



U.S. Coast Guard Academy officer candidate practices navigating using stars and sextant during evening training session aboard U.S. Coast Guard Barque *Eagle*, September 13, 2012 (U.S. Coast Guard/Lauren Jorgensen)

# Are There Too Many General Officers for Today's Military?

By Gregory C. McCarthy

There are approximately 900 Active-duty general/flag officers (GO/FOs) today of 1.3 million troops. This is a ratio of 1 GO/FO for every 1,400 troops. During World War II, an admittedly different era, there were more than 2,000 GO/FOs for a little more than 12 million Active troops (1:6,000). This development represents “rank creep” that does not

---

Colonel Gregory C. McCarthy, USMCR, is Officer in Charge, Marine Coordination Element, Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti.

enhance mission success but clutters the chain of command, adds bureaucratic layers to decisions, and costs taxpayers additional money from funding higher paygrades to fill positions. As end-strength fluctuates, force structure and strength projections for the next decade show the uniformed Services maintaining substantial excess capacity at senior ranks. Although historical numbers are inexact guides and future threats could radically change circumstances, the case for reduction is strong. The Department of Defense (DOD) should reduce the numbers, billets, and

percent of GO/FOs in each Service to increase efficiency, streamline decisionmaking, achieve modest cost savings, and enhance accountability of decisionmaking.

## Background

Historical comparisons of GO/FOs as a percentage of the total force from the establishment of the National Security Act of 1947 to today show an all-time high, a ratio that has steadily crept upward for more than half a century. GO/FOs grew so quickly during the Korean War that by mid-1952, the total

nearly doubled the World War II peak.<sup>1</sup> The Services as a whole had more three- and four-star generals for Vietnam than for a vastly larger force during World War II.<sup>2</sup> Although there were twice as many GO/FOs at the end of World War II than today, there were nearly 10 times as many Active-duty troops, and more four-stars serve today than served during World War II.<sup>3</sup> One study states the obvious: the U.S. military is more top-heavy than it has ever been.<sup>4</sup>

Comparisons across vastly different eras can be problematic, and it could be unwise to mimic industrial age ratios. One study defends the dramatic growth in senior ranks as emerging from “the long-term decline of labor-intensive functions in the military relative to technologically skilled functions, and the increased demand for managerial skill, given the military’s greater organizational complexity over time.”<sup>5</sup> Another raises the possibility of why the GO/FO population has grown while avoiding the downsizing that most of the forces have endured in the last few years, including joint requirements, coalition operations, organizational structure, and technological change.<sup>6</sup> Some generals anonymously speak to the complexity of the modern battlefield as justification for more senior officials than before.<sup>7</sup> One observer speaks of the dollars and not end-strength as the key growth in responsibility for today’s GO/FOs.<sup>8</sup> Matching international or coalition partners in rank could also be a consideration.

But given official justification, or lack thereof, for the required number of GO/FOs, it is doubtful that systemized planning or corresponding requirements have informed the structure shaping present conditions. It is further unlikely that today’s senior leaders are of such a higher caliber that a higher ratio is justified. One prominent observer argues that today’s Army generals, as a representative example, have the same flaws as previous decades.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the “strategic corporal” concept advanced several years ago plausibly posits that information technology will push strategic-level decisions further and further down to junior troops doing tactical-level jobs, thus obviating the need for many bosses.<sup>10</sup> Drone pilots,

for example, are not all officers. In a streamlined modern battlespace, the need for multiple levels of brass is less urgent.

Concerns about top-heavy ranks are hardly new. Even in the era of comparatively austere command structure and within the least top-heavy Service, Marine legend Lieutenant General Chesty Puller stated of World War II, “The staffs are twice as large as they should be. The regimental staff is too large. I have five staff officers in the battalion and I could get along with less.”<sup>11</sup> Edward Luttwak states that in 1968 in Vietnam there were 110 GO/FOs and “hundreds and hundreds of colonels,” mostly in Saigon.<sup>12</sup> Evidence of excess brass adding to bureaucratic complexity or poor decisionmaking is indirect and suggestive. Anecdotal complaints abound and historical comparisons reflect skewed ratios, but a smoking gun is not apparent in the literature. Yet the overwhelming skew of the numbers suggests there is a great deal of excess brass that could be shed.

