

1993

**Announcement by President Clinton of his Nomination of General John M. Shalikashvili
To be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

The White House

Washington, DC

11 August 1993

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. It's a great honor for me to be here today with the vice president and Secretary Aspin and General Powell to introduce you — to you and to our nation the person whom I have selected to replace Colin Powell as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili. He's widely known to his friends as General Shali, and since we're going to be seeing a lot of each other and you're going to have to write a lot about him, I think I'll just start using the shortened version of his name.

General Shali is superbly well qualified for this position. He is a soldier's soldier, a proven warrior, a creative and flexible visionary who clearly understands the myriad of conflicts, ethnic, religious, and political, gripping the world, as well as the immense possibilities for the United States and for the cause of freedom that are out there before us.

He has shown a proven ability to work with our allies in complex and challenging circumstances. He has shown me a real concern for the ordinary men and women who have enlisted in our armed services and who are living through this difficult and challenging period of downsizing. He understands how to downsize the armed forces and still maintain the strongest military in the world, with the equipment and, most important, the trained force with the morale we need to always fight and win when we have to.

And finally, I am convinced that he is in a unique position to be an advocate for the men and women in the armed services and for the national security of the United States to the Congress, to the country, and to our military allies throughout the world. General Shali entered the United States Army as a draftee and rose through the ranks to his current position of Supreme Allied Commander in Europe and the commander in chief of all United States forces there.

He's demonstrated his outstanding military talents repeatedly throughout a distinguished career, from the day he was first drafted into the Army. He's a decorated Vietnam veteran. He ran Operation PROVIDE COMFORT in Iraq. He served on the Joint Chiefs of Staff as General Powell's assistant. He has the deep respect of both the troops who have served under him and the military leaders who have worked with him.

I selected him because I believe he has the ability to lead and to win any military action our nation might ask of him. Above all, I am confident that in every instance he will give me his absolutely candid and professional military advice, which, as president, I must have. He is also a shining symbol of what is best about the United States and best about our armed services.

There is much more to his life than most Americans now know. It is a great American story. It began as so many American stories do: in another land.

General Shali was born in Warsaw, Poland, the grandson of a Russian general in the czar's army, the son of a Georgian army officer — that's the Georgia over there, not over here — the heir of a family caught in a crossfire of the kinds of ethnic and national rivalries that now trouble so much of our world. In 1944, when he was eight years old, his family fled in a cattle car westward to Germany in front of the Soviet advance. He came to the United States at the age of 16, settled in Peoria, Illinois, and learned English from John Wayne movies so that he could take a full course load from his first day in school.

Now, I intend to nominate this first-generation American to the highest military office in our land on the strength of his ability, his character, and his enormous potential to lead our armed forces. Only in America.

I intend to nominate him in particular because his skills are uniquely well suited to the security challenges we face today. He helped revamp NATO to be a more flexible military and political force. He created a NATO rapid-reaction corps to undertake peacekeeping missions that are significantly different from our Cold War challenges. He's been a leader in persuading NATO members to consider missions outside traditional alliance boundaries, a very, very important step in the recently announced NATO posture with regard to Bosnia.

The end of the Cold War has created many opportunities for our security and many new threats that lurk among the world's continuing dangers. General Shali is the right man to lead our forces in this challenging era.

Our nation is blessed with the finest military on the face of the earth and the best military we have ever had. That was made clearer to me than ever as I approached this selection, for the top ranks of our nation's military are an impressive bastion of talent, patriotism, and vision.

Nothing illustrates that better than the great soldier whom General Shali will replace as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And I want to take this opportunity before all of America to personally thank General Colin Powell for the magnificent service and leadership he has rendered to this country for so many years, to thank him especially for the last several months of difficult and challenging decision-making we have done together, for always giving me his most candid advice, and for the wonderful job he has done of working with the other service chiefs to come to consensus on challenging and very difficult issues. He has contributed a great deal to a grateful nation, and I know that we all wish him well.

I think there is no greater way for me, at least, to express the respect we all feel for General Powell than to name as his successor such an outstanding leader of such caliber, General John Shalikashvili. I now invite him to the podium for whatever remarks he might wish to make.

General Shali.

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for your trust and confidence in me. For someone who at the age of 16 came from Europe to the United States, and who has in all those years since then benefited so richly as I have from the boundless opportunities that our country offers, it's extraordinarily gratifying to me to be given this opportunity in a small way to repay my country through service in such a position of such high responsibility.

