impact you this year? I know

10 the General has a very important helicopter coming this

11 year, ready for delivery, could be delayed if we have a CR

12 in September. Would you both commit to do that?

13   Admiral Moran: Absolutely.

14   General Berger: Yes, sir.

15   Senator Perdue: Thank you.

16   One last thing. General, dynamic force deployment --

17 and this is for you too, Admiral. We talked about it, and

18 you were gracious enough to allow me to visit the Truman the

19 other day, and I was so impressed just like I am every time

20 I see our uniformed men and women around the world. The

21 best -- and I mean the very best -- of what we produce in

22 America is under your command. And I thank you for that.

23 You have survived a pyramid of performance to get here

24 today. Your families deserve the credit.

25   The last question. The dynamic force deployment --

1   help me understand how that balances off with the

2   operational unpredictability, which is I think what

3   Secretary Mattis was talking about when he brought this up

4   to begin with. Can you help us understand how you plan to

5   balance those two?

6   General Berger: I will, sir, very quickly. Dynamic

7   force deployment for us as services, working with the

8   Chairman and the Secretary, is a way of becoming more

9   operationally unpredictable in the way that you describe.

10   In other words, we have a set pattern for when we are going

11   to deploy regular units, and intermixed in that is dynamic

12   force deployment, the intent of which is to keep potential

13   adversaries, competitors a little bit questioning, make us

14   less predictable operationally.

15   To get there, though, requires resources on our part.

16   It requires a degree of training because these are not

17   programmed into the regular deployment cycle very far in

18   advance. So we have to work very closely with the Chairman,

19   I think, and the Secretary to understand where they want to

20   do it and when and make sure we have the forces ready and

21   the resources available to do it.

22   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. I will just add that with

23   our first effort on dynamic force deployment with the Harry

24   S. Truman strike group that you got a bit of an insight to

25   when you visited there, we are relearning a lot of lessons

1   we used to do in the Cold War. That is how we employed the

2   force back then. And to relearn those lessons on logistics

3   and supply chain, all of those types of mechanisms -- they

4   have been in hibernation for 17 years, and now we are

5   bringing them back. So there is some learning here that is

6   going on that is very important. So the benefits of doing

7   this employment scheme are not only the unpredictability for

8   our adversaries, but the predictability on how we are going

9   to operate in that environment in the future.

10   Chairman Inhofe: Senator Hirono?

11   Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12   As part of my responsibility as a member of this

13 committee and to ensure the fitness of our nominees for

14 appointment to senior positions within the DOD, I ask the

15 following two questions of, in fact, all nominees before any

16 of the five committees on which I sit. So I will ask both

17 of you.

18   Since you became a legal adult, have you ever made

19 unwanted requests for sexual favors or committed any verbal

20 or physical harassment or assault of a sexual nature?

21   Admiral Moran: No.

22   General Berger: No, ma'am.

23   Senator Hirono: Have you ever faced discipline or

24 entered into a settlement related to this kind of conduct?

25   Admiral Moran: No, ma'am.

1   General Berger: No.

2   Senator Hirono: This is for Admiral Moran. The Navy

3   has committed to a significant plan to modernize our four

4   public shipyards, of which Pearl Harbor is one, as you well

5   know. I commend this action as a needed step to ensure our

6   shipyards can accomplish the maintenance and support that

7   our fleets need to accomplish their mission.

8   So Admiral Moran, first your thoughts about the

9   modernization efforts and your commitment to the plan,

10 should you be confirmed.

11   Admiral Moran: I am fully committed to the plan,

12 Senator, and we have it funded in our current presidential

13 budget request and we will continue to fund that program

14 because it is vital to the foundation of our ability to

15 maintain the force in the future.

16   Senator Hirono: And as we talk about a 355-ship Navy,

17 we not only need to build new ships, but we better maintain

18 the ones that we already have. So our shipyards are very

19 critical to that.

20   I know that Senators Reed and King have talked to you

21 -- this is again for you, Admiral -- about the shipyard

22 tragedies, and I think you responded that the

23 recommendations were well underway to being enacted. There

24 are a number of recommendations. However, I have heard that

25 the staffing within the connect personnel in the Pacific

1   fleet was not to the levels that they were in the Atlantic

2   and other fleets, making deployments and readiness levels

3   more challenging in the Pacific fleet. So going forward,

4   how will the Navy ensure that ships and crews will be out

5   there with the best chance to succeed in terms of the level

6   of staffing, as well as having the right mix of sailors?

7   Admiral Moran: Senator, at the time of the mishaps,

8   you are correct, and that was brought out in the

9   comprehensive review and the strategic readiness review.

10 The manning levels in 7th fleet had dropped to a level that

11 was unsustainable. We are in a much better place today.

12 The FDNF ships in Japan are manned at a higher level than

13 any other place in the fleet. They are meeting all their

14 fit and fill requirements, which is the right sailor with

15 the right skill set and approaching the right level of

16 experience. We have taken a number of personnel policy

17 changes, to include extending the overseas tours for our

18 first-term sailors there. That is making a difference on

19 the waterfront, but we are a year and a half into this and

20 we are monitoring it every day. The three-star type

21 commander in San Diego looks at this every single day. So I

22 am confident we are on the right track and we will continue

23 to watch it. And we have a requirement to report to

24 Congress when things change up and down.

25   Senator Hirono: Thank you. And I think we have to

1   maintain that level of diligence because we cannot have any

2   more of the kind of tragedies that we have experienced.

3   The Pacific Missile Range Facility -- again, for you,

4   Admiral Moran -- continues to be an outstanding facility,

5   and it is the only range in the world that is capable of

6   tracking surface, subsurface, air, and space simultaneously.

7   And my hope is that the Navy continues to treat PMRF as a

8   priority.

9   How valuable is PMRF to the Navy and organizations such

10   as the Missile Defense Agency for testing, evaluation, and

11   readiness? And if confirmed, can I have your commitment

12   that you will continue to support PMRF and what it

13   represents?

14   Admiral Moran: Senator, I spent a lot of time on the

15   range out there off PMRF. To your point, it is a very

16   important range. It allows us to teach and train our crews

17   how to track submarines, how to track airborne threats, and

18   of course, Missile Defense Agency is also heavily invested

19   out there. It is a vital component of our national defense.

20   Senator Hirono: Thank you. With all of the aspects of

21   it.

22   There have been, of course, in the past some discussion

23   about operationalizing Aegis Ashore on PMRF, and that would

24   definitely, I would say, limit the capacity, if not to

25   totally eliminate the capacity of PMRF to provide the kind

1   of testing facilities that we currently have. You are

2   nodding your head yes.

3   Admiral Moran: What I am nodding my head is it is an

4   area that I have got to dig into, if confirmed. I will look

5   at it very aggressively to make sure that we are not

6   interrupting the training we get there with the capability

7   you described.

8   Senator Hirono: One more question for you. As you

9   probably know, I have been working with the Secretary of

10 Defense -- Secretary of the Navy rather and others, Admiral

11 Richardson in bringing the Navy ROTC to the University of

12 Hawaii because as we talk about the importance of

13 diversifying our military, Hawaii, as you know, has a very

14 diverse population. So if confirmed, will you agree to take

15 a good look at the opportunities that the University of

16 Hawaii and the Navy could capitalize on taking this step and

17 to work with me to effect that?

18   Admiral Moran: Senator, we have had this discussion.

19 I am absolutely willing to work with you. We are going to

20 need your help, though. It is very difficult for us to

21 close down ROTC units --

22   Senator Hirono: I was told that you do not need to

23 close down another existing ROTC in order to set up the one

24 at the University of Hawaii. So if that is your

25 understanding, please --

1   Admiral Moran: No. It is not that. It is just

2   limited resources, and we ought to disestablish the

3   underperforming ones and look for opportunities like you are

4   talking about in Hawaii.

5   Senator Hirono: Also, I think there was some money

6   previously to set up an ROTC program at the University of

7   Hawaii, and there are some issues relating to what actually

8   was provided. So I would like to, of course, work with you

9   to move that issue forward.

10   Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Hirono.

12   Senator Hawley?

13   Senator Hawley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14   Gentlemen, thank you for being here. Congratulations

15   again on your nominations and thank you for your exemplary

16   service.

17   I want to return to something that you said in response

18   to Senator King, which I think is extremely important, and

19   that is the increasing dependence of the joint force on an

20   increasingly narrow slice of the American population. I

21   think, Admiral, you mentioned that 84 percent of service men

22   and women currently come from legacy military families. It

23   also strikes me that regionally -- and you both talked about

24   the regional balance of recruitment -- we are increasingly

25   dependent on families, volunteers, recruits from the middle

1   West and the South.

2   This strikes me as a very serious concern because we

3   have talked on the committee all day today about the various

4   challenges that we face as a country and the various

5   challenges placed on the joint force, including the fatigue

6   that both of the services you will soon oversee have

7   experienced in the last 17 and 18 years, particularly yours,

8   General, due to the counterinsurgency threat and fight. And

9   those are being borne by an increasingly narrow slice,

10   again, of the American public. What are we going to do

11   about that?

12   I want to invite you to speak a little more broadly. I

13   think we sometimes talk a bit as if it is a military problem

14   and the military needs to do this, that, or the other. It

15   strikes me really as a society-wide problem. We have a

16   society that is increasingly disengaged and separate from

17   the mission that we ask you to perform every day. What

18   needs to change in order to reengage more and more of our

19   citizens in this crucial task of defending our country?

20   General Berger: I will start off first.

21   Some of the things that I have seen us do in the last 5

22   or 6 years I think are headed in the right direction. The

23   3rd Fleet puts together a force that sails out of San Diego

24   and Camp Pendleton and goes up to San Francisco, Seattle, a

25   couple of other places, and they spend a week there. And

1   this is a way I have found, because I was not familiar with

2   that, but going up there to see the marines who embarked on

3   the ship. A, they get good training because there is a Navy

4   and Marine Corps team. You are embarked. You are able to

5   operate. But, B, for a whole week, they flood the zone in

6   the community with marines and sailors, and there are no

7   filters in between them, there are no barriers. It begins

8   to break down that "I do not know what those military people

9   are all about" sort of thing you are focused on. I think

10   they are a step in the right direction.

11   Recruiting -- the Admiral knows every bit and probably

12   more than I do -- is a week in and week out battleground for

13   very highly qualified talent. I do not think that is going

14   to get any easier. We know what we need, and we need to

15   draw it from as many parts of society as we can get. But it

16   is getting harder and harder. I agree with you. We cannot

17   shrink into a portion of the country and that becomes our

18   base. That is a really bad place to head to.

19   Senator Hawley: Admiral, do you want to add anything

20   to that?

21   Admiral Moran: It is hard to top what General Berger

22   just talked about. Yes, sir.

23   Senator Hawley: Well, thank you for that, General.

24   And I think it is important to underscore that we cannot

25   continue to ask a narrowing slice of this country to fight

1   our nation's wars, to defend our nation's people. It is

2   just not sustainable to bear all of that burden, and I think

3   we as a society have to take a long, hard look at how we

4   have gotten to this place.

5   Let me shift to ask a few more specific questions about

6   the National Defense Strategy. Admiral, let me start with

7   you. We have talked about aircraft carriers quite a bit

8   here this morning. Let me ask you about aircraft carrier

9   lethality in the context of the NDS and in the context of

10   the Indo-Pacific, China in particular.

11   As you come soon to this position, what are your views

12   on what we should be doing, need to be doing about making

13   the carrier more lethal in the context of the China fight in

14   particular?

15   Admiral Moran: Senator, thanks for the question.

16   The combat lethality of the aircraft carrier extends

17   from the air wing. The carrier obviously is the airfield,

18   the platform, and a fantastic group of sailors that make it

19   all happen. But at the end of the day, it is the lethality

20   resident within the air wing and the combination of

21   different capabilities starting with the quarterback, which

22   is the E-2D that is a surveillance aircraft, targeting

23   aircraft, to the Growlers, which provide electromagnetic

24   warfare capabilities that are vital to the fight that we see

25   coming, and of course, with our Super Hornets at the fourth

1   gen plus level, as well as fifth gen F-35C's. That is a

2   pretty powerful combination. I feel very comfortable about

3   that.

4   Where we are trying to regain our superiority is in our

5   weapons that are carried by that air wing, longer range,

6   more networked, all of the things that will make us very

7   effective against a pretty tough adversary at the high end.

8   Senator Hawley: Thank you very much. Thank you for

9   that, Admiral.

10   General, let me ask you again in the context of the

11   NDS. We ask the Marine Corps to be the Swiss Army knife of

12   the joint force, in many ways to do so much in so many

13   areas. As we think about the peer pacing threat, as you put

14   it, in the Indo-Pacific with China, what do you think needs

15   to be done to see the Corps become more a part of the blunt

16   layer force in the Asian theater in particular?

17   General Berger: I would lift it up just a half a

18   degree, Senator, and really approach it from a naval force

19   rather than a Marine Corps view. This thinking on the Navy

20   and Marine Corps team is about maybe 2, 2 and a half, 3

21   years old. That contact to blunt force, that layer of

22   forward deployed naval forces is the best deterrent I know

23   of, and it is instantly convertible to an

24   offensive/defensive capability if you have to go there.

25   So what do we have to do? We have to practice the

1   concepts that are outlined in distributed maritime

2   operations. We have to develop the logistics to sustain a

3   more distributed force. We have to harden our networks so

4   that we can communicate within that force laterally. And

5   frankly, the last part is exercise what our doctrine has

6   always told us, which is empower subordinate commanders to

7   make decisions in lieu of other orders and let them go, in

8   other words, train that way all the time. Our doctrine says

9   we do that, but we cannot do enough training at the level

10   where you give broad guidance to subordinates, tell them

11   what you want to accomplish, and let them go. And then we

12   will talk about afterwards how you might have done it

13   differently.

14   Senator Hawley: Thank you, gentlemen.

15   Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16   Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator.

17   Senator Duckworth?

18   Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19   Admiral Moran, can you update the committee on the

20   state of our military's sealift, cargo, Ready Reserve, and

21   prepositioned fleet? I just feel like as I look at the

22   defense budget from the last few years, I am concerned about

23   what I see as an underinvestment in this critical

24   capability. And I just wonder if you share these concerns,

25   and does the U.S. have enough capacity, for example, and

1 capability to efficiently move our forces across the

2 Atlantic or the Pacific with those great distances to face a

3 potential adversary? And if confirmed, how would you

4 recommend correcting this serious decline in our

5 transportation fleet, if you agree with me?

6   Admiral Moran: Senator, it is a great question, and it

7 is one that has our attention as we have begun to update how

8 we are going to operate with distributed maritime

9 operations.

10   Under our current requirements, we have enough capacity

11 to meet our OPLAN requirements, but that capacity is very

12 old and we cannot keep riding those ships harder and harder.

13 So we are looking at ways to upgrade. It is a combination

14 of buying some used vessels that have a lot of life left on

15 them, as well as designing and building new sealift

16 capability.

17   So we are underway in a program called CHAMPS, and I

18 would be happy to come brief you on that. That is a design

19 of sealift capability that will answer a lot of different

20 aspects of how you replenish and resupply at sea. And that

21 combination of some of the authorities that this body has

22 authorized us to do in terms of buying used while we pursue

23 the new capacity is also important. So it is very much on

24 our minds as we look at this.

25   Senator Duckworth: Could you discuss the timeframe

1   that you are talking about both with buying used and

2   developing new? Because we look at great power competition.

3   Right? We are in it now. And the Chinese are out there

4   right now in the Pacific. And I do not think people

5   understand the great distances that we talk about in the

6   Pacific. So can you sort of go over some of the timeline of

7   what you are trying to do here?

8   Admiral Moran: We are trying to get an investment plan

9   put in place in this FYDP to be able to start delivering on

10   these things later, not long after this current fiscal year

11   defense plan. So the planning, the contracting, the design,

12   the build for the models that I talked about on the new side

13   will take a little while to ferret out and make sure we have

14   the requirements right. On the used side, we are looking

15   at, in this next budget cycle, ways to invest in buying

16   used, and we are working with Congress to make sure that

17   that is well understood because there are issues with buying

18   used especially from foreign vendors where the prices are

19   very reasonable that we are actively pursuing.

20   Senator Duckworth: Thank you. I would love that brief

21   if you have a chance to do that. Thank you.

22   General Berger, as my colleague, Senator Ernst,

23   mentioned about graduating the first integrated recruit

24   training company down in Parris Island -- the Marine Corps

25   did this. And I really agree that this was an important

1   progress in achieving a lethal force that is based solely on

2   demonstrated performance and not on personal characteristics

3   or religion or race or gender. I feel that a great nation

4   must embrace its citizens who are willing to put on the

5   uniform and defend their country.

6   So if confirmed to be Commandant, how would you succeed

7   where others have fallen short in transforming the culture

8   of the Marines to embrace a truly integrated fighting force?

9   Because you really came into the Marine Corps in the 1980s

10   and you have seen this change happening and the culture is

11   shifting, and you have seen us go from where people talked

12   about a front line -- you could hide. You know, you could

13   put the women back here and then they could do these support

14   jobs. There are no front lines anymore. So how are you

15   going to be able to succeed as Commandant to change the

16   culture overall of the Marine Corps as you move forward to

17   truly make this integrated force one that faces the modern

18   reality of you cannot fight without the women in your force?

19   General Berger: Thanks, Senator.

20   I think we are on our way, thanks partly to this

21   committee and Congress in emphasizing it and the service in

22   finding ways to open up occupational billet specialties in

23   units that women could not serve in 5 years ago. That

24   pressure from Congress is healthy, is good.

25   Today, there are almost 500 women who are in units that

1   they could not have been in 5 years ago, were not allowed to

2   and that will only grow. We have 200 marines who have

3   specialties that they could not have 5 years ago. That will

4   only grow.

5   I think all of us go into an organization and we want

6   to see role models. We want to see people sort of like us

7   be successful. I think the more of our units that

8   beforehand were male only, the more marines see females, as

9   that goes on, I think, to your point, at the end of the day

10   marines just care can you get the job done. This is the

11   standard and everybody is measured against that. And that

12   is the way it must be. I think the more they see marines in

13   infantry units and artillery units -- and they do not care,

14   like to your point, what gender, what race, where they came

15   from, what hometown. Can you carry the load, can you do the

16   job, that is all that matters.