### Recent Growth

One difficulty of assessing whether the GO/FO ratio is appropriate is that the Department of Defense (DOD) and Services offer little guidance or doctrine that explains the optimal number of GO/FOs. Defense authorization bill reports are replete with requirements, some requesting assessment of this topic, but rarely producing DOD-wide and vetted study. The Government Accountability Office thought DOD should articulate that validated requirements be periodically reevaluated. It found DOD wanting in both validating and updating requirements.<sup>13</sup> DOD concluded in its 2003 General and Flag Officer Requirements that it needed more GO/FOs than authorized by law, and it usually resists efforts at congressional reduction. In 2011, then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates ordered a widespread reduction in 2011 as part of larger reforms. In 2014, DOD admitted it had not updated GO/FO requirements since 2003 when it last sought an increase.<sup>14</sup> One difficulty in understanding the optimal number is that Services have their own GO/FO requirements

and a joint pool, but the overall picture is not presented.

The Services have slight variations in GO/FO and officer/enlisted percentages. The Air Force has the highest percentage of officers and GO/FOs, and are 2.5 times as top-heavy as the Marine Corps.<sup>15</sup> The Air Force and Navy shrank in the last decade but did not decrease their percentage of GO/FOs. The Navy has nearly as many admirals as ships when ships are now far more capable (seemingly arguing for fewer admirals). Identified Service needs and tradition, as well as an apparently informal truce between Services not to criticize each other’s funds or priorities, explain this arrangement. An across-the-board assessment is in order.

The Marine Corps, which has the lowest percentage of officers among the Services, is not exempt from these concerns. There has been a 38 percent increase in commissioned Marine officers as a percentage of end-strength from 1968 to 2015 with no obvious justification.<sup>16</sup> Overall, all Service officers as a percentage of the total force have grown an identical percentage over that period.<sup>17</sup> Evaluating the farm team for the next crop of generals, one commentator has lamented the state of Marine colonels: “The majority of these O-6s add little value to the process and are seen by many as unimaginative paper pushers who inhibit rather than assist Headquarters’ ability to accomplish its mission of organizing training and equipping the force. They have become an obstacle.”<sup>18</sup>

Events and time have not fundamentally altered the steady upward growth of GO/FOs. Although various defenders of the high level of GO/FOs cite the joint requirements of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, GO/FO numbers reflect a steady upward trend from World War II to present with no spike after 1986, just a continued trajectory. Neither has the introduction of nuclear weapons appeared to have had an effect. Furthermore, Goldwater-Nichols took effect in the final years of the Cold War and subsequent military downsizing, a theoretical opportunity for brass reduction along with the



Airman welcomes new officer trainee to Officer Training School, November 2013, at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama (U.S. Air Force/William Blankenship)

significant force reduction that took place. The reverse has occurred. Senator John McCain (R-AZ), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), defended a proposal to reduce GO/FOs and recently summarized the Goldwater-Nichols trends: “Over the past 30 years, the end strength of the joint force has decreased 38%, but the ratio of four-star officers to the overall force has increased by 65%.”<sup>19</sup> Against the argument that budget authority responsibility drives today’s GO/FO numbers, the 1986 defense topline is larger than today’s amount.<sup>20</sup>

A possible explanation for the continued increase in GO/FOs is the requirements associated with the war on terror. This period has shown a continuation of the trend line. From 2001 to 2011, the number of three- and four-star officers grew by nearly 25 percent, one- and two-stars grew 10 percent, and enlisted ranks only 2.5 percent.<sup>21</sup> Adding 2 more years to the sample shows an even steeper disparity. One study found, “From FY [fiscal year] 2001 through FY 2013 . . . the GO/FO and non-GO/FO officer populations

grew from 871 to 943 (8 percent) and from 216,140 to 237,586 (10 percent), respectively, while the enlisted population decreased from 1,155,344 to 1,131,281 (2 percent).”<sup>22</sup> Especially noteworthy is growth at higher ranks.

