

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF:
LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLEN D. VANHERCK, USAF
TO BE GENERAL AND COMMANDER,
UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND/
COMMANDER, NORTH AMERICAN DEFENSE COMMAND;
AND
LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAMES H. DICKINSON, USA
TO BE GENERAL AND COMMANDER,
UNITED STATES SPACE COMMAND

Tuesday, July 28, 2020

Washington, D.C.

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10 Tuesday, July 28, 2020
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12 U.S. Senate

13 Committee on Armed Services

14 Washington, D.C.
15

16 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:34 p.m. in
17 Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James M.
18 Inhofe, chairman of the committee, presiding.

19 Committee Members Present: Senators Inhofe
20 [presiding], Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst,
21 Sullivan, Cramer, Scott, Hawley, Reed, Shaheen, Gillibrand,
22 Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, Peters, Manchin, Duckworth, and
23 Jones.
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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S.
2 SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

3 Chairman Inhofe: Our meeting will come to order.

4 This is what we are going to do. We have got the vote.

5 It has already started, and some of you may want to go over
6 there and get that because there is a second vote behind it.
7 But the way the schedule is, we are going to have to go
8 ahead and start now.

9 So the committee meets today to consider the
10 nominations of Lieutenant General Glen VanHerck to be
11 Commander United States Northern Command and Lieutenant
12 General James Dickinson to be Army of the United States
13 Space Command.

14 We are experiencing unique challenges and threats in
15 our country. You have both been nominated for the position.
16 I am not going to go ahead and read the make on them because
17 I think we are all familiar with them. There is no
18 opposition that I know of.

19 I speak for the committee when I say that we appreciate
20 your willingness to serve our country in these important
21 roles and appear before us today.

22 So, gentlemen, I ask that you provide an audible yes or
23 no response. These are the required questions. I see you
24 are both down there. So let us hear your responses. All
25 right?

1 Have you adhered to the applicable laws and regulations
2 governing conflicts of interest?

3 General VanHerck: Yes.

4 General Dickinson: Yes.

5 Chairman Inhofe: Will you ensure that your staff
6 complies with the deadlines established for requested
7 communications, including questions for the record in
8 hearings?

9 General VanHerck: Yes.

10 General Dickinson: Yes.

11 Chairman Inhofe: Will you cooperate in providing
12 witnesses and briefers in response to congressional
13 requests?

14 General VanHerck: Yes.

15 General Dickinson: Yes.

16 Chairman Inhofe: Will those witnesses be protected
17 from reprisal for the testimony or briefings?

18 General VanHerck: Yes.

19 General Dickinson: Yes.

20 Chairman Inhofe: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear
21 and testify upon the request of this committee?

22 General VanHerck: Yes.

23 General Dickinson: Yes.

24 Chairman Inhofe: I just heard one.

25 General VanHerck: Yes.

1 General Dickinson: Yes.

2 Chairman Inhofe: Good.

3 Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of
4 electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when
5 requested by a duly constituted committee or to consult with
6 the committee regarding the basis of any good faith delay or
7 denial in providing such documents?

8 General VanHerck: Yes.

9 General Dickinson: Yes.

10 Chairman Inhofe: Have you assumed any duties or
11 undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the
12 outcome of the confirmation process?

13 General VanHerck: No.

14 General Dickinson: No.

15 Chairman Inhofe: All right.

16 I do not have to tell either of you about the many
17 challenges the nation faces. Both of the positions for
18 which we are considering your nominations are at the
19 forefront of those challenges. From responding to a global
20 pandemic to ensuring our dominance in space, it is important
21 that we have the right leadership for these items.

22 At the forefront of these responsibilities is ensuring
23 that we continue to implement and fulfill the National
24 Defense Strategy. That is our document we refer to quite
25 often. That is our Bible, our direction. So it is

1 important that we keep leadership that can take on roles to
2 help us win great power competition and take care of our
3 people.

4 So we look forward to hearing your views on these and
5 other important issues.

6 Now, Senator Reed has gone to vote. So we will pick up
7 there when he gets back.

8 I want to comment also we have some of the Senators
9 that are attending remotely, which complicates things. I
10 want to let everyone know how things are going to run.
11 Since it is impossible to know exactly when our colleagues
12 who will be joining us via the computer arrive, we will not
13 be able to be following our standard early bird timing rule.
14 Instead, we will handle the order of questions by seniority,
15 alternating side to side, until we have gone through
16 everyone. Once we reach the end, if there is anyone we
17 missed, we will go back and pick that up.

18 We will do the standard 5 minute rounds like we always
19 do, and I ask the colleagues on the computers to please keep
20 an eye on the clock which you should see on your screens.

21 Finally, to allow everyone to be heard, whether in the
22 room or on the computer, I ask all colleagues to please be
23 sure to mute your microphone when not speaking.

24 Gentlemen, we will begin with your opening statements.
25 Since we are meeting in unusual times, please feel free to

1 acknowledge family members that might be in attendance
2 remotely as you address your statements.

3 So let us start with General VanHerck. We will begin
4 with you and then we will carry on from there. Thank you.
5 you are recognized

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1 STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLEN D. VANHERCK,
2 USAF, TO BE GENERAL AND COMMANDER, UNITED STATES NORTHERN
3 COMMAND/COMMANDER, NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

4 General VanHerck: Thank you, Chairman Inhofe, Ranking
5 Member Reed. I understand he is gone. I want to thank him
6 upfront as well. Distinguished committee members, it is an
7 incredible privilege to appear before you today as the
8 President's nominee to be Commander, United States Northern
9 Command and Commander, North American Aerospace Defense
10 Command.

11 I would like to thank the President, the Secretary of
12 Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for their
13 confidence and for nominating me to lead these two unique
14 but complementary commands.

15 I would also like to thank Canadian Prime Minister
16 Trudeau, Canadian Minister of Defense Sajjan, and the Chief
17 of Defense Staff, General Jonathan Vance, who also concurred
18 with my nomination.

19 It is deeply humbling and an honor to be sitting here
20 next to the U.S. Space Command nominee, Lieutenant General
21 Jim Dickinson, as well.

22 To begin, I would like to introduce my wife Marilyn
23 sitting behind me to the committee. We ask a lot of our
24 military families, and I can tell you without hesitation
25 that I would not be here without the love and support of my

1 wife and my family. Marilyn and I have been married for
2 more than 32 years. She is an amazing woman, an inspiration
3 to many, including myself, and the best teammate that I
4 could have.

5 We have had the privilege of raising a beautiful
6 daughter Molly and welcoming our son-in-law Taylor who
7 serves in the United States Navy into our family.
8 Unfortunately, they are unable to be here with us today.
9 They have their hands full with a toddler Theo and also a
10 second grandchild on the way due in January.

11 I have been fortunate to have my incredible family by
12 my side throughout my military journey.

13 Today we face ever-growing threats to the homeland,
14 threats from actors across all domains, threats that are
15 very real and threats that are here today. I am committed
16 to the National Defense Strategy and its number one priority
17 of defending the homeland. No mission is more sacred.

18 We must remain prepared to meet the threats head on and
19 defend our homeland from an increasingly assertive set of
20 peer competitors, rogue nations, and non-state actors who
21 are committed to creating a new world order and influencing
22 our freedoms and our way of life.

23 For more than 62 years, NORAD has served as the
24 foundation for the defense of North America. This
25 incredible bond, coupled with military capabilities, ensures

1 a formidable deterrent to potential adversaries and is a
2 clear symbol of the unbreakable bond between the United
3 States and Canada. I fully understand the importance of
4 this mission, the value of the bi-national partnership, and
5 the incredible responsibility that comes with wearing the
6 hat of the Commander of NORAD. If confirmed, it would be my
7 distinct honor to lead the men and women of NORAD in this
8 no-fail mission and to work closely with General Jonathan
9 Vance as NORAD looks to modernize its capabilities while we
10 continue to build on what is already an incredibly strong
11 partnership.

12 If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with
13 our Mexican partners, including Secretary of National
14 Defense General Sandoval and Secretary of the Navy, Admiral
15 Ojeda, also Commodore King, new Commander of Royal Bahama
16 Defense Force, focusing on our common goals of security,
17 peace, and prosperity.

18 If confirmed, I commit to this committee that I will
19 provide my best military advice and candid views on the
20 issues and challenges we face and I will ensure that
21 NORTHCOM remains postured to defend the homeland and ready
22 to provide timely support to civil authorities in order to
23 eliminate suffering and ensure the safety of the American
24 people.

25 Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, members of the

1 committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear
2 before you today.

3 I look forward to your questions.

4 [The prepared statement of General VanHerck follows:]

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1 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, General VanHerck.
2 General Dickinson?

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1 STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAMES H. DICKINSON,
2 USA, TO BE GENERAL AND COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPACE
3 COMMAND

4 General Dickinson: Chairman Inhofe, is it okay if we
5 take our masks off when speaking?

6 Chairman Inhofe: Yes, it is.

7 General Dickinson: Thank you.

8 Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, and members of
9 the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear
10 before you today.

11 I am humbled and honored to be nominated as the
12 Commander of U.S. Space Command. I am thankful to the
13 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of
14 Defense, and to the President of the United States for their
15 trust and support.

16 I am honored today for the opportunity to testify
17 alongside Lieutenant General VanHerck.

18 On a personal note, I am proud to have my family here
19 with me today. I am a blessed man to have such a great and
20 supporting family. First and foremost is my wife and my
21 high school sweetheart, Angie Dickinson. We have known each
22 other for more than 42 years and have been married for
23 almost 34 years. Angie has dedicated her life to caring for
24 our four children while at the same time caring for the
25 countless Army families we have had the honor to serve

1 alongside throughout my career.

2 Seated to next to Angie are our four children, Deborah,
3 Hank, Olivia, and Joe, our son-in-law Matt, and our
4 daughter-in-law Sara. Our oldest Deborah is an elementary
5 school teacher, mother of three of our five grandchildren,
6 and herself an Army spouse. Her husband, Major Matt
7 Weisner, is a U.S. Army infantryman and a combat veteran.

8 Our oldest granddaughter Reagan recently turned nine
9 just made her fifth move in 9 years of her life with her
10 parents, and she is considered a true Army brat.

11 [Laughter.]

12 General Dickinson: Our son Hank is a newly promoted
13 area construction superintendent. His wife Sara is a
14 neonatal intensive care nurse and the mother of two of our
15 five grandchildren.

