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NOMINATION OF VICE ADMIRAL THOMAS H. COLLINS TO BE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2002

Printed for the use of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation



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COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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NOMINATION OF VICE ADMIRAL THOMAS H. COLLINS TO BE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2002

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:34 p.m., in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. John F. Kerry, presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KERRY. This hearing will come to order.

Admiral, we welcome you here this afternoon. I am blessed to be surrounded by more wisdom and ability in the U.S. Senate than at any time previously, and I thank my colleagues for being here.

Admiral, I suppose we could say that you are a native of Stoton, Mass., and your wife, I have just learned, is a native—or at least was born in Brighton—so the hearing could end right there. That is enough.

But it is a great pleasure to welcome you here. You are to be congratulated, and all of your family, on an extraordinary career and to reach the post potentially of Commandant—I say potentially, because the formality of this hearing is really all that stands between you, and your confimation—is really terrific.

The Coast Guard obviously is largely unknown, a lot of people in America are not aware of its size, 35,000 people in uniform. It is about the size of the New York City Police Department. I think you save on average about 14 lives a day and interdict several hundred tons of cocaine each day on average and provide just an enormous service.

That service obviously has grown markedly since 9/11. A lot of people again are not aware of it, but the Coast Guard is escorting major vessels into our ports in the country. We have an enormous number of ports in America, of rivers, I think about a thousand harbor channels and 25,000 miles of inland, intracoastal and coastal waterways, serving over 300 ports comprised of more than 3,700 terminals. Ninety-five percent of all of the commercial traffic of the United States was carried through the waterways. Unfortunately, as we learned only too well recently, only about two percent of that gets inspected.

So the mission for you and the members of the Coast Guard is just getting more and more complicated. We know you are beginning two major acquisition programs, the Integrated Deepwater System that Senators Snowe and Stevens and Inouye and I have fought for for a long time, the Response Systems Modernization Project, and the national distress project, which will greatly improve the service to the country.

I think Senator Snowe and I are particularly concerned about the gaps in that service, which happen to fall on New Jersey, New Hampshire, Maryland, and South Carolina, so Senator Hollings obviously also is concerned about it, and it is something we hope will be filled very quickly.

But we do not need to belabor these introductions at all. It is my honor to have Senator Stevens, who I know wants to introduce you. But we welcome you and Nancy, and again, we really are grateful for your years of service and look forward to your stewardship in this most important position.

Senator Stevens.

Senator STEVENS. My friend was here first.

Senator KERRY. Well, I try to go back and forth, but I am happy to break the protocol, particularly since you suggested it.

STATEMENT OF HON. DANIEL K. INOUYE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Senator Stevens and Mr. Chairman. I simply want to associate myself with your remarks, Mr. Chairman, and to simply add by saying that my constituents, the people of Hawaii, respect and love this man. So if you want my vote at this moment, you have got it.

I thank you very much. Will you please excuse me.

Admiral COLLINS. Thank you, sir.

Senator KERRY. Thanks so much, Senator Inouye. Thank you very much.

Senator Stevens.

STATEMENT OF HON. TED STEVENS,
U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator STEVENS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be here to formally introduce Vice Admiral Thomas Collins, the President's nominee to become the twenty-second Commandant of the United States Coast Guard.

I think Vice Admiral Collins is an excellent choice to lead this organization, and it has an increased level of responsibility now because the men and women of the Coast Guard have taken on additional duties to protect and secure our homeland.

Vice Admiral Collins has been on the front line serving on our Nation's coastline. He served tours first as a lieutenant and a deck watch officer of the Coast Guard Cutter *Vigilant* and as Commander of the Coast Guard Cutter *Cape Morgan*. He then moved into the group operations in St. Petersburg, Florida, and then as Captain of the Port for Long Island Sound and New Haven, Connecticut. His dual background in marine safety and operational issues will be relied on as the Coast Guard's role in homeland secu-

rity is developed and refined, as I know we must do in coming years.

Vice Admiral Collins served as commander of the Pacific Area and the Eleventh Coast Guard District, very close to home, Mr. Chairman. Alaska is the largest district in the Pacific area and the challenges of our area, the North Pacific, are well known to the Admiral. Foreign fishing vessels encroach on our maritime boundary line continually.

Many of Alaska's fishermen in remote communities depend on the Coast Guard's search and rescue program in the harshest of conditions.

The Coast Guard in my State of Alaska, more than half of the coastline of the United States, have a special and important relationship that I know the Vice Admiral appreciates and will continue to foster under his command leadership. I do not know if many of you realize how many babies the Coast Guard actually delivers from time to time in those helicopters, and it really does have a special relationship to us.

I am very pleased that the Admiral has asked me to comment on his background. The selection process that has brought Vice Admiral Collins to this Committee hearing is a very competitive process and you deserve a great deal of credit for having been selected. Your 34 years of dedicated service to this country provides you with a diversity of experience to lead the men and women of our country who will wear the uniform of your service, and I think that you will lead us into the future. It is an uncertain future right now, but it is very certain for the Coast Guard with you as the Commandant.

Mr. Chairman, I welcome this opportunity.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Senator Stevens.

Senator Snowe.

STATEMENT OF HON. OLYMPIA J. SNOWE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MAINE

Senator SNOWE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very briefly, I too, want to welcome Vice Admiral Collins to this Committee. You are certainly the right person for this multifaceted, multimission agency. You possess, based on your experience, I think the rare combination of Coast Guard experience, skilled leadership, and experience in working with other agencies. That combination of credentials I think is essential and pivotal in guiding the Coast Guard toward the future.

As we know, in the wake of September 11th, the challenges that confront the Coast Guard in fulfilling its Homeland Security responsibilities are tremendous. The Coast Guard has to fulfil these new responsibilities and obligations along with its many other traditional obligations and missions that the American people have come to expect from the Coast Guard.

I know that you will be able to guide the Coast Guard through these perilous times. Additonally, I know you will be able to lead the Coast Guard towards modernization, especially the Deepwater Project that is going to be so essential to the Coast Guard's future.

Admiral Collins, I want to welcome you. I think you provide remarkable experience at a time in which the Coast Guard is cer-

tainly going to require it. I know you will continue what Admiral Loy has done over the last 4 years, and I know that the Coast Guard is going to be in good stead for the future.

[The prepared statement of Senator Olympia Snowe follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR OLYMPIA J. SNOWE

I would like to thank the Chair for holding this hearing today. As you noted, the current Commandant will complete his tour of duty on May 30th, and it is critical the Senate consider his replacement before that time.

