

# *General James Amos, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, at the Council on Foreign Relations*

*Moderated by Thom Shanker, Pentagon and National Security Correspondent for The New York Times*

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**GENERAL JAMES AMOS:** Good morning, everybody.

**THOM SHANKER:** Good morning

**QUESTIONER:** Good morning, sir.

**SHANKER:** Welcome to today's session of the Council on Foreign Relations, which I know will be as dynamic and exciting as -- up to the council's standards.

Just a couple of housekeeping matters: First of all, for those of you with BlackBerrys and cellphones and pagers, please turn them all the way off, not just to silence. The reason is, we're using a wireless microphone system, and even on the vibrate mode, you'll interrupt.

Next, for all the journalists, including me, and everyone, this meeting is on the record. So everything the commandant says can be used and discussed and spread far and wide.

And the third issue is, one of the reasons the council likes to have me come and preside is, I spent five years as a correspondent based in Moscow, and I run these sessions with a Stalinist efficiency. And we will be out of here at 9:30 sharp, because the commandant has an important meeting back at the Pentagon.

The challenge for any presider in introducing someone whose career is as illustrious as the commandant's and who is as well-known is what can you say about them, especially to an audience of interested folks like you who are here today so early. So I guess all I will say is that over at the Pentagon, there are several chiefs, but just one commandant.

And here he's with us today, General James F. Amos of the Marines. Thank you, sir, for joining us.

AMOS: Thanks, Thom. It's good to be here. Thank you.

**SHANKER:** I guess I'd like to start really at the top strategic level. The 10 years since the attacks of 9/11 have really forced the American military to adapt and change as much as the adversaries have. And it really is what I like to call a new Darwinism. The adversaries learn a new trick, we have to adapt, they learn, and back and forth. You have B-52s, a strategic asset, flying close air support. Who would have thought? Troops are getting out of their armored vehicles, going out as infantry on foot patrols.

But one of the adaptations that the Corps has had to make is in many ways, it seems, you've given up your historic expeditionary role for heel-to-toe, back-to-back deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, operating out of FOBs. So in a post-Iraq, post-Afghanistan world, how do you see the Marine Corps getting back to its historic mission, and what other changes are you anticipating?

**AMOS:** First of all, we have been on the ground for 10 years now. And one of our -- one of our more senior leaders used the term -- we'd become a second land army. And that came -- that was coined as a Marine -- from a Marine, which -- I've lived to rue the day that those comments were made. But regardless --

**SHANKER:** That's up there with "the other white meat." I never got what that -- (laughter) --

AMOS: But regardless, over the -- over the history of the Marine Corps, we've done that. We did that in France. We did that in Vietnam. We've done that over periods of time.

But while we've been on the ground in Afghanistan, we've also had Marine expeditionary units out in the Pacific and around the world doing other things. They certainly have participated in -- (inaudible). We've kept our amphibious roots, but we haven't been practicing that trade to the way -- to the -- to a level that we need to get back to.

So as we come out of Afghanistan -- and Secretary Gates last fall, when he tasked the Marine Corps, he said, OK, build me a Marine Corps for a post-Afghanistan environment. We did that with the force structure review effort, and we've done it -- we've got about 10 months of analysis behind that. And in that, it incorporates the lessons we've learned for 10 years of this counterinsurgency and this irregular warfare, this hybrid warfare, built a Marine Corps that incorporates those lessons but also allows it now to be used in the way the Marine Corps was designed to be used, that forward-deployed expeditionary force, that force that's out and about doing the nation's bidding and representing the United States around the world.

So our goal is to get back to that. And I intend to do that when we come out of Afghanistan. In fact, we're not waiting till we come out. We're shaping the Marine Corps right now to be able to do that.

**SHANKER:** How do you do that, exactly? Sort of walk us through the orders you've given, the concepts that you've described to get you where you want to be.

AMOS: We've begun -- we've already begun to look at those units that would reorient back to the Pacific. That's an important part of the world for our nation. It's a -- it's -- quite honestly, it's an area that the United States Marine Corps has been operating in for the last 60, 70 years. So we're familiar with it. It's in our nation's best interest to reorient back to the Pacific.

So as we do that now, I've been looking at units -- OK, who would be the units that would -- that would -- that would be able to operate in the Pacific? You know, we've got units in there right now. So first of all, it's the identification of the units, and then changing their training regimen back here.

I was just at 29 Palms on Sunday and Monday, sat with our head trainer out there -- that's our premier training area -- and sat with the head of training for the Marine Corps and said, look, as we look at reorienting to the Pacific, that's going to need a different kind of training. It's going to -- it's going to

require more shipboard operations. It's going to require more combined arms operations. And some of it is kind of the bread and butter of the Marine Corps pre-9/11.

So we are redoing -- rebuilding our training packages right now in anticipation of probably next year taking the first units and putting them into -- putting them into this training regimen, getting ready to go back to the -- back to the Pacific.

**SHANKER:** That's interesting. And all this will have to be carried out in a time of less money for the Pentagon.

It seems to me that, you know, the public has not yet been engaged in a dialogue as the Pentagon has to cut at least 450 billion (dollars) and perhaps more after the super committee. It seems that the American public might want to be engaged in a discussion of, if there's less money, the military can't do everything it's doing today; what roles, missions, capabilities do you not want your military to do for you anymore? How does that dialogue on the budget affect your thinking as you reshape the Corps?

**AMOS:** Oh, I think -- you know, I think it's -- I think -- I think there is dialogue going on. I don't know that it's public dialogue, but there's certainly --

**SHANKER:** I could change that. (Laughter.)

**AMOS:** Well, it's probably going to be public after today. (Laughter.)

But there is -- I mean, there is -- there is great effort under way right now through the Department of Defense and within the -- you know, to align itself with the administration's vision of the -- of the strategy for the United States of America in the years to come, in this -- in this environment where we're fiscally constrained. That's going on right now.

So it's not -- there is -- there's nothing happening with the Department of Defense where they're unilaterally going, OK, well, we're going to go do this, and irrespective of the -- that's not happening. It's informed by the budget, but it's really being driven by the national strategy that's being worked right now. So I'm pretty comfortable that we're heading in the right path.

But back to your issue about, you know, kind of the implication about the Pacific, we -- you know, you've already bought the Marines, you've already bought the ships, you've already bought the airplanes, you've already bought the sustainment and the supplies. We -- in other words, the bill has already been paid for that, so it's a function now of what do you do with them. Do you -- do you leave them back in the continental United States, or do you take those ships and those Marines and forward deploy them and do the bidding of the nation?

