

Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Global Security Forum 2012

The Future of Special Operations: Proposed Changes in the Unified Command Plan

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**Admiral Eric Olson (Ret.)
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RICK OZZIE NELSON: We'll go ahead and get this -- get this started on time, the much-coveted lunch spot. My name is Rick "Ozzie" Nelson. I'm director of the Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Program at CSIS and I want to thank everyone for attending today. I have a couple general announcements first off. We, obviously, want to thank Finmeccanica. This is the third year that they sponsored this event at CSIS and we continue to be appreciative of their support.

You've heard it again three times today. Please mute your cell phones or put them on vibrate. No one wants to be that person, so please help us out there. We'll also be tweeting at [csi_org](#) and we're using #GSF2012. Following the panel remarks we'll take questions from the audience. Please wait for the microphone, identify yourself and phrase your question as a question. There will be no statements, only questions.

With that, we'll go ahead and get right into the -- to the meat of this, hopefully what will be a lively discussion. So the title of our panel today, "The Future of Special Operations" -- is this the time to change the Unified Command Plan, or UCP. We're lucky enough to have three immensely distinguished former military officers. First, we have General Pete Pace, retired from active duty with the United States Marine Corps in 2007 after more than 40 years of service. He had most recently served as the sixteenth chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a position he held from September 2005 to October 2007.

He previously served as the vice chairman from August 2001 to -- October 2001 to August of 2005. He earned his commission from the Naval Academy in 1967 and began his military career as a rifle platoon leader in Vietnam. General Pace currently sits on both the president's Intelligence Advisory Board and the secretary of Defense's Defense Policy Board and is a distinguished senior advisor to CSIS. General, thank you for attending.

Next, Admiral Keating. Admiral Keating retired -- Tim Keating retired from the Navy in December of 2009 after serving three years as commander of U.S. Pacific Command; before that as commander of Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command. He's an accomplished pilot, as all Naval aviators are, having spent over 5,000 hours in tactical jets and having performed over 1,200 landings on aircraft carriers. He currently serves on the Naval Post-Graduate School Board of Advisors, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Virginia Commission for Military and National Security Affairs and the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, among others.

And, lastly, we're honored to have Admiral Eric Olson, who most recently retired from the Navy in August of 2011, having served as the eighth commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command. He graduated from the Naval Academy in 1973 and qualified as a naval special warfare officer the following year. He is the first SEAL to achieve the -- to achieve the three-star or four-star rank. At the time of his retirement, he held the title of "Bullfrog," the longest-serving SEAL. (Laughter.) During his time as commander of U.S. SOCOM, he presided over one of the most dynamic periods in the organization's history. Gentlemen, we're honored that you could all join us here today. Thank you.

Before we begin, as we've done with all the panels today, I'm going to take a few minutes to try to objectively frame our conversation today.

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In January, the Department of Defense released a new defense strategic guidance laying out U.S. strategic interests and priorities in the coming year. The guidance puts forward a vision for a future that will be in several ways very different than the past decade. Threats in the future are likely to be varied and diffuse, emanating from a host of different actors in different regions.

To meet these challenges, the guidance emphasizes global missions that build partner capacity and work to address threats before they fully emerge as well as rapid reaction to specific crises. Further, the guidance calls for a force that will be smaller and leaner but will be agile, flexible and ready, and able to implement innovative, low-cost and small-footprint approaches.

Some have suggested that Special Operations Forces are uniquely suited to meet the requirements due to their unique skills in both direct and indirect action, their ability to undertake tactical actions that have strategic effects and the small number of personnel their missions generally require.

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In order to achieve their missions, Special Operations Forces balance direct and indirect approaches.

Over the past decade of major combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, SOF have been heavily involved in direct action missions. These missions involve the direct application of force and are often kinetic in nature. An example of such a mission would be a raid against a militant training camp or a hostage rescue mission. These missions are relatively visible and their success more quantifiable. As a result, much of the public focus has been on these types of mission.

However, as the U.S. shifts away from major combat operations and towards a preventive global posture, indirect action is likely to be of increased value. Indirect action seeks to increase security through nonkinetic means and includes activities such as security force assistance, (intend ?) to help build the capabilities of partner nations in an area where a threat may be emerging. SOF have been involved in indirect action in Iraq and Afghanistan yet the demand for such missions is likely to increase dramatically compared to the direct action as operations shift out of Title 10 zones and into a global environment.

Demands of SOF are going to change in the coming years, leading some to suggest that the structures governing how these forces operate may have to be modified as well. Currently, there are two models in which SOF could be utilized. Next slide. Command and control of SOF in theaters -- under the SOF theater model U.S. special -- U.S. Special Operations Commands provide SOF units and capabilities to GCCs, or geographic combatant commands, who have operational control over deployed SOF. Operational control is then exercised through the theater

of Special Operation Command and you can see the legal -- the U.S. code where that language comes from. Next slide.

The second one is for selected special operations. Under this model, which is applied less routinely if ever, U.S. SOCOM may be directed to exercise command of deployed SOF rather than simply supplying forces to GCCs. However, there are strict limits on this authority and it -- and can only do so when directed by the National Command Authority of the president and the secretary of Defense. Slide.

This architect may not be flexible and agile enough to combat global threats do not -- that do not conform to a regional construct. For instance, if a militant organization is based and operating in the Middle East but is moving drugs and/or other illicit goods from Latin America through smuggling routes in Africa and on to Europe, how would you address it under the current architecture? Additionally, the current architecture requires that GCCs initiate a request for special operations forces, potentially limiting the effective and timely deployment of SOF capabilities.

In order to address these challenges, some support U.S. SOCOM having greater ability to initiate and coordinate deployments to more effectively respond to threats on a global scale. In order to explore the future of SOF as well as the idea of the shift in the architect governing SOF in U.S. SOCOM, the panel is going to go ahead and review a few questions. Slide.

These are the questions we'll talk to in a moment, but first we're going to go to five to seven minutes of remarks from each panelist. We had a lengthy discussion to see who would go first, and Admiral Olson has kindly offered to go -- start with his remarks to give us the SOCOM perspective, although he is not representing SOCOM -- as none of our speakers are representing any of their former commands; and Admiral Keating from the COCOM perspective and then General Pace from the chairman of Joint Staff's perspective but not the current perspective. (Laughter.) So with that, Admiral Olson, please, sir, over to you.

ADMIRAL ERIC OLSON: Thanks, Ozzie, and thank you to Dr. Hamre and CSIS for putting this forum together. It's great to be with you and to see so many familiar faces in the audience.

