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clude: (1) crisis situations for which plans must be prepared; (2) domestic and international political constraints; (3) other planning assumptions; (4) broad policy guidance including a clear statement of U.S. interests; and (5) an indication of the range of options that should be developed. This document could be modeled on the Planning Guidance for Contingency Planning issued by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown in 1980.

- Option 3B —develop a continuing exercise program to test the adequacy of major contingency plans

In the Fall of 1978, DoD conducted an exercise of a major war plan for a NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict. This exercise, entitled *Nifty Nugget*, was highly beneficial. The *National Security Policy Integration* study discusses the benefits of *Nifty Nugget*:

...The exercise brought to light a number of flaws in the plans and planning process as well as weaknesses in our capability to carry out the plans. The result has been beneficial for both planning and program/budgeting. (page 35)

This option proposes that a continuing series of these major exercises be conducted. The objectives of this option would be to: (1) evaluate the quality of various contingency plans; (2) identify deficiencies in the plans; and (3) increase the level of interest in the contingency planning process.

## F. EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

This section evaluates the specific options for reforming the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that were set forth in Section E. No effort will be made here to compare these options with each other or to identify the most promising options for legislative action. Rather, this section seeks to set forth in the most objective way possible the pros and cons of each alternative solution. The options will be identified by the same number and letter combination used in the preceding section.

Prior to evaluating specific options, it may be useful to put the institution of the JCS into context. The report of the Chairman's Special Study Group begins with the following quote from the introduction to *Common Sense* written by Thomas Paine:

A long habit of not thinking a thing *wrong* gives it a superficial appearance of being *right*, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom.

As the Chairman's Special Study Group implied, this situation clearly applies to the JCS. As John Kester has noted: "The JCS are a product of history, not of logic." ("The Future of the Joint Chiefs of Staff", page 23) Despite this fact, there has been great reluctance and strong opposition to questioning the logic of the JCS institution.

The performance of the JCS in both war and peace clearly support a careful analysis of the institution. For example, in *Organizing for Defense*, Paul Hammond, writing in 1961, concludes:

...From the vantage point of a decade and a half after the end of World War II the question can be a considerably more limited one: does its record in that war justify the confidence

placed in the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a principal institution in the postwar organization of the military establishment? The answer is, quite unmistakably, that it does not.

During World War II the Joint Chiefs of Staff worked effectively in handling the larger problems of strategy and operations which were its primary *raison d'être* only briefly and with respect to a limited range of issues. In addition, it kept its own counsel to a degree that caused considerable difficulties within the service departments and for civilian agencies whose functions were related to military strategy and operations. While its closed mode of operation was usually justified on grounds of military security, another reason was evidently the necessity which arose from its structure and situation. Its limited success, diminished by the costs which success incurred, does not justify the conclusion that World War II was a test of the JCS which established its value beyond substantial doubt. (page 185)

Dr. Lawrence J. Korb in *The Joint Chiefs of Staff* makes the same point:

Because the United States won such an overwhelming victory in World War II, much credit was heaped upon the JCS system....

However, the wartime success of the JCS was more apparent than real. During the war the chiefs reached agreement only by numerous compromises and after long delays. Moreover, coordination in material and administrative matters was incomplete and was largely forced upon the Joint Chiefs by circumstances arising from the war. The JCS functioned effectively as a strategic planning and direction agency only in the European theater from mid-1943 until May 1944. Before that time the chiefs were unable to agree on basic strategy in the light of the President's wishes. After May 1944, the JCS took a back seat to General Eisenhower's Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force. Finally, the Joint Chiefs actually had very little to do with the Pacific war. For all intents and purposes, the Navy directed the Pacific campaigns. Nevertheless, in spite of these World War II difficulties, all the postwar unification plans took the JCS as a *fait accompli*. No one apparently wanted to quarrel with success, and the only question that arose was the exact delineation of the powers of the JCS within the military establishment. (page 15)

Dr. Korb summarizes these events as follows:

The JCS evolved accidentally in the early stages of World War II. The success of the allied war machine obscured the weaknesses of the Joint Chiefs and created false expectations for their future performance. Contrary to the intentions of some of its framers, the National Security Act and its amendments did not create a unified military establishment, and the JCS is not the cause but the reflection of that diversity. (page 179)

These historical analyses are cited not to argue that the JCS should be reformed. Their purpose is to present the case for rigorous evaluations of the JCS and alternative organizational arrangements. Such evaluations have been precluded in the past by "a formidable outcry in defense of custom."

#### 1. OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF INADEQUATE UNIFIED MILITARY ADVICE

All options that can be envisioned for an institution to provide joint military advice involve some degree of conflict of interest. Such institutions will be comprised of military officers whose careers have largely been duty in one Service. Loyalties and, in some options, formal responsibilities to their Services pose a dilemma for officers whose principal duty is to provide advice from a joint perspective. While this conflict of interest cannot be eliminated, the first two options in this subsection would considerably lessen its intensity. The conflict of interest in the current JCS arrangement is so sharp that it greatly limits the utility of the institution.

##### ◦ Option 1A —establish a Joint Military Advisory Council

The establishment of a Joint Military Advisory Council (JMAC) would substantially reduce the conflict of interest of officers serving on this senior advisory body. This council of military advisors would have the responsibility to provide the best possible joint military advice, uninhibited by Service responsibilities and pressures. Moreover, these senior advisors would be able to dedicate their full time and attention to these important duties.

Each member of the JMAC would have substantial expertise on the capabilities of his parent Service. While he would not be as knowledgeable as the Service Chief, his understanding of Service capabilities and programs would be nearly as good, particularly if the Service Chief ensured that he were fully informed on developments. Moreover, JMAC members would have a significant advantage over many Service Chiefs: they would have had substantial joint experience.

Another advantage of separating joint advisory and Service administration functions is that it would result in two positions that require very different abilities. This would facilitate the assignment of senior military officers who have the specific talents required by each position. The current "dual-hatted" position requires a combination of administrator, leader, strategist, and operational planner. Officers who are well-qualified in all of these areas are rare.

The ability of the Service Chiefs to devote their full time to Service administration and of JMAC members to devote their full time to the joint advisory role is an important feature of this option. Both of these roles require full attention; as a result, both suffer under the current arrangement. Because a Service Chief gives his greatest attention to the Service leader role, the joint advisory role is particularly shortchanged.

There are many JCS duties that are now poorly performed as discussed in detail in Section D. The ability of JMAC members to spend full time on these neglected duties could be a substantial benefit of this arrangement. In particular, JMAC members could

establish close and continuous contact with the operational commanders and carefully monitor their requirements.

In sum, establishment of a JMAC would provide a powerful joint perspective to serve as a counterweight to the Service perspectives that currently dominate the joint arena.

There are numerous arguments against this option. Principal among these is the view that removing the Service Chiefs from the institution that provides joint military advice would separate responsibility and authority. Those that hold this view argue that because the Service Chiefs are responsible for organizing, equipping, manning, and training Services forces, they must be involved in the authority for the employment of those forces. As Admiral James L. Holloway, III, USN (Retired) has argued on this issue:

The Congress has long recognized that to separate responsibility and authority leads to an impossible system of accountability. It would result in a military establishment totally out of control. (SASC Hearing, December 16, 1982, page 37)

This argument appears to have little merit. The terms "responsibility" and "authority" are used in an imprecise and confusing manner. The Service Chiefs do have responsibility and authority for organizing, equipping, manning, and training their Service forces. They are to be held fully accountable for executing these logistics responsibilities efficiently and effectively. However, the Service Chiefs, even when wearing their JCS hats, have no responsibility or authority for the employment of U.S. military forces. That responsibility and authority are assigned to the Secretary of Defense and the operational commanders. Accountability for force employment is also clearly placed with the Secretary and the combatant commanders.

In his paper, "The U.S. Military Chain of Command, Present and Future", General W. Y. Smith, USAF (Retired) presents another dimension of the argument that it is unwise to separate responsibility and authority. In recommending that the Service Chiefs remain JCS members, General Smith argues:

...But many of the positions taken by the Joint Chiefs are matters of judgment involving decisions the Services must in part or in full carry out, and here broad military agreement can be most beneficial. Successful implementation is more likely if the recipients of the instructions [the Service Chiefs] have been a part of the decision process (even though their views have not completely prevailed) and are fully aware of what they are told to do. (page 14)

In essence, General Smith believes that the Service Chiefs may not understand what needs to be done or appreciate the need for fully complying with the decisions of higher authority if they are not part of the joint decision-making process.

This argument has merit to the extent that it reflects a natural bureaucratic desire to be involved in decisions by higher authority and a tendency to resist decisions in which an organization believes that it was not a full participant. By itself, this argument does not appear to have sufficient merit to justify the retention of an ineffective joint advisory body. Furthermore, it should be noted that

the Service Chiefs would continue to be active participants in the Defense Resources Board where the primary issues of interest to the Services —programs and budgets —are decided.

There is great concern about one particular separation of responsibility and authority and about the lack of involvement of certain recipients of instructions. It arises, however, in connection with the unified commanders. As Chapter 5 notes, the unified commanders will be held responsible and accountable for force employment, but they have extremely limited authority to shape the capabilities of the forces under their command or ability to be heard in senior decision councils. Given that the current JCS arrangement has exacerbated these problems, the option of creating a Joint Military Advisory Council may help alleviate a critical imbalance in responsibility and authority and provide a greater level of involvement by the operational commanders.

The second major argument in opposition to this option is that a body of senior military advisors divorced from executive authority would become a “council of eunuchs” with little impact on actual decisions. General W. Y. Smith, USAF (Retired) presents this argument as follows:

...Experience has shown, however, an advisory council within the joint system that does not do more than advise sees its influence diminish over time. In the early years of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the Chiefs created a Joint Strategic Survey Committee, charged with advising the Chiefs on broad strategy matters, to be manned by the best and the brightest young flag and general rank officers. The Committee, with no control over resources, had substantial influence for a time; then its impact eroded and it was disbanded. There is no reason to believe that the fate of a modern-day similar advisory board would fare any better. (“The U.S. Military Chain of Command, Present and Future”, page 39)

While General Smith’s description of the fate of the Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC) is accurate, it is not clear that it is an appropriate analogy for the JMAC. The JCS may not have wanted the JSSC to provide crisp advice on matters of broad strategy for fear that it would have limited Service independence. The advice of the JMAC may, however, be highly desired by the Secretary of Defense and others. The validity of this criticism of a JMAC centers on the influence that this advisory body would have with the President, National Security Council, and Secretary of Defense. If its advice were valued by these officials, it would play a powerful role. If not, the JMAC would play only a minor role in important issues. The ultimate determinant is likely to be the quality of the advice offered.

