

**Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)
The Military Strategy Forum**

**“Challenges to Access and the U.S. Response: The Joint
Operational Access Concept”**

Welcome:

**Clark Murdock,
Senior Adviser and Director, Project on Nuclear Issues,
Center for Strategic and International studies**

Keynote Speaker:

**Lieutenant General George J. Flynn,
Director, Joint Force Development
Joint Chiefs of Staff**

Panel:

**Mark Gunzinger,
Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments**

**Frank Hoffman,
National Defense University**

**Thomas Donnelly,
American Enterprise Institute**

**Nathan Freier (Moderator),
Center for Strategic and International Studies**

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CLARK MURDOCK: I suspect, or at least I hope, that a number of people will start wandering in. We had RSVPs for 125, but I think people, as they went out into this beautiful day and started walking over here – (laughter). Well. But I personally can't think of anything better to do on a Friday afternoon than to think about the JOAC at this time.

So, it's my pleasure to introduce Lieutenant General George Flynn. He's a Naval Academy graduate, class of 1975, holds three master's degrees in the fields of industrial relations and national security and strategy; been a thought leader and has, in one way or another, been responsible for training and educating for the majority of the Marines who serve today.

A Marine artillery officer, he's commanded the Marines on eight tours. His most recent command was as commanding general of the Marine Corps Combat Development Command in Quantico. Immediately prior to that, he was the deputy CG Multinational Corps Iraq, 2008. Now the director of J7 Joint Staff, he carries several important initiatives for General Martin Dempsey, the chairman.

And I look forward to his presentation today. If you would join me in welcoming General Flynn. (Applause.)

LIEUTENANT GENERAL GEORGE FLYNN: A couple of things real quick.

The J7 is relatively – in its current form is a relatively new organization. It was basically stood up 1 August of this year with the disestablishment of Joint Forces Command.

And the three main things that are in the portfolio right now are the training of the combatant commanders that we run, the training programs that do exercises per year for each of the combatant commands. We also are responsible for the concept development experimentation piece that used to reside down in Joint Forces Command, and also we have oversight of professional military education.

If you take a look at the directorate and what it's responsible for and how it evolved, Joint Forces Command really was the forcing function of jointness. And what I mean by that, it developed the concept, the doctrine and the experimentation that led towards the interoperability and integration of the services. And the forcing function, if you will, were the joint exercises that allowed us to come up with joint capability.

With the change of doing away with a combatant command, you've now really made the chairman responsible for jointness. So, in light of that, that is – you know, the chairman signed the Joint Operational Access Concept.

Now, to give you one thing about – you know, my relationship with General Dempsey is – General Dempsey is – he has his graduate degree from Duke University in English. And the first document that we ever gave him to sign from the J7 was the Joint

Operational Access Concept. And the first word in the document was misspelled – (laughter) – all right?

I thought I was moving forward when I should have understood that, you know, there's moving forward and then there's the foreword to a publication. (Laughter.) And many people had read this document ahead of time before we published it, to include me, and I never read the first word, but he did. And so that's now framed in our office, and it's the first thing he ever signed for us but it's also the first word. So, we quickly complimented him on catching the thing we wanted him to catch – (laughter) – but he wasn't buying that.

So, I want to thank you all for having me here today. I do not intend to provide you all elements of the concept. I suspect most of you have read the document. And, more, I want to give you today is the context of how this fits within joint force development. It was published in January of this year, but it had been under development for well over a year. So this wasn't something that General Dempsey came into office in October; this has been a work in progress for well over a year.

In a perfect doctrinal world, if you want to take a look at the taxonomy of doctrine and how we develop things we would have published a strategy. We would have worked on the concepts. We would have published the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations. Then we would have published the Joint Operational Access Concept. And then we would have looked for the services that produce their concept. And then we would have saw (sic) the programmatic things.

But this is not a perfect world and that's not working in sequence, nor in this current environment that we're in should it work in sequence. You know, sometimes we have to do things in parallel rather than in sequence.

The key document that we're currently working on is the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations. And we're due to publish that in July of this year. And that really is how General Dempsey intends to define how the joint force is going to fight in the future.

The world in which we live doesn't always give us the luxury to follow our processes, so we'll need to make adjustments. I think, as the Joint Operational Concept has already been published, when the Capstone Concept comes out we may have to double back and adjust some of the elements in the JOAC. And we're just going to have to be ready for that.

A key thing, first of all, is the context of the environment. And I said this earlier this week at a different forum: If you like the complexity, the uncertainty, the increasing danger of today, you're really going to like tomorrow because the strategic environment in which we live is not going to get any simpler and it's not going to get any less complex.

What is going to change, though, are basically two or three things. First of all, the speed at which we have to adjust and the speed that we have to make decisions are going to continue to increase. That's a key element of the environment in which we live. And it's largely driven by the amount of information that's available, the accessibility of that information, and the availability of that information.

The other part is that the world is becoming more dangerous just because both state and nonstate actors are enabled by technology. In many ways, technology has been democratized. Everybody has access to technology, and that drives a lot of our ways when we develop these capabilities.

The other thing that we have to adapt to is a new fiscal reality. Everywhere I go, nobody is writing me a check, and everybody is asking me – whether it's in the combatant commanders' exercise program, whether it's in concept development experimentation, everybody is saying, let's just go back to where the funding was last year. And I said, you don't understand; when a deposit was made, it wasn't as big as last years, so everybody needs to make adjustments to that.

When we take a look at the future operating environment, there is going to be, clearly, a joint force requirement with the ability to create and enable access according to the likely missions. These access requirements are not regional or threat-specific, all right, but the challenges will include many different things. They'll include geographic impediments to access. Whether it's limitations on ports, limitations on airfields, geography is still going to play a part in our ability to achieve access.

Technology-driven capabilities like ballistic and cruise missiles are also going to add part of our access challenges, as well as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The main challenges are also going to occur in increasing – in increasing time from both your traditional domains – your air, sea and land domain – to the two new domains of space and cyber.

And asymmetric approaches like small boats in a traditional domain, but asymmetric approaches in a new domain like cyber are also going to have an impact on your ability to achieve access. The threat will come from both state and nonstate actors that are all technology enabled.

Currently, based on the above, a holistic approach is needed, which means a joint approach is needed. This is why the chairman published the Joint Operational Access Concept, to ensure that the joint force will have the range of capabilities to overcome “anti-access” and “area-denial” challenges in all domains across the full range of potential military operations.

We view concepts as the starting point for the development of the ways and means by which we're able to link strategy, operational capabilities and end state. They drive all elements of force development: doctrine, organizational issues, training issues,

materiel solutions, leadership development, personnel issues and also facilities. They are not just limited to materiel solutions.

Accordingly, the Joint Operational Access Concept was designed to provide a common intellectual framework and to establish the basis for all follow-on efforts needed to effectively create joint solutions to the full range of likely access challenges. It also provides broad operational-level capabilities required to maintain and gain – or to gain and maintain access.

Today and tomorrow's strategic environment necessitates, for both operational needs and for fiscal reality, a joint approach. We can't afford individual service approaches. In developing both the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations and the Joint Operational Access Concept, there are three common trends.

“anti-access” and “area-denial” capabilities are a growth industry around the globe that are technology enabled. There is also a changing U.S. overseas defense posture, and there's also the emergence of two new domains – space and cyber – which will be contested domains.

Common to both the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations and the Joint Operational Access Concept is the requirement to be able to conduct globally integrated operations across multiple domains in both time and space. This is referred to in the concept as cross-domain synergy. Cross-domain synergy is “the complementary vice merely additive employment of capabilities in different domains such that each enhances the effectiveness and compensates for the vulnerabilities of the others.”

There is no doubt that our freedom of action will be dependent on our ability to achieve the necessary superiority in one domain or multiple domains at a time and domain of our choosing. This requirement will require integration and jointness at lower levels, and potentially increased interdependence among the services to generate the tempo needed for mission success.

There are 11 supporting precepts within the concept – and I'm not going to read each one of them to you today because I know you've looked at it – and there are 30 operational capabilities within the concept. All of them flow from the conditions and challenges previously described, and let me just highlight two.

One calls for the joint force to identify and exploit domain mismatches in pursuit of the ultimate combination needed to gain the level of access required by the mission. This goes to the heart of cross-domain operations. We may decide to escalate in another domain to be able to gain advantage in another domain. In other words, we're trying to do this in space and time, and we're trying to manage this all at once.

Another one suggests that the notion of us having uncontested superiority in all domains is likely coming to an end and that we're going to have to fight for domain

superiority. So it will therefore be necessary to create a superiority in separate domains in time and space in order to get the overall superiority to accomplish the mission.

The precepts and operational capabilities cover the full range of capabilities from engagement, where you start to build the partnerships that are going to be needed to lay the foundation for some of your access challenges around the globe, and to set the conditions for future access to the ability to exercise mission command in order to maneuver in multiple domains to create opportunity.

Another key part of the Joint Operational Access – and one of the papers that’s going to inform the future here – is the mission command paper. Mission command could very well replace Command and Control as one of the warfighting functions, all right? So we may even take what we referred to as Command and Control, and one of the things we’re considering is looking at making that mission command.