**SHANKER:** Right. Will that partly be driven by the available funds? I mean, I assume it's much more expensive to have them forward deployed in an expeditionary mode than still here.

**AMOS:** There are some ways you can do this thing actually a little bit cheaper. I know that the Navy is looking at actually positioning some ships forward deployed; in other words, home-porting some ships in -- you know, outside of the continental United States. They certainly have some now. But they're looking at that, and that's one way of -- then you don't have the transit time, which is fuel, which is -- which is time away from home. So there are some things that you can do.

But the other thing you can do is you can look around the globe and say: Where are my greatest interests? In other words, where are -- where are the areas in the world that the United States needs to focus its efforts on? And I will tell you that the Pacific is certainly one of those areas. And so I think it's -- as you begin to try to balance all this, you're going to look and say -- we're going to say the Pacific is where we need to be.

**SHANKER:** All right. If we could talk about end strength for a moment, I know the Marine Corps went through a very deliberate and thoughtful process in coming up with a glide path from 202,000 down to 186,800.

**AMOS:** Right.

**SHANKER:** Could you talk about some of the thinking and analysis that went into that number and why is that 186,800 the right number?

**AMOS:** Yeah. We didn't know to begin with what it was going to be when Secretary Gates said design a Marine Corps post-Afghanistan. We built the Marine Corps up from 200 -- up from 173,000, which is what it was on 9/11, up to -- we started about 2006, so we were sitting at about 176,000, as I recall in 2006. And so we grew the Corps, not knowing how long this was going to last.

So when Secretary Gates said: Come out of Afghanistan -- or build a Corps when you come out; you're not going to need 202,000. And I completely agree. So we sat the group down, and I said: OK, take the lessons of 10 years of warfare, and what are -- what are some of those things? We've always had -- but it really showed its face -- what we call low density/high demand critical skills. We call them military operational specialties, but it's critical skills. And what would that be? The CI, you know, counterintelligence, human intelligence, signals intelligence -- you know, the guys that listen and do all kinds of things with radios in space, and they're closely affiliated to the NSA. We needed those guys. We needed explosive ordnance disposal Marines. We only had, like, I think, 200 of them to begin with. We're at about 875 today. Military police; truck company -- there's -- so there are all these kinds of things that we need; UAVs.

And so we said, OK, those are -- let's take those lessons, let's put them in, you know, let's build them in this -- in this mix, throw them in the bowl, and then let's determine what are the other lessons we've learned. Well, one of the things was -- is that -- is that when we began in 9/11, our manning in our units was sitting right around 90 percent -- 90 (percent), 91 percent. So our equipment rating -- this was probably a little bit less than that. But on any given day in any unit -- infantry, squadron or whatever -- you probably had somewhere around 88 (percent), 85 percent manning.

So as we went to war and we started putting these units and putting them into deployment, we had to borrow manning from other people. We'd take units from -- people from your squadron and put them in my squadron, or your battalion and put them in mine.

**SHANKER:** I wouldn't recommend taking them from my battalion, but --

**AMOS:** So we -- so we came to the inescapable conclusion, quite honestly, that the manning levels were built for a reason. So let's increase the manning in the units to what it's supposed to be so I don't have to be borrowing and so I am always ready. So we built units in this 186 that were ready.

And then we took the mission of the Marine Corps, which is to be our nation's crisis response force, to respond to today's crisis with today's force today, not next week, not a month from now. You don't ask me to do something and I say, thank you very much, Thom, it's going to take me about three weeks and I'll be able to cobble this force together and I'll be able to train them, and then I'll be able to -- no, the nation has a Marine Corps to respond today.

That's what we do. We have a very high level of readiness, and the nation expects us to be able to do that. Whether it be responding to that terrible earthquake and tsunami with our friends in Japan -- we went overnight; whether it be Libya no-fly zone -- we did that very, very quick. So -- so we put that in there. So I told the guys, I said, all right, build that, tell me what that number is. I did not give them a number, nor did the secretary of defense or secretary of the Navy. And it came out to be 186.8.

We reduced the numbers of battalions, we reduced numbers of squadrons, collapsed 21 headquarters -- did away with 21 headquarters, took John Wasser (ph) headquarters out. Nobody told us to do this. We just built this to be more efficient. When we went into the reserves, we kept the number of reserves at 39,500, but we shaped the reserves so that we could take these lessons learned and incorporate those into the reserves.

So that's what 186 gives you. It gives you a heck of a force that in my estimation is what our nation needs in the next two decades. And so we built it at that and with a lot of analysis. And I feel very comfortable about the number.

**SHANKER:** All right. Is that really the floor? I ask because it's, you know, a truth of Pentagon finances that personnel costs are such a huge part. If the government came to you and said you have to lose some end strength to make the budget work, is that possible, or is this the floor --

**AMOS:** Well, I think the way that the pressure's being applied, the reality of where we are budget-wise right now is -- and I think everybody knows that there is at least a \$450-billion-plus bill that's been levied on the Pentagon and -- for the next -- we got to pay for the next 10 -- over the next 10 years. So to do that, I've only got three levers.

I mean, I can either dial down manpower, (which is called ?) force structure, or I can dial down procurement, which means I buy less things -- which for us is pretty significant, because we've been on the ground for 10 years; we don't have a lot of extra equipment in the Marine Corps. Our stuff is in Afghanistan. I've got twice as much equipment in Afghanistan than a normal unit -- if you're an infantry battalion on the ground, you have -- let's just say you have a hundred pieces of gear. In Afghanistan that infantry unit's got about 200 pieces of gear, because we're spread out. We're spread out. The climate's harsh. The area is very -- very unforgiving on vehicles and equipment. So I've got to reset all that. So as we look at this, as I take a look at dialing down procurement and modernization or even recapitalization, that's a strain.

And the other one is operations and maintenance funds. In other words, I can cut training, I can cut ammunition, I can cut those kinds of things. So those are the three dials.

So one of the dials is manpower. So if -- if this continues to increase, I'm going to end up reducing the Marine Corps below 186.8. I guess the good news is that we have a model -- in other words, we at least

have a system, a framework that we can judge what would be the -- not necessarily capabilities, the capacity that we would want to pull out of the Marine Corps to get down to some number so we could pay our bills.

So I'm not sure 186 is the floor. What I can tell you in the audience is that 186 has more rigor and more analysis in it than any effort that's been done that I've seen by anybody in the Department of Defense in the last five years. So I'm comfortable, confident in the number. It's been briefed to the secretary of defense, Gates, in February, he approved it, and that was before we got into the fiscal crisis we're in.