I'm very glad to be with my distinguished colleagues up here. I couldn't ask for more expert partners in this forum than the ones who are here today. This is going to be a uniquely nuanced kind of discussion. Almost all of the finer points about United States Special Operations Command are complex. It is not a well understood command in terms of its position within the Department of Defense with respect to its authorities, with respect to its responsibilities, and I think much of that will come out today.

I'm not going to give a command briefing. I am not in the command anymore. But I will start with just a little bit about what SOCOM is and what Special Operations Forces are and there is a distinction between them, and I know this is quite a sophisticated audience so I won't talk about that more than a minute or so. First, it is truly a joint command. It is a combatant

command by law established in legislation with Army, Navy, Air Force and now Marine Corps components in a joint subunified command along with that.

It is global in its approach to the world. It has no defined geographic area of responsibility but it provides forces to work all around the world and on a typical day in about 70 or 75 countries; only in a shooting war in one of those countries with forces at a higher than normal risk and a handful of others but mostly they are just a presence force working with counterparts in conducting training around the world.

They are separately funded. Major Force Program 11 is provided by the Congress in response to the budget that's submitted by the department to fund those activities that are peculiar to special operations in nature and that's the -- that's the word of -- the language of the legislation -- peculiar to special operations in nature -- and therefore the United States Special Operations Command and Special Operations Forces depend very, very heavily on the services for much of their support and much of what they do, and there is about an equal amount of investment by the services in special operations capability as there is provided by MFP 11.

And then there are wide-ranging responsibilities and authorities. You can state with some accuracy that the commander of Special Operations Command has authorities and -- on a much smaller scale but authorities and responsibilities similar in many ways to a service chief, similar in many ways to a service secretary, similar in many ways to a head of a defense agency and, certainly, established as a combatant command so having responsibilities and authorities of a functional combatant commander.

But the commander of Special Operations Command has little operational authority and he has virtually no operational authority outside of the continental United States. He has combatant command of all U.S.-based Special Operations Forces but when forces are deployed they transfer to the command of the geographic combatant commander into whose theater they deploy. And the commander of Special Operations Command has not in the past had the authority to initiate requests for forces, the process by which forces are deployed. Those are initiated by the receiving geographic combatant commanders, not by the providing commander of United States Special Operations Command.

So to be clear, I transferred command of Special Operations Command to Admiral Bill McRaven last August, eight months ago, and where our views and opinions may coincide I am in any case not speaking for the Special Operations Command or the special operations commander today. In my opinion, though, a fundamental question that we're addressing today is this, and it's which commander is in the best position to determine the optimal allocation of Special Operations Forces capabilities globally and I can make a case that that would be the commander of the United States Special Operations Command.

Better than anyone else he knows the capabilities and availability of his force, the condition of his force, and he's charged with taking a look across the geographic boundaries of the geographic combatant commanders to determine whether activity in one area may be supported by actions in another GCC's area with potential effects in a third or fourth geographic combatant commander's area. He tracks global trends and linkages and does his best then to

prepare his force for future contingencies. He's accountable for special operations forces' readiness to operate anywhere but, again, he has little authority over where and when to deploy his force.

So I believe a solution to the current situation, which I believe is suboptimized, is to give the commander of Special Operations Command the authority to initiate a request for deployment. This is to accelerate a process, not circumvent it. Simply as the geographic -- as the Special Operations commander sees what is happening across geographic combatant commanders' boundaries, he may have a view of something about to happen in one part of the world that that geographic combatant commander hasn't yet focused on because he hasn't seen the activity in the -- in the neighboring geographic combatant command. So this is not at all about forcing or sneaking Special Operations Forces into a geographic combatant commander but instead accelerating a process of initiation, coordination with both the geographic combatant commander and the country teams in the places where Special Operations Forces might be needed to help develop knowledge, in some cases, about a -- about potential activities.

It's also about enhancing the theater of Special Operations Commands. The theater of Special Operations Commands are subunified commands all of the geographic combatant commander. They are under the COCOM and OPCOM combatant command and operational control of that geographic combatant commander with Special Operations Command being the provider of that capability but with no operational authority, no operational streams into the -- into the theater of Special Operations Command.

The geographic combatant commanders use their theater Special Operations Command to exercise operational control of the Special Operations Forces that are deployed into their theater and my opinion is that that relationship should not be changed. But you could make a case that combatant command of the theater Special Operations Command could be under the commander of Special Operations Command and that could include executive agencies so that then the commander of Special Operations Command would be more responsible for providing the capabilities, the funding, to the theater Special Operations Command and could better support the geographic combatant commander's needs. And it shouldn't be lost on us that both TRANSCOM and STRATCOM, the other two functional commands besides SOCOM, maintain combatant command of their forces when they are deployed into another geographic combatant commander's -- into a geographic combatant commander's theater. Only SOCOM does not have combatant command of those forces.

So at the end of the day, I think this is about centralized management of the allocation of deployable Special Operations Forces courting with -- coordinating with the geographic combatant commanders and country teams to accelerate the process and it's still about decentralized operational control of those forces but with U.S. Special Operations Command's monitorship of the activities of the forces that are deployed. And, frankly, in the past there have been some geographic combatant commanders who have actually prevented their theater special operations commanders from even reporting the activities of Special Operations Forces to the commander of Special Operations Command, which makes it very difficult for him to be accountable for their readiness, frankly.

Separately, I'd like to note that what's happened in the last decade has been a very powerful bringing together of the interagency community. The intelligence community and the special operations community in particular have become quite comfortable working with each other. This is beginning at the beginning, not separately brought together at the end after both communities have worked an issue. But they work it together from the very first indication of a - of an issue that will have to be addressed.

Second, across the interagency community there's been quite an exchange of people. As the commander of Special Operations Command, let's just snapshot a year ago there were about -- I had about 140 members of other agencies coming to work at our headquarters in Tampa every day. We had close to a hundred uniformed members of Special Operations Command going to work in about 15 other agencies inside the national capital region every day. This is -- this is a paradigm shift from the way things were a decade ago and -- a decade ago and now we're seeing these interagency individuals grow up together in operational and headquarters environments and become quite comfortable with that.

I have to credit General Pace with much of that. He was one who supported the exchange of people between other agencies and Special Operations Command, and at Special Operations Command we took that as a responsibility for SOCOM to be an extension of the Joint Staff in many ways in that regard. And then I'd like to mention the international piece. There has been a building of special operations capabilities globally.

Over the last four or five years, I could probably name a dozen countries that have created a Special Operations Command-like organization within their nation, meaning an organization that is not under a service chief but that reports separately to a joint staff or to a minister of defense, and although United States Special Operations Command is not an ideal model for any of that there are some concepts within the United States Special Operations Command that are from which -- which other countries are drawing some inspiration and education.