16 Our daughter Olivia is a journalist and most recently a
17 senior executive news producer.

18 And finally, Joe is a recent graduate of the University
19 of Alabama, Roll Tide, and is on the cusp of joining our
20 great Army to pursue his dream of flying helicopters.

21 Angie and I could not be more proud of our family as
22 they represent the resiliency, toughness, and service that
23 make military kids so successful. While they are considered
24 dependents because of me, the reality is I am dependent on
25 them, and I would certainly would not be here today if it

1 was not for their support, sacrifice, and their service to
2 our great nation.

3 Thank you for allowing me to introduce them today.

4 As the current Deputy Commander of U.S. Space Command,
5 I know well the tremendous responsibilities levied upon this
6 command and its incredible joint warfighters. As I reflect
7 on the responsibilities of the new position for which I have
8 been nominated, frankly I am amazed at where we are today.
9 Just over a year ago during General Raymond's nomination
10 hearing, he testified of the great alignment in our nation
11 with acknowledging space as a warfighting domain just like
12 land, air, sea, and cyber. Based on that alignment, we as a
13 nation took bold steps towards protecting and defending our
14 critical space capabilities by establishing U.S. Space
15 Command and subsequently standing up the U.S. Space Force to
16 better organize, train, and equip our space warfighters.

17 As highlighted in the new Defense Space Strategy, we
18 are now facing the most significant transformation in the
19 history of U.S. national security space programs. The
20 scope, scale, and complexity of the threats to our space
21 capabilities are real and concerning. We no longer have the
22 luxury of operating in a peaceful and benign environment.
23 And we no longer have the luxury of assuming our access to
24 and ability to leverage the space domain as a given.

25 Although space is indeed a warfighting domain, our

1 actual goal is to deter a conflict from extending into
2 space. The best way I know how to prevent that from
3 happening is be prepared to fight and win if deterrence were
4 to fail.

5 Today we are the best in the world in space, and if
6 confirmed, my job will be to make sure our advantage
7 continues to grow well into the future. The source of our
8 strength that will make this possible is and always will be
9 our service members and civilians. They are, without a
10 doubt, the best in the world at what they do. I am truly
11 humbled and honored to be considered to lead these great
12 patriots. I take this obligation and responsibility very
13 seriously, and I assure you that, if confirmed, I will
14 continue to uphold their sacred trust to the utmost of my
15 ability.

16 I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

17 [The prepared statement of General Dickinson follows:]

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1 Senator Reed [presiding]: Well, thank you very much,
2 General.

3 Chairman Inhofe has gone to the floor to vote. I am
4 going to present my statement, and then if Senator Hawley is
5 still the ranking Republican and he is available, I will ask
6 him to ask his questions. And then we will come back and
7 alternate on both sides.

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

3 Senator Reed: Again, let me thank you all for having
4 the flexibility to cooperate with us not only in the midst
5 of votes but in the midst of a pandemic. So I appreciate
6 that flexible spirit and can-do attitude.

7 Let me begin by thanking the families and the nominees.

8 General VanHerck, you are joined today by your wife
9 Marilyn, and you are the proud parents of Molly who is
10 married to Lieutenant Taylor Scott, a Navy pilot.

11 General Dickinson, we welcome your family here today:
12 your wife Angie; your daughter Deborah; and her husband,
13 Major Matt Weisner, an Army officer; your son Hank and his
14 wife Sara; your daughter Olivia; and your son Joe.

15 Thank you for all your service and the sacrifices as
16 members of military families. It is very important to all
17 of us.

18 General VanHerck, if confirmed, your mission will be to
19 protect the homeland, to deter and defeat attacks on the
20 United States, and to support civil authorities in
21 mitigating the effects of attacks and natural disasters.
22 You will also serve as the Commander of the North American
23 Aerospace Defense Command, NORAD, which brings unique
24 responsibilities and partnering opportunities with Canada to
25 deter and defend against threats to our nation. As

1 Commander of NORTHCOM, you will be responsible for the
2 operation of our homeland ballistic missile defense system,
3 and I look forward to hearing your views on the Department's
4 plan to improve the ground-based missile defense system with
5 an interim underlayer approach while we work towards
6 developing and deploying the next generation interceptor.

7 I would also like your assessment of where we stand
8 with tracking and discrimination sensors, both ground and
9 space-based, as well as the importance of developing
10 defenses against complicated hypersonic threats.

11 As you know, NORTHCOM is leading the Defense
12 Department's contributions to the federal response to the
13 coronavirus pandemic. More than 31,000 military personnel
14 are operating support of COVID-19 operations in communities
15 across the nation while at the same time, more than 25,000
16 members of the military have been diagnosed with this virus
17 since mid-March. If confirmed, you will take command as
18 this crisis continues and as other needs from agencies may
19 arise, particularly as we are now in the hurricane season.
20 You will need to balance requests for support from civil
21 authorities with the readiness and availability of our
22 forces.

23 Lastly, I remain concerned with the military utility of
24 the ongoing deployment of active duty forces to our southern
25 border and the impacts of diverting defense funds to build a

1 wall. When we should be focusing on the challenges to our
2 national security posed by near-peer adversaries like Russia
3 and China as directed by the National Defense Strategy, we
4 are needlessly committing billions of DOD dollars in support
5 of a wall that has no connection to a military threat and
6 does not support military effectiveness. And now our
7 military personnel continue to remain on the border while
8 DHS is choosing to deploy its personnel, some of whom are
9 dressed in mock camouflage, to our own cities.

10 I also continue to be concerned about the potential use
11 of military forces in areas of civil unrest in this country.
12 As NORTHCOM Commander, you would not direct this, but you
13 would be responsible for the forces that are deployed. So I
14 would expect you to keep utmost in your mind the proper role
15 and focus of active duty forces in response to such events
16 in our country.

17 General Dickinson, you are well qualified to serve as
18 the Commander of U.S. Space Command, having recently served
19 as the Commander of the Army's Space and Missile Defense
20 Command. The U.S. Space Command was inactivated in 2002,
21 and its responsibilities and forces were merged into U.S.
22 Strategic Command. Then, after nearly 17 years, U.S. Space
23 Command was reestablished last August. Since its original
24 creation in 1985, there have been nine commanders of the
25 U.S. Space Command, all from the Air Force. You will be the

1 first commanding officer from a service other than the Air
2 Force, although there are some of us who refer it as the
3 Army air corps, but we are very old.

4 [Laughter.]

5 Senator Reed: A little joke.

6 I think this is important to point out because our
7 combatant commands are joint commands. It is vital that the
8 commands incorporate the perspective of all the services.
9 The Army's space operations officers, known as the FA40s,
10 are highly prized and respected across the space community.
11 They embed themselves within the Army's ground combat forces
12 and are found often at the tip of the spear using the power
13 of space and information to enable a more effective
14 warfighting force. I hope that your boots on the ground
15 perspective and experience will be imparted to this command.

16 I am interested in hearing your views on several
17 topics.

18 First, I would like to know how you will shape a joint
19 warfighting operations plan which is at the core of all
20 combatant commands.

21 Second, during conflict in space, will you have direct
22 tasking authority over the space assets the intelligence
23 community controls? This issue is critical because there
24 must be no ambiguity in the chain of command.

25 Third, what steps will you take to ensure our missile

1 warning mission is up to date to assess an attack on our
2 homeland, especially a nuclear attack? As Commander of
3 SPACECOM, you will own a vitally important system of sensors
4 that both NORTHCOM and STRATCOM rely upon to inform the
5 President of whether our homeland is under attack. This
6 mission is more vital today than it was 60 years ago with
7 the proliferation of long-range missiles, some of which do
8 not follow a ballistic trajectory, by countries such as
9 North Korea, China, Iran, and of course, Russia. Space
10 Command is a sensor command, and the missile warning mission
11 may be its most important one.

12 Again, I thank both of you for your continued service
13 and look forward to your testimony and thank you all both.

14 Now, at this point -- let me see. I am getting
15 instructions. I have been instructed that we are going to
16 Senator Fischer, the ranking Republican who is on Webex.
17 Senator Fischer please.

18 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator Reed. Can you
19 hear me okay?

20 Senator Reed: Loud and clear.

21 Senator Fischer: Okay, great. Thank you so much.

22 And thank you for holding this hearing today on these
23 very, very important confirmations.

24 I would like to begin by asking General VanHerck. Your
25 predecessor, General O'Shaughnessy, advocated for

1 accelerating the schedule for the next generation
2 interceptor. In testimony before this committee in
3 February, he stated, quote, we cannot wait 10 years to get
4 the next gen interceptor fielded. We are trying to bring
5 that left. End quote.

6 First, I would ask, do you agree with that view? Do
7 you think the capability needs to be deployed before 2030?

8 General VanHerck: Senator, I do agree that we need to
9 field the next generation capability quicker and as soon as
10 possible.

11 Senator Fischer: And how concerned are you that with
12 the contract still not being awarded, our ability to
13 accomplish this schedule is diminishing?

14 General VanHerck: Senator, I remain concerned, just as
15 General O'Shaughnessy did. Last week, I discussed this with
16 Jon Hill from the Missile Defense Agency. He is looking
17 forward next month to receiving the request for proposals to
18 come back. I understand that NORTHCOM's number one
19 requirement was timing and sequencing of the next generation
20 interceptor. So I am optimistic, based on my discussions
21 with Jon Hill, that we will potentially see the next
22 generation interceptor move further left and not have the
23 significant gap that you are referring to.

24 Senator Fischer: I know that there are proposals to
25 develop an interim capability that would be deployed prior

1 to the NGI being fielded, a separate plan to supplement our
2 GMD system with an underlayer. Senator Reed referenced
3 that. But these options also face their own schedule and
4 budgetary challenges. What is your assessment of the
5 tradeoff of these options and the need for some additional
6 capability prior to NGI's deployment?

7 General VanHerck: Senator, my assessment is we do need
8 to look at the current system service life extension.
9 Again, in my conversations with Jon Hill last week from the
10 Missile Defense Agency, he gave me some great news, that the
11 service life extension, which Congress funded -- thank you
12 for that -- is not only going to be an extension to the
13 program, but is going to bring additional capabilities and
14 also redundancy to the system. So I am encouraged by that,
15 that it would prevent any gap.