The third negative argument is that JMAC members would quickly lose their currency on Service and other operational issues. An extension of this argument is that the separation of JMAC members from day-to-day Service activities might produce an “ivory tower” mentality. A troubling possibility is that Service officials, both military and civilian, might attempt to isolate a JMAC member from his parent Service. Obviously, JMAC members would have to devote sufficient attention to Service developments to

ensure an accurate knowledge of their current status. This clearly appears to be possible. However, the Secretary of Defense would also have to play a forceful role in ensuring that JMAC members have unrestricted access to necessary Service information.

It is recognized that Service-unique inputs are required in many areas of joint planning, strategy formulation, and other advisory tasks. The vast majority of these efforts are undertaken in a deliberate manner which permits adequate time for the Joint Staff to obtain the necessary Service inputs and for the JMAC members to consult, as necessary, with the Service Chiefs.

A fourth negative argument is that the establishment of the JMAC would diffuse military influence by creating two sources of military advice: the JMAC and the Service Chiefs. According to this argument, neither source would be as powerful as the present "dual-hatted" Service Chiefs. Less powerful military advisors would have diminished influence with the President, National Security Council, Secretary of Defense, and the Congress. As a result, the military point of view will not be adequately represented before decision-making bodies. Speaking with one voice on joint issues has always been an objective of U.S. military officials although its utility to civilian decision-makers is questionable.

There is a powerful counter-argument to this view. At present, the military voice in DoD decision-making plays a limited role because of the poor quality of advice that results from the institutional deficiencies of the present JCS system. The JMAC —capable of objective analyses of issues —could provide better advice and present a better articulation of professional military views. Such inputs are likely to carry much more weight with the Secretary of Defense and other decision-makers.

Moreover, with the current organizational arrangements, civilian decision-makers normally receive from the JCS only one recommendation for consideration. It would appear useful to have more than one recommendation offered by several sources of senior military advice.

Clearly, establishing the JMAC would create additional power centers and make some aspects of internal DoD organization more difficult. External presentation of DoD positions may also be less consistent. However, these would appear to be acceptable costs for the benefits that would result from having an objective body of senior military advisors capable of approaching issues from a national perspective.

Another negative argument is that the separation of the Service Chiefs from the joint advisory body could intensify interservice competition. The Service Chiefs would remain powerful officials even if a JMAC were created. When freed of responsibility for joint cooperation and capabilities, the Service Chiefs may pursue narrow Service interests with greater vigor. The present degree of Service cooperation might be lost. This is clearly a possibility. On the other hand, the degree of Service cooperation is currently limited by the careful protection of Service interests in the JCS system. The advice offered by the JCS is the lowest common level of assent among the four Services. The JMAC may be able to highlight opportunities for vastly improved interservice cooperation and coordination. To the extent that these opportunities affect Service inter-

ests, they will be strongly resisted. It would be the responsibility of the Secretary of Defense to decide these issues and to ensure that his decisions are fully implemented.

A sixth negative argument —not related to disestablishment of the JCS but to other options for a joint advisory institution —is that the JMAC would continue to perpetuate a committee system. Those who raise this argument believe that a committee system — whatever its composition —would lead to extensive negotiations and compromises that would lessen the likelihood of crisp, clear advice for civilian decision-makers. The alternative is to place the responsibility for joint military advice in the hands of one or two officers, such as the JCS Chairman and a Deputy. This alternative would lead to a narrower set of inputs and experiences in the formulation of joint military advice. This may not be desirable.

The last major argument against this option is the dramatic nature of the changes that it proposes. Many of the effects of this option will be difficult to foresee. Opponents of this concept may argue that a more incremental approach should be pursued.

◦ Option 1B —establish a Chief of the Joint Staff

Under this option, the JCS would be disestablished and the Chief of the Joint Staff, assisted by a Deputy, would become the principal military advisor to the President, National Security Council, and Secretary of Defense. This option would have many of the same advantages as Option 1A (Joint Military Advisory Council): (1) would reduce the conflict of interest for those responsible for joint military advice; (2) would provide the opportunity for better joint military advice, uninhibited by Service responsibilities and pressures; (3) would enable Service Chiefs to devote their full time to Service administration; and (4) would provide an opportunity for a greater role for joint military advice in decision-making through a better articulation of professional military views.

Similarly, this option has many of the disadvantages of Option 1A: (1) the Chief of the Joint Staff and his Deputy would not be as knowledgeable as the Service Chiefs on Service capabilities and programs; (2) these two officials could be isolated from the Services; (3) some aspects of DoD internal management would be more difficult; (4) external presentation of DoD positions would be less consistent; (5) interservice competition might be intensified; and (6) the full effect of this dramatic change would be difficult to foresee.

Aside from these pros and cons, the principal advantage of this option is that it would end the committee system in the formulation of joint military advice. By creating a single Chief of the Joint Staff, the principle of unity of command would be applied at the level of the senior military advisory institution. The most senior U.S. military officer would be able to make clear recommendations to civilian authorities after gathering and considering all relevant information and inputs.

On the other hand, assigning responsibility for joint advice to only two military officers —the Chief and Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff —would limit the range of senior Service expertise and experience that would be brought to bear in the formulation of joint advice. There may be some tasks —primarily advice on operational matters during crises —in which the committee system

should be avoided. However, for other tasks in which a more deliberate process is possible, it would appear useful to have a wide range of inputs.

As an additional consideration, only two of four Services would be represented by the Chief and Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff. The two Services not represented may believe that their Service-unique inputs have not been adequately addressed. As a consequence, their resistance to proposed alternatives may be formidable.

- Option 1C —designate the JCS Chairman as a statutory member of the National Security Council

This option has two objectives: (1) to enhance the stature of the JCS Chairman; and (2) to ensure that military advice is directly provided to the NSC. The first objective is likely to be obtained if this option were implemented. As a statutory member of the NSC, the JCS Chairman would be viewed as a more powerful and influential official. He may be able to use this enhanced stature to take positions and provide advice independent from the views of the corporate JCS. Alternatively, if he continues to be constrained by the requirement to speak only for the corporate JCS, the advice that he offers is likely to continue to be ineffective. If there is a clear desire to have a more independent JCS Chairman capable of forceful articulation and representation of the joint perspective, it appears that more powerful actions will be necessary.

This option is likely to fail to meet its second objective: ensuring that military advice is directly provided to the NSC. The Congress cannot through legislation instruct the President from whom he must receive advice. If the President believes that the professional military should have a voice at particular NSC meetings, he will invite appropriate officers, including the JCS Chairman. If the President does not want advice from the professional military, for whatever reason, it cannot be forced upon him by law.

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski and Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, USAF (Retired), former Assistants to the President for National Security Affairs, support these views. In testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, Dr. Brzezinski stated:

Insofar as the deliberations of the NSC itself are concerned, it is immaterial whether the Chairman of the JCS is made a statutory member....In practice, attendance at the formal NSC meetings is at the President's discretion, and discussion is equally open to the statutory and nonstatutory members. The President calls upon those whose views he wants to hear.

There is no vote and no de facto distinction between participants. Thus the views of the Chairman of the JCS are heard as much as the President wishes to hear them. (Part 11, page 488)

During the same hearing, General Scowcroft presented a similar view:

I think the present system where the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is an adviser to the NSC is perfectly adequate. He does and should attend most of the meetings and he will respond in whatever manner the President wishes to use him. (Part 11, page 495)

While there are convincing arguments that professional military advice should be directly presented to the NSC when national defense or security issues are being addressed, there is no way of ensuring this through legislation. The National Security Council is an advisory body to the President. He is and should be free to use and organize it as he sees fit. Congressional efforts to instruct him on the appropriate use and composition of this body are likely to be futile in addition to being undesirable.

In addition to these considerations, this option has a major disadvantage in that it would make the Secretary of Defense and one of his subordinates, the JCS Chairman, equals on the NSC. This would be highly undesirable. It would undermine the Secretary's authority and lead to confusion in the formulation of defense policy and the management of the Department of Defense. Dr. Brzezinski shares this concern:

The issue [statutory membership on the NSC for the JCS Chairman], therefore, should be judged not in terms of the JCS contribution to the NSC deliberations as such, but rather in terms of the relationship between the Chairman of the JCS and the Secretary of Defense.

While I strongly favor the reforms proposed by Gen. David Jones for the enhancement of the role and status of the Chairman of the JCS, I would be concerned over changes which dilute the authority of the Secretary of Defense as the President's principal officer on defense matters. (SASC Hearings, Part 11, page 489)

General W. Y. Smith, USAF (Retired) sees another disadvantage in making the JCS Chairman a statutory member of the NSC: the senior military position could become politicized. In his paper, "The U.S. Military Chain of Command, Present and Future," General Smith argues:

...As a member of the NSC the Chairman would tend to be perceived as a member of the Administration's political team because he would be sitting with the other statutory members: the Vice President and the presidentially appointed Secretaries of State and Defense. It is inadvisable for him to be so perceived either at home or abroad. Furthermore, it is not inconceivable that the selection of a Chairman under these conditions could become politicized as each Administration would want to make certain it had a Chairman compatible with its outlook and objectives. This would gravely endanger our apolitical military tradition. (page 44)

- o Option 1D —authorize the JCS Chairman to provide the President, National Security Council, and Secretary of Defense with military advice in his own right

As the only member of the JCS without responsibility to represent Service interests, the JCS Chairman is uniquely qualified to champion joint military interests. However, his ability to effectively do so is tremendously limited by his lack of authority to present his own views.

It is absolutely clear that the joint perspective is now under-represented in the Department of Defense. In the absence of more dra-

matic reforms of the JCS, the only possible way to provide more effective representation of this critical point of view is to authorize the JCS Chairman to forcefully present his own views independent of the corporate JCS position or that of individual Service Chiefs. While there are other options to enhance the independent authority of the JCS Chairman, this is obviously the most important. The other options would serve to complement this one. By themselves, the other options would have a limited effect.

