

**39<sup>th</sup> IFPA-Fletcher Conference on National Security Strategy and Policy:  
The Marine Corps: America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness**

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**The Honorable Robert O. Work, Under Secretary of the Navy  
Opening Speaker, Session 3, "Meeting the Demand: Responding to Crisis and  
Applying Force"**

**Questions & Answers**

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Well, that was a very provocative panel and many different sets of comments. A common theme, of course, goes back to the original opening comments set by Secretary Work, referring to Secretary Gates's statement yesterday – what missions can we afford to shed if we are going on the trajectory that we all think we're going on with respect to Congress and the budget.

So I would like, before they leave, each of our panelists to address that from his service perspective – what mission do you think your service can afford to shed as we think about force efficiencies and budget efficiencies in the period ahead.

Also, on the last point, Bing, you raised a very intriguing point and important point, I believe, about the trainers. There is a little organization, and everyone's going to groan when I mention NATO, but it's an organization called the NATO SOF Headquarters Element. It is technically part of NATO, but not really part of NATO's peacetime establishment operation. And it is an MOU organization, led by the United States. SOCOM has now taken ownership.

It was really stood up by General Jones when he was SACEUR, and embraced by Admiral McRaven, who is going to take over at SOCOM, as you know. And it is a coalition of nations with partner relationships. So that includes the Australians, New Zealanders, the Jordanians, the UAE, who are operating on the ground, in Afghanistan, in precisely that role, Bing, you're talking about, with respect to both the ANA, as a training and equipping force, but also now the

police force. And they're working with EURPOL, which is very interesting, all sorts of non-traditional partnerships. And US DEA, which is another key, I believe, to an exit strategy that gets us out where DoD supports another agency that might have a more fundamental role in leading.

So I think we need to think more creatively about the NATO SOF Headquarters Element, led, by the way, by an Air Force three-star now, Frank Kisner, which is doing amazing things, and no one hears about it because it's under NATO's radar, which I think is a good thing. But I think that the partnership activities it's engendering is very important, with non-traditional NATO partners, and that's why I think it's actually working.

Now, having said that, I'd like to open the floor for questions. The Secretary made, I think, one of the most compelling arguments for why we need a joint forcible entry capability. And I certainly hope you're going to be working on those papers that go to the Secretary when you argue about amphibious assault capabilities and joint forcible entry.

But please, questions? Microphone? Please identify yourself.

**ARNOLD CRASHER[?]:** Arnold Crasher with the *Seapower* magazine and [1:11:42]. Secretary Work, what level is this review going to take place? Are we going to do another QDR; everybody hides in rooms and then come out six months later with something? What's the timeline of it, and who is going to do it?

**THE HONORABLE ROBERT O. WORK:** It's too early to tell. The President just gave his speech yesterday. The Secretary called all of the senior military leaders in the department, as well as the senior political leaders yesterday to kind of say, "The key thing that I want you all to remember is that the President has said— all he did was mention scale, 400 billion over 12 years." So the President has laid out the scale. But most critically he said that these cuts would not take place without a comprehensive strategic review.

So we're in the process of trying to figure out how to do it. In my view, it's going to be something like a mini-QDR, and it will be refined over the next several months and into POM-13. And then it will be refined in the QDR of 2013, which we will do with the change of the Administration.

So I think this is going to be, unless there is a change— now, Bing could be right. Generally what happens, the history of both ramp-ups and ramp-downs are they go a lot faster than you anticipate, in both directions. But as of right now, we're under the assumption that we will have an opportunity to conduct this review, and make a measured way forward.

So it's too early to tell exactly how it would work out.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Another question? Yes, John?

**JOHN:** Gentlemen, there seem to be two forcing functions for change. One certainly, the budget, and the other is something we've talked about most of the day, cyber. And General Vane used a phrase that I have heard a lot, but haven't seen many results from. The phrase was "whole of government." And particularly as you look at things cyber, that must be addressed, I think, and rehearsed and exercised in an interagency, which is a different way of saying whole of government.