16 With regards to the underlayer that you are talking
17 about, I also talked to Jon about that. And there is a test
18 upcoming in the wintertime that will take a look at some
19 additional capabilities, a Navy capability and potentially
20 an Army capability, specifically the SM-3 and the THAAD,
21 that will give us an additional underlayer capability. That
22 system is TBD. We need to see that test first.

23 I am encouraged and will continue to work with the
24 committee, the Missile Defense Agency, and the Department to
25 minimize any gap.

1 Senator Fischer: I think we all need to remember that
2 some of those systems that you mentioned are regional, and
3 when we look at the threats that we are facing within the
4 next 10 years, I think we need to be better prepared.

5 General, I also understand that what you can say here
6 is limited in the unclassified environment that we are in,
7 but can you briefly describe your level of concern about
8 cruise missile threats to the homeland and our ability to
9 defend against them?

10 General VanHerck: Senator, thank you.

11 Yes, it is concerning. It would be a top priority, if
12 confirmed, for me. I understand right now that there is an
13 ongoing analysis of alternatives to take a look at the
14 cruise missile threat from a NORAD perspective. I would
15 look forward to working closely with our Canadian partners
16 looking to see that analysis of alternatives to get after
17 the cruise missile threat.

18 If confirmed, domain awareness will be a top priority,
19 but we have to be able to detect those threats. And so if
20 you cannot detect them, you certainly cannot defeat them and
21 you cannot deter them. So I would place that at the top of
22 the priority list, ma'am.

23 Senator Fischer: Thank you, sir.

24 And, General Dickinson, can you talk about the steps
25 Space Command is taking to integrate with other geographic

1 combatant commands and the importance with which you view
2 this effort, given the lessons learned from the previous
3 iteration of Space Command that was de-established in 2002?

4 General Dickinson: Senator, I look at that integration
5 between U.S. space Command and the other 10 combatant
6 commands as one of our most critical areas that we need to
7 focus on. Our ability to integrate space capabilities
8 throughout the world, throughout the geographic combatant
9 commands is essential to our globally integrated effort
10 warfighting capability. And we are taking steps right now
11 to make sure that we have that capability. We have designed
12 in the new USSPACECOM headquarters these integrated planning
13 elements that we are already embedding within the combatant
14 commands. Most notably, our first one we had was at
15 USSTRATCOM, and we are following up with INDOPACOM, EUCOM,
16 CENTCOM, and then the other combatant commanders. But our
17 ability to integrate into those combatant command staffs is
18 critical to make sure that we are providing those space
19 capabilities that are needed by the joint warfighter.

20 Senator Fischer: Right. And have you only stood up a
21 portion of those teams at this point?

22 General Dickinson: Yes, Senator. We have stood up a
23 portion of those. While those teams have several people, as
24 you can imagine, on them, we do have two or three people in
25 each of those locations. So we are growing that capability

1 as we speak. And then we have the ability to reach back.
2 So those individuals are able to reach back into SPACECOM
3 headquarters and be able to get the support that they may
4 require.

5 Senator Fischer: Great. Thank you so much.

6 Thank you, Senator Reed.

7 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Fischer.

8 It is now my turn for questioning, and so let me begin
9 with General VanHerck.

10 From your experience on the Joint Staff, can you
11 describe what are the key factors you are going to be
12 looking at as you try to anticipate the response to the
13 COVID-19 that NORTHCOM will be making not just now but going
14 forward? And then you could add into that hurricanes. You
15 could add a whole host of disruptive situations. And if you
16 give us kind of a sense of your perspective, that would be
17 helpful.

18 General VanHerck: Thank you, Senator.

19 With regards to anticipation, on a routine basis from
20 my position as the Director of the Joint Staff, we monitor
21 the trends and the requirements across the States, and we
22 see that today. You are certainly seeing trends, Texas,
23 Florida, Mississippi, California, Arizona, et cetera -- to
24 anticipate the potential need for resources from DOD.

25 With regards to going forward and looking in a

1 hurricane season manner, I am encouraged to tell you that we
2 anticipated that from the Joint Staff and provided a plan
3 org to United States Northern Command to take a look at how
4 they would do defense support of civil authorities in this
5 environment. And they came back with a planning estimate,
6 commander's estimate, that gives how they would do command
7 and control of a hurricane in a COVID environment. And so
8 we have a level 2 base plan that was provided to NORTHCOM
9 that is on the shelf and ready to go in the case of a
10 hurricane or another defense support to civil authorities.
11 If confirmed, I look forward to getting into NORTHCOM and
12 hopefully not putting that into place but continue to
13 anticipate the future.

14 Senator Reed: Thank you.

15 Let me shift to your colleague, General Dickinson, and
16 then back to you if time allows.

17 General Dickinson, one of the perennial issues is
18 authority over the intelligence community and space assets.
19 Could you give us an idea whether you will have tasking
20 authority over these assets at the particular time of
21 conflict and crisis?

22 General Dickinson: So, Senator, I would start off by
23 categorizing our relationship, for example, with the
24 National Reconnaissance Office that I have been able to
25 observe since I took this job as the Deputy Commander at

1 USSPACECOM, and I would characterize that, Senator, as the
2 best it has ever been in terms of our ability to work with
3 the NRO. We have them embedded in our operations centers
4 out in Colorado Springs. We operate with them every day.
5 We train with them. We exercise with them, and we are
6 building our operational plans together to ensure that we
7 are able to do the missions that we need to together. We
8 have had some recent activity that has brought us even
9 closer in terms of being able to work together.

10 Specifically with regards to your question about
11 tasking authority, we do have a series of exercises that we
12 are working through right now that will help us get after
13 what I just described in terms of being able to work with
14 them to provide that warfighting focus that they need to
15 operate.

16 Senator Reed: Well, thank you, General.

17 Again, returning back to General VanHerck, what is your
18 assessment of the next generation interceptor? Are we
19 assuming too much risk in the situation we are right now
20 with the interceptor?

21 General VanHerck: Senator, my understanding is that
22 the United States Northern Command, General O'Shaughnessy,
23 worked closely with the Missile Defense Agency and the
24 Department in the development of the requirements for the
25 next generation interceptor. Those requirements are, my

1 understanding is, more than capable of accomplishing the
2 mission that we need in the future. If confirmed, I will
3 continue to work that closely with the intelligence
4 community, with the Department to ensure there is no
5 capability lapse for the next generation interceptor, sir.

6 Senator Reed: Thank you.

7 One of the issues is not just the platform we have but
8 the threat we face. And I think we are all much, much more
9 sensitive to hypersonic vehicles, to non-ballistic missiles
10 that could be streaking into our area of operation. That
11 must certainly heighten the kind of consequences and
12 potential dangers. Is that accurate?

13 General VanHerck: Senator, I share your concern as
14 well, and I would say that is accurate. Specific to
15 hypersonics, they create unique challenges going forward.
16 Again, talking with Jon Hill, I am very delighted to see
17 they are working on hypersonics going forward. It creates
18 unique challenges for the threat warning and attack
19 assessment capabilities, sir.

20 Senator Reed: Well, I was going to ask a question to
21 General Dickinson why it is so important for him being an
22 Army officer to have this job, but since that is obvious, I
23 will reframe from asking the question. And I will recognize
24 Senator Rounds.

25 Senator Rounds: The ranking member once again shows

1 his wisdom.

2 Senator Reed: Thank you.

3 [Laughter.]

4 Senator Rounds: General Dickinson and General
5 VanHerck, first of all, thank you and your families for
6 decades of service to our nation.

7 Last week when we spoke, in separate conversations both
8 of you mentioned the topics of SPACECOM-CYBERCOM integration
9 and SPACECOM-NORTHCOM integration. I wonder if you could
10 take this opportunity to briefly discuss why these
11 relationships are so important. And if you could, in
12 whichever order you would like, I think it is important to
13 talk about the interactions between those three.

14 General VanHerck: Senator, thank you.

15 You are absolutely correct. Those relationships are
16 vitally important.

17 From a NORTHCOM perspective, reliant for indications of
18 attack assessment with SPACECOM, as well as supporting from
19 a cyber perspective, defensive capabilities. So I talk to
20 General Nakasone as well. So I really look forward to
21 partnering with both General Nakasone and, if confirmed,
22 General Dickinson to continue on a path to ensure success.
23 I understand that the relationships between not only
24 CYBERCOM and SPACECOM and NORTHCOM, but all the combatant
25 commands are vitally important today with the global threat

1 that we have each and every day. I look forward to that, if
2 confirmed.

3 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

4 General Dickinson: Senator, the CYBERCOM-SPACECOM
5 relationship, very, very important, critical to what we do
6 each and every day. We both have a supporting and a
7 supportive role in each other's operations. We are getting
8 after that, if you will, in terms of integration through
9 putting one of our integrated planning elements from
10 USSPACECOM into USCYBERCOM and then actually the reverse, so
11 USCYBERCOM putting an integrated planning element within
12 USSPACECOM. This will help us in our efforts to make sure
13 that as we stand up U.S. Space Command that we are
14 implementing the cyber protection, cyber capabilities that
15 we need to right from the very beginning. So if you will, a
16 clean sheet of paper as we put USSPACECOM together, and we
17 are going to be able to do that starting out on the ground
18 floor by this relationship.

19 And it is critical and, as General VanHerck said,
20 critical to all the other combatant commands as well, but in
21 particular for SPACECOM and CYBERCOM where you have two
22 domains where you are not necessarily are able to see
23 physically what is going on in each of those domains. So
24 our ability to work together is critical.

25 Senator Rounds: I agree, and I just think it used to

1 be we talked about air, land, and sea, and now we clearly
2 have to talk about space and cyber space. And without all
3 five of them protected and coordinated together, we are in
4 trouble. And so I appreciate the fact that both of you
5 recognize that and want to continue to improve it.

6 General Dickinson, when we talked last week, we
7 discussed the article that recently was written by retired
8 Admiral Dennis Blair and former Deputy Secretary of Defense
9 Robert Work concerning the problem of overclassification of
10 space information. They had argued rather persuasively that
11 overclassification results in the duplication of space
12 systems, the lack of integration of space capabilities and
13 training, and ignorance of specific space threats among our
14 operational forces.

15 Can you discuss your thoughts on this issue with this
16 committee? And I recognize that we are not in a closed door
17 session, but just in terms of the importance of reviewing
18 the classifications with regard to space.

19 General Dickinson: Senator, that is a very important
20 process that we need to do routinely. And so in my previous
21 job as the Commander of U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense
22 Command, I saw firsthand how that overclassification, if you
23 will, was actually making it more difficult for us to
24 actually provide support to the warfighter.