17   Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

18   Shifting gears a little bit. As you know, forcible

19   entry amphibious operations have become daunting

20   propositions in today's anti-access and access denial

21   environment. In your opinion, in this era how must we

22   improve the Marine Corps programmatically and

23   organizationally to ensure that we can execute and oppose

24   amphibious landing against potential adversaries like China

25   and North Korea and Iran? Again, looking at where you are

1   going, I want to make sure you have that capability.

2   General Berger: Just quickly, ma'am. We are never

3   going to pick a symmetric fight. The commanders will find

4   ways so they have an advantage. In other words, we are not

5   going to do another Tarawa or another Iwo Jima. We are

6   going to find a way, if we are tasked to do so, to do a

7   forcible entry in a way that we have the advantage. We need

8   to fight distributed. We need connectors that we do not

9   have right now that will allow us to move the force from

10   amphibious ships to the shore, spread them out shore to

11   shore to the family of surface and aerial connectors. That

12   has got to change. That has got to grow.

13   And as far as the training, finding the training

14   environments, the realistic training environments, is really

15   tough, a place where there are littorals that represents a

16   spread-out area and where you can do high-end training that

17   the Navy and Marine Corps need to do. We are going to need

18   all the help from this committee we can in making sure that

19   those training areas are available to us to train in.

20   Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

21   Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22   Chairman Inhofe: Senator Tillis?

23   Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24   Gentlemen, thank you for being here and for your

25   service. Congratulations to you and your family for your

1   nominations.

2   General Berger, thank you for the time we spent in the

3   office. We covered a lot of the landscape there. So I just

4   want to go back and talk about one thing that we had

5   discussed in the office that has to do with actually two

6   aspects of Camp Lejeune. One is I think the consensus need

7   for the recovery from the hurricane damage that I believe is

8   somewhere in the $3 billion range, and then the other one

9   was family housing, which was damaged. But we had a problem

10   before the storm. The storm in some respects masked a

11   fundamental problem that we now know that we have with

12   military family housing across the country.

13   So, one, I would like to get, just again, your

14   assessment of the need for the storm recovery down at Camp

15   Lejeune and then, two, your personal commitment when you get

16   in there that we are going to continue to do the good work

17   that we started a few months ago when this problem became

18   obvious.

19   General Berger: For the storm recovery, Senator,

20   first, you are correct. The total bill -- I think the

21   Commandant has been clear -- is about $3.6 billion or $3.7

22   billion. We are using some reprogramming authorities that

23   we had been given this year to begin to pay what we can. We

24   will need supplemental funds to rebuild Camp Lejeune. Camp

25   Lejeune is directly tied to combat readiness. So if we

1   cannot rebuild the facilities and training areas that we

2   need and the family housing that has got to happen at Camp

3   Lejeune, there is a direct impact to readiness.

4   Senator Tillis: And Commandant Neller like a good

5   marine -- I asked him about the condition of some of these

6   buildings that we have marines operating in. He said that

7   it was sort of expeditionary conditions. They are

8   accustomed to it. That is fine when you are deployed. It

9   is not fine when you are on U.S. soil. So we have got to

10   make sure that we do everything we can to get them up to

11   sound operational shape and soon. And you have my

12   commitment to do everything I can on my side of the dais to

13   do that.

14   Admiral Moran, I had a question for you. It is deep in

15   the weeds. So I would not necessarily expect you to answer

16   the specific. But more generally, the Dare County bombing

17   range down in North Carolina. I served in the legislature

18   before I came up here, and one priority that I placed as

19   speaker of the house is we did not allow encroachment on our

20   bases. Anything that would make you think twice about

21   completing your training missions -- we made it very clear

22   as a matter of State policy that that was unacceptable.

23   Now I hear that there are some proposals for some wind

24   farms in and around the Dare County bombing range that could

25   potentially impact -- could -- I am not saying will, but

1   could potentially impact the training operations down there.

2   And what I have heard to this point -- I have got a call out

3   to Secretary Spencer because I would like to know fairly

4   quickly whether or not it would raise a concern because the

5   legislature is prepared to act if it is a real concern.

6   Obviously, we do not want to stand in the way where it makes

7   sense, but I definitely do not want anything standing in the

8   way when it does not let you all do your mission as safely

9   and as completely as possible.

10   So do I have your commitment -- if you have specific

11   knowledge now, I would like to hear it. Generally I think

12   encroachment is a concern in a number of areas across the

13   United States. Do I have your commitment to look into this

14   when you are confirmed? I am convinced both of you will be,

15   incidentally.

16   Admiral Moran: Senator, yes, you have my commitment.

17   Senator Tillis: Thank you very much.

18   And again, similar to the situation we have down at

19   Camp Lejeune on military housing, it is not just about Camp

20   Lejeune. That just happens to be in my back yard. But we

21   have got to make sure that with the service secretaries and

22   the leadership that we are keeping the foot on the pedal

23   because here is how I think this all plays out. A lot of

24   people will come up and blame it on the housing providers,

25   the private sector. I think they had a role to play, but I

1   also believe that the Department and Congress also had roles

2   to play. And we have got to look at this as not having that

3   guy fix his problem because I am okay and recognize what

4   state we were in when we went to private housing. And that

5   was not an acceptable state. We have got to fix it, and the

6   way we fix it is not only look at the other guy who has got

7   to fix his problems or her problems, but you all need to

8   look internally and you need to look at us and see actions

9   that we have taken that made it more difficult to make sure

10   these military families have adequate housing.

11   So I want both of your commitments on pursuing this

12   aggressively. I do not like operating in terms of months.

13   I want days and weeks to start showing positive progress and

14   get something in place over the next few months.

15   Admiral Moran: Yes, sir.

16   General Berger: Sir, you do.

17   Senator Tillis: Thank you all.

18   I came in late. I will have an opportunity to follow

19   up with you, Admiral.

20   And again, General Berger, thank you for being in my

21   office. Again, thank you for your service and take care of

22   our troops. Oh, and I should say our soldiers, sailors,

23   airmen, and marines. Thank you all for your service.

24   Chairman Inhofe: All right. Thank you, Senator

25   Tillis. I appreciate it.

1   And I appreciate the patience and the performance of

2   both of our witnesses. We look forward to serving with you

3   in the capacity. We thank your families for being here and

4   for their endurance also.

5   And we are adjourned.

6   [Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

Aegis 87:*23*
aerial 99:*11*
affect 21:*8*
Afghanistan 3:*23* 17:*18* 36:*19, 22* 37:*1*
after-action 74:*8*
Agency 87:*10, 18*
aggressively 63:*14* 65:*10* 88:*5* 103:*12*
agile 57:*18*
ago 42:*2, 23* 61:*4, 20* 72:*12* 97:*23* 98:*1, 3* 100:*17*
agree 5:*23* 6:*2* 28:*23* 36:*14* 42:*17* 44:*12* 47:*2* 63:*25* 67:*11, 17* 68:*2, 13* 71:*4* 78:*11* 80:*21* 81:*5* 88:*14* 91:*16* 95:*5* 96:*25*
agreed 31:*18*
agreement 35:*6*
ahead 14:*16* 31:*13* 64:*24*
Air 4:*9* 24:*17* 41:*16* 51:*2* 58:*23* 72:*23* 79:*3* 87:*6* 92:*17, 20* 93:*5*
airborne 87:*17*
aircraft 25:*7, 14, 15* 30:*12* 34:*3* 43:*15* 46:*25* 47:*5, 12* 51:*1, 2* 56:*20* 73:*6, 7* 92:*7, 8, 16, 22, 23*
airfield 47:*7* 92:*17*
airline 43:*14*
airlines 42:*6*
airmen 103:*23*
airplanes 42:*21*
aisle 73:*19*
al 37:*1*
alarming 6:*25*
Alaska 69:*4, 18* 71:*3, 8, 22* 72:*23*
allies 7:*3* 15:*14* 80:*1, 8*
all-male 60:*24*
allocated 41:*9*
allocation 57:*2*
allow 65:*21* 80:*21* 82:*18* 99:*9* 101:*19*
allowed 98:*1*

allows 51:*3* 87:*16*
alluded 32:*24*
alluding 37:*14*
ally 80:*2*
aloft 30:*12*
alongside 13:*14*
amazing 13:*1, 16* 72:*25*
America 7:*3* 55:*4, 8* 82:*22*
American 14:*12, 21* 19:*21* 45:*14* 47:*17, 24* 89:*20* 90:*10*
Americans 30:*8, 11* 56:*22, 23*
amounts 45:*12*
amphib 31:*19* 75:*22*
amphibious 31:*4, 11, 17, 19* 37:*16* 45:*7* 68:*21* 98:*19, 24* 99:*10*
ample 11:*11*
analysis 74:*6*
anchor 65:*22*
Andrew 78:*8*
angle 3:*5*
answer 24:*12, 24* 32:*1* 39:*7* 59:*5* 61:*9* 77:*3* 79:*16* 95:*19* 101:*15*
answered 5:*1, 1*
answering 66:*20* 75:*14*
anti 56:*25*
anti-access 98:*20*
anticipate 24:*13*
anticipated 24:*21*
anxious 50:*4*
anybody 17:*9* 50:*21* 53:*14*
anymore 97:*14*
anytime 79:*1*
appear 5:*23* 6:*11* 7:*14* 12:*5* 17:*5* 20:*5*
applicable 5:*4*
appointed 3:*25*
appointment 84:*14*
appreciate 2:*6* 4:*15* 29:*20* 32:*21* 53:*25* 56:*5* 60:*12* 66:*13* 75:*16, 19* 77:*17* 103:*25* 104:*1*
appreciated 48:*10*

approach 22:*21* 45:*23* 76:*20* 93:*18*
approaching 13:*13* 25:*11* 40:*2* 65:*6* 86:*15*
appropriate 67:*18, 25*
appropriated 30:*19*
appropriately 6:*24* 34:*6*
appropriation 50:*8*
April 1:*9*
Arctic 67:*2, 5, 13* 68:*20, 21, 23* 69:*5, 13* 71:*19* 73:*4*
area 3:*18* 60:*15* 73:*13* 75:*11* 88:*4* 99:*16*
areas 26:*22* 28:*15, 17, 21* 42:*25* 58:*2, 13* 60:*19* 61:*11, 11* 64:*3* 67:*4* 69:*6* 71:*12* 72:*7* 74:*5* 80:*9* 93:*13* 99:*19* 101:*1* 102:*12*
arena 40:*9*
Armed 1:*12*
arming 77:*5*
Army 4:*7, 7* 23:*9* 76:*12* 79:*4* 93:*11*
arsenal 73:*14*
article 68:*18* 70:*3* 76:*4, 7, 8, 23*
articulated 33:*25*
Artificial 60:*14*
artillery 31:*10* 98:*13*
Ashore 87:*23*
Asia 69:*13*
Asian 93:*16*
Asia-Pacific 69:*6*
asked 52:*14* 54:*2, 13* 61:*16* 73:*9* 75:*25* 76:*25* 81:*11* 101:*5*
asking 5:*1*
aspect 38:*19* 60:*1, 1* 80:*5*
aspects 9:*15* 26:*17* 58:*22* 87:*20* 95:*20*

100:*6*
assault 84:*20*
assembled 21:*14*
assessment 46:*6, 13, 16, 23* 50:*23* 75:*20* 100:*14*
asset 44:*7*
assets 45:*6, 11, 20* 46:*3* 50:*9* 56:*16, 19* 57:*3* 74:*2*
assigned 37:*9* 77:*12*
assistance 17:*14*
Assistant 25:*2*
assume 30:*12* 41:*2* 44:*9* 59:*17, 18*
assumed 6:*10*
assurances 54:*9*
asymmetric 58:*14*
Atlantic 86:*1* 95:*2*
atrophied 37:*21* 72:*11*
atrophy 71:*4* 72:*17*
attach 45:*17*
attack 35:*18* 40:*5* 45:*12* 48:*13, 19* 57:*1* 59:*2* 74:*9, 12*
attacks 74:*1, 3, 7* 75:*3, 7*
attempted 74:*3*
attention 24:*8* 67:*22* 95:*7*
audibly 5:*1*
authoritative 58:*11*
authorities 29:*19* 95:*21* 100:*22*
authority 43:*4, 6* 57:*12*
authorized 30:*19* 77:*21* 95:*22*
authorizing 25:*5*
authors 52:*3*
autonomy 63:*17* 64:*25*
avail 15:*17*
availabilities 49:*18*
available 47:*19* 83:*21* 99:*19*
avenues 43:*3*
aviation 23:*9* 40:*10* 42:*13* 51:*5*

aviator 42:*19*
aviators 43:*2*
avoid 10:*10* 54:*11* 81:*16*
award 35:*10*
aware 23:*14, 14* 61:*5* 64:*9*

< B >
back 7:*17* 13:*11* 14:*14* 18:*22* 21:*11* 27:*18* 33:*6, 7* 34:*25* 36:*25* 41:*25* 46:*16* 50:*8, 12* 58:*5* 69:*7* 84:*2, 5* 97:*13* 100:*4* 102:*20*
backed 36:*2*
backlog 49:*11*
bad 43:*15* 75:*10* 80:*11* 91:*18*
balance 50:*24* 51:*5* 83:*5* 89:*24*
balanced 37:*14*
balances 83:*1*
balancing 36:*18*
ball 24:*9*
ballistic 10:*7* 36:*1* 45:*18*
Baltics 73:*25* 74:*5*
bar 77:*6*
barrel 81:*15*
barriers 91:*7*
base 34:*4* 35:*22* 38:*21* 39:*1* 51:*9* 54:*20* 68:*22* 69:*9, 12, 15* 72:*23* 91:*18*
based 25:*1* 33:*11* 37:*15* 53:*6, 23* 61:*1* 74:*24, 24* 97:*1*
bases 28:*25* 38:*20* 54:*24* 101:*20*
basic 61:*2*
basically 50:*9*
basics 77:*3*
basis 6:*6* 37:*7* 54:*14*
battalions 71:*20* 72:*13*
battle 59:*16* 63:*8*
battleground 91:*12*
battles 19:*6*

44:*16*
BCA 33:*21* 34:7
bear 15:*9* 78:*13*
92:*2*
becoming 19:*8*
83:*8*
beginning 18:*24*
62:*9* 66:*8*
begins 60:*5* 91:7
begun 14:*2* 95:7
behalf 13:*25*
behavior 59:*23*
beliefs 14:*5*
believe 28:*9*
31:*16* 40:7
48:*17* 54:7
57:*24* 58:*14*
63:*1* 65:*10*
68:*11* 81:*20*
100:7 103:*1*
believed 40:*11*
benefit 38:*15*, *16*
40:*10* 41:*25*
benefits 62:*10*,
11 71:*16* 84:*6*
Benjamin 13:*9*
BERGER 1:*5*
2:*8* 3:*12*, *14*, *21*
4:2, *6*, *11*, *16* 5:7,
13, *18*, *22* 6:*1*, *9*,
14 7:*20* 9:*5*, *17*
10:*15* 11:*5*, *13*
14:*2* 16:*3* 17:*1*,
3 20:7 21:*1*
22:*23* 23:*19*
24:*4*, *23* 28:*6*, *22*,
23 29:*23*, *24*
30:*24* 31:*15*, *25*
32:*13* 33:*9*, *10*,
24 34:*12*, *22*
36:*17* 37:*6* 38:*1*,
18, *19* 41:*20*, *21*
42:*18* 43:*3*, *12*
44:*4*, *11*, *18*
53:*12* 55:*18*
57:*19* 58:*1* 59:*4*,
8, *9* 60:*21* 61:*3*
64:*15* 65:*3* 66:*2*
68:*4* 71:*15* 72:*1*,
12 76:*3*, *23*
79:*14* 82:*14*
83:*6* 84:*22* 85:*1*
90:*20* 91:*21*
93:*17* 96:*22*
97:*19* 99:*2*
100:*2*, *19* 103:*16*,
20
best 13:*10*
15:*10* 18:*10*, *11*,
11, *13* 32:*17*
33:*18* 43:*22*

53:*5* 60:*5*, *6*, *11*
80:*2*, *2* 82:*21*, *21*
86:*5* 93:*22*
bet 43:*17*
better 3:*6* 7:7, *8*,
10 19:*24* 24:*12*
28:*11* 42:*14*
48:*1* 85:*17*
86:*11*
big 31:*20* 32:*3*
40:*20* 56:*20*
bigger 41:*10*
biggest 18:*1*
28:*23* 71:*11*
bill 38:*22* 40:*20*
100:*20*
billet 97:*22*
billeted 61:*13*
billion 21:*19*, *24*
45:*14* 49:*3*
100:*8*, *21*, *22*
bit 7:*19* 30:*11*
31:*15* 39:*12*
43:*16* 45:*21*
53:*13* 57:*14*
60:*13* 67:*3*
68:*10* 83:*13*, *24*
90:*13* 91:*11*
92:7 98:*18*
Blackburn 1:*20*
blame 102:*24*
bloodlines 54:*22*
55:7
blue 51:*18*
Blumenthal 1:*21*
43:*25* 44:*1*, *12*
45:*2* 46:*18*, *21*
47:*13* 48:*3*, *4*
blunt 93:*15*, *21*
bodies 26:*23*
body 12:*17*
29:*19* 46:*17*
50:*14* 95:*21*
Boise 48:*16*
bombing 76:*17*
101:*16*, *24*
bonus 43:*4*
bonuses 42:*3*
43:*10*
book 53:*16*
border 35:*12*
borne 90:*9*
bottom 60:*13*, *15*
boys 17:*16*
branch 51:*14*
brand 23:*2*
break 91:*8*
bridge 41:*11*
brief 11:*11*
29:*16* 33:*10*