So SOF depends on the services. SOF serves as a -- SOCOM serves as a supporting commander for deployed forces and I think what this is about mostly today is how the commander of Special Operations Command can use his budget and his authorities to provide even better support to the geographic combatant commanders. Over to you.

MR. NELSON: Admiral Olson, thank you very much, sir. Admiral Keating, sir?

ADMIRAL TIMOTHY KEATING: Thanks, Ozzie. And it's good to see a lot of good friends and to be on a panel with Eric and the chairman is a great privilege. I'm not so sure. I was trying to figure out how to stand in front of this juggernaut that is Special Operations Command, particularly in today's world -- the remarkable, incredible successes enjoyed by our men and some women in various types of operations, some of which we read about, some of which we don't, in the past decade our surpassing importance to us as a country and to the world. That said, I'm not so sure that the proposal, as I understand it, will fix anything because I don't fundamentally understand what needs fixing.

I had the privilege of two combatant commands -- Northern Command/NORAD and then Pacific Command. They couldn't have been much different and had I -- had it stopped after Northern Command/NORAD I would be up here and would probably have a different perspective than I do have now, having enjoyed the great privilege of about three years at Pacific Command.

One floor below me at Pacific Command was Special Forces Pacific Command and there was a two-star Army guy there to begin with, Navy guy there when I left, who enjoyed unfettered access to the office or me on the phone or, if I was unavailable, to the DCINC or the deputy or whatever we're supposed to call them in State. Sure like that word "CINC." (Laughter.)

Rumsfeld's not -- Secretary Rumsfeld is not here. (Laughter.) Anyway, we had an ongoing operation involving Special Operations Forces in the Philippines. Didn't attract a lot of attention. Whole lot of guys -- 6 (hundred), 700 special forces. Effective operation not involved in direct kinetic offensive operations.

They were training the Philippine marine corps and army and special forces. And on a daily basis I felt I had a reasonable to very good appreciation for the challenges and opportunities confronting available to the commander of the Pacific Command. Eric cites -- he can come up with a couple of examples where a regional combatant commander was not helpful in execution of important special operations missions.

The fix, the change, the alteration proposed or being considered may eliminate if not reduce chances for recurrence of those occasional obstructions to the well-oiled machine (that a ?) special operations proceeding forward with timely, effective, efficient, likely kinetic operations that cross geographic command boundaries.

I don't believe that this change as proposed necessarily eliminates the possibility of confusion. I think we need to be very careful. We should take this in a very slow, measured, careful manner -- take it under consideration in a slow, measured careful manner. Chairman Pace -- I had the privilege of working for him a couple of times and I heard him say more than once, "Let's make sure we do no harm."

I'm not suggesting that the proposal will be harmful. But the way things work now, from where I sat in various jobs ranging through all manner of joint and straight Navy jobs, I wasn't aware of a situation where an immediate response was necessary and was not provided in the case of straight white SOF operations in particular. Other classified operations, you bet. They may be good examples.

So another point -- Eric mentions how TRANSCOM and STRATCOM enjoy certain relationships that Special Operations Command does not. I would submit, at least from where I sat, where I sit, there's a world of difference between what Strategic Command does -- an even bigger difference at Transportation Command and what Special Operations Command is capable of doing and what we expect of them and what we demand of them. So writ large, I would say let's be very careful.

Let's not try and change a system that works relatively well to very well, from my experience. If in time -- how long is that, I don't know -- and subjected to some war games and some very careful analysis, the proposal as being considered proves to be a more effective, efficient way of utilizing or a remarkable unique capability resident in our Special Operations Forces then I'm all for it. I'm just not so sure. Thanks.

MR. NELSON: Great. Thank you, Admiral Keating. I was concerned that the panel might not be exciting. So I appreciate -- (laughter) -- I appreciate that. I do want to clarify one thing you were discussing here, is just the command relationships and potentially changing that or modifying that to facilitate future missions and not on any specific initiative that may be -- may or may not being pursued right now inside the Department of Defense. General Pace, over to you, sir.

GENERAL PETER PACE: Thanks, Ozzie. At the expense of making this a love-in, you know, I am -- I am delighted to be on this stage with Admiral Keating and Admiral Olson, two gentlemen who are truly heroes of our country and it's good to be on the same platform with them both. Thank you.

I have not had a discussion with Admiral McRaven. I have not had a discussion with General Dempsey. So I do not know the exact nature of the proposal that's on the table. I know what I've read in the paper. Forgive me, Eric, but that's not always exactly accurate. (Laughter.) And I know what I read in -- I know what I read in Admiral McRaven's 12 March testimony in front of the SASC, which did not really address this issue, and I remember as chairman that I didn't really need a whole lot of public help from the 15 guys who went before me and I think that probably General Dempsey doesn't need a whole lot of public help from the 17 guys who went before him.

But this being Washington, I'm going to speak my mind anyway, I guess. (Laughter.) If I -- let me just approach from the standpoint if I were still chairman what would I want to know. First of all, I'd want to know what is it that we're trying to fix. There's, obviously, a problem in somebody's mind. What is it and how do we make the process more effective and more efficient? That's the bottom line.

You're always going to be goring somebody's ox a little bit, especially at this level. Wherever you draw the line on the map, however you divide up OPCOM, TACOM, COCOM, no matter how you do that, somebody's going to be a little bit more advantaged than the other guy. The question is, how do you do it in a way it best serves the nation. On the indirect mission, I think we've got that pretty good. Special ops traveled to about a hundred different nations during the course of a year.

The indirect mission by its very nature is a long-term mission. When I was CINC South in Miami I had the privilege of having Special Operations Forces working long term in the Americas with us and I benefitted from what they did, and the process, though, of allocating the resources and getting them into the countries could accommodate the request for forces and the like that it took. So I really don't think that the problem is on the indirect side.

That leaves the direct side and that, clearly, is where our special operators for the last 10-plus years has served the country so magnificently, and the question then becomes if they feel that the process is not working as smoothly as it can be, what is it that we might look at to change.

I come to it with two biases, for sure. One bias is as chairman. I was not in the chain of command yet I was held responsible for what happened. Several times during my time as vice chairman and chairman I was asked my opinion about whether or not the chairman should be inserted into the chain of command, and each time my response was, man, you would make my life so much easier -- if I'm going to be held accountable and responsible, give me the authority to get something done.

