

time, I don't think I subverted my responsibility to the Navy because I feel that many of the Navy issues were really tied in with my efforts in the Joint Staff.

So I felt it was not only important for me as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I felt I contributed at the National Security meetings and the like and did not feel ill-prepared in so doing.

I believe the same face going in the conference room for 3 months in the absence of General Vessey provides a very important piece of continuity. Other participants can begin to relate to you and you, in turn, can reflect the views of the Chairman and the other Chiefs. I have participated in many conference calls during those periods of time with the other Chiefs. We never do anything without touching base with each other.

I was able to be Acting Chairman and carry out my purely Navy functions. My observations have been that each one of us has been put to the test, has done the job, and feels after it is all over that we made a contribution. We were able to do both tasks and without giving short shrift to either.

General MEYER. I had intended to make an opening statement where I could put my views into perspective.

I would like to talk a little bit on the broader issue, if I may, Mr. Chairman, because clearly I have been an advocate of major surgery and major change within the JCS. I wrote about it in April 1982, in the Armed Forces Journal. I laid out what I considered to be some of the flaws existing in the organization of the JCS.

It appears to me that the most important aspect of this issue, underscored by the appearance of the Chiefs here as a corporate body before you, is an agreement on the part of the Chiefs, which they have stated in their memo to the Secretary of Defense and the President and in a discussion which General Vessey outlined that the Chiefs believe that we need to do a better job of providing military advice to the President and the Secretary of Defense.

We all agree with that. To me that is the most important single step and that was why, since this group of Chiefs was willing to agree on a way to come up with a solution as to how to provide better military advice, I was willing to join with them in a common approach toward the solution.

I learned about accommodation after having watched Congress operate around here for the past 8 years. So I learned somewhat from you.

But I do want to say a few words about that because I do not believe that changes to the JCS alone will do anything. I believe it will do a little—I guess that is a better way to say it. It will improve along the lines Admiral Watkins and General Vessey outlined—those kinds of things will take place. But if the de jure senior military advisers are not, in fact, the senior military advisers to the President and to the Secretary of Defense, and if either of those two go elsewhere for military advice, then all the monkey business you do in reorganizing the JCS will be for naught. The administration proposals that we have here, as far as a change in the law, I support, because they move us in the direction we need to go. As we said in our memorandum to the Secretary of Defense, at this time we don't feel we need to do more.