First, let me express my appreciation for the efforts of Admiral Loy, the outgoing Commandant, over the past 4 years. He has carried out his duties with distinction and remarkable accomplishment, particularly during the tumultuous times in the wake of the horrific attacks of September 11th.

Since then, Admiral Loy has led the Coast Guard through its largest port security operation since World War II, and he has worked tirelessly to ensure the Coast Guard is ready to respond to any threat. With his sure and steady hand at the helm, he led the Coast Guard through numerous readiness challenges and he has been at the forefront in advocating the Deepwater project which is now coming to the production phase. As the Coast Guard has increasingly been called upon to do more with less, Admiral Loy has navigated these difficult waters effectively and with impressive leadership, and I want to publicly thank him for his tireless efforts on behalf of the Coast Guard and the Nation.

It is vital the new Commandant of the Coast Guard maintains this course and I have every confidence that Admiral Collins is the right person for the job. The Coast Guard is an integral component of the federal government. Through its search and rescue operations, the Coast Guard aids people in distress and prevents injuries, loss of life, and loss of property on our waters.

It enforces all federal laws and treaties related to the high seas and U.S. waters. It is the lead federal agency for preventing and responding to major pollution incidents in the coastal zone. It makes our ports and shipping lanes safe for efficient maritime transportation and commerce. And as one of the armed services, it plays a critical role in our Nations's defense strategy.

As the Chair noted, the nominee for Commandant before us today has compiled a long and distinguished career in the service of our Nation. Admiral Collins currently serves as the Coast Guard's Vice Commandant where he has served by Admiral Loy's side for the past 2 years. In this position he has been instrumental in implementing readiness and retention plans to strengthen the Coast Guard.

Before assuming this position, he served as the Coast Guard's Commander of the Pacific Area and the Commander of the U.S. Maritime Defense Zone in the Pacific. Admiral Collins has served in a variety of assignments throughout his exemplary career which was highlighted by his command of a cutter and a Group, assignment as a Captain of the Port, and later serving as a District Commander.

Mr. Chairman, Admiral Collins clearly has very impressive qualifications for this high position for which he has been nominated. I look forward to his testimony and to working with him, and I again thank you for scheduling this important hearing.

Senator KERRY. Senator Cleland has joined us. I am delighted to welcome my friend and our colleague.

STATEMENT OF HON. MAX CLELAND, U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA

Senator CLELAND. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to welcome Vice Admiral Collins before the Committee. You certainly have a distinguished record of over 34 years of service to our country. I am pleased to say that I look forward to supporting your nomination.

There are a few issues that I would like to call to your attention today. First is the critical issue of port security. In Georgia we happen to have Savannah and Brunswick. I was just down in Savannah over the weekend. Both the Senate and house have passed S. 1214, the Maritime and Port Security Act. It will provide vital as-

sistance to our Nation's 361 ports in upgrading their existing security system, of which the Coast Guard is an integral part.

I might say that the Coast Guard took an integral part, I am sure in an official way, in monitoring the 500,000 people at the Saint Patrick's Day parade in Savannah, and your presence was most welcome.

I know you understand this importance as a former captain of a port and you understand the Coast Guard's leadership role for all local, state, and federal officials involved in seaport security.

Further, this legislation authorizes additional funding for the Coast Guard to carry out its port security responsibilities. I urge my colleagues in the House to work with the Senate in order to pass the conference report so that you have the resources to do your job.

Second, the Coast Guard as the coordinator and leader in port security should work with all entities involved in the security process. I look to the people who work and experience life at the port every day for the most up-to-date information. They are the most informed. It goes without saying that a port is only as secure as its weakest link. I believe with better coordination and with the belief in and the feeling of open communication among all groups, public and private, involved in protecting the seaports, we eliminate those weak links.

Last, the Coast Guard has duties other than port security, such as search and rescue, drug interdiction, and living marine resources enforcement. I urge you not to overlook these responsibilities as you work to fulfil the heightened importance of port security. These duties are also an important part of securing the homeland.

I thank you so much for your service to our nation and may God watch over our men and women in uniform.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Senator Cleland.

Admiral, welcome again and we look forward to your statement. As I say, I do not think we need to prolong this hearing, but we certainly do have some areas we would love to hear your thoughts about. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF VICE ADMIRAL THOMAS H. COLLINS, COMMANDANT, U.S. COAST GUARD HEADQUARTERS

Admiral COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your kind words and thank you for the kind words of the other distinguished Members of the Committee, particularly to Senator Stevens for his kind introduction and support, as he supported us throughout these years.

I might note that the states of Massachusetts, Maine, Hawaii, Alaska, and Georgia, have just a rich history where Coast Guard has played a key part with the constituents in ensuring the safety in the coastal areas. Our 211-year history is replete with Coast Guard heros from Maine and Massachusetts, Alaska and Hawaii. So it is great to have the Senators from these states at this hearing this morning.

If confirmed, of course, I am going to apply all my energies to ensure that I can live up to the expectations of the Committee.

I am clearly honored by the confidence that President Bush and Secretary Mineta have placed in me in my nomination to be the twenty-second Commandant of the Coast Guard. I have a very deep respect for the organization that I have worked for for 34 years and, more importantly, a very deep respect for our men and women that serve the American people so well day-in and day-out. I feel incredibly privileged to have the opportunity to lead them in jobs and tasks that truly make a difference for the public and the national interest.

I also have the great fortune to follow a great leader in Jim Loy, some big shoes to fill. I think he has done an incredible job as Commandant the past 4 years. He has built a solid foundation for our service as we launch into the twenty-first century. The fact that we can be so responsive and on point in the wake of 9/11 had a lot to do with the preparatory work that he did for our service over the last 3 or 4 years. I look forward to working with the President and Secretary Mineta and Congress to further strengthening this reputation of excellence that he has created.

The Coast Guard has always been a very relevant player in the national security arena. Our flexibility and responsiveness as a military and multi-mission organization has allowed us to add value in every instance. It was so before 9/11. It is more so now in the wake of the terrorist acts. The events of last September have properly catapulted maritime security as a component of homeland security to the forefront, and it necessitates a strategic rebalancing of Coast Guard missions and associated resource allocation and utilization.

Along with search and rescue, security within our ports and waterways and coastal zones must command top billing among our mission priorities. At the same time, we must balance our efforts so other missions can be performed at adequate levels, especially those that strengthen and push out our borders and preserve our scarce living marine resources.

If confirmed, my goals would be to meet these challenges through a sharp focus in three central areas: readiness, stewardship, and people. Let me elaborate briefly on each one of these.