However, my recommendation always was and always will be please do not do that. As an American -- as an American citizen, do not give any uniformed officer, even one as nice as me, the absolute authority to move every plane, any ship, any troop, any missile, any whatever, around the globe without the authority of the president -- the elected president -- and his designated secretary of Defense. I think it is not good for our democracy to have anybody be able to move anything around the planet other than the president and the secretary. That's bias number one.

Bias number two -- speed is a force multiplier. Clearly, the faster you can do something the more powerful the impact in almost every circumstance. But I worry about speed. I worry about speed making it too easy to employ force. I worry about speed making it too easy to take the easy answer -- let's go whack them with SOF -- as opposed to perhaps a more laborious answer for perhaps a better long-term solution.

We're not going to kill our way to success in this war. We are certainly going to do what Admiral Olson and now Admiral McRaven's troops have been doing magnificently, which is decimating the enemy leadership. But at the end of the day, from the special ops community viewpoint, in my opinion, it is the indirect missions that will have a long-term impact and long-term effect. So if we are talking about direct missions how do we make them more effective and more efficient?

I will tell you, when we knew that a crisis was bubbling and I knew that the Navy inside a geographic area -- that the Navy had reached out and said to, you know, a carrier battle group, go ahead and start steaming toward wherever, yeah, still inside -- still inside the area in which they'd been assigned but getting a little closer to the boundaries -- that if our civilian leaders made the decision then we'd be better prepared to support their decision -- would actually be their decision, I'm good with that and I'm good, therefore, with the concept of the commander of Special Operations Command being able to identify and start moving forces.

But I would not want him to be able to do that without the "Mother, may I" that comes from the secretary of defense or the secretary -- or the president of the United States. Right now, as Admiral Olson pointed out, we've got the combatant commander asking for forces. I think it's fine for the special ops commander to ask for forces. But I would not want those forces,

whether it's a ship or a special operator, to cross boundaries between combatant commands without the secretary of the Defense or the president having approved it.

I think we have the capacity to do that. I don't know that I understand the entire proposal. But if the proposal is for the special operations commander to be able to propose the movement I see nothing wrong with that, the difference being that if a geographic commander does it, it gets passed through SOCOM to get their opinion. If a SOCOM commander does it, it's going to get passed to the geographic command for their opinion. So either way, people's opinions are going to be asked.

But if, at the end of the day, you can demonstrate to me that, no kidding, we can -- we can shave hours or days off of response, then I want to listen to that very carefully and set it up in a way we can do that as long as we don't end up putting into one individual's hands the power to move things globally without the president or the secretary saying, do it. And I'll stop there.

MR. NELSON: Thank you, General.

ADM. OLSON: Ozzie, if I could have a couple of minutes because --

MR. NELSON: Absolutely.

ADM. OLSON: -- just to be clear, I did not offer to go first. I agreed to go first.
(Laughter.)

MR. NELSON: This is true. I confirm it.

ADM. OLSON: And one of the disadvantages of going first is that the others get to comment on your remarks but you don't get to comment on theirs. So I would ask for just a couple minutes to -- (inaudible).

MR. NELSON: Absolutely, sir. I'm not getting in the middle.

ADM. OLSON: What if I didn't speak clearly or there were assumptions made that I just wasn't aware of, in response to Chairman Pace's comments specifically. In my view, this is much less about responding in a direct action role and much more about responding in the indirect action role.

This is about getting ahead of crises, ahead of the sound of guns, in order to prevent them -- to gain an understanding on the ground in a place where it's got just now the most subtle hints that something may be developing.

I think that the process for actually deploying forces for kinetic actions in response to a crisis works pretty well. It's the -- it's the much more nuanced, the much subtler need to get a small number of people in a place, to start working with the country team, start working with geographic combatant commander forces on the ground if there are any to gain an understanding so that then when Special Operations Forces do deploy there if they need to in greater number

they have a better sense of the place, about -- their predictions about what to do will be -- their predictions about the effects of what they do will be -- will be far more accurate.

This is -- this is about -- special operations is much more a knowledge-based capability than a platform-based capability, and in order to use it to its full capability you've got -- you've got to understand the place. And so it is these very small deployments to unusual places that may not be on the scope of a geographic combatant commander, may not be on the scope of the Joint Staff. I think we're talking about mostly -- and in no way is this meant to give any person, in my view, the authority to, as I said, force or sneak people around. Can't cross a geographic combatant commander's boundaries, certainly, without higher authority. Can't deploy forces O CONUS without higher authority. This is, as I said, not to accelerate, not circumvent, any of the authorities of the Joint Staff or the office of the secretary of defense in terms of where forces go and how they move across borders. Thank you.

ADM. KEATING: There might be a minor objection voiced in the -- in what -- Eric, what you said if it's below the scan of the geographic combatant commander.

ADM. OLSON: No. Well, let me explain that. There may be things happening -- there may be things happening in EUCOM funded out of someplace else with potential effects somewhere else, with training camps somewhere else, and it's just not on the scope of those somewhere else yet.

It may be on the scope of EUCOM but it's not on the scope of the somewhere else yet and -- but SOCOM's responsibility is to step back and take a look across all of that and track the trends, track the linkages, track the connections, track movement, track behavior, and see whether or not those kinds of potential actions outside of one GCC's theater may be brewing. So that's what I meant. I don't mean it's -- I don't mean the GCCs aren't paying attention. What I do mean to say are that GCCs focus their attention on their combatant command's AOR, not on anyone else's. SOCOM does not do that.

ADM. KEATING: This is a very interesting discussion because, obviously, to you all now we have not coordinated what we're going to say -- (laughter) -- which is cool, but before --

(Cross talk.)

ADM. KEATING: From my -- from my standpoint then I do believe that the indirect mission is the most important mission long term and I do believe that there's enough time. I mean, Admiral Olson's point is correct as is the slides look correct in saying that it is a development of the understanding of the knowledge but there -- in a direct mission the speed and times they have to be worried about. In the indirect mission, there are the country team in all of its parts that need to be coordinated with and somebody needs to be the stuckee.

I mean, the president and the secretary of defense need to be able to reach out into an area and say, you're the guy I'm holding responsible, and I believe that as correctly the responsibility of the geographic combatant commander to be held responsible for everything that happens in

his or her AOR except for those things that are very time sensitive and blessed by the president or secretary of Defense, and SOCOM does what they do magnificently well.

So perhaps I didn't hear what Admiral Olson said properly in the first place, but the more something is indirect the more time you have, in my opinion. Absolutely special ops should be given a global view but in my opinion, it ought to stay in its current configuration. To the extent it is direct, that's where I am personally comfortable looking for more effective and efficient things. So if I'm hearing it right, we're coming at it from different parts of the plan.