**SHANKER:** Of the specialized capabilities that you listed for the Corps a few moments ago, you didn't talk about your new Special Operations component. It's been operational now for a couple of years. What's the report card?

**AMOS:** Tell you what. I think it's a -- I visit them all the time. I'm a huge fan of them, and in fact to the point where we've plussed them up. In this 186 bill, there's a lesson learned of the 10 years. We drew the Marine Corps down. We've put a thousand more Marines into Marine Special Operations Command. They were sitting at about 2,600; they're going to go to about 3,600. We're going to go from -- cyber warfare, from where we were, about another 600 in cyber.

But back to MARSOC, they -- I visit them. I was with them last month in Afghanistan. We're going to see them -- we're going to spend Thanksgiving with them, running around Helmand. They are just -- their report card is very, very strong. Very high marks.

I'm very pleased with them. I'll tell you what they -- they're -- they are the ultimate economy of force organization -- and by that for everybody, I mean instead of taking an infantry battalion of nine other Marines and arraying them on the field somewhere or -- (inaudible) -- the MARSOC Marines, the special operations Marines -- and it's more than MARSOC -- it's the SEALs and it's the Rangers and it's the Navy -- I mean the Green Berets, because we work together. But you put small teams of these guys in there and they can occupy a space and have an awful lot of effect, which allows the general purpose forces to do the other things on the battlefield and face the enemy in other areas. So my -- I'm very pleased with MARSOC. I feel like a proud father to these guys.

**SHANKER:** Right. I wanted to ask a bit about the global posture. You've already spoken at length about the Pacific. And it seems to be really the current theme or focus -- Secretary Clinton had a very powerful essay in the new issue of Foreign Policy, you as well.

So since you've addressed that, let's talk about Africa for a second. The president just two weeks ago deployed a hundred enablers, mostly from special operations, to Uganda to help enable, build partner capacity. Do you think Africa should be a renewed focus of what the Marine Corps is doing?

**AMOS:** I think Africa and I think South America are two prime areas where the Marine Corps can really -- can really help with whatever our nation's bidding is in there. And I say that because we are -- we are reasonably inexpensive. We are prepared -- we do training; we do that well. In fact, we're -- we spent -- we had over a thousand Marines in Central Africa over the summer training with African nations. We know how to do that.

We live -- we're -- we don't need fancy hotels or air conditioned hooches to live in. We -- we're more than welcome -- more than willing to live hard. So you get a lot of bang for the buck with us. We can go in small areas.

Colombia is a great example, down in South America. We've been training and working with Colombia for the last, goodness, probably 10 or 11 years. Look at what's happened in Colombia. I mean, the country has turned around. You know, we're working with Peru right now, so -- and we're working in Africa. So I think -- and what I would envision, (kind of?) penny packets of small units of Marines doing what our nation would like it to do with regards to training and assistance in Africa and South America is clearly a mission that the Marine Corps would excel at. I think -- I think it's affordable.

**SHANKER:** Right. Your comment on austere environments reminded me, I was last in RC South in August. It was one of those typical southern Afghanistan days in August, 126 degrees, dust was blowing, body armor. I was talking to a soldier from Oklahoma actually, my home state. And he said, my grandpa fought in France in World War II. How come we don't get to invade nice places anymore? (Laughter.) And I thought for a second. You know, I love the Army; I love all the services. But you really wouldn't hear someone from the Corps say that because you never get to invade nice places.

AMOS: No. Well, you've got to think about where we train. We go to 29 Palms, California, and train in the High Desert. So I mean, we're used to it. You know, but you're right.

**SHANKER:** Right. But that raises the next set of questions, General, which is the procurement aspect -- clearly, not only resetting and rebuilding what's been in Afghanistan, in Iraq, but looking to your future needs. I mean, there's -- you know, the list of weapon systems, F-35B, ACV, JLTV. Talk to us a little bit about how you're trying to assess your needs and requirements and how you're going to put your funds against those.

**AMOS:** You know, if I kind of start big and -- (inaudible) -- down small: Our nation needs a military, first of all, that can -- that can do what our nation needs it to do, and then it needs a military that's not going to break the bank. For years the Marine Corps -- I mean, for decades the Marine Corps was known as -- in some circles as the cheap force. They were known -- I'd call it the frugal force; that's a little bit more esoteric. But we were known to be the penny-pinchers.

So to begin with, we're going back to that. You know, we've had 10 years of what I call a culture of plenty. And I don't mean that we've been squandering this or abusing the nation's wealth, but I do mean that we've been obviously tied up in Afghanistan and Iraq. And that does cost a lot of money; that does require a lot of new stuff. And so money has not been a problem. It is now. So we are going back to our culture of plenty.

What I promised the Senate and the House was, is that I will not ask for anything I don't need -- excuse me -- I will not ask for things that I want; I will only ask for things that I need. And that's what I promised the leadership and that's where we are in the Marine Corps.

So to your point, we've gone back now. We've got -- for example, we've got 40,000 vehicles in the Marine Corps. That's tanks. That's 7-ton trucks. That's Humvees, MRAPs. It's a whole -- the whole thing.

We're going to have to -- we don't need 40,000 vehicles. We need about -- for this 186 force, we need about 30,000.

So we're not going to recapitalize all those vehicles. I've told the Corps -- I said, you take a look at what's good enough. What is it that's good enough to get us through the next, say, eight to 10 years?

The -- you know, the temptation would be, OK, take all that stuff out of Afghanistan. We'll put it in a lot over here, and we'll sell it -- foreign military sales. Meanwhile, we're going to buy all this new stuff over -- we can't do that. We understand that.

So we've gone back in and built a plan that we can afford, based on our budget. And it's all dealing with affordability right now.

There are some vehicles that are going to have to be replaced. I'll give you an example. And this is for everybody here -- I mean, this pulls at the hearts of Congress, and moms and dads. We've got some great Humvees, all these high-mobility, multiwheeled vehicles that are -- have been up-armored, and we did in Iraq and saved lives.

But as the IEDs got bigger and then we transitioned to Afghanistan, where the IEDs are huge, we have evolved to these -- we've been seeing these homemade explosives. They will take a Humvee -- I don't care how much armor it has on it -- and will destroy it.

So as we -- as we look to the future at places we might deploy, where our nation might send Marines, we're going to have to have some vehicles that have some heavier protection on it but have a higher mobility than an MRAP has on it. It's -- MRAPs are very difficult, if not impossible, to take off road.

