

He said he did not want to do it because he was afraid of getting in the paper. I guess. I said—

I will tell you what I will do. You send him over here. I will send him to school for a year and if he passes the examination, he will have a good chance for promotion.

The point is you cannot have any side effects on promotion of officers by permitting the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to specifically promote individuals that are in one or another service.

Now, the Air Force tried that during the heyday of General LeMay. He would promote officers and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, or the Selection Board of the Air Force, would pass them over and vice versa. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force would select for promotion officers who were assigned to the Strategic Air Command and General LeMay didn't like that. So he wouldn't give them the position. So you cannot have two promotion systems. It just simply creates turmoil, and it is not necessary, and it won't work in a military organization.

So by and large, after having studied the report of last year that Mr. Barrett was kind enough to provide to me, and thinking the matter over, I then took a very good look at the two bills that are before the Congress today, one submitted by the Secretary of Defense, and the other submitted by Congressman Skelton. I would like to comment on each of those.

As you know, the National Command Authorities are the President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense. For some time, though, since the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff prepares all of the directives, relays the messages to the combat forces, he is in effect, as a matter of practice, a member of the Command Authority, and he should be. What this bill does from the Secretary of Defense is to formalize what has been a practice for some time. Consequently, I strongly support that.

Now, my practice, when I was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, after having attended a National Security Council meeting or having had a discussion with the Secretary of Defense, when a decision was made to take certain actions, I would prepare the directive. But not once—and I can document this—did I ever send a directive to the uniformed forces to conduct a combat activity that I did not first get initialed by the Secretary of Defense. So there was no question of the fact that the Secretary of Defense was never bypassed. He was always aware of all combat action. I think that worked very well.

Now, I have studied General Vessey's statement, both the one he made recently and the one he made last year. And I support in toto everything that he has said. I think that General Vessey is a very mature officer with great experience and great intelligence and balance, and I would think that his statement provides the best guidance I have seen for reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Therefore, I fully support H.R. 3145.

Now I would like to turn my attention to H.R. 2560.

Mr. NICHOLS. Admiral, we have a vote on. We will recess and return in about 10 minutes.

[Recess.]

Mr. NICHOLS. The subcommittee will resume its hearing.

Admiral, you may proceed, sir.