Now, mission command clearly has two aspects to it. It has the aspect of the art of command, which is the human element – the leadership element. And it also has the science of command, which is the technical means to be able to do it. It is all about empowering individuals at the right level of strategic operational and the tactical levels of war to be able to be empowered to operate on intent, and it requires trust up and down the chain of command to be able to do it. You have to be able to do mission command in the future if you’re going to be able to operate at the speed of the problems which we’re going to face.

The precepts and operational capabilities contained within the Joint Operational Access Concept cover the full range of capabilities. Again, they go from engagement all the way to high-end technical capabilities. These also form the basis – and they will form the basis – for our experimentation in the future, and for our further-on development of supporting concepts and also form the basis for analysis of what capabilities are being brought to the table by the services.

It is clear that the flexibility, resiliency and adaptability required by the environment and also by this concept can only be achieved by a joint approach. The concept will assist in developing affordable solutions by the framing of choices that our new fiscal reality demands.

I used to say in my last job when I was at Quantico – I’d go into an audience and I’d say, you can have anything you want; just ask. And everybody put a big smile on their face. And then I’d say, but you can’t have everything. You’ve going to have to make choices. Unfortunately, for about the last 12 years we have a mindset, if you will, of which we didn’t have to make choices. You know, if you wanted something, we basically could afford it.

The new fiscal reality is going to require us to have to make choices. And a good reason, or a good purpose, behind all the documents and all the discussions that we’re having right now is trying to set the framework to enable decision-makers to make

decisions because, like I'm saying here, it's all going to be about choices. You cannot afford everything. And to think that you can is just kicking the can one more bit down the road.

Recognize two things: As we work through these concepts, the other reason why we want to provide this framework is we're never going to get the future 100 percent right. So if we envision – there is the world that we would like it to be, and there is the world that's going to happen. So, we're never going to get it 100 percent right; we can't afford to be 100 percent wrong.

So, how do you build the resiliency into this force? How do you build the broad range of capabilities into a Joint Operational Access Concept that is not unique to a specific situation? And if that specific reality doesn't happen, how do you ensure that you have the resiliency and the flexibility to adjust to what didn't turn out the way you wanted it to be?

Lastly, as we move forward into the uncertain and increasingly dangerous post-OEF world, characterized by rapid change the democratization of threatening technologies, we will need to ensure that we can operate at the speed of the problem. We will need to be able to create the understanding needed to make the right decisions faster than our adversary.

And this is another concept that we're working on, is the co-creation of context – you know, how do you take information from the bottom, from the side, from the top down and be able not only just to push data but to be able to create knowledge at the point of action?

This means that the human dimension will remain the foundation of our success, and that our leaders, enabled by technology, will be the core of our future warfighting capabilities. And I believe that's why, when you take a look at the Joint Operational Access Concept, that's why we laid out 11 precepts and 30 capabilities of which we needed to explore.

So, the document wasn't an end in itself. The document was designed to be able to inspire further concept development, experimentation and analysis needed to be able to link our strategic goals with the ends desired to achieve. And it was designed to fit in the middle, to come up with the ways to be able to do that.

So I just wanted to talk to you briefly about that, and I wanted to leave the majority of the time for you to ask questions, because I figured that's what you really wanted me here for.

MR. MURDOCK: Thank you very much. (Applause.) I would like to take the prerogative of the chair and perhaps ask the first question before throwing it open.

To me, you know, warfare and the evolution of warfare has been driven by the competition between offense and defense, and in this particular case you could say that American power projection capabilities were offense and A2AD are our defensive response to that offense.

Does that mean that we should be thinking about things like Air-Sea Battle, and the JOAC as being another stage of offense and response to this or refinement of power projection capabilities? How do you put it into this context?

GEN. FLYNN: I put it into the context in two ways. First of all, I think that capabilities that are emerging, especially, for example, say, in the cyber domain, are creating a capability inflection point that could be compared to the introduction of the airplane into our warfighting capabilities, or the transition of the battleship to the carrier as the capital ship.

So, if you take a look at that, those were significant changes that drove capability in the future. So, the challenge is between now we're focused on two things. We're focused on building a force out to 2020. And what you're seeing in some of the traditional domains is you're seeing the strength of the defense, I think, enabled by technology.

So, how do you then look for offensive opportunities in which to counter those defenses? And I believe that where you're going to have to look is into the new domains. And how you integrate those operations across multiple domains is really going to be the key to whether you have an offensive capability or not. And whether you can integrate all these in real time or in the time that's going to be available for your reaction is going to be the success to whether you do it.

Right now a lot of this is just all conceptual. It hasn't been proven yet. It hasn't been exercised. One of the things that we're looking at, for example, on the training side – because not all of this is going to be a materiel solution – so, when you do COCOM exercise, how well do we add this new environment in cyber, and how well do we exercise to it? How well do we get a common operating fixture of what effects you can gain in the cyber world, and how do you integrate them with traditional effects that come in the more traditional domains?

But if you take a look at traditional domains, defense always tended to have an advantage. And I think in the future now what we're trying to do is figure out new ways of seizing the initiative by doing these operations across domains. And, conceptually, there's a lot going on. It's not going to happen overnight, and I'm not sure you're going to have a revolution in your requirements.

Eighty percent of the force that you're going to have in 2020 is either in existence today or is already programmed to come into existence. So, what you can basically do in all this is, as you think through the problem, is you can influence about 20 percent of it through 2020. And if you take a look at the pace of change, the real question is, how far

out can you advance to project this perfect view of the world in which, you know, you can make the choices that you're going to have to make based on the fiscal reality we face. It's not easy – it's complicated – but I think a lot of these concept documents, if you will, are designed to help frame some of those choices.

MR. MURDOCK: Thank you.

Question? And when you ask your question – there's a mic here – please state your name and affiliation. Thank you.

Right here in front.

Q: Sir, George Michelson (sp) with StratCorp.

On Wednesday there was a terrific session with the chief of staff of the Air Force, General Schwartz, and the chief of naval operations, General Greenert. There has been a lot of confusion about what the Air-Sea Battle concept is, almost like sort of blindly grabbing hold of the elephant, but I think they clearly articulated it when they said, this is not a doctrine, this is not policy; it will be in support of your overall doctrine. Can you speak to exactly how that's going to be incorporated into what you're doing?

GEN. FLYNN: OK. I think the key part – if you take a look – and one of the things why I mention in here is the joint operational concept has been under development for – was under development for well over a year. In fact, many of the people that were working on the Joint Operational Access Concept, because it had full service representation, were also the same people that were working on the Air-Sea Battle concept.

So, the two were not created in vacuums. There was actually commonality in action officers and in planning and in senior leaders as they went along. But Air-Sea Battle really takes you – is a mix of a service – of a multiservice concept and multiservice programmatic requirements that are designed to support part of the 30 operational capabilities that are included in the Joint Operational Access Concept.

I don't see any white space between those 30 operational capabilities in Air-Sea Battle. Air-Sea Battle, that's important. Does it support all 30? No. All 30 are designed to get you to a joint solution. They're not necessarily designed just to limit you to the multiservice concepts and programs that are contained in Air-Sea Battle.

MR. MURDOCK: Thank you.

Next question? Right there on the –

Q: Robert Gard (sp). I retired way too long ago to even have heard the terms, until recently, "area-denial" and "anti-access" and so forth. Could you be somewhat specific about the specific kinds of threats – you look in the newspaper and you see the

Chinese are going to be able to kill our carriers and prevent us from supporting Taiwan, for example. Could you talk specifically about what some of these more recent threats are that you're trying to combat?

GEN. FLYNN: Well, I think in general terms, first of all – and it's not limited to a specific region of the world or to a specific country. I think one of the challenges that are unique to this new environment that we have is that a lot of this technology is going to be available to both traditional state near-peer or peer competitors, but also in fewer numbers it could also be available to nonstate actors, which complicates some of your planning as you do this.

It can range from cruise missiles, supersonic cruise missiles – and if there's one supersonic cruise missile, I would say that the battle force that's approaching needs to be able to defend against that one way or the other, which is going to – you know, because one is as bad as 10 in some cases.

It's going to be the proliferation of ballistic missile defense technology, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and also the capability of both states and nonstates to operate in the cyber domain. All those things together, you know, are going to create challenges to us in the ability to achieve and to overcome “area-denial” strategies.

So, it's wide-ranging. So, as we have developed the capability, people have – or the technology has enabled defensive measures to always counter them. So, it's not one specific thing. That's why you're going to have to be able to operate across all five domains simultaneously in space and time to seek advantage wherever you can to counteract that.

So, it would be easy if I could say, OK, this is the one threat, the ballistic missile defense, or the ballistic missile threat is the threat that we have to worry about. It's the only threat. It's not the only threat. It's ballistic missiles, it's cruise missiles, it's anti-air capabilities, it's cyber capabilities. There's a host of problems, so how do you do this? And what we're trying to figure out is how do you take four services, integrate them and come up with a coherent joint approach to overcome the potentially wide range of threat capabilities?

MR. MURDOCK: Right back there.

Q: Thank you, General Flynn. Sandra Erwin, with National Defense.

I wanted to ask you about the allies' – the NATO allies' role in air denial operations. I mean, what specific responsibilities do you foresee for allies? Do you expect them to provide any technology, to provide access, bases? Can you talk maybe specifically what you would be expecting from allies in the future?