An area of growth was combatant command headquarters, which grew by about 50 percent from FY 2001 through 2012. Despite some congressional concern about brass creep, DOD has grown (through congressional authorization and appropriations), adding new commands and organizations, including the National Guard Bureau (2008), U.S. Africa Command (2007), U.S. Cyber Command (2010), Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (2006), and Defense Health Agency (2013), all headed by GO/FOs or higher ranking GO/FOs over those already in place.<sup>23</sup> Do any of these reflect a strategic necessity?

U.S. Space Command and U.S. Joint Forces Command were closed during this period, but were not enough to offset the growth trend. One reporter estimates 21 generals running the current

light-footprint war against the so-called Islamic State.<sup>24</sup> While not part of peacetime DOD, even the Coast Guard has gotten in on the act, adding a second four-star to its permanent ranks.<sup>25</sup>

### Right-Sizing

A defense of the requirement for a large number of GO/FOs is found in the ostensible need to provide “inherently governmental” functions, that is, decisions involving high levels of government assets or personnel. But this need does not explain the multiple levels of GO/FOs that are involved in any substantive decision, or that many GO/FOs command no forces whatsoever. One GO/FO in a decision process might be justified, but it is almost always many more. Additionally, recent growth has coincided with a boom in outsourcing, meaning GO/FO growth could not have occurred with inherently governmental functions in mind.

Clearly, historical comparisons or even lamenting the upward trend do not end the issue. The deeper question is

what the right percentage of GO/FOs, Service-specific or DOD-wide, is. DOD took a half-hearted stab at the matter in 2003, successfully requesting more. Since then, it has not updated or addressed its requirements, although Secretary Gates's ordered reductions assumed excess. The Services cannot be expected to lead, as voluntarily sacrificing personnel is a zero-sum game and would be professional suicide for a Service chief to unilaterally disarm. Yet if there is no optimal percentage, the current ratio is indefensible.

Both DOD and the Services have been absent in defining their GO/FO requirements, occasionally asking for additional ad hoc slots, rarely requesting fewer. No DOD entity has offered much in the way of principles, let alone numbers, other than marginal alterations of the previous year. The Army recently got its Pacific billet upgraded to four stars. The Marine Corps, for example, successfully requested 12 more generals in the FY 1997 defense authorization bill over the vociferous objections of only one Senator. The Marine Corps conceded that only 4 of the 12 had anything to do with joint requirements.<sup>26</sup> Even in today's era of constraints, Marines received one additional net GO above the two-star level in the FY 2017 defense authorization.<sup>27</sup>

The result of brass creep is "making routine authorizations complex procedures," in one view.<sup>28</sup> This frustration led Secretary Gates to order the elimination of more than 100 GO/FOs as part of his 2010 efficiency initiative. He then stated, "Almost a decade ago, Secretary Rumsfeld lamented that there were 17 levels of staff between him and a line officer. The Defense Business Board recently estimated that in some cases the gap between me and an action officer may be as high as 30 layers."<sup>29</sup> Gates's plans were partially implemented, but the highest ranks were spared. One former principal offered that, "when Gates spoke there were 981 generals and admirals. Today, there are 958. Yet, this difference results almost entirely from reducing one-stars; there are now 10 more three-stars, and 14 more two-stars."<sup>30</sup>

Congress has traditionally questioned DOD's request for more GO/FOs. One senior DOD official stated 20 years ago, "Congress has consistently taken the view that we have needed fewer general and flag officers, and that we have taken the opposite view, that we needed more than the Congress would allow."<sup>31</sup> Congress has generally taken the opposite position of DOD on Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), weapons systems, commissary/TRICARE reforms, and other spending items whose reduction would yield far more savings.

The Senate has recently used its confirmation power to block the promotions or higher grade retirements of certain controversial officers. The Senate could use confirmation to decline promotions as a way of reducing GO/FOs, although this is virtually unprecedented. Senator John Stennis (D-MS) of the SASC personally imposed a cap on Air Force generals, announcing in the mid-1950s that he would confirm no more than 300. During Vietnam, 560 Army GOs were permitted by law, but only 487 by Stennis.<sup>32</sup> So a determined Senator backed by a majority, without formal House or Presidential input, could potentially block the filling of GO/FO vacancies if he or she desired. Similarly, DOD could choose not to fill vacant billets through natural attrition.