25 And so we have to look at that. And I read the same

1 article, Senator, and I would tell you that we have come a
2 long ways in a short period of time in terms of that
3 particular effort. We have looked at that in the DOD in my
4 last job very extensively. And we have already seen in the
5 U.S. Army how that declassification, if you will, of some of
6 the assets that we have has added to not only more soldiers
7 being able to be trained and qualified on that capability
8 but providing that capability to the warfighter on the
9 ground.

10 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Senator Reed: Senator Manchin, please.

13 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Thank you all for your service. Thank you for being
15 here.

16 General VanHerck, we spoke about ensuring Northern
17 Command's training operations are efficient as possible. An
18 important part of that process will included smaller-scale
19 training exercises which allow for centralized planning,
20 decentralized execution. We talked about this yesterday.
21 So if you could share with us -- while I know that we are in
22 agreement on the issue, could you share your opinions on how
23 best to maximize the efficiency of training operations in
24 these unique and challenging times?

25 General VanHerck: Thank you, Senator. I enjoyed the

1 discussion.

2 Yes, training opportunities are crucial, not only the
3 tier one large exercises but exercises at all levels.

4 Senator Manchin: Sure.

5 General VanHerck: Today we have to be as efficient and
6 effective as possible with each and every training dollar
7 that are given. And so we should look continuously at
8 training opportunities that maximize the dollars that
9 Congress gives, that taxpayers expect.

10 I look forward to, if confirmed, working with you to
11 take a look at potential opportunities for efficiency and
12 effectiveness in training.

13 Senator Manchin: The National Guard is not the
14 National Guard of our fathers. Is it?

15 General VanHerck: I am sorry, sir.

16 Senator Manchin: The National Guard is not the
17 National Guard that our fathers or grandfathers knew.

18 General VanHerck: Absolutely. I concur with you 100
19 percent. Today's National Guard is in with us each and
20 every day, and there have to be training opportunities for
21 the National Guard.

22 Senator Manchin: Thank you, sir.

23 And, General Dickinson, in the past few months, we have
24 seen concerning signs of offensive capabilities and tensions
25 in space from our adversaries. This includes Russia's

1 testing anti-satellite weapons; last week Iran launching a
2 military satellite into orbit in April; and China launching
3 three imaging satellites over the course of 3 days last
4 month. While these three examples vary in severity, there
5 is no question that they are signs of our adversaries are
6 successful, improving, and investing in their space program.

7 So what are your strategies for ensuring that the Space
8 Command responds to adversaries challenging U.S. dominance
9 in space while also avoiding perpetuating any further
10 weaponization of space?

11 General Dickinson: Senator, I think two parts to that
12 that I would answer. First is that we have to hold our
13 competitors accountable for their actions in space, and that
14 has actually been one of the major functions or achievements
15 in my words, in my opinion, the first year, like 11 months,
16 of USSPACECOM being in existence is we have the
17 professionals now that are looking at that each and every
18 day using our space domain awareness capabilities to
19 understand what our competitors are doing in space.

20 Senator Manchin: Do you have good -- I am sorry, sir
21 -- good communications between our adversaries who are
22 basically really going into space and going at it with the
23 gusto? Do you have good communications to let them know
24 what is the protocol or what we will accept, what we will
25 not accept, or are we the gatekeeper?

1 General Dickinson: So, Senator, that is actually an
2 area that we are working on very hard right now is
3 establishing what we call norms of behavior in the space
4 domain. And so we have seen this in other domains, for
5 example, the maritime domain where it took us some time to
6 establish what the norms of behavior are, what are the
7 acceptable practices in that domain. So we are working
8 that, and by holding our competitors accountable, we are
9 starting to begin to establish what we would consider the
10 norms of behavior are in space.

11 Senator Manchin: That is establish any type of
12 authority has to be through superiority.

13 General Dickinson: I am sorry, Senator.

14 Senator Manchin: Our superiority in space is the only
15 way we are going to get any of their attentions probably to
16 work with us or to allow us to set those norms.

17 General Dickinson: Senator, I think from our
18 deterrence position, we deter by the position of strength.
19 And as I said in my opening statement, we are the best in
20 space.

21 Senator Manchin: Thank you, sir.

22 General VanHerck, one final one. I had the pleasure of
23 speaking with you yesterday, and we touched upon the
24 importance -- that is the wrong one.

25 In the past few months, we have seen concerning signs

1 of offensive capabilities and intentions -- oh, here it is.

2 We are seeing steadily increasing aggression from
3 Russia and a growing interest from China in the region of
4 the Arctic. I think we spoke briefly about that yesterday.

5 Could you give an outline of some of your top
6 priorities to counter the conventional and unconventional
7 threats that we are likely to face from both countries in
8 that region?

9 General VanHerck: Sure, Senator. Thank you.

10 The changes in the environment have allowed more access
11 to the Arctic. With the vast amount of resources, certainly
12 there will be competition for those resources, whether they
13 be oil or minerals. Both Russia and China are very
14 interested in the Arctic.

15 With regards to what the NORTHCOM perspective would be,
16 if confirmed, is persistence. We need persistence and
17 domain awareness in the Arctic to ensure that we are aware
18 and able to detect, monitor, and if needed, deter.

19 Senator Manchin: Can you speak about the partnership
20 that we see going on between China and Russia, partnerships
21 in the Arctic? And are our allies as concerned as we are
22 about deterring that?

23 General VanHerck: Senator, I am not aware of a
24 specific partnership with China and Russia in the Arctic.

25 I assure you that our allies and partners are concerned

1 about China's activities and Russia's activities in the
2 Arctic.

3 Senator Manchin: I look forward to talking to you more
4 about that. And we just did a trip in the Arctic and it was
5 very interesting and hearing from the Arctic nations up
6 there, their concerns and what activities they are seeing
7 now.

8 General VanHerck: Yes, sir.

9 Senator Manchin: Thank you, sir.

10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 Chairman Inhofe [presiding]: Thank you.

12 Going back and forth and voting with the two votes, I
13 did my opening statements, but I had two questions I was
14 going to ask in the beginning. Now, if they have already
15 been asked while I was out voting, you can just skip that
16 over.

17 That would be, first of all, General VanHerck, from the
18 opening statement, you mentioned your support for the
19 National Defense Strategy -- that is this document here that
20 we all are adhering to -- and the defense of our homeland
21 being the number one priority. You also mentioned that
22 threats to the homeland are here now.

23 So can you expand a bit on the strategic environment
24 that you would expect to face when you are confirmed as
25 NORTHCOM, or have you already responded to that question?

1 General VanHerck: Senator, I have not.

2 Chairman Inhofe: All right.

3 General VanHerck: If confirmed, I would expect a very
4 dynamic environment. Over 32 years of service, I do not
5 think I have ever seen a strategic and dynamic of a national
6 security challenges that we have today.

7 Over the last 3 decades, our competitors and potential
8 adversaries have watched the United States and our way of
9 deterring, our way of competing, and our way in conflict.
10 They have taken the opportunity to adapt to that environment
11 by watching us. Specifically China and Russia across all
12 domains.

13 Russia develops strategic capabilities such as their
14 submarines which now are a significant challenge for
15 tracking and pose the potential for cruise missiles that can
16 strike the homeland.

17 China will do the same in the not too distant future as
18 they continue to develop their capabilities and become more
19 expeditionary.

20 Russia will continue with their cruise missile
21 development, which is a significant challenge that we talked
22 about earlier as well.

23 DPRK, with the nuclear capability and the potential to
24 strike the homeland.

25 Iran, although not having a nuclear capability at this

1 time, continues down a path developing space capability,
2 which could translate into an ICBM capability and, of
3 course, they are state sponsors of terrorism. And their
4 proxies will continue attacks on the Western nations as
5 well.

6 Couple that with the VEO and also transnational
7 criminal organizations, I expect a full challenge, if
8 confirmed as the NORTHCOM Commander, sir.

9 Chairman Inhofe: Very good.

10 And, General Dickinson, the National Defense Strategy
11 and great power competition -- in your view, does the 2018
12 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment as
13 it pertains to the domain of space?

14 General Dickinson: Senator, I think it does. And when
15 I look across the spectrum of competitors that we are
16 looking at today, in particular two of them, China and
17 Russia, are very active. We have seen that over the last
18 few years, particularly with China in 2007 with their direct
19 ascent anti-satellite capability test that they have
20 demonstrated their proliferation of jammers and directed
21 energy.

22 Similarly, Russia has been in the news the last couple
23 weeks, actually the last few months, in terms of what they
24 are doing on orbit in terms of advancing their capabilities.

25 North Korea and, in particular, not again not advancing

1 quickly in the space domain, but is definitely using that in
2 terms of developing missile technology.

3 And likewise with Iran, their ability to put satellites
4 into orbit, albeit not as capable, is still able to
5 demonstrate that missile technology to do that.

6 So, Chairman, I would just tell you that they are
7 active and I agree with the NDS.

8 Chairman Inhofe: Yes. Thank you very much.

9 Senator Shaheen?

10 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 General VanHerck, as you know, this administration has
12 attempted to divert billions in funding for Department of
13 Defense counterdrug activities, including monies that have
14 been dedicated to the Joint Task Force North
15 counternarcotics mission, for the construction of a border
16 wall.

17 Commander O'Shaughnessy, when he was before this
18 committee, stated that he recommended to the Secretary that
19 counterdrug mission funding not be diverted to border wall
20 construction.

21 Would you agree that this funding should remain
22 dedicated to the NORTHCOM counternarcotics mission?

23 General VanHerck: Senator, thank you.

24 I would have to go to the border and assess, if
25 confirmed, to make a rational judgment at this time. In

1 general, I would support and say that counternarcotics
2 funding is crucial to the mission. But, again, I have not
3 been to the border to make that assessment.

4 Senator Shaheen: Well, can you comment on any ways
5 that you think that NORTHCOM's counternarcotics mission can
6 be improved or modernized or be more effective than it
7 currently is to disrupt drug trafficking by transnational
8 criminal organizations?

9 General VanHerck: Senator, my understanding is that
10 the NORTHCOM mission is in support of the Department of
11 Homeland Security. Homeland Security has capability gaps
12 right now. The NORTHCOM mission is in support through
13 operational support, infrastructure support, aviation
14 support, and detection and monitoring. If confirmed, I
15 commit to go to the border quickly and make an assessment of
16 that mission and provide candid and honest feedback, when
17 appropriate.