So that's when things like the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle comes in. It -- but --

**SHANKER:** (Inaudible) -- because you're doing it with the Army.

AMOS: Yeah. And we are working a deal right now. In fact we have worked a deal with the Army. Now what we're doing is going back to Congress and saying, OK, you've got the two largest services that are -- that are in -- that are in cahoots on this JLTV. Now what we need to do is go back to Congress and get their support on it.

But we're going to buy a -- if Congress allows us, we're going to buy a slice of those 23,000 Humvees, a slice of them, way less than -- you know, in fact the number is probably a little -- around 5,000. And that will then suffice, and we'll take the rest of the Humvees and the rest of the 7-ton trucks, and we'll live with that.

Then if we go someplace where we really need that extra protection, then we'll have the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. If we don't, then we'll have the Humvees, and we'll live with what's good enough. So that's how we're -- that's how we're living within our budget there.

You know, our MV-22 always seems to kind of come up -- by the way, I mean, I've flown all over Afghanistan with them. I was out to the USS Wasp 10 days ago, watching the Joint Strike Fighter fly off the Wasp, flew out in an MV-22. It's replacing 44-year-old helicopters. Think about that. Those helicopters were introduced in 1968 in Vietnam, and we're still flying them. So they've got to be recapitalized. Our C-130s are just about completely recapitalized. The ones we took to war in 2003 -- I had one -- I was a wing commander. I had one that we took delivery of, I think, in 1956. So we're actually pretty good stewards of our equipment.

So we have equipment that has got to be recapitalized. Our fleet of tactical jets -- we made the decision in the late '90s that we would skip a generation of airplanes and not buy the F-18E/F. We said that we're going to keep our F-18A/Es and Cs, our Harriers and our EA-6B Prowlers, and we're going to keep those,



and we're going to invest, save our money and really save billions of dollars for the department and buy the F-35.

We are that close to seeing reality come in. The airplanes we have right now, our F-18s, begin to run out of service life in the next 10 years -- I mean, out of service life. They're going to be done.

The Harriers run out of service life, I think, in about 2024 or '25. I mean, they're done. I mean, it's no more -- there's nothing left on them.

And the Prowlers we're just -- we're just limping the electronic warfare Prowlers along.

So that's why the F-35 -- so we're working right now on, OK, how do we buy it, what's the affordable buy rate, and that's -- I mean, that's kind of the big-ticket items.

**SHANKER:** Right.

**AMOS:** Right.

**SHANKER:** A "small" in procurement and then a "big" in procurement: At the small end of procurement, I see you and I both have that same hiker's compass on our watch, so I guess don't like being lost.

**AMOS:** That's right.

**SHANKER:** Right. And --

**AMOS:** I'm OK here. It's just when I run around the rest of Washington, D.C., I want to know where I am.

**SHANKER:** That's right.

And at the high end, it's probably a question more for your sister service, the Navy, that takes you around the world. But as you talk about, especially in the Pacific, the rise of anti-access weaponry, that has to be a concern for you. It's the asymmetric advantage of a potential adversary like a China and even some smaller powers. What is the Corps thinking about in the world of anti-access?

**AMOS:** Yeah, I think, you know, you've got to -- as you look at anti-access, you tend to immediately gravitate to a weapon. And you tend to think, OK, I'm going to pull up here off the coast, and then something is going to come flying out at hypersonic speeds, and it's going to sink me. But what you really need to do is kind of back out of that and say, OK, what -- how do I make a targeting problem for the adversary. In other words, how do I make myself either stealthy, or how do I make myself -- confuse the enemy? How do I -- how do I disperse my forces such that the enemy doesn't know where I am? How do I take the enemy's overhead capability to watch me away? How do I take the enemy's command and control away? How do I sneak into his ability, and how can I confuse him?

The Pacific is huge. I mean, 70 percent of the world is covered in water, and the Pacific is the greatest body of water out there. So if you start talking anti-access, you tend to think, oh, man, we're really restricted now; I'm going to be driven a thousand miles off the coast. Not the case. I mean, there are capabilities, which we can't talk about in here, and -- that we have that can deny the enemy the ability to just say, OK, I'm going to push you out there, and you can't come anywhere close to me.

So it's more than just a single weapon pushing a ship or a vessel out or a single weapon that's going to target a single airplane out there. There are -- there are ways that you can -- that you can increase the degree of difficulty for the enemy to deny you access.

And that's where we all fit. That's where the entire joint community is working on right now. And it's everything from cyber to weaponry to stealth to -- I mean, it's a variety of things that we're doing. And again, a bunch of it is things that we -- that we can't talk about. But I will tell you that there is no -- doesn't mean it's going to be easy. It doesn't mean we're not investing in capabilities. But what I will promise you is, is that it's not going to be insurmountable.

**SHANKER:** That's fascinating.

One last question before I invite the members and guests to join the discussion. There was a bit of breaking news last night on Capitol Hill, a vote about the Montford Point Marines. Can you bring us up to date and describe that action for us?

**AMOS:** That's pretty exciting. For the audience, the -- in 1942 to 1949, you know, President Roosevelt in the -- just before that, right around the early part of 1942, signed a proclamation telling the Department of Defense, you're going to integrate your forces. And the Marine Corps went at it kicking and screaming. And -- but we did. And between 1942 and 1949 we went across the nation and recruited African-Americans to join the Corps.

Now -- but we didn't send them to our own boot camp because we didn't want to integrate it. We sent them to a boot camp that they helped build down in a small point of land called Montford Point that sits on the New River down in North Carolina right next to Camp Lejeune. And they had to build their own boot camp. And then we put white drill instructors over the top of them. Their training was certainly every bit as hard as what was going on at Parris Island and San Diego and probably, in many ways, harder.

And then we kept them in segregated units, and we deployed them in the Pacific in things like ammunition companies and artillery batteries. And in 1949 we quit -- we closed down Montford Point. Twenty thousand Marines had come through Montford Point during that period of time. This is an organization which is predominantly -- we've lost a lot of them by now. You -- as you can imagine, they're well into their 80s.

And they were true heroes. I mean, they were American patriots. You talk to them today -- and I had them at the barracks for a dinner -- a breakfast and a parade at the end of the summer. And they just said, General, we just wanted to join -- we wanted to join the best service. We wanted to join the Marines. We heard about it, we saw them on the newsreel, read about it in an advertisement in Time magazine, and we wanted to be a Marine.