And sir, I'm wondering, is anybody actually doing that as you prepare for crisis, as you prepare for forcible entry? Or is each service kind of doing their own thing, General Alexander putting it all together? Or is it in fact an interagency operation?

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Phil, do you want to take a first shot at that question?

**GENERAL PHILIP BREEDLOVE:** I was just sitting here thinking I thought you were directly your question to General Vane and I would have time to think about this a little more.

But I think, sir, when it comes to cyber, one of the things that's become key, as you have watched us go into that room where all of the Vices are sitting around over the past year, we've had what I

would call fruitful, but sometimes not very progressive discussions. And we were locked into discussions about how we were going to employ, whether it was the geographic COCOM or whether it was a functional COCOM that would be directing and leading the fight, how the Joint Force Commander, whoever he or she might be, would effect control or drive the effects inside of their geographic boundaries, and then sort of the responsibilities of, if that effect was driven from outside, what are the derivative problems that might a geographic COCOM come up against.

And I would just say that, literally, this has been almost exponential progress in this area in the last several months. We have really come to, I think, some better constructs on understanding supported/supporting in the relationships of who will seek effect and then have the trigger-pulling authority, maybe not actually doing the trigger, but tripping the trigger, so that the timing and effects to a geographic sync would not get out of touch with what they needed on the ground.

So I'm encouraged in that way. I will take a bit of a chance here by saying that I think that I think that our nation's ability to employ and to sort of bring a coordinated effort in the employment in cyber, I think is moving much farther than our nation's policy and our nation's will to employ in cyber.

And my fear is that we will get to a point where we have tools that could save soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines as they do their mission, but we will still neither have the policy or the national will to employ.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** General Vane, do you want to add anything?

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL MICHAEL A. VANE:** Yeah, I'll go out on a limb here. I think most people know about 95% of cyber is defense, and about 5% is offense. And so that could lead you to organizing and thinking about it more at an operational and strategic level in order to get the authorities to operate in offensive kinds of environments, which leads you to more of a higher level, NSA-led, with all the Cyber Command that are standing up in each one of those

services, and have stood up for a while. And perhaps down at tactical level is more of a defense, as we've known in the past, but having to address obviously some of the new threats.

So how much of the whole of government becomes something that gets led by each of the services, and how much of the whole of government gets something that's more led by Keith Alexander and crowd? That would be the first comment I would say. I think it probably is more of a higher level problem than a lower level problem.

The second thing I'd say is that one of the things we've been doing, and started doing with DARPA was that perhaps we should reexamine the framework within which the Internet was established. And instead of trying to continue to defend everywhere, which I think those of us that have studied history and looked at Maginot lines and think about even more we've done with MRAPs and reactive or passive capability to protect, eventually doesn't allow you to do anything.

Then you might want to move to a different paradigm and a different way of thinking about how you solve the problem, instead of just thinking about solving the problem the same old way we've been solving it. Which I believe is this co-evolution of a threat will only mean we'll spend zillions of more money, and perhaps we should be looking at speed, decision-making faster, and other ways to solve the problem than just trying to slug it out through the cyberspace.

So that would be my two cents.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Thank you very much. Any other questions?

General Breedlove, you made an intriguing comment earlier about offensive cyber as an important aspect of your sea battle. I wonder if you could draw that out a little bit for your audience? Because that would be cyber at a slightly lower level than the level General Vane was talking about earlier, Keith Alexander. We're talking now about operational concepts.

**GENERAL PHILIP BREEDLOVE:** Well, as I mentioned in my remarks, the beauty of what the enemy is trying to do to us in A2AD is exploit our weakness. And clearly, we are dependent on our net. And some of the things we discussed were how to create smaller and even more survivable nets that may not be reliable on the existing sort of infrastructure that we have now. And how can the Naval and the Air team exist more securely on these smaller, very robust and large throughput kind of nets required to bring target-quality data to target-employing platforms.