18 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. I appreciate that.

19 As you know and as has been referred to, obviously
20 NORTHCOM includes the Arctic. And can you speak to your
21 plans to continue the research that has been undertaken in
22 engineering new technologies for cold weather adaptability?
23 You may know that the Army's Cold Regions Lab is in Hanover,
24 New Hampshire, and it provides a lot of research and
25 capabilities that the Army can then use. And as we are

1 looking at a situation where we really have not had a major
2 northern conflict since the Korean War, how important it is
3 to have the kind of research and adaptability that can be
4 used by our services.

5 General VanHerck: Senator, that is incredibly
6 important.

7 As I mentioned earlier, persistence is what is crucial
8 in the Arctic, and to have persistence, you have to be
9 equipped and trained and capable and have the equipment to
10 do that. If confirmed, I commit to you that I will continue
11 to look at that. That is really a service perspective on
12 the development. I would work closely with any of the
13 service chiefs to ensure that the equipment for any forces
14 allocated or assigned to NORTHCOM have what they need to
15 compete and deter in the Arctic.

16 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. We hope that you
17 will also come and visit the Cold Regions Lab in Hanover and
18 see exactly what their capabilities are. I think you
19 will find the research they do there is going to be of great
20 importance.

21 General VanHerck: Senator, if confirmed, I look
22 forward to that.

23 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

24 General Dickinson, can you talk about how you envision
25 the National Guard and Reserve as you think about how we use

1 their skill sets in both Space Command and in maintaining
2 our superiority in the space domain?

3 General Dickinson: Senator, I think the Reserve
4 component in particular for space is incredibly important.
5 My experience in my last job as the U.S. Army Space and
6 Missile Defense Command Commander was I was very impressed
7 with the Reserve component contributions to the Army space
8 mission. Those same professionals are supporting U.S. Space
9 Command now, and they are so important to our mission that
10 we cannot do that every day unless we have them. And I see
11 that only getting stronger and more of a part of our command
12 as we continue to mature. I do know there is some work
13 going on in the Department now to look at what the future
14 might be for that. But what I can speak about today is the
15 fact that we have National Guardsmen and Reservists both
16 from the Air Force and from the Army right now performing
17 space missions in support of U.S. Space Command.

18 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. I hope that will continue
19 and you will continue to evaluate how they can contribute to
20 the mission.

21 As I am sure you are aware, a number of our commercial
22 and military satellites are proliferating and the tracking
23 of those objects has become increasingly important. Right
24 now, the Air Force is playing this role at the federal
25 level, but as I am sure you are aware, there is discussion

1 about moving some of these responsibilities to the
2 Department of Commerce.

3 As the ranking member of the Commerce, Justice, and
4 Science Appropriations Subcommittee, I, along with Chairman
5 Moran, have requested additional information about what
6 moving this operation from DOD to the Department of Commerce
7 would entail, how many personnel, what other changes would
8 be required. We have not yet received an answer to our
9 request even though it has been a number of months.

10 Can you talk about what concerns you might have about
11 moving those capabilities from DOD to the Department of
12 Commerce, if any, or do you think this is a great idea?

13 General Dickinson: Senator, my opinion is that I think
14 it is a good idea. I think it is the future and where we
15 need to move. As you mentioned, the space domain is
16 becoming much more cluttered, populated, if you will, with
17 the proliferation of satellites, technology, and debris for
18 that matter. And so I think as we move forward in order to
19 make sure that we do it the most efficient and in the most
20 safest manner is that we should look towards that. And if
21 confirmed, I would look forward to working that particular
22 issue with you and your committee.

23 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. My time is out, but
24 I think we would like to get back to you on what you think
25 will be required in order to do that successfully.

1 Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman.

2 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Cramer?

3 Senator Cramer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 And I thank both of you for being here and thank you
5 both as well for very interesting phone conversations. I
6 guess we met in person in your cases, and I am grateful for
7 that. I was encouraged by it, quite honestly.

8 We have more questions than time, but we will submit
9 the rest for later.

10 I wanted to follow up, General VanHerck, with our
11 discussion about over-the-horizon radar. As I think I
12 mentioned to you, the Air Force lab and NORAD did a --
13 NORTHCOM did a test in North Dakota at Camp Grafton, which
14 is a National Guard camp and facility. Our feedback was
15 that the results were far extended to actually -- far
16 exceeded the expectations. And I would just be interested
17 in your knowledge of over-the-horizon radar, what you see
18 coming, if anything, and how you think it might play out.

19 General VanHerck: Sure, Senator.

20 Anything that enhances our capability for domain
21 awareness is going to be crucial specifically with regards
22 to ballistic missile and cruise missile capabilities, a
23 longer range, and to keep an eye on what may be going on
24 over the Arctic and beyond.

25 Specific to the test, I do not have the details. I

1 will get those from AFRL, if confirmed, but specific we are
2 looking for further discrimination especially with ballistic
3 missiles as they get more advanced and the technology with
4 debris and decoy kind of information would be crucial. And
5 any of those radar capabilities would help us with that.

6 Senator Cramer: As long as we are on the topic of
7 radar, maybe I will throw one out that both of you could
8 weigh in on.

9 We talked about the radar station at Cavalier that is a
10 Space Force station now and has been there since the 1970s.
11 It looks its age. But I am wondering about the data that is
12 collected there. Is it still relevant, and is there more
13 that can be done in terms of modernizing the space station
14 at Cavalier for awareness?

15 General VanHerck: Well, Senator, the data that comes
16 from that is absolutely critical to our missile warning
17 architecture that we have throughout North America, as well
18 as the rest of the world.

19 In terms of the age of the radar and those types of
20 things, I can speak from a position of USSPACECOM, if
21 confirmed, that I would take a look at those capabilities
22 and put the demand or the requirements to the U.S. Space
23 Force and work with General Raymond on improving, if that is
24 what we need to do.

25 Senator Cramer: So that leads to what I was not

1 planning to be the follow-up to that, but it makes perfect
2 sense. Since we got that at Cavalier and we are still
3 waiting for results and to see just how specific and how
4 clear images can be from over-the-horizon radar, the
5 northern tier becomes important. We talked a little bit
6 about the Arctic, but there is not a lot between Minnesota
7 or Michigan and, say, Montana except North Dakota and some
8 other important States.

9 But what I am sort of wondering about as it relates to
10 the Arctic itself and should an attack come from over
11 Saskatchewan or Manitoba, are we prepared for that? Do we
12 have the right equipment? Do we have enough tankers and
13 bombers and response weapons if something like that should
14 happen? Maybe, General VanHerck, you would be the
15 logical --

16 General VanHerck: Senator, my understanding is that
17 the current ballistic missile defense system is capable of
18 defending against the intended threat that we have today.

19 With regards to bombers and additional threats, the
20 cruise missile threat certainly is a concern, and that would
21 be a top priority, if confirmed, for me and domain
22 awareness. That goes back to your radar question, having
23 awareness of what is coming over the horizon. So, if
24 confirmed, I would look forward to partnering with you and
25 the committee to ensure we get after that threat.

1 Senator Cramer: Before my time runs out, I do want to
2 associate myself with some of the issues raised by Senator
3 Shaheen with regard to a Guard, and I know there is a
4 process for doing that and I think a deliberative process,
5 slow process -- it does not have to be done the way it has
6 always been done. Let us just say that. So with regard to
7 space, I appreciate that.

8 The only other thing I would bring up at this point is,
9 with General Dickinson, when General Raymond did visit Grand
10 Forks and the University of North Dakota in January, just
11 after being named chief, he told the University of North
12 Dakota they would be a great fit for a space-related UARC,
13 university-affiliated research center. Since then, we know
14 that it has changed from a consortium of schools to a
15 competition for a school or group of schools and the process
16 has slowed down. So as we understand, it is going to be
17 Space Command not Space Force that would actually run the
18 UARC.

19 So how do you envision a space UARC coming together? I
20 ask that question also with the statement that we sure hope
21 that UND is very seriously considered and a partner.

22 General Dickinson: Senator, that is a program -- as
23 the Deputy at U.S. Space Command right now, that is a
24 program that we are actively looking at right now. We
25 understand the absolute value of having a UARC as part of

1 that. In my previous assignment, I was a Chief of Staff at
2 USSTRATCOM where we leveraged the UARC very well within that
3 combatant command. And as we stand up U.S. Space Command,
4 we are looking at the best practices right now across the
5 other combatant commands in the Department to see how best
6 to stand that up to meet the needs that we are going to
7 have. And I envision over the next 9 months or so that that
8 program will come together in a formal way.

9 Senator Cramer: I appreciate that.

10 I will just close by just again reminding you that we
11 are a northern tier State with important assets, academic
12 and talent and others, as well as well positioned to both
13 defend the Arctic and play a role in space.

14 And with that, I thank you.

15 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

16 Senator Blumenthal?

17 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

18 Thank you both for your service and to your families as
19 well, and thank you for being here today.

20 Lieutenant General VanHerck, at the time that you are
21 testifying here today, Attorney General Barr is testifying
22 before a House committee, the Judiciary Committee, on the
23 use of federal policing forces against protesters in Oregon
24 and elsewhere in the country. The question of the use of
25 military force has also been raised. In fact, the President

1 has raised it as a possibility.

2 Would you agree with me that the American military
3 should never be used to suppress First Amendment free
4 expression?

5 General VanHerck: Senator, what I would say is the
6 American military should be the absolute last resort to be
7 utilized in any case. The first utilization should occur
8 from local authorities, then State, and federal law
9 enforcement. But the Constitution, the law allows for the
10 use of forces if required, but it would be the absolute last
11 resort.

12 Senator Blumenthal: But not to suppress First
13 Amendment rights because, would you not agree, that would be
14 an illegal order if it were issued to you?

15 General VanHerck: Senator, I fully support protests of
16 the First Amendment type exactly as you stated. There
17 should be freedom to your First Amendment at any time.

18 But what concerns me is protests that turn violent, and
19 those concern me significantly. We cannot have that in the
20 nation. We have to abide by laws. And so a last resort
21 would be the use of the military.

22 Senator Blumenthal: And I agree with you that violence
23 and lawbreaking that involves a threat of physical injury is
24 to be deterred and to be prosecuted when it violates the
25 law. But how would you decide whether military force is in

1 fact needed, if ever, as a last resort to protect individual
2 rights as was done, for example, in the South at the time of
3 desegregation, as has been done elsewhere?