**SHANKER:** And the action on Capitol Hill last night was to do what?

**AMOS:** They did -- to give them the Congressional Gold Medal. And so the House passed it 422 to nothing. And then it's over in the Senate. So if there are any Senate staffers in here today, I need your help on this. We need to get this through the Senate and get them awarded their Congressional Gold

Medal. Just like the Tuskegee Airmen, the Buffalo Soldiers, this is a big deal and this is long overdue. And I'm as proud of them as I possibly can be, and I'm very grateful for the House.

**SHANKER:** That's a fascinating piece of history. Thank you very much.

I'm now eager to invite the council members and guests in the audience to join our discussion. Please wait for me to call on you, wait for the microphone, stand and give us your name and your affiliation if you would. And very importantly, please keep your questions as concise as possible, so as many people can ask.

Yes, the gentleman here in the second row.

**QUESTIONER:** Thank you. Nick Kalman, Fox News. I wanted to ask about reports that the Marines are planning to close the brig at Quantico. Is this in any way related to Bradley Manning?

**AMOS:** They're planning to close the what at Quantico?

**QUESTIONER:** The brig.

**AMOS:** Oh, brig at Quantico?

**QUESTIONER:** Yes, sir.

**AMOS:** You know, I don't -- I don't know. I can't speak to that. I have heard -- I know it's been open until -- in fact, I think it's open right now. But I don't know of any plans to close it, but it might be. I don't want to -- I don't want to misrepresent anything. I truly don't know the answer to that question.

**SHANKER:** OK. So all the way over here, the gentleman in the second row here.

**QUESTIONER:** Mike Kostiw. I just retired from the Senate Armed Services Committee. Nice to see you, Commandant. It's a pleasure to be here.

**AMOS:** Nice to see you, Mike.

**QUESTIONER:** Thank you for coming. Joint Strike Fighter: We've been hearing arguments -- I'd like to hear your opinion more about the utility of it to the Marine Corps. And I understand what it is, but there's an argument out there now that it's unlikely that the Marines will fight again without the Navy, and let the Navy have the Joint Strike Fighter. The Marines -- the Marines' version is being -- is expensive; it's had some cost-overrun related issues -- as they all have. But I'd like you to address this a little bit more, if you -- if you don't mind.

**AMOS:** No, I appreciate that, Mike. I think if you -- again, going -- starting big and going down to the Marine Corps, at this point, it's -- from my perspective, it's what's best for our nation. In other words, I can get real parochial in a hurry, because I wear this uniform and I'm -- and I'm the commandant of the Marine Corps. But at this -- but what I want to talk about for a second is what's best for the United States.

You know, the Navy has -- our nation has what I call 22 capital ships. And a capital ship doesn't mean that cruisers and destroyers and submarines aren't, but we're talking about nuclear-powered carriers -- big-deck carriers. And we've got -- we've got 11 of those, and we've got 11 large-deck amphibious ships. And those are the ones that look like a smaller carrier; they look exactly like a carrier, only they don't have an (angle deck?). That's what's flying in the Gulf of Aden right -- I mean, that's what's operating in the Gulf of Aden. That's what was off the coast of Libya during the early part of the no-fly zone enforcement. In fact, for the first several days, the Harriers -- our version of the joint -- you know, yesterday's version of the Joint Strike Fighter -- was flying into Libya, and they were the only airplanes that were flying into Libya.

So for our nation to have 22 carrier type ship -- capital ships, and to be able to send them around the world to do whatever our government decides it's important for our nation to do, is a significant capability. If we don't have the F-35B version -- the short takeoff, you know, and vertical landing version -- then our nation basically will be down to 11 ships, 11 capital ships, to do our nation's bidding. And we all know that on any given day -- it's just like a fleet of trucks -- you're only going to have so many of those that are going to be available; some are going to be in maintenance and whatever. So our nation will lose a -- will lose a -- lose a great capability.

We're using the Harrier right now in the Gulf of Aden for a host of different missions. We use them off -- we used them off the coast of Pakistan. They were flying close air support into Afghanistan. We used them -- when we crossed the border and I was the wing commander, we flew our Harriers off the highways.

So as we look to the Joint Strike Fighter, our version of it, not only is it best for the nation, it's a capability our nation gets; it also allows us now to operate the way we did when we were in -- when we were in Iraq, flying off of highways, flying off of bombed-off -- bombed-out runways of Saddam Hussein, flying off of taxiways. It's the expeditionary capability that the Marine Corps brings. So we really will miss an awful lot. I mean, we will hamstring our nation, in my -- in my view, if we don't have the F-35B.

And by the way, it's really doing well -- and I track it like a bird dog. I mean, that's -- I've assumed ownership of that for the United States Marine Corps. So if it fails, you can point a finger at me.

**SHANKER:** (Chuckles.) Yes, sir, here in the front row, please.

**QUESTIONER:** Is this it, this thing?

**SHANKER:** Yeah. Thank you.

**QUESTIONER:** I'm Ed Rowny, a retired lieutenant general, retired ambassador. My question is, I wonder if the Marine Corps as a whole is aware of the small but vocal minority that's doing the Marine Corps, in my opinion, a lot of damage with the Department of Defense and with the Congress. This is a group that's downgrading their adversary or their compatriots, saying how much better they are, how they don't need the others.

Let me go back just a minute -- tell you that in 1950 I was one of the planners of the Inchon invasion. And in order to make that invasion work, General MacArthur needed an additional division. He went to his chief of staff, General Almond, who was my boss, and said where do we get this division. And Almond said, well, let me try General Shepherd -- classmate of mine from VMI who is now the head of the fleet

Marine -- fleet Marine forces. And he went out, and he said, look, we have one regiment here of Marines in Korea; if you can get us two more regiments, we'll have a division, and we can make this Inchon invasion fly or succeed.

So Shepherd went out, and he got the reservists from World War I (sic) to come back and made a division. And with the help of the Army and the other forces, that -- Inchon was a brilliant success. Now, instead of capitalizing on this success, again, the small but vocal minority said that, well, we didn't really need the Army; we could have done it all by ourselves. And the facts are that the Army is about 80 percent and the Marine Corps about 20 percent of those forces in those days.

**SHANKER:** Sir, yeah, thanks. The question was about the internecine rivalry among the services, right? Because --

**QUESTIONER:** Excuse me?

**SHANKER:** Your -- if you could pose your thought as a question, General, so we can --

**QUESTIONER:** Well, the question is, I'm wondering if the Army -- if the Marine Corps is aware that this small but vocal minority is again rearing its head and is downgrading and down-mouthing or bad-mouthing the Army and saying how they are doing it all and don't need it. And I think that this is just -- is doing harm to a Marine Corps that doesn't need any real boasting or that doesn't need anybody to build up its reputation.