47:*9*, *13* 95:*18*
96:*20*
briefers 5:*15*
briefing 73:*15*
briefings 5:*20*
briefly 22:*4*
60:*21* 73:*23*
brigade 23:*8*
brigades 23:*10*
bring 15:*8*
46:*11*, *16* 51:7
58:*24* 65:*17*, *21*
78:*13*
bringing 47:*10*
64:*5* 84:*5* 88:*11*
broad 94:*10*
broadening 56:*6*
broader 26:*16*
broadly 90:*12*
brother 13:*12*
18:*2*
brought 22:*17*
26:*21* 48:*13*
52:*3* 80:*15* 83:*3*
86:*8*
Brown 27:*1*, *5*
buddy 59:*16*
budget 6:*24*
10:*5* 21:*19*, *24*
31:*3*, *4* 32:*10*
35:*3*, *6* 39:*14*, *23*
40:*17* 45:*13*
50:*2*, 7 62:7, *24*
73:*16* 81:*8*, *12*
85:*13* 94:*22*
96:*15*
build 14:*8*
39:*18* 85:*17*
96:*12*
Building 1:*16*
22:*9* 45:*23* 52:*4*
73:*5* 95:*15*
buildings 29:*4*, *5*
101:*6*
buildup 78:*3*
built 10:7 45:7
77:*21*
bulk 27:7
bunch 18:*2*
burden 92:*2*
burn 41:*11*
busiest 14:*19*
business 54:*17*
buying 95:*14*, *22*
96:*1*, *15*, *17*

< C >
caliphate 76:*18*
call 39:*8* 48:*11*
59:*6* 66:*20*
102:*2*

called 19:*22*
40:*2* 49:*2* 76:7
95:*17*
calling 13:*23*
27:*12*
calls 17:*14*
Camp 90:*24*
100:*6*, *14*, *24*, *24*
101:*2* 102:*19*, *19*
cancel 33:*14*
capabilities
22:*10*, *14* 52:7
58:*5*, *23* 63:*2*, *5*,
6 64:*20*, *21* 79:*6*,
6 92:*21*, *24*
capability 31:*12*,
17 32:*6* 46:*10*
51:*1*, 7 57:*25*
59:*20* 64:*13*
72:*5* 79:*10* 88:*6*
93:*24* 94:*24*
95:*1*, *16*, *19* 99:*1*
capable 57:*18*
63:*1* 87:*5*
capacities 3:*22*
capacity 14:*6*
35:*16*, *18* 36:*10*
49:*6* 58:*17*, *19*,
20 72:*5*, *13*
87:*24*, *25* 94:*25*
95:*10*, *11*, *23*
104:*3*
capital-intensive
34:*1*
capitalize 88:*16*
captain 54:*9*
captured 39:*25*
care 19:*23* 20:*1*
98:*10*, *13* 103:*21*
career 12:*17*, *24*
careers 53:*24*
careful 41:*9*
carefully 63:*9*
cargo 94:*20*
Carolina 13:*8*
29:*3* 101:*17*
carried 12:*20*
93:*5*
carrier 39:*16*
41:*2* 45:*6* 46:*25*
47:*5*, *12* 49:*13*,
17 51:*2*, *5* 73:7
92:*8*, *13*, *16*, *17*
carriers 36:*1*
39:*19* 45:*23*
49:*17* 56:*20*
73:*6*, *13* 75:*22*
92:7
carry 98:*15*
cars 63:*18*

case 27:*1* 43:*9*
80:*9*
cases 30:*23*
casting 64:*4*, *6*
casualty 17:*14*
catastrophic
33:*22*
catch 58:*16*
cautionary 27:*11*
center 58:*21*
59:*20*
certainly 34:7
38:*16* 40:*9*
48:*10* 53:*20*
60:*18*
certainty 35:*3*
cetera 64:*25*
CH-53 24:*18*, *22*
chain 54:*10* 84:*3*
Chair 3:*3*, *9*
34:*19* 57:*9*
72:*20* 77:*14*
chairman 1:*17*
2:*3* 3:*6* 4:*20*
5:*8*, *14*, *19*, *23*
6:*2*, *10*, *15* 9:*3*
11:*8*, *9* 12:*3*
15:*10*, *17* 16:*1*
17:*3* 21:*1* 22:*17*
23:*6* 24:*3*, *12*
25:*16*, *25* 30:*14*,
16 32:*24* 34:*20*,
21 36:*17* 39:*4*
43:*24* 44:*1* 48:*4*,
6 52:*18*, *19*, *21*,
23 53:*2* 57:*6*, 7
61:*25* 62:*2*
66:*14*, *16*, *21*
70:*2* 72:*3*, *18*
77:*15* 83:*8*, *18*
84:*10*, *11* 89:*10*,
11, *13* 94:*15*, *16*,
18 99:*21*, *22*, *23*
103:*24*
chairman's 29:*10*
challenge 10:*6*, *9*
36:*18* 40:*6*
48:*24* 73:*4*
76:*14*
challenged 10:*4*
38:*11*
challenges 7:*9*
10:*3*, *19* 14:*15*
28:*24* 37:*2*, *24*
44:*16* 47:*4*
51:*11*, *15* 65:*1*
70:*5* 76:*16* 90:*4*,
5
challenging
18:*20* 60:7

75:*12* 86:*3*
CHAMPS 95:*17*
chance 3:*12*
35:*14* 86:*5*
96:*21*
change 22:*5, 6,*
19, 19 27:*15*
28:*18* 33:*7*
59:*23* 61:*13*
64:*23* 86:*24*
90:*18* 97:*10, 15*
99:*12*
changed 61:*13*
changes 27:*19*
37:*25* 51:*18*
54:*11* 86:*17*
changing 65:*5*
characteristics
97:*2*
cheaper 78:*13*
CHIEF 1:*4*
9:*13, 14, 24* 12:*2,*
6, 9 30:*3* 32:*17*
chiefs 4:*5* 9:*6*
15:*8* 29:*15* 53:*1,*
18
China 6:*20* 7:*1,*
25 22:*24* 36:*20*
37:*5* 56:*25*
59:*10* 66:*23*
71:*10* 78:*3, 21,*
22 79:*7* 92:*10,*
13 93:*14* 98:*24*
China's 79:*10*
Chinese 73:*4*
96:*3*
chooses 32:*7*
choosing 19:*13*
Chosin 69:*22*
citizen 56:*6*
citizenry 18:*10*
citizens 19:*24*
90:*19* 97:*4*
civilian 14:*14*
clarity 18:*25*
class 21:*22* 36:*9*
41:*2* 61:*19*
classic 53:*16*
classification
51:*24*
classified 47:*9,*
21 58:*4* 60:*1*
73:*12* 74:*14*
75:*17* 79:*15*
classmates 13:*22*
clean 19:*18*
clear 58:*12*
62:*10* 78:*19*
100:*21* 101:*21*
clearly 40:*11*

climate 28:*18*
29:*6* 37:*25* 38:*6*
clime 69:*22*
close 24:*7* 65:*20*
88:*21, 23*
closely 14:*9*
25:*14, 21* 39:*2*
59:*11* 71:*16*
83:*18*
CNO 4:*17* 7:*4*
32:*15, 18* 47:*6*
coaches 13:*18*
coast 28:*25*
49:*18, 20* 73:*5*
cobwebs 67:*22*
code 11:*3*
CODEL 72:*22*
cold 69:*21* 70:*1,*
4 71:*5, 12, 20*
72:*10, 13* 84:*1*
colleague 96:*22*
colleagues 3:*4*
45:*24*
collective 80:*11*
College 78:*8*
collided 74:*13*
collisions 26:*2,*
14, 18, 21 74:*9,*
10, 18
Combat 4:*1*
9:*19, 20* 17:*14*
18:*16, 21, 23*
20:*2* 23:*8, 12*
36:*25* 40:*11*
64:*16* 71:*17*
92:*16* 100:*25*
combatant 21:*18*
80:*9*
combination
49:*8* 92:*20* 93:*2*
95:*13, 21*
combine 51:*6*
come 2:*3* 22:*5,*
8 36:*7* 42:*10*
47:*4* 49:*18*
54:*22* 55:*7* 58:*5*
69:*4, 18* 89:*22*
92:*11* 95:*18*
102:*24*
comes 19:*9*
31:*7* 49:*9* 59:*6*
80:*20* 81:*11*
comfortable
75:*3, 9, 14* 93:*2*
coming 36:*25*
51:*1* 56:*15*
75:*11* 82:*10*
92:*25*
Command 4:*1*
9:*19* 44:*5* 54:*10*
64:*16* 82:*22*

COMMANDANT
1:*7* 3:*13* 4:*3*
7:*4* 9:*20, 22*
10:*15* 17:*2, 6*
19:*19* 20:*4*
44:*10* 61:*15*
68:*12* 76:*9, 22*
97:*6, 15* 100:*21*
101:*4*
Commander
3:*24* 38:*21* 39:*1*
64:*15* 86:*21*
commanders
18:*15* 33:*11*
94:*6* 99:*3*
commanding
3:*25* 9:*19*
commend 56:*10*
85:*5*
comment 24:*21*
77:*17*
commercial
63:*18* 74:*3, 12,*
17, 18, 21 75:*6*
commissioned
26:*15*
commit 46:*15*
53:*4* 54:*14*
68:*25* 71:*7, 12,*
15, 23 72:*6* 81:*2*
82:*12*
commitment
11:*7* 37:*17*
53:*25* 68:*15*
69:*3* 85:*9* 87:*11*
100:*15* 101:*12*
102:*10, 13, 16*
commitments
59:*14* 103:*11*
committed 68:*17,*
24 84:*19* 85:*3,*
11
Committee 1:*12,*
15, 17, 18 4:*12,*
14, 18 5:*24* 6:*5,*
5 12:*4* 15:*18, 22*
17:*4* 18:*5* 19:*21*
20:*8* 25:*4* 31:*8*
32:*22* 35:*5*
47:*10* 53:*4*
56:*14* 66:*24*
67:*11* 68:*8, 16,*
25 70:*7* 71:*7, 14,*
16, 24 72:*7* 73:*1,*
19, 21 81:*12, 12*
82:*7, 8* 84:*13*
90:*3* 94:*19*
97:*21* 99:*18*
committees 84:*16*

Commonwealth
3:*16*
communicate
55:*23, 25* 58:*10*
94:*4*
communications
5:*10* 6:*4*
communities
28:*15* 55:*24*
community 91:*6*
company 61:*3, 5,*
6, 10, 10 96:*24*
compassion
13:*20*
compassionate
19:*13*
compelling 58:*12*
compete 58:*1*
79:*20*
competition 6:*18*
36:*19* 42:*5*
67:*21, 24* 76:*17*
78:*20* 79:*5* 96:*2*
competitors 7:*11*
10:*18* 83:*13*
complement 63:*7*
complete 19:*24*
21:*14* 27:*12*
46:*1*
completely 17:*12*
42:*17* 75:*24*
102:*9*
completing
101:*21*
complies 5:*9*
compliment
22:*23*
compliments
35:*20*
comply 32:*8*
complying 28:*2*
component 51:*3*
87:*19*
compounded
10:*6*
comprehensive
26:*13* 86:*9*
conceivable
75:*12*
concept 21:*9*
22:*6* 65:*11, 24*
66:*5, 8* 80:*25*
concepts 62:*25*
65:*7, 9* 94:*1*
concern 45:*9*
55:*3* 90:*2* 102:*4,*
5, 12
concerned 7:*12,*
22 10:*24* 21:*7*
25:*18* 69:*24*

94:*22*
concerning 48:*11*
concerns 34:*25*
94:*24*
concluded 60:*23*
74:*9*
concurrently
18:*24*
condition 101:*5*
conditions 101:*7*
conduct 39:*15*
69:*25* 84:*24*
confidence 12:*7*
54:*10*
confident 11:*6*
15:*1* 25:*7, 12*
37:*18, 20* 79:*8*
86:*22*
confirm 74:*20*
confirmation
6:*12* 9:*5*
confirmed 5:*23*
9:*24* 10:*8, 15*
14:*9* 15:*3* 19:*19*
29:*20* 32:*17*
46:*17* 57:*16, 20*
60:*25* 69:*1, 4*
72:*1* 85:*10*
87:*11* 88:*4, 14*
95:*3* 97:*6*
102:*14*
conflict 19:*14*
conflicts 5:*5*
congested 63:*11*
congratulations
34:*23* 89:*14*
99:*25*
Congress 15:*18*
23:*24* 25:*5*
30:*18* 35:*5*
39:*24* 40:*24*
41:*1* 42:*23* 43:*6*
77:*20* 86:*24*
96:*16* 97:*21, 24*
103:*1*
congressional
5:*15*
connect 85:*25*
connection 56:*9*
connectors 99:*8,*
11
CONOPS 59:*4*
consensus 100:*6*
consequences
75:*8*
CONSIDER 1:*1*
consideration
7:*18*
constantly 59:*19*
constituted 6:*5*

Constitution 14:*24*
constrained 10:*20* 39:*23*
constraints 62:*14*, *15*
construction 29:*1*, *2*, *5*, *8* 30:*21*, *23* 38:*1*, *2*
consult 6:*5*
contact 32:*6* 93:*21*
contains 10:*1*
contested 66:*6*
context 92:*9*, *9*, *13* 93:*10*
continually 15:*1*
continue 9:*9* 12:*10* 15:*6* 20:*3* 25:*6* 28:*4* 36:*25* 38:*12* 41:*2* 44:*9* 50:*5* 57:*17* 58:*15* 62:*4* 64:*12* 67:*25* 85:*13* 86:*22* 87:*12* 91:*25* 100:*16*
continued 42:*24*
continues 26:*9* 55:*5* 87:*4*, *7*
continuing 14:*8* 33:*1*, *4*, *11*, *15*, *17* 37:*3* 71:*13* 81:*10*, *16*
contracting 96:*11*
contractor 22:*19*
contractors 51:*16*
contracts 34:*2*
contributed 26:*18*
control 24:*8*
controversial 77:*23*
conventional 7:*2*
convertible 93:*23*
convinced 102:*14*
cooperate 5:*14*
coordinate 52:*15*
coordinated 52:*11*
copies 6:*3*
copy 51:*25*
core 10:*23* 14:*4* 37:*11*
CORPS 1:*7* 3:*14*, *20*, *24* 4:*1*, *3*, *7* 6:*23* 7:*20*, *23* 9:*19*, *21*, *23* 10:*16* 11:*1* 17:*2*,

6, *8* 18:*20*, *24* 19:*4*, *19* 24:*5*, *7* 25:*13* 28:*8*, *11* 32:*19* 34:*2* 39:*11* 41:*17*, *20* 42:*5* 43:*14*, *22* 44:*4*, *15* 51:*6* 60:*6*, *22* 61:*2*, *12*, *19* 64:*16*, *18* 65:*8*, *14*, *23* 66:*4* 67:*6*, *13* 69:*20*, *25* 71:*5*, *20*, *21* 72:*4*, *15* 79:*3*, *19* 82:*3* 91:*4* 93:*11*, *15*, *19*, *20* 96:*24* 97:*9*, *16* 98:*22* 99:*17*
Corps." 76:*10*
Corps' 32:*14* 70:*3* 72:*8*, *9*
Correct 31:*25* 34:*11* 41:*4* 44:*11* 60:*17* 86:*8* 100:*20*
correcting 95:*4*
corrosive 10:*25*
COs 27:*17*
cost 21:*18*, *23* 24:*20* 25:*16* 30:*7*, *8*, *12* 38:*14*, *16* 40:*13* 63:*23* 78:*2*
costly 45:*8*
costs 25:*17* 30:*10*
Cotton 1:*19* 39:*5*, *6* 40:*24* 41:*10*, *14* 43:*8*, *24* 45:*24* 73:*9*
Council 53:*8*
count 35:*7*
counter 79:*6*
countering 75:*18*
counterinsurgenc y 7:*21* 90:*8*
counterterrorism 37:*22*
countries 14:*18*
country 12:*11*, *15* 13:*23* 48:*8* 53:*24* 55:*5* 56:*7* 57:*1* 62:*16* 80:*10* 90:*4*, *19* 91:*17*, *25* 97:*5* 100:*12*
County 101:*16*, *24*
couple 14:*4* 24:*23* 35:*2* 46:*5* 48:*11* 49:*17*

50:*14* 62:*23* 63:*14* 90:*25*
course 8:*3* 12:*9* 49:*5* 50:*3* 79:*25* 87:*18*, *22* 89:*8* 92:*25*
cover 11:*11* 79:*17*
covered 21:*13* 59:*10* 100:*3*
CR 41:*6* 50:*16* 81:*23*, *24* 82:*11*
Cramer 1:*20*
creative 76:*24*
credit 12:*25* 34:*9* 82:*24*
crews 27:*18* 86:*4* 87:*16*
crisis 19:*8*, *14* 44:*20*
criteria 22:*20*
critical 9:*11* 29:*2* 30:*22* 42:*9* 59:*20* 63:*25* 72:*14* 85:*19* 94:*23*
criticism 51:*12*
CRs 34:*7*
crucial 90:*19*
crystal 24:*9*
cultural 26:*17* 97:*7*, *10*, *16*
culture 27:*16*
current 3:*25* 10:*3*, *19* 31:*19* 38:*9* 45:*13* 46:*7* 51:*11* 62:*20* 63:*6* 64:*15* 65:*23* 68:*11* 81:*3* 85:*12* 95:*10* 96:*10*
Currently 9:*18* 88:*1* 89:*22*
cuts 31:*1*
cyber 51:*9*, *12*, *15* 52:*6*, *8*, *15* 59:*16* 60:*14* 74:*1*, *3*, *7*, *9*, *11* 75:*3*, *7*
cybersecurity 58:*10*
cycle 83:*17* 96:*15*

< D >
D.C 1:*13*
dad 17:*25*
dais 101:*12*
damage 100:*7*
damaged 100:*9*

Danang 73:*8*
dangerous 75:*8*
dangers 45:*15*
Dare 101:*16*, *24*
dark 47:*24*
dates 35:*11*
daughter 13:*7*
daunting 10:*20* 98:*19*
Dave 14:*2*, *10*
DAVID 1:*5* 3:*12* 17:*1*
Davidson 26:*12* 47:*5* 68:*4*
Davidson's 80:*9*
day 13:*20* 14:*23* 48:*11* 50:*4* 56:*22* 59:*17* 63:*12*, *13* 80:*3*, *8* 82:*19* 86:*20*, *21* 90:*3*, *17* 92:*19* 98:*9*
days 81:*14* 103:*13*
deadlines 5:*9*
deadly 57:*1*
deal 21:*16* 32:*25* 33:*4* 47:*1* 64:*23* 66:*12* 78:*12*
dealing 76:*15*
decade 18:*21* 59:*12*
decades 66:*18*
decision 39:*20* 40:*22* 73:*10* 77:*23*
decisions 18:*16* 33:*12* 58:*11* 94:*7*
decisive 15:*12* 31:*3*, *7*
decisively 6:*19*
deck 32:*3*
decks 31:*20*
decline 41:*3*, *5* 95:*4*
dedication 9:*10*
deep 53:*6* 54:*3* 101:*14*
deeper 51:*24* 57:*15*
deepest 47:*24*
deeply 12:*11*
defeat 6:*19*
defend 14:*24* 92:*1* 97:*5*
defending 90:*19*
Defense 6:*16*, *24* 12:*8* 19:*4*, *9* 23:*16*, *20* 29:*15*