I look forward with great enthusiasm, Mr. President, to helping you keep America's armed forces the very best that we have ever had, and soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines that have no match. And I must tell you that I am also deeply grateful to the man who has carried on that task with such singular distinction up to now: my friend, General Colin Powell.

And so, Mr. President, from the bottom of my heart, thank you very, very much for the opportunity to continue in the service of my country. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Will you take a question?

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: Sure I will.

Q: Can we ask whether you're comfortable with the most controversial decision that has been made over the last six months, which is the compromise on service by gays and lesbians in the military?

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: I'm very comfortable that a decision has been taken after very detailed and very concerned deliberations, that where we have arrived today is the best solution, and that we are ready to move on with the decision that our president has made. I feel comfortable with that.

Q: General Shalikashvili? Do you anticipate that the United States will be forced to use military action in Bosnia-Herzegovina while General Colin Powell still is chairman of the Joint Chiefs? Or will that await your tenure?

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: I hope that we all can approach that from the standpoint that we will be more successful if we never have to use force. But that is up to those factions engaged in that senseless struggle in Bosnia-Herzegovina. And our intent is to persuade them to modify their behavior so, in fact, the just resolution of the conflict can come very quickly. Therefore, I hope that we do not have to bomb as long as General Colin Powell is there, and I hope we do not have to do so when I am asked to assume that position. But no one should make a mistake. I think the resolve is there to do so should those who are carrying on that struggle not modify their behavior.

Q: General, how do you feel about women in the military?

Q: Have you seen any signs that the Serbs are willing to withdraw from those mountains, willing to modify their behavior, sir?

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: May I take this question, please? (Laughter.)

Q: How do you feel about women in the military?

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: I feel great about women in the military. (Laughter.)

Q: Have you seen any signs that the Serbs are willing to withdraw from their positions, loosen their grip on Sarajevo and respond to the—

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: I think the signals are mixed right now, and I think we need to watch it very carefully over the next few days. We've had conflicting reports of some movement, but—I have not seen any yet where—that we could characterize as Serbian forces having vacated, in fact, those two mountain hillsides.

Q: Well, what will be the trigger for you? What do you think should be the trigger for air strikes?

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: Oh, I think the concept that we have submitted to the North Atlantic Council is fairly specific on the sort of behavior that we would expect of the Serbians, and I think that it is now time for us to watch and see if, in fact, the stranglehold around Sarajevo is loosened, if humanitarian aid is brought in, if water, electricity and other necessary elements of a decent life there can be brought into the city.

Q: General Shalikashvili?

Q: General, will you seek to bring the Ukraine and Russia into NATO, sir?

GEN SHALIKASHVILI: I have just been nominated for the position of chairman, not president of the United States.

**Statement to the U.S. Senate
On Nomination to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Washington, DC
22 September 1993**

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator Thurmond, and distinguished members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Let me say at the outset how deeply honored I am to be here, and how humbled I am by the trust and confidence that the President and Secretary Aspin have bestowed on me. And if confirmed as the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I will do everything in my power to be worthy of that trust and that confidence.

I also wish to acknowledge a deep debt of gratitude to my friend, General Colin Powell, for his caring and unselfish support of the men and women of our Armed Forces. Today, America has the very best military that the world has ever known, and General Powell deserves a great share of that credit. He has been a brilliant Chairman, and our Nation could not have been served any better.

During the historic period of his chairmanship, the world witnessed a revolution as large as it was unanticipated. And while the world and America were suddenly faced with unprecedented opportunities, we were confronted as well with a host of different challenges.

But we were able to meet those challenges, from JUST CAUSE to DESERT STORM to PROVIDE COMFORT, to name but a few, because America's soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines were and are today the best trained, best equipped, and best led team, a joint force of extraordinary quality and unwavering commitment, a team capable of working shoulder-to-shoulder with our allies in a world very much filled with tensions, instabilities and, yes, bloody conflicts.

The great American team has had very few moments of respite, and I suspect that the future will be just as taxing. That is why we must ensure that our Armed Forces remain ready — ready to deal with whatever challenges might arise in our freer but certainly not more peaceful world.

To ignore those challenges and the prospect of future conflict would be the height of folly, and to allow our readiness to falter would place at hazard our long-term security and that of our allies. So, we must continue to think seriously and coherently about defense. We must act with prudence, foresight, and commitment.

Secretary Aspin's just completed Bottom Up Review does just that as it fits strategy, force structure, and defense programs to the harsh realities of the post-Cold War world. It confirmed one of my foremost responsibilities as Chairman will be to provide sound, candid military advice to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense on this and all other military matters.