**SHANKER:** OK, thank you.

**AMOS:** General Brown (sic), I think I can tell you that, first of all, I don't know of that vocal minority. I've not heard that. I mean, historically over the years -- and you know this from our two services -- there's always been competitive rivalry. But I will tell you the relationship right now has never been better than it is today. And we've fought alongside of one another for eight years -- six years in Iraq. We're fighting alongside of one another. Army generals have commanded Marines, and we've commanded Army brigades. I think the relationship is better today than it's ever been in my 41 years of being a Marine.

So I am unaware of that. But I've got my staff in here. And I'll tell you what I will do: I will pull the string on that thing because if they're active duty -- if they're -- if they're retired, much like you, sir, I can't reach in and touch you. But if they're wearing this uniform on active duty, I can sure as hell reach in and touch them. And I intend to do it because that's not the message. Today's joint environment -- this is not a paid political announcement for (being purple ?) -- today's environment requires us -- all of us -- to work in the joint, combined, interagency environment. The world is too complicated. We cannot do it ourselves. So I -- sir, I am -- I am unaware of that. But I guarantee you that it -- that it doesn't sit well with me if it's true.

**SHANKER:** Well, it just seems that the underlying narrative the general is pointing to is when there was plenty of money to go around for the past 10 years, it was easy for the joint force to get along. Money is going to be tight. The knives are out. I mean, I can certainly second what the general said, the whisper

campaign in the hallway, not just from the Marines about the others, but from many of the services about the formerly great partner is -- you know, we deserve our equity.

**AMOS:** Well, I'll tell you, being one-fourth of the service chiefs, you know, so therefore one-fourth of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I look around the table -- we meet -- when I leave here and I meet at 10:00 for this meeting, I'll be sitting there with my fellow service chiefs. And to this day, when we go to the tank on Friday afternoons, the tank on Monday afternoons or we meet the way we are, there is none of that that goes on, none of it.

Now I made a comment over at NPR last week; I said tight budgets bring out kind of the worst in behavior in people, which is what you're implying, Thom. But I haven't seen it yet.

And I'll tell you, we've got a great chairman. I don't know how well you know Marty Dempsey, but if there's anybody that can kind of keep the tribes together and say, look, folks, we're going to do this together -- it's going to be Marty Dempsey.

**SHANKER:** Well, that's a high endorsement for a large challenge. Anybody in back hasn't -- yes, here along the aisle. Sir.

**QUESTIONER:** Good morning and thank you. This is Shin Shouji (ph) for NHK Japan Broadcasting. You spoke --

**AMOS:** Can you speak up just a little bit for me?

**QUESTIONER:** Sure. You spoke at Brookings Institute earlier this summer. You said you're favorable toward Senator Webb's proposals on -- (inaudible) -- air force base. Do you think that that is the way to save money because of the increased expenditure on Camp Schwab plan?

**SHANKER:** (Inaudible) -- could you repeat the question, please?

**AMOS:** Could you maybe come up here? Could you walk -- could you come up here and just ask it a little bit closer and that way (after ?) my 41 years of flying jets I can hear you. (Laughter.) I'm sorry, it's just reality for --

**QUESTIONER:** So earlier in the summer you spoke at Brookings Institute, and you said that you were favorable toward Senator Webb's plan about Okinawa and -- (inaudible) -- air force base. Having (invested ?) three months into this process, do you -- do you think that this is still the best way to save money considering that Camp Schwab is very expensive right now?

**AMOS:** Well, you know, I can't -- as you know -- thank you. As you know, Secretary Panetta was in Japan, and I think he's -- I think he's traveling in Korea today. And in the reports that I've read, in the same newspapers you're reading -- because I've not talked to anybody that's on the traveling party, is that -- it was a very encouraging visit in Japan and that there is strong encouragement from the central government to continue on with the agreed-to implementation plan, which is eventually building the runway at Schwab offshore and moving the Marine Corps station to Futenma.

What we've done is I've -- what I'm trying to do as a Marine Corps to be a good partner in this thing is delinking some of the things and saying, OK, I'm willing to move some Marines to Guam just so I can relieve some pressure. So we're trying to be good neighbors. We want to give the land back, as you remember; I mentioned that at Brookings. We want to give the land back that we've agreed to between our two governments. So all of that is done with honorable intentions.

So I'm encouraged. I'm encouraged by what I've -- what I've ready by Secretary Panetta's latest visit, and I hope that works. And I hope we can build a runway and we can stay on the plan that was agreed to by our two governments.

**SHANKER:** Thank you. To the left -- (inaudible) -- room. Yes, sir, the gentleman here.

**AMOS:** (Inaudible.)

**QUESTIONER:** Steve Cheney with the American Security Project.

**AMOS:** Hello, Steve.

**QUESTIONER:** A follow-on to Mike's question here, this one about the V-22: Since 2000 -- or since 2001, the United States military has lost 405 helicopters, and we've lost 580-some American service members. Only one of those 405 was a V-22, and in fact, that one was flown by the Air Force, and we lost four service members.

This same aircraft, the V-22, flies a third less cost to passenger per mile than any other helicopter we own. Why is it that the V-22 takes such a bad rap when it's probably one of the best aircraft that you've ever purchased?

**AMOS:** Yeah, no, Steve, thank you. (Inaudible) -- ladies and gentlemen, that's not a setup. (Laughter.) I mean, I know him just like I know some of the other folks -- (inaudible) -- but I haven't seen him in a couple years, so this is not a setup question.

**SHANKER:** The red tie should have been a tip-off.

**AMOS:** Yeah. The truth is, what he did say about cost per passenger mile -- you know, because we always get -- you know, we get beat up and they go, well, the airplane's expensive. But it holds 24 combat-loaded forces and it will take them three times as far -- it really well. And it will take them twice as fast -- it really will. And we just went over -- just probably about six months ago went over 100,000 accident-free hours in the airplane. The rap goes back to the late '90s and the -- and 2000. And the truth of the matter is, we're well beyond that right now.

Anecdotally, I'd throw this out. When the USS Kearsarge pulled off the coast of Libya, and those Harriers were doing that no-fly zone business, MV-22s were on that ship. They got the call at 9:00 at night to go rescue that F-15E pilot.

Now they were sitting, I think, about a hundred miles off the coast of Libya. They launched -- they briefed, they launched, they picked the pilot up, and they were back on deck in 90 minutes.