As the senior uniformed leaders of the military, the higher percentage of GO/FOs could perhaps be justified by unambiguous strategic success. Thomas Ricks views the GO/FO job description as "being able to impose one's will on a large organization engaged in one of the most stressful of human activities."<sup>33</sup> But since World War II, American military successes mostly stop at the tactical or operational level. Today is characterized by less than obvious success. Ricks finds the post-World War II class of generals, with few exceptions, strategically inept, seen in middling conclusions to the many conflicts of the last several decades. He argues that Army leaders of the 1980s and early 1990s "produced a generation of tacticians who knew how to fight battles, but who apparently lacked the strategic ability to fight and conclude

wars."<sup>34</sup> A retired Army three-star places losses in Iraq and Afghanistan on abysmal generalship, stating "[it was] our war to lose and we did."<sup>35</sup> This damning indictment need not be wholly embraced to believe the system would be streamlined and improved with fewer GO/FOs. Strategic-level thinking seems to be missing, and a reordering of GO/FO-specific professional military education seems to be in order.

More troubling is the perception of increased corruption among senior officers. Perhaps this is only increased *reporting*, but high-visibility scandals have tainted the Navy, of note, as well as prominent GO/FOs in other Services, often with salacious details and tales of misuse of government resources. These revelations seem to happen with a frequency unheard of as recently as two decades ago.<sup>36</sup> This may be a "good news" story of policing the ranks as never before, but the disclosures raise doubts about the crop of current leaders. Enhanced accountability would be more achievable with a smaller subset. Would national security be gravely damaged with a couple dozen fewer GO/FOs? The heightened reporting of scandals involving GO/FOs exposes an inadequate status quo. The population could be reduced.

According to Ricks, the Army's current "template of generalship," which he argues is representative and influential over all Services, is that of "organization men who were far less inclined to judge the performance of their peers. They were acting less like stewards of their profession, answerable to the public, and more like keepers of a closed guild, answerable mainly to each other."<sup>37</sup> This situation cries out for reform and oversight from without, as DOD has proved unable to correct itself.

The FY 2017 Defense Authorization Act has admirably tackled this topic, ordering a reduction of 110 GO/FO positions by the end of 2022. It also lamented the following:

*despite two decades of Congressional concern the Department of Defense and the military departments have not demonstrated the willingness to implement*



Marine candidate participates in fire team assault course at Officer Candidate School, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, June 17, 2017 (U.S. Marine Corps/Cristian L. Ricardo)

*even the reduction in the number of general and flag officer positions directed by the Secretary of Defense's Track Four Efficiencies Initiatives decision of March 14, 2011.*<sup>38</sup>

This is a good start.

Congress contemplated an additional 10 percent reduction in GO/FOs in the report accompanying the FY 2017 law. Service- and DOD-wide sacrifice is in order and the effects of such a move should be monitored with hopes of something approaching the 25 percent reduction that the Senate originally passed. Reduction should be imposed on headquarters, bureaus, offices, and commands. Service vice chiefs and other high-level deputies could be reduced to three-stars as they were decades ago before Goldwater-Nichols. Theater commanders below combatant commanders could be three-star positions as they have been in recent memory. Excess senior Pentagon civilians, positions largely

vacant as of this writing, should also be targeted, but that topic is beyond the scope of this article.

### Conclusion

One estimate places the total salary cost to each general, including aides and staff, at nearly \$1 million annually.<sup>39</sup> If all GO/FOs and their retinue were eliminated, savings would be less than \$1 billion annually. Unlike BRAC or cancellation of a weapons system, even a significant reduction in the number of GO/FOs would amount to relatively small savings in an overall DOD budget of approximately \$580 billion in FY 2016. However, it would set the example and begin to address personnel costs, one of the drivers of unsustainable trends in DOD and broader budgeting.

