

Advance Questions for General Peter Pace, USMC
Nominee for the Position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Defense Reforms

You previously have answered the Committee's policy questions on the reforms brought about by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in connection with your nominations to be Commander, U.S. Southern Command, and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

Has your view of the importance, implementation, and practice of these reforms changed since you testified before the Committee at your most recent confirmation hearing on July 24, 2003?

My fundamental view of Goldwater-Nichols legislation remains unchanged. Goldwater-Nichols has institutionalized joint warfighting in today's generation of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines – our force is joint – thinks joint – and fights joint. Your Armed Forces continue to prepare for complex future operations that require knowledgeable, innovative and decisive leaders, capable of succeeding in a fluid and often-chaotic environment. Educating and empowering the joint force remains a priority.

You previously have indicated in response to questions about the need for changes to Goldwater-Nichols, that the Joint Staff has sought to identify methods that would allow the Chairman of the JCS and the Vice Chairman of the JCS to carry out their duties under title 10, United States Code, more effectively and efficiently. The Committee has received testimony from Secretary England, General Jones, and Admiral Clark that changes relating to the acquisition process under Goldwater-Nichols may be necessary.

What are your current views about the need for additional modifications of Goldwater-Nichols in light of recently identified problems in the Air Force acquisition process, ongoing transformation, and JCS efforts to identify necessary modifications?

Goldwater-Nichols continues to effectively shape and integrate unified action within the Armed Forces to meet the strategic objectives outlined by the President in his National Security Strategy. Goldwater-Nichols still provides relevant guidance to all our Departmental processes, and provides us the flexibility to continue to look at innovative ways to improve our business practices. While a review and possible changes to our acquisition processes are warranted, I believe what is most worth exploring is application of a "Goldwater-Nichols like" framework across the USG, to maximize integration and effective use of interagency resources.

Duties

Based on your experience as a combatant commander and as Vice Chairman of the JCS, what recommendations, if any, do you have for changes in the duties and functions of sections 152 through 155 of title 10, United States Code, relating to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the organization and operation of the Joint Staff?

I have one recommendation. If the Homeland Security Council is going to remain separate from the National Security Council, I recommend the CJCS be designated as a statutory advisor to the Homeland Security Council. The Armed Forces play a vital role in homeland defense, and the Chairman should be included formally as principle military advisor to the Homeland Security Council.

Relationships

Section 151(b) of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Chairman of the JCS is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. Other sections of law and traditional practice establish important relationships between the Chairman and other officials.

Please identify any changes in the relationships the Chairman and JCS have experienced with the following officials since your last confirmation hearing:

The Secretary of Defense

I have not noticed any changes in the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense since my last confirmation hearing.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

I have not noticed any changes in the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Deputy Secretary of Defense since my last confirmation hearing.

The Under Secretaries of Defense

I have not noticed any changes in the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Under Secretaries of Defense since my last confirmation hearing.

The Assistant Secretaries of Defense.

I have not noticed any changes in the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Assistant Secretaries of Defense since my last confirmation hearing.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

I have not noticed any changes in the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and my current position since my last confirmation hearing.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments.

I have not noticed any changes in the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretaries of the Military Departments since my last confirmation hearing.

The Chiefs of Staff of the Services.

I have not noticed any changes in the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint

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Chiefs of Staff and the Chiefs of Staff of the Services since my last confirmation hearing.

The Combatant Commanders.

I have not noticed any changes in the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Combatant Commanders since my last confirmation hearing.

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Major Challenges and Problems

In your view, what are the major challenges that you would confront if confirmed as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

There are several challenges that confront the Armed Forces as we fight today's war and prepare for tomorrow's. We will continue our efforts to win the war on terror and to provide a stable, secure environment in Iraq and Afghanistan inside of which their sovereign governments can develop and mature. We will continue to transform the Armed Forces, taking advantage of the lessons learned over the past three years, as we develop a military capable of rapid adaptation to meet our future challenges. We are in the process of completing a comprehensive review of our Armed Forces in the Quadrennial Defense Review with the aim of developing the future Joint Force that has the right people with the right capabilities to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The foundation of our success in the Armed Forces is our people –and our focus will remain on recruiting, training and developing our best and brightest to continue to deliver to the American people the finest fighting force in the world. We must ensure we take care of these incredible soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and their families by ensuring we have effective programs to support their professional, physical, and financial well-being.

Assuming you are confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?

Currently the Department is conducting the Quadrennial Defense Review directed in Title 10. The Secretary has organized this effort to include both civilian and military leadership analyzing six focus areas. Through this review, I will work with the Secretary and make recommendations regarding the appropriate capabilities, policies and resources needed to continue to transform the Armed Forces to meet current and future security challenges.

Priorities

In his responses to the Committee's advance policy questions in July 2003, General Myers indicated that his priorities included continued focus on winning the war on terrorism, improving joint warfighting, and transforming our Nation's military to face the dangers of the 21st Century while taking care of the men and women serving in the Armed Forces.

How would you describe progress to date in attaining these goals?

We continue to make steady gains in these three areas. Our war on terrorism efforts, both at home and abroad, have been successful. While we still face significant challenges, our forces have performed superbly in defending the homeland and conducting offensive counterterrorism operations to defeat threats closest to their source. We have made major strides in transforming the force, from readiness forecasting, mobilization procedures, and force management, to adapting whole new ways of organizing, equipping and training our forces like the Army's modular combat brigade concept. Likewise, the commitment to our people has enhanced their benefits and maintained high morale in an otherwise very busy force. These successful efforts, and many others, continue to transform our forces and enhance our joint warfighting capabilities.

If confirmed, what would be your priorities as Chairman?

Having had the opportunity to serve as Vice Chairman under Dick Myers, I believe his focus these past four years has been spot on – appropriate and in the best interests of our nation and our Armed Forces. My priorities will continue to focus on winning the war on terrorism, improving joint warfighting, and continuing the transformation of our Nation's military. We will focus on five themes – 1) execute a comprehensive strategy to undermine and defeat extremists, 2) strengthen our capability to prevent conflict, 3) increase speed of adaptation of the force and the interagency process, 4) shape and size our joint force to meet the challenges of the future, and 5) continue to pursue quality of life initiatives.

Transformation

You previously have stressed the objective in transformation of achieving a new "mind set" within DOD and developing a generation of warfighters who are accomplished in their service culture and strengths and equally comfortable applying that knowledge in the joint arena.

Please describe the progress that the Department, including the JCS and the Joint Staff, has made in transforming the Armed Forces.

We've made progress in the transformation of many concepts and programs, to include: intelligence reform and information sharing in GWOT; Network Centric Operations and the Global Information Grid that will provide the backbone systems for global end-to-end communications for DOD; efficient and effective integration of various USG agencies in the Joint Interagency Coordination Groups of our Combatant Commands; new tools and ideas for future warfighting as a result of joint experimentation, to include the way we plan, preposition, and mobilize our current force; and finally, improvements in our processes and the interaction of our organizations — cultural transformation. General Schoomaker offers a tremendous example of transforming our "mind set." By simply reorganizing the same Army assets into Brigade size units, he has created greater capacity, in a more agile, flexible force.