GEN. FLYNN: Well, first of all, I think a key to the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations is the development of partnerships. And one of the risks that we have already identified as we've worked the Capstone Concept to where we are today is what happens if our partners aren't able to network? So, I think partnership is – and it's not just limited to NATO; it's going to be limited to allies around the world – is what do you do before there's a conflict to enable the accesses or to enable the capabilities that you could need when you had to respond to a crisis?

That's why part of those 30 operational requirements in the JOAC include engagement activities designed to help you build partnerships, designed to help you build capability and capacity by exercising with potential partners, so that when you need them, you're ready to partner and you're able to generate the capability and capacity to meet the challenge.

I think also by having a concept like this, we're able to work through the issues of how do you divide labor, if you will, or how do you define how much capability and capacity you need to have individually, and how much capability and capacity you need to have as partners or as part of an alliance?

So, again, the framework is in here, but the answers aren't completely fleshed out yet. So, I think building partnerships, deciding what capabilities and capacities everybody will bring to the table, and then how to you integrate them is going to be key to this.

And then, the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations, the key challenge is, do you have the ability to integrate this? Do you have the ability to integrate your command and control systems, the technical backbones that you have to be able to integrate the operations in real time?

MR. MURDOCK: Back on the –

Q: Hi. Thanks for being here. Mike Fitzsimmons from the Institute for Defense Analyses.

In the JOAC document, one of the risks that's identified toward the end is the potential that the concept may be logistically unsupportable. And it discusses, first of all, the extensive threats to – whether they be fixed bases or resupply at sea, or tankers, combined with the fact that it's difficult to come up with convincing ways to mitigate this vulnerability beyond sort of incremental improvements in the efficiency of our systems.

So my question is, maybe, how worried should we be about this? Or perhaps more specifically, at what point does this start to look like a risk that fundamentally undermines the concept as opposed to something that's manageable?

GEN. FLYNN: One of the reasons why in both the Joint Operational Access Concept and then the CCJO, where we have identified what we think potential risks are,

is so that up front we have an idea of what we should be war-gaming and what we should be analyzing in the further development of the concept and the requirements, because if you didn't identify that, I think you could assume – you know, a plan that has bad assumptions tends not to execute well.

So, are there assumptions that we're making in the development of this concept – you know, are the logistics going to be there? We all believe that in the future, in the Capstone Concept, what we are talking about in the future is that the force is going to have to be more dispersed. OK, so what does that mean? And what does that mean for our logistics aspects of this? What does it mean by how we do logistics? And how do we sustain the force?

So, you have to start with the concept. I'm not telling you that if you did all 30 operational capabilities, you followed the 11 precepts that we would have figured out – we would have had the perfect idea for how we're going to fight in 2020. There is much – there is much needed development, further development of the concept, and experimentation needed to see, you know, where are the, if you will, the fault lines, or where are the potential failures within the concept?

We haven't gotten that far yet. You know, the first step was getting the concept up, but you're absolutely right; if we don't train to this, if we don't experiment with this, we're not going to know if we're going to have the confidence that we need to execute it when we have to.

MR. MURDOCK: Harlan?

Q: I'm Harlan Ullman. George, good to see you, and thanks for your comments.

I want to shift the focus a little bit away from systems concepts and force structure to what I think is one of the really most important aspects, and that's education towards a knowledge-based force. And in your professional military education hat, how do you see refocusing the knowledge and learning and educational structure to support new concepts in what you describe as a far more complicated world?

Some time ago I did a study for the secretary of the Navy and proposed a revolution in naval education, which did not go as far as it might, and I wondered what your view and the chairman's view are of the future for professional military education, and how you intend to see a change, if at all.

GEN. FLYNN: Well, the easy part of that is that I know that the chairman believes in the professional development of the force. In fact, one of the other papers that he published was the "Profession of Arms" white paper. And he's also published a reading list, which covers the gamut of thinking about the future, traditional warfighting books on traditional aspects of warfighting, but also thinking about the future.

The emphasis in the future is going to be on the human element and the development of the leaders to be able to operate at the speed of this environment. One of the advantages we have going in is we have a very experienced force right now that has had 12 years of conflict.

But what we have to be able to do is, how do you take advantage of that 12 years of conflict – the ability that they've demonstrated to deal with uncertainty and complexity in irregular warfare – and how do you expand that to a more complex and uncertain world that is not going to just be limited to irregular warfare, that could have potentially a peer competitor or a near-peer competitor thrown in? It could have state and nonstate actors. So, how do you do that?

And I think it's going to be – the core is going to be emphasis on the education of this next generation of leaders to think outside their comfort zone, to think towards the future, and to teach them at some times to be able to think the unthinkable, because one of the ways that we're going to get to the future is to be able to anticipate the unexpected. And I believe that the educational foundation of getting people to be able to think rather than us to train them for a specific outcome is going to be key.

So, how much that requires that we take a look at the JPME institutions, I'm not sure yet, but it is one – it's another one of the core elements that the chairman has us working on. And I think you'll see that the next ideas behind that come out probably in August or September.

MR. MURDOCK: A question right here.

Q: Sir, this is Brian Solis (sp). My question is concerning the human element again, and more specifically human communication, probably one of the more thornier parts of the human element, and what parts of the Joint Concept address focusing on human communication and all those aspects of influencing and getting the enemy or the population to help us out?

GEN. FLYNN: OK, some of these ideas are going to – are still a little bit rough, because, very honestly, I'm telling you think that we're thinking through right now. And I'm intentionally telling you some of them because I'm looking for a reaction from different places.

As I mentioned when we talked about mission command, there's a technical aspect to that and there's a human aspect to that, or a leadership aspect. So as you look through mission command, on the technical side we're looking at mobile applications that enable mission command via the cloud. That's the big idea on the technical side that we're looking at.

On the human side we're looking at, OK, how can I train leaders that the strategic level commander has confidence in the operational commander that he just tells him or

her what he wants done and he lets them do it, even though he has the ability to reach down and micromanage at that level?

Just like right now we could set up a Toughbook here right now and we could dial in to a fire team leader in Afghanistan and help that fire team leader with today's problems. That doesn't mean we should. To be able to operate at the speed of the problem in this human element, we're going to have to train commanders at the strategic level to think the battle after next, operational commanders to think the next battle, and the tactical commanders to fight the current battle.

Key to that is going to be their ability to discipline themselves to empower their subordinates to be able to do what they have to do. And it's all going to be about enabling trust up and down the chain of command, and that a junior – the tactical commander should really report by exception when things aren't going well, or they should report when they need help from the senior commander.

I've seen this done in some of the combatant commanders' exercises. Some of the combatant commanders are already onto this already. And what I've seen is they've enabled mission command from their headquarters to their component headquarters. And the next level is going to be getting it across – across compartment among the components, because it's easy to do it in the up and down up the chain of command; it's hard to do sometimes, you know, across to various components.

But that's what we're looking at, and it goes to Harlan's issue of how do you develop leaders to be able to operate in that environment? Because I do really mean that I – and I believe this wholeheartedly, that the difference between today and tomorrow is the speed at which you're going to have to react to problems.

And that speed is not just being faster in action; it's simply being faster in how you decide what to do. And sometimes your decision may be not to do anything but to exercise tactical patience, but you've decided to do that faster than your adversary or faster than the challenge.

MR. MURDOCK: There was a question just down – did you have a question, sir?

Q: Sure. Thank you.

General, Brian Sheirs (sp), Rolls-Royce North America. I'm thinking back to my resource sponsor days when we used to take a hard look at what is the joint staff asking the services to do, and that became a framework for which we developed our POM.

And you talked a little bit about the 30 operational capabilities. Can the services look at those operational capabilities, assess their programs, get down to capability gaps – capability gaps in capacity as well? I mean, is there that sort of teamwork in developing the document, the JOAC?

GEN. FLYNN: Well, I think there's two answers to that. There's a couple ways – a couple aspects of that that have to be addressed.

First of all, in laying out these larger concepts, there is the near-term requirements – three to four years – which is where the combatant commanders tend to focus. So they come up with near-term requirements. You basically – you know, and that program is already set.

The next part is, what do you build towards the future? So, in laying out these 30 operational capabilities, when we see the POMs coming in, how many of these are being addressed and how many are being addressed in the numbers that we have to do it?

But it's all going to be – it's not just whether your POM supports all 30. I'm not sure we could afford all 30 of those operational requirements that are in the concept. I'm not saying we can't. I'm not sure how much we can. And then, how much capability and capacity do you need?

So, the first thing you need is the framework from which to address the POM. I think by putting out this concept – and I think the chairman's intent when he publishes the CCJO is to also use that document as one of the lenses of which you review the service POMs.

When he has to give his assessment as to whether if the requirements that are under development are going to meet the needs of the force, both for the combatant command needs in the next three to four years, and also the force beyond that – which is the development of the future force for, you know, a yet-to-be-decided or yet-to-be-finalized future security environment.

MR. MURDOCK: I think we have time for one more question. Is there another question? Right there.

Q: Good afternoon, sir. My name is Major Kenney from Expedition Warfare School.