Now -- so people say, well, why don't you just buy a -- just name some other helicopter -- I don't want to name it because I'll get beat up by somebody -- but buy that other helicopter. We had been negotiating with Gadhafi for the release of that F-15E pilot because their forces were on top of that pilot by the time we got there. Had we not had the speed to launch, had we not had the ability to get there quickly and get him off the ground in Libya and get him back, we'd have been negotiating it till last Friday, I guess, with Gadhafi, trying to get his release.

So I mean, that's the significance of the speed, the lift, all that stuff.

**SHANKER:** But those of us who don't follow procurement that closely do recall those dark days of '99 and 2000 when the Osprey seemed to go down a lot, and a lot of people died. So was that R&D problems? Was it pilot error? Was it something that you discovered and fixed? Why is it working now, because --

**AMOS:** You know, I think it was kind of a little bit of all of that. You've got to remember the airplane was in development then. And it suffered -- and this is a real lesson learned for procurement today. You know, all these -- and I've been on -- that's why I watched the F-35B really closely. I mean -- but we, as a -- as a nation and we as a Department of Defense and, I think, we as Congress and then we as the program managers of the B-22 program underfunded it.

So instead of while it's going along being developed and you're supposed to do these 10 things, the program managers had to make a decision: Well, I can only afford to do six of these things. And so we do the six most critical, and then the program continues to move along. And then what we're doing is we're trying to mitigate risk. We're making decisions on doing things. And so we end up with an airplane in 2000, in March of 2000.

And it's -- the airplane actually was flying fine. But we lost an airplane in March of 2000. We lost an airplane in December. I think it was December the 13th of 2000. And that's when Secretary Cohen wisely said, OK, I'm -- we're going to convene a blue-ribbon panel, and we're going to take a look at this airplane. And one of the findings was let's not make this an event-driven -- excuse me, a time schedule-driven development program. Let's make it event-driven. We'll serve no wine before its time. So we're going to fix the airplane. We're going to put the money in the program. We're going to put the right management in the program. And we're going to put the right parts and -- I mean, everything.

So now everything is set up the way it should be to bring in a successful program. And that's what's happened since then. The program is not anemic. The program actually is funded well, and it's been cared for well by Congress and everybody else. And so we have that today. We have the fruits of that labor today.

**SHANKER:** Yes, ma'am. Here in the front row.

**QUESTIONER:** General, it's great to get a chance to see you. I'm Mitzi Wertheim with the Naval Postgraduate School. I want to ask about the human side of this. It was my impression that when the Marines were going off to Iraq, that on their way over, they were getting some cultural training. What are you doing about learning about the countries where you're likely to be going? And do you have language skill requirements for Marines, since you spend your time on the ground?



**AMOS:** Yeah, we do. Thank you. That's a great question, and that's part of the -- you know, I talked earlier about the lessons learned over the last 10 years of combat. That's absolutely one of them. We've increased in the last year -- we've -- what I -- I think I told them to double the number of foreign area officers and regional area officers in the Marine Corps. Now, I --

**QUESTIONER:** Will they get promoted to general?

**AMOS:** Yeah, you know -- well, you know what? We're tracking that. And they actually are getting promoted from major to lieutenant colonel and lieutenant colonel to colonel at a higher rate right now. They didn't used to be. We could take somebody and send them for a year and a half and teach them Mandarin Chinese at DLI in Monterey, be a great young officer, and then we'd -- and then we'd terminate them at major. And there are several of us in here that used to -- used to be in charge of that program. That's now happening -- (inaudible). So it's a recognition -- back to your question, it's a recognition that we need more expertise in the regions around the world, and so we're building that. There is a -- there is irrefutably a requirement when we're going to go somewhere to understand the culture, understand the people, what we call the microterrain or the human terrain of a country and a nation. So boy, I'll tell you, if there's anything we learned out of the war after 10 years, it's that, to include around the world -- every lieutenant that goes through the Basic School, when we come out of the Naval Academy, Officer Candidate School, NROTC like I was, you get commissioned, and you spend six months down at Quantico with the Basic School for farther follow-on officer training. Every single lieutenant's assigned a region of the world, and then he has to -- he gets tested on that, and for his promotion -- actually we're in the process of tying it to his promotion right now -- you have to pass a series of examinations in your region to be eligible to become a first lieutenant, a captain, a major. So it's acknowledgement that that is probably one of the greatest lessons learned we've had out of 10 years.

**SHANKER:** Yes, ma'am.

**QUESTIONER:** Good morning. And thank you very much for this conversation. Evelyn Varkus (sp) from the U.S.-European Command. You mentioned lessons learned coming out of Iraq and Afghanistan, General. I wonder whether you have concluded -- whether you have some conclusions that you're drawn or lessons that you've learned at the strategic or operational level pertaining to Libya. It may be too early, but if you could comment on that.

**AMOS:** Pertaining to Libya?

**QUESTIONER:** Yes. So what lessons have you learned or conclusions have you drawn based out of our experience in Libya.

**AMOS:** I think as a nation, and I think -- I'm trying to think of who said this last week. We don't want to over-learn the lessons from Libya. In other words, we don't want to just say that's it and that's the way we're going to do business as a nation. So as a nation, you know, our government made the decisions it did on what are we going to do with Libya; are we going to do a no-fly zone, are we going to put forces on

the ground -- which we didn't, of course -- and are we going to be in the lead, which, of course, we were not. NATO was in the lead. So, you know, my sense on this thing is the lesson that -- as I look at it as a service chief, and somewhere along the line I'll get asked over the period of over the next years to give my best military advice -- is that the lesson I got out of it, that we don't always have to be in the lead, we don't always have to jump in, we don't always have to be first. We've got lots of strategic partners out there that we can rely on. And I think the Libya thing for me is a classic case of NATO and our allies jumping in and that we supported that.

So I -- that's kind of what I got out of it at the strategic international politics level.

**SHANKER:** But if I could turn her question around, I mean it's true that NATO was in command, it was a NATO mission, but it would have been impossible without the United States. We still remain the essential partner. The refueling, almost a hundred percent. The really important intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. Some of the specialized anti-aircraft activity.

So, I mean, there's still this requirement for the U.S. to have a lot of skin in the game even if for political reasons it has to be a NATO-led mission. Isn't that true?

**AMOS:** Oh, I think there are enablers. I don't think there's any question that we didn't provide enablers. And some of them are more technical and at a higher -- I guess a higher level of capability than others.