If confirmed, what would be your goals regarding transformation in the future?

We will examine the near-, mid-, and long-term capabilities the department will require to remain the world's greatest fighting force. We will use joint concepts and experimentation to help us make the best decisions we can to solve today's issues while also continuing to transform so we maintain our joint warfighting capabilities into the future. And we will continue to aggressively work on our cultural transformation — looking at our current assets in new ways to solve the challenges that will face us in the future.

Do you believe the Joint Staff should play a larger role in transformation? If so, in what ways?

The requirement to transform our forces will remain one of my top priorities. We are a nation at war, and one of our greatest challenges is to transform while protecting the US from direct attack; fighting the global war on terror; and reducing the potential for future conflict. If confirmed, I will do my best to ensure we continue to invest heavily in transformation, both intellectually and materially. It is a difficult undertaking, especially in time of war; but it must be done.

Afghanistan

What is your assessment of the long-term prospects for Afghan military forces to effectively provide a secure environment for a democratically elected government to function?

The long-term prospects for Afghan security forces are excellent. To date there are approximately 42,000 trained Afghan National Police and 24,000 Afghan National Army Soldiers. Currently the Afghan security forces are conducting patrols side by side with our coalition forces and performing well. Starting this fall units will undergo Unit Readiness exercises to measure capability to operate independently from coalition forces. The process of handing over security responsibilities is a deliberate one, involving incremental steps of training, small unit operations, and ever-increasing responsibilities being transferred to the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police.

What, if any, types of military assistance would you recommend in addition to current efforts?

Our commanders on the ground continually assess their requirements and we intend to provide the forces that they need. Military assistance will come from US and Coalition forces, which in this case includes NATO.

The FY 05 Supplemental Afghan Freedom Support Appropriations Act provides appropriate funding to support our current military efforts in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Security Forces Fund included in that Act provides funding to help stand up national level security forces in Afghanistan. Our current efforts in that regard are going extremely well. However, as we consider ways to accelerate training efforts of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and assist the Afghan police, we may need additional funds to support that accelerated effort.

What is the current division of labor between U. S., coalition partners, and the Government of Afghanistan in overall counterdrug efforts, particularly with regard to identifying drug traffickers, destroying drug labs, interdicting drugs and drug-related imports and exports, and destroying opium fields?

Our goal is an Afghanistan properly controlled by the Afghan Government, not outside forces. So it is good that the counterdrug effort is handled principally as a law enforcement effort of the Government of Afghanistan. The United Kingdom is the lead coalition nation in assisting the Afghan Government. The role of US forces and our Coalition partners in this effort has been to provide the Afghans the training, intelligence, and logistics support necessary to execute their counterdrug missions.

Specifically, Coalition forces have provided Close Air Support / Medical Evacuation, intelligence, planning and airlift on an as available basis. The Afghan

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government's Central Poppy Eradication Force, based in Kabul, is responsible for the destruction of opium fields.

How would you assess the effectiveness of this division of labor, and what, if any, changes would you recommend?

The division of labor is appropriate and the Coalition's participation should continue to be in a supporting role as counter-narcotics is a law enforcement matter. The challenges to the counterdrug effort include insufficient numbers of trained Police and counterdrug forces, corrupt local officials, insufficient legal and judicial infrastructure, and Alternative Livelihood efforts that have not yet yielded the desired results.

Status of the Armed Forces

Ongoing operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and worldwide in the global war on terrorism have placed great demands on active and reserve military personnel and their families.

In your view, how is the overall morale of forces at the present time, particularly with regard to those units and individuals who have been deployed for extended periods of time and are facing the prospect of redeployment to combat zones?

The morale of our forces continues to be strong, especially in our deployed units. I have observed this first hand. Our Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen, both active and reserve components, recognize that while they are in a demanding fight, their efforts are having a profound, positive impact on some very troubled areas of the world. They see both the direct effect they are having on protecting America and the good they are doing for people abroad. These effects upon them are clearly reflected in their willingness to reenlist at historically high rates.

I am also extremely proud of our military families, who bear the burden of keeping the household running, balancing the day-to-day details with the constant concern of their loved ones serving in harm's way. Their courage and sacrifice equal that of our warriors in uniform, and they deserve our continued gratitude and support. Reenlistment is very much a family decision, and again our reenlistment rates show that our families are equally committed.

If confirmed, what plans would you implement to address the stress that high operational tempo under combat conditions places on our forces and their families?

The operational tempo of U.S. forces during the three plus years since September 11, 2001 has been significant. My task is to assist the Secretary of Defense in making every effort to achieve the most efficient use of our forces and to manage those forces within acceptable levels of stress. Accordingly, we developed with the Secretary 47 critical tasks to reduce the stress of the force that apply lessons learned from the Global War on Terrorism; expand focused joint training; coordinate technical interoperability with coalition forces; and reorganize force capabilities into a modular structure supported by a minimum logistical footprint. The Department will monitor, measure, analyze and exploit each of these areas for specific opportunities to reduce stress on the force for both the active and reserve components.

Dr. Chu has the lead for the Department on this very important endeavor and each of the Services and the Joint Staff are playing a vital role. If confirmed I look forward to working with Dr. Chu and the Joint Chiefs to reduce relieve stress on our forces and their families.

Joint Officer Management

Statutory standards for joint officer management and joint professional military education have increasingly been the subject of proposals for change that would afford greater latitude to the Joint Staff and the services in the management of officers. In section 531 of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005, the Secretary of Defense is required to develop a strategic plan for joint officer management and joint professional military education that would link future requirements for active and reserve military personnel who are trained and educated in joint matters to the resources required to develop those officers in terms of manpower, formal education, practical experience, and other requirements.

What do you consider to be the principal problems that should be addressed by the strategic plan and, if confirmed, what objectives would you hope to achieve?

Since the enactment of GNA in 1986, we have made great strides in the joint arena. However, the current world environment and the enemies we face on today's battlefield are radically different than those of 20 years ago. GNA was based on our assessment of the Cold War environment and the Department's limited experience in true joint operations. Today's military is actively and decisively engaged in joint operations to an extent we never imagined. We have embraced joint operations and continue to adapt to fighting jointly.

The Joint Staff is assisting Dr. David Chu, USD (P&R), in developing a strategic plan for joint total force development that will be directly linked to the overall missions and goals of the department. This new strategic plan will fully define the specific capabilities and competencies required of our officers, senior civilians, field grade reserve component officers, and senior noncommissioned officers. Additionally, the plan will address the resources, education, training, assignments and career progression requirements needed to perform and succeed in a joint environment.