So I think that's a big piece of it. But I mean, quite frankly, we've said many years and across all of the services the best offense is a good defense. Or the best defense is a good offense. In this case, I like the best defense is a good offense in that if we are going to receive, and just receive, in cyber, then we'll spend a lot of money on how to receive and employ. If we give our enemy the same problems that he gives us every day now, then our advantage in an A2AD environment might be multiplied.

And I would have to think, and I would have to hope that because we have not been employing against our possible adversaries at the rate they are us now, they may not be as well equipped to receive. And so, we should exploit their weakness.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Absolutely.

We have a very interesting presentation this morning from Fusion Technologies, in which he talked about there actually, from his perspective, were boundaries now in the cyber world called routers. And those are vulnerabilities, but that's going to change as you go to mesh networks in the future.

General Vane?

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL MICHAEL A. VANE:** I'd like to make one other comment, Jacquie, in this regard. I think we have to get more precise in our terms. So when Joe Schott asked me about cyberspace and the whole of government, that's sort of an infrastructure question and issue in my mind; it's a manmade domain.

But we really only have one frequency management spectrum. If you listen to Keith Alexander, he will tell you and talk about the convergence of all the things we have right now that are currently being separated, managed and talked about differently. So we talk about electronic warfare, we talk about the network, transport leg. And then separately we talk about cyberspace.

And so, we've got organizations that also look at these problems separately and think they have different missions. They're all operating for motion video, all this is operating television, all in the same electromagnetic spectrum. And until we start looking at the whole cyber magnetic spectrum, and putting our organizations and our focus on it, collectively, I think we're going to continue to have these different views. How do you defeat it? We have to get a common lexicon.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Thank you very much. Very important clarification. There's another question yes?

**TED SMITH:** Yes, thank you. Ted Smith, Johns Hopkins University. Given the wide range of challenges and potential skill sets that are required of the services as we look into the future, I was wondering if you'd be willing to comment on how your respective services view the projected role of the Reserve component in the years ahead.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Gentlemen?

\_\_\_: Well, we've gone from a partnership, to an addiction, to the Reserve support, to they're part of what are normal operations now. And that's the good news. The bad news is that we're under a waiver for use of the Reserve forces. There are federal mandates to how long we can use them.

So the question becomes, which of the regulations do we want modified? How do we shape the skill set that we are creating now? It wasn't inherent at first, because they were in the Navy, more a strategic asset as opposed to an operational asset. And then make, as I said before, make them, as we move out of current operations, more routine, if you will, in the skill sets that we use. That becomes our challenge.

To put it another way, we have about, round numbers, 70,000 Reservists. What number of that at any given time would be inherent in our operations, our day-to-day operations. And I think it is a source we can pursue.

One Reservist is not necessarily equal to one active duty for every skill. We can't just declare that; that won't work. We've tried that in some areas before and it was unfair for those that we asked to do.

**GENERAL PHILIP BREEDLOVE:** I would just say that as far as the Air Force, I see very little change. Since Desert Storm, we have been absolutely dependent on our Reserve forces. We have not come home out of the desert since 1990. And all of the northern fly and southern fly through the '90s and the conflicts through this century, our Reserve force is essentially an extension of our active force. Two-thirds of our lift is in the Reserve force. We cannot move the nation's military and business without them. We have unique capabilities in our ISR world that resolve completely in the Reserve force. And they are fighting every day overseas now. We will never come off of that.

So I see little change. We are absolutely dependent on our Reserve force. And will remain so in the future.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Any other questions, final questions from the audience?

\_\_\_: If I could just— on the Marine Corps side, you can speak directly to the many Marines in the audience here and they would be able to tell you more, but there's been a lively debate within the Marine Corps for a long period of time over the force in readiness. And I would say that for a long time there were some people in the Marine Corps that say, "Hey, the 1952 kind of language on the force in readiness is passé. You can't really tie your pole to that anymore, or tie your tent to that anymore." And there were some that said, "Hey, we need to have another model."