MR. NELSON: We'll get to questions. I'm going to just ask one -- (inaudible) -- question here and to clarify a couple points that were on the slide here, and one is we're talking about the effective employment of SOF -- that speed and agility are components of the effective employment and knowledge, obviously, is another one. And there are multiple ways to affect this employment -- these employment options or the enhancement of the GCC special operations capabilities. There's the UCP. Then there's law. There's changes to Title 10. The National Command Authority and the current structures are in Title 10.

Changing the law would require congressional action. Changing the UCP does not, and there are other things inside DOD that can be done to affect this as well. This conversation happens to focus on one aspect or one potential change to this. But if we talk about the National Command Authority, that's something that no commander, no uniformed military person can do unless there's some sort of significant change to the law that I think would never happen. But let's just drill down and then we'll go to questions.

Let's talk about this question then. If, in the example I used in my remarks -- if a military organization is based and operating in the Middle East, is moving drugs and other illicit goods from Latin America through smuggling routes in Africa and on to Europe, how do you address this under the current architect? So can each of the panelists just address that and if -- and basically the ultimate question is is the first one up here -- is the current architecture -- once we described that is it sufficient to handle that because that's what the strategic guidance says we're going to see in the future, and then we'll go to audience questions. So Admiral Keating?

ADM. KEATING: Yes.

MR. NELSON: OK. (Laughter.) Thank you.

ADM. KEATING: It is sufficient.

MR. NELSON: General Pace, sir, do you want to -- (inaudible)?

GEN. PACE: I don't know that a change of who has the throttle is going to change the sharing of information across the world. I hope, I trust, that the special operators are in fact sharing information and I'm perfectly fine with the COCOM proposal. I see no reason not to do that and I would hope that special ops always is sharing information internally as well as with the intel community. So I don't know that a change to who the stuckee is for a particular operation

would change whether or not the folks who are responsible for gathering global data have better - have better data or not. I could be educated but I just -- I just don't know.

MR. NELSON: Admiral Olson, sir?

ADM. OLSON: First, to my knowledge, there is no proposal. There is -- there is discussion. So we keep talking about a proposal but I don't think that anybody's at that stage yet. I do think there are condition and discussions taking place. First, I would -- next, I would say that in order for sort of your scenario -- a thing moving across GCCs -- the process now is inadequate.

It requires multiple conversations with multiple -- this would happen anyway but it -- but now the conversation is trying to stimulate the geographic combatant commander to get his staff working on the process of submitting a request for forces that will then go back to the Joint Staff and the Joint Staff will then come back to SOCOM and ask them if they have forces available to support it.

I mean, the whole idea with SOCOMs to begin with they wouldn't have forwarded it if they didn't have forces to support it so why should we go through that process at all? Why can't we just have the commander of Special Operations Command talk to the geographic combatant commanders, say, we see this happening in your theater -- the ultimate impact won't be in your theater but there's activity in your theater -- let's agree to move these forces down under your OPCOM -- I'll start the request from my headquarters so it'll be a coordinated effort across this country and this country and this country and this country -- we'll take the coordination fraction -- we'll take submitting the request for action and we'll get the troops there faster than if we went through the other process for you to initiate the request. I think that's, in my view, what it is we're talking about. And I will make -- I will make up an example here but I don't have to make it up too much.

There's an international conference taking place in Tampa -- an international special operations conference next month. Eighty-something countries with Special Operations Forces will be there. I had the opportunity to host one of these four years ago. We had 70-something countries show up. And there will be a lot of back room discussions about hey, we could really use this from you guys -- can you help us out with this -- can you send a couple of guys to help us train this -- can you help -- send a couple guys to help us do this.

Right now, it is up to the commander of SOCOM in response to those to say nope, I can't do any of that but if you go back and work through your thing within the geographic combatant commander and get him to submit a request for forces to the Joint Staff then maybe I can send you forces -- where, in my view, he ought to be able to come out of that conference with a list of prioritized efforts, work it out with the GCCs and the Joint Staff and just get that action going.

But that -- and so, in my view, that's what it is we're talking about is accelerating a process, not circumventing it, not changing operational control of anything, not changing country team purview or GCC purview over anything. Just really building a more coherent global special operations network, if you will.

GEN. PACE: And I have -- I have zero problem with exploring that as long as at the end of the day the special operations commander, like any other commander, has to ask for the force to be moved and has to have it approved, and if that streamlines it it's either going to be the special operator coordinate with the GCC or the GCC coordinate with the special operator. If one of them has a better view on a situation than somebody else and starts the -- and initiates the process and that helps, I think that's worth pursuing.

ADM. KEATING: Yeah, I see that as a distinction but not a difference. There has to be a request initiated somewhere. It goes someplace else. There will be, unless we -- I don't know the -- I'm not suggesting you're -- (inaudible) -- but unless we throw the whole 136 chop chain (ph) out and someone can just say yeah, good -- which actually happens so -- sometimes. If it's -- and we've all had -- got VOCO and can move stuff right now if you need to if it's sufficiently urgent. So who makes the phone call, who submits the paper, can it -- can this request become mired in the, quote, "churn" of a geographic combatant command, yes, sir. I would submit to you that on occasion that is not necessarily detrimental to the overall good.

There may be things going on in that aforementioned geographic combatant command of which the special operations commander, smart as he is and as informed as he is, he may not be aware or sufficiently attuned and so therefore let's say CINCPAC goes, yeah, you want a SEAL platoon but they're busy. Now, if they're standing gate guard that's, you know, bad on CINCPAC but a phone call between SOCOM and CINCPAC could -- CINCOSOC and CINCPAC -- if I keep saying it more folks are going to -- (laughter) -- bite -- (inaudible) -- could walk in the room. Anyway, I see it as a distinction but not a difference.

MR. NELSON: All right. We'll go to questions. Again, please leave it to a question, your name and your affiliation. And we'll go to the very assertive individual in the back.

Q: Hi, it's Michael Schrage with MIT and there's one thing that I think hasn't been addressed. It's the issue of your capabilities are changing. The SOCOM capabilities are changing. Your warriors are very good systems designers, weapons designers, platform designers. So I think the rate of change is accelerating and I think that creates even more trade-off issues between the local area -- the ground commander and SOCOM.

I would just like the panel to address if SOCOM's capabilities increase relatively faster than traditional, do you think the demands on SOCOM are going to be even greater and increase the need for greater agility and greater involvement both on an indirect and direct basis because you guys are the early adapters and early utilizers of things that really are force multipliers? Thank you.