And in this regard, I intend to follow General Powell's good example of holding such advice privileged, as well as recognizing that it is the Chairman's role to advise and it is up to the President and the Secretary to decide.

And I will do my level best to ensure that in my dealings with the Congress, those dealings are always characterized by openness, candor, and honesty. At this moment, there are many reasons for me to feel both pride and humility. There is none greater than the patriotism and devotion to our Nation of the servicemen and women with whom I am privileged to serve. They are a national treasure, the offspring of a great people whose contribution to our country and to the world beyond our borders commands our respect and our care, and I shall always feel the deepest sense of responsibility for their welfare.

Before concluding, allow me to comment briefly on the recent deeply disturbing reports that my father had been a member of the dreaded Waffen SS, and I perhaps withheld this information. I did not withhold this information, for I never had the slightest hint that my father was associated with the Waffen SS.

While my father's official German record shows uninterrupted service in a Georgian legion under the German army of Wehrmacht, it is most troublesome to me that according to his own writings apparently in the last months of the war my father was associated with some Georgian unit that was under the control of the Waffen SS.

I am deeply saddened that my father had this tragic association. To me, and I believe to all those who knew him, that is so absolutely out of character. To me he was a kind and gentle man, and I loved him very much. He was a man

who perhaps loved his native Georgia too much, certainly a man caught up in the awful tragedy of World War II.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to make these brief remarks. I look forward to your questions and, if confirmed, to working with you in the future.

Thank you very much.

**Official Welcome Ceremony
The Pentagon
Washington, DC
3 November 1993**

Mr. Secretary, members of Congress, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, men and women of our Armed Forces. To all of you here, thank you for coming. And I assure you that I am deeply moved by your presence, and by the honor you do me today. And I thank you for that.

To you, Mr. Secretary, many thanks for those most kind words. And I look forward with great enthusiasm, to serving on your defense team. And to you, behind me, standing this formation, my very special salute. You, and your flags and battle streamers, are a grand sight, and you are most fitting representatives of the hundreds of thousands of American men and women in uniform. And I'm absolutely certain, were they all here today, they would give you a thunderous applause. But since they can't be here, I wonder if all of you would join me in applauding these fine young men and women.

Standing here among you, I must tell you I am humbled by the confidence placed in me, by the President, and by you Mr. Secretary. And I am deeply honored by the chance to serve our nation, and our Armed Forces, as the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

But I stand before you, as well, with a heart full of pride. Pride in our great nation, and pride in our incomparable Armed Forces. We are a nation that stands alone — a nation that stands alone as the world's richest, most powerful, and as its leading democracy. And contrary to our critics, we remain a nation of vision, and values — a nation committed to helping others in need, and to remain a beacon of hope and opportunity, that continues to draw so many countless to our shores.

Just as so many years ago, when a young man in Warsaw, Poland, dreamed of coming to America, children all over the globe today dream of some day coming to this very special place, this place called America. Yes, we are the greatest power, but we are also the best nation on earth.

But power is finite. As much as we would like otherwise, we recognize, that not every worthy cause can be our own, and that we must make hard, and painful choices. Now that the simpler world of bipolar confrontation has entered the pages of history, we must have strategic priorities, to order our efforts, our expenditures, and our risks.

This does not mean that we step back from our vision, of what we are as a nation, nor that we disappoint friends, and allies, who continue to rely on us, for security, for partnership, and for leadership. Indeed, it implies just the opposite. We need to remain active, and very vigilant, but we must invest our energies, our efforts, our resources, and our good will, where they will do our nation, and the world, the most good. President Clinton has made it clear, that we will neither waste the opportunities that the end of the Cold War has opened, nor shrink from the challenges and dangers of this new era.

And so my heart is full of pride — not only because of what our nation was or is, but pride as well, in the promise of what our nation will remain, the beacon of hope, of freedom, of opportunity, and of human dignity, that has lit the lives of billions of people all over the globe.

Our Armed Forces have had, and will continue to have, a decisive part in our nation's journey to greatness. America's men and women in uniform were there as our forefathers turned a dream into a nation. They were there to fight for this "more perfect union." They were there as we pushed westward into a new continent. And they were there to help rescue the world from tyranny no fewer than three times in this century. And they made history as they defeated a dictator, and freed a nation, in a 100-hour war called DESERT STORM. For over 200 years, our task was to be prepared, to be ready to fight our nation's battles.

