



LETTERS: We must invest in our defense



THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

Published: July 2, 2015 Updated: 5:10 p.m.

As we celebrate Independence Day this year, it is important to remember that the United States remains a beacon of freedom and justice in the world. Many in the world owe their political and economic independence to the presence of U.S. armed forces in their region protecting them from terrorist and rogue nations who would take that freedom away. That independence is protected not by only through war and battle, but through the mere presence of our U.S. Navy-Marine Corps team, standing ready 24/7 to react to any threat and respond to any crisis.

As America's away team, the U.S. Navy is a global force that reminds other countries and bad actors that we are the strongest country in the world, with the best military and the most advanced technology. The United States Marine Corps is the nation's 911 emergency response force – fast, flexible and lethal. Together, their ability to project power, deter aggression and lend aid when needed is the core of their mission, and it is integral to keeping American citizens from harm.

Recent news reports in mainstream media outlets have reported that the Marine Corps is considering deploying Marines on foreign ships due to a shortage of Navy vessels. Another story reports that 19 percent of Marine Corps aircraft are down for repairs. We are clearly facing a crisis. We are a maritime and coastal nation – we need a strong Navy and Marine Corps to counter potential threats and protect our citizens.

This proposal to hitch a ride to the action shows that the Navy and Marine Corps are both overextended and underfunded. They are our first response force and we need them now more than ever, as recent terror attacks in multiple nations have shocked the world. As citizens, we must call on our leadership and demand the necessary investments be made in the Navy-Marine Corps team. I urge every citizen of the Inland Empire to speak out on this issue.

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