ADM. OLSON: My opinion is that the demand for special operations will increase and this is partly for some of the -- because of some of the things that you mentioned, mostly because the secretary of defense's strategic guidance says that we will be out in the world supporting our friends and partners with teams in a way that enhances their sovereignty for -- increases their ability to do what it is they need to do -- always better if they do it than for us to have to do it for them -- and Special Operations Forces are well suited to that.

I don't know the exact numbers but I think if you go -- if you sort of track the force deployments from the United States that have been, say, brigade size or larger, going back 20 years, it's a -- it's a relative handful and some of those are for disaster relief but the -- and the other ones, generally named operations, relatively large-scale operations.

In the meantime, Special Operations Forces have been -- I mean, other -- the services-provided forces do this too but we've just been out in small numbers in many places, and that's - - and I think that's the new normal, that we'll just place a continuing high demand on special operations forces, probably an increasing demand, and some of that is related to this international growth of special operations.

We now -- there are more counterparts for Special Operations Forces to work with than there were a decade or two ago. This global community, this international community, is beginning to gel a bit, and next month's conference is a good manifestation of that.

MR. NELSON: The gentleman right here in the blue shirt.

Q: Hi. My name is Harvey Rishikof. I'm the chair of the ABA Standing Committee on Law and National Security. I particularly want to thank you three gentlemen for all your service and your sacrifice, particularly General Pace, who always came to the National War College and always spoke to our classes whenever we invited him.

My question is the following. This -- you've tiptoed up to another major issue and the other major issue, which in my line of work we're sort of focused on, which is Title 10 authority and Title 50 authority, and increasingly, as you know, the scenarios you've laid out tiptoe up to the issue of what's traditional military activities versus what is borderline classic intelligence and intelligence using kinetic power.

So another admiral used to -- Admiral Blair used to talk about the need for Title 60 as the true way to figure out how to resolve this problem. So I'm curious to -- now that you're wearing mufti what your sense is about that potential problem and the problem that many of us see -- that the emergence of special operations and its activities very capable, are very, as you've pointed out, quite a tool in the toolbox for the senior policy makers. So I'm curious to see what your gentlemen's response and, Ozzie, you should jump in too if you have a thought about this.

MR. NELSON: (Laughter.) We're going to answer that question in the context of the -- of the panel topic, though. Thank you, Harvey, for that question. Who wants to go --

GEN. PACE: Well, if you're going to -- if you're going to raise the level of the issue let me raise it even further --

MR. NELSON: (Laughter.) Thank you, sir.

GEN. PACE: -- to the National Security Council functioning, which functions amazingly well in the courses of action, putting in front of the president a way to go about whatever it is he

is asked to take a look at, and at one-star, two-star, three-star, four-star levels they're all very collaborative and it gets in front of the president eventually at the National Security Council and eventually the president is comfortable enough and he makes a decision.

And the instant he makes a decision is when the process starts to break down because great -- because great Americans, who are the secretary of Defense and the secretary of Treasury and the secretary of Homeland Security, et cetera, all go back to their buildings and start working on their piece of the problem. And the problem is unlike the military joint command, which wouldn't be where it is today if we didn't have Goldwater-Nichols -- unlike that, there's nobody short of the president of the United States with (CHOKECOM ?) over everybody who has a responsibility. So if two strong personalities in two different departments don't see eye to eye, unless the issue is so important as to bring it to the president, it just festers. OK. I can give you lots and lots of examples of that and I won't, OK.

But you can guess for yourself. So the bigger issue -- it isn't so much Title 60. It's ought there not be a Goldwater-Nichols-like law for how the interagency process works so that at the end of the day when the president says, I want this done and I want State in charge -- I want this done, I want Treasury in charge -- I want this done, I want DOD in charge -- and then just like a military operation in D.C. the means are -- in State, in D.C. the meetings are held and the State Department guy or gal is running the meeting.

In a region, because a combatant commander has a facility, the meetings are at his facility but the State Department person is running the meeting. In the country, because the ambassador's got a facility, it's run there and State's giving guidance. Now, it took 20 years for the military to figure out how to play together and share our toys in the joint world, and when we first started out a Marine who wasn't happy with the order he was getting from an Air Force guy or whatever would take that issue to the -- to the commandant of the Marine Corps and if he felt it was worthy he would take it into the tank and a tank would figure it out. They did that many, many, many times.

But in the six years I was vice chairman and chairman, not once did we have an issue like that because it had all been figured out in the preceding 20 years. Would there be issues initially on this? You bet. But if -- in this case, the State Department was giving the orders to have things happen and the military guy didn't think it was right he could bring it to the secretary of defense, and if the secretary of defense told him it was right he could take it to the National Security Council and have that decision.

Now, we've got to be careful because there is a chain of command from the president down to PFC Pace, which is inviolate and we got to be careful. But most of the things -- 80 percent of the things that you need to get done you can get done with somebody else other than the military guy being the guy making the large-vector decisions. And if we had something like that we wouldn't have to worry about Title 60 because that would be subsumed in how it is we set up the joint interagency process in the first place.

MR. NELSON: OK. Your --

Q: (Off mic) -- that was my question.

Q: Thank you, Ozzie. Given that we've got the panel here today, I wanted to bring it back to a larger question that we were discussing.

MR. NELSON: Name and affiliation.

Q: Jeremy Devaney, BB&T Capital Markets. Thank you. Bring it back to a better question that we had earlier today. We recently had the president initiate his new strategy under the current budget. Given that sequestration is likely to happen, according to the panel we had earlier, how is SOF and the emphasis of SOF going to change as the strategy changes through sequestration and does the panel see the future of SOF changing because of funding levels? Do they currently have the funding to achieve the mission and will they have to reevaluate that mission if the funding levels change.

MR. NELSON: Who wants to jump on that one?

GEN. PACE: I'll be a windom (ph) if you want. (Laughter.) The dollars allocated are going to be the dollars allocated. Preferably, you would start with a strategy. If you had a strategy then you go to the military in the building and you say OK, here's the strategy. We want you to do one of these and two of these and three of these. And we got lots of folks in the building -- they have lots of folks in the building -- who do that for a living and can say OK, if that's your strategy we're going to need this many ships, this many planes, this many troops and it's going to cost you this many dollars, and everybody's going to go, that's too much.

And we're going to say that's right, it is -- it is too much. Now, now that we know that you had a strategy, which is a starting place -- not a budget that you buy what you can but a strategy that you understand what it's going to cost -- and then you look at you don't have that much money. You start taking things off the table and you understand how you're then accepting more and more risk over here on your strategy but you have a basis and a understanding of what you're doing. OK.