Superior operational service is our core purpose, our most important product. Our nation has come to expect that from us. In the midst of our current crisis, we must expand our capabilities as the lead federal agency for maritime security. To deliver on these expectations, we must build ready forces composed of well-trained people equipped with modern, sustainable technology, all employing sound tactics. This is a first order priority of any military service leader. It will be mine.

Assurance of our future readiness must be aggressively pursued by pushing ahead smartly with modernization efforts, such as Deepwater and the National Distress and Response System Projects.

Building maritime domain awareness through collaborative partnerships with other governmental agencies and the private sector will also be key to achieving readiness success, as alluded to by the Senator from Georgia.

My second area of emphasis is stewardship. We will work hard to further strengthen our reputation for excellence in managing our

resources by instilling quality principles in all we do, by emphasizing performance-based planning and resource allocation, and by driving to a culture of innovation in the smart use of technology. We want to be accountable. We want to be accountable for delivering results.

My most important emphasis reflects a commitment to our people. In fact, our people make the Coast Guard what it is. The ability to attract, develop, retain and deploy a quality workforce is the key to Coast Guard's ability to deliver operational excellence and be good stewards of the public trust. This will be my top priority, and perhaps our greatest challenge. It will mean restructuring decades-old human resource policies and processes, ensuring compensation parity with Department of Defense services, building an innovative training and professional development program, and appealing to a diverse pool of candidates.

Achieving success in the areas of readiness, stewardship, and people will translate directly into good outcomes for the nation. However, success cannot be achieved without establishment of sound overarching governing policy direction and wise investments in our service. More than ever before, national interests call for a vibrant, ready Coast Guard. I will seek your support, with the guidance of Secretary Mineta, in this regard, so that we can live our motto, "Semper Paratus."

In turn, I pledge my full energies and enthusiasm to our service, to its core values and characteristics, and its tradition of service to the public now and into the future. The interests and safety of our men and women will always be at the forefront. I am excited about the prospects.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I will be happy to answer any questions that you or Committee Members may have.

[The prepared statement and biographical information of Vice Admiral Collins follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL THOMAS H. COLLINS

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished Members of the Committee. I am honored to appear before you today. I look forward to listening to your views and responding to your questions on issues facing the Coast Guard.

President Bush and Secretary Mineta have bestowed a great honor upon me, reflected in this nomination as the 22nd Commandant of the United States Coast Guard. I am humbled by the nomination and grateful for their confidence in me.

I have the deepest respect for the organization in which I have spent my thirty-four years of service and for the professionalism and dedication of its men and women. My commitment is to lead and manage the Coast Guard for the next 4 years with the overall goals of expanding our service reputation of operational excellence and strengthening our role as an integrated and productive component of the Department of Transportation. I look forward to working with the President, Secretary Mineta, and the Congress to this end.

The past 6 months have brought unprecedented challenges upon us as a nation. I am grateful for the dynamic leadership of the President and our Secretary and the unified strength of the Congress in responding to the real and present dangers of terrorism and in preparing us for additional threats, which may yet come. Americans of all walks of life have risen with courage and determination to meet these new challenges, just as we always have done throughout our illustrious history.

As a maritime nation, the United States has always depended on a strong and capable Coast Guard for its security and safety. Through the years, our missions have grown steadily in response to the needs of this great and prosperous country. In fact, the Coast Guard's history reflects the story of a growing nation confronting one emergent maritime need after the other. During many such crises, America en-

trusted the mission to the Coast Guard. Each time, the Coast Guard accepted the challenge and folded it into its inventory of multi-mission responsibilities.

Today is no different. We must remain ready to provide maritime safety and security in a rapidly changing world. And the Coast Guard has been uniquely positioned to serve a wide range of maritime security, safety, environmental, mobility, and defense interests under the extraordinary leadership of Admiral Jim Loy. His focus on restoring readiness and shaping the future through wise operating expense and capital investments has been on target.

We are poised to transform our Coast Guard capabilities, systems, and processes so we can meet the demands of the twenty-first century. We are confident in our military, multi-mission, maritime character; strengthened by our core values of Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty; and renewed in our sense of purpose and commitment to serve America.

My leadership challenge will be to build upon this solid foundation and to provide the vision and direction that will be required to meet tomorrow's challenges, especially in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks. As we look forward, we must place our immediate focus on strengthening our capability to provide security to our homeland, yet do so with a careful and watchful eye on the adequate accomplishment of all of our other missions. Each of our missions is inherently connected to the others. The success of all depends on the excellence of each one.

We must also build productive relationships with newly created security entities including the new Transportation Security Administration, the Office of Homeland Security, as well as evolving Department of Defense unified command organizations.

If the Senate confirms me, my emphasis as Commandant will be focused sharply in three areas: (1) *readiness*, (2) *stewardship*, (3) and *people*. We must be *Always Ready* for the call, and will remain so by taking affirmative steps to sustain current and future *readiness*, by aggressively reinforcing our *stewardship* of the public trust, and by placing energetic emphasis on the development and well-being of Coast Guard *people*. Allow me to discuss briefly each of these three areas of emphasis.

We must be *ready* in all of our mission areas, because each contributes to our Nation's safety and security. The Coast Guard is recognized throughout the world for its leadership and expertise in Search and Rescue. We must exercise the same level of leadership and expertise as the lead federal agency for maritime security. To do so, we must ensure ready forces composed of well-trained people, equipped with modern, sustainable technology, and employing sound tactics. Our readiness initiatives will include the:

- Design and implementation of an integrated command and control, communication and intelligence network for information gathering, analysis, and sharing so as to provide Maritime Domain Awareness to our operational commanders and other national stakeholders. The goal is to optimize safety and security in our ports, waterways and the coastal zone;
- Development and maintenance of national and international strategic partnerships to bring clarity to mission planning and execution; and
- Assurance of our future readiness by modernization or replacement of our aging ships, aircraft and associated command and control and sensor systems through innovative initiatives. The Integrated Deepwater System Project, the National Distress Response System Modernization Project and other elements in our Search and Rescue Strategic Plan represent the lead items in achieving our future readiness.

We must continue to strengthen our *stewardship* of the public trust by maintaining and improving upon our enviable reputation for excellence in managing our resources. We must unleash our collective ingenuity and resourcefulness through initiatives that include:

- Instilling quality in all we do by encouraging performance based management;
- Inspiring a culture of innovation and the creative use of technology; and
- Exploiting the Deepwater acquisition for emerging opportunities to revolutionize our service to the American people.

Most importantly, we must be loyal to our *people* and inspire their loyalty to the Coast Guard. The readiness of our ships, aircraft, and systems will come to nothing without Coast Guard men and women who are ready, willing, and able. We must transform our team through initiatives that:

- Recruit, train, and retain diverse, dynamic, and capable people;
- Educate and encourage professional growth for every element of the active duty, civilian, reserve, and auxiliary components; and
- Develop and implement modern policies for personnel, operations, and support systems to attain greater stability and flexibility of assignment and advancement.