Sir, the concept, you know, obviously calls for a united front between the services. And, you know, with the capabilities that are offered by the Army, dropping an airborne division or so, they bring a lot to the fight but in reality we're looking at this from a holistic perspective. An amphibious force afloat is really going to carry a lot of the – carry the heavy load there.

And, you know, as we've seen in the last decade or so, the Marine Corps and the Navy have drifted apart somewhat in terms of their ability to really operate synergistically. And you see this in the ship-building plans that the Navy has for the future, as well as what we've got – the amphib capability we've got on hand right now. We're at 33 ships – 33 amphib ships. It is the minimum requirement for a 2.0 MEB,

which is a Marine Corps' requirement, yet we're starting to look at the ships on hand, you know, dwindling down to 28 or so.

How do we end up reconciling this in order to support the concept? And, you know, we tend to get stuck on building ships that are like the San Antonio class or 1.4 billion (dollars), you know, per copy, yet we can't afford to – we really can't afford to do this. So, also how do we reconcile these gaps we've got?

GEN. FLYNN: OK, first of all, I'm not sure there's the gap that you talked about between the Navy and the Marine Corps. Now, as the requirements guy in the Marine Corps up until last August, I obviously have different opinions on that – (laughter) – all in a good way.

But I think the – when I was listening to you, one of the things that is – you know, that as I'm working through this and as I'm thinking about this is there really could be an inflection point in how we fight in the future, all right? I talked about the introduction of the airplane, you know, the transition of the battleship to the carrier. I'm not saying all that's going to change overnight. You know, I'm not saying that today, all right. Don't quote me as saying it's the end of the carrier. I didn't say that, all right. (Laughter.)

MR. MURDOCK: I think you protest too much. (Laughter.)

GEN. FLYNN: Right. What I'm saying is there's changes in the environment that are coming that are of that significance, you know, that are big changes, all right? So, how do you use the amphibious force? How do you use the airborne force? How do you integrate that force into an Air-Sea Battle concept?

If you're saying – somebody mentioned it over here – that fixed bases could be at risk, OK, how do I create more fixed bases, all right? If some of these things – for example, if you have a ballistic missile defense problem, or if you have a cruise missile problem, chances are the center of gravity for the cruise missile is the launcher. It's more the archer than it is the arrow.

So, how do you use other forces in the joint force to help you deal with that problem? You know, if you can get to all the archers, it doesn't matter if you have 3,000 missiles. If you have no way to fire them, it's to your advantage.

So, can you use amphibious forces? Can you use airborne forces? Can you use special operations forces? Can you use cyber forces? What can you use to bring to the problem to create – to overcome the defenses, the strength of the defense, by coming at them in multiple domains? You know, so whatever we do, we have to take a look that there's not going to be one silver bullet, that you just can't buy one program and say, we've solved the A2AD challenge.

I think what we're trying to do by the concept is to force the debate or the discussion about what are the range of capabilities that you need, first of all, and how do

they complement each other? And then the next question you're going to have to answer is, how much of that can we afford, in what capacity? Does that make sense?

MR. MURDOCK: If you would join me in thanking General Flynn for his thoughtful presentation. (Applause.)

And we'll be taking a five-minute break while Nate Freier brings our panel together. Thank you.

(Break.)

NATHAN FREIER: OK, ladies and gentlemen, one last warning. Please take your seats. And, if you could, just make sure – administratively – one administrative note – make sure you have any of your electronic devices silenced on.

Thank you again, ladies and gentlemen, for joining us. On behalf of CSIS and Rolls-Royce North America, who is the gracious sponsor of these Military Strategy Forums, we're very pleased to have you with us for the second half of this event.

My name is Nate Freier with CSIS. I'm also a research professor at the U.S. Army War College's Peacekeeping and Stability Operations. And today we're going to sort of continue the discussion on the Joint Operational Access Concept and the broader challenges to American access, going forward in the future.

First let me begin just saying – thanking Lieutenant General Flynn again for his setting the context with his remarks. I thought that it established a good foundation for what I think will be hopefully a very active two-way discussion as we take this discussion forward for the remainder of the afternoon.

As General Flynn said, there is perhaps no more important subject today – and probably the most topical subject around Washington in the sort of defense and military circles, than the “anti-access”/“area-denial” challenge.

The challenge obviously comes in many forms. It comes in – it ranges from the high political and economic – sort of the exclusionary challenge all the way down to sort of the lethal operational and tactical challenges that were talked about in great detail during General Flynn's remarks.

I think we've assembled an excellent panel to talk about the subject and the challenges facing the United States in the access realm going forward. And I've asked the panel to really answer one simple question, or at least address one question, and that's, given what we all understand to be American interests and the various defense-relevant threats to those interests, what are the key challenges to American access going forward, and what are some of the military approaches that will be available to the United States to overcome them?

I've asked that they make their opening remarks purposefully brief so that we have a maximum amount of time for questions and answers, but let me just first introduce the panel members from left to right – from my left, I should say, or from your left to right. I've got to get this right.

THOMAS DONNELLY (?): I'm confused. (Laughter.)

MR. FREIER: Are you confused now? Thank you.

On my left is Thomas Donnelly. He's a resident fellow and co-director of the Marilyn Ware Center for Security Studies at the American Enterprise Institute. He's a former policy group director and professional staff member of the House Armed Services Committee and is a former editor of Armed Forces Journal, Army Times, and Defense News. He is the author, co-author or editor of several books and studies.

Mark Gunzinger is to his left. He is a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. He has served as a senior advisor to the Air Force for the QDR in 2010, and served as a deputy assistant secretary of defense for forces transformation and resources. Among his many high-impact works for CSBA includes a recent monograph on Iran's A2AD challenges entitled "Outside In: Operating from Range to Defeat Iran's Anti-Access and Area-Denial Threats."

And to Mark's left is Frank Hoffman. Frank is a member of the Foreign Policy Research Institute's board of advisors, and he's also a senior research fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies at NDU. Frank directs the NDU press operations, and this includes publication of the journalists' Joint Force Quarterly and Prism.

Frank recently left the Department of the Navy as the senior director for naval capabilities and readiness. And Frank is a widely published author in the field of strategy and is well known for his ground-breaking work in hybrid challenges and threats and hybrid warfare.

Please join me in welcoming our panel. (Applause.)

MR. DONNELLY: Well, thanks to Nate and to CSIS for putting on this event, and although no thanks to Nate for making us the last panel on a wonderful afternoon. (Laughter.) So, I'll try to fulfill the first obligation of a panelist who is standing between you and breezy sunshine – not only try to be brief but be an entertainment as well.

I have to say that a lot of this discussion about "anti-access" and "area-denial" seems to have been conducted in a kind of strategy-free environment. There is no doubt that the development of new technologies, from what we can glean, new operational concepts on the part of the Chinese and others around the world are having an effect, or changing things, and things that we need to respond to. But a lot of the conversation seems to be very much ant's-eye-view, ground-up approach to the solution, which is

especially lamentable for history's sole superpower, the guarantor of international security, et cetera, et cetera, the United States of America.

We bring a lot of baggage to the table, both in the sense of being responsible – essentially responsible for the world as it is, and with particular ambitions still unfulfilled to make it different in the ways that we often try to do – more prosperous, more free and more accessible to our commerce.

So, I think it probably is a good idea as soon as possible to run the new or emerging battlefield realities up against an assessment of what kind of world we would like to live in or how we will define victory, whether that's going to change, and in particular, the strategy that we have employed for decades and decades and decades since the end of World War II to try to achieve our strategic goals.

That is, as has often been said, try to maintain access to and supremacy – or superiority if not supremacy through the common – the realms – the common realms, but also to preserve a favorable balance of power across Eurasia and in our neighborhood. And when you start with a strategic view, I think you get at least a 90-degree different set of lenses or perspective on how to think about the “area-denial” and “anti-access” challenges.

First of all, we have extraordinary access now. Access is something that we have, and what the Chinese and others are trying to do is to drive us out of places that we already are. They're not putting up a barrier other than the most close-in kind of barrier, because we're already inside the wire, from their perspective. So the question that I would propose is, is a reframing of these challenges as how do we sustain access? And if we are driven out of where we are, how do we get back in? And are there indirect – strategically indirect approaches to doing this?

It's not, to me, unlike the challenge that the British repeatedly faced whenever there was peace on the European Continent, because the French would then start building up their maritime power and make life miserable for the British around the world and in the home waters, and threaten to invade Britain. Consequently, Britain's most reliable strategy was to subsidize Austrians, Prussians, Dutch, pretty much anybody they could find to try to keep the French fully engaged elsewhere but in the place that the British most cared about.

So, one of things we need to think about in this regard is not how to just respond to emerging operational and tactical and technological challenges but, really, how to defeat a particular set of enemies, and how to defeat their strategy.

I'd like to close, finally, with a complaint against thinking about the age of austerity as though it were a matter of geology instead of politics.

It's arguable that however the election turns out, that we could emerge into a period of budgetary warming, at least as far as the Defense Department is concerned, and

in particular the idea that we need to make choices, long-term choices, based on pretty recent phenomena, which are particularly the attempt to deal with deficit reduction, in large measure through defense reductions, and, secondly, the sort of broad sort of pulling back from the front line trace across the Middle East I think at least deserves to be thought about more seriously.