But now, I think the Marine Corps, when they went through their force structure review, they actually anticipated a downturn in overall defense spending. And I think the idea of an expeditionary force in readiness really has an awful lot of currency now.

Now, tiered readiness is a kind of anathema to everyone in the Joint Force. But in 1986, Bill Lind wrote an article that was very interesting that argued in terms of operational echelons and strategic echelons of the force. And the Marine Corps really tried to put its— tried to hit the bull's eye on this expeditionary force in readiness, and they took their Reserves, and it now really interdependent with the active forces.

So I think in the 2nd Marine Division, for example, one of the artillery battalions will have a habitual Reserve artillery battalion to it. And instead of having the 4th Marine Division headquarters and the 4th Wing headquarters as everything, there's now a consolidated headquarters. And the active and Reserve forces are integrated so tightly now, all within the framework of this expeditionary force in readiness model.

And I have to tell you that when it was briefed to the Secretary of Defense he said, "That's it, that's exactly what the Marine Corps ought to be doing for our nation."

So I think the Marines have kind of hit the sweet spot in trying to get their Reserves and their active forces more thoroughly integrated, in line with this expeditionary force in readiness model. And I think they're in a good place when we go into this roles and missions debate on exactly what the Marine Corps offers to our nation.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Well, I just hesitate to say it, but on that note, perhaps we should end, because we're coming to a rapid time for closing, and we promised everyone they would be out at around 6:00.

But I do want to give the panel one last chance, if you would like to add one final comment. Bing, we'll start with you.

**FRANCIS J. "BING" WEST:** The only thing I have to say is it's clear that no matter how good a job these gentlemen do at playing poker, and no matter how much convergence there is between them and the new Secretary of Defense, the budgets are in great, great peril because of two external variables over which there isn't any control.

The first external variable will be the extent to which the Democratic Party insists that there be proportionate cuts in defense, as the Republican Party demands cuts in the other programs.

And the second variable that I spent my time talking about is, don't lose in Afghanistan, because that would cause such an emotional drain that the budget would be gravely imperiled.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** General Vane?

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** General [Breedlove]?

**GENERAL PHILIP BREEDLOVE:** I will just make my remarks back to sort of the focus, how do you support a MAGTF ashore. And the bottom line is the JFC, whoever that JFC is, needs a robust capability across the full spectrum that all force services/air components bring. And the loss of any of these niche, some people call them niche capabilities, will only lessen the capability of the JFC to bring force to bear in support of those on the ground.

So as we face these budget pressures, we need to fight the sort of instinct that there are things that are easy to trim away. Each have been grown to support a part of the joint fight, and we need to be able to support that joint fight.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** Thank you very much. And Mr. Secretary?

**THE HONORABLE ROBERT O. WORK:** I'm of two minds, enough for some to think I am bipolar. In the last two years, the Navy and Marine Corps have really, really gone after our expeditionary maneuver capability. We have a plan for 33 amphibious ships, three MPF squadrons with LMS, large, medium speed, roll-on/roll-off ships, big TAKES. We're going to

buy 16 JSHVs. We're just about ready to ink the final MOA with the Army to take over their five JSHVs. Also adding three mobile landing platforms. We're talking about 70 different types of platforms to enable both expeditionary maneuver and expeditionary movement from the sea. And now, as Bing has said, we're going to go back through this comprehensive review.

So the one thing that happens is whenever Marines argue for this forcible entry capability, we feel— I mean, everyone feels very passionately that it is a capability the nation cannot do without. But generally, what we are viewed as is being very parochial. But its strategically necessary.

So I'm very much looking forward to the debate, because I think the argument for amphibious forcible entry is a compelling strategic argument, but we are definitely going to have to make it again. And it will be interesting to see how we go out. Or how it turns out.

**DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS:** I'm sure our Marines are very happy to have you there helping to make the argument.

It remains for us to thank our panel. [Applause]

And I hope you enjoy your evening. And we will reconvene tomorrow at 9:00 with General Jones. Thank you.

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