More then ever before, America's national security interests mandate the need for our Nation's maritime guardian—the Coast Guard. Much has changed since last September, but much remains the same: America's vital maritime commerce must

continue to flow, our fishing grounds must be protected, preventive inspections must be performed, our precious maritime environment must be preserved, our borders must be secure from illegal drugs and migrants, and the American people must be kept safe and secure. We must do all of this while preserving our multi-mission, military, and maritime character and our core values of honor, respect, and devotion to duty. I recognize the need and look forward to working as a member of the Department of Transportation team with the Administration and Congress in the years ahead so as to ensure a Semper Paratus Coast Guard, not just for the next 4 years, but also for the next generation.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I will be delighted to respond to any questions you might have.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Name: Thomas H. Collins.
2. Position to which nominated: Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard.
3. Date of nomination: February 6, 2002.
4. Address: (Information not released to the public).
5. Date and place of birth: June 25, 1946; Quincy, MA.
6. Marital status: Married: Constance Ann Collins (Monahan).
7. Names and ages of children: Christine Ann Collins, 31; Kathryn Collins, 27.
8. Education:

Institution	Dates Attended	Degrees Received	Dates of Degrees
USCG Academy	1964–68	BS	June 1968.
Wesleyan University	1971–72	MALS	May 1972.
University of New Haven	1973–76	MBA	May 1976.

9. Employment record:

From	To	Name of Employer	Address	Type of Work
1964	1968	USCGC Academy	New London, CT	Undergraduate Studies.
1968	1969	USCGC Vigilant	New Bedford, MA	Deck Watch Officer.
1969	1971	USCGC Cape Morgan	Charleston, SC	Commanding Officer.
1971	1972	Wesleyan University	Middletown, CT	Graduate Studies.
1972	1976	USCG Academy	New London, CT	Faculty Member.
1976	1980	USCG Headquarters	Washington, DC	Office of R&D Programming/Budget.
1980	1983	USCG Group St. Petersburg	St. Petersburg, FL	Deputy Grp Commander.
1983	1987	USCG Headquarters	Washington, DC	1Office of Chief of Staff Programming Staff.
1987	1990	USCG Grp Long Island Sound	New Haven, CT	Group Commander.
1990	1992	USCG District 14	Honolulu, HI	Division Chief/Staff Officer.
1992	1994	USCG Headquarters	Washington, DC	Office of Chief of Staff Division Chief/ G-CPA.
6/94	10/94	USCG Headquarters	Washington, DC	Deputy Chief of Staff.
1994	1996	USCG Headquarters	Washington, DC	Chief, Office of Acquisition.
1996	1998	USCG District 14	Honolulu, HI	District Commander.
1998	2000	USCG Pacific Area	Alameda, CA	Area Commander.
2000	2002	USCG Headquarters	Washington, DC	Vice Commandant.

10. Government experience: None, other than those listed above.
11. Business relationships: None.
12. Memberships: U.S. Coast Guard Academy Alumni Association; Wesleyan Alumni Association.
13. Political affiliations and activities: (a) List all offices with a political party which you have held or any public office for which you have been a candidate. None.

(b) List all memberships and offices held in and services rendered to all political parties or election committees during the last 10 years. None.

(c) Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of $500 or more for the past 10 years. None.

14. Honors and awards: 2000, Distinguished Service Medal for Service, Pacific Area Commander; 1998, Legion of Merit for Service, Commander, 14th Coast Guard District; 1996, Legion of Merit for Service as Chief, Office of Acquisition; 1994, Legion of Merit for Service as Chief, Programs Division; 1992, Meritorious Service Medal for Service as Division Chief, 14th CG District; 1990, Meritorious Service Medal for Service as Group Commander, Long Island Sound; 1987, CG Commendation for Service as Staff Member, Office of Chief of Staff; 1983, CG Commendation for Service as Deputy Group Commander, St. Petersburg, FL; 1980, Commendation for Service as Staff Member, Office of R&D; 1978, Commandant's Letter of Commendation for Service as Staff Member, Office of R&D.

15. Published writings: "Coast Guard at the Crossroads," Seapower Magazine August 2000.

16. Speeches: Enlisted Person of the Year, CG Head Quarters, 23 June 2000; Passenger Vessel Association, Savannah, GA, 06 February 2001; Officer Candidate School Graduation Dinner, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT, 15 Feb 2001; Launching of the Coast Guard Cutter *Aspen*, Marinette, Wisconsin, April 21, 2001; CG Innovation Exposition, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT, 24 Apr 2001; Coast Guard Foundation Dinner, San Francisco, California, 03 May 2001; National Safe Boating Campaign Celebration Washington, DC 24 May 2001.

B. FUTURE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS

1. Do you have any plans, commitments or agreements to pursue outside employment, with or without compensation, during your service with the government? If so, explain. No.

2. Do you have any plans after completing government service for employment affiliation or practice with any business firm, association, or organization which is regulated or controlled in any manner by the Coast Guard? No.

3. Has anybody made a commitment to employ your services in any capacity after you leave government service? No.

4. If confirmed, do you expect to serve your full term of office? Yes.

C. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Describe all financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements, and other continuing dealings with business associates, clients or customers. None.

2. Indicate, any investments, obligations, liabilities, or other relationships which could involve potential conflicts of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. None.

3. Describe any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction which you have had during the last 10 years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. None.

4. Describe any activity during the past 10 years in which you have engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy. None.

5. Explain how you will resolve any potential conflict of interest, including any that may be disclosed by your responses to the above items. Please refer to the Deputy General Council Opinion Letter.

6. Do you agree to have written opinions provided to the Committee by the designated agency ethics officer of the agency to which you are nominated and by the Office of Government Ethics concerning potential conflicts of interest or any legal impediments to your serving in this position? Yes.

D. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics for unprofessional conduct by, or been the subject of a compliant to any court, administrative agency, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If so, provide details. No.

2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged or held by any federal, state, or other law enforcement authority for violation of any federal, state, county, or municipal law, regulation or ordinance, other than a minor traffic offense? If so, provide details. No.

3. Have you or any business of which you are or were an officer ever been involved as a party in interest in an administrative agency proceeding or civil litigation? If so, provide details. No.

4. Have you ever been convicted (including pleas of guilty or *nolo contendere*) of any criminal violation other than a minor traffic offense? No.

5. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be considered in connection with your nomination. None.

E. RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMITTEE

1. Will you ensure that your department/agency complies with deadlines set by congressional committees for information? Yes, I will work within the scope of my authority to meet the requested deadline, notwithstanding delays caused by circumstances beyond my direct control.
2. Will you ensure that your department/agency does whatever it can to protect congressional witnesses and whistle blowers from reprisal for their testimony and disclosures? Yes.
3. Will you cooperate in providing the committee with requested witnesses, to include technical experts and career employees with firsthand knowledge of matters of interest to the committee? Yes, I will work to that end by cooperating to identify appropriate witnesses.
4. Are you willing to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress on such occasions as you maybe reasonably requested to do so? Yes.

Senator KERRY. Admiral, thank you so much. I appreciate your opening comments and certainly the focus of them I think is most appropriate.

If I could just ask, on one level my attention was piqued by Senator Stevens, who mentioned *Vigilant*, and I wondered, where was *Vigilant* when you reported aboard?

Admiral COLLINS. New Bedford, Massachusetts, sir.

Senator KERRY. That is what I thought. That is why I knew. Bells went off and I said, "I know the *Vigilant*."

Admiral COLLINS. It was my very first tour as a new ensign graduating from the Coast Guard Academy in 1968.

Senator KERRY. How long did you spend aboard *Vigilant*?

Admiral COLLINS. A year.

Senator KERRY. I see we shared the same duty for a period of time. I was also a first lieutenant for a brief period of time, and we could tell sea stories, I am sure.

Admiral COLLINS. Yes, sir. First lieutenant on the *Vigilant* and spent many chilly days going through Pollidip Channel in the middle of the winter.

Senator KERRY. Well, we will not bore the rest of the Committee.

Let me bring us back, if I can, to where we were pre-September 11th. On September 10th, Senator Snowe and I, and other Members of the Committee were particularly concerned, and I know as Vice Commandant you heard us ask these questions to the Commandant, Admiral Loy. I want to begin there.

Already on September 10th, the Coast Guard was hard-pressed to perform its duties. The deep-water fleet is one of the oldest in the world. The ability to interdict narcotics, which is increasing because there are so many more Americans with addictions, is important; also, the increasingly difficult task of enforcing the fisheries, which is critical in all sectors of our oceans because of the overfishing is also paramount. The more the regulations get tough and try to bring the stocks back, the more important that policing ingredient becomes.

But by his own admission, Admiral Loy made it clear to us that the response to September 11th required a cannibalizing of each and every one of those activities. There was not one activity that did not require a redeployment, particularly for the long-term port piece, though some of that has been transferred.

So the question for a lot of us is, if I look at the numbers here, I know the President has increased the budget, but a significant amount of this increase is related to non-programmatic missions. In other words, not all of this large sum of money is going to go into any of the tasks that I just described. About $736 million is going to payment into the military retirement fund, which we all know is critical. That covers an unfunded liability for employee retirement benefits. I think $504 million of $1 billion sought for operating expenses is going to current retirement and other benefits and other pay increases and personnel entitlements, which total about $193 million.

So that leaves only $303 million out of this entire increase to fund new initiatives and enhance the other missions.

So the question really is, is this enough? Can you do this job? I know there is always a can-do attitude and I know you are going to have to say yes, but I would really like to examine this reality.

Admiral COLLINS. Mr. Chairman, a great question.

Clearly, in the wake of 9/11, we threw everything but the kitchen sink, including the kitchen sink, at the security issue in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. I do not think across the Nation we really knew what we had. I think that was the right approach.

Since that time, we have been gradually pulling back those resources that were pulsed in to beef up that mission to create a greater state of normalcy relative to the other missions. Clearly, in the case of New England, for example, the first and second quarter of this year saw a rapid decline in the amount of ships devoted to fisheries enforcement off the Massachusetts coast and other areas experienced the same thing.

Counter-drugs, fisheries enforcement, and offshore migrant interdiction were those areas where those high end resources were carved out. Based upon direction from Admiral Loy last fall, operational commanders were directed to start moving those resources back into those traditional missions that we peeled them off from.

We expect, with the support of the 2003 budget, which we are very pleased with, Mr. Chairman, there is a 20 percent increase in our operating expense appropriation, the largest increase that we have seen in our recent history. There is an increase of 2200 people in this budget, another significant incremental increase. That compared with the 2002 supplemental that we received, which restored some of the cuts in the 2002 budget—if you recall, there was a 15 percent operational reduction within the 2002 budget as it passed last summer. We could not even operate the assets we had to full capacity.

So the supplemental restored that amount of money. It allowed us to pay the reserves that we called up and also provided for select new initiatives. We expect the second supplemental to come forward from the Administration shortly that will help to keep that momentum.

So between that 2002 supplemental and 2003, we have seen some of the most significant incremental increases that we have seen in modern history. That is good news for our missions across the board.

Senator KERRY. Where would most of that go, Admiral?

Admiral COLLINS. About $430 million or so of the $730 million incremental increase in the operating expenses is going into homeland security initiatives. That is the combination of annualizations of 2002 supplemental into 2003 plus new initiatives in 2003, for a total of about $430 million. But there is search and rescue investments that is in the 2003 budget, for example, another 138 or so individuals being put into search and rescue stations, investments in small boats. Between 2002 and 2003, we will have 70 to 80 more small boats that will be introduced in our service because of the support of the 2002-2003 supplemental.

So it is very significant investments in search and rescue. Also, if you include the National Distress Modernization System, there is a $90 million capital investment in the 2003 budget for that. Over $500 million for the Deepwater Project.

So we think there is real solid investments, sir, that will start a multi-year ramp-up for us to deal with both our traditional missions and the homeland security missions.

Quite frankly, we would be hard-pressed to bring aboard more than 2200 people in 1 year, between 2002 and 2003. We are probably maxed out in terms of execution on bringing that many aboard. In order to realize a net gain of 2200 people in those 2 years, we have to attract about 4800 new people into the Coast Guard, considering attrition and so forth. So that is a heavy lift for our infrastructure to make that happen.

So all in all, I think we are going to do well with the 2003 budget and the supplemental, and when we get to sort of a steady state as they play out, we will be within about 5 percent of those other missions, probably 5 or 6 percent off on meeting the traditional programmed hours in those other missions.

Senator KERRY. Share with me, if you will, your thoughts about the attrition and personnel issue. It is my understanding that retention has become a major problem at this point. Can you speak to that a little bit?

Admiral COLLINS. Sure. Manpower issues and retention are an issue for all the armed services. Clearly, if you talk to the CNO in the Navy and you ask him what his job one is, he would probably tell you manpower. I think it is all the services' challenge to attract capable men and women and keep them in the service.