35:*9* 43:*16* 46:*9* 52:*12* 55:*5* 56:*1* 62:*9* 65:*24* 66:*21* 67:*1* 71:*9* 87:*10*, *18*, *19* 88:*10* 92:*6* 94:*22* 96:*11*
defensive 93:*24*
deficiencies 21:*20*
deficit 79:*10*
deficits 62:*16*
definitely 33:*25* 76:*1* 87:*24* 102:*7*
degree 83:*16* 93:*18*
delay 6:*6* 33:*13* 36:*14*
delayed 33:*14* 82:*11*
deliberate 30:*2* 37:*9*
deliberately 63:*14*
delighted 80:*24*
deliver 15:*12* 21:*13* 22:*2* 29:*22* 33:*4* 59:*2*
delivered 21:*19*, *22*, *23*
delivering 40:*19* 96:*9*
delivery 45:*19* 82:*11*
demand 11:*5* 46:*8*
demands 19:*14*, *17* 53:*25*
demonstrated 97:*2*
demonstrations 65:*17*
denial 6:*6* 98:*20*
Department 6:*22* 28:*10* 31:*18* 32:*20* 52:*12* 67:*1* 103:*1*
departments 52:*14*
dependence 89:*19*
dependent 89:*25*
deploy 15:*4* 83:*11*
deployed 14:*12* 17:*19* 23:*9* 32:*2* 37:*12* 93:*22* 101:*8*
deploying 34:*14*

deployment 13:6 17:13 37:15 71:3 82:16, 25 83:7, 12, 17, 23
deployments 3:22 17:10 86:2
Deputy 9:20
describe 57:23 83:9
described 22:16 35:1 88:7
describes 64:16
deserve 82:24
deserves 12:25
design 38:24 95:18 96:11
designing 95:15
Despite 67:5
destroyers 56:20 75:22
detail 7:16 47:19
details 75:1
deter 6:18 7:24 80:11
determines 21:14
deterrence 32:7
deterrent 32:4 93:22
detrimental 81:14 82:1
devastating 82:5
develop 15:4 94:2
developed 75:25
developing 28:14 44:7 45:17 47:21, 22, 23, 23 59:4 96:2
Development 4:1 9:19, 20 64:11, 16
devote 15:6 56:19
died 56:23
Diego 13:5 27:1 86:21 90:23
difference 43:10 86:18
different 3:4 36:8 55:11 58:6 59:2, 24 63:1 78:2, 22 92:21 95:19
differently 94:13
difficult 45:8 75:12 88:20 103:9
dig 75:17 88:4
diligence 87:1

direct 51:12 101:3
direction 28:2 29:14 63:22 90:22 91:10
directly 42:15 100:25
directs 6:16 35:10
Dirksen 1:16
disaster 35:3
discipline 84:23
discuss 21:6 95:25
discussed 100:5
discussing 73:20
discussion 32:19 50:19, 24 55:14 61:18 67:5 68:6 73:6 87:22 88:18
discussions 64:9 73:11
disengaged 90:16
disestablish 89:2
disincentive 43:1
disincentivizing 42:19
distances 95:2 96:5
distinguished 12:4, 16 17:4 69:21
distributed 40:2 65:15 66:9 94:1, 3 95:8 99:8
Dive 4:8 57:15
diverse 88:14
diversifying 88:13
diverted 35:11
dives 51:24
doable 24:10
dock 35:16, 17 48:17
docks 36:5, 8
doctrine 64:22 65:1, 3, 10, 12, 21 94:5, 8
documented 59:9
documents 6:3, 7 66:3, 9, 12
DOD 32:10 52:17 84:14
doing 25:22 36:24 41:18 46:23 49:7 55:10 56:2 63:1, 3 68:8 75:2, 20 81:22 82:2 84:6

92:12, 12
dollars 56:1
domain 52:8
Donna 17:7, 18, 21, 24 18:3
dozens 21:20
DPRI 68:5
drafted 35:9
drag 65:22
dramatic 24:20 64:24
draw 91:15
drive 27:15
dropped 86:10
drug 56:14
dry 35:16, 17 36:5, 8 48:17
Duckworth 1:22 94:17, 18 95:25 96:20 98:17 99:20
due 90:8
duly 6:4
Dunford 31:23 77:10
duties 6:11
duty 54:22, 24
Duty." 53:16
dynamic 29:14 82:16, 25 83:6, 11, 23

< E >
E-2D 92:22
earlier 41:6 49:12 60:22 62:6
early 22:10 27:4 49:18 59:18
earned 4:13
easier 91:14
East 18:22 37:18 49:20 73:5, 5
Echo 25:11 29:24
Echoes 24:19
effect 10:25 33:2 88:17
effecting 34:10
effective 22:9 27:7, 15, 15 28:3 32:4, 5 38:13, 25 63:6, 23 93:7
effectively 52:15 63:10
effectiveness 31:11
effects 36:4

efficiencies 49:4
efficiency 38:5
efficient 34:5
efficiently 95:1
effort 49:3 50:5 65:13 68:5 83:23
efforts 38:6, 8, 10 41:20 49:21 56:10 58:8 85:9
eight 21:18 72:22
either 32:11 73:12 79:24
election 81:24
electromagnetic 92:23
electronic 6:3
elevators 7:13 21:25
eliminate 87:25
Elmendorf 72:23
emanates 15:13
embarked 91:2, 4
embody 14:21
embrace 97:4, 8
embraces 62:10
emerging 57:15, 19, 21, 24 64:20, 21
emphasize 53:19
emphasized 66:25, 25
emphasizes 66:22
emphasizing 97:21
emphatic 32:21
employed 84:1
employment 84:7
empower 94:6
enable 39:9
enacted 31:14 85:23
encouraged 35:8
encouraging 49:5
encroachment 101:19 102:12
ends 15:12
endurance 104:4
energy 38:8, 9, 17, 22
engaged 75:2
engineers 47:2 64:7
enjoy 47:10
ensure 5:8 19:20, 21 32:10 80:8 84:13 85:5 86:4 98:23
ensuring 10:1

entered 61:20 84:24
entering 53:14, 15
enthusiasm 4:21
entire 12:24 26:13
entry 98:19 99:7
environment 66:6 84:9 98:21
environments 99:14, 14
epicenter 64:18
equally 47:16
equals 32:5
equipment 7:24 34:6 60:4, 9
equipped 6:24 18:11 78:25
era 53:17 98:21
Erickson 78:8
Ernst 1:19 57:8, 9 59:7 60:12, 21 61:22, 25 64:19 96:22
eroded 78:22
erosion 33:20
especially 4:12 28:15 34:13 40:9 42:18 43:11 63:12 73:13 96:18
essential 47:15
established 5:9
estimate 78:9
et 64:25
evacuation 44:22
evaluated 46:25
evaluation 87:10
everybody 28:2 76:14, 21 98:11
evidence 74:25
evolution 64:18
evolutionary 65:3
exactly 75:18 76:1
examined 63:13
example 11:3 18:14 21:21 27:23 32:3 39:10 45:16 48:16 54:8, 24 94:25
examples 27:25
excellent 16:1
excited 59:3
execute 43:6 49:24 98:23
exemplary 9:8,

frigates 56:*20* 77:*22*
frightening 46:*2*
front 18:*14* 22:*16* 23:*3, 22* 38:*8* 41:*21* 49:*14* 58:*21* 60:*7* 65:*18* 81:*18* 97:*12, 14*
frustrating 42:*12*
fulfill 37:*17*
full 17:*18* 18:*15*
fully 18:*8* 71:*24* 85:*11*
function 53:*2, 3* 64:*4* 80:*3*
functionality 74:*16*
Functions 52:*25*
fund 75:*25* 78:*1* 81:*8, 22* 85:*13*
fundamental 100:*11*
funded 50:*3* 85:*12*
funding 35:*11* 42:*24* 45:*14* 78:*14* 80:*14, 23*
funds 25:*5* 30:*20* 32:*11* 100:*24*
further 7:*10* 44:*8* 60:*19* 61:*1* 66:*10* 69:*14* 75:*17*
future 9:*22* 18:*25* 38:*4* 40:*13* 44:*13* 46:*7, 11, 15* 47:*9* 48:*22* 49:*1, 10* 50:*10* 58:*22, 23* 59:*4* 62:*8* 67:*24* 82:*6* 84:*9* 85:*15*
FYDP 40:*20* 96:*9*

< G >
game 78:*2*
GAO 26:*19*
gateway 69:*5, 13*
gears 98:*18*
gen 50:*20, 20, 22, 22, 23* 51:*3* 93:*1, 1*
gender 61:*1* 97:*3* 98:*14*
GENERAL 1:*5, 6* 2:*8* 3:*12, 14, 21, 25* 4:*2, 6, 11, 16* 5:*7, 13, 18, 22* 6:*1, 9, 14* 7:*20*

9:*5, 17, 19* 10:*15* 11:*4, 12* 14:*2* 16:*3* 17:*1, 2, 3* 18:*19, 25* 19:*5* 20:*7* 21:*1* 22:*23* 23:*13, 19* 24:*4, 23* 28:*6, 22, 23* 29:*9, 23, 24* 30:*24, 25* 31:*8, 15, 23, 25* 32:*13, 24* 33:*9, 10, 24* 34:*9, 9, 12, 22* 36:*17* 37:*6* 38:*1, 18, 19* 41:*19, 21* 42:*18* 43:*3, 12* 44:*4, 11, 12, 18* 53:*11, 12* 55:*16, 18* 57:*19* 58:*1* 59:*4, 8, 9* 60:*21* 61:*3* 64:*15* 65:*3* 66:*2, 17* 68:*2, 4, 12* 69:*17, 24* 71:*1, 15, 19* 72:*1, 2, 12* 74:*16* 76:*3, 23* 77:*10, 17* 78:*4* 79:*13, 14* 82:*10, 14, 16* 83:*6* 84:*22* 85:*1* 90:*8, 20* 91:*21, 23* 93:*10, 17* 96:*22* 97:*19* 99:*2* 100:*2, 19* 103:*16, 20*
generally 75:*4* 101:*16* 102:*11*
generated 79:*7*
genius 15:*13*
gentleman 12:*14*
gentlemen 9:*7* 30:*13* 39:*6* 43:*23* 48:*7* 52:*17* 57:*10, 14, 23* 61:*23* 62:*3* 66:*13* 89:*14* 94:*14* 99:*24*
Gerald 7:*13*
getting 27:*13* 35:*24* 36:*15* 56:*1* 91:*16*
Geurts 25:*2, 13* 30:*2* 31:*24*
Gillibrand 1:*21*
Give 24:*3* 27:*17* 29:*13* 42:*10* 60:*25* 62:*19* 82:*8* 94:*10*
given 17:*7* 29:*11* 62:*7, 13, 15* 64:*23* 100:*23*
gives 32:*6*

giving 34:*9*
glad 43:*8, 20*
glide 45:*16*
global 59:*14*
globe 15:*15* 58:*8* 76:*19*
go 10:*13* 19:*7, 22* 24:*15* 26:*9, 22* 27:*8, 25* 28:*4* 31:*13* 33:*5, 9* 34:*15, 16, 24* 37:*7, 18* 40:*17* 42:*6, 20* 43:*1* 47:*18* 49:*20* 50:*15* 52:*4* 58:*4* 59:*18, 21* 69:*7* 74:*1* 77:*5* 80:*19, 21* 93:*24* 94:*7, 11* 96:*6* 97:*11* 98:*5* 100:*4*
goal 6:*23* 19:*6* 23:*19* 24:*5* 57:*20*
goes 49:*4* 61:*6* 64:*11* 65:*6* 90:*24* 98:*9*
going 21:*4, 17* 22:*2* 24:*15, 17* 25:*17* 28:*3, 19* 29:*6* 30:*8* 31:*15* 33:*14* 34:*25* 36:*15, 15, 23* 37:*10* 38:*6, 8* 40:*7* 42:*6* 43:*13* 45:*4* 46:*12, 14* 48:*22* 49:*9, 21* 56:*11* 58:*24* 62:*15, 19, 21* 63:*19* 65:*2, 7, 20* 75:*1* 78:*6* 79:*21* 81:*2* 83:*10* 84:*6, 8* 86:*3* 88:*19* 90:*10* 91:*2, 13* 95:*8* 97:*15* 99:*1, 3, 5, 6, 17* 100:*16*
gold 38:*24*
good 6:*6* 30:*4* 40:*24, 25* 43:*8* 49:*15* 61:*22* 69:*10* 76:*11, 25* 88:*15* 91:*3* 97:*24* 100:*16* 101:*4*
gotten 92:*4*
governing 5:*5*
government 81:*9*
GPS 74:*2, 7, 12, 17* 75:*3, 13*
gracious 82:*18*
GRADE 1:*3*

12:*2*
graduate 4:*6*
graduated 61:*3, 20*
graduating 96:*23*
grandkids 13:*1*
grandsons 13:*9*
granted 56:*3* 79:*23*
grateful 12:*6* 13:*12* 18:*5* 19:*2*
gravity 59:*20*
great 6:*17* 13:*24* 17:*16* 30:*17* 45:*19* 61:*11* 64:*23* 66:*12, 19, 22* 67:*21* 76:*16* 78:*18, 20* 79:*4* 95:*2, 6* 96:*2, 5* 97:*3*
greater 20:*2* 25:*10, 10, 10* 28:*14* 32:*20* 40:*4* 56:*19* 58:*25*
ground 14:*17* 59:*15* 79:*25*
group 83:*24* 92:*18*
groups 37:*16* 45:*6, 7* 47:*1*
grow 14:*23* 98:*2, 4* 99:*12*
Growlers 92:*23*
Guam 72:*24*
guarantee 60:*16*
guidance 28:*12* 94:*10*
guided 18:*20*
guides 13:*20*
gun 81:*15*
guy 103:*3, 6*
guys 43:*16*

< H >
H.R 53:*15*
hacking 74:*20*
Haiti 3:*23*
half 33:*8* 59:*13* 65:*15* 73:*17* 86:*19* 93:*17, 20*
hand 19:*1*
happen 34:*13* 56:*11* 92:*19* 101:*2*
happened 23:*6* 24:*1* 77:*22*
happening 21:*15* 37:*4, 25* 63:*17* 97:*10*

happens 33:*19* 102:*20*
happier 42:*14*
happy 17:*13* 95:*18*
harassment 84:*20*
harbor 73:*8* 85:*4*
hard 19:*17* 23:*21* 33:*12* 60:*7* 79:*21* 80:*2, 7* 91:*21* 92:*3*
harden 59:*22* 94:*3*
harder 60:*10* 91:*16, 16* 95:*12, 12*
hardware 60:*1*
Harry 83:*23*
Hawaii 22:*25* 72:*24* 88:*12, 13, 16, 24* 89:*4, 7*
Hawley 1:*20* 89:*12, 13* 91:*19, 23* 93:*8* 94:*14*
head 33:*18* 73:*19* 88:*2, 3* 91:*18*
headed 29:*13* 51:*4* 90:*22*
health 30:*4*
healthy 97:*24*
hear 25:*16* 30:*17* 41:*17* 43:*8, 20* 61:*22* 78:*16* 101:*23* 102:*11*
heard 30:*24* 81:*23* 85:*24* 102:*2*
HEARING 1:*1* 2:*3* 9:*5* 14:*3* 52:*22* 56:*22* 104:*6*
hearings 5:*11*
heart 26:*8*
heartwarming 17:*24*
heaviest 25:*9*
heavily 73:*21* 87:*18*
Heinrich 1:*22*
helicopter 25:*9, 19* 82:*10*
helm 19:*1*
help 27:*16* 40:*12* 52:*3* 71:*3* 80:*5* 81:*12* 82:*1* 83:*1, 4* 88:*20*

99:*18*
helped 66:*4, 12*
helpful 29:*8*
32:*22*
hibernation 84:*4*
hide 97:*12*
high 24:*21*
31:*10* 42:*15*
43:*15* 44:*23*
58:*7* 93:*7*
high-end 78:*21*
99:*16*
higher 25:*18*
27:*22* 51:*24*
61:*11* 81:*2*
86:*12*
highest 19:*15*
highlight 80:*16*
highlighted 68:*4*
highly 19:*11*
45:*18* 47:*9*
91:*13*
highs 17:*13*
hinted 66:*5*
hire 34:*5*
Hirono 1:*21*
84:*10, 11, 23*
85:*2, 16* 86:*25*
87:*20* 88:*8, 22*
89:*5, 11*
history 56:*7*
69:*21* 77:*22*
hit 24:*6, 6*
hold 22:*11*
33:*18*
holding 76:*18*
home 3:*19*
14:*14* 59:*24*
homecomings
17:*13*
hometown 98:*15*
homework 53:*13*
Hon 1:*16* 2:*1*
3:*1* 9:*1*
honestly 17:*18*
honor 3:*11* 4:*16,*
22 12:*5* 13:*16,*
24 19:*18* 20:*2*
honored 17:*5*
hope 41:*11*
56:*24* 87:*7*
hopefully 57:*11*
horizon 41:*8*
Hornet 50:*25*
Hornets 92:*25*
horrendous 26:*2*
56:*21*
hostile 14:*18*
hour 30:*10*
hours 42:*11*
43:*19*

house 13:*11*
101:*19*
housing 100:*9,*
12 101:*2* 102:*19,*
24 103:*4, 10*
huge 39:*1* 42:*13*
human 18:*17*
humanly 19:*8*
humbling 12:*11*
18:*17*
hurricane 100:*7*
husband 13:*7*
hymn 69:*23*
hypersonic
45:*16* 64:*25*
hypersonics 45:*5,*
9, 14 58:*9* 60:*14*