What do you consider to be the primary strengths and weaknesses of the current requirements for joint professional military education with respect to qualification as a joint specialty officer?

The primary strength of the current system is that it produces outstanding, qualified joint specialists who perform at the highest organizational levels in critical joint positions. The major drawbacks are "chokepoints" within officer career paths that reduce the opportunity of gaining joint experience and create a need for prerequisite waivers. These chokepoints have constrained opportunities for officers and have impacted organizations and missions.

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Broader and more equitable standards for defining what constitutes a “fully qualified” joint officer are required. The CJCS' new vision of Joint Officer Development envisions multiple avenues for officers to attain joint qualified officer (JQO) status, such as obtaining both JPME and Joint Individual training from both resident and non-resident paths, as well as counting experiences gained during service on a Joint Task Force or in Service billets that have inherently joint aspects. For example, an officer in the G3 of the 18th Airborne Corps, who is in combat operations with a Joint or coalition force, could generate joint credit from that assignment if it is found that most of his work is in joint matters and that he further displays “joint competence” in the performance of his duties.

The multiple paths to the JQO designation as well as service responsibilities to track, monitor and record Joint experience, will provide relief to the currently encumbered manpower systems and reduce the ad hoc “work-arounds” regarding assignments and tour-lengths. This broader definition of a joint qualified officer will provide increased flexibility in the system and more effectively produce the joint specialists needed.

What is your assessment of the appropriate balance between education and experience in achieving qualification as a joint specialty officer?

Based on individual strengths and talents, one proscriptive approach of x amount of education and y amount of training may not best serve our needs to joint officer development. I believe that our system must be flexible enough to provide selected officers a tailored mix of joint education, training and assignment opportunities they need to gain the experience and achieve the competency-level an organization requires to effectively fill critical joint positions.

Rebalancing Forces

In a memorandum of July 9, 2003, the Secretary of Defense directed action by the Services, the Joint Staff, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense aimed at achieving better balance in the capabilities of the active and reserve components. The Secretary noted that the Department “needs to promote judicious and prudent use of the Reserve components with force rebalancing initiatives that reduce strain through the efficient application of manpower and technological solution based on a disciplined force requirements process.”

What progress has been made in achieving the Secretary's vision?

The Secretary's vision encompassed three principal objectives: rebalance the active and reserve forces to reduce the need for involuntary mobilization of the Guard and Reserve; establish a more rigorous process for reviewing joint requirements, which ensures that force structure is designed appropriately and requests for forces are validated promptly to provide timely notice of mobilization; and make the mobilization and demobilization process more efficient.

The Department continually assesses its force structure and rebalances within and between the Active and Reserve Components to move forces from low demand to high demand specialties with the desired result of improved readiness and deployability. These rebalancing efforts will shift forces to critical specialties such as Civil Affairs, Military Police, Special Forces, Psychological Operations, and Intelligence while divesting Cold War structure to provide a more capable and lethal force to fight the Global War on Terrorism.

We have instituted a new process for assignment, allocation and apportionment of U.S. military forces to the combatant commands. The Global Force Management Process provides comprehensive insight into the global availability of U.S. military forces and helps us match requirements with available forces. Sourcing solutions are developed and then approved at a quarterly Global Force Management Board designed to ensure the best options are selected to achieve desired effects.

Additionally, the lessons learned during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM concerning reserve mobilization and demobilization have been put into action. Specific recommendations were made, each with potential follow-on actions, to enhance the capability of the Department to mobilize and deploy reserve forces. The Department has rewritten policies that have been included in the Global Force Management process. As part of this process, every reserve deployment is reviewed for an effective alternative source of manpower – civilian, contractor or volunteer.

UNCLASSIFIED

What do you consider to be the biggest continuing obstacles to achieving the goals that the Secretary of Defense has set forth in his memorandum?

The biggest challenge to achieving the Secretary's goals is determining the appropriate balance between the Active and Reserve Components while maintaining sufficient warfighting capability. To that end, rebalancing of the force is an ongoing activity within the Department. The Department is continually assessing its force structure and rebalancing within, and between, the Active and Reserve Components with the expressed purpose of improving readiness and deployability.

Iraq Insurgency

We have all been concerned about the recent rise in violence in Iraq, particularly with regard to suicide bombers. Our current strategy is to continue to train, equip, and assist the Iraqi Security Forces in their efforts to be able to take responsibility for internal security in Iraq.

What progress has been made in training Iraqi Security Forces?

Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) are making steady progress. In May of 2003 there were no ISF. In July 2004 there were six newly formed Regular Army battalions in training and over 32,000 trained police. In June of this year, there are over 100 combat battalions in the Iraqi Defense and Interior ministries and over 60,600 trained and equipped police. Despite horrific terrorist attacks directed at the ISF, security force development maintains its forward momentum: large numbers of recruits are volunteering and being trained; the supply system is equipping them; and the infrastructure is maturing to house and support these units.

How would you assess the current capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces?

Most Iraqi combat battalions are capable of planning, executing, and sustaining counterinsurgency operations with Coalition support or in conjunction with Coalition units. All are on track for eventual independent operations and, while working toward that end, all units are in the fight. Regular police and border forces continue to struggle in high threat areas; however, we are working to strengthen links to coalition forces to enhance their capabilities.

What system has been developed for assessing those capabilities?

The process for measuring MOD Iraqi Security Forces capability looks at six areas of readiness. They are: Personnel, Command and Control, Training, Equipping, Sustainment, and Leadership. Using these measurements, battalion size units are assessed on a readiness rating of Level 1 - 4. At the top end of readiness, a Level 1 unit is fully capable of planning, executing, and sustaining independent counterinsurgency operations. At the lower end, a Level 4 unit is just forming and/or incapable of conducting counterinsurgency operations. Iraqi Commanders and Coalition Forces will jointly report these assessments with parallel reporting up the chain to Multi-National Corps - Iraq (MNC-I) and the Iraqi Joint Headquarters/Iraqi Army Headquarters. Minister of Interior (MOI) Special Police Battalions use the same assessment system. Measuring the capability of other MOI forces is challenging due to the vast number of local police stations and border enforcement guard posts throughout Iraq. Multinational Forces - Iraq (MNF-I) is finalizing the process for assessing the provincial police

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stations along areas of readiness similar to the Ministry of Defense forces. We expect the first iteration of readiness reporting using this new process for MOI forces to be completed at the end of July 2005.

With U. S. assistance, the Iraqis are developing combat and police units to conduct a variety of missions, including local security, external defense, reserve contingency operations, and counterinsurgency.

What requirement has been established for the number of battalion-size units of Iraqi Security Forces to be organized, trained, and equipped specifically for counterinsurgency missions?

The current authorized number of combat battalions for the ISF is 143. These forces include 112 battalions in the Iraqi Army, 3 battalions of Special Operations Forces within the Ministry of Defense, and 28 battalions of Special Police Forces in the Ministry of Interior. We anticipate the sovereign government of Iraq to, over time, modify the size of their security forces based on internal and external threats.