At the end of the day, if sequestration hits and the dollars come off the table, as an infantry guy I'm going to be looking you in the eye and saying, look, if I get killed taking this hill I don't have to worry about the next one. I'd like very much to be worried about both hills but if you only give me enough money to worry about this one then the current hill I'm worried about is the counterterrorism fight and I'm looking to make sure that special ops has got all the resources they need.

If 10.4 billion (dollars) is the number I heard in the budget, is what they need, if -- in Pete Pace's opinion, if money comes off the table, that 10.4 billion (dollars) ought to stay where it is because that's the fight we're in right now. The other money is properly used for the full spectrum forces, if I can use that term, so you have the capability to do what we need to do as a nation. But if you get down to where you are working dollars and not strategy then you have to start buying with your dollars the things that you need today, and whatever money you have left over you buy the things you need for tomorrow, in my opinion.

ADM. OLSON: I'd like to weigh in on that.

MR. NELSON: Oh, Eric -- (inaudible).

ADM. OLSON: I think it's much -- in my view, it's not about the health of Major Force Program 11. I think that it will keep on keeping on. In my view, it's how the services who are responsible for the other half of special operations capabilities prioritize their support for special operations forces, and the spotlight has been on the kinetic operations against high-value targets. National prestige is often at stake in those kinds of operations. Everybody lines up to support those with a full capability and budgets required. The dispersed small operations around the world are much less visible.

The spotlight is never on those, and so instead of having a spotlight on SOF shift to other places I think the spotlight on SOF will just dim and -- as Special Operations Forces disperse. And so the -- I think the issue is will special operations retain the same high priority and service budgets in the future that they've had for the kinetic operations that they've been involved in for the last decade.

ADM. KEATING: We should avoid the temptation to make it a binary decision. It's either -- some folks would characterize it as you're either for SOF or your for conventional forces. You either want F-35s and more satellites or you want more special operations. It cannot devolve, degrade to that level of discussion. It goes to the chairman's point, I think. For those guys who are out there -- guys and girls who are out there -- it's not an either-or. It's both. And so how to best manage the resources available under the budget given to us by our Congress, that's the real hard part. It can't be either-or.

MR. NELSON: OK. Go ahead.

Q: Kim Dozier with the AP. Admiral Olson, could you give us an example of how much time you think could be shaved off of a deployment of a small special operations team to a given area? Is it week -- from months to weeks? Second, could you give us an example of -- say, in Mali what could a small team have done to get ahead of the sound of guns there? And finally, for all of you, do you think that this change should also be applied to counterterrorism/direct action in that the SOCOM commander should be given more of a role, a guaranteed seat at the table in some of these discussions, where right now you always have the chairman but you don't necessarily have the SOCOM commander? Thanks.

MR. NELSON: You're getting your -- you're getting your money out of these questions -- (inaudible). Admiral Olson, sir?

ADM. OLSON: You know, Kim, I don't think the question is how many specific days are going to be shaved off a specific deployment. It's about is there a coordinated effort or are there separate efforts that then have to be brought together with the deployment of forces into different geographic combatant commands. You can make a case about the time frame and I

think, roughly, I would say it takes some weeks to get a deployment (order ?) through the process and, hopefully, it would be some weeks that are shaved off that.

But I don't have an absolute sense for that. I think it really is about, as I said, a much more coherent approach to where forces go and when they go there with a vision -- not in response to activity but with a vision about what the potential for their need in a place. In some places, they don't even know what the need might be.

They need to get somebody there to determine what the need is, talking to a local force or a counterpart, and that -- and that would be much brighter on the scope of the -- of the commander of Special Operations Command. I think it also shouldn't be lost on us that the commanders who best understand how to use Special Operations Forces are the special operations commanders. They wouldn't pretend that they should command aircraft carriers or fly jets but they do believe, in my view, appropriately, that they ought to have the strongest voice in the employment of Special Operations Forces advising and supporting geographic combatant commanders and how to do that. Largely, the theater special operations commanders take care of that role.

In terms of any specific country and how to get ahead of the sound of guns, I think there are many cases where an understanding on the ground prior to a crisis has helped accurize the response to that crisis. It's just made it a better response. Send this, don't send that. Send them then, don't send them then. And so a concrete example about how you would -- you know, trying to prove a negative is difficult but I do think that it just makes the whole organization, the big we, much wiser in the employment of force.

MR. NELSON: Anyone on the seat at the table making decisions -- the chairman with the SOCOM commander or just the chairman?

ADM. OLSON: My sense is the SOCOM commander has a pretty good seat at the table now. The Special Operations Command over the last decade, I think, has moved into a place where it is not only the occasional -- it is not the occasional visitor to most of these venues. It is a regular presence in most of these venues, and between the four-star and the three-stars of Special Operations Command, my sense -- again, I'm not speaking for the current leadership of SOCOM but my sense is that we had the avenues for communication that were required.

GEN. PACE: Yeah, and you're kind of asking the judge if he runs a fair court. (Laughter.) But I considered that one of my primary responsibilities was to make sure that everybody who had equities had a seat at the table, and that if it was the Pacific Command that the Pacific commander was either present or his rep was. If it were special ops, et cetera. So I do believe that the current system pays attention, as it should, to making sure that everybody's voice is heard.

In fact, it's the chairman's responsibility to make sure that when advice is being given to the president and then to the secretary of defense and to National Security Council and Homeland Security Council that not only the chairman's opinion but especially dissenting opinions are put on the table to include especially any combatant commander's opinion that may

be different. That was an obligation -- a sacred obligation, I believe -- of a chairman to make sure all voices were presented to the president for a decision.

ADM. OLSON: OK. I have to be clear here. Nothing that I'm saying is meant to imply that I think Special Operations Command should be bigger -- that it should be more powerful -- that it should be a service or anything like that. It shouldn't get out of its skin. It is in a very good place -- has fewer than 3 percent of the people, less than 2 percent of the budget of the Department of Defense in a supporting role.

It doesn't have to -- it depends on the services for its infrastructure. My opinion is the commander of SOCOM shouldn't be a member of the Joint Chiefs. I mean, this is not -- this is not a discussion about that. This is a discussion about accelerating the process by which the commander of Special Operations Command can support the geographic combatant commanders because he may see things that they don't see, and that's it.

MR. NELSON: All the way in the back.

Q: Lieutenant Colonel Randy Page. I'm the Marine Corps Fellow at the Atlantic Council. It sounds like the admiral or at least the proposal was talking about maybe a global synchronizer.

ADM. KEATING: There is no proposal. (Laughter.)

Q: An idea of about being a global synchronizer of activity, specifically SOF. The global war on terror -- special operations community was, I believe, designated as that global synchronizer for the global war on terror. Are we talking about a broader application of being that global synchronizer? But my specific question is did anything really change when Special Operations Command was designated as that global synchronizer or was it just you're tasked to do this and then everyone kind of went about their business?