And so it is today. We who wear our nation's uniforms have the responsibility to be ready, to answer the call, whenever it should come. After all, all Americans are enormously proud, and confident, of their Armed Forces. But it is a trust we must continually earn.

In turn, this country is blessed with the finest soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, who ever donned America's

uniform. They are more dedicated, more motivated, better trained, better led, and better equipped than any force in the world today. Day in, and day out, tens of thousands of these outstanding patriots stand ready along the DMZ in Korea, patrol the hostile skies over Iraq and Bosnia, enforce sanctions off Haiti, Iraq, and in the Adriatic. And at great sacrifice, and with great valor, and with considerable dignity, they are helping to bring hope to the people of Somalia.

We owe them the total and unequivocal support of this great nation, and wisdom, and leadership. When we must ask them to go in harm's way, as must we will, let us do so in the certain knowledge, that we have done all in our power, to make them ready, and that the families they leave behind, have the care that they so richly deserve. We owe them no less, for they are our most precious asset, they are America.

To have been asked to be their spokesman, is the highest honor, and the most solemn responsibility that can be bestowed upon a man in uniform, and I shall never shrink from the responsibility.

**Ceremony Honoring Vietnam Women Veterans
Fort Myer, Virginia
12 November 1993**

Secretary and Mrs. Perry, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and you magnificent soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coast guardsmen standing this very special formation — thank you all for your presence, and with your presence helping my fellow members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and me, to honor our women veterans of the Vietnam War.

Yes, we are here to honor them; but perhaps just as significant, my fellow Chiefs and I are here finally, to officially, welcome you home. Welcome home Diane Carlson Evans! Welcome home! Welcome home all of you sisters who served during Vietnam and who are here this morning. Welcome home! And welcome home as well to the 11,500 women who served in Vietnam, and welcome home to all 265,000 who served our nation during the Vietnam era. To all of them, although they can't all be here today, welcome home!

And on this occasion we the Joint Chiefs offer a special salute to the memory of these eight women whose names are edged forever on the black granite of the Vietnam memorial and in the memory of a grateful nation. Welcome home to them!

You see, over the entire 39-year history of the observance of Veterans Day, America has seen in its mind's eye the image of the nation's *sons*, of its *male* warriors, of the *men* who serve, who fight, and who sacrifice on behalf of our nation.

But yesterday, on Veterans Day, just across the river, at the Vietnam Memorial, there yesterday at last, we threw a bright and so well-earned light, on another group of veterans — veterans who have served no less nobly, who have struggled with equal fierceness, and who have sacrificed as much as their brothers in the defense of this great country.

These are the *daughters* of this nation who raised their hands and donned America's uniforms and who went off to serve. They are the women, as well, who went to war as civilians — as USO and Red Cross volunteers, as special services personnel, and correspondents, and entertainers.

We are honoring them, in part, for what they did during that ravaging war. We are honoring them for their fortitude, their courage, their deathless loyalty, and for the nurturing solace many of them brought to a place of surreal pain and desolation. We are honoring them for the monumental courage it took to do their part in obscurity, to bury their feelings, to suffer their terrors and agonies, unnoticed, and in the background. We are honoring them for the painful secrets they have carried for these past 20 years. And we are honoring them for all the others they represent—the generation upon generation of American women, in all of our wars, who have chosen to answer the same call, as the men who went off to fight.

From Molly Pitcher during the Revolutionary War, to Sarah Edmonds, the Union spy, to the Yeomanettes, and “hello girls” of World War I, to the heroines of Corregidor and Anzio, to the hundreds who went to war in Korea, to the thousands of women who served, side-by-side with their brothers, in Panama, and the war called DESERT STORM.

The women of Vietnam, who have come together to create the stirring monument that was dedicated yesterday, are symbols for all their sisters who have rallied to the flag in years gone by, and who do so today in places as different as Mogadishu and Zagreb.

But most importantly, when you unveiled that monument, you lifted the veil of silence, you threw open wide, the doors to full recognition of service, for all generations of women to come. For what you did in Vietnam, and for what you did yesterday, we the Joint Chiefs, we the entire Armed Forces, on behalf of a grateful nation, extend to you a most

heartfelt “thank you.” You have done our nation a great service. And we are proud to welcome you home.

But of course a celebration like this does not simply happen. A nation — a people — does not simply come to the realization, spontaneously, that it has overlooked an entire category of its heroes. That realization comes slowly; and it is the product of hard work, of dedication, of absolute and unwavering belief in the rightness of a cause. It comes, more often than not, from the heart of an individual who cares deeply, and who has the stamina to see the struggle to its end. Our special guest today is one of those individuals.