You could say that this is the beginning of a long-term trend, but I think you should think very hard about doing that before facing long-term Pentagon planning on that, regardless of – I mean, obviously people in uniform have to follow the policy guidance that they're set, but they ought to think about it pretty hard.

So, I'll just stop there and hope that the discussion will return to some of these issues.

MR. FREIER: Mark?

MARK GUNZINGER: Thanks, Nate. I'll add my thanks. And it is a beautiful Friday afternoon. I'll begin my quick comments.

We were worried about the cuts in the department's new strategic guidance as well as Air-Sea Battle and the JOAC. Frankly, I think they're a pretty good foundation, a good starting point to address the kinds of threats we see emerging today. And, of course, concept documents such as the new strategy and the JOAC and so forth, unaccompanied by changes to DOD's resource priorities, well, they're going to be hollow policy documents. They're going to be words.

So, while I see them as a good foundation for addressing the threats that are emerging in the Pacific and in the Middle East and other regions of the world, I don't see, in the department's latest budget submission, many of the changes that you might expect. So, hopefully this is going to be a multiple effort and more resources will be put towards the kind of capabilities actually implemented in the new strategy, in the JOAC in Air-Sea Battle.

Well, that being said, I agree with my colleagues in CSBA that the emergence of "anti-access" and "area-denial" challenges in multiple theaters is going to change how we project power in the future. I also agree with you that our future power projection forces need to be prepared for hybrid threats. I'll take that another step and say we need to break from using the words "high-end" and "low-end" – and I don't think the general did today, which is great – because those are very dated concepts.

So, when we look at the future security environment, we might want to say "permissive" and "nonpermissive" to replace those terms. And, frankly, I think across the spectrum of operations, our operating environment is going to be increasingly nonpermissive in nature. So, the main question: How could DOD change its buying priorities to address the kinds of challenges we're talking about today? JOAC, Air-Sea Battle, a good start.

And we did hear from the CNO and chief of staff of the Air Force earlier this week a couple of interesting points. Even though they made the point that Air-Sea Battle is not all about the Pacific theater, we still hear people say, oh, it's all about the Pacific; clearly it's all about China, and even one former vice chairman, who said, well, Air-Sea Battle is demonizing China. And I think we need to stop that kind of dialogue because it's not terribly productive.

That being said, an Air-Sea Battle document or a JOAC that is not used by military planners to focus on specific theaters, the intent and the capabilities of our competitors, will be useless. They need to focus down on those threats to discern, what is it exactly that we need to do in the Pacific, where our bases are, our capabilities are, our doctrine, how we interact with our allies, and so forth, if they really are to establish a better foundation, a more stable military posture in those regions.

Next point, I'm at heart a force development planner so I think in terms of how these documents could influence choices of the department and our future resource – our priorities. And, frankly, I think it's important that we challenge legacy assumptions, assumptions in the news over the last 20 years to decide which capability options are best to invest our treasure in.

And those assumptions have pretty much been along the lines of what we did in Desert Storm. Bases in four theaters would be readily available. Carriers would be able to operate in the littorals and launch the sorties deep into they enemy's territory. Our networks would be secure. Space would be inviolate. Air refueling could occur on the border of an enemy nation or even in enemy airspace. We could achieve air superiority rapidly and et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Well, if you change those assumptions and, frankly, assume that none of those might be true in the future in a world were precision-guided weapons and other asymmetric capabilities are high proliferated, and use a new set of assumptions as a lens to look at capability options, you can end up with a force that's quite different than what we have today because, frankly, what we have today is based on the old set of assumptions.

We have – sure, we're buying a fifth-generation fighter force. Great. We're still going to be very short range. Our UAD (ph) force is primarily suited to operations in very low-threat environments – and on and on. So I think some changes to our basic assumptions that we use to assess future capability options is needed.

My last point, we are at an inflection point, and I think it's time for the services to really take a hard look at their strategic concepts for how, when and where they'll protect the nation's interests in light of the changing operational environment. Without such a concept, the services may try to remain full-spectrum capable at the expense of really focusing on the “crown jewels” of what they provide and need to provide for the warfighters in the future. Three thoughts on that:

First, strategic concepts ought to incorporate the indirect approach to addressing future security challenges, and not just for COIN and CT operations, but how could our allies contribute to countering “anti-access” and “area-denial” threats? How do they fit into Air-Sea Battle and the JOAC?

Second, strategic concepts ought to focus on what a service uniquely or predominantly provides to the warfighters.

And, third, they ought to address how the services can provide capabilities in their particular domains to support operations in other domains. And that’s perhaps the most promising thing that I see about Air-Sea Battle, the potential to really integrate across domain – across the domains to achieve an effectiveness greater than any one service can achieve on its own.

So, with that –

MR. FREIER: Great.

Frank? Thank you very much.

FRANK HOFFMAN: Thank you. Can everybody hear me? Great. I happen to be wearing the king’s coat and eating the king’s salt today, so as the only government representative here, I have to give the government disclaimer. (Laughter.) I’m not speaking on behalf of the president of the United States, who I’ve never met or seen. I’m not speaking for the chairman or the president of NDU. These remarks are only my own.

I happen to have participated in the production of the JOAC to some degree, so I’m happy to particularly take credit for the deception component of both the concept and your appearance here today, because the rumor that I distributed about Nate’s buying beer at the Topta (ph) bar tonight is true. Yeah, you’re buying. (Laughter.)

MR. FREIER: Excellent.

MR. HOFFMAN: And that’s why you got everybody here. It certainly wasn’t probably Tom and I’s appearance, I’m sure.

I want to talk a little bit about concepts. There seems to be a lot of misunderstanding about what a concept is. I was really disappointed to hear a former vice chairman of the JCS reflect a lot of comments which reflect – “ignorance” might be too strong a word, but he particularly doesn’t seem to understand what concepts are all about.

I think most of us in industry or in the concept development business understand the importance of good concepts and what they’re all about. They’re not supposed to be a doctrine, at least at the beginning. They’re not a strategy. They’re not a programmatic

penetration of Congress. They're ideas. They're supposed to serve as a catalyst. They're the first step in a journey. They're never really great first out of the block.

And we should look at some of these concepts, both Air-Sea Battle, which I think I've seen 34 iterations of when I was in the building, and the JOAC, which I know I saw at least half-a-dozen copies. This is version 1.0. If you're not satisfied with it, you're going to see other iterations. It's going to adapt, as we all must over time.

The context is going to change. What you learn over time is going to change. What General Flynn and the joint community learns out of experimentation, exercises, lessons learned from ongoing conflicts that we're in, or conflicts from other people, will all be absorbed and improve upon some of these concepts.

So these are not in search of some "holy grail." They shouldn't be miscastigated (sic) for what they're not able to be. They're not supposed to be a doctrine, but at some point down the road we'll have capabilities and we'll have some doctrine, and there will be some personnel implications and things that come out.

I had some prepared remarks but I actually wanted to talk a little bit about – to reflect on this and to kind of bring in General Flynn's comments, I think the idea of an inflection point does have some value. It can be overstretched. But I think we are, at some point, at an inflection point, and I think the 1930s is a very useful point to think about.

You know, we had a lot of things and technological developments that were raised during the '30s that, you know, we didn't understand at the time, and maybe we don't understand air defense – or aerial defense and "anti-access" threats as much as we should, or some of the solutions that we're seeking right now, particularly in space and cyberspace.

In the 1930s there was a lot of claims about air power. There's a lot of things that we made assertions. Some of them turned out to be true. Some of them weren't so true. The idea that the bomber would always get through and that there could be an effective defensive component proved not to be terribly true for some time.

There was a belief that fighters couldn't have the range that we wanted them to have to escort the fighters, and people in this country insisted we didn't have to even bother with that, and that turned out to be a rather fatal mistake that we adapted during the battle.

There was concepts that we could hit what we wanted to hit. And I think the British and ourselves for some period of time had trouble finding, much less hitting, large areas called cities – (laughter) – over Germany for a year or two, at great expense. And those contests were very contested. That was definitely contested space.

And I agree with your comments about the nature of threats is probably not – the character of threats is not the best way to think about the environment anymore. I like “contested” over “uncontested” perhaps a little bit. But there was a lot of those things that they had to be worked out, and unfortunately not enough of them were worked out during peacetime in the ’30s. The ideas were there, but the rigor, the experimentation, the testing of the ideas wasn’t always there.

And the industry, unfortunately, for that particular period of time, was not as prepared and as robust as it is today, and the connections between industry and the military and the science and technology community and the military was not quite as robust as it should have been, but I think it’s there today and I think that’s why some of us are here in the room. Again, thanks to our sponsor for bringing these kinds of things together.

But this co-evolution of the military and the S&T community is what brings these concepts to some light, and that’s what they’re really all about, not a search for the “holy grail.” And to test some of these ideas out – I don’t know if everybody has seen it, but there’s this new book out from Arthur Herman – I wish I could promote books – but “Freedom’s Forge,” about how the industrial base in World War II really accelerated our capability development during World War II, is something that animated my comments today.

But I thought I was going to cheat a little bit here today. Instead of having to prepare remarks, I prepared your remarks. I have developed a list of questions that you should be thinking about – (laughter) – because you would’ve asked. And I know that some of you people probably actually hit the bar – Nate’s probably already buying – and you’re not quite as prepared as you might like to have been. So I have some ideas of things that you should be asking us today.