ADM. OLSON: Yeah. No, as I said up front, everything about this is nuanced. SOCOM was never -- was never designated the global synchronizer of any sort of activity. SOCOM was designated the global synchronizer for planning. So SOCOM was -- what did change was that SOCOM was given the authority to have a meeting, to look into the future about global application of Special Operations Forces with respect to countering a violent extremist threat. That's what specifically changed.

I think there was a sense out there, frankly, because some said it, that the commander of Special Operations Command was synchronizing global activities but in fact there was no authority ever granted for the special operations commander to reach into any geographic combatant commander's theater and direct in any way what a force might or might not do on any given day. That authority always remained with the geographic combatant commander, and SOCOM didn't have any synchronizing role.

But I do think what we're talking about here, and there is no proposal, but what we're talking about here is sort of expanding that concept of synchronizing planning to synchronizing

deployments, again, in support of geographic combatant commanders -- they keep OPCOM, et cetera, et cetera, but having a synchronized approach to force allocation, not just planning for force allocation. There's a -- there's a big bridge in there that hasn't been crossed.

MR. NELSON: OK, great. Yes, sir. Your --

Q: Yes. Bill Courtney of CSC. With the demand for SOF going up, budgets going down, to what extent is there a possibility for substituting some conventional forces for some SOF missions and if so what implications will that have for the various kinds of command relationships?

MR. NELSON: Thank you.

ADM. OLSON: I have -- I mean, I think every opportunity to have non-Special Operations Forces except a hand-off of missions from Special Operations Forces we ought to explore. There's a lot of potential for other forces to accomplish a lot of the missions that Special Operations Forces have conducted in the past. I think we ought to aggressively pursue every opportunity to do that where it's right to do so.

There are some forces that -- some missions, some operations that should never be handed off and some that could be handed off, I think, fairly easily and a history of doing that over the last several years, I think, where special operations has moved out of several mission -- not mission areas but out of several operational employments as -- and I wish we had a better term for conventional or general purpose forces, I don't like either of those -- but I'll just say big Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps forces to come in and take a battlefield hand-off of some of those operations or reduce the requirement for a special operations force by providing robust support to the Special Operations Forces in a way that allows a smaller special operations presence.

So I think that's very important and I think it's more important as we look forward because you said up front -- as the budget -- as people feel more constrained by the budgets, one of my concerns is that there will be a temptation to improperly use Special Operations Forces to conduct missions that ought to be conducted by somebody else. They tend -- their utility infielders with guns, they are easier to deploy. They can do a lot of things and I think it's a real concern that they will be used to solve problems that aren't special operations problems.

GEN. PACE: I agree with you, Admiral Olson, but the other side of that coin is exactly the same, which is if we don't fund enough special ops and we by default then have to use troops who are not properly trained and equipped for that particular mission, that is also a place you don't want -- you don't want to end up.

So I take the budget guidance at a -- SOF FY '13 at face value, which is that one of the priorities is special operations and I believe that the folks who have the responsibility today to make those recommendations and decisions are going to fund Special Operations Forces to the level that is required for them to be able to do today's mission, and then the question in my mind

is will there then be enough left to be able to do the full spectrum training you need to do so that we don't inadvertently tempt another nation to try us out.

When I had the responsibility I always said and I will continue to say we need to have a full spectrum force that nobody wants to mess with because they know they're going to get their butts kicked, and if you have that force that forces your potential enemies into the asymmetric role, and if they're in the asymmetric role then you need to fund our special operators to be able to fight them and prevail in the asymmetric environment. And that, to me, is the proper mix for our nation.

To the extent that we might encourage another nation to expand their conventional force because ours is weaker than it was -- it's perceived to be weaker -- to the extent that we might encourage another country to build its nuclear force because ours has come down to whatever the level is that might encourage them, I think we just have to be very careful of those kinds of decisions that make us look less capable and therefore encourage something on the conventional side, which is geometrically more expensive in life and treasure than where we are right now. We're just spending enough to not have to fight in that mode and then spending enough to be able to fight in the asymmetric mode, if that makes sense.

MR. NELSON: OK. We got -- I'm sorry to say --

ADM. KEATING: We need to remember as hard as it is to get in to some places, it's almost always harder to get out. The problem is magnified if we're using higher-end elite forces. We've had hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of Special Operations Forces in the Philippines. Tried to get them out. Tried to replace them. Couldn't do it or was unable to do it. Might have been the guy trying to get them out but there was a great -- the government in the Philippines, their agencies in the federal government who were -- who were not just reluctant but adamant they did not want any change because things were running pretty smoothly.

MR. NELSON: Last question -- gentleman in the front.

Q: Hank Gaffney from CNA. Just one quick comment. When I hear all these comments about oh, all these shrinkages in budgets and forces and all that kind of thing, I would remind people we end up with the biggest budget by far in the world with very nearly the biggest forces in the world, and this notion that we're going to run out of things seems pretty fantastic.

But I have a very specific question as the last question. One thing that was not cleared up with this Title 10 versus Title 50 thing, which is we heard about the Osama bin Laden raid when, basically, SOF was assigned to CIA under their command. The question that I have is once that's done how much does the rest of the defense establishment know about that operation and should they?

MR. NELSON: (Laughter.)

GEN. PACE: I think -- I think only the combatant commander in the area needs to know about it. I don't think the rest of the force needs to know about it. I think there are certain

operations like that one especially as prime example. I don't need -- if I'm a combatant commander I need to know the combatant commander if I happen to be operating in that area. I don't need -- I don't need to know that. The more people who know, the more likely that something will leak.

So there is a level that needs to know. I think that's the combatant commander's level. Oh, by the way, just for fun, Hank, I can -- with the budget I can, with the same numbers, tell you that either the budget is going up by 6.8 percent between now and FY '17 or it's going down by -1.6 or it's going down by -22 percent or it's going down by -73 percent, depending upon which way I use -- I use the numbers. So who -- those numbers are just funny numbers. The bottom line is -- and I want to say it again -- start with a strategy, understand what the strategy costs and take risk off of your strategy. Don't start with a number of dollars and buy the best force you can with that amount of money.

MR. NELSON: Well, on that -- and on that note, a budget note, I want to thank the CS -- on behalf of CSIS and Finmeccanica, General Pace, Admiral Keating and Admiral Olson for participating in this lively discussion. Thank all of you all for attending and thank Finmeccanica, our sponsor. A round of applause for our -- (inaudible).

(Applause.)

(END)