She was herself an Army nurse in Vietnam. She returned, like so many of her colleagues, to a nation that hadn’t thought to offer its gratitude for what she’d done, or to understand the nightmares that were her souvenirs, or even to include her in its memory among the male veterans who served at her side, and healed under her hands. She saw a need for Americans to understand. She saw a need to erect a memorial in America’s capital, to the women who served during this nation’s longest war. The year was 1983.

Over the ten years that followed, she and the other men and women who joined in her effort, steadily overcame the financial, bureaucratic, and technical obstacles that stood in the way of the Vietnam Women’s Memorial — until it became a stirring reality at two o’clock yesterday afternoon.

But the story is hers, not mine, to tell; and so it is my distinct honor at this time, on behalf of all the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to introduce to you Diane Carlson Evans — registered nurse, founder of the memorial project, and fellow veteran of the Vietnam War.

**Department of Defense Press Briefing
The Pentagon
Washington, DC
14 December 1993**

Thank you. I must tell you that I’m delighted to be here, but I also feel very bad because I looked at my calendar, and I realize I have been here almost two months now. I have been very delinquent in not coming to you much sooner and introducing myself, but I guess time flies when you’re having fun or some kind of a cliché like that.

I have to tell you that I was under no illusion when I came here about what would be in my in-basket. After all, I had served in the chairman’s office before going to Europe. But I guess I didn’t realize just how full the in-basket could really get.

Whether those are the issues that are so well familiar to you — Somalia and Haiti and Bosnia and North Korea — or whether it’s worrying about the process that’s now ongoing in Russia as they build their democratic institutions and market economies and how all that will turn out or just downsizing and restructuring the force and making sure that we do all that right and that in the process we don’t just get smaller, but that we also get better.

It would be a hit on us if we, in this process, didn’t turn over every rock and try to figure out if there isn’t a better way of doing things. But while we do that, ensuring that we protect the quality of life for our service men and women and their families and our civilian work force, and that’s no mean trick, as you well understand.

Let me tell you that I have really enjoyed the challenges so far. I have been busier than I thought I would be. But having assured you of that, that I’m not underemployed, but that I’m enjoying it, and that I’m really enjoying the people that I work with here.

With that, I know you don’t want me to talk too long. You’d rather ask questions. So what are your questions?

NORTH KOREA CHALLENGE

Q. General Shalikashvili, certainly one of the highest profiled challenges that face you now is North Korea, the problem of North Korea. You have a study under way, I know, with the South Korean military, on changes that might be needed to beef up the military there. Have you any preliminary results from that study? Do you think that forces need to be beefed up — U.S. and South Korean forces? And are you confident that the force that’s there now could stop any North Korean thrust before it reached Seoul?

A. First, as far as the ongoing effort to determine whether their structure is right or whether their capabilities are in place and what it is that we, in a reinforcing role, ought to be doing, I think it’s much too early to be talking about specifics, other than you need to view that it’s an ongoing process and not something that has all of a sudden been

brought about by what we've been reading in the headlines, and that is the nuclear issue. I am satisfied, having gone to Korea about a month ago and meeting there with my counterpart, that that's going well.

As far as our confidence to stop a North Korean attack into the South, I am very, very confident. I think even the more pessimistic studies that you sometimes write about have no question that we will stop, that the South Koreans, together with our reinforcements, will stop North Korean attack far short of their reaching their war objectives. I would not want to stand here before you and speculate where that in relationship to Seoul is. Suffice it to say that I am very comfortable that no one has yet suggested that we would not be able to stop the North Koreans.

Q. How would you be able to stop them? In 1950 the Chinese came in on behalf of North Korea, and it became a very bloody, long war, and we know the outcome. What is your assessment of Red China today? Will they remain neutral? Do you think they'd come in if North Korea attacks?

A. I think the conditions are totally different. I certainly would not envision right now that we would be facing the Chinese government and the Chinese troops if, in fact, North Korea were foolish enough to attack the South.

Q. Given the North Koreans' vast numerical superiority, how is it that the South Korean forces reinforced by the U.S. would be able to repel an invasion?

A. First of all, there is more to a warfighting capability than the number of soldiers or airmen or marines that one side or the other has. It has to do with the quality of the force. It has to do with the quality of the armaments. It has to do with terrain, and also it has to do with whether you're the attacker or the defender. I am not alone in this military judgment, that the Republic of Korea forces, reinforced by the United States, as it's now envisioned, would be able to stop any attack.