4 But I have submitted proposed legislation. It is
5 called the CIVIL Act. It would essentially make the
6 President certify or report, explain to Congress why and
7 whether troops are necessary. Right now, he can send troops
8 abroad and he must report back to Congress. Under the War
9 Powers Act, he is accountable to Congress, specifically by
10 statute. There is no such requirement if he uses American
11 troops against American citizens.

12 How would you decide, by what criteria, whether force
13 is necessary, and would you support legislation that would
14 require some accountability to Congress?

15 General VanHerck: Senator, my understanding is that,
16 if confirmed as the Commander of NORTHCOM, it would not be
17 my decision to make the use of force decision. That would
18 come from the President to the Secretary of Defense as a
19 direction.

20 What I can assure you is if I felt I was being given an
21 illegal, immoral, or unethical order, that I am obligated to
22 not follow that order.

23 With regard to your second question about supporting
24 legislation, I am going to stay out of the policy aspect of
25 that. If that law is enacted, Senator, I will support it

1 100 percent.

2 Senator Blumenthal: And let me ask you finally. You
3 are familiar with what was done in Lafayette Park. Correct?

4 General VanHerck: I am.

5 Senator Blumenthal: Are those National Guard troops
6 within your purview?

7 General VanHerck: Senator, are you talking about in my
8 current job or, if confirmed, a future job? The answer is
9 really neither. Those National Guard troops were not
10 allocated or assigned to USNORTHCOM is my understanding.

11 Senator Blumenthal: What about the use of Air Force or
12 Air National Guard assets potentially over Oregon? I do not
13 know whether you have seen the report that there was some
14 form of surveillance in the use of an Air Force plane.

15 General VanHerck: Senator, I am aware of that report.
16 What I understood was it was a test mission that the United
17 States Air Force had scheduled months in advance. It
18 happened to coincide and was noticed. But there was no
19 mission assignment to support anything on the ground in
20 Oregon.

21 Senator Blumenthal: And let me just ask you finally,
22 will you commit as the Commander of NORTHCOM that you would
23 report to us, if asked, about the use of any military force
24 involving American citizens, as we have been discussing?

25 General VanHerck: Let me make sure I understand your

1 question. Are you talking about the proposal you have to
2 enact?

3 Senator Blumenthal: No. Let me rephrase it. I am
4 sorry I was unclear.

5 Would you report to us about the use of military force
6 against American citizens in any incident after it occurred?

7 General VanHerck: Senator, I will answer that in two
8 parts.

9 First, if directed in a lawful order to execute with
10 military force, I will follow that. If this committee would
11 like to discuss that, absolutely I would come to discuss
12 that.

13 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you. Thanks very much.

14 General VanHerck: Thank you, Senator.

15 Chairman Inhofe: Senator Sullivan?

16 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 And, gentlemen, congratulations on your nominations and
18 thank you for your decades of service to our nation.

19 General VanHerck, I want to talk a lot about your
20 responsibility in this important position with regard to
21 your responsibilities overseeing the Arctic. I have been in
22 the Senate 5 and a half years. We have made very
23 significant progress on focusing on this not because the
24 Pentagon has been focused on this. It has been primarily
25 this committee, bipartisan way. You know, we started -- the

1 previous NORTHCOM Commander when I was here was not that
2 focused on the Arctic at all. It has got increasingly
3 better. General O'Shaughnessy has been fantastic.

4 So can you give me your sense of the great power
5 competition that is occurring in the Arctic and what we need
6 to do? I think we are, unfortunately, way behind. But the
7 Congress of the United States has been really pressing this
8 issue to get the Pentagon to wake up, and I think the
9 Pentagon is finally waking up. I give a lot of credit to
10 General O'Shaughnessy, the Secretary of the Air Force. You
11 may have seen -- Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit this
12 for the record. The new Department of the Air Force Arctic
13 Strategy came out last week. It is a really good document.

14 Again, 5 and half years ago, the Obama administration
15 Arctic strategy in this committee I referred to as a joke
16 because it was, 13 pages, 6 of which were pictures. Climate
17 change was mentioned like six or seven times and Russia was
18 mentioned once in a footnote. And China was not even
19 mentioned.

20 So it is a changing situation now.

21 Can you give me your views? And then I would like to
22 ask some specific issues with regard to the Arctic.

23 Chairman Inhofe: Without objection, that will be made
24 a part of the record at this point.

25 [The information follows:]

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1 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 General VanHerck: Thank you, Senator.

3 I see tremendous value in the Arctic. Specifically, if
4 confirmed, what I would focus on is enabling persistence.
5 And I am encouraged by the strategy that you talked about
6 from the Air Force. I have read it. I think it is a great
7 step in the right direction.

8 China and Russia, as you asked about, tremendous
9 resources in the Arctic. Russia specifically, using the
10 militarization taking approximately a dozen or so bases and
11 either reopening or opening to have significant influence in
12 the Arctic.

13 China calls themselves a near Arctic nation, which I
14 find hard to believe, but they do. But certainly they want
15 to have persistence in the Arctic as well.

16 That demands persistence of the United States as well
17 in my mind, and to do that would require some capabilities.
18 I understand that General O'Shaughnessy and NORTHCOM have a
19 requirement for fuel north of Dutch Harbor. That could
20 enable some additional capabilities for persistence.

21 Communications will be a significant challenge. I
22 understand that is the number one priority for General
23 O'Shaughnessy right now.

24 Senator Sullivan: We have a third of that requirement
25 in the NDAA this year. So we are making progress there too.

1 General VanHerck: Yes. And so we sincerely appreciate
2 that, Senator. That is crucial in the northern latitudes.
3 Communication allows command and control as well. And to
4 deter and defend, you have to be able to command and control
5 the forces. And so you have to have the infrastructure to
6 support that.

7 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask about infrastructure,
8 General. Just again this week -- hardly a week goes by
9 without a new media article or something in the press about
10 the Arctic. Pompeo says U.S. to expand Arctic role to deter
11 Russia and China. That was in the "Washington Post" 2 days
12 ago. Yesterday in the "Wall Street Journal," there was a
13 huge article -- huge -- China's move to buy Arctic gold mine
14 draws fire in Canada. As world powers seek dominance in the
15 Arctic region, opponents of the purchase say blocking deal
16 is in Canadians' national interest.

17 You are going to be working closely with the Canadians,
18 as you mentioned in your opening statement on this.

19 And then the President just a month ago put out from
20 him the memorandum on safeguarding U.S. national interests
21 in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. I would like to submit
22 this for the record, Mr. Chairman.

23 Chairman Inhofe: Without objection.

24 [The information follows:]

25 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

1 Senator Sullivan: But what the President is asking
2 you, the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, Secretary
3 of Homeland Security is look at that issue of
4 infrastructure. His memo says we need more icebreakers and
5 we need a presence of at least two U.S. basing locations for
6 these new icebreakers.

7 Do you think it would make sense to put one of those
8 basing locations in the part of America that actually is the
9 Arctic?

10 General VanHerck: Senator, I do think it makes sense,
11 and if confirmed, I would continue to work with you and this
12 committee to ensure that we get after that.

13 Senator Sullivan: Great. Thank you, General.

14 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

16 Senator Hirono?

17 Senator Hirono: I ask every nominee on any of the
18 committees on which I sit the following two questions. So I
19 will ask you gentlemen the following two questions.

20 Since you became a legal adult, have you ever made
21 unwanted requests for sexual favors or committed any verbal
22 or physical harassment or assault of a sexual nature?

23 We will start with you, General VanHerck.

24 General VanHerck: No, Senator.

25 Senator Hirono: General Dickinson?

1 General Dickinson: No, Senator.

2 Senator Hirono: Second question. Have you ever faced
3 discipline or entered into a settlement related to this kind
4 of conduct?

5 General VanHerck: No, Senator.

6 General Dickinson: No, Senator.

7 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

8 You have been asked -- this is for General VanHerck.
9 You have been asked a number of questions. So should you be
10 confirmed to the position of NORTHCOM Commander, some
11 questions along the lines of involvement in civilian
12 protests. So in recent weeks, we have seen disturbing
13 levels of violence used against American citizens exercising
14 their right to protest.

15 Assuming that you are confirmed, what kind of training
16 will the forces under your purview get to deal with
17 nonviolent protesters if they are called up?

18 General VanHerck: Senator, if forces are called to be
19 utilized, they would get training on the standing rules for
20 the use of force and any training that would involve being
21 in close proximity or with civilians.

22 Senator Hirono: Is there any kind of training that you
23 are aware of that deals with civilian nonviolent protesters
24 such as de-escalation training? Do you think there should
25 be specialized training for forces that are used to dealing

1 in the military context when they are in a civilian context?

2 General VanHerck: Senator, I do believe that if
3 anybody from the military is going to be put into that
4 situation, that we as senior leaders owe them the proper
5 training. What I would tell you is, if I am confirmed and
6 if put into that situation, I will ensure 100 percent that
7 anybody put into that situation will have the proper
8 training before they are put in there.

9 Senator Hirono: So it would seem that you would be
10 able to give me a commitment that you will do everything
11 possible in your role as the NORTHCOM Commander to ensure
12 that forces under your purview do not violate the rights of
13 American citizens when providing support to civilian
14 authorities.

15 General VanHerck: Senator, I commit to you, if
16 confirmed and put into that position where forces are going
17 to be put in proximity to support either a federal agency or
18 via an act where they are in charge, that they will get the
19 most training possible before they get put into that
20 situation.

21 Senator Hirono: And while you said that the decision
22 will ultimately be made by the President, as a Commander I
23 think you have some responsibility to make your own
24 decisions. For example, General Milley apologized for his
25 presence at Lafayette Square during that photo op of the

1 President. So he was exercising his own judgment. And you
2 may be called upon to exercise your own judgment to come
3 through with the commitment that you are making today.

4 You were asked about the importance of the National
5 Guard and providing support to SPACECOM, and this is for
6 General Dickinson. Senator Shaheen had asked you some
7 questions, and I just wanted to note that this year it was
8 announced that the Hawaii Air National Guard has been
9 selected to have one of four national offensive space
10 control squadrons. And I understand that the Hawaii Air
11 National Guard is in the process of establishing the 293rd
12 space control squad base at the Pacific Missile Range
13 facility on Kauai. So thank you very much for acknowledging
14 the importance of their role in SPACECOM, General Dickinson.
15 That is not a question.