Why is the concepts both called Air-Sea Battle and Joint Operational Concept – why do they have those names? And are they a substitute for strategy? And how are they consistent or not consistent with current strategy? Are we planning to leave our forward bases and come back home? Is this a component of an expeditionary strategy?

Are we going to start fighting our way from the outside in, or not? How does the approach in the JOAC reassure allies about our posture in the Pacific, in both the Middle East and in the critical Asia Pacific region? How do these concepts contribute to reassurance of partners and build partnerships, and how to they deter aggressors?

And while the Pentagon takes some pains to disassociate Air-Sea Battle from some of these concepts with China, I don’t have a problem with identifying threats as explicitly, particularly since China doesn’t seem to have any sensitivity about running over boats and running into things themselves. So I don’t know why we’re still thin-skinned.

But one of the things that makes a good concept valuable in terms of combat development, if you can be honest about it, and rigorous about the character of the threat and the operating environment, the geography you're going to fight in, it has some utility. But, again, you don't want to demonize and make something out of, you know, a potential partner in the Pacific just out of sheer desire to create problems.

So I understand what General Cartwright is trying to say. I just disagree with the way he said it. There is quite a bit of proliferation of hardware, as General Flynn said. It doesn't have to be Chinese material. There is enough Indian, Russian and other materials floating around that make "anti-access" threats quite robust. It's all on the market. This is a kind of globalization 2.0, 3.0. A lot of these capabilities and mines and other things can be bought on the market. So it doesn't have to be all about China.

There is a public interpretation of Air-Sea Battle that I think is a bad caricature: all high-tech, all kinetic, all long-standoff distance, fighting our way inside, sort of what I call all the "Jedi knights" against some "Battlestar Galactica" kind of thing. I think that's a caricature. You have to ask yourself that; you know, what are the other things that this concept is bringing about and how does it support staying inside an envelope as opposed to fighting the "Battlestar Galactica" from the outside?

Another important issue – and I think the JOAC is a little bit honest about this, about the risks in the back – are we on the right side of the cost-imposing curve with the cost-economics curve on some of these issues? The concept particularly of the JOAC, is very, very honest about the nature of the physical environment.

And I take Tom's point. We still have lots of capabilities, lots of friends and a lot of resources to apply to things. But let's be honest about the cost of fighters, space systems, operating resilience systems, the networks we're talking about, the interdependencies and the integration we're talking about. It does not come cheaply. Are we pricing ourselves out of some markets or out of the business is something we need to ask.

If we're going to have to make really clear choices, and if we're going to get some interdependencies, we're going to probably take some risks in some areas and not buy some things or invest in some things. We're also going to specifically target some investments with precious investment dollars. What are the critical capabilities that we're going to buy?

Is it all about autonomous systems? Is it about directed energy or other forms of power that are different than we have? Is that the real strategic inflection point? Is it about base hardening or resilience of networks and cyber capabilities? Is it about just networks themselves, as Admiral Fitzpatrick said yesterday down in Virginia Beach on a panel I was on, on Air-Sea Battle? To him the most important thing is networks, networks and networks, and the resilience and integration of those networks.

But for General Dahtua (ph), it wasn't about networks and it wasn't about technology at all. The capability he wanted to invest in was really about breaking down stovepipes and mental frameworks that we currently have today between the services about who does what. And I think General Flynn alluded to that in his comments.

It's about the interdependencies; it's about the relationships; it's about the cross-scenes that we're not very sincere about breaking down right now. But concepts like the Capstone Concept and, I think, the JOAC are really getting at that.

Two more questions you might want to think about. There are defense experts – and at least one of them is in the room today. We have reservations about concepts that require us going what I would call downtown against a sovereign power that is a nuclear-capable power.

This raises potential escalatory issues, both on the non-kinetic side and on the kinetic side that might get a surprising response unless we understand decision matrixes and thought processes of some of our opponents. If we try to hold all capabilities of some of our opponents at risk, they might misperceive that. It might produce an escalatory situation that we're not really prepared for.

And then the last question I had today but Harlan actually got it out – did Harlan already leave? OK, he's already at the bar. (Laughter.)

MR. FREIER: I left my credit card up there. (Laughter.) I've got to go.

MR. HOFFMAN: General Flynn answered the question and Harlan brought it up, but when I did read this thing from a capability perspective – and I've worked in the same business with General Flynn and Mark for a long period of time – this one was a little thinner. It's the best concept actually I've probably ever read. And I didn't really pen any of this. It's very well written. It's very well structured.

The capability list is rather exhaustive. I don't think we can even afford – I agree with General Flynn – all 30 of them, but it was a little bit light on what I'd call the intellectual infrastructure. But General Flynn's comments I think made me feel a little bit better about that. And, in particular, if you've read the chairman's guidance for the development of force, there is a lot of emphasis there on leadership development and the human dimension that I think is still a little bit lacking in this.

So I expect those things to kind of be backing in from the new chairman into some of these documents at some point in time, but particularly the need for adaptive leaders that are able to come up with new solutions and novel circumstances is something that we're not investing enough in, and something that's particularly at risk, I think, in the science and technology community, the R&D base, and also in the PME base as we enter into this over-hyped age of austerity that I think we're going into.

And with that, I'll conclude my remarks and turn the microphone back over to Nate.

MR. FREIER: Excellent. Thanks. That was a great wrap-up by everybody.

Now I'm going to open it up to questions. I'm not going to take the prerogative of the chair this time because we have limited time, and just ask for the first question. And if I don't get one, I'm going to be forced to point somebody out and make them stand up and ask one.

MR. HOFFMAN: Because I've already given the questions.

(Cross talk.)

MR. FREIER: Right. Right. Questions?

MR. HOFFMAN: Wow, they really do want to leave on a Friday.

MR. FREIER: Yes, sir.

Q: Mike Bosworth, Naval Sea Systems Command, U.S. Navy.

In the cyber arena, the more wealthy nations have tended to go into cybersecurity with pretty much hardware solutions, whereas many of our allies, less well endowed, have been going with software solutions. And I'm wondering if anyone here would care to chat about how we're going to be able to talk with our allies that have chosen a different solution.

(Cross talk.)

MR. DONNELLY: That's a great question.

MR. FREIER: That is a very good question. I've never been involved in a panel where everybody was stumped, actually. (Laughter.)

MR. HOFFMAN: Well, I'll take a peck at this. Again, Harlan would have been excellent at this.

We spent a lot of time with this with NDU, working with NATO. This will be something that will be come a focal point, perhaps, at the COCOM level, where partnerships and interoperability will have new meanings. I mean, we already have this problem in theater now, and we've gotten to some level of information sharing and interaction-type things.

But, you know, there's a strength and a weakness to the interdependencies and the networks, and that's a challenge to work out. And the more we try to go for partners, the

more we're opening ourselves up to those interactions. And, again, as you said, some of them are investing in software and we have a lot of hardware. This is just going to be part of the difficulty.

And this is, I think, something that's going to have to be decentralized out because it's going to vary from region to region in solution and the kind of missions that we're working with people right now, whether we're working counter-piracy, whether you're working "anti-access" or whether you're working, you know, with NGOs on humanitarian things. We just have a lot of troubles sharing things. The more high-tech we go and the more threats we face, the more we become insular.

And I think that's one of the tensions that doesn't quite come out, and perhaps in the JOAC or in the Capstone Concept we want a lot of partnerships, but we're not willing to open ourselves out to a lot of technological interchange.

MR. GUNZINGER: Yeah, cyber domain is really the only man-made operational domain there is. And the kinds of scenes we see in a cyber domain are man-made. And we're not very good at addressing a lot of those scenes yet. And, as you said, as we do open up Air-Sea Battle and other operational concepts to our allies, that problem is just going to multiply.

Now, at CSBA we have met with our counterparts in military and LOD members in Japan, Australia, Taiwan and South Korea. They've all expressed much interest in, how can we contribute to Air-Sea Battle? What are our roles? We want to play. But they've been very concerned about China and what they're doing in that particular domain.

So that's – again, I don't have a good answer for what we can do other than say, yeah, it's a real problem.

MR. DONNELLY: One thing that's worth – again, sort of trying to think about specifically in this regard – I mean, we talk about sort of the character of war in the abstract, or the, you know, strategic environment in the abstract.

And allies we talk about in the abstract too, but they are particular allies who, you know, care about the same things that we do. There is a de facto China deterrence coalition that's forming, like, you know, the star out of the gas – not that we're doing as much as we ought to, to make it solidify. And there is a natural Iran deterrence or containment coalition out there.

And there may be – Mark's – both Mark and Frank's point – look, I mean, we should never build anything again that we're not going to share, and that we should design things to share. And, unfortunately, we're also turning our back on a lot of things that we are currently trying to build that we intended to share, which is going to have a deleterious effect on the coalition-building process.

But, you know, again, even though I'm completely clueless about cyber per se, I think the point is a broader one. There is a need to think through what the coalitions are going to be, what the contributions are going to be, but with some specificity instead of just sort of talking about capabilities, partners, coalitions in the abstract.