Critics of this option question whether a JCS Chairman —whose background, experiences, and biases are derived largely from duty in one Service —should be considered as being any more objective or expert than other JCS members. In this context, the argument is put forward that the overriding advantage of the current JCS system (with all its faults) is that it ensures that the collective experiences and professional judgments of JCS members are included in the process through which advice is formulated. While the corporate JCS and individual Service Chiefs would still have the opportunity to present their views, they could be overshadowed by a powerful JCS Chairman whose influence would be out of proportion to his expertise and experience.

There is some validity to this argument. However, so long as the members of the JCS, with the exception of the Chairman, retain their Service leadership roles and thus function as a committee of the lowest common denominator, there would seem to be only one way to strengthen the representation of joint interests: enable the JCS Chairman to present his own independent views.

- Option 1E —authorize the JCS Chairman to independently manage the Joint Staff

At present, the JCS Chairman has only a small, immediate staff that reports to him. The Joint Staff works for the corporate JCS body. If the JCS Chairman is to be able to forcefully represent the joint perspective, he must be able to direct the Joint Staff to conduct its work in support of this unified outlook.

The principle advantage of this option is that it may substantially alleviate the tendency of the Joint Staff to propose consensus recommendations representing the lowest common denominator of possible Service agreement. The JCS Chairman could ensure a more objective approach to issues by the Joint Staff. He could also ensure that critical issues receive the attention that they deserve regardless of their level of controversy from the Service perspective. The JCS Chairman could ensure that the Secretary of Defense would receive a greater diversity of viewpoints, more rapidly generated, and more sharply defined than at present. The JCS Chairman could also be authorized, as is proposed by Option 1K in this section, to alter the cumbersome staffing procedures of the Joint Staff which are primarily designed to achieve consensus.

Under this option, work on the Joint Staff would probably become more interesting and offer a greater opportunity for meaningful contributions on important issues. These possibilities might attract higher caliber officers to Joint Staff assignments. It should be noted, however, that this option would not fully ensure the independence of the Joint Staff since each officer would still be dependent on his Service for future promotions and assignments.

Critics of this proposal argue that the JCS Chairman would become too powerful if he solely managed the Joint Staff. He would have full authority to set the work agenda of the Joint Staff. His biases would be forced on the Joint Staff which would be required to accommodate and support his views. With this substantial staff support, the JCS Chairman would be able to completely dominate the other JCS members. There is a possibility that the Service Chiefs might seek to increase the size and quality of their Service staffs to more effectively argue their disparate views.

On the other hand, it can be convincingly argued that the reverse is now the case. By requiring that the Joint Staff work for the corporate JCS, the Service Chiefs have denied the JCS Chairman access to sufficient staff support. At the same time, the Service Chiefs have large Service staffs to support them in their joint work. The Chairman's Special Study Group noted the reliance of the Chiefs on the Service staffs and their limited interaction with the Joint Staff:

...by tradition, the Chiefs prefer to depend on their Service staffs rather than on the Joint Staff to analyze Joint issues and to assist them in preparing for JCS meetings. For this reason, there are collectively about as many officers in the Service staffs generally dedicated to Joint activities as there are on the Joint Staff. More important, the Service Chief is not given the benefit of regular Joint Staff advice to balance against the Service views he receives from his own Service staff. The Chief obviously has access to Joint Staff papers, but he does not normally interact with the Joint Staff on a regular basis, nor is he routinely briefed by the Joint Staff. (page 10)

In essence, authorizing the JCS Chairman to independently manage the Joint Staff would correct a current imbalance in staff support and would not, as some have claimed, create an imbalance. As John Kester has concluded:

...Unless the [JCS] chairman can call on the joint staff for meaningful help, his position resembles that of the first secretary of defense, who was limited by law to no more than four civilian assistants. ("The Future of the Joint Chiefs of Staff", page 14)

◦ Option 1F —establish the position of Deputy JCS Chairman

A Deputy JCS Chairman would be authorized to assume the authority of the Chairman whenever he was traveling away from Washington, D.C. (which is quite often). This would provide for improved continuity and control in the exercise of the Chairman's responsibilities. In a position as critical as JCS Chairman, continuity and control are important and desirable. In supporting the proposal to create a Deputy JCS Chairman, General Bernard W. Rogers, USA, the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. European Command (USCINCEUR), stressed the need to ensure the presence in Washington of a cross-service spokesman at all times:

...The Chairman is a cross-service spokesman, not the service chief. When the Chairman is not there, we need, I think, a

Deputy to the Chairman who is a cross-service spokesman. (SASC Hearings, Part 7, page 279)

An additional advantage of a Deputy Chairman is that it would give the JCS Chairman an ally within the JCS who was independent of any Service and capable of objective consideration of the joint perspective. General W. Y. Smith questions, however, whether a Deputy or Vice Chairman would be an ally of the JCS Chairman:

...it has been stipulated that the Vice Chairman would come from a Service other than that of the Chairman. The Chairman presumably would have a say in his selection, but the extent to which the Vice Chairman would have any personal loyalty to the Chairman or necessarily share his point of view is at least questionable. ("The U.S. Military Chain of Command, Present and Future," page 39)

Moreover, critics of this option have suggested that the Deputy Chairman would have little to do whenever the Chairman was in town. If the Chairman were given greater authority, however, he would probably have more than enough work to delegate. It might be desirable to task the Deputy Chairman to focus on resource issues in the same manner that the Deputy Secretary of Defense serves the Secretary. It would also be possible to specify that the Deputy Chairman would also serve as the Director of the Joint Staff, thus making him the Chairman's key ally in managing the staff. This would only make sense if the preceding option of authorizing the Chairman to manage the Joint Staff were implemented. Alternatively, the Deputy Chairman could assume the responsibilities currently performed by the Assistant to the Chairman (i.e., coordinating JCS relations with outside agencies like the Department of State and the National Security Council). If the Deputy Chairman took up duties now performed by another flag or general officer, an additional flag or general officer billet would not have to be created.

Critics of this option believe that a Deputy JCS Chairman is not needed. General Vessey has stated:

...a four-star deputy chairman is not required and one would, in fact, not improve the operation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (Answers to Authorization Report Questions)

Moreover, critics argue that the creation of a Deputy Chairman would end the system of rotating the position of Acting Chairman among the Service Chiefs. Many observers believe that this rotating system has had the positive benefit of broadening the perspective of individual Service Chiefs. General Vessey has commented that giving the Deputy Chairman the Chairman's duties in his absence.

...takes away an important integrating tool that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have been using for the past three years; that is, we have rotated the duties of Acting Chairman in the absence of the Chairman for periods of three months. We have found that this procedure makes all of us better members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and from time to time brings each of the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff into direct contact with

the Secretary of Defense and the President. Modern day communications permit the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be in contact with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff and, through the National Military Command System, all of the commanders in chief of the unified and specified commands no matter where he is in the world. We have found over the past few years that the combination of modern communications and using Service Chiefs for long and planned tours as Acting Chairman in Washington has worked well for consistency of advice and in unifying the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (Answers to Authorization Report Questions)

General Paul F. Gorman, USA, then the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Southern Command and former Assistant to the JCS Chairman, presented similar arguments in testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services:

I believe that that system which General Vessey and his colleagues adopted has had the great benefit of educating members of the JCS in the intricacies of the operations of the National Command Authority in the way that they would not otherwise have gotten, had they been left out of the net as it were in the former fashion.

It has made a very serious proposition of their getting themselves briefed and remaining briefed on world events day by day. They have to curtail their travel as members of the service chiefs. In brief, they have to really put their minds to the kinds of consideration that the Chairman has to bring on issues day to day.

I think that has made for a better set of chiefs. (Part 7, page 303)

The new procedure of a 3-month rotation among the Service Chiefs of the responsibility for serving as Acting Chairman is clearly preferable to the previous approach. Prior to institution of the current system, the most senior Service Chief or, if necessary, Vice Chief available became Acting Chairman when the JCS Chairman was absent. As might be expected, the position of Acting Chairman changed hands much more frequently and continuity was diminished. As the Chairman's Special Study Group noted about this earlier period:

...During one recent three-day period when the Chairman was out of town the responsibility for Acting Chairman changed hands seven times. (page 38)

Despite the improvements offered by the new procedure, there are a number of disadvantages to the system of rotating Acting Chairmen. First, the Service Chiefs cannot keep themselves informed on the Chairman's work. When they begin their tour as Acting Chairman, they make an effort to become as knowledgeable as possible on this work. This becomes an additional burden on Service Chiefs who already lack sufficient time to cover their normal responsibilities. Moreover, this system of rapid education poses risks, particularly at the beginning of a tour of an Acting Chairman. The Chairman's Special Study Group highlighted these

risks in discussing the need for continuity in the Chairman's position:

...This is important in many areas, but surely the most critical involves the role of the Chairman as an advisor to the Secretary and the President in the emergency use of strategic nuclear forces, now a highly technical subject. (page 22)

Second, an Acting Chairman may not be able to divorce himself from his Service interests. There have been instances where Acting Chairmen have sought to promote the interests of their Services. This would clearly be a misuse of this position. In testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, General Bernard W. Rogers, USA, USCINCEUR, noted one instance in which this occurred:

I well remember an NSC meeting in which a Chief was representing the Chairman and it was directed that he, the Chief, never again attend an NSC meeting because he used that opportunity to inject into the system some matters which should not have been raised. (Part 7, page 306)

Third, an Acting Chairman may continue to rely primarily on his Service staff during his tour. Again, Service perspectives would play an undesirable role in the conduct of the duties of the joint spokesman. Former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger noted this problem in testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services:

...If the Chairman happens to be out of town during a crisis, as was the case in the Mayaguez incident, the acting Chairman, quite naturally, tends to lean on his own service staff. That causes a fair amount of turmoil in the system. (Part 5, page 188)

- Option 1G —authorize a 5-star grade for the position of JCS Chairman

General Omar N. Bradley, USA, is the only JCS Chairman to have held a 5-star rank. General Bradley, the first JCS Chairman, was promoted to the rank of General of the Army after serving in this position for more than 1 year.

The objective of this option would be to enhance the stature of the JCS Chairman and, thereby, increase his power and influence. While these goals are laudable, this option by itself is likely to have little impact. By statute and by practice, the JCS Chairman is seen as the most senior U.S. military officer. Promoting the JCS Chairman to 5-star rank would not, therefore, change his relative stature.