We have seen in the last 6 months a turn-around a little bit in the retention, a positive turn-around up to 5 percent improvement, depending how you read the numbers. That is a positive thing. I think it is a combination of maybe the economy, No. 1; No. 2, the realization of the relevancy of our mission and what it contributes to the Nation. I think that is a very, very strong feature. I think people realize that we do have jobs that matter.

Third, I think people recognize that we are an organization who care very much about our people. We have invested solidly in pay and compensation issues over the last 3 or 4 years. We are going to continue to do that and we are going to invest in training and education and professional development. We have increased our sea pay, for example, a tiered sea pay, a bonus system that will make going to sea attractive for our men and women.

There are a lot of things that we have done, the medical benefits for example. I think those will all pay off. Talking to our Master

Chief of the Coast Guard just the other day, he really felt that what is resonating with the men and women of the Coast Guard and the other armed services is that Congress, the Administration, the American people are paying attention to the needs of our armed forces by making pay and compensation a high priority.

If you look at the medical benefits, if you look at the pay and the housing benefits that have come to pass over the last several years, they are making a difference. I would urge to keep the pressure on in that regard because I think it is resonating and it will turn some of these numbers around.

As we grow up by 2200 people, it is important that we retain as many as we can.

Senator KERRY. Do you sense that that is happening? I mean, I know you indicated a little bit of an upturn, but do you sense that we are doing enough or is there more you would like to see us do? I mean, if you had your druthers here and speaking on behalf of those folks now, do you think we should be approaching this differently?

Admiral COLLINS. I think the professional development training is an area that we still can make some gains on and it is very relevant, professional development training is very relevant to the new generation of people coming in. We have just got to keep the pressure on there, keep improving our pay and compensation, the housing for example. Reducing the out-of-pocket costs for housing, BAH, has been a major push and that is gradually going to get better and better for our men and women.

The medical benefits, I think, have been right on. They are tremendous. I think those are all drawing cards, Mr. Chairman. I think we cannot just draw a conclusion on one data point of 3 or 4 months, but I think over time we are going to see that the attention that Congress and the Administration has paid to pay and compensation for our men and women and their professional development will pay off in the high quality armed forces.

Senator KERRY. I agree with that, except that I have heard from some people that, notwithstanding what they sense are some good opportunities in that regard and may be improving, the time, the deployment time itself, is sort of a cruncher, and even in some of the boat stations on the coastline, summertime deployment, etcetera, there is just an on versus off ratio that is really tugging at some people.

Admiral COLLINS. Yes, sir. Some of our investments in the 2002 budget and the 2003 budget in terms of increasing the personnel at search and rescue stations is all about reducing that work hours at station. You drive it down from 80 and 70 to below 60, that is our goal. With the support of Congress for the 2003 budget, we will be able to realize that.

One other note. You know, we are creating these Maritime Safety and Security Teams, four of them through the 2003 budget, teams of 70 active duty people plus additional reservists. They will be located at selected areas around the country to provide search operations for security, safety, aftermath of hurricanes, and the like.

They will, in effect, be also an investment in our search and rescue stations because they ease the pressure on those search and

rescue stations to provide those kind of skills. So it is another presence, a presence in our coastal waterways, that eases some of that OPTEMPO, PERSTEMPO pressure on our stations. We are excited about the prospects of those new units.

Senator KERRY. Last year we appropriated, I think, about $290 million for the Deepwater Asset Refurbishment and I think this year there is a $500 million request. Balancing that against the post-9/11 demands, are we out of balance here? Are we thinking in terms pre-September that perhaps should be changed now because of the demands for port security, inspection, Customs, Immigration, all those components?

Admiral COLLINS. That is a frequent question that we have heard, Mr. Chairman. Our answer is that we think the Deepwater Project is right smack dead on center in the type of capability we need for homeland security and for other missions. I would submit that counter-drugs is part of homeland security, protecting our borders is part of homeland security, pushing our borders out is part of homeland security and a wonderful strategy for us to pursue.

That all depends on awareness of people, cargo, and platforms. The Deepwater Project is a C4ISR, a command and control, information-centric procurement, a system of systems. The central feature of that is giving us sensors, communication capability, and interoperability, the ability to interdict, detect, surveil, classify, prosecute cases at sea.

It is just the type of capabilities that we need to embed for homeland security, including counter-drug ops and others. I think it is right dead on center. I think it is an absolute wonderful investment to make in homeland security. I think if you invest in Deepwater you invest in homeland security.

Senator KERRY. What do you hope to be known for as Commandant if there is sort of one overriding thing, beyond being a great Commandant because you come from Massachusetts?

Admiral COLLINS. Again, I think it is captioned in those three areas that I have emphasized.

Senator KERRY. Would you say that focus is different from what Admiral Loy——

Admiral COLLINS. I think it is a continuation and a natural extension of what he has set up. If you recall, his two broad themes are restoring readiness and shaping the future, with several subobjectives. Mine are very much in keeping with that. I guess it is because I am part of his senior leadership team to help move that along.

I think if our motto is "Semper Paratus" and we do not have readiness as part of our vision, there is something wrong. Readiness, taking care of our people and being good stewards of the American taxpayers' interest is what I would like to be known for. In keeping with that, I would like to be known that we have got the Deepwater Project off and running with a bang, that it is well situated, a strategic partnership established with the winning contractors, and that project is producing good things for us, as well as the National Distress and Modernization System Project that, as a previous group commander, I know how vital that capability is to the public in our coastal waters. We need to do that one right

and we are going to do that one right, and we are going to address all those gaps that you are concerned with.

That is going to be a wonderful system, giving us 98 percent in the performance standard, 98 percent chance of connectivity in terms of communications. We are well, well, well below that. And oh, by the way, that is higher than what your average police and fire department and for public safety operations. That is where we are going with this. We think it is going to be a wonderful system.

So I would like to be known to get those two projects off and running, taking care of our people, increasing our retention, and preserving our operational excellence and readiness, sir.

Senator KERRY. Well, I wish you well with that, Admiral. It is an important agenda and I am confident you are up to it.

Senator Snowe.

Senator SNOWE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral Collins, just to follow up on the budget issue, are you comfortable with the billion dollar increase? Do you think it is sufficient to meet the needs of the Coast Guard?

Admiral COLLINS. I think, Senator Snowe, along with the supplementals, the 2002 supplemental and the forthcoming supplemental, that we expect to be submitted shortly, it will give us that first year increment of a 3-year plan or so that we are developing to build out homeland security competence and capability while taking care of the rest of the mission. So I think it is on a time line and a scale that is just about right.