I'll give you an example. When the Kearsarge pulled up off the coast -- I mean, I keep going back to that, but when the Kearsarge pulled off the coast, the AWACS airplanes from Europe hadn't arrived yet. And by the way, these were not U.S. AWACS airplanes, these were European AWACS airplanes. They belonged to the NATO forces, the NATO countries. They just hadn't gotten there yet. And nothing -- when you're going to do something like this, we all expect it to be clean and be executed and on a precision timeline. The fact is, is that when you're dealing with nations and -- things just don't happen that way in the real world.

So when the Kearsarge pulled up there, guess who controlled the airspace like an AWACS? It was the USS Kearsarge. It was that amphibious ship, for the first two days of the war, controlled all the airspace over Libya. So when the Harriers were flying in there -- and by the way, the tankers that came down were not just U.S. tankers. I can't tell you how many U.S. tankers came down, but I will tell you there was a slug of NATO tankers that came down from the NATO allied countries, and they just hadn't gotten there yet.

They were working their way down, working on basing and trying to figure out where are we going to fly them out of. But there was tankers that were provided, a lot of them.

So there are capabilities. It's a team. We are truly a team on this thing. And so we had the ability in some cases to provide some technical capabilities that perhaps our NATO allies didn't have, and they were willing to provide the leadership and a big chunk -- I mean a lot of those airplanes, most of those airplanes were flying -- in fact, all of them, for the most part, have been NATO airplanes.

So I'm not offended by that. I think that's the way we do team play as a nation in the future. And I think that's a lesson we learned coming out of Libya. This is team play. This is a team sport.

**SHANKER:** You've already had one. Sorry.

Yes. Sure.

**QUESTIONER:** Good morning, General. Mike Fabey from Aviation Week. Going back to some of the things you were talking about overcoming anti-access, especially in the Pacific, some of the things you've mentioned, such as stealth, such as firepower and command and control -- it's awful lot like some of the attributes you were going to see in the DDG-1000. That program has been truncated, but now the GAO's been directed to look at the restarted 51 and the DDG-1000 decision. Is that something we'd welcome? Or how important are the attributes this ship would have brought to the USMC?

**AMOS:** Well, you know, I can't -- that's -- you know, that's really out of my lane, and so I can't talk about that. I'd be telling you -- I can't give you anything that's going to be worthwhile, but I'll tell you the -- it had an enormous capability and for the Marine Corps perspective, besides the kind of the command and control, you know, we were looking at it to provide naval surface fire support. I mean, that's what the Marines were looking at.

And so it has been truncated. And so we -- but the DDG-51s are going to provide the ballistic missile defense that our nation has agreed to help with around the world. So I mean, that's kind of the extent of probably my knowledge on that. So --

**SHANKER:** Thanks. We have time for one more question. Before I take it, let me just remind you that this meeting has been on the record.

And the last question, sir. Please.

**QUESTIONER:** I'm Robert Pursley, retired Air -- (off mic). Robert Pursley, retired Air Force. Tying procurement and people together, I wonder if we could have your assessment, General Amos, of the all-volunteer force, both its benefits and its costs --

**AMOS:** Right.

**QUESTIONER:** -- and what alternatives, if any, you might be thinking about, because it seems to me that that's going to be the -- one of the bases of the foundation of whatever strategy we develop.

**AMOS:** Yeah. Well, I think -- you know, I think in the paper you've seen Secretary Panetta -- in fact he commented while he was traveling in Japan yesterday and in Korea as well -- he was on the Blue Ridge. He made some comments about it.

His goal is to protect the all-volunteer force. When he sat with all the service chiefs, and we started talking about, OK, the budget, the \$450-plus billion and how we're going to do this and what the fiscal environment is going to -- how that's going to impact the services -- Secretary Panetta's been clear from the beginning. He says we have to protect the all-volunteer force.

We have -- I mean, sometimes you don't -- you just -- I guess you've got to be right in the middle of it to really appreciate the quality of the young men and women we have today.

And by the way, they're lined up. If you want to join the Marine Corps today -- I mean, I'm -- realize I'm on a recruiting speech, but if you -- if you want to be a Marine today and you walk into the recruiting station in Dallas or Topeka, it's going to be eight months before we can send you to boot camp. That's how big the backlog is. If you want to be an officer, it's going to be longer. That's the quality of young men and women we have today.

So Secretary Panetta's been adamant. We've got to preserve -- how do you do that? How do you incentivize young men and women to join and then to remain?

In our service -- and that's why we've gone through this -- I had to do some homework, and only 10 percent of the people -- young men and women that join the Marine Corps stay for 20 years and retire. So the other 90 percent -- some of them get out after four years. Some get out after eight years and -- but only 10 percent of them go all the way to retirement. So that's really what we're talking about, is the 10 percent. So -- when you talk retirement.

So we got to kind of keep it in perspective. You know, we're talking -- when we talk about paying benefits and all, sir, we immediately emotionally get to the hundred percent. But when you start talking retirement, you're really talking 10 percent. And the other services are a little bit more than that, but not a lot more. So that's the focus for retirement.

And then the benefits in between -- in other words, the pay raises, the health care, the copays for pharmaceuticals and stuff -- most of that affects the retirees and that kind of thing. But basic allowance for housing -- current pay -- I saw last night that if you take the 70 percentile across the nation and you take somebody that's, say, a college graduate that's 24 years old, and he or she -- the average pay for a 24-year-old college graduate is X, and you add all that up, and then you say, OK, what's the pay for a second lieutenant? And what you want to do is, you want to have that second lieutenant historically being paid at about -- whatever the average is across the country, which should be 50 percent -- you want him paid -- being paid at about 70 percent of what the market will bear across the nation. We're sitting at about 79 percent now for officers, and we're about 83 percent of what the market will bear for enlisted.

So we're actually doing pretty well. We're paid pretty well. So as we look at how we pay this \$450 billion, is there room to question, then -- is there room to adjust inside that to bring that back down a little bit and make it a little bit more of a level playing field? And the answer from the service chiefs and from me is yeah, I think there is room. How much? I don't know. What's the bend in the knee where it begins to affect the all-volunteer force? I don't know what that is. We haven't put that kind of rigor into it, and we're going to need to do that as we start looking inside pays and -- pay and benefits. We're really going to need to look at that to make sure that we know what we do and what the second and third-order effects are. So --

**SHANKER:** And with that, a special thanks to the Council on Foreign Relations for hosting this today. Thanks to all of you for joining us and for your interesting questions. General Amos, it was a pleasure.

**AMOS:** Thanks -- (inaudible). (Applause.)