16 I do have a question for you, General Dickinson. We
17 know that you are going to need a lot of qualified people
18 mainly with STEM backgrounds as we set up SPACECOM. And
19 given the competition for talent across the STEM and cyber
20 communities, how will you work with the military services to
21 ensure that SPACECOM has the technical experts needed to
22 perform the mission of the space domain, and what will you
23 do to attract minorities, including women, to serve in
24 SPACECOM?

25 General Dickinson: Senator, the question is one of

1 talent management is I think what you asked me and how are
2 we going to attract good talent from the STEM curriculum
3 into the United States Space Command. And my overall
4 assessment, being the Deputy for about 6 or 7 months now and
5 in my former job at U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense
6 Command, is we have got tremendous interest from our young
7 population wanting to come and be a part of the space
8 enterprise, whether it is commercial, civil, or in this case
9 military. And so our ability to attract young talent -- I
10 think we have got a lot of people that want to come serve,
11 and we have a lot of young adults that want to serve their
12 nation in this capacity. So I am encouraged by the numbers
13 of people that are interested in doing that.

14 And I think we as a Department, and if confirmed as the
15 USSPACECOM Commander, is that we need to have mechanisms in
16 place that will attract that young talent. In my last job,
17 we had a very robust scholarship program and opportunity for
18 internships out some of our universities across the country.
19 And I would look to expand that so that we can maintain that
20 knowledge base and that expertise within the command.

21 Senator Hirono: I hope that you will make concerted
22 efforts to encourage minorities, which include women, to
23 seek jobs in SPACECOM because there is certainly a lack of
24 encouragement for minorities and women in the STEM area. So
25 I hope you will have a focused effort to encourage young

1 folks to work with you.

2 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Hirono.

3 Senator Cotton?

4 Senator Cotton: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Thank you, gentlemen, for your appearance and
6 congratulations on your nomination.

7 General VanHerck, I want to speak about the nuclear
8 threat facing the American people. Our lead negotiator for
9 the New START treaty, Marshall Billingslea, has warned that
10 China is in the midst of what he calls an alarming crash
11 nuclear buildup. We also have a significant flaw in the
12 existing New START regime in that it does not capture
13 Russia's significant advantage in what are variously called
14 low-yield tactical or battlefield nuclear weapons. I do not
15 see much difference between tactical and strategic nuclear
16 weapons since both are devastating.

17 As the Northern Command Commander, you will have the
18 homeland aerospace defense mission. So from a military
19 standpoint, do these twin threats concern you? Are you
20 worried about the risk of nuclear overmatch when Russia and
21 China's forces are combined against the United States?

22 General VanHerck: Senator, I am confident -- and I
23 have talked to Admiral Richard -- with our deterrent
24 capability today that we can deter both China and Russia.

25 With regards to New START, specifically entering into a

1 treaty that would put us at a disadvantage with one or the
2 other -- that would have to be something that I would have
3 to really take a look at. I would be concerned about that,
4 Senator.

5 Senator Cotton: General, I am confident in our ability
6 to deter that threat today as well, but what about in the
7 next 5 to 10-year period? Are you concerned that what Mr.
8 Billingslea refers to the crash nuclear build up in China
9 could put us in a position in the near future where we face
10 a combined nuclear force of China and Russia that is greater
11 than ours and therefore that we cannot effectively deter?

12 General VanHerck: Senator, I need to get smarter on
13 that, to be honest with you. But right now, I understand
14 that our deterrence has the capability to deter both.

15 Now, with that being said, I am concerned with what I
16 see about China, their rapid buildup and their change of
17 strategy with their nuclear weapons. If confirmed, I commit
18 to you to work with you and this committee and the
19 intelligence community to continue to monitor that. If I
20 ever felt that there was overmatch, then I am going to speak
21 as loud as anybody in the room, sir.

22 Senator Cotton: Thank you. I appreciate it, General.

23 General Dickinson, Russia has just announced that it
24 will deploy hypersonic nuclear strike weapons with its navy.
25 I know that counter-hypersonics are already a top priority

1 for the Department of Defense. Yet, we currently have only
2 minimal capability to detect these weapons throughout most
3 of their very short flight profile.

4 Do you believe a space-based sensor layer is one of the
5 most critical capabilities the Department needs to detect
6 and track hypersonics?

7 General Dickinson: Senator, in my opinion, yes. We
8 need to have a space-based detection capability. That is
9 absolutely critical to solve this problem with hypersonics.
10 Our ability to see that threat early in the sequence or in
11 the kill chain of that is absolutely critical to our success
12 in defeating it. So I would look, if confirmed, to advocate
13 for that capability in terms of building out a space-based
14 sensor layer.

15 Senator Cotton: Do you believe that Congress is
16 sufficiently funding development of that capability at
17 present?

18 General Dickinson: Senator, my understanding is I
19 believe it is at this point.

20 Senator Cotton: When you testify in the future and
21 Senators imply that they are ready to give you more money,
22 you should always say that you would take it if you can get
23 it.

24 General Dickinson: If confirmed, Senator, I would
25 advocate for that.

1 [Laughter.]

2 Senator Cotton: All right, gentlemen. Thank you again
3 for your appearance today and congratulations on our
4 nomination.

5 Mr. Chairman, I will yield back the balance of my time.

6 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

7 Senator Kaine?

8 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9 These witnesses I think are very, very qualified for
10 the positions for which they have been nominated, and I
11 applaud you for your service.

12 I have a plea that is really more of a plea for the
13 committee. Then I have a question for each of you. And the
14 plea for the committee is sort of a -- I am just going to
15 state it as heartfelt as I can.

16 I believe that this committee did really, really good
17 work on the national defense authorizing act, and it passed
18 by an 86-14 vote. And I think the chair and ranking did
19 superb work with the staff in helping pull it together. It
20 contains everything. It is 1,160 pages. It is true pay
21 raises and it is protection for military families, and it is
22 shipbuilding and ship repair. And it is strategic advances
23 on issues that my colleague, Senator Cotton, raised about
24 Huawei. It is a very complex bill. And the chair and
25 ranking did a wonderful job with the committee, and then

1 they did wonderful job on the floor. And there were dozens
2 and dozens and dozens of amendments added by not only Armed
3 Service Committee members but members who were not on the
4 committee. That is to their credit.

5 A similar bill passed the House with over a two-thirds
6 vote.

7 I do not believe everything I read in the newspaper or
8 tweets, but I was discouraged this weekend when I read that
9 because President Trump does not like one part of the bill,
10 a bill that establishes a process for renaming military
11 bases currently named after confederates -- and three of
12 those bases are in Virginia. I voted for the provision to
13 establish the renaming process, but because he does not like
14 one piece of the bill, there is some consideration being
15 given to either removing that, even though it was in both
16 sides, both the House and the Senate's bills, or delaying
17 getting the bill to him for that reason.

18 I just want to plea that we not let bases named for
19 Confederate generals and the issue of those names become the
20 dominating important issue that would bog down a very good
21 defense authorizing bill for three reasons.

22 Number one, the priorities in the bill, pay raises,
23 shipbuilding, our nuclear deterrence, are vastly, vastly
24 more important than the Confederate naming provision
25 regardless of how you feel about the provision or how people

1 voted on it.

2 Number two, this is the single most important piece of
3 legislation I work on any year in the Senate. And I would
4 venture to say that members of the committee probably feel
5 the same way. And for a place like Virginia where I have
6 got the Pentagon, the largest concentration of sort of
7 military administrative power in the world, Quantico where
8 every Marine officer is trained, Norfolk, the largest seat
9 of naval power in the world -- this is the bill. The NDAA
10 is the bill where I have my entire communities asking what
11 is going to be for the pay raise, what are you doing for
12 military families. They are on the edge of their seats
13 every year about this bill and they want to know what is in
14 it. And then when it passes, I put out a press release
15 stating what is in it and then communities start to plan
16 around it.

17 President Trump tweeted out over the weekend that he
18 was assured that the Confederate provision would somehow be
19 removed. That puts uncertainty into all of the things that
20 I have mentioned to people in Virginia about this bill. I
21 do not think we should inject uncertainty over the good
22 priorities in this bill over an issue that is more minor
23 important.

24 Finally, the other reason that I would just urge us not
25 to let the Confederate issue wag the dog in this case is

1 this committee is the only place in the Senate where I think
2 we do this right. I hold this committee up all the time. I
3 have had two Republican chairmen and one Democratic chairman
4 in my 8 years in the Senate. It is the one part of the
5 Senate that I actually think works where the chairman and
6 ranking are open to letting every member offer amendments
7 and get them voted up or down and only when there are none
8 left to offer do we declare it done. And then on the floor,
9 the chair and ranking work assiduously with members of both
10 parties to clear as many amendments as possible. I hold
11 this up in my all my other committees. Why can we not do it
12 this way? Why can we not do it like the Armed Services
13 Committee does?

14 And I would hate to see that in the very predictable
15 instance where we might see an issue differently than the
16 President -- President Obama wanted to pull out funding for
17 the refueling of a carrier, but we did not let that stop us.
18 We thought differently and we did it. And there have been
19 things where we disagreed with President Trump on. That is
20 what we do. But we should not be playing Mother May I with
21 the President. We should do what we are going to do and
22 then we should let the President do what the President is
23 going to do. But I do not think we should let a minor issue
24 dominate and slow down this bill.

25 So that is my earnest plea of my colleagues and of the

1 Senate and of the conferees.

2 My question is this. Our chair and ranking did a good
3 job during the month April when we were quarantined in
4 keeping us informed about how the DOD is dealing with the
5 coronavirus issue. We had a weekly call and we were digging
6 into it. But because of the outbreak on the Roosevelt, a
7 lot of the discussion was about that.

8 Should you each be confirmed in your positions, how
9 will you deal with sort of the coronavirus and trying to
10 keep your team safe and operating at a high level of
11 effectiveness and efficiency should you be confirmed in your
12 new role? Have you given that some thought, or what
13 experience did you have in your current role that you bring
14 to bear on that issue, should you be confirmed?

15 General VanHerck: Senator, thank you very much.

16 Yes, I have given that some thought as the Director of
17 the Joint Staff, and if confirmed, NORTHCOM would continue
18 to think about that.

