

June 5, 2013

Washington, D.C.

Session 2 Panel Member

Rear Admiral Kerry Metz, USN

Interim Commander, Special Operations Command, U.S. Central Command

REAR ADMIRAL KERRY METZ: Thanks, Admiral McRaven. And also, thanks to General Austin and General Jacoby. As we talk about building the global SOF network, I am building my personal global boss network. [laughter] A personal story to start off with. If you have any affiliation with the Fletcher School at all, just a show of hands. I want to tell you how that saved me, just the affiliation with the Fletcher School, it saved me so much time over the last fifteen years.

My wife Sheila is a graduate of the Fletcher School. She has a MALD, which is master of arts in law and diplomacy. And I quickly learned that, after that education, that there was no use arguing with her about anything. [laughter] So now I just let her have her way. So, I want to pass that as a personal thanks. [laughter] And it is working, because today is our anniversary. So yeah, how about that?

Most of the people that have addressed the audience this morning have been providers of information. I'm very much a consumer of it. And the other guys up here on the panel are, many – a couple of them are providers of forces. As a TSOC commander, I'm a consumer there, too. We take trained, ready, equipped forces, and we employ them in the CENTCOM area of operations.

And I just wanted to make sure – And Admiral McRaven touched on this earlier. But we have also in the audience today, General Norm Brozenick, the SOCPAC commander, General Sean Mulholland, the SOCSOUTH commander, General Eric Wendt, the SOC KOREA commander, and General Brad Webb, the future commander of Special Operations Command Europe.

And we are probably the luckiest group of guys in all of SOF, because we get to take great people, with great attitudes, give them missions, and let them do what they do so well. And it is great. Now, we don't do it alone. We have a lot of people helping us. Also, I noticed in the audience, is Brigadier General Dennis Thompson, the head of all Canadian Special Operations. And he is a great partner with us around the world. Also, he has sort of agreed to give me a couple of staff officers as I stand up SOCNORTH. So I just thought I'd throw the shout-out to him, to remind him that he was going to do that. [laughter]

So, of all those SOC commanders, TSOC commanders, why am I the one up here? And I asked myself that question over and over. And I think, as Admiral McRaven mentioned, currently at SOCCENT, we've got a few more weeks there, and then I move out to SOCNORTH. And I want to talk to you a little bit about SOCNORTH and what that's going to mean.

It's a new mission. It supports the NORTHCOM mission of homeland defense and strengthening defense in depth, support to civil authorities, all that kind of stuff. But, what it means to me is, it's a new design. It's a new way to do a theatre Special Operations command, a smaller Special Operations command, one that is quite possibly more agile. It also gives us new opportunity, opportunities for interagency collaboration, and then the multinational partnerships that I mentioned with Brigadier Thompson and others.

But, what most interests me, and most excites me, is the new challenges. I've spent the last twelve years looking at the Central Command area of operations. And there's a little bit of complexity there. I've pretty much solved all of it, so it's time for me to



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move on. [laughter] But our biggest challenge, and most critical, is the application of all those best practices that the other TSOCs and General Votel and his organization have come up with, and putting all those together.

And I'll close by just telling you that I don't have any of the answers. But, using the network, using all of you, and with your help, I think collectively we'll figure it out. Thanks, sir.