MR. FREIER: One thing – just let me add to that. One thing, just to jump onto this. One of the things we've found in recent work with did with ground forces, actually, was this point that whereas the allies are reducing, significantly – our core allies especially are reducing significantly some of the ground force capability.

Where they are actually, in certain respects, keeping capability are in these sort of higher-end systems that allow them to participate in, you know, course of campaigns against the near-peer competitors or containment of a near peer or the Iran containment problem, et cetera.

MR. DONNELLY: Well, I mean, that's a good point. The most important ally we have in Afghanistan is the ANA, and that's going down because we're making it go down.

MR. FREIER: Right.

MR. DONNELLY: There's plenty of Afghans who like to fight. So, you know, again, thinking through what the coalition you need to achieve – you know, to fit your strategy would clarify a lot of things for us.

MR. FREIER: Right. Excellent.

Now a lot of hands went up this time. Yes, sir.

Q: George Nicholson (sp) with StratCorp.

You talked about the importance of coalition support partnership. I remember when General Gorman was a SOUTHCOM commander, one of his pet peeves is he said, we've got this great propensity of hanging the millstone of technology around our partner's neck. We can come up with a great widget and they can't afford to operate it.

Along the same lines, a few months ago General Schwartz was asked, the chief of staff of the Air Force, why aren't we pressing the Afghans to buy brand-new Blackhawk helicopters or 47s? Why are we letting them buy MI-17s? And he said, the point is that's something they can afford to maintain and operate.

So, as we go forward, again with this interoperability, how do we go ahead and get a handle on that?

MR. DONNELLY: Well, shoot, I mean, the Japanese just signed an F-35 contract for 75 planes. There's probably 150 that they would buy. They wanted to buy

the F-22. I mean, there's probably 5(00) or 600 F-35s to be sold in the Asia-Pacific, even before you get to India.

On the other hand, everybody's scared to death that we're going to, you know, quite the program. And the Australians are. You know, so our allies – many of our allies are really rich countries, and even if they're not going to – you know, 1 percent of Japanese budget or GDP is a lot of dough. If we can – if you could meld that into a larger coalition capability, that just – you know, that makes our adversaries' life a lot more difficult.

The same with – you know, all the good, attractive partners are already our allies. We just sort of have to get out of – the first thing we have to do is get out of our own way and, again, just – we should build things with an eye toward proliferating to have them become the, you know, central nervous system of the coalition.

MR. GUNZINGER: Let me address this question.

I'm not sure that we should build everything to be able to share them with our allies or sell to our allies – certainly be able to operate with our allies, clearly, no question about it. But a huge caution is we think about role of allies in Air-Sea Battle, how Japan, how Taiwan, how Australia and others could contribute to a more stable, defensive posture in the Pacific to counter China's "anti-access"/"area-denial" complex. How do you get China in there?

(Cross talk.)

MR. GUNZINGER: I'm sorry, the PLA. (Laughter.)

They don't have to look like us. They probably shouldn't look like us. Maybe selling the same things that we buy to our partners in the area isn't the right answer. Perhaps Japan, for example, a focus on missile defense, cyber and submarine warfare, and the kinds of things that, you know, they're really pretty good at and they could invest in to help execute a future Air-Sea Battle-like concept. Just a thought.

MR. FREIER: Frank?

(Cross talk.)

MR. FREIER: Next question. Yes, sir.

Q: T.X. Hammes, NDU.

We talked about cyber and the use of command and control and how important our networks are. We seem to skip over the fact that most of the national corporations own 95 percent of the pipes. Not since Wallenstein and the Thirty Years' War have I seen governments turn over such critical elements of their capabilities to corporations and

pretend it's OK. Is there any thought going into that that we've just turned over everything to corporations in the hopes they'll be there when we need them?

MR. DONNELLY: As opposed – I mean, the question is, you know, what are your choices? Are you going to replicate that through government means? You know, how much of the building up of JSOC's capabilities in the GWOT over the last 10 years has gone over commercial satellite links and stuff like that?

You know, people used to be able to convert armed merchantmen into if not ships of line, certainly ships of war, you know, so – well, for the Elizabethans, it was all they had. I mean, I don't know the honest answer, but when there's so much capacity that's increasing so dramatically out there, and, you know, so much of –

When we come straight out on cyber defense, I mean, it may actually be a more intelligent strategy to be able to, you know, sort of – beyond defending the absolute crown jewels, to use the commercial realm as a way to maintain, you know, not only your C2 networks but, you know, to conduct counterattacks, as it were, if you're being attacked through that realm.

And, besides, just, I think, a fact of life, there's so much capacity out there we ought to figure out how to use it. But I don't have a more intelligent answer than that, I guess.

MR. HOFFMAN: I think T.X. has brought up an issue. I'm not as concerned whether it's who owns it, but if we don't understand it, if we don't understand the vulnerabilities, if we don't test ourselves against it, I think we set ourselves up for a lot of vulnerabilities, and that's not one of the risks that's identified in the JOAC, which includes – should include both space, cyber and other dimensions that are at risk and can be either degraded or destroyed, so essentially at least neutralized.

But having worked on a government location for the last couple of years, my computer support has always been less than adequate, so I'm not as worried that the government doesn't own something without maintaining it. The fact that industry, and it's more decentralized, and hopefully both redundant, resilient and self-organizing I'm a little more confident.

But, without testing that thought that you brought up, that's something we've left ourselves open. And, again, I think that's a risk that is not identified. And I just checked; it's not identified in the back end of the paper.

MR. FREIER: Next question? Yes, ma'am? Back there.

Q: Thank you. Sandra Erwin with National Defense. I wanted to ask anyone on the panel about the potential UAV arms race. DOD unveiled the report on China capabilities this morning.

They were pretty much giving, you know, generic information that, yeah, China is developing drones and they're interested in the technology. But now that we see the Air Force sticking with the U-2 and they want to hold off on the Global Hawk, and who knows what's going to happen to that program, do you foresee potentially China developing something more advanced in high-altitude long endurance? And what do you see happening there?

MR. GUNZINGER: I've talked about UAVs, written about them before. And, frankly, we're in the very, very early years of unmanned capabilities, not just airborne capabilities – undersea unmanned and ground-based, for that matter.

Technology is progressing. They've becoming more autonomous, and they need to become more autonomous still. And, frankly, when DOD does develop unmanned capabilities, it can operate with a greater degree of autonomy. They are capable of persisting over battlespace support – maybe not hours but days – and are very survivable.

Then, when are we going to have something? I don't see how the DOD backing off from that direction, even though some immediate investments may not be funding some UAV programs that some people really like. And I don't see Iran and I don't see China and others backing off from investing in UAV technologies. They are part of the force in the future. They're here to stay, no question about it.

And, frankly, as I said earlier, the UAV force we have today isn't what we need in the future, and they're really not going to be terribly helpful for an Air-Sea Battle-like operation, either in the Persian Gulf or in the Pacific, because they're not survivable and they lack range, and so forth.

I imagine there's air planners sitting over in the Pentagon today trying to figure out where they're going to park all of their Predators when they come back from Afghanistan and other areas of the world.

MR. DONNELLY: And the MRAPs.

MR. GUNZINGER: Yeah. (Laughter.) So, I just don't see people backing off from investments in unmanned technologies in all their various forms.

MR. DONNELLY: Mark raised an interesting point that sort would be interesting to see how this plays out as the value of autonomy – I mean, yeah, again, we are in an early stage and the temptation is to think that this really, you know, makes the battlefield more transparent and all that kind of – that's kind of the way we try to use it is to keep a leash on people to a certain degree.

If we can get across that threshold – so, it's the way we use these technologies that conceivably could really have a multiplying effect for military organizations – relative to military organizations that will have a hard time, you know, crossing that kind of a threshold by really exploiting it.

So I think there's – you know, there's wild speculation, but there's reason to believe, particularly if the whole culture of mission command per se, you know, really does begin to suffuse the approach to leadership, that there's a possibility that a more agile human organization can really multiply the technological effects beyond what a more constrained or more traditional hierarchical command structure or leadership structure will allow itself to do.

MR. FREIER: Yeah, go ahead.

MR. HOFFMAN: Just to throw on some of this – I think we're starting from a pretty high base on unmanned systems, but clearly it's perhaps a future inflection point. We were first seeing Hezbollah flying, you know, armed UAVs six years ago, and I don't think they've stopped having some interest in that.

Some work that some friends of mine are doing at NDU will explore, you know, new manufacturing techniques. You know, there's options for low-tech lightweight UAVs to be mass produced by folks if they can get into that breakthrough. There is a potential strategic inflection point there that I think is going to come out.

But I just want to point out a caution. Most of our experience and understanding about UAVs comes from essentially uncontested air space, and our own, you know, experience is somewhat limited. We need to extend our thinking, like in the '30s, and think about fighter bomber and cross-terrain, bring in radar, bring everything in and really understand what's possible and what's not possible, rigorously.

MR. FREIER: I'd like to – I actually want to ask a quick question, actually. I should have done this upfront but I didn't think about it until we started talking. I mean, T.X. has written a lot lately about the escalation problem and the lethality, the environments that we commonly talk about with respect to the highest intensity “anti-access” challenge.