How many battalions are currently capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations with and without coalition assistance, respectively?

The majority of Iraqi combat battalions are already planning, executing, and sustaining counterinsurgency operations with Coalition support or in conjunction with Coalition units. I have provided a separate, classified graphic that shows the specific number of battalions currently in each category.

At the current pace of training and equipping, when do you anticipate the Iraqis will be ready to assume primary responsibility for security in Iraq?

CENTCOM and MNF-I regularly assess the capability of the ISF and their ability to assume primary responsibility for security in Iraq. The pace of transition from US forces to Iraqi security forces will be driven by the capability of the Iraqi forces, the level of insurgent activity, and the ability of the Iraqi government to provide essential services and infrastructure in the areas of security, governance, economic development, and communications. Iraqi security forces are gaining valuable combat experience and continue to make progress toward taking the lead in the counterinsurgency fight. As conditions warrant, Multinational Forces - Iraq (MNF-I) will progressively transition the counterinsurgency mission to capable Iraqi security forces at the local, regional and national levels, and assign Coalition forces to supporting roles with a less visible presence.

Treatment of Detainees

The Constitution, laws, and treaty obligations of the United States prohibit the torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of persons held in U.S. custody.

What steps, if any, do you believe the Joint Staff should take to ensure the humane treatment of detainees in DOD custody and to ensure that such detainees are not subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment?

The United States Government will treat all detainees humanely and in accordance with applicable international and domestic law. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines are trained to treat all detainees humanely from the moment they are captured -- without exception. The Joint Staff, in coordination with and support to the Combatant Commands, constantly evaluates and assesses DOD policies to ensure the appropriate treatment of all persons in DOD custody.

To date, US forces have detained approximately 70,000 individuals in the prosecution of the Global War on Terrorism. These efforts have successfully prevented many of the most dangerous people on earth from committing further terrorist acts or criminal activities. Despite thorough training and policies that clearly prohibit the maltreatment of detainees, a small number of individuals have violated the law. Those actions are totally unacceptable, and the United States has suffered a direct and severe impact strategically as a result of them.

Humane treatment is the standard, and deviation from this standard will not be tolerated. Credible information regarding detainee abuse has been and will continue to be investigated, and individuals will be held accountable if abuse is substantiated. The Joint Staff's role in this effort, in coordination with OSD and the Interagency, is to ensure that national level policies and procedures are in place that will continue to provide clear guidance to the Combatant Commanders and the component commands on the applicable standards.

Operational Tempo

The U.S. has approximately 138,000 troops deployed in Iraq and another 15,000 deployed in Afghanistan, in addition to our other overseas commitments in Korea, Japan, Europe, and elsewhere. Sustainment of these large-scale deployments has put strains on the force, particularly ground forces, and has required the extensive use of Reserve component elements.

For how long is the current level of deployments sustainable?

The Armed Forces of our Nation will sustain whatever level of operation is required. Thanks to the Members of this Committee and the support of the Congress, we have the force structure we need to meet the needs of the Nation.

This is not to say we are accomplishing our many missions, both at home and abroad, without challenges. We have a process, the Global Force Management System, by which we seek to assign the right forces at the right time to meet the requirements of our combatant commanders, within acceptable risks.

One of my most important duties is to convey to the civilian leadership of our Nation what the risks are, and provide my best military recommendations to mitigate such risks.

What initiatives are underway or being considered to increase the level of coalition military participation in Iraq and Afghanistan?

The primary vehicle we are using to increase coalition participation in Afghanistan is expansion of the NATO and International Security Assistance Force initiatives. Over the past several months, the Italians assumed control of the formerly US-led Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT) at Herat. As International Security Assistance Force expands to the south, the Canadians and UK will bring in a significant number of troops to assume control of two PRTs and conduct security operations. Through frequent mil-to-mil talks with our allies, we continually identify areas in which coalition forces can provide greater assistance. Through our State Department we make formal requests to other governments.

Under what conditions can U.S. troop levels in Iraq and Afghanistan be reduced?

US troop levels can be reduced when Afghan security forces are capable of operating independently, when NATO/ISAF expansion is complete, and when the

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insurgency is reduced to a level manageable by Afghan security forces. The conditions for US troop reductions in Iraq will be driven by the capability of the Iraqi forces, the level of insurgent activity, and the ability of the Iraqi government to provide essential services and infrastructure in the areas of security, governance, economic development, and communications. In each case, troop reductions in Afghanistan and Iraq will be event-driven, not based on timelines.

The Marine Corps currently conducts 7-month deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, while the Army conducts 12-month deployments.

What are the operational reasons for this difference?

The Service Rotation Policies are based upon the Service Chiefs' assessments of how they can best execute their Title 10 responsibilities to organize, train and equip the force. The Marine Corps requested that they be allowed to meet their deployment requirements and still maintain as close to their normal 6-month deployments as possible. It is the Marine Corps' view that the 7-month deployments allow them to meet the CENTCOM requirements, and to maintain a high state of readiness in worldwide deploying and deployed units.

What changes, if any, would you recommend to the approach taken by either service?

I do not anticipate any changes. The Service Rotation Policies are based upon the Service Chiefs' assessments of how they can best execute their Title 10 responsibilities to organize, train and equip the force. These Policies are the product of significant amounts of time and effort by the Service Staffs. With these policies each Service is bearing its fair share of the requirements based upon their core competencies.

U.S. Forces in Korea

In April 2005, the Government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) announced it would cut back by 8.9 percent on its financial contribution to the U. S. military presence in that nation, citing U. S. plans to reduce the number of its deployed troops. As a result, the number of locally hired South Korean workers has been reduced by United States Forces Korea.

In your view, do the planned reductions in the number of U. S. troops in South Korea and the funding response by the ROK place in jeopardy the goals of the Korea Land Partnership Plan, specifically, relocation of Army headquarters from Seoul to Camp Humphrey and other locations south of the capital?

No. The moves within Korea will continue on schedule. USFK is adjusting for the reduction in the Korean financial contribution, and it will not affect the Land Partnership Plan. Relocation of the Army headquarters from Yongsan is funded separately from the ROK financial contribution to the US military presence.

Increases in pay for U. S. soldiers stationed in the ROK as a result of the Army's use of assignment incentive pay and higher overseas cost of living allowance have made extended tours of duty in Korea more attractive.

Do you support increased numbers of accompanied tours for U. S. military personnel assigned duty in the ROK?

Yes. We are moving toward the reorganization of 95 installations across the peninsula into 12 "enclaves" that will provide for more centralized planning, execution, and coordination of our valuable resources. After the construction of these new facilities, we anticipate that 25 percent of the US troops serving in South Korea will be able to bring their families with them, compared with the current level of 10 percent. This new opportunity will not only enhance mission capability but will improve the quality of life for troops assigned to the Korean peninsula.

