

Mr. NICHOLS. Would you yield?

Mr. SKELTON. Yes.

Mr. NICHOLS. General Vessey, the five of you at the table are the senior military advisers to the President. Why isn't that your job?

General VESSEY. Well, Mr. Chairman, you know that when the President sends a budget over here, he has spent a lot of time and listened to the advice not only of his senior military advisers but to the rest of his advisers on how that budget ought to be put together. We come over here with understandable marching orders from the President to defend that particular budget.

Now, if the system is to be changed to have us provide direct advice to the committees on how that might be done, that is another matter. But it is not part of the system now. We give you facts and information but we come over here to defend the President's budget as he put it together, as you well know.

Mr. SKELTON. May I ask General Meyer about an article he wrote for the Armed Forces Journal in April of 1982? General, you pointed out the very thing that I alluded to in my testimony. You were not here, but I alluded to dual hatting; that is, doing two jobs.

Does that still stand as a matter of fact?

General MEYER. Yes, it does. As I pointed out, Mr. Skelton, I laid out what my paradigm is for change in the article in April of 1982, and that I believe that I have a requirement to work within the art of the possible for what can and cannot be done. In working with my peers here, as I said, it seems to me that the most important issue that is raised is that everyone here believes we need to improve the quality and the timeliness of the military advice that we provide.

So I continue to project that out into the future. I have said that at this time I believe that it is important that this be done. I will go back to my main point. I would contend that as you address the issue of 6 percent and a \$10.5 billion cut, you are addressing the broader issue and not reordering of the JCS. You are addressing the issue of how we go about doing defense business. Reorganization of the JCS is only a segment of the problem and unless the kinds of things General Vessey outlined here are effected. We don't have any chance of getting improvement.

Mr. SKELTON. Thank you.

Mr. NICHOLS. Mr. Lally.

Mr. LALLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Vessey, prior to your testimony Mr. Skelton eloquently supported his proposal for a Chief of Staff to the National Command Authorities who would be the sole principal military adviser to the President and the Secretary of Defense.

I believe that General Meyer's views on this proposal are known, but I was wondering if we could have the views of the other members of the Joint Chiefs on that proposal.

General BARROW. You can surely have mine.

I think it would be a mistake. I don't think any one man is capable of doing it. I think that the system we presently have, in which we as service chiefs understand the services that we represent, brings the best possible set of advice to this joint body.

Admiral WATKINS. We agree with General Barrow. When we went through the very significant debate on MX, we spent almost