< I >
i.e 28:*10*
idea 66:*10*
IG 26:*21*
II 67:*9*
ill 20:*1*
imagine 14:*19*
immediately
22:*8* 26:*25* 61:*9*
immense 45:*11*
immersed 17:*12*
impact 36:*15*
55:*14* 82:*9*
101:*3, 25* 102:*1*
impacting 62:*18*
implementation
51:*17*
implemented
27:*4, 10, 14* 28:*1*
50:*1*
implementing
10:*9* 50:*19*
importance 14:*7*
79:*18* 88:*12*
important 11:*1*
12:*14, 15* 28:*17*
29:*7* 35:*4, 17, 19*
36:*6* 49:*16, 19*
51:*20, 21* 53:*4,*
19 56:*2* 64:*12*
66:*20* 71:*22*
73:*14* 82:*10*
84:*6* 87:*16*
89:*18* 91:*24*
95:*23* 96:*25*
impress 14:*20*
impressed 30:*6*
51:*10* 82:*19*
impressive 36:*23*
improve 10:*9*
14:*23* 98:*22*
improvement
42:*9*

improvements
23:*18* 24:*20*
26:*24*
incentives 42:*4*
Inchon 69:*22*
incidentally
102:*15*
incidents 27:*20*
include 38:*13*
86:*17*
includes 45:*13*
including 3:*22*
5:*10* 6:*3* 17:*9*
81:*9* 90:*5*
incoming 76:*9*
increasing 71:*2*
89:*19*
increasingly
46:*2* 89:*20, 24*
90:*9, 16*
incredible 55:*8*
incredibly 17:*21*
51:*21* 79:*4*
inculcate 26:*6*
indicated 44:*6*
54:*4*
individual 27:*18*
individuals 12:*20*
Indo-Pacific
66:*23* 67:*13*
68:*1* 92:*10*
93:*14*
INDOPACOM
72:*24* 73:*13*
80:*9*
industrial 58:*19*
industry 34:*4*
81:*1*
infantry 98:*13*
information
47:*17* 58:*11*
70:*6* 75:*6*
informed 46:*7, 8,*
9, 10
Inhofe 1:*17, 18*
2:*1, 3* 3:*6* 4:*20*
5:*8, 14, 19, 23*
6:*2, 10, 15* 11:*9*
12:*3* 16:*1* 17:*3*
21:*1* 22:*17* 23:*6*
24:*3, 12* 25:*16*
30:*14* 34:*20*
36:*18* 39:*4*
43:*24* 48:*4*
52:*19, 23* 57:*7*
61:*25* 66:*14*
72:*18* 77:*15*
84:*10* 89:*11*
94:*16* 99:*22*
103:*24*

initial 21:*19*
41:*24* 60:*24*
initially 25:*17*
injured 20:*1*
injuries 61:*8*
INSERT 15:*22*
20:*8* 70:*7*
insight 83:*24*
installation 28:*11*
installations
28:*8* 38:*13*
instantly 93:*23*
Institute 70:*3*
institutional
64:*17*
instruction 61:*12*
integrated 96:*23*
97:*8, 17*
integrating 60:*23*
Integration 9:*21*
61:*2*
intellectual 64:*17*
intelligence 60:*15*
intend 57:*17*
intent 83:*12*
intercontinental
45:*18*
interdict 56:*17*
interest 5:*5* 54:*3*
interested 10:*12,*
21 71:*2* 76:*4*
interesting 76:*6*
interim 66:*3*
interject 31:*22*
intermixed 83:*11*
internally 77:*1*
103:*8*
interrupting 88:*6*
intricately 9:*15*
introduce 3:*12*
4:*19, 24*
introduced 62:*21*
introduction 2:*5,*
7 62:*17*
invest 45:*6* 49:*6*
96:*15*
invested 87:*18*
investigate 74:*22*
investigating
26:*23*
investigation
74:*25*
investigations
26:*4, 5, 20*
investing 45:*11*
investment 39:*1*
46:*18* 50:*25*
96:*8*
investments
40:*21* 46:*1*

47:*11*
invite 90:*12*
involved 9:*15*
45:*16*
involving 26:*2*
53:*8*
Iran 98:*25*
Iraq 3:*23* 17:*17*
36:*19, 22, 25*
ISIS 36:*25*
76:*18*
ISLAND 9:*2*
60:*24* 73:*4*
96:*24*
issue 35:*23*
41:*15* 48:*13*
58:*9* 89:*9*
issues 12:*16*
41:*16* 54:*19*
68:*24* 69:*1* 89:*7*
96:*17*
items 48:*11*
its 69:*25* 73:*17*
97:*4*
Iwo 99:*5*

< J >
JACK 9:*1*
James 1:*16* 2:*1*
January 27:*5*
50:*16* 61:*20*
Japan 86:*12*
jeopardy 33:*20*
Jessica 13:*7*
Jima 99:*5*
job 35:*21* 53:*4*
98:*10, 16*
jobs 56:*4* 97:*14*
John 12:*9* 13:*7*
26:*3*
join 17:*16* 44:*2*
joined 36:*21*
43:*14*
joining 69:*17*
joint 4:*4* 15:*8*
39:*22* 52:*25*
53:*18* 59:*1* 79:*3,*
20 89:*19* 90:*5*
93:*12*
Jones 1:*22*
36:*21*
Journal" 68:*18*
JPARC 71:*9*
judgment 15:*9*
Jump 4:*7*
Juncture 73:*24*
74:*4*
jungle 72:*15*

< K >

Kaine 1:*21* 2:*7, 8* 3:*1, 3, 8, 11* 4:*20* 52:*20, 21* 72:*19, 20* 74:*23* 75:*1, 16* 77:*13*
KC-135 24:*18*
KC-46 24:*18*
keep 11:*10* 19:*17* 30:*12* 36:*25* 42:*15* 83:*12* 95:*12*
keeping 13:*1* 102:*22*
kids 13:*1* 77:*18*
killing 56:*22*
Kilo 24:*22*
kind 23:*3* 47:*11* 62:*18* 67:*24* 69:*11* 71:*4, 16* 73:*10, 19* 84:*24* 87:*2, 25*
kindness 13:*19*
kinds 58:*23* 75:*7*
King 1:*21* 52:*22, 24* 53:*11, 13* 54:*16* 55:*16* 56:*5* 57:*5, 7* 85:*20* 89:*18*
knife 76:*12* 93:*11*
know 4:*8* 12:*19* 14:*3* 17:*9* 18:*8, 10* 23:*6* 24:*9, 14* 25:*16* 26:*11* 32:*4, 5, 14, 15* 33:*17* 35:*13, 25* 37:*19* 38:*19* 42:*5* 44:*25* 47:*22, 22, 23, 23* 50:*19* 52:*10* 54:*3, 13* 56:*17* 58:*17* 61:*16* 62:*7* 63:*4, 17, 21* 66:*11* 69:*15, 19, 20* 71:*9* 72:*12, 14* 73:*9* 74:*8* 77:*4* 82:*9* 85:*5, 20* 88:*9, 13* 91:*8, 14* 93:*22* 97:*12* 98:*18* 100:*11* 102:*3*
knowing 75:*2*
knowledge 18:*15* 47:*20* 102:*11*
knows 91:*11*
Korea 71:*10* 72:*24* 98:*25*
Kosovo 3:*23*
Krulak 19:*5*
Kuwait 3:*22*

< L >
labs 47:*2* 64:*7, 10*
lack 67:*22*
lady 12:*21*
lag 65:*10*
land 50:*4*
landing 98:*24*
landscape 100:*3*
lanes 14:*19*
Lanka 76:*17*
large 15:*18* 34:*2, 3* 58:*9* 62:*8* 68:*20*
largely 18:*23* 28:*17* 31:*1* 34:*10*
larger 32:*16* 45:*5* 78:*10*
large-scale 69:*25* 72:*10*
lasers 58:*9*
lastly 6:*10*
late 21:*20* 39:*17* 103:*18*
laterally 94:*4*
Laughter 3:*7, 10* 13:*3* 23:*5*
laurels 79:*24*
Law 73:*2*
laws 5:*4*
lay 51:*14*
laydown 67:*16*
layer 93:*16, 21*
layers 22:*13* 51:*22*
laying 51:*11*
Lead 7:*14* 14:*15* 15:*1* 20:*3* 21:*8, 18* 22:*6* 30:*22* 38:*24* 52:*10*
leaders 2:*4* 4:*22* 11:*2, 6* 18:*13* 25:*14* 59:*19* 60:*7*
leadership 19:*2* 30:*25* 35:*5* 102:*22*
Leahy 72:*23*
learn 26:*5*
learned 14:*4* 26:*7*
learning 84:*5*
led 18:*11* 72:*23* 74:*10*
left 60:*22* 67:*9* 95:*14*
legacy 13:*19*

89:*22*
legal 84:*18*
legislature 101:*17* 102:*5*
Lejeune 100:*6, 15, 24, 25* 101:*3* 102:*19, 20*
lengthen 41:*23*
lessons 7:*14* 26:*7* 83:*25* 84:*2*
lethal 19:*12* 92:*13* 97:*1*
lethality 33:*4* 63:*24* 92:*9, 16, 19*
letter 76:*9*
level 51:*24* 79:*21* 81:*3* 86:*5, 10, 12, 15* 87:*1* 93:*1* 94:*9*
levels 10:*2* 28:*24* 38:*9* 50:*16* 57:*11* 86:*1, 2, 10*
LHA 31:*6, 9* 32:*10, 12*
LHA-9 30:*19*
lie 14:*16*
lieu 94:*7*
LIEUTENANT 1:*5* 3:*12* 9:*4, 17* 14:*2* 17:*1* 43:*17* life 17:*23* 18:*1* 73:*18* 95:*14*
lifetime 18:*12*
lift 25:*9* 93:*17*
light 46:*2*
likewise 9:*17*
limit 87:*24*
limited 45:*8* 58:*19, 20* 78:*14* 89:*2*
Lincoln 13:*9*
line 60:*13, 16* 97:*12*
lines 97:*14*
list 12:*21* 28:*7, 8*
listed 53:*1*
little 7:*18* 30:*11* 39:*12* 43:*16* 45:*15, 21* 51:*24* 54:*6* 57:*14, 15* 59:*24* 60:*13* 67:*3* 68:*10* 83:*13* 90:*12* 96:*13* 98:*18*
littoral 66:*5*
littorals 99:*15*
live 3:*15* 10:*23* 14:*23* 19:*20*

lives 18:*17*
load 98:*15*
location 29:*4*
Lockheed 25:*3*
logistics 84:*2* 94:*2*
long 7:*6* 12:*16* 21:*10* 27:*25* 30:*22* 33:*17* 49:*19* 63:*10* 68:*20* 77:*10* 92:*3* 96:*10*
longer 42:*1* 93:*5*
long-term 48:*24*
look 8:*3* 14:*9* 15:*20* 19:*23* 20:*6* 25:*19* 26:*16* 27:*2* 28:*21* 29:*3, 4* 38:*21* 52:*7* 56:*24* 61:*17, 23* 62:*21* 63:*9* 67:*8, 15, 25* 68:*7, 13* 69:*4, 12* 71:*13* 72:*2* 88:*4, 15* 89:*3* 92:*3* 94:*21* 95:*24* 96:*2* 102:*13* 103:*2, 6, 8, 8* 104:*2*
looked 21:*10* 26:*13, 23* 27:*7* 35:*14* 67:*18* 68:*24* 74:*16*
looking 3:*5* 24:*20* 38:*2, 5* 40:*20* 63:*1* 66:*2* 67:*11* 68:*22* 71:*7, 21* 75:*21* 95:*13* 96:*14* 98:*25*
looks 58:*23* 86:*21*
lose 81:*19, 21*
losses 17:*14*
lost 12:*13* 26:*10* 50:*15* 69:*25*
lot 3:*15* 21:*6* 27:*24* 36:*2* 43:*9* 50:*25* 55:*11* 63:*19* 64:*10* 67:*7* 69:*14, 15* 70:*5* 72:*25* 73:*6, 18* 76:*11* 81:*21* 83:*25* 87:*14* 95:*14, 19* 100:*3* 102:*23*
loud 77:*2*
love 58:*5* 69:*7* 81:*10* 96:*20*
lower 40:*13*

61:*11*
lows 17:*14*
LPD 31:*5, 10, 20* 32:*10, 11*
LPD-31 30:*20*
LPDs 31:*20*
LSDs 31:*20*
Lugar 12:*15*
luxury 19:*13* 44:*24*

< M >
ma'am 37:*8* 60:*2* 61:*5* 84:*22, 25* 99:*2*
ma'am 38:*7, 17* 60:*20*
mail 75:*14*
main 76:*12*
maintain 19:*25* 24:*15* 34:*6* 35:*18* 36:*16* 48:*22, 25* 57:*21* 58:*13* 59:*25* 60:*8* 79:*5* 80:*6* 85:*15, 17* 87:*1*
maintainers 49:*6*
maintaining 10:*18* 14:*7*
maintains 77:*9*
maintenance 35:*24* 80:*22* 85:*6*
maintenances 49:*13*
major 30:*1* 76:*5, 5*
majority 47:*19*
making 10:*13* 43:*20, 21* 47:*11* 86:*2, 18* 92:*12* 99:*18*
male 98:*8*
man 12:*14* 40:*14*
management 28:*1*
Manchin 1:*22*
maneuverable 45:*19*
manned 6:*23* 63:*6, 7* 75:*21* 78:*25* 86:*12*
manner 6:*4* 67:*19*
manning 86:*10*
maps 23:*2* 46:*10*
March 74:*6* 77:*20*
margin 57:*21* 60:*8* 77:*9*

MARINE 1:7
3:14, 17, 19, 20,
21, 24 4:1, 3, 3, 6
6:23 7:20, 23
9:19, 21, 23
10:16 11:1 17:2,
6, 8 18:24 19:4,
19 24:5, 7 25:13
28:8, 11 31:17
32:14, 19 34:2
37:16 39:11
41:17, 20 42:5
43:14, 22 44:4,
15 51:6 60:6
61:2, 12, 19
64:16, 18 65:8,
14, 23 66:4, 4, 7
67:6, 13 69:20,
24 70:3 71:5, 20,
21 72:4, 7, 9, 14
76:10 79:2 82:3
91:4 93:11, 19,
20 96:24 97:9,
16 98:22 99:17
101:5
marines 11:4
17:17 19:5, 10,
15, 20, 22 23:11
31:2 65:18
71:25 75:24
76:12, 14 78:5
91:2, 6 97:8
98:2, 8, 10, 12
101:6 103:23
maritime 37:15
40:3 65:16 66:9
94:1 95:8
mark 72:5
married 17:9
MARSOC 44:5,
9
Martin 25:3
masked 100:10
Master 4:7
match 65:4
67:19
matches 77:8
material 30:22
mates 13:22
matter 27:21
80:10 101:22
matters 68:25
98:16
Mattis 83:3
MBAR 31:17
McCain 10:11
26:3 54:2 74:9,
13
McMaster's
53:15

mean 67:8 77:5
82:21
means 6:18
25:12 39:16
45:10 55:11
77:1
measure 61:6
77:6
measured 98:11
measurements
54:7
measures 56:11
mechanism 30:3
mechanisms
45:19 84:3
meet 10:2, 19
25:7 57:18, 20
95:11
meeting 72:5
86:13
meetings 44:6
Member 3:4
15:7 17:3 18:7
84:12
Members 1:18
12:4 17:4 18:6
43:11 47:10
53:3 64:9 66:19
memo 35:8
men 13:18
14:11, 17 18:7
35:4 36:24 55:7,
12 82:20 89:21
mention 80:1
mentioned 25:11
31:2 42:1 44:18
47:18 58:7
59:17 66:21
79:17 89:21
96:23
mentors 13:18
mentorship 19:2
merely 57:20
Merz 65:13
message 81:1
met 1:15 36:21
method 75:13
methodology
67:16
metrics 54:7, 14
MEU 70:4
middle 17:15
18:22 37:18
54:9 79:25
89:25
midlife 39:15
midst 46:5
Midway 69:14
Mike 13:12
MILCON 35:10
38:11

military 6:17
9:11 10:25 15:9
17:11 25:9 29:1
39:10 53:1, 6, 9
54:20, 20, 22, 23,
24, 25 55:6, 19
56:8 74:2 75:4
78:19 81:9
88:13 89:22
90:13, 14 91:8
100:12 102:19
103:10
military's 94:20
million 25:19, 20
30:19
mind 12:12
22:5, 8 62:22
78:17 80:17
mindful 41:7
minds 95:24
minimum 48:18
minute 33:8
51:10 60:22
mishaps 86:7
missed 12:17, 18
missile 10:7
36:1 45:16, 18
87:3, 10, 18
missiles 64:25
missing 73:3
mission 37:9, 11,
22 77:11 85:7
90:17 102:8
missions 77:7
101:21
mix 46:13
50:20 51:3 86:6
mobility 31:10
MOC 66:11
model 24:22
43:2
models 18:1
96:12 98:6
modern 97:17
modernization
7:1 40:18 78:24
85:9
modernize 7:5
18:24 40:8 85:3
modernized
59:11 78:24
modernizing
79:5
mom 17:25
moment 13:15
14:1
momentum
50:13 81:19, 21
money 31:13
40:15, 17, 25
41:1, 6, 8, 9, 19

43:9, 13, 17
50:11, 15 62:13
81:4 89:5
monitoring 86:20
monitors 39:1
month 13:6
42:11 43:19
60:22 73:21
months 25:2
100:17 103:12,
14
moral 11:3
MORAN 1:2
4:17 5:6, 12, 17,
21, 25 6:8, 13
7:12 9:4, 12, 24
10:12 11:4, 13
12:1, 3 13:4
15:21 16:2
17:21 21:3, 8
22:7 26:1, 8
27:21 28:6, 12,
13 29:16, 18
33:23, 24 34:11,
22 35:8, 20 38:7,
16 39:12, 25
41:5, 13 42:17
43:17, 18 45:3
46:4, 20, 24 48:1,
10 49:2 50:2, 13,
24 51:20 53:9,
10 54:1, 13 55:3
57:4, 16 58:2, 4
59:17 60:18
62:5, 23 64:1, 6
67:15, 20 68:15
69:2, 7 73:10
74:14, 24 75:9
78:18 79:11
80:24 81:6 82:4,
13 83:22 84:21,
25 85:2, 8, 11
86:7 87:4, 14
88:3, 18 89:1
91:21 92:15
94:19 95:6 96:8
101:14 102:16
103:15
morning 2:5
12:5 13:10
17:20 18:4 20:6
61:15 92:8
mothball 69:9
mothballing
73:17
mother 17:16
mountain 71:12
mountainous
72:10
move 31:13
35:6 40:16