One of the things that interests me is there's obviously political calculation that goes into undertaking an operation under circumstances like this. And I was struck recently in a conversation when I was talking to a French Air Force officer about the HMS Sheffield. I mean, how many HMS Sheffields would the United States be able to – be able to bear before they sort of made a different calculation as far as a particular operation?

So, one thing I'm interested in hearing from you guys is, sort of we have the Iran and the China sort of case study that seems to be the centerpiece of all of the “anti-access”/“area-denial” discussions amongst us in the discussing crowd, right? What are the likeliest circumstances where the United States might have to either force entry in either of the domains and sort of maintain a presence in a medium-to-high threat environment?

MR. DONNELLY: Well, it's a little bit difficult for me to believe that the tide of war is actually receding across the greater Middle East. I mean, again, if you just sort of open the aperture and look at – you know, take, for example – just to pick one number at random – what we've done since 1979.

You know, our pre-1979 posture towards the Persian Gulf across that region was to be an offshore balancer. You know, we'd take out most of the – you know, we'd put our finger on the scales every now and then, but mostly tried to let the locals run their own politics. Since 1979 we've been on the opposite track entirely. And, curiously enough, you know, the generation of, you know, sort of Baath Party-era autocrats is now, you know, clearly on the way out.

So, you know, it's going to take me a couple of years to really believe that we made a U-turn, again, both because of what's happening in the region because it's still strategically vital to the balance of power across the globe, because I would include South Asia in this regard.

So, you know, there's no more Saddam-type guys out there. However, there's a whole lot of other problems that I just find it hard to believe that aren't sort of giant sucking sounds that will involve us, not necessarily in large ways but over a long, long period of time. So, as a force-planning construct, it will be an important thing. And we're trying to act like we're not going to do that anymore, so just call me skeptical.

MR. GUNZINGER: We talk about, we write about how China, PLA and Iran, and their "anti-access"/"area-denial" capabilities or strategies, because they're, frankly, pacing the threats against which we can develop new concepts of operation, investigate how we can better integrate our services, our capabilities, where the capability gaps are and so forth and so on.

Personally, I don't think we're going to go to war with China. We certainly don't want a war. I don't believe China wants a war. On the other hand, things go bump in the night. Things happen. So we do need to be prepared to support our allies and protect our vital interests in the region.

However, in the Persian Gulf region it's quite possible that we might have a conflict there in the near future. We've written about that and proposed an Air-Sea Battle-like operation concept for the region with Iran and its capabilities as the facing threat, projecting out 10, 15 years in the future. It could be a significant problem for us, especially if we do not have base access, we can't deploy our carrier battle group into the Persian Gulf itself, and so on.

MR. HOFFMAN: This is a good opportunity for me to get in one of my hobby horses on this particular concept.

We spend a lot of time focusing on the access problem, which is kind of the newer-range greater lethality, greater precision. And I've spoken at CSIS on this before. It's legitimate, it's new and emergent, and it's got a lot of our attention.

But I think the scenarios that are most likely are not in some of these scenarios, and they're about the "area-denial" problem, which is the mines, EFPs, dirty areas, contested space in urban tunnels and canyons. And there's a lot more scenarios of nasty situations in which, you know, might not even begin terribly as an "anti-access" kind of challenge, but we get there and our other enemies all kind of come to, like, a kid's soccer game and al-Qaida and everybody else comes.

And there's scenarios perhaps in North Korea that you have an implosion of a state or in another South Asia state or other places in Latin America where you have criminal organizations that have acquired certain capabilities or bought MANPADS in Libya on the open market, and it can combine some things in an "area-denial" kind of situation where we think the situation is more humanitarian or more peacekeeping and we find ourselves in an "area-denial" challenge.

So I think those are likely but they're certainly not the kind of pacing or things that are conceptually developed to get a capability breath, but we might want to think about those when we start buying capacity.

But I think the "area-denial" problem from Wonsan 1950, if you read T.X.'s books – 1951 – we've had a problem for half a century with "area-denial" challenges. And I'm sometimes worried that we do have these new domains pulling our attention in a period where we have less resources. So hopefully we'll look at both sides of the problem.

MR. GUNZINGER: Allow me to violently agree with you on this one. I was thinking in terms of a large-scale scenario involving a state – not necessarily a nonstate actor, although of course Iran is busy still equipping its proxies across the Middle East region, and equipping them with some nasty stuff, like guided rockets, artillery, mortars and so forth.

As we look at the future – and those things do proliferate – even peace-keeping operations can turn into very nasty events for us. And that's why I said in my remarks that across the spectrum of conflict, across the spectrum of operations, or ROMO, or whatever you want to call it, our operating environments are going to become much more nonpermissive to the point where we could see some damage inflicted on our ground forces that pales – well, in comparison, what we've experienced over the last 10 years in Iraq and Afghanistan, the damage created by IEDs, will be nothing compared to what we can see in the future. I avoided using the words "low end."

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you.

MR. FREIER: Great.

We have time for one more question. We're going to release 15 minutes early – one more question.

Yes, sir?

Q: Sequestration. (Laughter.)

MR. FREIER: I thought we were going to get out of here and then that word was uttered.

MR. HOFFMAN: That is an “area-denial” problem. (Laughter.)

Q: There you go. I'm with Rolls-Royce North America, and I can tell you that the defense industries are wrestling with this issue today. Contingency plans are being drawn up. I mean, we're dealing in a very real situation where the election happens, lame duck Congress, no budget, CR. We're already, you know, three-quarters – more than – actually, we all have about three – barely less than three-quarters of the fiscal year left. Sequestration happens.

All of this discussion – and, Nate, I'll tell you, this has been very, very good for me to listen to all your panelists. They are spot-on. What's going to happen here with all of this discussion, the strategy, the planning? Everything we've put into place today goes out the window with sequestration. And I'm wondering if any of our panelists have any thoughts on that particular event. And what's the impact going to be, because the industry is trying to get their hands around what's going to likely happen.

MR. DONNELLY: Well, let me ask you a question.

Q: Sure.

MR. DONNELLY: When are you going to issue your layoff notice? By law you have to –

Q: You have to do that by law 90 days in advance.

MR. DONNELLY: OK, is there going to be a sequestration resolution? You're going to have to do that before the lame duck session.

Q: Right.

MR. DONNELLY: OK, so the effects of – there's already, you know, a sequestration bow wave that is not only administrative but I think across the department. So, if we're not there, we're very, very close to being in a de facto sequestration. Nobody can reasonably plan based on having this sort of Damocles out there.

The political class does not grasp that. All the political smart guys, you know – and there's so many things that are going to supposedly happen in December. You've got, you know, an AMT patch, tax cuts, debt ceiling, on and on. It's like six or eight, you know, major trains that are heading for the same intersection. And I would actually worry that when we get close to that – you know, we're currently at a time where the impacts of sequestration on defense are relatively present in the public today, certainly more than they were when the BCA was enacted.

However, I wonder whether, in that – you know, and it also depends on what happens in the election. You know, if it's still split government, or even if it's not but the people who lose are grumpy – I just want to throw as many cow pies at the opposition or leave as many land mines behind when they leave the building – you know, the idea that it's going to get resolved in December is going to be – I think is worth thinking about pretty hard.

So, I would put the odds of, you know, if not sequestration as defined by the BCA – formal sequestration – but de facto sequestration, the department having to eat a lot – and the industry and the force having to eat the consequences of another budgetary train wreck that essentially turns the next fiscal year into a giant mess as being extremely high.

MR. HOFFMAN: Let me make two quick points, one related to the question and one not, because this is my last shot at the mic, I suspect.

Let me tell you what sequestration is not going to do. It's not going to change what our competitors are doing today. No question about it. China is going to continue to build its "anti-access" capabilities. Iran is going to continue to invest in the kinds of "anti-access" weapons we see fielded today. And others are going to attain – hopefully not, but weapons of mass destruction and the kinds of capabilities that could threaten our future power projection operations, despite what the Congress does. You have to take that into account, no question about it.

The unrelated comment is on Air-Sea Battle and the JOAC and so forth. Caution: We've got to be careful that these documents, these concepts don't become the next key word, transformation, or the next "N" word, network-centric warfare, and become all things to all people. They'll lose their meaning. They'll lose the impact. And DOD will lose the chance to really make a persuasive argument to the American people and on the Hill and to our allies that we're concerned about these challenges, these specific regions and these specific challenges, and we're doing something to address them.

MR. FREIER: I liked your comments on that.

I'd like to quote something that CSIS wrote in their global forecast, and particularly one of my longtime mentors is old enough to probably be more than my father probably, but Tony Cordesman made a great comment about sequestration in the CSIS report, "Global Forecast," where he said that, you know, the sequestration legislation was something that was so contrived, so twisted to force – is something that's

so stupid that even this Congress would have to get past this dysfunction and take the national interests into account. And that –

MR. DONNELLY: It's still true.

MR. FREIER: – yet remains to be seen. (Laughter.)

Is that it? All right. Well look, this has been, I think, a very valuable discussion on the “anti-access”/“area-denial” threat. And on behalf of CSIS and Rolls-Royce North America and the Military Strategy Forum, I appreciate everybody's participation today on this beautiful Friday afternoon. And I now release you all to have a good time upstairs on my credit card. Thank you very much. (Laughter, applause.)

(END)