

know if any one of them affects military advice. I understand the improvement in the chain of command but not in military advice.

General MEYER. That is the reason I chimed in specifically when the Chief of Naval Operations made his comment, because the law that we are proposing is proposing a legislative change which does specify that the Chairman be the principal military advisor, is your principal military advisor.

I am sorry, excuse me, I am wrong. The Chairman is the representative for the Chiefs in providing military advice along the lines that had been outlined.

Is Meyer inconsistent with what he said last year? The answer is yes. I have tried to explain why. Not because I don't believe that at some point in time we have gone in the direction in which I have indicated, but rather I believe that this group of Chiefs, as General Barrow has outlined, has been able to come to grips with some of these problems. At this time, this provides a solution to the problem when you are trying to get political support from a group this far into an administration, where you would have to make any sort of management changes.

I believe this system should have an opportunity to work. But I believe that it has to draw with it the other aspect that I have talked about, and that is how we work with the Defense Department and how we work with what happens over in Congress. I think that even to make all of the changes in the radical way that Meyer proposed would be ineffective if you don't change the rest.

Mr. BARRETT. One followup question.

Representative Skelton this morning indicated that, even in this era in which we have a smoothly oiled JCS working in conjunction with the President and the Secretary of Defense, we still have problems because you cannot act as a principal military adviser in resource allocation matters. When General Vessey was asked a question on that earlier, he answered, Well, we give overall requirements, but when it comes to cutting we turn to the services.

Now, it seems to me that there is some conflict there with the JCS role of principal military advisers when some of the most fundamental questions facing the country are, How do you cut the budget and How do you allocate priorities, and your answer is that you turn to each individual service.

How do you prioritize between the services?

General VESSEY. I think that you misconstrued my answer.

Mr. BARRETT. I am sorry.

General VESSEY. The prioritization isn't between the services, it is among the missions to be performed and how best to perform those missions. The JCS can give that advice. When you get down into taking "x" number of dollars out of a given line item, and so forth, what I don't want to see happen is that moved to the JCS and the Joint Staff because each of the services has experienced staffs to take care of that detail.

So I don't want you to believe that we cannot and should not give sensible and cogent advice on what areas to pursue to make those cuts.

Now, the details of line items and dollars are over in the comptroller in the service side of the house. Prioritization for resource allocation is a job that we all agreed has not been done well by the Joint Chiefs in the past and we agreed that we would make great