

level, sometime in the Joint Staff over in the Pentagon. All of it is in the same ball park.

Mr. BRITT. I think the operational end is critical. If you try to have some kind of a small elite unit, I agree with you that would be counterproductive. But I do think that recurring exposure—recurring experience and recurring training looking toward a unified perspective—could be helpful to those who serve.

No further questions.

Mr. NICHOLS. Mr. Skelton, your witness.

Mr. SKELTON. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that the gentlemen before us have made my case. One gentleman remarked that the Vice Chiefs should run the services and these gentlemen should spend time on joint activities.

Another remarked that during a transition to war, you need full-time people with the most brilliant strategies.

Another, we need one senior military leader.

Another, it is not uncommon to call upon the retired officers for advice.

Another, that we need to improve the military advice to the President and Secretary of Defense.

Another, that there is concern about getting the most for the defense dollar.

Another commented about not being satisfied with the way that we are doing business today.

Another, that better military advice to the President and Secretary of Defense is needed.

Another commented that in the future they will do better and that there was confidence that we can in the future turn our hats around without conflict of interest.

I think, gentlemen, you have made my case.

I will ask General Vessey: When this committee was wrestling with the 6 percent figure that we had to wrestle with—of an increase of only 6 percent as opposed to what the President recommended—we found ourselves in a position of having to cut \$10.5 billion from the recommendation, was there a formal recommendation from the five of you to us to tell us how to do this and give us advice?

General VESSEY. No, there wasn't a formal recommendation from the five of us to tell you how to do that, and that is primarily because the budget that is sent up is the Presidential budget. We make our recommendations to the Secretary of Defense who makes his to the President, and the President sends the budget over here.

Mr. SKELTON. Nevertheless, General, you all do testify in front of us and those questions were put to you on how we could cut the budget. Is that not correct? You see, you leave it up to a small country lawyer like me to make the tough decisions. I take them very seriously, General. And we did—this committee in line with the budget that we had to live under, a 6-percent increase—we had to cut \$10.5 billion. Were you able to agree to make any recommendations to us to assist us?

General VESSEY. Well, I think, as we discussed earlier, if that were a part of our duties, that we could agree on recommendations to you on how to do that, but that is not part of the system as it now stands.