But let me say, I don't want to leave it with the impression that something has changed in the last month or two or three that somehow makes it more likely that North Korea is engaged in some kind of preparation for an attack. I don't want to leave that impression at all. What I am saying is something that has been true for some time, and I think it's going to remain true for some time to come, without giving you all the impression that we ... sense that the North Koreans are in some kind of a preparatory phase prior to attack.

RUSSIAN REFORM

Q. You mentioned Russia. The parliament there, they're electing a parliament, the Nationalist Group, that has opposed many of President Boris Yeltsin's policies on denuclearization, on switching to defense conversion. What are your thoughts about that, and how it would change any U.S. military policy?

A. The first thing I would tell you is that it's useful to remember, as a start point, that there's an awful lot to be satisfied about in the sense that we've had the first free democratic elections since, I guess, 1917 probably and that we do have a new constitution that guarantees an awful lot of the rights to the citizens of Russia. So I think there's an awful lot to be very thankful about.

As far as the outcome between the reformers and those who would slow down the reforms or reorient reforms, I think I would like to reserve judgment until we see better, really, how that came out. Certainly, you could speculate that we hope that after all the votes are counted that the reformists will have the necessary majority to be able to get programs through the Parliament and through the Duma that would speed up reforms.

I think, unless you know more than I right now, I think it's a little bit too early to tell what the final vote tally will be.

Q. The latest is that Vice President Gore, in Moscow, is now saying it may not be as optimistic as they had originally thought. What about your own personal opinion of [Vladimir] Zhirinovskiy? He had been quoted as saying that he believes that Germany and Russia should get together and divide up Poland as well as he would not hesitate to use nuclear weapons, and he thinks Alaska should be annexed. What are your...

A. I was going to say, I must be careful not to make any comments about someone who thinks that it's realistic to view Alaska returning to ... I don't know enough about him, other than what I have read in the newspapers. Again, I think it's useful to find out the difference between election rhetoric and appealing to emotionalism during this very heated election process they had and what the man is going to be like when he assumes responsibility as a member of the Duma.

Q. Does it give you any concerns about U.S. military policy? Are you beginning to have strategy looking at...

A. No.

Q. General, in view of the apparent outcome there in Russia yesterday, how can Ukraine be expected to give up its nuclear weapons now?

A. I think that we should have every expectation that Ukraine follows through on their initial commitment to the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty], as a nonnuclear state, to the ratification of START [Strategic Arms Reductions

Treaty], without the reservations that now have been imposed by Darara and by the Lisbon Protocols.

I don't think it's realistic to think that Ukraine would wish to use those weapons somehow in the defense of Ukraine against Russia. I think that's a faulty notion, and I am very hopeful that Ukraine will come to the realization and will go on with the process. And despite some of the reporting as to the statements that one side or another might have made during this election process, I think it's too early to tell whether there is any kind of a significant reversal in Russia and its commitment, the government's commitment, to democratic reform.

After all, they have just voted on a constitution where the presidency has been strengthened manifold. Right now, as far as I know, Yeltsin will continue with the democratic processes, in his views, towards Ukraine and the relations that he wishes to build with Ukraine that have nothing to do with threatening each other with nuclear weapons.

NORTH KOREAN OBJECTIVES

Q. Another question having to do with Korea. Your own assessment of the likelihood of a North Korean attack? And secondly, you mentioned in one of your answers, to a question on Korea, that you were confident that the combined United States/South Korea could stop a North Korean attack short of North Korea's war objectives. What are North Korea's war objectives?

A. I will tell you that none of us read their war plans, and I wouldn't want to pretend otherwise. I think logic would lead you to the conclusion that they probably would wish to reunify the country through force, and I think our friends in the Republic of Korea, together with us, have the capability of stopping them short of that.

Q. And the likelihood?

A. I think we have all heard enough about the unpredictability of Kim Il Sung and Kim Sung's regime, so I think it is very dangerous to speculate one with the other. All I would say is that I don't see anything different today than I did a few months ago when I came to this job, and people who have been here in this building and watching this part of the world longer than I have don't see anything that has particularly happened that would increase or decrease the likelihood between now and, let's say, six months ago.

Q. Just getting back to your idea of what their war objectives are, American analysts have assessed that one of their objectives would be to surround and possibly overrun Seoul. Do you believe that ROK forces reinforced by American forces could stop a North Korean invasion short of Seoul?