63:13, 22 65:7, 8,
20 73:16 89:9
95:1 97:16 99:9
movement 24:14
moves 17:10
moving 24:22
48:17 63:21
65:15
multiple 40:5
51:22 59:2
multiyear 80:20
Museum 3:20

< N >
narrative 48:2
narrow 55:4
89:20 90:9
narrowing 54:19
91:25
nation 9:8 11:7
18:8 19:5, 14
39:7 43:16 72:3
97:3
nation's 2:4
6:16 10:3, 19
14:6, 23 15:19
19:9 59:5 92:1,
1
National 3:20
6:16 12:16 19:9
44:7 46:9 53:8
65:24 66:21
71:9 87:19 92:6
NATO 73:24
nature 19:12
84:20
NAVAL 1:4 7:5
9:13, 14, 24 12:2,
6, 9 14:6, 8, 10
15:5, 14 18:22
32:2 34:13
35:13 44:21
45:6, 11 46:2
57:18 64:8 65:8,
16 70:3 77:20
78:8 93:18, 22
navies 15:15
navigate 52:4
navigation 68:19
Navy 4:8 6:22,
23 9:15 10:4, 13
11:1 12:14, 18,
24, 25 13:5, 13
14:13, 22 21:13
24:7 25:2 26:1,
16 28:7, 8, 10
30:2 31:19
32:20 34:2
35:19 39:11, 23
41:3, 17 43:15,
22 45:22 48:22,

25 51:*10*, *13* 52:*10*, *12*, *16* 57:*17* 58:22 60:*6* 62:*10* 64:*4* 65:*8*, *14* 66:*3* 67:*7*, *12* 68:*12*, *16*, *22* 71:*2* 74:*19* 75:*4*, *21*, *24* 78:*5* 79:*2* 82:*3* 85:*2*, *16* 86:*4* 87:*7*, *9* 88:*10*, *11*, *16* 91:*3* 93:*19* 99:*17*

Navy's 10:*10* 62:*7*

Navy-Marine 79:*19*

NDAA 7:*18* 21:*11* 29:*11* 73:*21*

NDAAs 66:*24*

NDS 67:*5*, *19* 79:*9* 92:*9* 93:*11*

near 46:*6*

near-peer 6:*19* 10:*18* 44:*14*

necessarily 37:*10* 77:*5* 101:*15*

necessary 6:*19* 7:*24* 10:*2* 22:*12* 54:*11*

need 10:*6* 18:*8* 24:*1* 25:*15* 27:*12* 28:*3*, *13* 29:*3*, *4*, *19* 34:*4*, *5* 36:*13*, *16* 38:*3* 40:*7* 45:*25* 46:*14* 47:*16*, *25* 50:*10* 52:*15*, *16* 55:*1*, *5*, *8* 58:*15* 62:*24* 65:*25* 66:*11* 68:*3*, *13*, *19*, *23* 71:*11* 73:*4* 75:*5* 78:*1* 85:*7*, *17* 88:*20*, *22* 91:*14*, *14* 92:*12* 99:*7*, *8*, *17*, *17* 100:*6*, *14*, *24* 101:*2* 103:*7*, *8*

needed 10:*5* 26:*23* 27:*17*, *17* 30:*22* 40:*15*, *16*, *17* 48:*25* 85:*5*

needs 32:*19*, *20* 49:*25* 53:*24* 71:*24* 90:*14*, *18* 93:*14*

neither 59:*14*

Neller 18:*19* 30:*25* 34:*9* 44:*13* 68:*12* 69:*24* 71:*1*, *19* 72:*2* 101:*4*

Neller's 19:*1*

net 64:*4*, *6*

network 15:*14* 59:*24*

networked 93:*6*

networks 59:*21* 94:*3*

never 10:*25* 43:*13* 77:*18* 99:*2*

nevertheless 76:*19*

new 7:*7* 10:*17* 22:*9*, *9*, *13*, *14* 23:*2* 29:*1* 33:*15* 39:*21* 41:*2* 50:*23* 51:*1* 57:*18*, *20* 62:*20* 85:*17* 95:*15*, *23* 96:*2*, *12*

news 49:*15*

nice 43:*11*

night 17:*15*, *19*

nimble 44:*15*

nine 7:*12* 38:*21*

nodding 88:*2*, *3*

nominated 13:*24* 17:*6*

NOMINATIONS 1:*1* 9:*6* 34:*23* 89:*15* 100:*1*

nominee 3:*13* 12:*5* 76:*21*

nominees 12:*19* 30:*17* 84:*13*, *15*

noncombatant 44:*22*

non-deploying 34:*17*

normal 21:*5*

North 13:*8* 29:*3* 71:*10* 98:*25* 101:*17*

Northeast 54:*24*

Norway 71:*22* 74:*4*

note 27:*11*

notice 1:*15*

November 73:*25* 81:*25*

nuclear 7:*2* 35:*21* 48:*13*, *19* 49:*7*, *13*

number 43:*1* 45:*8* 68:*8*, *17*

85:*24* 86:*16* 102:*12*

numbers 41:*23* 80:*4*, *4*

nutshell 40:*3*

< O >

Obama 6:*25*

obligation 41:*24* 55:*22*, *24*

obligations 15:*7*

obvious 28:*17* 100:*18*

obviously 6:*20* 22:*1* 39:*15* 79:*15* 92:*17* 102:*6*

occupational 97:*22*

occur 74:*19*

occurred 26:*14*

ocean 56:*16* 63:*12*

offense 40:*4*

offensive 32:*8* 93:*24*

offer 48:*9* 75:*6*

Office 1:*16* 21:*9* 64:*7* 100:*3*, *5* 103:*21*

officer 3:*19*

offset 40:*21*

Oh 54:*13* 103:*22*

Okay 24:*12* 103:*3*

OKLAHOMA 2:*2*

old 93:*21* 95:*12*

OMB 31:*3*

onboard 74:*20*

once 19:*5* 39:*8* 48:*14* 52:*9*

ones 47:*24* 55:*21* 85:*18* 89:*3*

ongoing 68:*5*

open 76:*9* 97:*22*

OPENING 2:*1* 21:*2* 36:*17* 44:*18*

operate 44:*21* 45:*1* 51:*2* 63:*11*, *12* 65:*8* 79:*19*, *22* 84:*9* 91:*5* 95:*8*

operating 65:*23* 66:*5*, *7* 72:*15* 101:*6* 103:*12*

operation 50:*12* 80:*22*

operational 83:*2* 101:*11*

operationalizing 87:*23*

operationally 83:*9*, *14*

OPERATIONS 1:*4* 4:*5* 9:*13*, *14*, *25* 12:*2*, *6*, *9* 27:*3*, *7*, *15* 36:*19* 37:*3* 40:*3* 44:*5* 66:*6*, *7*, *9* 68:*19* 69:*21*, *25* 71:*6* 94:*2* 95:*9* 98:*19* 102:*1*

opinion 31:*23* 55:*19* 81:*20* 98:*21*

OPLAN 95:*11*

opportunities 14:*15* 71:*3*, *8*, *13*, *24* 73:*3* 88:*15* 89:*3*

opportunity 4:*18* 11:*11* 12:*10* 17:*5* 20:*5* 29:*12* 103:*18*

oppose 98:*23*

opposed 21:*5*

opposite 77:*12*

ops 65:*16* 70:*4*

Optimization 49:*3* 50:*3*

optimize 67:*12*

order 2:*3* 6:*22* 22:*9* 40:*5*, *15* 52:*15* 88:*23* 90:*18*

orders 94:*7*

ordnances 22:*2*

organization 98:*5*

organizationally 98:*23*

organizations 87:*9*

ought 89:*2*

outcome 6:*12*

outcomes 82:*6*

outlined 94:*1*

outstanding 9:*18* 30:*17* 59:*7* 87:*4*

Overall 37:*14* 97:*16*

overdoses 56:*23*

overmatch 57:*21* 58:*2* 59:*25* 77:*9* 78:*4*

overseas 86:*17*

oversee 90:*6*

oversight 23:*24* 25:*12*

overview 60:*25*

owe 48:*1*

< P >

P-8's 68:*23*

pace 58:*16* 65:*12* 79:*5*

Pacific 3:*24* 69:*14* 74:*17* 85:*25* 86:*3* 87:*3* 95:*2* 96:*4*, *6*

pacing 44:*25* 66:*23* 77:*4* 93:*13*

Palms 38:*21*

par 78:*10*

parents 3:*14* 13:*16*

parochial 31:*16*

Parris 60:*24* 96:*24*

part 32:*1*, *16* 33:*16* 38:*5*, *24* 42:*8* 43:*21* 49:*22* 56:*4*, *7* 58:*17* 61:*4* 63:*8* 64:*8* 66:*8* 68:*6* 69:*23* 79:*14* 83:*15* 84:*12* 93:*15* 94:*5*

participate 2:*7* 29:*12*, *21* 55:*9*

participated 7:*20*

participating 55:*4*

particular 14:*1* 39:*8* 67:*6* 92:*10*, *14* 93:*16*

particularly 62:*15* 90:*7*

partly 80:*3* 97:*20*

partner 59:*1* 80:*2*

partners 15:*15* 51:*6* 79:*25* 80:*8* 81:*2*

partnership 49:*8*

parts 13:*23* 63:*12* 73:*14* 91:*15*

passed 13:*19* 77:*20*

passionate 73:*2*

path 24:*2*, *10* 27:*9* 57:*17* 58:*18*, *19* 78:*25*

patience 104:*1*

Patricia 12:*22*	**pick** 63:*16* 99:*3*	87:*15* 98:*9, 14*	**prepared** 6:*18*	**problems** 8:*2*
patriot 12:*14*	**picking** 44:*24*	102:*2*	15:*21* 20:*7*	21:*25* 27:*24*
patriots 14:*20*	**pile** 33:*25*	**points** 76:*11*	102:*5*	47:*4* 103:*7, 7*
pattern 83:*10*	**pilot** 41:*15*	**policies** 71:*13*	**preparing** 14:*3,*	**process** 6:*12*
pay 30:*21* 35:*11*	80:*21, 25*	**policy** 45:*3*	*15*	29:*25* 30:*2*
43:*13* 100:*23*	**pilots** 41:*18*	53:*17* 86:*16*	**prepositioned**	55:*13* 65:*11*
paying 24:*7*	42:*10* 43:*14, 22*	101:*22*	94:*21*	78:*14*
67:*22*	**pipeline** 42:*1*	**politically** 81:*23*	**presence** 55:*24*	**procure** 10:*5*
PCS 17:*10*	**place** 22:*6, 22*	**population** 88:*14*	**Present** 1:*18*	**procurement**
Pearl 85:*4*	23:*13* 25:*13*	89:*20*	2:*5* 9:*14* 32:*7*	30:*18* 31:*5, 6*
pedal 102:*22*	45:*19* 49:*23*	**portfolio** 32:*16*	63:*24*	32:*10, 12* 33:*20*
peer 7:*25* 44:*25*	50:*22* 52:*16*	**portion** 79:*15*	**presents** 7:*2*	78:*14* 80:*18*
77:*8* 93:*13*	69:*22* 81:*8*	91:*17*	37:*2*	**Procurements**
peer-to-peer 60:*9*	86:*11, 13* 91:*18*	**ports** 68:*23*	**President** 12:*7*	33:*14*
Pendleton 90:*24*	92:*4* 96:*9* 99:*15*	**Portsmouth**	15:*11* 53:*2, 7, 20,*	**procuring** 7:*7*
people 14:*13*	103:*14*	35:*13, 21* 36:*6*	*21*	**produce** 82:*21*
15:*14* 19:*21*	**placed** 90:*5*	**position** 4:*18*	**President's** 3:*13*	**production** 31:*4*
30:*25* 35:*7*	101:*18*	13:*24* 53:*5, 15*	**presidential**	**professional**
45:*15* 47:*17, 24*	**places** 36:*6*	64:*15* 76:*2*	85:*12*	15:*10* 19:*15*
54:*21* 55:*25*	52:*21* 68:*21*	92:*11*	**President-specific**	**professionalism**
59:*23* 60:*2, 4, 6*	69:*15* 75:*13*	**positioned** 4:*2*	53:*22*	10:*10*
63:*20* 69:*15*	90:*25*	**positions** 43:*12*	**presiding** 1:*17,*	**Professor** 78:*8*
76:*24* 81:*23*	**plan** 28:*14*	52:*13* 66:*20*	*19*	**program** 22:*13*
91:*8* 92:*1* 96:*4*	31:*14* 33:*13*	84:*14*	**pressure** 97:*24*	24:*25* 25:*4* 30:*1,*
97:*11* 98:*6*	38:*3, 12* 48:*24*	**positive** 103:*13*	**pressures** 26:*17*	*4* 37:*8* 41:*2*
102:*24*	49:*2, 3, 23, 24, 25*	**possible** 19:*8*	**presume** 6:*12*	51:*4* 61:*12*
percent 23:*8, 10,*	50:*2, 3, 7, 8* 52:*4*	44:*9* 53:*9* 65:*7*	**pretty** 24:*21*	80:*21* 82:*6*
11, 15, 16, 19	75:*25* 76:*2*	102:*9*	51:*7* 59:*11* 67:*8,*	85:*13* 89:*6*
24:*5, 6, 6, 11*	78:*12* 82:*5* 83:*4*	**posture** 10:*3*	*10* 73:*20* 78:*19*	95:*17*
27:*22* 54:*21*	85:*3, 9, 11* 96:*8,*	52:*6* 67:*6, 9, 12,*	93:*2, 7*	
56:*17* 89:*21*	*11*	*17, 25* 68:*3, 14*	**prevent** 19:*8*	**programmatically**
percentage 24:*3,*	**planet** 14:*9*	**potential** 57:*22*	**preventable**	98:*22*
15	**planning** 28:*11,*	78:*21* 83:*12*	10:*11*	**programmed**
Perdue 1:*20*	*20* 62:*9* 71:*21*	95:*3* 98:*24*	**previous** 32:*25*	83:*17*
77:*16, 17* 79:*8,*	96:*11*	**potentially**	62:*11*	**programs** 10:*9*
12 80:*13* 81:*4, 7*	**plans** 10:*21* 62:*9*	101:*25* 102:*1*	**previously** 89:*6*	22:*9* 29:*10, 21*
82:*7, 15*	**platform** 30:*7*	**power** 6:*17*	**prices** 96:*18*	32:*11* 45:*14*
perfectly 13:*2*	92:*18*	14:*10* 15:*13*	**primarily** 64:*3*	**progress** 22:*22*
perform 90:*17*	**platforms** 30:*8*	31:*3, 7* 66:*22*	**primary** 66:*24*	49:*15, 16* 54:*5*
performance 7:*8*	42:*9, 13* 43:*2*	67:*21* 76:*17*	**principled** 11:*2*	97:*1* 103:*13*
43:*15* 82:*23*	46:*13, 19* 60:*4*	78:*20* 79:*4* 96:*2*	**priorities** 23:*7*	**project** 47:*8*
97:*2* 104:*1*	62:*18* 63:*8, 23*	**powerful** 14:*8*	45:*4*	**projects** 35:*10,*
period 21:*10*	75:*23*	51:*7* 79:*4* 93:*2*	**prioritization**	*15* 36:*5, 15*
24:*13* 48:*18*	**play** 46:*10*	**PowerPoint** 23:*2*	49:*12*	**promise** 46:*15*
person 81:*11*	102:*25* 103:*2*	43:*20*	**priority** 35:*25*	**promote** 11:*2*
personal 15:*9*	**played** 81:*17*	**PowerPoints**	44:*10* 87:*8*	**proper** 19:*25*
18:*14* 97:*2*	**playing** 40:*4*	23:*1*	101:*18*	**proposal** 31:*5, 5*
100:*15*	**plays** 102:*23*	**powers** 47:*21*	**private** 36:*12*	**proposals** 101:*23*
personality 4:*10*	**plea** 56:*13*	**practice** 72:*16*	49:*5, 7, 8* 64:*2*	**proposes** 39:*15*
personnel 9:*16*	**please** 58:*3*	93:*25*	102:*25* 103:*4*	73:*16*
10:*25* 54:*17*	88:*25*	**pre-deployment**	**privilege** 14:*1*	**propositions**
85:*25* 86:*16*	**pledge** 15:*3, 8*	37:*8*	**proactively** 56:*4*	98:*20*
perspective 32:*14*	**plenty** 43:*6*	**predict** 44:*20*	**probably** 18:*1*	**prosperity** 14:*7*
Peters 1:*22*	**plus** 65:*8* 93:*1*	**predictability**	32:*4* 33:*13* 61:*5*	15:*19*
62:*1, 2* 63:*16*	**PMRF** 87:*7, 9,*	34:*5* 84:*8*	81:*4* 88:*9* 91:*11*	**protect** 75:*5, 6*
64:*2, 14* 65:*23*	*12, 15, 23, 25*	**predictable** 82:*6*	**problem** 7:*9, 17*	**protected** 5:*19*
66:*13, 14*	**point** 30:*5*	83:*14*	21:*16* 28:*19*	**protecting** 47:*12*
phone 48:*10*	42:*18* 55:*22*	**prefer** 50:*22*	43:*10* 56:*21*	**protection** 52:*15*
physical 84:*20*	60:*18* 63:*16*	**pre-flight** 42:*21*	90:*13, 15* 100:*9,*	**prototyped** 22:*15*
physically 61:*7*	65:*4* 66:*11*	**premise** 75:*10*	*11, 17* 103:*3*	**prototyping**
	67:*20* 76:*12*	**prepare** 6:*17*		40:*18*

proud 2:4 3:18 15:1 17:21 69:20
prove 63:5
proven 22:14
provide 5:14 6:2 15:9 35:5 53:5 74:15 82:7, 8 87:25 92:23
provided 23:25 30:20 51:23 89:8
providers 102:24
providing 6:7
public 4:19 13:17 23:13 36:2, 11 49:4, 8 55:23 56:8 85:4 90:10
publication 76:5, 7
publicly 47:19
published 65:25
purposes 2:5 32:12
pursuant 1:15
pursue 61:1 64:12 95:22
pursued 43:5
pursuing 96:19 103:11
purview 74:21
push 15:1
put 18:16 31:5 35:1 58:25 63:2 65:18 81:8 93:13 96:9 97:4, 13
puts 90:23
pyramid 82:23