Senator SNOWE. Well, I know that the Coast Guard is devising a 3-year plan for this new normalcy. What are the specifics to the second and third year of this 3-year plan?

Admiral COLLINS. It is an evolving plan, as everything is in the wake of 9/11 because it is a new world, new realities that we are building to. Some of the specifics are being worked through, discussed within the Administration. I think what you can expect to see ultimately in a 2004 or 2005 budget as it rolls up is some of the very same things that appear, just a continued buildout of those same things that appear in 2003.

For example, Sea Marshalls, the Sea Marshall concept to ensure the positive control of vessels in our waterways, which is a major goal of our strategic plan. Another major goal is Maritime Domain Awareness, that concept where we have clarity and visibility in our area of responsibility of people, cargo, and platforms, so that we can take preventative action, not consequence management action. Consequence management action is when really all those upstream things have failed.

But significant investments in communications, secure communications, intelligence, and so forth, that is part of that MDA, or Maritime Domain Awareness. You can expect to see more of that.

Maritime safety and security teams. We do not want to stop at six. We feel that there is additional teams that we can justify as part of our plan. That gives us another part of our strategic goal, which is presence, increased presence in our ports for deterrence and response capability. So that is another continuation of our plan.

Also, protection of critical infrastructure and force protection for our own men and women, things like weapons, ammunition, chem-

ical, biological, and radiological detection, protection equipment. Those are the kind of things that you would expect to see, in addition to outreach and partnership, goal five of our strategic plan, with industry and with other government agencies, local agencies. This is an all-hands affair. That requires—as the Chairman mentioned, over 30 ports, 95,000 miles of coastline. We could never be big enough to do that by ourselves.

This requires the most important features—collaboration and outreach, and I would submit not only domestically, but internationally. One of the reasons why Admiral Jim Loy went over to IMO last fall and addressed the general assembly and got a unanimous resolution to aggressively pursue internationally enhanced security for shipping, because part of this an international threat and part of the solution has to be an international solution.

Senator SNOWE. Let's turn to the whole modernization program, such as Deepwater, as well as the National Distress and Response System. First of all, with Deepwater, do you think there should be any modifications to that program as a result of September 11th?

Admiral COLLINS. Right now, of course, we are in the pre-award phase, the source selection phase. The way the requirement is defined and the way the structure of the contract will be set up, if adjustments need to be made I think they will need to be made on the margin. They can be made in a post-award environment. That is the most prudent thing to do now.

But I see there may be some adjustments, but adjustments on the margin, that the basic feature of Deepwater, which is a system of systems, which is information-centric, which is all about coordinating our aircraft and our surface assets so they work as a system and a network, is the very thing that homeland security calls for. So I think we are pretty much on target. There probably will be some marginal adjustments in the post-award environment.

Senator SNOWE. As the Chairman mentioned about the National Response and Distress System, there are still existing gaps. We are going to be hearing testimony in subsequent panels about the Department of Transportation IG report which stated that there are still going to be gaps across this country. Have you given any thought to how we should address that? The original purpose of this initiative was to address and correct all the gaps in the system. Now we are modifying it because of the cost, but at the same time we are back to where we started in many ways.

Admiral COLLINS. The approach, Senator, to the project is not to take the existing system and say these were the gaps and let us go plug them. What it is is taking a more blank sheet of paper and redrawing, reconfiguring the entire system with a brand new build-out that gives you digital capability, direction-finding capability, and so forth.

It is going to be built out regionally, region by region. The first one will be the mid-Atlantic area. Atlantic City, Group Atlantic City, for example, will be one of the early initial operating capabilities. Each one of those areas, the industry will come in, the winning contractor will come in and do a detailed survey of that area, and then look at where he has to site towers and so forth to ensure he meets the performance requirement of the contract.

The performance requirement of the contract calls for 98 percent probability of communications. That is way more than the mid-1980s that we have now with the current system. So I think that we have to wait for surveys, region by region surveys that will say. The contractor is going to have to meet those minimum performance standards region by region by region as it is built out.

The way it is being built out, there is one region built on and then the next adjacent region is built out, so we build off the tower structure of one region against the other region to the other region. So it is a very disciplined, I think well thought out approach. We do not want gaps in our system. We want 98 percent connectivity, and I think that is what we are going to get when this gets awarded.

Senator SNOWE. I certainly hope that you work with this Committee on that issue, because I think we have to make sure that we provide the kind of communications coverage that is essential. That initially was the primary goal for this program. I think we want to work with you to make sure that we stay on track with that program. We will be hearing later about the report. We hear perhaps we will follow up with you on this later.

Go ahead.

Admiral COLLINS. I would be glad to provide a brief to your staff, you or your staff, on the details of that as you desire, Senator.

Senator SNOWE. Thank you.

Finally, on the issue of small boat station readiness. This is another area which I really do think we have to address in terms of the operations tempo. I know I have talked to my station in Eastport, and I know the demands that have been placed on them and the long hours. That is also true for most of these stations around the country.

How do you propose to addressing this issue for the future? It is clearly a deficiency. It needs to be addressed and we have to rectify it, because it is a matter of safety and providing for the safety on our coastal waterways. I do know the OPTEMPO rates are obviously very high and so we need to take corrective action on that score for the future.

Admiral COLLINS. Yes, Senator, clearly whatever shortfalls we had at the stations were exacerbated by 9/11 and the OPTEMPO that we push ourselves toward to meet the security needs of our ports and waterways. I think the 2002 and 2003 game plan and along with out years for search and rescue meets many of the previously discussed issues associated with our search and rescue stations, whether that be boat readiness or whether it be amount of people and so forth.

The 2002 budget provided close to 200 people, additional people for our search and rescue stations. The 2003 budget provides 138 people additional to be distributed to our search and rescue stations. In addition, there is another increment of, I think, about 30 or so, if I have got the numbers right, for our groups, the command centers, our Coast Guard groups. So there is a fairly significant investment.

In addition, I will state again, those maritime safety and security teams, those new units that we are creating six through the 2003

budget, that is 498 people going into those teams around the country. Those teams, what do they provide?

Senator KERRY. Are they new people or are they coming out of the existing personnel pool?

Admiral COLLINS. New people, Senator.

Senator KERRY. Brand new people?

Admiral COLLINS. Yes, sir. They are part of the 2200 person plus-up. 498 of those are maritime safety and security teams. They represent boatswain mates, MKs, and the like that are going to be operating boats in coastal areas. Those will significantly reduce the OPTEMPO pressures on those stations.

So a combination of the plus-up in the SAR station plus the maritime safety and security team will move us a long way along solving some of those OPTEMPO, PERSTEMPO problems, Senator that you mentioned.