Global Force Management System

The Department of Defense has instituted a new process for allocating U. S. military forces among and between the U. S. combatant commands.

Why has the Global Force Management System been instituted, how does it achieve the goal of efficiently allocating forces, and how is it different from past practice?

The Global Force Management process provides a structured means to allocate forces from a global, rather than a regional perspective. This process provides the strategic flexibility needed to address emerging as well as rotational troop requirements while constantly assessing general risks. It provides a more comprehensive capability to accurately assess the impact of risks of proposed changes in force assignment.

Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy

The President announced plans in August 2004 to implement an Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (IGPBS) to emphasize the expeditionary posture of U. S. forces overseas. This strategy will result in the redeployment of tens of thousands of U. S. troops to the United States.

As a result of IGPBS, what adjustments to mobility assets and force modernization investments will be required to continue to meet the operational requirements of the combatant commanders?

The transition from the Cold War's containment strategy to a new international security environment has produced formidable challenges. The new global posture strategy promotes the expansion of allied roles and encourages new partnerships. The strategy relies on a tailored force construct to engage in regional security, which ultimately prevents war.

Transformation initiatives utilizing lighter platforms, such as the Stryker, US Army modularity, and network centric operations, augmented with prepositioned equipment, should greatly ease the stresses placed on our mobility lift requirements. Our ongoing study of mobility requirements will give us a better understanding of future requirements.

The new strategy will allow the US to "transform in stride" while taking better advantage of technology and innovative war-fighting concepts, improving our ability to meet our alliance commitments and global responsibilities.

Stability and Support Operations

Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have underscored the importance of planning and training for post-conflict stability operations. Increased emphasis has been placed on stability and support operations in DOD planning and guidance in order to achieve the goal of full integration across all DOD activities.

What is your assessment of the Department's current emphasis on planning for post-conflict scenarios?

The Department has placed considerable emphasis on post-conflict planning. The most critical step in improving our post-conflict planning is the establishment and integration of a counterpart civilian planning capability. Therefore:

- We strongly support the establishment of the office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) within the Department of State.*
- We have assisted S/CRS in building their own planning processes while integrating them into our own deliberate and crisis planning processes, here in Washington and with the Combatant Commanders.*
- We have worked with S/CRS to integrate stabilization and reconstruction operations into our Combatant Commander's Operational Plans and Theater Exercises.*

We are developing a DOD directive concerning stability operations. We envision a policy where stability operations are a core capability—one US military forces should be prepared to undertake. As such, stability operations will have the attention and priority comparable to other combat operations.

S/CRS is participating in the ongoing Quadrennial Defense Review, which emphasizes the need for post-conflict planning as we reassess our force structure requirements, to ensure we have the right mix of forces for the right missions, including stabilization and reconstruction operations.

What role should the Joint Staff play in the area of post-conflict planning and the conduct of stability and support operations?

The Joint Staff is a key member of the various interagency committees and working groups that develop plans and policies. Importantly, the Joint Staff facilitates coordination between the governmental agencies, such as S/CRS, and the Combatant Commanders and their staffs.

In your view, what is the appropriate relationship between DOD and other federal agencies in the planning and conduct of stability and support operations in a post- conflict environment?

I believe stabilization and reconstruction operations need to become core competencies of all departments of our government. Our experiences in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere have made it clear that interagency and international "jointness" are important, and can be crucial, to success.

It is essential to maintain clear accountability and responsibility for any mission. Therefore, the military is accustomed to designating lead and supporting responsibilities during contingencies.

DOD should be the lead agency while combat operations are ongoing. However, once combat operations have ceased, and stabilization and reconstruction operations are underway, there will be a time when another agency such the Department of State takes the policy lead in a stabilization and reconstruction operation with DOD in a supporting role.

S/CRS and the other government agencies, including DOD, have put considerable thought and effort into how they would exercise command and control during stabilization and reconstruction operations.

In particular, S/CRS has formulated three echelons of deployable teams to plug in with our Combatant Commanders, Joint Task Force Commanders, and then down to the division or brigade level. These teams would be key to the transition to another agency's control once combat operations are complete.

The military chain of command would remain in place, even under another agency's command and control. If a Joint Task Force or Combatant Commander felt he could not comply with direction from his civilian counterpart, he could always bring that matter up through the chain of command, up to and including the Secretary of Defense. Similarly, the civilian in charge could take issues up to the Secretary of State. At that point, the Secretaries could resolve the matter.

What lessons do you believe the Department has learned from the experience of planning and training for post-conflict operations in Iraq and Afghanistan?

The experiences of our forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and other contingencies have taught us several key lessons. They include:

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1) A focused, integrated US government approach to stabilization and reconstruction operations is essential to bring all the nation's elements of power to bear in a contingency.

2) Such an integrated approach requires that our civilian and military planning be fully coordinated, both here in Washington and with the Combatant Commanders.

3) We need a strong, standing civilian management capacity to ensure personnel, programs and resources for stabilization and reconstruction operations are coordinated.

4) That civilian management must have a surge capacity to rapidly mobilize and deploy personnel prior to or during a contingency.

5) Building and maintaining the civilian capacity to plan, mobilize, deploy, and execute stabilization and reconstruction operations requires a robust interagency training and exercise effort.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

At her confirmation hearing in January 2005, Secretary of State Rice expressed the Administration's strong support for the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. Officials of the Department of Defense, including the Chief of Naval Operations, have advocated for accession to the Convention.

Do you support U. S. accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

Yes. The Convention has useful provisions regarding freedom of navigation.

How would you answer the critics of the Convention who assert that accession is not in the national security interests of the United States?

On balance, the Convention would serve the national security interests of the United States.

Chinese Military

In early June 2005, Secretary Rumsfeld criticized China's military buildup, noting that China's investment in missiles and modern military technology posed a risk not only to Taiwan and American interests, but also to nations across Asia.

What do you believe are the objectives of the Chinese military modernization program?

Chinese leaders judge they must modernize to protect their vital national interests.

What do you believe are the Chinese global political-military objectives and specifically its objectives regarding Taiwan and the Asia-Pacific region?

The Chinese have developed worldwide economic and commercial interests and presence. Thus, they also seek to be consequential in all decisions involving international security issues, especially in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Their stated objective for Taiwan is that Taiwan is part of the Chinese homeland and, as shown by the law enacted earlier this year, they cannot permit an independent Taiwan.

How do you believe the United States should respond to the Chinese military modernization program?

US-China relations should be considered within the larger context of bilateral and multilateral relations of the region. Much of the peace and stability in Asia has been built on US presence and our strong and enduring alliances with Japan, Australia, South Korea, Thailand and the Philippines. We will continue to work with our allies and friends to ensure that the Asia-Pacific region remains a stable environment for continued peaceful development.