< Q >
Qaeda 37:1
qualified 9:13 91:13
qualitatively 78:10
quality 3:16 10:1, 17 78:24
Quantico 3:17, 20
quantitatively 78:10
quantity 78:23
quarterback 92:21
quarterly 54:14
question 22:7 24:24 28:13 32:1 40:1 41:6, 10 42:4 45:5

46:4 49:22, 23 50:17 53:10 61:9 62:5, 12, 13, 17 64:19, 22 73:22 75:10 76:3, 20 77:4 78:18 81:6 82:25 88:8 92:15 95:6 101:14
questioned 45:24
questioning 29:10 83:13
questions 4:25 5:10 15:20 20:6 34:24 45:4 62:6 67:4 73:9, 18 76:25 80:17 84:15 92:5
quick 24:23 60:25 78:1 80:17
quicker 78:13
quickly 19:7 30:5 32:8 33:21 58:4 63:22 83:6 99:2 102:4
quite 27:4 68:20 92:7
quote 44:8, 9 64:17

< R >
RAA 42:23
race 97:3 98:14
raise 102:4
raised 54:19
raises 45:5
raising 12:25
Raleigh 13:8
ramp 37:4
range 25:10 44:22 58:25 87:3, 5, 15, 16 93:5 100:8 101:17, 24
Ranger 4:7
Ranking 3:3 17:3 18:7 38:25
ranks 11:2 18:18 20:3
ratification 73:2
reach 24:11 55:10, 12 56:6 58:24
read 53:15 76:4
Readiness 4:13 7:6, 23 10:2, 10, 19 18:23 23:23, 25 26:15 33:20 34:16 42:8, 12,

15 50:15 71:17 81:18 82:2 86:2, 9 87:11 100:25 101:3
reading 21:12
ready 15:13 19:11, 22 34:14, 16 37:16 44:21 45:1, 7 67:23 82:11 83:20 94:20
real 3:11 25:21 38:22 69:10 76:14 77:25 102:5
realistic 60:8 79:18 99:14
reality 10:14 97:18
realize 63:20
realized 30:9
really 17:21, 23 18:4 28:16 33:19 34:3, 4 36:6 42:12 49:24 60:7 65:9, 9, 15 67:22 69:5 81:14 90:15 91:18 93:18 96:25 97:9 99:14
REAPPOINTME NT 1:3 12:1
reasonable 96:19
reasons 28:17
rebuild 7:5 82:3 100:24 101:1
rebuilding 38:5
recall 54:18
recapitalize 10:6
received 51:25
recognize 43:21 103:3
recognized 4:23
recognizing 49:23
recommend 95:4
recommendations 26:20, 22 27:3, 6, 8, 10, 14 52:5, 11 85:23, 24
recommended 51:18
reconsideration 46:1
reconsidering 45:22
record 5:10 9:12, 18 70:2

recover 29:2 42:25 58:18 81:18
recovered 18:21, 23 31:1 42:12
recovering 35:23
recovery 34:9 44:23 100:7, 14, 19
recruit 60:10 96:23
recruiter 3:17
recruiters 55:20
recruiting 9:25 10:16 27:20 41:21 43:4 91:11
recruitment 56:6 89:24
recruits 60:23 89:25
reduce 22:16 38:9
reduced 6:24
reducing 38:17
Reed 1:20 3:4 8:5 9:1, 3 11:9 12:4 17:3 18:7 21:3 25:24, 25 27:19 28:5, 22 29:9, 23 30:5, 14 36:21 54:2 85:20
reemergence 67:20
reengage 90:18
reestablish 71:22
reevaluating 27:13 45:22
reevaluation 46:22
reexamining 68:13
referenced 38:1
reflect 18:9
reflects 39:21, 22
refreshing 51:13 52:10
refuel 41:1
refueling 39:15 48:18 73:17
regain 93:4
regard 48:12, 21 51:15, 17 67:2, 9 68:22 69:13 70:4 80:22
regarding 6:6 9:5
region 67:7 80:5
regional 89:24

regionalization 54:23 55:14
regionally 89:23
regular 37:7 83:11, 17
regulations 5:4
reinforce 28:21 52:6
related 42:15 43:4 84:24
relating 89:7
Relations 73:1
relearn 84:2
relearning 83:25
reliability 25:10
reliance 38:9
relied 7:4
relief 27:17
religion 97:3
remain 25:8 32:11
remainder 54:25
remarkable 47:3
remarks 11:11
remember 21:11
removed 31:3
rendered 46:21
repeatedly 77:19
replace 45:9
replacing 24:17
replenish 95:20
report 51:11, 19, 21, 22 52:3, 5 74:6, 8 86:23
reports 26:19 27:8 73:24
reposture 68:6
represents 87:13 99:15
reprisal 5:20
reprogramming 25:5 38:11 100:22
reputation 4:13
request 2:6 5:24 39:14 45:13 62:8 85:13
requested 5:9 6:4
requests 5:16 84:19
require 44:20
required 67:1
requirement 31:18, 20 32:14 36:8 37:17 39:18 40:14 58:18 72:14 86:23

43:*11* 44:*3*, *13*, *21* 48:*8* 55:*22* 62:*3* 66:*18*, *18* 89:*16*, *21* 97:*21* 99:*25* 102:*21* 103:*21*, *23*
serviceable 50:*10*
serviced 50:*12*
Services 1:*12* 9:*6* 23:*20* 29:*11* 83:*7* 90:*6*
serving 3:*23* 9:*18* 12:*10* 35:*4* 36:*24* 104:*2*
set 22:*10* 23:*19* 39:*10* 83:*10* 86:*15* 88:*23* 89:*6*
sets 37:*13*, *21* 71:*5*
setting 18:*13*, *14* 31:*9* 58:*6* 73:*12* 75:*17*
settlement 84:*24*
seven 4:*25* 71:*19*
severe 28:*9*, *24*
sexual 84:*19*, *20*
Shaheen 1:*21* 34:*21* 36:*14* 37:*23* 38:*14*, *18* 39:*3*, *4* 48:*13*
Shanahan 12:*8* 35:*9*
shape 101:*11*
shaping 9:*21* 10:*17*
share 4:*21* 14:*1*, *4* 28:*16*, *16* 47:*16* 94:*24*
sheet 75:*24*
shelf 49:*25*
shift 40:*1* 92:*5*
shifted 18:*22*
shifting 97:*11* 98:*18*
ship 7:*14* 21:*9* 30:*18* 31:*4*, *17*, *20* 36:*7* 91:*3*
shipmates 12:*18* 13:*22*
shipments 56:*15*, *17*
shipping 74:*3*
ships 10:*5* 21:*18* 30:*21* 31:*19* 32:*16* 34:*3* 45:*9* 47:*1* 56:*16* 62:*23* 74:*10* 75:*3* 77:*21*, *22* 78:*2*, *6*, *13* 79:*9* 85:*17*

86:*4*, *12* 95:*12* 99:*10*
Shipyard 35:*13* 49:*3*, *5* 50:*3* 85:*21*
shipyards 28:*15* 49:*9* 85:*4*, *6*, *18*
shore 99:*10*, *10*, *11*
short 14:*4* 24:*13* 97:*7*
shortfall 36:*10*
showing 103:*13*
shows 76:*17*
shrink 91:*17*
sick 69:*11*
side 38:*11*, *11* 42:*3* 51:*5* 63:*18* 66:*4* 73:*15* 80:*14* 96:*12*, *14* 101:*12*
sides 73:*18*
significant 22:*18* 26:*4*, *11* 35:*23* 58:*15* 81:*17* 85:*3*
significantly 71:*2*
silver 38:*24*
similar 48:*20* 102:*18*
simple 40:*3*
simply 49:*25* 57:*2*
simultaneously 87:*6*
single 14:*23* 44:*24* 51:*14* 59:*12* 80:*3* 86:*21*
sir 5:*6*, *7*, *12*, *13*, *22*, *25* 6:*1*, *8*, *9*, *13* 15:*20* 24:*23* 27:*21* 28:*13*, *23* 29:*24* 31:*15*, *25* 33:*10*, *21* 34:*11*, *13*, *18* 41:*5*, *13* 46:*20*, *24* 48:*1* 49:*2* 50:*2*, *13* 51:*20* 53:*12* 57:*4* 59:*7* 62:*23* 64:*1* 67:*15* 69:*7* 71:*17* 74:*14* 75:*9* 79:*11*, *14* 80:*13* 82:*14* 83:*6*, *22* 91:*22* 103:*15*, *16*
sister 18:*2*
sit 79:*23* 84:*16*
situation 35:*1* 48:*12*, *20* 102:*18*
situations 53:*8*

six 56:*23* 77:*21*, *21* 78:*1*
skill 37:*13*, *21* 71:*5*, *23* 72:*10*, *16* 86:*15*
skilled 43:*12*
skillfully 18:*19*
slept 17:*18*
slice 55:*4* 89:*20* 90:*9* 91:*25*
slides 43:*20*
slow 65:*11* 68:*10*
slows 60:*18*
small 10:*20*
smaller 56:*21*
smart 38:*22*
smarts 31:*13*
society 19:*24* 55:*1* 90:*16* 91:*15* 92:*3*
society-wide 90:*15*
soil 101:*9*
soldier 56:*7*
soldiers 103:*22*
solely 97:*1*
solutions 8:*3* 47:*3*
somebody 23:*4* 54:*9*
son 13:*4* 17:*17*
song 75:*24*
sons 13:*8* 17:*16*, *20*
soon 90:*6* 92:*11* 101:*11*
sooner 63:*19*
sort 66:*5*, *8* 73:*17* 91:*9* 96:*6* 98:*6* 101:*7*
sorts 43:*5* 61:*8*
sound 31:*15* 101:*11*
South 22:*24* 90:*1*
space 28:*16* 66:*7* 87:*6*
Spader 76:*5*
speak 90:*12*
speaker 101:*19*
Special 44:*5*
specialties 97:*22* 98:*3*
specific 52:*5* 54:*6* 92:*5* 101:*16* 102:*10*
specifically 41:*23* 53:*18* 71:*18*

specifics 58:*6*
spectrum 45:*1*
speed 6:*25* 25:*10* 63:*25*
Spencer 12:*8* 31:*23* 39:*14* 102:*3*
spend 41:*19* 90:*25*
spending 23:*25*
spent 3:*15* 43:*19* 87:*14* 100:*2*
spoiled 13:*2*
spoken 59:*19*
spouses 12:*25* 17:*11*, *15* 39:*9*, *11*
spread 99:*10*
spreading 40:*4*
spread-out 99:*16*
squadron 13:*22* 31:*9*
Sri 76:*17*
SSBN 49:*13*, *16*
SSN 35:*25* 36:*3* 49:*11*
SSNs 49:*14* 58:*18*
stability 34:*1*, *4*
staff 5:*8* 53:*18* 56:*19* 74:*15* 82:*8*
staffing 54:*8* 85:*25* 86:*6*
stages 28:*20*
stale 67:*7*, *18*
stand 102:*6*
standard 4:*25* 98:*11*
standards 19:*15* 29:*1*, *5*, *8* 38:*2*, *3*, *23*
standing 102:*7*
stands 14:*14*
staring 81:*15*
start 11:*10* 21:*3* 29:*16* 33:*8* 34:*17* 38:*7* 41:*20* 55:*13* 58:*2* 63:*7* 73:*16* 90:*20* 92:*6* 96:*9* 103:*13*
started 12:*12* 22:*24* 50:*13* 54:*1* 56:*22* 61:*4* 100:*17*
starting 36:*7* 49:*15* 92:*21*
startled 30:*9*
starts 33:*15*

state 69:*9*, *19* 94:*20* 101:*22* 103:*4*, *5*
stated 45:*3* 47:*5* 57:*16*, *19*
STATEMENT 2:*1* 3:*1* 9:*1* 12:*1* 15:*21* 16:*1* 17:*1* 20:*7* 21:*2* 32:*21* 36:*17* 78:*11*
States 12:*7* 14:*25* 34:*2* 53:*7* 56:*15* 74:*19* 102:*13*
stations 28:*25* 38:*20*
statistics 61:*9*
statute 33:*6*, *7*
stay 42:*4*
steadfast 18:*9*
steady 19:*1* 42:*24*
step 85:*5* 88:*16* 91:*10*
stepping 57:*10*
steps 54:*4* 75:*5*
stick 31:*14* 50:*7*
stint 3:*17*
stomach 69:*12*
stood 26:*25*
stops 60:*17*
storm 29:*3* 100:*10*, *10*, *14*, *19*
storms 28:*24* 38:*4*
stranger 4:*11*
Strategic 26:*15* 39:*21* 40:*1* 45:*5*, *22* 46:*1* 67:*2*, *16* 68:*23* 69:*5*, *12* 73:*11*, *15* 86:*9*
Strategy 6:*16* 46:*9* 65:*25* 66:*22* 71:*10* 79:*9* 92:*6*
stream 42:*24*
street 30:*11* 68:*18*
strike 25:*20* 45:*6* 47:*1* 83:*24*
strikes 89:*23* 90:*2*, *15*
strive 15:*12*
strives 14:*22*
strong 73:*1* 80:*11* 81:*1*
structure 10:*2* 46:*6*, *13*, *16* 62:*18* 75:*20*

stuck 43:*18*
study 53:*16*
stuff 65:*18*
sub 75:*22*
Subcommittee
4:*13* 44:*6* 64:*20*
subject 55:*17*
subjects 11:*12*
submarine 10:*7*
35:*23* 36:*1* 57:*1*
submarines 34:*3*
35:*18*, *22* 36:*16*
48:*13*, *19* 87:*17*
submit 70:*2*
submitted 28:*7*
subordinate 94:*6*
subordinates
94:*10*
subsets 77:*7*
subsurface 87:*6*
succeed 86:*5*
97:*6*, *15*
success 9:*11*
17:*23*
successful 80:*7*
98:*7*
suffered 26:*1*
suffering 36:*3*
sufficient 57:*3*
suggest 50:*21*
suggesting 47:*14*
53:*22*
suited 4:*2*, *4*, *9*
Sullivan 1:*20*
66:*15*, *16* 67:*17*
68:*2*, *7* 69:*3*, *11*
71:*1*, *18* 72:*9*, *18*
summarize 76:*10*
summary 82:*9*
Sunday 12:*14*
Super 50:*25*
92:*25*
superiority 93:*4*
supplemental
100:*24*
suppliers 30:*22*
supply 84:*3*
support 4:*16*, *17*
9:*10* 14:*24* 18:*6*,
9 20:*1* 23:*24*
44:*7* 85:*6* 87:*12*
97:*13*
supported 12:*20*
supporters 18:*1*
supporting 61:*24*
supposed 21:*22*
sure 11:*12*
12:*17* 22:*13*
23:*25* 25:*6* 27:*1*,
14 28:*2* 29:*5*, *21*
32:*18* 34:*14*, *16*

43:*21* 52:*1*
59:*22* 75:*23*
76:*8* 80:*2* 81:*13*
83:*20* 88:*5*
96:*13*, *16* 99:*1*,
18 101:*10*
102:*21* 103:*9*
surface 40:*12*
62:*6*, *8* 63:*2*, *11*
75:*22* 87:*6*
99:*11*
surveillance
92:*22*
survivability
47:*12*
survivable 47:*7*
survive 29:*6*
survived 82:*23*
susceptible 45:*12*
suspect 53:*14*
73:*20*
sustain 31:*1*
94:*2*
sustainable
57:*18* 92:*2*
sustained 18:*21*
sustainment
30:*7*, *9*
swap 52:*21*
Swiss 76:*12*
93:*11*
symbols 55:*19*
symmetric 99:*3*
system 22:*6*, *20*
31:*10* 38:*25*
74:*17* 75:*15*
80:*4*, *4*
systematic 74:*6*
systems 7:*8*
52:*16* 60:*14*
74:*2*, *7*, *10*, *12*
75:*3*

< T >
table 22:*25*
23:*14*
TACAIR 23:*23*
take 7:*6* 22:*6*
52:*6* 54:*8* 55:*6*
56:*3* 58:*21*
62:*19* 67:*21*
79:*1*, *2*, *23* 88:*14*
92:*3* 96:*13*
103:*21*
takeaway 72:*25*
taken 7:*23*
32:*12* 54:*5*
66:*10* 86:*16*
103:*9*
takes 22:*22*

35:*25*
talent 91:*13*
Taliban 37:*1*
talk 7:*18* 35:*16*
37:*2* 38:*14*
39:*12* 41:*14*
45:*21* 58:*5* 60:*3*
64:*10* 77:*25*
78:*3* 81:*23*
85:*16* 88:*12*
90:*13* 94:*12*
96:*5* 100:*4*
talked 7:*15*
21:*4*, *9* 23:*16*
36:*18* 37:*24*
44:*4* 49:*12*
54:*18* 55:*14*
57:*14* 60:*3*, *13*
61:*15* 62:*5*, *11*
64:*21*, *25* 68:*18*
71:*20* 73:*23*
82:*17* 85:*20*
89:*23* 90:*3*
91:*22* 92:*7*
96:*12* 97:*11*
talking 6:*20*
48:*17* 82:*4* 83:*3*
89:*4* 96:*1*
Tarawa 99:*5*
target 22:*21*
targeted 42:*3*
targeting 92:*22*
task 10:*20* 90:*19*
tasked 9:*25*
10:*16* 99:*6*
tasks 10:*22*
taxpayer 50:*11*
55:*25*
teach 23:*3* 87:*16*
teachers 13:*17*
team 14:*22*, *22*
15:*5* 22:*24* 59:*5*
65:*13* 79:*3*, *19*
91:*4* 93:*20*
teams 12:*20*
23:*8*
Technical 7:*6*
60:*1*
technically 75:*14*
technological
79:*14*
technology 22:*14*
58:*8* 62:*21*
65:*16*
Teddy 13:*9*
tell 32:*13* 60:*4*
94:*10*
telling 4:*14* 50:*6*
terms 23:*23*
29:*15* 35:*22*
43:*4* 53:*19* 56:*6*