- Option 1H —lessen the pressures for unanimity in JCS advice

Clearly, the JCS would better serve the interests of senior civilian decision-makers if it developed, evaluated, and presented the full range of valid alternative courses of action. When the JCS offers only one recommendation for consideration by higher authority, it ceases to be an advisory body and essentially becomes a decision-making body. When presented with only one proposal —without an appreciation of other possible courses of action —civilian officials can either endorse this alternative or develop addition-

al options using other staff, usually civilian, resources. This is not a preferable system for receiving joint advice. The Chairman's Special Study Group comments as follows on this situation:

...there are few defense issues with only one possible resolution, and any Secretary of Defense will be quite aware that alternatives do exist. If he does not find them in JCS papers, he will turn to his civilian staff to find them and to determine whether they are preferable to the one recommended by the JCS. But, no matter how useful this civilian advice, it cannot substitute for a competent military evaluation of the alternatives. (page 47)

Another advantage of this option is that it would help curtail collusion by the JCS. This collusion has been described by various observers as negotiated treaties, truces, log-rolling, back-scratching, and marriage agreements. All of these terms characterize a process in which the needs of the Secretary of Defense and others for clear, usable advice are given low priority and the protection of Service interests is emphasized. It can be convincingly argued that collusion by the JCS members to protect Service interests does not serve the overall interests of national defense.

On the other hand, the professional military has long held the view that its influence is maximized if it speaks with one voice in favor of one course of action. If the senior military advisors openly showed divided views on an issue, the influence of the professional military on the eventual decision would be diminished. In *Organizing for Defense*, Paul Hammond articulates this point of view:

...Were the comity of JCS relations to be abandoned, far more would be lost than gained. To be sure, comity has not meant an unwillingness to disagree. It has meant, nonetheless, delay, equivocation, and compromise in order to minimize the costs of open disagreement to the status of the Chiefs and their services, together and individually. For open division would likely mean the end of the professional status which the military enjoy through the JCS in the making of national policy. Its professional character would be tainted by the arguments and assumptions which open discussion would reveal. What might be worse for American military interests, and quite likely for the nation, would be reduced influence of badly divided military councils in the making of national policy. The JCS, that is to say, represents an interest, and quite a legitimate one, which can only be maintained by its cohesion... (page 350)

This argument is based, however, upon misplaced emphasis: the degree of military influence has become the focus rather than the quality of advice offered. Again, the tendency of the JCS to serve their interests rather than those of the Secretary of Defense appears to be the case.

The success of this approach is also open to question. While a united front of JCS members poses a formidable force with which to reckon, there is substantial evidence that JCS advice has played a limited role in many important decisions. Secretaries of Defense have often recognized "watered down" and ineffective advice and have sought counsel elsewhere.

- Option II —remove barriers to effective interactions with the JCS system, especially for the Office of the Secretary of Defense

Related to its desire for unanimity, the JCS have created effective barriers that limited interactions with non-Service organizations, especially OSD. A more open system would reveal the existence of disagreements within the JCS system. In line with the quote in the discussion of the preceding option, Hammond argues that JCS cohesion “is achieved by its closed military staff characteristics.” (*Organizing for Defense*, page 350)

While arguing that the Joint Staff “does deal openly” with OSD and others, General John W. Vessey, Jr., USA, the current JCS Chairman, offers another reason for carefully controlling such interactions:

...it is the Joint Chiefs of Staff who are charged with being advisors to the Secretary of Defense, the President, and the National Security Council. Because of the importance of the issues with which the Joint Chiefs of Staff deal, the Joint Chiefs of Staff guard that duty very carefully. The Joint Chiefs of Staff want JCS advice to be just exactly that and not to be Joint Staff advice. The Joint Staff duty is to advise the Joint Chiefs of Staff and assist them in carrying out their duties. (Answers to Authorization Report Questions)

While DoD directives clearly call for substantial cooperation between OJCS and OSD, this has not been the result. If both OSD and OJCS, including the JCS themselves, are to provide advice to the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary cannot be well served by either organization if their advice arrives from two separate channels with limited interaction and coordination. Dr. Lawrence J. Korb does not believe that effective OJCS —OSD interactions are possible. In his book, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff*, he writes:

...directing the Joint Staff to cooperate with the Office of the Secretary of Defense to act as one staff for the secretary is totally unrealistic. The members of the Joint Staff from one service do not even cooperate fully with joint staffers from the other services. While on the Joint Staff, they are responsive primarily to the interests of their own service. To expect them to operate in unison with a civilian staff is asking too much. (page 19)

While numerous alternatives for improving OJCS —OSD interactions were presented in Section E, the vast majority of these should not be considered for congressional action. Only two proposals are worthy of consideration in the context of this study: (1) specifying in statute the desired relationship between the Secretary of Defense and the JCS and between OJCS and OSD; and (2) making OJCS part of OSD.

Sections 141, 142, and 143 of title 10, United States Code, are silent on relationships between the Secretary of Defense and his civilian assistants and the JCS, the JCS Chairman, and the OJCS staff. DoD Directive 5100.1 does specify the relationship between the Secretary of Defense and the JCS/OJCS. The relationship between OSD and OJCS is specified in DoD Directive 5158.1. Given

the conflict in the specified and actual relationships, it might be useful to include statutory language that presents the desired relationships. By itself, such additions to title 10 are not likely to have a substantial impact. Despite this realization, no disadvantages of more clearly establishing in statute these important relationships have been identified.

Incorporating OJCS into OSD also has appeal. The existence of OJCS as a wholly separate institution has fostered efforts by the JCS to secure greater autonomy and independence from the Secretary of Defense. The success of these efforts has undermined the authority of and the support for the Secretary. Making OJCS part of OSD would clarify this issue. The JCS is not to be independent of the Secretary of Defense; it is to serve him and be responsive to his needs.

On the other hand, reduced independence for the JCS could create an environment in which it would be easier to "muzzle" the military voice in national security decision-making. While this possibility cannot be absolutely discounted, the system of checks and balances in the Federal Government offer many opportunities to frustrate such an undesirable effort.

- Option 1J —strengthen the requirement for joint experience for promotion to Service Chief of Staff

Given the relatively limited joint experience that Service Chiefs bring to their JCS duties, it would clearly be desirable to set some joint duty standard for promotion to such an important position.

On the other hand, the screening process for Service Chief is extensive. Some observers do not believe that there is a need to establish another yardstick for evaluating the qualifications of candidates for Service Chief positions.

- Option 1K —authorize the JCS Chairman to specify the staffing procedures of the Joint Staff

If the JCS Chairman were authorized to independently manage the Joint Staff, as is proposed by Option 1E, it would be logical to also authorize the Chairman to establish the staffing procedures. If, however, the Joint Staff continued to work for the corporate JCS, the arguments are more divided.

It is clear that the current staffing procedures undermine the quality of joint papers. The process magnifies Service interests and obscures joint considerations. The JCS Chairman would be the most logical person to establish procedures that would strike an appropriate balance between Service and joint perspectives.

On the other hand, if the Joint Staff is to serve the corporate JCS, giving the JCS Chairman the authority to specify staffing procedures might permit him to effectively control the Joint Staff. He might establish a process that would serve his needs and neglect the requirements of the Service Chiefs. This might be of particular concern if the following option, which would substantially reduce the Service staffs which work on joint matters, were implemented.

- Option 1L —substantially reduce the Service staffs which work on joint matters

Many observers of the DoD organization have criticized the overly large bureaucracies, excessive layers, and unnecessary dupli-

cation of effort. The large number of military officers on Service staffs who are dedicated to joint matters appears to fit into this category of criticism. Moreover, the existence of these Service staff elements has shifted the focus to Service interests and away from the joint perspective. The Service Chiefs have also come to rely on their Service staffs for inputs that they should be receiving from the OJCS staff.

Substantially reducing the Service staffs which work on joint matters could have numerous benefits: (1) the OJCS staff may be able to address joint issues from a more independent and objective position; (2) the Service Chiefs would be forced to rely on the OJCS staff on joint matters; and (3) the duplication of effort between the OJCS and Service staffs could be substantially lessened.

On the other hand, the Services have important inputs to make on joint issues. It may be necessary to have large Service staffs dedicated to joint matters to consistently ensure that such inputs are made on a timely basis. The absence of effective Service inputs may preclude careful and comprehensive evaluations of joint issues within the JCS system.

This option needs to be addressed in the context of other proposed solutions to OJCS problem areas. If Option 1A (Joint Military Advisory Council) or Option 1B (Chief of the Joint Staff) were implemented, substantially reducing the Service staffs which work on joint matters would clearly be possible and desirable. The loss of responsibility for providing joint advice would greatly lessen the needs of the Service Chiefs for Service staff support on joint matters. The 25-man staff that would remain available to the Service Chief under this option could serve to keep the Chief informed on joint issues and provide necessary information to the OJCS.

If the JCS Chairman were authorized to independently manage the Joint Staff (Option 1E) and/or to specify the staffing procedures of the Joint Staff (Option 1K), there may be a requirement to ensure that the Service Chiefs retained sufficient staff support on joint matters. Such a requirement would arise only if there were concerns that the JCS Chairman would use these new authorities so aggressively that the position of the Service Chiefs would be severely weakened.

## 2. OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE INADEQUATE QUALITY OF THE OJCS STAFF

- Option 2A —give the JCS Chairman some influence in the promotion and assignment of officers who are serving or have served in OJCS

The power that the Services retain over OJCS staff officers (and other joint duty officers) through their control of promotions and assignments is enormous. The current system results in incentives to protect Service interests rather than to think in joint terms. Joint thinkers are likely to be punished, and Service promoters are likely to be rewarded. This system of punishments and rewards must be changed if the quality of the OJCS staff is to be improved and if the objectivity of its work is to be increased.

Giving the JCS Chairman some influence in the promotions and assignments of past and current OJCS officers appears to be the

best possible method of changing the currently unfavorable incentives. As the senior military officer representing the joint perspective, the JCS Chairman is best qualified and positioned to ensure that OJCS officers receive fair treatment.

On the other hand, this option may be viewed as an outright challenge to an important Service prerogative: unrestricted management of its professional corps of officers. It would put Service officers under the effective control or potential influence of a military officer outside of their Service.

Despite strong Service objections, it will be impossible to obtain quality work from the OJCS staff unless those officers can be protected from Service retribution for objectively performing their joint duty assignments.