Senator SNOWE. Thank you, Admiral. We appreciate it and we know that you are going to provide remarkable leadership in the future, and it is certainly indicative of the kind of career that you already have amassed. So we appreciate it. Thank you.

Admiral COLLINS. Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Senator Snowe.

If I could just follow up on that for a moment. Notwithstanding the increases, the increases are going to an increased set of responsibilities; is that correct? In other words, the increases you have just talked about, the new personnel, the 2200, are being divided and 400-plus some are going directly into the special security. But others are going to be going into port security and these other security demands, correct?

My problem is that all of these new demands have arisen post-Labor Day. This is in the off season in terms of station demand. What happens to you getting into May and proceeding forward in the next months on that station demand, plus the new responsibilities, when already prior to September 11th you did not have enough people to do everything we were asking you to do?

Admiral COLLINS. 138 of the 2200, are brand new, going into SAR stations. An additional increment is going in to provide the fourth crew member for our new 47-foot MLB. So part of that 2200 people are going into search and rescue stations. Of course, the bulk, as you pointed out——

Senator KERRY. How many stations do we have nationally?

Admiral COLLINS. Over 200, about 220 stations, Senator.

Senator KERRY. So you are talking 138 people for 200 and some stations.

Admiral COLLINS. Of course, they are not going to be distributed across the board, station by station.

Senator KERRY. Right, station for station, I understand that.

Admiral COLLINS. They will be put into those with the highest requirement. It is the second increment of the investment. There was the 200 additional search and rescue personnel last year as well.

Senator KERRY. Well, obviously the Committee is very interested in this and concerned. We do not have to belabor it now, but I think you can tell that we are here for you. There is no political axe to grind here whatsoever. This Committee is completely bipar-

tisan to making sure that the Coast Guard has the resources it needs. I think we have been, frankly, one of the loudest and most persistent voices on a bipartisan basis over the years for what we think has been an underfunding of your important agency.

So we hope you are going to be frank with us as we go forward here, because these responsibilities are critical. Senator Snowe and I feel very deeply about the inadequacy of the monitoring of the fisheries. It is just inadequate, and we are going from 88 days maybe down to 22, depending on what happens here in New England in the groundfish fishery. The havoc that is going to create among our fisherpeople and the pressures it is going to create, frankly, for people that go look outside of those parameters. And if you have not got enforcement, we are all cooked.

This is an ecosystem resource. This is not something that you can buy your way back into. If we do not have sufficient enforcement mechanism, we are not going to make those stock goals.

Likewise on narcotics and these other issues. These are all equal kinds of competing factors. So it is really crunch time and I think 9/11 sort of woke people up to the extraordinary demands and the number of waterway, port security issues that we face.

Maybe all of it does not have to fall on your agency and, needless to say, a lot of it will not as we sort of hone this, though it would be helpful for us to hear from the person in charge of it so we could begin to understand exactly how those demands are being divided, which is another issue, not for us here at this moment.

So we are going to work with you and hope you will work with us as we try to figure out what is necessary. We have got $37 billion that is going into homeland security. Homeland security has a lot of definitions. I think homeland security is our narcotics effort and I think homeland security is also our protection of our ecosystem. But the nefarious networks that use the narcotics trafficking channels are the very same people what also provide illegal passports, illegal visas, money accounts that are hidden, who play to the proliferation issues, and so forth.

So your ability to perform that function in my judgment is at the front line of any homeland security effort, and we need to make certain that that $37 billion is enough to do some of the other things we may choose to do. We have got to really think very hard about that.

A couple of just quick pro forma questions, if I may. Is there any conflict that the Committee should be aware of that might in any way affect the performance of your responsibilities as Commandant?

Admiral COLLINS. No, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Do you agree to appear before the Committee at such time as the Committee duly sends you appropriate request to do so in the course of your tenure?

Admiral COLLINS. Yes, sir, with pleasure.

Senator KERRY. And those people who serve with you, should that be necessary?

Admiral COLLINS. Yes, sir.

Senator KERRY. We thank you for that.

Assuming we can move your nomination very rapidly, and we are going to try and do that—we will hold a Committee meeting off the

floor of the Senate, hopefully, to be able to move it to the floor rapidly. Assuming we are able to confirm you this week, when would this change of command take place under those circumstances?

Admiral COLLINS. It is scheduled for the 30th of May, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Fine.

Admiral COLLINS. Yes, sir.

Senator KERRY. Well, Admiral, we wish you all the best. We thank you very much for the job you have done as a prelude to this enormously important job you are about to do. We really do look forward to working with you. We hope you will feel the Committee is available to you to be as cooperative and as thoughtful as possible as we try to resolve these important issues for our country. We wish you well.

Admiral COLLINS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It has been a pleasure to appear before you today and I do look forward to working very closely with the Committee.

Senator KERRY. Well, good luck to you. Thank you.

Admiral COLLINS. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 3:29 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

I am pleased to offer my support on behalf of Vice Admiral Thomas H. Collins, who has been nominated by President Bush to be the 22nd Commandant of the United States Coast Guard.

Admiral Collins is well qualified for the post of Commandant. He currently serves as the Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard, at the side of the Commandant, Admiral Loy. Admiral Collins is a highly decorated officer with a long and distinguished career in the Coast Guard. He has served in a variety of assignments throughout his exemplary career which include: Pacific Area Commander, 14th District Commander, command of a cutter, commander of a Group, and Captain of the Port.

In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11th, the Coast Guard faces a critical point in its history. The challenge facing the Service is to take on this significant homeland security mission while at the same time providing the same level of service the American people have come to expect from the Coast Guard across a large spectrum of missions.

Even before September 11th, the Coast Guard faced enormous challenges in overcoming chronic readiness issues ranging from an antiquated deepwater fleet, readiness problems in the search and rescue program, and retention problems with experienced personnel leaving the service. Readiness is clearly a concern to all of the military services and the Coast Guard should be funded at a level which allows the men and women who proudly serve this country to do so with the right resources. We need to ensure the Coast Guard has the resources to carry out its enhanced homeland security posture and conduct its traditional missions at their pre-September 11th level.

The Coast Guard is the first line of defense in our war on drugs—they are the lead maritime federal agency for drug interdiction efforts. 95 percent of the drugs smuggled into our country travel over the water, so the Coast Guard should be well equipped to stop these drugs from reaching our schools and streets.

The Coast Guard also performs a wide range of duties—high profile search and rescue efforts, saving the lives of sailors in trouble, keeping our waterways safe for commercial trade and recreation, cleaning up oil spills and other environmental hazards, and enforcing important immigration and environmental laws.

I strongly support Admiral Collins' nomination and believe we should quickly confirm him.

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