62:*20* 68:*3* 71:*5*
72:*5* 78:*23*, *23*
80:*5*, *18* 86:*5*
95:*22* 103:*12*
terrain 69:*5*
71:*12* 72:*11*
territory 14:*18*
terrorism 76:*16*
test 62:*25*
testament 18:*25*
tested 10:*24*
14:*25*
testified 4:*12*
47:*6*
testify 5:*24*
testimony 5:*20*
47:*6* 56:*13* 68:*5*,
17
testing 25:*1*, *6*
87:*10* 88:*1*
Thank 3:*3* 4:*20*
6:*15* 9:*3*, *7*, *9*
11:*7*, *8*, *9* 12:*3*
15:*20* 21:*1*, *2*
25:*23*, *25* 28:*5*
30:*13*, *14* 34:*18*,
19, *20*, *21*, *22*
36:*14* 37:*23*
39:*3*, *3*, *4*, *6*, *8*
43:*23*, *24* 45:*2*
48:*3*, *4*, *6*, *7* 51:*8*
52:*9*, *17*, *18*, *19*,
24 54:*16* 57:*5*, *6*,
7, *9*, *10*, *12* 59:*7*
61:*23*, *24*, *25*
62:*2*, *3* 64:*14*
66:*13*, *14*, *16*, *17*,
19 69:*17* 72:*18*,
20 77:*13*, *15*
79:*12* 82:*15*, *22*
84:*11* 86:*25*
87:*20* 89:*10*, *11*,
13, *14*, *15* 91:*23*
93:*8*, *8* 94:*14*, *15*,
16, *18* 96:*20*, *21*
98:*17* 99:*20*, *21*,
23, *24* 100:*2*
102:*17* 103:*17*,
20, *21*, *23*, *24*
104:*3*
thanking 44:*2*
thanks 4:*18*
17:*4* 20:*5* 22:*7*
25:*4* 42:*23* 44:*1*
46:*4* 50:*14*
72:*21* 77:*14*
92:*15* 97:*19*, *20*
theater 66:*24*
93:*16*
thing 5:*3* 21:*7*
23:*9* 40:*25* 53:*1*

63:*3* 72:*2* 82:*16*
91:*9* 100:*4*
things 21:*6*
22:*1*, *8* 24:*8*
30:*6* 40:*19*, *25*
43:*5* 46:*5* 58:*21*
61:*6*, *8* 65:*5*
68:*17* 77:*25*
78:*15* 86:*24*
90:*21* 93:*6*
96:*10*
think 17:*18*
20:*2* 22:*15*, *17*,
21 23:*10*, *15*, *22*
24:*7*, *10*, *19*
27:*12*, *23* 29:*1*,
18 30:*8*, *11*
31:*12* 32:*9*, *17*,
22 35:*3* 36:*20*
38:*1* 39:*17*, *25*
40:*3* 41:*8*, *22*
42:*4* 43:*9* 44:*20*
46:*12*, *14* 47:*2*,
13 49:*22* 50:*21*
51:*4*, *14* 52:*2*, *9*
53:*3*, *14* 54:*1*, *21*
55:*1*, *3*, *18* 56:*2*,
5, *10* 58:*7* 59:*3*,
9, *16* 61:*18* 63:*4*,
9, *19*, *25* 64:*9*, *12*,
17 65:*2*, *3*, *5*, *13*
68:*4*, *9* 71:*4*
72:*1*, *9* 73:*18*
75:*19* 76:*11*, *25*
78:*18* 81:*1*, *17*
83:*2*, *19* 85:*22*
86:*25* 89:*5*, *18*,
21 90:*13*, *22*
91:*9*, *13*, *24* 92:*2*
93:*13*, *14* 96:*4*
97:*20* 98:*5*, *7*, *9*,
12 100:*6*, *20*
101:*20* 102:*11*,
23, *25*
thinking 7:*17*
39:*21* 93:*19*
third 35:*25* 42:*8*
thought 13:*10*
34:*12* 40:*8* 44:*8*
64:*22*
thoughts 24:*23*
39:*20* 55:*16*
85:*8*
thousands 13:*18*,
21
threat 7:*3* 37:*1*
40:*5*, *12* 44:*21*,
24 59:*16* 66:*23*
75:*18* 77:*4* 90:*8*
93:*13*

threatening 57:*24*

threats 7:*25* 10:*4* 28:*12* 46:*2, 8, 25* 57:*15, 19, 21* 64:*20, 21* 87:*17*

three 13:*1, 8, 9* 17:*20* 35:*15* 42:*21* 48:*19* 66:*24*

three-star 86:*20*

throw 29:*6*

throwing 43:*9*

tickled 18:*4*

TICOM 26:*25*

tied 48:*16* 100:*25*

Tillis 1:*19* 99:*22, 23* 101:*4* 102:*17* 103:*17, 25*

TIM 3:*1*

time 3:*16* 7:*5* 10:*5* 12:*24* 14:*4* 19:*25* 21:*10* 23:*12* 24:*13* 26:*12* 27:*13, 18* 29:*17, 22, 25* 30:*22* 32:*24* 35:*24* 40:*16* 41:*19, 23* 43:*19, 20* 48:*18* 49:*19* 54:*19* 68:*20* 69:*18* 74:*17* 77:*24* 80:*14* 82:*19* 86:*7* 87:*14* 94:*8* 100:*2*

timeframe 95:*25*

timeline 96:*6*

timely 6:*4*

times 10:*21, 23, 24* 18:*20* 19:*11* 81:*10*

timetable 66:*1*

tireless 17:*11*

tirelessly 15:*4*

Title 52:*25*

today 3:*15* 4:*22* 14:*11* 17:*5, 7, 25* 30:*17, 24* 33:*6* 36:*4* 47:*7, 18* 48:*12* 49:*7* 54:*22* 55:*13* 57:*13* 77:*25* 78:*2* 81:*9* 82:*24* 86:*11* 90:*3* 97:*25*

today's 65:*4* 98:*20*

told 73:*13* 88:*22* 94:*6*

toll 7:*22*

tomorrow's 10:*4*

tone 18:*13*

top 12:*21* 28:*7, 7* 91:*21*

topic 51:*21*

total 21:*18* 78:*7* 100:*20*

totally 87:*25*

touch 51:*9*

tough 65:*4* 93:*7* 99:*15*

tours 86:*17*

track 32:*11* 86:*22* 87:*17, 17*

tracking 87:*6*

tracks 74:*24*

tragedies 54:*11* 85:*22* 87:*2*

train 27:*18* 41:*25* 59:*22* 60:*10* 87:*16* 94:*8* 99:*19*

trained 6:*23* 18:*10* 19:*11* 37:*19* 72:*13* 78:*25*

training 3:*16, 19* 4:*6* 7:*24* 14:*14* 33:*13* 37:*8* 41:*19* 42:*1* 44:*24* 54:*8* 60:*2, 5, 8, 24* 71:*3, 8, 9, 16* 72:*14* 79:*18* 83:*16* 88:*6* 91:*3* 94:*9* 96:*24* 99:*13, 13, 14, 16, 19* 101:*1, 21* 102:*1*

transferable 37:*13* 72:*16*

transforming 97:*7*

transportation 95:*5*

traveling 13:*7*

treat 59:*23, 24* 87:*7*

Treaty 73:*3*

triage 34:*15*

Trident 73:*24* 74:*4*

tried 26:*6*

trip 36:*22*

troops 103:*22*

true 12:*14* 77:*12*

truly 14:*21* 17:*5* 97:*8, 17*

Truman 39:*13, 16* 40:*20* 41:*1* 45:*25* 73:*10, 17* 82:*18* 83:*24*

truthful 53:*6, 23*

try 11:*10* 33:*18* 38:*9*

trying 37:*4* 76:*13* 82:*2* 93:*4* 96:*7, 8*

Tuesday 1:*9*

tumultuous 10:*23*

turn 32:*8*

Twenty 38:*20*

twice 101:*20*

two 2:*4* 4:*21* 8:*1* 13:*1* 17:*16* 26:*1, 11, 19, 20* 28:*23* 30:*16, 21* 42:*21* 45:*23* 62:*9* 66:*3, 8* 67:*4* 74:*17* 76:*1, 3* 77:*25* 80:*17* 83:*5* 84:*15* 100:*5, 15*

type 43:*2* 86:*20*

types 63:*2* 84:*3*

typhoon 44:*23*

typically 19:*6*

< U >

U.S 1:*11* 2:*1* 3:*1, 24* 4:*7, 7, 8* 9:*1* 25:*9* 31:*11* 55:*19* 59:*21* 70:*2* 73:*2* 80:*7* 94:*25* 101:*9*

unacceptable 101:*22*

unclass 51:*22*

unclassified 31:*9* 79:*15*

underinvestment 94:*23*

underline 73:*11*

underperforming 89:*3*

underscore 91:*24*

undersea 40:*11* 58:*14* 63:*3*

understand 24:*16* 25:*17* 32:*18* 47:*25* 77:*23* 81:*13* 82:*1* 83:*1, 4, 19* 96:*5*

understanding 45:*15* 63:*10* 88:*25*

understood 7:*7* 96:*17*

undertaken 6:*11*

underway 46:*19* 54:*12* 58:*8* 85:*23* 95:*17*

underwent 26:*11*

unfortunately 38:*10* 69:*9*

uniform 18:*8* 19:*25* 81:*11* 97:*5*

uniformed 82:*20*

unique 14:*5, 21* 19:*4* 37:*14, 21*

unit 17:*12* 60:*24*

United 12:*7* 14:*25* 34:*1* 53:*7* 56:*15* 74:*19* 102:*13*

units 37:*16, 18* 55:*20* 83:*11* 88:*21* 97:*23, 25* 98:*7, 13, 13*

University 88:*11, 15, 24* 89:*6*

unlimited 62:*14*

unmanned 40:*9, 10, 11, 12* 60:*14* 62:*6, 8, 18* 63:*2, 11, 22* 75:*21*

unnecessary 59:*1*

unpredictability 33:*16* 83:*2* 84:*7*

unpredictable 83:*9*

unreasonable 19:*17*

unsustainable 86:*11*

unvarnished 53:*6*

unwanted 84:*19*

unwavering 18:*6*

update 68:*3* 94:*19* 95:*7*

upgrade 95:*13*

urge 7:*6* 56:*18*

use 21:*21* 23:*11* 53:*9* 61:*12*

useless 46:*22*

USMC 1:*5* 17:*1*

USN 1:*2* 12:*1*

USS 7:*13* 10:*11, 11* 26:*2, 3* 48:*16*

utility 31:*11*

< V >

valid 25:*8*

valuable 47:*14* 87:*9*

values 10:*23* 56:*10*

various 90:*3, 4*

vast 47:*19*

vectors 40:*5, 13* 59:*2*

vehicle 25:*20*

vehicles 63:*18*

vendor 25:*3* 34:*4*

vendors 65:*17* 96:*18*

venues 76:*24*

verbal 84:*19*

versatile 31:*16* 44:*15*

versed 9:*21*

version 51:*23*

versus 80:*4, 4*

vessel 21:*13, 14*

vessels 56:*21* 62:*6, 8* 63:*3, 11* 74:*12, 19, 21* 75:*6* 95:*14*

Vice 9:*14* 27:*1*

Vietnam 53:*17* 72:*24* 73:*5, 6*

view 7:*6* 72:*7, 8* 93:*19*

views 92:*11*

VIRGINIA 3:*2, 15, 16, 18* 36:*9*

Virginian 3:*14*

Virginias 36:*7*

virtually 55:*12*

visible 55:*18, 21, 23*

vision 10:*13, 13* 19:*1* 62:*19*

visit 37:*7* 72:*25* 73:*7* 82:*18*

visited 14:*16* 83:*25*

vital 35:*22* 49:*9* 85:*14* 87:*19* 92:*24*

voice 12:*15*

volunteer 54:*20*

volunteers 14:*20* 89:*25*

vulnerable 28:*9* 45:*11*

< W >

wait 46:*12*

waiting 48:*20*

walked 23:*3*

wall 35:*12*

want 9:*4, 7, 9* 13:*16* 21:*6* 25:*21* 28:*8*

30:*18* 39:*12, 20* 40:*6* 41:*14, 20* 44:*2* 48:*14* 51:9 54:*6, 8* 57:*12, 15* 58:*13* 63:*16* 66:*17* 67:*3* 69:*17* 72:25 73:*10* 75:*17, 23* 76:*1, 10* 77:*18* 78:*15* 80:*15, 16* 83:*19* 89:*17* 90:*12* 91:*19* 94:*11* 98:*5, 6* 99:*1* 100:*4* 102:*6, 7* 103:*11, 13*
wanted 40:*22* 68:*15* 73:*22*
wanting 76:*20*
wants 79:*2*
war 19:*9* 39:*22* 67:*9* 78:*8* 84:*1*
warfare 45:*10* 57:*1* 64:*23* 92:*24*
warfighters 14:*25*
warfighting 15:*5*
warming 68:*22*
wars 19:*6* 92:*1*
Washington 1:*13*
waste 50:*11*
watch 14:*12, 14* 86:*23*
watched 59:*10*
watching 25:*14*
water 28:*16, 24* 33:*19* 56:*15*
waterfront 28:*16, 18* 86:*19*
waters 28:*19*
way 5:*2* 12:*21* 13:*5* 14:*21* 17:*23* 27:*25* 29:*9* 31:*13* 39:*22* 40:*2, 3, 8, 21* 44:*23* 47:*8* 49:*21* 51:*2* 52:*4* 63:*23* 65:*5* 75:*12* 78:*25* 79:*22* 83:*8, 9* 91:*1* 94:*8* 97:*20* 98:*12* 99:*6, 7* 102:*6, 8* 103:*6*
ways 42:*25* 49:*20* 63:*10* 67:*11* 78:*23* 93:*12* 95:*13* 96:*15* 97:*22* 99:*4*
weapon 7:*13*

weapons 21:*24* 93:*5*
weather 28:*9, 12* 69:*21* 70:*1, 4* 71:*5, 12, 20* 72:*10, 13*
weeds 101:*15*
week 24:*5* 69:*18* 80:*3* 90:*25* 91:*5, 12, 12*
weeks 30:*23* 36:*22* 61:*3, 20* 103:*13*
weigh 30:*3*
welcome 9:*4* 43:*17* 47:*14* 57:*13*
welfare 19:*23*
well 4:*2, 2, 4* 7:*22* 9:*3, 13, 21, 22* 12:*19* 18:*3* 21:*1* 24:*12* 25:*25* 27:*8* 37:*19* 38:*16* 41:*10* 46:*19* 47:*8* 57:*13* 58:*17* 59:*9, 10* 60:*15* 61:*7, 21* 63:*24* 68:*5* 69:*1, 6* 85:*4, 23* 86:*6* 91:*23* 93:*1* 95:*15* 96:*17*
went 17:*17* 27:*6* 61:*11* 103:*4*
west 49:*18* 69:*14, 15* 90:*1*
wholeheartedly 44:*6*
Wicker 1:*19* 30:*15, 16* 31:*22* 32:*9, 21* 33:*23* 34:*8, 18, 20* 80:*15*
Wicker's 34:*25*
wide 64:*4, 6*
wife 12:*22* 17:*7*
WILLIAM 1:*2*
willing 27:*16* 39:*7* 57:*3* 88:*19* 97:*4*
willingness 9:*8* 62:*4*
win 7:*25* 19:*6, 6*
wind 101:*23*
wing 51:*3* 58:*23* 92:*17, 20* 93:*5*
wintertime 29:*25*
wish 80:*14*
witnesses 5:*15,*

19 72:*21* 104:*2*
woken 67:*21*
women 13:*18* 14:*11, 17* 18:*8* 35:*4* 36:*24* 55:*7, 12* 82:*20* 89:*22* 97:*13, 18, 23, 25*
wonder 45:*21* 94:*24*
wonderful 39:*9*
wondering 45:*25*
word 15:*5*
words 42:*13* 56:*3* 58:*1* 60:*9* 83:*10* 94:*8* 99:*4*
work 4:*4* 7:*13* 15:*4, 18* 19:*17* 21:*25* 29:*19* 36:*2, 3, 5, 13, 23* 37:*20* 49:*7* 56:*18, 18, 21* 65:*16* 67:*11* 68:*16, 24, 25* 71:*7, 15* 73:*21* 79:*21* 80:*1, 7* 83:*18* 88:*17, 19* 89:*8* 100:*16*
worked 61:*14*
workforce 58:*20*
working 14:*9* 22:*20* 23:*21* 51:*15* 59:*3* 64:*2* 68:*7* 71:*23* 72:*6* 81:*14* 83:*7* 88:*9* 96:*16*
world 13:*23* 63:*12* 65:*4* 67:*9* 82:*20* 87:*5*
world's 14:*19* 43:*22*
worry 54:*24* 56:*7*
worse 3:*6* 7:*10* 33:*5*
worst 33:*16*
wounded 20:*1*
write 76:*24*
written 38:*23* 76:*5*

< Y >
yard 102:*20*
yards 36:*2, 11, 12* 38:*13* 49:*5, 7*
year 27:*9* 30:*20* 31:*4, 14* 33:*2, 5* 35:*10* 42:*7* 46:*7* 61:*17* 62:*9, 10* 65:*14, 15* 69:*8* 81:*15, 21, 25*

82:*9, 11* 86:*19* 96:*10* 100:*23*
year's 45:*13*
years 3:*21* 7:*9, 21* 12:*23* 13:*13* 17:*8* 18:*19* 21:*20* 23:*18* 24:*11, 18* 25:*12* 27:*12* 29:*11* 32:*25* 35:*2* 39:*17, 24* 40:*11, 20* 42:*2, 22* 46:*24* 49:*4* 50:*14* 53:*20, 21, 21* 56:*14* 59:*11* 63:*15* 64:*24* 72:*11, 12* 78:*5, 20* 81:*7, 16, 20* 84:*4* 90:*7, 22* 93:*21* 94:*22* 97:*23* 98:*1, 3*
yesterday 73:*23*
young 13:*18* 14:*17, 20* 17:*15* 43:*14* 55:*7, 12*

< Z >
zone 91:*5*