

out to have a guarantee of the caliber of the men that we have now. Of course there is none.

Mr. BARRETT. Thank you.

No further questions.

Mr. NICHOLS. I thank the gentleman from Missouri for his testimony, and I want to invite him to join the subcommittee as General Vessey presents his testimony.

Mr. SKELTON. Thank you.

Mr. NICHOLS. General Vessey, on behalf of the Investigations Subcommittee, I want to welcome you and the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff this morning: General Meyer, Chief of Staff of the Army; General Barrow, Commandant of the Marine Corps; Admiral Watkins, Chief of Naval Operations, and General Gabriel, Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

It is seldom that our subcommittee gets such a galaxy of stars before us and we are indeed honored, sir.

We are certainly cognizant of the responsibilities that each of you shoulders in the defense effort and we appreciate the time that you have given us to appear here as a body today.

General, you have submitted a joint statement representing the position of the entire Joint Chiefs of Staff. I am going to request that you summarize that statement, if you will, and after you are through, and before we have questions from members of the subcommittee, I will ask that each member of the Joint Chiefs in turn comment on his thinking about the current organization of the JCS, any problems that you think could be improved, and generally your views on how these problems can be solved.

General Vessey, you may proceed, sir, at this time.

STATEMENT OF GEN. JOHN W. VESSEY, JR., USA, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, ACCOMPANIED BY: GEN. ROBERT H. BARKOW, COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS; ADM. JAMES D. WATKINS, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS; GEN. EDWARD C. MEYER, CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY; AND GEN. CHARLES A. GABRIEL, CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE AIR FORCE

General VESSEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking me and my colleagues to testify on this important subject.

You will recall that last year General Gabriel and Admiral Watkins and I were asked shortly after we came into office to testify on our views and we did. Last summer this body of Chiefs agreed that we would undertake a review of our own organization. To be used as the basis for that review, we used the duties that were outlined in the law. We agreed on criteria that we would apply to the various proposals that had been made for change. I described those criteria to you last July, but I think it is worth repeating those here today.

The first was, Would the change improve the ability of this Nation to go to war if we were forced to go to war?

Second was, Would the change provide the President and Secretary of Defense better advice than the present system does, and would that advice be timely? I also pointed out to you when we discussed this earlier that we agreed on a definition for timeliness and that was the Secretary of Defense and the President ought to have