- Option 2B —strengthen the requirement for joint duty for promotion to flag or general rank

The current requirement for joint duty prior to promotion to flag or general rank has been circumvented to the extent that it is meaningless. Obviously, a strengthened requirement for joint duty would greatly increase the interest in OJCS assignments. This should improve the quality of the OJCS staff.

On the other hand, this option could be viewed as an undesirable pressure tactic. As the Chairman's Special Study Group noted:

...To increase interest in Joint duty, one could return to a strict interpretation of that prerequisite [joint duty prior to promotion to flag or general rank] or, indeed, institute other forms of pressure on officers to seek Joint assignments. However, such coercive policies are not the best approach, nor are they likely to be effective in the long run. (Appendix E, page E-1)

In addition, the Services claim that there are insufficient joint duty assignments (under a strict interpretation) to permit the qualification of sufficient candidates for flag or general rank. If this were the case, this option would produce difficulties in personnel management and lead to an undesirable practice of quick, ticket-punching rotations of officers through joint duty assignments.

- Option 2C —require the JCS Chairman to evaluate all nominees for 3-star and 4-star positions on the basis of their performance in joint duty assignments

This option has two objectives: (1) to ensure that nominees for 3-star and 4-star positions have strong joint duty backgrounds; and (2) to provide an additional incentive for highly qualified officers to seek joint assignments and to perform their duties in these positions with objectivity.

As to the first objective, this option appears to be too broad. Many nominees for 3-star or 4-star positions will be serving only in Service assignments. Authorizing the JCS Chairman to evaluate their qualifications for a Service position does not appear appropriate. However, the JCS Chairman should be forcefully involved in evaluating nominees for 3-star and 4-star positions that are joint duty assignments.

As to the second objective, this option might provide an additional incentive for joint duty. However, it has, in the view of some ob-

servers, the same coercive nature as Option 2B. On the other hand, this option can be viewed as providing a desirable and appropriate incentive. For example, in recommending that the JCS Chairman evaluate all 3-star and 4-star "operational" promotions as well as selected key assignments below those grades, General W. Y. Smith states:

...This would formalize the informal voice the Chairman now has in senior promotions, and it is an important change. It would send the proper signal concerning the importance of joint duty. ("The U.S. Military Chain of Command, Present and Future", page 43)

- Option 2D —increase the number of cross-Service assignments of military officers

In addition to joint duty, cross-Service assignments provide an improved understanding for a military officer of the capabilities, doctrine, and tactics of a sister Service. The individual Services are the only ones, however, that can judge to what extent such assignments can be made without undue disruption of the Service experience and training of an individual officer and without creating shortfalls in officers available for Service duty.

This does not appear to be an area where congressional action can or should be taken. At most, the Congress could merely encourage the Services to expand as appropriate their cross-Service assignments of military officers.

- Option 2E —establish a personnel management system to ensure that joint college graduates actually serve in joint duty assignments

This option appears to be highly desirable. A substantial portion of the graduates of the three colleges of the National Defense University (NDU) should receive joint duty assignments. This is not to say that NDU graduates do not make better contributions to their work if assigned to a position within their Service. However, only a small percentage of NDU graduates actually are now being assigned to joint duty.

No disadvantages of this option have been identified as long as the Services are given some flexibility in assignments of NDU graduates.

- Option 2F —authorize the Secretary of Defense to approve the extension of tours on the Joint Staff beyond the current 4-year limitation

The Joint Staff currently suffers from a lack of experience, continuity, and corporate memory. This option would seek to lessen these deficiencies. By authorizing the Secretary of Defense to extend Joint Staff tours for military officers, it would be possible to retain key personnel to provide the JCS with quality staff work.

Opponents of this option may see extended tours on the Joint Staff as the first step to the creation of a General Staff. The argument may be made that officers who serve for more than 4 years on the Joint Staff would lose currency on Service doctrine, operations, and capabilities and, thereby, be susceptible to an "ivory tower" approach.

There may be some merit to these negative arguments. However, careful control of such extensions by the Secretary of Defense could lessen these possibilities while providing the necessary experience and continuity in key Joint Staff positions.

- Option 2G —establish in each Service a joint duty career specialty

The Chairman's Special Study Group made the following observations about the preparation and tenure of joint duty officers:

...All professional military assignments have special requirements for prior training and experience. Submarine skippers, F-15 pilots, and infantry battalion commanders all require—and are given—careful preparation.

The same should be true for officers serving in Joint assignments, such as the Joint Staff or the Unified Command headquarters. Aside from understanding how such staffs function, they face the immense problem of learning how the DoD and their sister Services function. Few officers are expert in the several branches of their own Service, let alone the other Services. But officers serving on Joint staffs should at least have a broad working knowledge of all the Armed Forces. Few do. Most assigned to Joint duties have little formal preparation, and few stay long enough to acquire expertise on the job... (page 41)

Given the demanding nature of joint duty assignments, it would appear appropriate to establish a joint duty career specialty. This would provide an opportunity to develop a small cadre of military officers who have demonstrated abilities for and an interest in joint duty. This cadre would provide for better continuity, more objectivity, and greater experience in the handling of joint matters.

To ensure that joint staffs served by joint duty career specialists would not become isolated, this option has two important features. First, joint duty specialists would return periodically to their parent Services for field assignments to maintain currency. Second, only half of the positions on joint staffs would be filled by joint duty specialists, thereby retaining a mix of varied backgrounds and ensuring that joint staffs would not become isolated.

The Services have opposed the creation of a joint duty career specialty for two basic reasons. First, the Services believe that implementation of a joint duty specialty would require the establishment of a joint-duty subspecialty in each functional area. This increase in the number of subspecialties, according to the Services, would disrupt current Service personnel systems and detailed officer distribution plans.

Second, the Services argue that a succession of joint duty assignments may result in a loss of currency with respect to Service doctrine, operations, and capabilities. Accordingly, an officer's ability to contribute to the work of a joint staff would be diminished.

In a memorandum for Secretary Weinberger dated December 24, 1984, General John W. Vessey, Jr., USA, JCS Chairman, presented the following conclusion on a joint duty career specialty:

The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the commanders of the unified commands consider Service functional expertise the most im-

portant prerequisite in selecting officers to fill joint-duty positions, and they consider a separate career specialty unnecessary to ensure that qualified, experienced personnel are selected for joint-duty assignments.

- Option 2H —establish a General Staff in place of the current Joint Staff

Before evaluating this proposal to establish a General Staff, it should be noted that the U.S. military establishment has not rigorously analyzed the General Staff concept. As Colonel T. N. Dupuy, USA (Retired) notes:

...the United States has generally ignored (rather than rejected) the example of the German General Staff... (*A Genius for War*, page 312)

While there was some interest in a U.S. General Staff by those who were studying alternative organizational arrangements during World War II and the immediate post-war period, there has been little attention on the subject since then. This is particularly troublesome because objective evaluations of the concept would only seem possible after the strong emotions associated with World War II began to subside. It may be that the General Staff is an out-moded organizational concept and does not fit the American approach to providing for national defense. Unfortunately, the U.S. military establishment is unable to say whether this is the case or not.

The establishment of a General Staff is a far-reaching option that might substantially contribute toward resolving the existing inadequacies of the Joint Staff. The fundamental characteristic of a General Staff is that its officers, once selected, remain General Staff officers throughout the remainder of their careers, regardless of their assignments. Their promotions are determined by their superiors on the General Staff, not by their original Service.

On the plus side, the very nature of a General Staff would give top-quality officers an incentive for entering this career path, knowing that it offered a promotion track wholly separate from any Service. The type of officer attracted would probably be particularly interested in and suited for staff work. The independence and objectivity of a General Staff, as well as the high-quality officers that it would likely attract, would make it a powerful instrument in planning for war, developing military strategy, and promoting inter-Service cooperation and coordination. In particular, a General Staff would be able to cut across the biases of the individual Services in determining innovative and effective ways for employing their combined combat capabilities.

Former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown presents the following arguments in favor of a General Staff in his book, *Thinking About National Security*:

Such an approach would be an attempt to introduce a clearer and less parochial military view on issues of military strategy and capabilities, and the relationship between the two. It would provide a means to clarify roles and missions and to improve the procedure for establishing the requirements for oper-

ational capabilities. A General Staff would be able to review, compare, and suggest changes in the plans of commanders with different geographical or functional responsibilities and to decide among their competing demands for limited combat resources. Decisions would be less likely to be influenced by (or go unmade because of) questions of whether individual unified and specified commanders are from one service or another, whether the functions are oriented toward one service or another, or how the decisions would affect service roles, missions, opportunities, futures, and personalities. The President, the Secretary of Defense, and Congress would be able to get much clearer and more accountable military advice than they get now —if they want it. U.S. military planning and strategy would become more responsive to the changed needs of military operations and to complex political-military situations. (page 210)

Numerous arguments have been raised against the General Staff concept. These criticisms have focused upon the Prussian-German General Staffs of the period of 1807–1945. Missing from this debate is the recognition that a number of other nations, including the United States, France, and Soviet Union have employed the General Staff concept. Another critical point relating to the German General Staff of World War II was that it was not an Armed Forces General Staff, but only served as the central staff for the German Army. This is an important distinction, as subsequent discussion will reveal. Despite these critical omissions, this evaluation will focus on the criticisms of the German General Staff. As a starting point, the concerns expressed by the Congress are presented and are followed by other criticisms.

Congressional hostility to a General Staff is a principal reason why this concept has not been seriously considered for application in the U.S. military establishment. Given the central role of congressional opposition, Appendix A of this chapter presents a paper (specifically prepared for this study) on “The Evolution of Congressional Attitudes Toward a General Staff in the 20th Century” by Robert L. Goldich, Specialist in National Defense, Congressional Research Service. Goldich determined that World War II and Service unification were watershed events influencing congressional attitudes toward the General Staff concept. Prior to World War II, congressional discussions of a General Staff “reflected more positive than negative views of the institution.”

In the immediate postwar period, the experiences of the war against Germany and its famous Army General Staff and the disputes over Service unification proposals combined to radically alter congressional attitudes. Goldich summarizes this finding:

After World War II, congressional discussion of general staffs arose in the context of proposals to provide stronger organizational coordination and management of the four military services through creation of a central Department of Defense and a Joint Chiefs of Staff organization. Opponents of unification of the Armed Forces under a central Department of Defense, or equivalent organization, argued that a joint, or inter-service staff structure in a more unified military establishment

would represent an undesirable step toward the German General Staff system. These opponents of service unification were principally partisans of the Navy and Marine Corps, who felt that naval and amphibious interests and identities would be dominated by the Army and Air Force in a unified Department of Defense.