Despite the Trump administration's expressed desire to increase defense spending and end-strength, this will likely prove difficult. Close observers point out that its recent proposed increase of \$54

billion will barely keep pace with inflation and not result in greater overall numbers immediately.<sup>40</sup> The pressure is not off for continued reform. The present setting calls for more efficiencies rather than fewer. Continuing to reduce top-level officers is the kind of cost savings that must be sought. Personnel costs have to be addressed and should begin at the top. Ideally, this should trigger a DOD-wide scrutiny of personnel needs vis-à-vis corresponding missions and long-term threats.

The sequester effort of the Budget Control Act of 2011 was criticized in numerous corners as an indiscriminate instrument that blindly cut domestic and defense spending equally. But it had the virtue of partially controlling spending in an era of runaway deficits. Today's times are no less challenging. Getting a grip on GO/FO numbers and, ultimately, senior civilians and total force requirements would begin to align means and ends. Reducing each year by a percent and thus leading by example is how it should

begin. The Defense Department and national security of the United States would be enhanced by reducing the number of GO/FOs currently on Active duty, as part of a larger rationalizing of command structure and making forces leaner and flatter. This is not inherently risky in today's world of technology and communication. Our GO/FOs could lead in fewer numbers.

All personnel numbers, from end-strength to GO/FO ratios, should be regularly scrutinized to evaluate the effects on national security. The steady upward growth of GO/FOs has no apparent justification. The case for reduction involves inductive reasoning as the Services appear reluctant to state what inherently governmental tasks or organizations require GO/FO presence. The Services' less-than-full-throated defense of their GO/FO numbers indicates that the levels have no inherent justification and could be reduced. The fact that none of the Services rebutted Secretary Gates's demand for fewer GO/FOs speaks to a weak case for the status quo. The Services have thus resorted to incremental bargaining in attempting to maintain their numbers, offering minor concessions at the lower ranks of GO/FOs. Today's technology allows for a much clearer battlespace picture than at any time in history, allowing for a flatter chain of command, obviating the need for multiple GO/FO inputs. Staff and headquarters elements are the least defensible places for layers of brass. The burden of proof should be on the Services to justify GO/FOs outside of senior leadership and commanders of large line organizations. Services must be required to identify not which GO/FOs they want to give up but which ones they want to keep. JFQ

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Maureen Mylander, *The Generals: Making It, Military Style* (New York: Dial Press, 1974), 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Freeman, "The Pentagon Has Too Many Generals," *U.S. News & World Report*, July 24, 2013, available at <[www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/world-report/2013/07/24/the-pentagon-has-too-many-troops](http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/world-report/2013/07/24/the-pentagon-has-too-many-troops)>.

report/2013/07/24/the-pentagon-has-too-many-troops>.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Priscilla Offenbauer, *General and Flag Officer Authorizations for the Active and Reserve Components: A Comparative and Historical Analysis* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, December 2007), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Lawrence Kapp, *General and Flag Officers in the U.S. Armed Forces: Background and Considerations for Congress*, R44389 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service Report, February 18, 2016), 7–8.

<sup>7</sup> Mark Thompson, "Starry, Starry Fight: The Pentagon's General Bloat," *Time*, May 15, 2016, available at <<http://time.com/4336563/military-generals-congress/>>.

<sup>8</sup> Mark F. Cancian, *Reducing the Number of Active Duty General/Flag Officers* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 9, 2016), available at <[www.csis.org/analysis/reducing-number-active-duty-generalflag-officers](http://www.csis.org/analysis/reducing-number-active-duty-generalflag-officers)>.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *The Generals: American Military Command from World War II to Today* (New York: Penguin, 2012), 350.

<sup>10</sup> Charles C. Krulak, "The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War," *Marines*, January 1999, available at <[www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/strategic\\_corporal.htm](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/strategic_corporal.htm)>.

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Edgar F. Puryear, Jr., *Marine Corps Generalship* (Washington, DC: NDU Press, 2009), 234.

<sup>12</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, *The Pentagon and the Art of War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985), 28.