A. It's certainly a possibility, and our hope that we can do so.

Q. But you're not certain about that? Obviously, their artillery guns are well within range. It's an easy mark there. But in terms of ground forces actually coming in?

A. I think you're talking of a huge city that's only some, at its narrowest point, some 20-plus miles from the border. So let me simply say that we have every intention to try to do so. I certainly think there is a very good likelihood. However, there are also many imponderables that you simply cannot predict.

SOMALIA OPERATION

Q. A two-part question about Somalia. Did you see the video of the Oct. 3 battle in Mogadishu? And two, would you give us your evaluation of the performance of [Army Maj.] General [William] Garrison, [commander, joint] special operations?

A. Are you talking about the video that was made by the forces that participated in that operation?

Q. October third.

A. Yes, I saw it several times. In my judgment the military personnel involved in that operation performed with extraordinary courage in an extremely difficult situation and I think, from a military point of view, did an absolutely sterling job. I think General Garrison had gone through all the proper planning and precautionary steps that one would expect of a leader in that kind of an operation and led those troops with great distinction.

Q. When are we going to get that video?

A. I don't know. We'll look into it.

Q. Is there any security material in there?

A. There might be. There might be methods they used on the video that I just simply am not prepared to answer for you now. But those of you who have known me for more than a day or so know that if there is a way to make this available to you, I certainly won't stand in the way.

Q. On the issue of peace operations, considering the problems in Somalia, do you have reservations, and should there be solid conditions before U.S. forces are placed under United Nations command?

A. I have always maintained, even long before the 3-4 October fight in Mogadishu, that there must be very solid conditions before United States forces participate in any kind of operation, whether that's under United Nations or not. Certainly for operations under the United Nations, there ought to be some very strict conditions.

In addition to those that we would consider for an operation were it, for instance, under the command and control of NATO or unilaterally under the United States, is the issue of the robustness of the chain of command under the U.N., the specific rules of engagement, and whether they not only allow for the self-protection of the force, but also are robust enough to allow you to get the job done.

I think we ought to make sure that we judge those doings on a case-by-case basis, but I can well imagine that there will be United Nations operations in the future where we can all, with a great deal of confidence, say that the command/control arrangement is robust enough, the rules of engagement are proper, and then for me to recommend to my boss that it would make sense to participate. There are other cases where I would obviously have to say no.

Let us agree, I think, to judge each one of them on a case-by-case basis.

MILITARY OPTIONS

Q. Let me get your judgment on two military matters. First of all, on Korea. Does this country have military options in the event diplomacy fails that, in your judgment, are preferable to permitting the North Koreans to develop a nuclear weapons capability? Number 2, do you support extending the borders of NATO eastward over the next several years with no particular military infrastructure in place to defend this new territory, and at a time of shrinking defense budgets and real deep questions about the national will, to take on additional commitments?

A. On the first question, I know that you do not seriously want me to discuss any planning that we do on this or any other operation. I would hope that this building does not get caught short if we are ever asked to do something, and I feel confident that we won't be. But that's all I would really want to say on that matter.

As far as the issue of extending security guarantees to the East, I think for the longest time we were talking about whether security guarantees are to be extended or whether NATO membership ought to be extended.

It is, I think, becoming clearer and clearer that there is a consensus forming in the alliance that people would like to think, on that issue, that the question is no longer whether, but when and how. And while this process might be lengthy and this process might not satisfy some of our Eastern friends in terms of how quickly it can move ahead, that the alliance is beginning to come to that conclusion that we are now standing at the threshold of saying when and how, as opposed to whether.

PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE

The issue of extending security guarantees in this time frame, I think, is premature as I view the debates in the various capitals, and I think one of the reasons why the United States has proposed its Partnership for Peace is to have a proposal on the table that is appropriate to the times we are in, in relationship to this issue of extending membership, this whole question of whether it is not premature, right now, to extend guarantees, and how are the capitals of the member countries of the alliance now willing to do so?

My sense is that the vast majority are not yet ready to do so, and yet there has to be a qualitative step forward from the NACC [North Atlantic Cooperation Council] process that was our first reach to the East. I think, viewed in that light, I think the Partnership for Peace has been embraced by all NATO countries that I'm aware of, and I think it's also going to get acceptance in the East.

PENTAGON BUDGET

Q. In your role as the principal military adviser to the president, what do you intend to say to him this week when he sits to consider the defense budget?

A. I'm not sure what you mean, "when he sits down this week to consider the defense budget."

Q. He and Secretary [of Defense Les] Aspin have to meet on the defense budget to decide whether, actually, to break the budget caps or to keep the budget within those limits.