Great confusion about the nature of the German General Staff was generated by the resulting debate. There was vehement discussion and uncertainty about the extent to which the German General Staff created, as opposed to reflected, militarism and authoritarianism in pre-1945 Germany. Modern scholarship inclines to the latter view. There was also a blurring in the minds of many congressional commentators between a general staff as (1) an organization charged with assisting a nation's military high command in the planning and execution of military operations (which is found in the military services of all nations) and (2) an elite branch of the career officer corps whose members monopolized high-level positions in the national military headquarters and in field commands (which was unique to pre-1945 Germany).

Those Members of Congress, and others who were opposed to service unification thus may have reflected a distaste for German military institutions, opposition to service unification, and/or unclear comprehension of the varying ways in which a general staff could be defined. The result was an equation of increased centralized control of the separate military services with German General Staff methods and organization, hence with pre-1945 German militarism, and an extension of opposition to the German General Staff to opposition to *any* General Staff. The wars and upheavals which led to the crystallization of these beliefs in the minds of Members of Congress 40 years ago were cataclysmic in nature. Given the evidence of the persistence of these attitudes until well after the end of World War II, it is likely that they linger yet.

Congress' deep concern over the nature of a General Staff was reflected in the 1958 Defense Reorganization Act which expressly prohibited the Joint Staff from operating or being organized "as an overall Armed Forces General Staff..." In its report accompanying the 1958 Act, the House Committee on Armed Services emphasized its reasons for finding a General Staff "dangerous":

Such an organization [a General Staff] is clearly desirable in battle, where time is everything. At the top levels of government, where planning precedes, or should precede, action by a considerable period of time, a deliberate decision is infinitely preferable to a bad decision. Likewise, the weighing of legitimately opposed alternative courses of action is one of the main processes of free government. Thus a general staff organization—which is unswervingly oriented to quick decision and obliteration of alternative courses—is a fundamentally fallible, and thus dangerous, instrument for determination of national policy.

As a corollary, it is the nature of a general staff at national level to plan along rigid lines for the future. This creates rigid-

ity of military operations and organization and historically has led general staffs to attempt to control all national policies involved in war—notably foreign and economic policy, both of which lie far beyond the proper sphere of military planners.

Moreover, when structurally placed over all the armed services and military departments, an overall Armed Forces general staff serves to isolate the politically responsible civilian official from all points of view but its own, so that, while he, in theory at least, retains all power, this power becomes increasingly captive to the recommendations of the general staff.

It has, parenthetically, been a concern of the committee, in considering the proposed legislation, lest a defense organization be ultimately created in which power is totally concentrated in the Secretary of Defense only so that it may be wielded and controlled more effectively by a military tier (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Joint Staff) immediately below him.

For these and for other reasons, Congress has historically rejected an Armed Forces general staff and single Chief of Staff. This rejection was exhaustively debated in 1947 when Congress shaped the top organization of the services along representative lines (Joint Chiefs of Staff supported by service committees) and rejected the authoritarian concept advanced in the so-called Collins plan for a single Chief of Staff and a national general staff.

The opposition to the General Staff concept articulated by the House Committee on Armed Services in 1958 can be summarized as follows. It found that the General Staff concept had the following deficiencies: (1) a failure to systematically consider the full range of alternatives; (2) rigidity of thought; (3) an attempt to control national policies that are beyond military affairs; (4) isolation of civilian officials from other points of view; and (5) erosion of civilian control of the military by concentrating too much power in the hands of the military officers immediately below the senior civilian official.

These congressional criticisms are highly inaccurate and cannot be supported by historical analysis of the work of General Staffs, particularly those of Prussia and Germany. In fact, these criticisms more accurately reflect the actual deficiencies of the current Joint Staff than they do the imagined shortcomings of the General Staff concept. Each of these criticisms is evaluated below.

#### a. Failure to consider alternatives

First, General Staffs have traditionally provided objective consideration of all valid alternatives, to a much greater extent than is now done by the Joint Staff. In *A Genius for War*, Colonel T. N. Dupuy, USA (Retired) discusses the objectivity of German General Staff work:

Anyone who has reviewed German staff documents cannot fail to marvel at the objectivity of their staff analyses and estimates. This was true not only when they attempted to analyze the causes of defeat or failure, but also in their evaluation of technical or tactical performance of other nationalities, in

peace and war. There was no NIH —“not invented here” — syndrome in the German General Staff. (pages 304 and 305)

b. Rigidity of thought

Second, rigidity of thought or inflexibility have never been identified as deficiencies of General Staffs. Such staffs have been highly innovative and have quickly and objectively recognized previous failures. Dupuy discusses the encouragement of initiative and imagination in German General Staffs:

There is no direct evidence that German military emphasis on imagination and initiative has been due to a conscious effort to offset any traditional German cultural trait of regimentation. If not conscious, however, this may well have been an unconscious motivation of German General Staff theorists. That these efforts to encourage initiative and imagination were successful is evident from the fact that it was in this area, probably more than any other, that the German, at all levels, excelled in both world wars. (page 304)

Dupuy also comments favorably on the German General Staff's attitude toward intellectual individuality:

In most armies, intellectual individuality is viewed with some suspicion and even hostility; it is an automatic challenge to authority and the Party Line. In the German Army this natural human reaction also existed —but was offset by the General Staff's deliberate efforts to encourage and reward intellectual individualists. (page 306)

Max Hastings also discounts the argument of rigidity of thought:

...One of the more absurd propaganda cliches of the war was the image of the Nazi soldier as an inflexible squarehead. In reality, the German soldier almost invariably showed far greater flexibility on the battlefield than his Allied counterpart. (“Their Wehrmacht Was Better Than Our Army”, *The Washington Post*, May 5, 1985, page C4)

c. Attempt to control national policies

As to attempts to control national policies, there appears to be some evidence to support this assertion in the actions of Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg and General Erich Ludendorff of the German General Staff during World War I. Dupuy comments as follows:

...By this time [July 1917] the real leaders of Germany, with power unchallenged, were Hindenburg and Ludendorff. The Field Marshall and the General had not seized power; Germany's political leaders, pale imitations of Bismarck, had abdicated power to them. (page 167)

However, these events occurred in a government where the Army was under the effective control of only the monarch —Kaiser William II —and not the parliament —the Reichstag. Despite this occurrence, it has little to do with the system of government in the United States in which civilian control of the military by the President and the Congress is well established.

In World War II, the German General Staff did not attempt to control national policies. The General Staff was absolutely controlled by Adolf Hitler and its influence even over military matters began to decline in 1938 and continued to erode during the war. As Colonel Dupuy notes:

The decline of the General Staff as the key military institution in Germany had begun when Hitler assumed the position of Defense Minister and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in early 1938. (page 276)

d. Isolation of civilian officials and erosion of civilian control

As to its relations with civilian officials, there is nothing inherent in the General Staff concept that would either isolate civilian officials from other sources of advice and influence or dominate them and, thereby, erode civilian control of the military. In an editorial page article in *The Washington Post* on June 9, 1984, Colonel Dupuy emphasizes this point:

...there is absolutely no evidence that general staffs have in any way eroded civilian control of the armed forces in any nation. They have been subservient to autocrats when they have been created in autocratic societies; they have ably defended liberty when they have been implanted in democracies. The general staff most noted of all, that of Germany, twice attempted to substitute democracy for autocracy in an autocratic society, but failed on both occasions because the autocracy was too entrenched. ("Military Reform: The Case for a Centralized Command", page 19)

Similarly, Captain John M. Nolen, USA, in his article, "JCS Reform and the Lessons of German History," writes:

Those who claim that JCS reform might threaten civilian control cannot make their case using Hitler's Germany as an example. Granted, the German generals are not guiltless figures in the rise of Hitler and subsequent Nazi aggression. But one of the clear lessons of the Hitler era is that civilian control was never jeopardized. Hitler, the Nazi politician, insured his lasting control over the generals. (*Parameters*, Volume XIV, No. 3, page 19)

In addition to these weak and inaccurate congressional criticisms, there are other arguments in opposition to the General Staff concept which merit consideration. These include: (1) the loss of World Wars I and II is itself an indictment against the General Staff concept; (2) a General Staff would become a dangerous elite; (3) a General Staff would promote militarism; (4) a General Staff is alien to democratic societies; (5) the very nature of General Staff would result in officers too far removed from the field to be realistic planners; and (6) the German General Staff was incompetent in formulating strategy.

e. Loss of World Wars I and II

In *A Genius for War*, Colonel Dupuy summarizes (but does not endorse) the first negative argument as follows:

The Germans lost World War I, and they also lost World War II. These simple truths would seem to provide prima-facie evidence that German military “genius” —whether personalized or institutionalized —was not performing very well during those wars. (page 290)

The historical record does not support this argument. In both World Wars, the German Army under direction of the General Staff outperformed its opponents. Even Gary W. Anderson, a strong critic of the General Staff concept, admits this fact:

...The German army consistently performed better than any of its single opponents from 1866 until 1945. (“The Military Reformers’ Prussian Model”, *The Washington Post*, May 21, 1984, page 19)

Max Hastings reaches a similar conclusion about German military forces during World War II:

The inescapable truth is that Hitler’s Wehrmacht was the outstanding fighting force of World War II, one of the greatest in history. For many years after 1945, this seemed painful to concede publicly, partly for nationalistic reasons, partly also because the Nazi legions were fighting for one of the most obnoxious regimes of all time. (“Their Wehrmacht Was Better Than Our Army,” *The Washington Post*, May 5, 1985, page C4)

Colonel Dupuy agrees:

...Germany’s involvement in, and loss of, the World Wars was in no way connected with the professional organization, indoctrination, or performance of the German General Staff. (*A Genius for War*, page 302)

#### f. Elitism

The second negative argument is the dangers associated with creating an elite military organization such as a General Staff. If the General Staff effectively performed the important role envisioned for it, it will almost certainly become an elite organization and attract many of the best military officers. This is not a reason, however, for precluding the search for a more effective central staff organization. In his paper, “Designing a U.S. Defense General Staff”, John Kester counters the argument of elitism:

...The armed forces are supposed to reflect merit and achievement, not to be egalitarian. They do not exist to make people happy; they exist to do a job. It is not self-evident that feelings of jealousy or awe that might develop among some officers [if a General Staff were created] would be so debilitating as to offset the gains in influence and efficiency that could be expected to flow from a better staff organization. (*Strategic Review*, Summer 1981, page 43)

Kester adds to this:

Moreover, the services already have elites. The question is simply where the chosen shall serve. (page 43)

#### g. Militarism

Some of the past aversion to the creation of a General Staff has arisen from the concept's historical roots in Prussia and hence, its identification with "German militarism". While the association of the General Staff concept with militarism persists, there is no historical evidence to support it. The adoption of the General Staff concept by numerous democratic nations with no sign of militaristic tendencies may serve to place this argument in its proper context.