China's concentrated deployments of missiles and conventional weapons near Taiwan are a cause for concern, and the passage of anti-secession legislation authorizing the use of non-peaceful means is destabilizing. We must continue to communicate US resolve to maintain peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, and urge PRC restraint in cross-Strait relations. At the same time we should continue development of a stable and constructive military relationship with China that contributes to cooperation in overall bilateral relations.

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U. S. Military-to-military relations with the Chinese have been described by defense officials as “modest.”

What changes, if any, do you believe that DOD should make in the quality or quantity of military-to-military relations with China, and why?

It is important for us to continue to develop constructive and stable military relations with China to allow for better understanding between our two nations. While generally satisfied with continued positive developments in US-China military-to-military relations, I would like to see greater transparency, which serves to reduce suspicions and lower the risk of miscalculation between our two militaries. Additionally, our military-to-military relations would benefit from the expansion of our military education exchanges, especially cadet and student exchanges between our academies and senior service colleges. As we strive to achieve this goal, our interactions will continue to be guided by the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2000.

Future of NATO

Over the past several years, NATO has experienced great changes. NATO has enlarged with the addition of seven new members from Eastern Europe and the Baltics, and has taken on an ambitious stabilization mission in Afghanistan, as well as a training mission in Iraq.

In your view, what are the greatest opportunities and challenges that you foresee for NATO over the next five years?

The opportunities available to NATO over the next five years are significant. I predict that the Alliance will complete their expansion plans for Afghanistan, leading to a unified military command; transition the Kosovo mission to a smaller, more responsive force; and enlarge NATO support of the training mission for the Government of Iraq.

NATO is also advancing democracy and defense reform in Europe, Central Asia and the broader Middle East region while developing closer cooperation with the nations in those regions on issues such as counter-terrorism and counter-proliferation.

The greatest challenge for NATO is to finish the transformation process started in 2002 when the work to develop an expeditionary force was begun. While NATO has been successful in creating a new military command structure and deploying effective forces, we now need to turn the Alliance's attention on reforming the budget process, streamlining management functions, and developing new modalities for funding operations.

Do you envision further enlargement of NATO within the next five years?

Further enlargement of the Alliance is a decision for the President and the other 25 Allied Heads of State and Government.

What progress are the NATO member nations, particularly the new member nations, making with respect to transforming their militaries, acquiring advanced capabilities, and enhancing their interoperability with the U. S. and other NATO member nations?

The progress, especially in regards to the new members, is mixed. While all members of the Alliance agree on the need to modernize, acquire advanced capabilities, and enhance interoperability, most nations face a very austere budgetary climate marked with years of underinvestment. We continue to press our allies to make the changes needed to bring their nations in line with NATO investment targets.

European Security and Defense Policy

A potential challenge facing the U. S. and NATO in the months and years ahead is the European Union's (EU) implementation of its European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), that is, an EU capability to conduct military operations in response to international crises in cases where NATO as a whole is not engaged. Many in the Congress have expressed concern that ESDP could emerge as a competitor, rather than a complement, to the NATO Alliance.

Do you share these concerns? What steps do you believe that the United States and NATO must take to ensure that ESDP is implemented in a way that strengthens the Alliance?

I support a close cooperative relationship between the EU and NATO. The Berlin Plus agreement should be implemented to support EU-led operations. Proposals that duplicate existing NATO structures are unhelpful. In this time of limited defense resources we should recognize and build on the strategic partnership between the EU and NATO.

Colombia

U.S. military personnel have been involved in the training and equipping of Colombian military forces involved in counter-narcoterrorism operations. U.S. military personnel, however, do not participate in or accompany Colombian counter-drug or counter-insurgency forces on field operations in Colombia.

What changes, if any, would you recommend for the role of the U. S. military in Colombia?

The most appropriate role for the US military is to continue to address systemic deficiencies in the training and employment of the Colombian armed forces. Under the leadership of President Uribe, Colombia has made important strides towards defeating the narco-terrorists. There is no question that the Government of Colombia and the Colombian Armed Forces have primary responsibility for bringing security and the rule-of-law to their sovereign nation.

The Colombian security forces and state intelligence services are best suited to sift through the complex maze of local allegiances. They are also best equipped to leverage the cooperation of local communities.

What is your assessment of the progress achieved by the Colombian armed forces in confronting the threat of narcoterrorism?

The Colombian armed forces have progressed well over the last few years. US training and equipment have contributed significantly to this progress. The Colombian military's (COLMIL) Plan Patriota offensive, the largest in the nation's history, continues to pressure FARC in its base areas. The COLMIL has captured key nodes and dominates mobility corridors, denying FARC access to support and population. A number of FARC, ELN, and AUC high value targets have been killed or captured. Colombian police are now present in all 1,098 municipalities. Colombia's 2005 defense budget is 7% higher than 2004 and 13.3% higher than 2003. In 2005, 16,000 more troops will be recruited, for a total increase of 95,000 since President Uribe took office. Finally, units of the United Self-Defense Groups of Colombia (AUC) are currently negotiating demobilization with the GOC, with as many as 9,000 personnel to be demobilized by the end of year.

This is all good cause for tempered optimism. The COLMIL has made significant progress fighting narco-terrorists, but it still has a long way to go. The GOC needs to restore government services to the countryside. While the COLMIL is more "forward-leaning" than ever, their mettle will be tested in future offensive operations. Despite COLMIL successes, the FARC is not close to being defeated. Only sustained efforts against them will eventually win the peace.

Excess Infrastructure

How high a priority do you place on the closure of excess Department of Defense installations and why?

Closure of excess installations deserves very high priority. We must convert excess capacity into war-fighting capability and enhance our ability to operate as a joint team.

How do you respond to arguments that initiation of a new round of base realignment and closure should be postponed until operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have concluded and the requirements of the global war on terrorism come into better focus?

The department's footprint is in need of change and adjustment. The current arrangements, designed for the Cold War, must give way to new demands of the war on terrorism and other evolving challenges in the world. We face an unconventional enemy that is dispersed throughout the world, has no territory to defend, no permanent bases to safeguard, and is constantly adapting. We must constantly adapt as well. Closure of excess installations frees up resources to apply to the war on terror and transformation.

Health Care Benefits

In April 2005, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs testified that health benefits are “out of step” with trends in health care and may not be sustainable for the long term. Expansion of TRICARE coverage and rising health care costs nation-wide have contributed to the prediction that health care will grow to 10 to 12 percent of the DOD's outlays in the next ten years.

What recommendations, if any, would you offer to address the rapidly escalating cost of personnel benefits?

I support the Department's efforts to find efficiencies in the current system and to pursue cost effective methods for Health Care delivery in the future. I believe the Department's performance-based budgeting initiative and restructuring of cost-effective pharmacy programs will help to gain those efficiencies. However, as we pursue these cost-cutting measures, we should proceed with caution and ensure that the reductions are not made at the expense of our troops, their families, and retirees who deserve the best health care system possible.