19 The Department has put in a four-tier process for
20 testing to ensure that the mission continues. So tier one
21 nuclear forces, for example, a four-tier process to ensure
22 that folks are tested and, if positive, they are quarantined
23 accordingly. This is all about continuing with the mission.
24 So, yes, Senator, I would continue with that process, if
25 confirmed.

1 In addition to that, following the CDC guidelines and
2 the policies of the Department that are put in place to keep
3 the mission effective and keep the force ready.

4 If confirmed, I look forward to partnering with you and
5 the committee to ensure we can get through this. Thank you,
6 Senator.

7 Senator Kaine: General Dickinson?

8 General Dickinson: Senator, in my current job as the
9 Deputy at U.S. Space Command, we have gone through very
10 detailed planning to make sure that we have accounted for
11 the coronavirus in terms of making sure that our space
12 mission areas have been protected from it. As you can
13 imagine, Senator, we have got many no-fail missions within
14 the command right now that we are using, and our ability to
15 take the guidance that we have received from DOD -- take
16 that and impart it into our planning process has really --
17 we have had a good success story to this date in terms of
18 making sure we preserve that space capability for the
19 nation. And if confirmed, I will continue to do that and
20 work with the committee as well as the Department.

21 Senator Kaine: Thank you both. I look forward to
22 supporting both your nominations.

23 Chairman Inhofe: Very good.

24 Senator Jones?

25 Senator Jones: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 And thank both of our witnesses for your service and
2 for your willingness to continue to serve.

3 Let me first -- I want to strongly associate myself
4 with Senator Kaine's comments about the NDAA and every
5 provision in it, including the removal of the Confederate
6 names. I think that is so important right now. And if the
7 President wants to continue to be on the wrong side of
8 history on that point, then that is his prerogative. But
9 this committee, as well as the Senate of the United States
10 and the House of Representatives, have decided they are
11 going to be on the right side of history on this. And I am
12 hopeful that we can get this across the finish line and do
13 all those great things that we set out to do when we first
14 started consideration of that bill.

15 General Dickinson, thank you for a shout-out, the Roll
16 Tide shout-out earlier today, and also I appreciate the fact
17 that your son, who just graduated, is going to be training
18 to fly helicopters. I will tell you my son also just
19 graduated, and right now he is just kind of hovering around
20 our house waiting to go to law school or graduate school or
21 something. But thank you for that.

22 I do want to ask about your time in Huntsville. And as
23 you are well aware with Space Command, Huntsville was one of
24 the finalists to be the headquarters for Space Command.
25 That got changed recently, and that process has been

1 reopened. And in a hearing last year -- actually a couple
2 of hearings -- I have raised concerns about that. I was
3 pretty upset that it had been reopened because it seemed to
4 me that there were some presidential politics coming into
5 play. Secretary Esper, Secretary Barrett assured me that
6 was not the case, but I still have my doubts. But the one
7 thing that Secretary Esper talked about was the fact that no
8 decision was going to be made.

9 So I have two questions for you -- no decision made
10 before the election. So I have two questions.

11 Could you talk a little bit -- you have been in
12 Huntsville as head of the Army Space and Missile Defense
13 Command. Can you talk to us a little bit about the
14 importance of Huntsville and the operations there to our
15 overall mission in space?

16 General Dickinson: Senator, my personal experience
17 from being the Commander at U.S. Army Space and Missile
18 Defense Command was that Huntsville is a great place to live
19 and a great place to work. And I would tell you that my
20 wife and I -- we enjoyed the community as well in
21 Huntsville, Alabama. As you know, Senator, it has a lot of
22 capabilities there in terms of the space enterprise with
23 NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, those types of
24 activities, along with the Missile Defense Agency. So there
25 is a lot of technical base, if you will, that is indigenous,

1 if you will, in Huntsville, Alabama.

2 Senator Jones: Well, thank you.

3 My next question about that is that -- I know that the
4 basing decision is not going to be yours to make, but if
5 confirmed as the next Commander of SPACECOM, will you
6 support Secretary Esper in keeping his promise about timing?
7 And will you commit to offer your best military advice about
8 the headquarters location based on the needs of the command
9 and not the desires of political leaders?

10 General Dickinson: Senator, I support Secretary Esper
11 in his concept for the basing decision that will be made. I
12 feel that it is, in my opinion, a fair, transparent,
13 holistic look that will be done and is already underway.
14 And at the end of that, Senator, I will provide my best
15 military advice, if asked for that opportunity, to the
16 Secretary of Defense.

17 Senator Jones: Thank you, General.

18 General VanHerck, real quick. I know you and Senator
19 Reed discussed about the lessons for any pandemic that may
20 occur in the future, and I am assuming that we are also
21 looking from the military at lessons learned. I would like
22 to ask you real quick about the two hospital ships that we
23 have, the Comfort and the Mercy. I think that they were
24 launched in 1976 and converted to hospital ships in 1986.
25 Would you agree that those hospital ships provide an

1 important capability that we want to have in future
2 pandemics? And would you support trying to modernize those
3 assets and maybe increasing the number of those type of
4 assets?

5 General VanHerck: Senator, I agree that those hospital
6 ships are crucial to our warfighting and any response and
7 execution of any OPLAN.

8 Specific to their modernization, if that is a way
9 forward, absolutely I would support that to ensure that we
10 keep that critical capability for the future.

11 Senator Jones: Great. Thank you, General.

12 Thank you both for your service.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you.

15 And before going to our last member, which will be
16 Senator Duckworth, the last two Democrats to speak both made
17 quite an issue out of the one statement that the President
18 has made. And I would like to clarify a little bit because
19 I happen to agree with that statement that he made. It is
20 an objection to trying to rewrite the history of America.

21 Now, I was stationed -- many years ago, I was stationed
22 in Fort Lee, Virginia. So I know a little bit about -- have
23 a little bit of personal background in that.

24 And I think there are a lot of people who just
25 legitimately do not want to disregard the history of this

1 country as actually happened, and that is a legitimate
2 concern.

3 Senator Duckworth?

4 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 I do think that it is important to remember history so
6 it shall never repeat itself. But as a soldier, I did not
7 care to be serving at Fort Rucker, Alabama. I love Fort
8 Rucker. I built an enterprise in the Ozark area. I had
9 some wonderful times there, but I certainly did not
10 appreciate being posted to a base named for a traitor who
11 raised arms against our nation.

12 General VanHerck, our country is facing daunting
13 challenges. A deadly pandemic has killed more than 148,000
14 Americans in a matter of months. An economic recession is
15 battering our country, and members of the National Guard
16 have been ordered to intervene while their fellow Americans
17 exercise their First Amendment rights. The situation has
18 both troubled and concerned about the state of civil-
19 military relations and placed many of our guardsmen in a
20 difficult situation at the center of public debate.

21 The resiliency of our country and our government is
22 truly being tested. The National Guard has not been exempt
23 from this, and we have had this discussion partially already
24 today. The Guard's domestic contributions have been simply
25 staggering. The National Guard has activated thousands of

1 citizen soldiers and airmen domestically while continuing to
2 carry out regularly scheduled missions and overseas
3 deployments.

4 That is why earlier this week, the National Guard
5 reached a new peak of over, as you mentioned, 120,000
6 personnel mobilized worldwide.

7 In your own words, General VanHerck, can you tell me
8 how you see the National Guard's role in the execution of
9 NORTHCOM's missions?

10 General VanHerck: Thank you, Senator.

11 The National Guard, as you point out, is doing
12 incredible things all around the globe. And I think today
13 it is almost 70,000 guardsmen not only in the United States
14 but abroad.

15 The National Guard plays a crucial role in the NORTHCOM
16 mission. Defense support of civil authorities is crucial
17 across all 50 States and territories to ensure that --
18 linked and ready to go.

19 Now, NORTHCOM routinely trains and works with the
20 National Guard and the States. And so the relationship is
21 vitally important.

22 What I would commit to you, if confirmed, is I will
23 continue to do that. I have worked closely with General
24 Hokanson as he gets in the seat and all the governors and
25 the TAGs as well. That is a crucial mission, ma'am. Thank

1 you.

2 Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

3 In mid-May during the height of COVID-19 response
4 efforts, I was alerted to friction points between National
5 Guard and NORTHCOM. There appears to be a lack of firsthand
6 experience among NORTHCOM leadership concerning how the
7 National Guard response occurs at the State level. In the
8 past, the Deputy Commander at NORTHCOM was required to be a
9 National Guard officer. Now that position is open to any
10 reserve component officer, not necessarily a guardsman.

11 If a commander or deputy commander at NORTHCOM does not
12 have much experience with the National Guard or homeland
13 missions, it can be hard to understand many of the Guard's
14 complexities. For example, the National Guard ran into
15 issues with NORTHCOM failing to appoint dual status
16 commanders. Fortunately, the Guard was able to address
17 these issues, but not every situation will afford the luxury
18 of time.

19 General VanHerck, if confirmed, how do you plan to
20 increase the NORTHCOM senior leadership's understanding of
21 the National Guard's complexities and its mission
22 requirements? And if confirmed, will you commit to
23 recording and publishing NORTHCOM's lessons learned from its
24 response to COVID-19 and civil unrest to ensure NORTHCOM
25 does not experience similar difficulties in the future?

1 General VanHerck: Thank you, Senator.

2 With regards to the first question, if confirmed, I
3 would work closely to ensure that all the senior leadership
4 gets the proper training and exposure to the key National
5 Guard leadership.

6 With regards to the lessons learned, the Department is
7 going through a process right now to capture lessons learned
8 from COVID. I commit to you and this committee that we will
9 share those lessons learned and, if confirmed, from a
10 NORTHCOM perspective implement those lessons learned. It
11 will be crucial.

12 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, General.

13 General Dickinson, I just have a minute left. My
14 questions on the decision and timing of the headquarters
15 have been asked. I just wanted to thank you and your family
16 for your service but also if you could relay a message to
17 your son. Tell him real pilots fly -- Whoop.

18 General Dickinson: Whoop.

19 [Laughter.]

20 Senator Duckworth: Thank you so much.

21 I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

22 Chairman Inhofe: Thank you very much.

23 Let me thank our witnesses, General VanHerck and
24 General Dickinson, for the time you have given us and the
25 frank ways in which you have responded to the questions.

1 And we will all be looking forward to working with each of
2 you in your new capacity. Thank you very much.

3 And we are adjourned.

4 [Whereupon, at 4:14 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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