#### h. Alien to democratic societies

The fourth criticism of the General Staff is that it is alien to democratic societies. In 1956, Hubert Humphrey presented this view. In defending the JCS system, he criticized

...the form of highly centralized supreme general staff system which is anathema to every concept of democracy.

Gary W. Anderson presents this argument as follows:

Strong general staffs, as they evolved in Russia and Germany, are manifestations of autocratic political systems that are essentially alien to the way we do things in our democratic republic. The American military machine is a servant of the state, not a partner in dictating political policy.

General staffs...have traditionally extracted a price for their services...an erosion of civilian control of the armed forces... ("The Military Reformers' Prussian Model", *The Washington Post*, May 21, 1984, page 19)

Dupuy counters the assertions in Anderson's article as follows:

Nothing that Anderson writes, nothing in the historical record, will support any one of those three sentences. France had a strong General Staff in 1914, and this is why fiercely democratic France was able to survive the Marne Campaign and—eventually, with its allies—win World War I. The U.S. Army has had two strong general staffs in its history: 1917–1918, and 1942–1945. The performance of the U.S. Army during those two periods was up to the finest military traditions of our nation. Civilian control was exercised firmly and wisely by Woodrow Wilson, through Newton D. Baker, and by Franklin Roosevelt, through Henry L. Stimson.

There is no reason for the American military machine to change from being a servant of the state to being its master just because it achieves the efficiency that has been eluding it for centuries (with the brief exceptions for the Army noted above). In fact, the servant will be a useful one, instead of one (as it is now) of dubious utility. ("Military Reform: The Case for a Centralized Command", *The Washington Post*, June 9, 1984, page 19)

#### i. Removed from reality

One of the reasons for the rejection of a General Staff in the past has been that its officers might be too far removed from the field to be realistic planners. This argument is presented along the following lines. Although regular field assignments would alleviate the problem of unrealistic planning to a degree, the natural bent of

General Staff officers would be toward the theoretical. This inclination could lead to less than the most desirable staff advice, particularly in wartime. No matter how careful the selection process or how thorough the education system, the General Staff could become one step removed from reality and, hence, subject to serious blunders in both operational and resource allocation matters.

The performance of the German General Staff does not support this point of view. The General Staff quickly analyzed technical developments in military equipment and prepared appropriate changes in doctrine and battle plans. The most prominent example of this capability was the development of the "blitzkrieg" doctrine. Dupuy describes the General Staff process that produced these results:

...Like qualified observers and critics of the Allies, the Germans observed the obvious "lessons" of World War I. Unlike the others, however, they had an institution [the General Staff] available to make the much more difficult analyses of these observations, to include assessments of the characteristics, limitations, and capabilities of weapons, and the implications of trends in weapons and technology. Following analytical concepts initiated by Scharnhorst and continued by his successors, that institution almost automatically made the even more difficult translation of the analytical results into doctrine, organization, the establishment of requirements for new or modified weapons and equipment, and development of new and revised operational and administrative techniques. (*A Genius for War*, page 255)

This process does not appear to fit an organizational concept that is criticized as removing itself from reality. Moreover, the German General Staff ensured that its officers continued to receive regular field assignments to maintain currency.

#### j. Incompetent in formulating strategy

The last argument against the German General Staff—that it failed to formulate grand strategy—appears to have more merit than any other. Captain Nolen comments:

...Hitler's emasculation of the German General Staff system prevented any systematic assessment of Germany's strategic options. For all of its tactical brilliance, the German officer corps was strategically barren. Strategic decisions were made without the benefit of interservice consultation and coordination, and without considering the relations among the several decisions. (*Parameters*, Volume XIV, No. 3, page 18)

Dupuy reaches a similar conclusion:

Thus, in essence, Prusso-German military successes were based upon a transitory technical mastery of war. The ultimate failure in both conflicts came because the German military system—unlike those of the Allies—was too narrowly specialized. (*A Genius for War*, page 292)

While the inability of the German General Staff to formulate strategy was a critical deficiency, the criticism for the World War II period must be tempered by the fact that the German General

Staff was only an Army organization and was, therefore, unable to formulate grand strategy involving all three Services. As Nolen notes: "No headquarters was in charge of overall strategy." (page 17)

During World War II, Germany's military effort suffered from four interrelated, organizational shortcomings: (1) the inability to create an effective Armed Forces General Staff and to bring the three Services under unified command; (2) the Services' desire to remain independent of centralized planning and control; (3) the inability to effectively coordinate the operations of the three Services; and (4) a failure to formulate military grand strategy. Nolen discusses these shortcomings as follows:

Those who see the German General Staff as a model of military efficiency should reconsider the evidence. The German General Staff never solved the problem of centralized command; it remained an army organization. Though amazingly efficient at managing army affairs, it never achieved the status of an armed forces staff with the more complex mission of managing all three armed services. The OKW [Oberkommando der Wehrmacht], which might have performed such a role, was denied by Hitler the size, leadership, or authority to do so. However, Germany's failure to organize a strong armed forces staff was not the fault of Adolf Hitler alone. The armed forces must also bear part of the responsibility. The three services never willingly accepted subordination to a higher headquarters —either to Blomberg's *Wehrmachtamt* or, after 1938, to Keitel's OKW. The services certainly had grounds to question the competence of these higher organizations. Yet one wonders how much of their resistance was for professional reasons and how much was due to organizational rivalries. (page 17)

To this, he adds:

...Clearly the absence of an armed forces staff compounded Germany's military deficiencies. Only such an organization could have provided a balanced view of military strategy and properly divided resources among the three services. (page 18)

While the lessons of history concerning the General Staff concept remain debatable, the broader deficiencies in German military organization during World War II have been well and unambiguously documented. These lessons are relevant to the United States because the U.S. military establishment suffers at present from the four organizational deficiencies that plagued Germany during World War II.

- Option 2I —remove the distinction between the Joint Staff and other OJCS military officers and eliminate the statutory limitation on the size of the Joint Staff

The distinction between the Joint Staff and other military officers in OJCS serves no useful purpose. In addition, the 400 officer limitation on the size of the Joint Staff has been circumvented by the flexibility offered to assign officers to OJCS rather than the Joint Staff.

It would be much more useful to manage all military officers in OJCS under one system. Not only would this provide for improved personnel management practices, but it would also highlight the total number of personnel in the JCS system.

The argument raised against this option is that it would permit unconstrained growth in the size of the Joint Staff. To the contrary, this option would provide an opportunity to measure the growth in OJCS personnel resources without the artificial and confusing distinction between the Joint Staff and other OJCS staff.

- Option 2J—authorize the JCS Chairman to develop and administer a personnel management system for all military officers assigned to joint duty

Given that problems in joint duty assignments are broader than just those in the Joint Staff or even the OJCS staff, it would be appropriate to implement management arrangements that would solve the larger concerns. Many of the options proposed in this subsection envision a more forceful role for the JCS Chairman in correcting joint duty problems. Some of these options address only the OJCS staff; others involve all joint duty assignments, but only address narrow solutions to one of many problem areas.

This option would authorize the JCS Chairman to address all personnel problem areas encountered in the joint duty community. The JCS Chairman would be responsible for ensuring that (1) highly qualified officers were selected; (2) they had the appropriate promotion and assignment incentives; (3) they had relevant education and experience; (4) they served sufficiently long tours to be effective; and (5) they could be reassigned to joint duty as necessary.

This option could be implemented in conjunction with Option 2G (Joint Duty Career Specialty) or Option 2H (General Staff). Even if options to establish a joint duty career path were not implemented, the JCS Chairman could—with the authority proposed in this option—have a major impact on the quality and effectiveness of joint staffs.

Objections to this proposal are likely to center on the view that it would infringe upon Service prerogatives for management of their professional corps of officers. The JCS Chairman would have personnel management responsibility for 5 percent of military officers in grades of O-3 (Captain or Navy Lieutenant) and higher. The Services may be especially troubled by the fact that the JCS Chairman would manage nearly 20 percent of all flag and general officers.

Despite possible Service objections, it does not appear possible to obtain the necessary performance in joint duty assignments without substantial revision of current personnel management practices. Only the JCS Chairman can ensure that joint duty has the stature that it deserves, broaden the preparation of officers for joint duty, and reward them for effective work.

### 3. OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF INSUFFICIENT OJCS REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT OF CONTINGENCY PLANS

- Option 3A —require that the Secretary of Defense annually promulgate a Planning Guidance for Contingency Planning

This option would clearly be desirable. The absence of civilian guidance for contingency planning has been a major shortcoming. While it might be possible to provide such guidance without a formal document, it would appear to be more useful to transmit this important information in writing. Moreover, many of the users of this guidance would be located in operational command headquarters which are far removed from Washington.

In concluding that policy guidance for military crisis planning is needed, the *National Security Policy Integration* study states:

Effective military crisis planning requires higher government levels to select situations to be planned for, to provide the planners with realistic assumptions and objectives, and to conduct a critical review of the resulting plans. (page 36)

The Chairman's Special Study Group also supports this concept:

...The important iterative process by which the civilian and military leadership settle on military objectives and on the political assumptions important to contingency planning should be enhanced. The JCS must be furnished clearly defined objectives by the civilian leadership. (page 61)

Besides providing a framework for contingency planning, promulgation of a Planning Guidance for Contingency Planning would have numerous benefits: (1) result in increased attention to contingency planning; (2) lead to a useful questioning of assumptions; (3) help sharpen perceptions of U.S. interests and objectives; (4) ensure that political assumptions are consistent with national security policy; (5) highlight planning guidance issues that need attention; and (6) help connect the PPBS process and contingency planning.