If confirmed, what role would you anticipate playing in any shaping or rethinking of health care benefits for military personnel?

We are focusing our current efforts on improvements for our Reserve Component members and their families who will continue to be instrumental in fighting the Global War on Terrorism. I thank you for the legislation that was passed in NDAA's 2004 and 2005 and believe that the 2006 budget initiatives will go a long way in making the health care system fair and equitable to both our Active and Reserve component service members. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing our efforts with Congress and the Department of Defense to ensure military personnel can serve their nation with the knowledge that their health care benefits are secure.

How would you assess the impact of such benefits and changes on recruitment and retention of military personnel?

When we discuss benefits associated with military service, it is my view that a reasonable-cost health care system is an important cornerstone of the entire compensation package that we offer. The current recruiting environment presents us challenges, and although our current retention numbers are strong—we can't take that for granted. Our health care benefits package favorably impacts our ability to attract recruits and retain a quality force.

Sexual Assault in the Military

In response to a Congressional requirement for formulation of a comprehensive policy related to sexual assaults in the Armed Forces, the Secretary of Defense has promulgated guidance aimed at more effectively preventing sexual assaults, investigating incidents of sexual assault, and responding to the needs of victims of sexual assault.

What role, if any, has the Joint Staff played in monitoring progress within the military services and the combatant command's areas of responsibility in order to ensure enforcement of a "zero tolerance" policy relating to sexual assaults?

We continue to work closely with the Joint Task Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (JTFSAPR) team and the Services as DOD develops policy, procedures and regulatory guidance. This ensures that the policy is executable in the joint and multinational operational environment.

The Joint Staff provides a monthly report to the JTFSAPR on Service progress in completing investigations of sexual assaults that occur in the US Central Command area of operations. We are also providing assistance to combatant commanders during the development of their internal procedures; serving as a liaison staff to address Service policy issues that might impact a commander's ability to conduct investigations; and providing support to victims in the joint environment.

Permanent Forward Deployment of Naval Forces

For many years, a carrier strike group and an expeditionary strike group have been permanently forward deployed in Japan.

How important, in your judgment, is the permanent forward deployment of these two naval forces in the United States Pacific Command's area of responsibility?

I view the continued forward basing of a carrier strike group and an expeditionary strike group in Japan as extremely important components of our National Security Strategy in the Pacific. Recent events in the Pacific, such as the Tsunami, as well as our ability to rapidly respond to a range of military and humanitarian contingencies emphasize the importance of forward deployed naval forces. Our commitment to the peace and security of the Pacific region, especially to Japan and the Republic of Korea, underscores the continuing relevance of credible and sovereign combat power. The presence of our military forces, and in particular naval forces, in this strategic location provides significant capability, deters aggression, and imparts tangible reassurance to our allies.

Joint Requirements Oversight Council

As Vice Chairman, you have served as the Chairman of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC). Over that time, as the services' transformation initiatives have matured, some have been approved for system development and demonstration even though it appears that certain programs lacked the technical maturity required to transition into system development and demonstration.

How would you assess the effectiveness of the JROC in the acquisition process?

The Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) has increased its effectiveness over the past few years. We have been operating under the new Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS) process for a relatively short two years, and already have seen improvements in support to the joint warfighter through better identification of capability gaps and redundancies. JCIDS is a much more inclusive process. We take advantage of the vast expertise and experience in the acquisition community by engaging them earlier in the process. This helps ensure we are on the right path in providing effective military advice to the acquisition process. As programs mature and approach the next acquisition decision, they come back to the JROC to validate changes. Capability documents are submitted into the JCIDS process and fully vetted by the combatant commanders, the Joint Staff, the Services and the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Do you believe that the role of the JROC in the acquisition process should be expanded? If not, why not? If so, what areas or roles would you recommend for expansion?

I do not believe the role of the Joint Requirement Oversight Council (JROC) in the acquisition process should be expanded. The JROC provides appropriate validation and approval of the capabilities and the key performance parameters for any systems designed to provide those capabilities. The Service Acquisition Executives incorporate that joint military advice into their decision process.

In your view, are the requirements of combatant commanders adequately addressed by the JROC?

The combatant commanders are tightly integrated into the capabilities development process that supports the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC). Combatant commanders have an open invitation to attend JROC meetings. They participate in writing the Joint Concepts that guide future capabilities development, they comment on capability needs documents being developed by the Services, and they are members in each of the Functional Capabilities Boards that support the JROC. Members of the JROC or the Joint Capabilities Board travel to the combatant commands semi-

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annually to discuss their issues and other ongoing challenges and initiatives. The combatant commanders have an opportunity to submit their most critical capability needs to the Department through the annual Integrated Priority List (IPL) process. Beginning with the Fiscal Years 2006-11 IPL submission, the JROC took ownership of the IPL assessment process and endorsed Functional Capabilities Board-developed courses of action to address IPL needs. IPL inputs have also informed discussions on many of the issues brought to the JROC for review. Close, continual involvement of the combatant commanders will remain a key part of JROC deliberations.

Contractors on the Battlefield

DOD's maintenance and support functions have been increasingly outsourced resulting in a greater deployment and employment of civilian contractors in combat areas.

What issues have emerged for DOD as a result of an increased number of contractors on the battlefield?

Contractors provide invaluable services in support of military and reconstruction operations worldwide. Our challenge is how to balance the increased capabilities brought by contractors with the added challenges of integrating contractors into operational planning, maintaining visibility and accountability, and providing appropriate government support to ensure continuation of essential services.

What steps do you believe the Department should take to address these issues?

We are helping to develop comprehensive DOD policy on contractors that is expected to be released in the coming weeks. The policy captures lessons from recent operations and addresses the contractor challenges from the planning phase to the actual employment across the spectrum of military operations. The policy addresses all issues raised by Congress in Section 1205 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005: integrating contractors into operational planning; maintaining overall visibility of contractor personnel and contract capability in a database; deploying and redeploying contractors; providing force protection to contractor personnel; contractor security services; and other government support requirements including protective equipment, medical and mortuary coverage. After approval, DOD will implement the policy in doctrine, training, and appropriate contracts.

The Congressional Budget Office has concluded that U.S. forces could save money in peacetime and increase operational control in wartime by utilizing contractors with sponsored reserve affiliation. Some of our allies have already experimented with this approach.

What is your view of the feasibility of a sponsored reserve approach to provide logistics support for deployed forces?

The department is examining a variety of force structure initiatives including the sponsored reserve concept being explored by some of our coalition partners. We are watching an ongoing Air Force initiative to explore the concept and examine the operational effectiveness and potential changes required in US law and policy.

Independent Legal Advice

As Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, you witnessed the working relationship between the Chairman's legal advisor, the Department of Defense General Counsel, and the Judge Advocates General of the services in providing legal advice to the Chairman.

What is your view about the responsibility of the Chairman's legal advisor to provide independent legal advice to you, other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and to the Joint Staff?