<sup>13</sup> Government Accountability Office (GAO), *DOD Needs to Update General and Flag Officer Requirements and Improve Availability of Associated Costs*, GAO-14-745 (Washington, DC: GAO, September 9, 2014), 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Author's review of "Authorized Strength: General and Flag Officers on Active Duty," in *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017: Conference Report to Accompany S. 2943*, U.S. House of Representatives, 144<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., Report 114-840, November 30, 2016, available at <[www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-114hrpt840/pdf/CRPT-114hrpt840.pdf](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-114hrpt840/pdf/CRPT-114hrpt840.pdf)>.

<sup>16</sup> Author's review of end-strength numbers.

<sup>17</sup> Congressional Research Service Report compilation of data provided by Defense Manpower Data Center.

<sup>18</sup> Pete Gaynor, "Where Have All the Colonels Gone?" *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 2005, 44.

<sup>19</sup> Thompson.

<sup>20</sup> Fiscal Year 1986 authorized \$296 billion, which would be \$657 billion today. Fiscal Year 2017 authorizes \$590 billion. Defense spending began a steep decline at the outset of this period and a steep increase 15 years later before declining again. Dollar amounts compared at

<[www.usinflationcalculator.com/](http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/)>.

<sup>21</sup> "How Bad Is Our Bloat of Generals? How Does It Compare with Other Armies?" *Fabiusmaximus.com*, September 10, 2012.

<sup>22</sup> GAO, cover letter.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>24</sup> Nancy A. Youssef, "Exclusive: 21 Generals Lead ISIS War the U.S. Denies Fighting," *Daily Beast*, March 31, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Meghann Myers, "The Coast Guard Just Got Its Second Four-Star Admiral," *Navy Times*, June 1, 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Chuck Grassley, "Marine Corps Generals," *Congressional Record*, 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, July 30, 1996, S9150.

<sup>27</sup> *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017*, 1014.

<sup>28</sup> Saagar Enjeti, "Here's Why Congress Wants to Fire So Many Generals," *Daily Caller*, June 26, 2016, available at <<http://dailycaller.com/2016/06/26/heres-why-congress-wants-to-fire-so-many-generals/>>.

<sup>29</sup> Greg Jaffe, "Gates: Cuts in Pentagon Bureaucracy Needed to Help Maintain Military Force," *Washington Post*, May 9, 2010, available at <[www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/08/AR2010050802495.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/08/AR2010050802495.html)>.

<sup>30</sup> Celeste Ward Gventer, "Military Should Trim the Top, Like Most Innovative Organizations," *New York Times*, May 28, 2014, available at <[www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/11/05/does-the-military-have-too-many-generals](http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/11/05/does-the-military-have-too-many-generals)>.

<sup>31</sup> Frederick Pang, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, Testimony before the Subcommittee on Personnel of the House National Security Committee, April 8, 1997, quoted in Kapp, 1.

<sup>32</sup> Mylander, 27.

<sup>33</sup> Ricks, 350.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 348.

<sup>35</sup> Daniel P. Bolger, *Why We Lost: A General's Inside Account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars* (New York: Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin, 2014), xiii.

<sup>36</sup> See Dan Lamothe, "The Air Force Is Investigating Sexual-Assault Allegations Against a Retired Four-Star General," *Washington Post*, August 26, 2016.

<sup>37</sup> Ricks, 213.

<sup>38</sup> *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017*, 1013.

<sup>39</sup> "How Much Does an Army General Cost Taxpayers?" *Slate.com*, August 2010, available at <[www.slate.com/articles/news\\_and\\_politics/explainer/2010/08/how\\_much\\_does\\_an\\_army\\_general\\_cost\\_taxpayers.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/explainer/2010/08/how_much_does_an_army_general_cost_taxpayers.html)>.

<sup>40</sup> Connor O'Brien and Gregory Hellman, "Trump's Defense Budget Boost Falls Short of Buildup Plans," *Politico*, March 16, 2017; Mackenzie Eaglen, "Why Trump's Defense Budget Is Not Enough to Rebuild America's Military," *The Hill*, March 16, 2017.