A. I don't mean to evade your question, I really don't know. I know that they have a meeting. I've been told that

they have a meeting coming up. Whether that's just simply to outline, for the president, where Secretary Aspin sees the issue or not, I can't comment on it.

Q. The Pentagon is facing these shortfalls, \$50 billion by some estimates. What's been your military advice as to what would happen if the Pentagon has to absorb those kind of cuts, \$50 billion or any limit below that?

A. I think we probably can all agree that there is an issue, as Secretary Aspin said this weekend. We're not sure whether that's \$50 billion or slightly smaller, a slightly larger number. So I wouldn't want to get hung up on the number.

The second thing I think that Secretary Aspin said, and I'd like to reinforce, it isn't a we-they issue. It is that, together, we have this dilemma of how to solve that problem. It's much too early to reach any conclusions that it cannot be solved.

We need to scope the problem and then look at realistic solutions to it, and we can only get there if we all work together. If we see that there isn't a solution that will get us to that, then I think we can talk about what the fallout would be. So I think it's a little premature for me to say what the dire consequences might be if we can't together solve the problem. I'm confident that there's a way that can be solved.

Q. But having said that and given that the Army especially has been complaining pretty loudly that they're not ready now, you're going to have to absorb the \$50 billion adjustment, be it somewhat higher or somewhat lower. Aren't you really running the risk that the entire military won't be ready?

A. I was not aware that the Army said that they are not ready. I think all of the services are concerned. I think for every budget cycle that I am aware of, we've always tried to be very realistic as we look at the resources vs. the structure that's needed to execute a strategy. But in my discussions with the leadership of the Army, I was not aware that they were claiming that they are now somehow over the edge. I don't think they are.

All of the services, and certainly I as chairman, have a concern that we have sufficient resources to get the force structure and properly support that force structure in order to be able to execute the strategy that was developed and articulated during the Bottom Up Review, which I think is the right strategy.

Q. What do you foresee happening in Bosnia? Have you been able to give some time to a re-evaluation of a potential U.S. commitment of forces to any kind of NATO peacekeeping? And what would you imagine the size of that might be?

A. First and foremost, like last winter, the main effort right now needs to be to get folks through the winter. That means we need to redouble our efforts in a humanitarian area. And as you know, Secretary [of State Warren] Christopher announced when he was in Europe a couple of weeks ago, that we're doing just that. And I think we will, very soon, have the airplanes in place and the humanitarian goods to be able not only to significantly increase our air landings into Sarajevo and Tuzla, if the warring factions ever allow the airport to be opened, and certainly also to increase our airdrop operations.

But your question goes beyond that, and beyond that is the issue of supporting a peace agreement if, in fact, the three factions ever reach an agreement. There was a degree of euphoria here last week. As is often the case, in Bosnia it was not well founded, because once again, at least so far, they have not managed to come to an agreement. My understanding is that they're going to be meeting again on the 21st of this month to try to see if they can come to an agreement.

The United States has stated that if there is an agreement and it is a just agreement and all three parties sign up to it—not just the leadership, but there is indication that throughout, down to the warlords, that there is the willingness to implement that agreement and if it's implementable with military force — that the United States would be willing to, in coordination, in consultation with Congress, to participate in such an operation. I don't know of anything that has changed.

So where I now stand and all of us, we're very carefully watching the peace process to see whether, in fact, we can finally have an agreement that emerges from Geneva or any other talks.

Q. But there's a lot of ifs to that.

A. Not on our part. It's on their part, really. But I think we went into it — Europeans and Americans — from the very beginning, that we cannot impose a peace on them. We need to do all we can to help them reach an agreement, but ultimately, the agreement must be one that they all sign up to. So far, they have been unable to do so.

TROOP PULLOUT

Q. When the U.S. pulls its troops out of Somalia in the end of March, how many support troops will be left, and how safe will they be?

A. How many Americans?

Q. Yes.

A. We have indicated that ... I think when the president announced it, it was 300 or less. I am going to Somalia on Saturday. One of the things I want to look into is, not only what we will then, eventually, on the 31st of March have to leave. Where I come from I'd rather the number be smaller than larger.

Secondly, I want to make sure that while I have carefully viewed the withdrawal plans, I want to make sure that I have the opportunity to sit down with ... leaders there and review, in person, their withdrawal plans to make sure that we can do that as efficiently and as safely to ourselves and the other forces that are there.