As noted previously, Title 10, Section 151(b) makes the CJCS the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the SECDEF. If confirmed, I will take very seriously my responsibility to provide independent military advice to each of those individuals or entities. Title 10 also provides for an independently organized Joint Staff, operated under the authority, direction and control of the Chairman, to support the Chairman in fulfillment of his statutory duties. I believe it is absolutely essential that the Joint Staff – and in particular the Chairman's Legal Counsel – be exclusively dedicated to support the CJCS in fulfilling his responsibility to provide independent, apolitical, military advice.

What is your view about the responsibility of staff judge advocates within the services and joint commands to provide independent legal advice to military commanders?

Similarly, service and joint commanders have a responsibility to the civilian leadership to provide their independent and candid military advice. Receiving independent legal advice from their respective Staff Judge Advocates is an indispensable aspect of those commanders' ability to effectively fulfill their responsibilities.

Interagency Reforms

You have spoken publicly about the need for Goldwater-Nichols-like legislation for the interagency that would involve, for example, requiring service in another department or agency as a condition for advancement to senior executive service (SES) rank and requiring civilian employees to accept temporary assignments to countries, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, in which combat is taking place.

Can you provide more details of your proposal and explain why you believe such legislation would be necessary?

Goldwater-Nichols was significant legislation that continues to shape and integrate unified action within the Armed Forces.

I believe that Goldwater-Nichols legislation serves as a good example for a similar move to jointness in the interagency community. Currently the NSC offers a great process for teeing up issues for decision by the President. Yet once the President makes a decision, the different agencies return to their “stovepipes” to plan and operate with no individual below the President responsible for ensuring that decision/mission is accomplished. While the agencies are collaborative in their efforts, the process is not responsive or agile enough to support the current war fight. The new National Counter Terrorism Center is potentially a large step in the right direction.

A Goldwater-Nichols like approach to the interagency would allow all instruments of national power to be effectively integrated to achieve enduring results that exploit the strengths of our government. Just as the military did following Goldwater-Nichols, the interagency can greatly benefit from cross-pollination of agencies – a requirement to do a tour in an agency other than your own would form greater trust and understanding between the various agencies. This “joint” requirement could be a prerequisite to senior level promotions in the civil service career paths, properly grandfathered for those who came in under different rules.

Another qualifier for senior promotion could be an agreement to accept orders to wherever needed for a set period of time (six months to 1 year.) Currently, there is little rapidly deployable capacity outside the Armed Forces. Other agencies rely on volunteers to fill critical billets overseas. Arguably, sometimes the best qualified are not the ones who volunteer. To further complicate the matter, volunteers often stay for a short period of time, which offers little continuity and overall understanding of the mission in complex environments like Iraq.

Today dedicated civil servants, foreign service officers and military professionals are working together through the strength of their own dedication and personal commitment to excellence. We need to institutionalize and professionalize a wider range of National Security personnel throughout the government similar to the way that

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Goldwater-Nichols developed a cadre of professional joint officers in the armed forces. Initiatives for the interagency could include mechanisms to strengthen integration and trust at the strategic, operational and tactical levels, create more responsiveness within the supporting agencies, and build operational capacity in non-DOD agencies.

Any proposal to reform our interagency process will involve a number of other changes, to include professional level education, and the requirement to increase the civilian work force enough to allow the “overhead” for out-of-agency tours, schools, and other requirements. It is important to devote intellectual resources to continued dialogue on this topic.

Women in Combat

The issue of the appropriate role of women in the armed forces is a matter of continuing interest to Congress and the American public.

What is your assessment of the performance of women in the armed forces, particularly given the combat experiences of our military, since the last major review of the assignment policy for women in 1994?

Today, more than 333,000 women serve in the US Armed Forces around the world and they are performing magnificently and with distinction. From crewmembers, technicians and commanders, to pilots, and military police, women will continue to play a critical role in the defense of our Nation as officer and enlisted functional experts in a variety of specialties.

Given the nature of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Army's on-going effort to reorganize to become a more modular, flexible, combat force, is the time right to conduct a comprehensive review of the policy, regulations, and law pertaining to the assignment of women in the armed forces?

I support the current DOD assignment policy for women and therefore do not believe a comprehensive study of policy, regulations and law is necessary.

Does the Department of Defense have sufficient flexibility under current law to make changes to the assignment policy for women when needed?

Current law provides adequate flexibility to make changes to DOD assignment policy for women. The law recognizes that DOD and the Services will need to constantly assess the role of women and the dynamics of the constantly changing battlefield. The law and DOD policy also allows the Services to impose additional restrictions based on Service unique mission requirements.

Do you believe any changes in the current policy are needed?

The current DOD policy recognizes that women are an integral part of our Armed Forces and provides the flexibility needed to address changes to the operational environment; no policy changes are needed at this time.

Ballistic Missile Defense

As a result of Program Budget Decision 753, funding for the Missile Defense Agency was reduced by \$5 billion over years FY 2006 to 2011. In restructuring the missile defense program, the Director of the Missile Defense Agency sought to strike a balance between developing and fielding near-term capabilities and continuing the development of more advanced capabilities for the longer term. The Committees on Armed Services of the House and Senate, while supportive of Administration missile defense efforts, have made it clear in their respective versions of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 that priority should be given to more rigorous testing and fielding of near-term operational capabilities over future block research and developmental efforts.

What is your assessment of the Missile Defense Agency's current balance between near-term fielding and future development of missile defense capabilities?

The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) program provides the right balance between near-term fielding and future development. As MDA proves systems in testing, near-term capabilities are enhanced and fielded to the warfighter. This early fielding of elements will address the near-term threat while continuing the steady improvements needed to keep pace as that threat evolves.

Is MDA's approach consistent with the nature of the ballistic missile threat as you understand it, or should more priority be given to fielding near-term operational capabilities?

I believe the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) program has been structured appropriately to address the near-term threat while continuing the steady improvements needed to keep pace as that threat evolves.

The Independent Review Team chartered by the Director of the Missile Defense Agency to review the Ground-based Midcourse Defense testing program found that the BMD program needs to make test and mission success the primary objective.

Do you agree with this recommendation?

The Independent Review Team is correct that test and mission success must be a primary program objective. I am confident that MDA will appropriately implement the recommendations to improve flight mission performance and reliability.

Do you believe the Missile Defense Agency has in place a plan for operationally realistic testing --- consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Review Team --- that will provide an appropriate level of confidence over time that the ballistic missile defense system will work reliably under operational conditions?

I am confident that the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) will appropriately implement the recommendations of the Independent Review Team to improve flight mission performance and reliability. The Director of Operational Test and Evaluation (DOT&E) and MDA are partnering on the test and evaluation master plan to add operational realism to developmental testing and ensure the tests are as realistic as possible.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?

Yes.

Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the administration in power?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

Yes.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?

Yes.