There are two possible problems with this option. First, the guidance may be overly specific and unnecessarily constrain or complicate the work of contingency planners. Second, this guidance document would contain extremely sensitive information which, if leaked, might cause serious political problems or embarrassment. These concerns relate to implementation of this option and not to the concept itself. Clearly, a Planning Guidance for Contingency Planning would have to be carefully prepared and protected.

- Option 3B —develop a continuing exercise program to test the adequacy of major contingency plans

While increased attention by civilians and the JCS system to the review of contingency plans would be beneficial, it cannot substitute for the actual exercising of plans. Only through such tests can the quality of the plans be assessed and important lessons learned. The *National Security Policy Integration* study supports this view:

...military plans should be exercised periodically. Nifty Nugget underscored the need for such exercises, with high-level government participation, both to discover shortcomings in planning and to test the capabilities and resources needed to execute existing plans. (pages 36 and 37)

The disadvantage of this option is the cost of these exercises and the commitment of substantial time by senior civilian and military officials that is required to make the exercises effective. These financial and manpower costs are modest when compared to the sub-

stantial benefits of such tests. While planning and preparing for the future are important, senior officials must not neglect preparation for today's and tomorrow's crises. As the Chairman's Special Study Group has stated:

. . . One cannot overdramatize the fact that while the peacetime management of military activities is an important matter, preparedness for war management is the overriding imperative. That type of preparedness is the best possible deterrent to actual conflict, and provides the best assurance of success if deterrence fails. (page 65)

## G. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the conclusions and recommendations of this chapter concerning the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (OJCS). The conclusions result from the analyses presented in Section D (Problem Areas and Causes). The recommendations are based upon Section F (Evaluation of Alternative Solutions).

### Conclusions

1. The JCS is unable to adequately fulfill its responsibility to provide useful and timely unified military advice to the President, National Security Council, and Secretary of Defense.
2. Deficiencies in JCS advice have encouraged senior civilian officials to rely on civilian staffs for counsel that should be provided by professional military officers.
3. The conflict of interest inherent in the dual responsibilities of the Service Chiefs is the primary cause of deficiencies in JCS performance; furthermore, Service Chiefs do not have sufficient time to perform both roles.

### Recommendations

- 3A. Disestablish the JCS and, thereby, permit the Service Chiefs to dedicate all their time to Service duties.
- 3B. Establish a Joint Military Advisory Council consisting of a Chairman and a 4-star military officer from each Service on his last tour of duty.
- 3C. Reduce the Service staffs that work on joint matters to no more than 25 military officers for each Service.

### Conclusions

4. Removing the Service Chiefs from the institution that provides unified military advice increases the importance of the Defense Resources Board as a forum for the formal presentation of Service views.
5. The JCS Chairman's potential effectiveness as the principal spokesman for the joint perspective is curtailed by his limited independent authority.
6. There is an important need for continuity in the position of the senior spokesman on joint matters.
7. The desire for unanimity has not only forced JCS advice to the lowest common level of assent, but also has greatly limited the range of alternatives offered to the Secretary of Defense.
8. The closed staff characteristics of the OJCS have inhibited important interactions between the OJCS and OSD.
9. JCS members have traditionally not had a strong background of joint service.

### Recommendations

- 4A. Establish the Defense Resources Board in statute with appropriate Service representation.
- 5A. Authorize the Chairman of the Joint Military Advisory Council to provide military advice in his own right.
- 5B. Authorize the Chairman of the Joint Military Advisory Council to independently manage the Joint Staff.
- 6A. Designate one of the members of the Joint Military Advisory Council, from a different Service pair than the Chairman, as Deputy Chairman.
- 7A. Specify that one of the responsibilities of the Joint Military Advisory Council is to inform higher authority of all legitimate alternatives.
- 8A. Specify in statute the relationship between the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Military Advisor Council and between the Joint Staff and OSD.
- 8B. Make the Joint Military Advisory Council and the Joint Staff part of OSD.
- 9A. Require that members of the Joint Military Advisory Council have substantial joint experience.

**Conclusions**

10. The cumbersome staffing procedures of the OJCS have greatly reduced the quality of JCS advice.
11. The quality of the OJCS staff and other joint staffs is inadequate.
12. For the most part, military officers do not want to be assigned to joint duty; are pressured or monitored for loyalty by their Services while serving on joint assignments; are not prepared by either education or experience to perform their joint duties; and serve for only a relatively short period once they have learned their jobs.
13. DoD has not rigorously evaluated the General Staff concept.
14. The OJCS does not sufficiently review and oversee contingency plans.

**Recommendations**

- 10A. Authorize the Chairman of the Joint Military Advisory Council to specify the staffing procedures of the Joint Staff.
- 12A. Authorize the Chairman of the Joint Military Advisory Council to develop and administer a personnel management system for all military officers assigned to joint duty. Establish procedures, as part of this system, to ensure that joint college graduates actually serve in joint duty assignments.
- 12B. Establish in each Service a joint duty career specialty.
- 12C. Strengthen the requirement for joint duty for promotion to flag or general rank.
- 12D. Authorize the Secretary of Defense to approve the extension of tours on the Joint Staff beyond the current 4-year limitation.
- 12E. Remove the distinction between the Joint Staff and other OJCS military officers, eliminate the statutory limitation on the size of the Joint Staff, and redesignate the OJCS staff as the Joint Staff.
- 13A. Require the Secretary of Defense to undertake a comprehensive study of the General Staff concept.

**Conclusions**

15. There is no civilian guidance being used in developing contingency plans.

**Recommendations**

- 15A. Recommend to the Secretary of Defense that a Planning Guidance for Contingency Planning be annually promulgated, and a continuing exercise program to test the adequacy of major contingency plans be developed.

## APPENDIX A

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### THE EVOLUTION OF CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD A GENERAL STAFF IN THE 20TH CENTURY

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#### I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF ANALYTICAL FINDINGS

##### PURPOSE, BACKGROUND, AND SCOPE

The purpose of this report is to describe and analyze the evolution of congressional attitudes toward the concepts of military general staffs during the 20th Century, and assess them in the light of current leadership on the subject of general staffs. The nature of German military institutions and the German General Staff, American civil-military relations, and the roles and missions of the four U.S. military services, are involved in, reflect, and are crucial to an understanding of congressional attitudes toward a general staff. The report identifies trends and themes in these attitudes, and delineates factors which appear to have influenced the Congress and its members in arriving at the attitudes they have held.

This report was prepared at the request of the Senate Armed Services Committee to supplement the Committee's ongoing staff study of the organization and management of the Department of Defense (DoD). The Committee staff was interested in the development of and rationales for what it believed had been continuing congressional antipathy toward the term "general staff" and the concepts and structures it connotes.

The report begins with this brief statement of its purpose, background, and scope; a description of research methodology; and a summary of the major analytical findings of the report, centering on the crucial distinction between pre- and post-World War II congressional attitudes toward a general staff. The study then traces the historical development of the general staff concept, with particular attention to modern definitions and the German example. It then identifies and analyzes major themes in the evolution of congressional attitudes toward a general staff during the 20th Century, using the legislative histories—hearings, reports, and floor debates—of the six major legislative acts of the 20th Century related to Army and defense organization as primary sources. Emphasis is placed on issues of bureaucratic politics, executive-legislative relations, structural change in the military establishment, and reaction

to external developments such as the Nazi era and World War II. Brief concluding observations end the study.

**MAJOR ANALYTICAL FINDINGS: WORLD WAR II AND SERVICE  
UNIFICATION AS WATERSHED EVENTS**

World War II saw a fundamental change in the depth and intensity of congressional attitudes toward a general staff. Before World War II, discussions were in the context of the need to provide coherent staff support to overall national and senior field commanders in the conduct of military operations, and revolved around issues of bureaucratic politics and executive-legislative relations. On balance, these reflected more positive than negative views of the institution.

After World War II, congressional discussion of general staffs arose in the context of proposals to provide stronger organizational coordination and management of the four military services through creation of a central Department of Defense and a Joint Chiefs of Staff organization. Opponents of unification of the Armed Forces under a central Department of Defense, or equivalent organization, argued that a joint, or interservice staff structure in a more unified military establishment would represent an undesirable step toward the German General Staff system. These opponents of service unification were principally partisans of the Navy and Marine Corps, who felt that naval and amphibious interests and identities would be dominated by the Army and Air Force in a unified Department of Defense.

Great confusion about the nature of the German General Staff was generated by the resulting debate. There was vehement discussion and uncertainty about the extent to which the German General Staff created, as opposed to reflected, militarism and authoritarianism in pre-1945 Germany. Modern scholarship inclines to the latter view. There was also a blurring in the minds of many congressional commentators between a general staff as (1) an organization charged with assisting a nation's military high command in the planning and execution of military operations (which is found in the military services of all nations) and (2) an elite branch of the career officer corps whose members monopolized high-level positions in the national military headquarters and in field commands (which was unique to pre-1945 Germany).

Those Members of Congress, and others who were opposed to service unification thus may have reflected a distaste for German military institutions, opposition to service unification, and/or unclear comprehension of the varying ways in which a general staff could be defined. The result was an equation of increased centralized control of the separate military services with German General Staff methods and organization, hence with pre-1945 German militarism, and an extension of opposition to the German General Staff to opposition to any General Staff. The wars and upheavals which led to the crystallization of these beliefs in the minds of Members of Congress 40 years ago were cataclysmic in nature. Given the evidence of the persistence of these attitudes until well after the end of World War II, it is likely that they linger yet.

## II. THE CHANGING NATURE OF GENERAL STAFFS

The term "general staff" has been applied to numerous different features of military organization since the term first appeared in military literature in the 18th Century. By the last third of the 19th Century, the type of structure that had obtained before no longer applied anywhere in the industrialized world. It was replaced by two new and different types of organizational structures, which have been the subject of much analytical and polemical confusion—down to the present.

It is important to understand how general staff structures evolved, and what the nature of the pre-1945 German General Staff system was in order to understand why the Congress became interested in general staffs at different times. The first part of this chapter describes the difference between preindustrial and modern general staffs. This distinction is important to an understanding of why Congress was interested in and concerned about the creation of a modern U.S. Army General Staff in 1903 and in subsequent reforms of that structure. The second part describes the characteristics of the pre-1945 German General Staff and its relation to German militarism of the mid-19th through the mid-20th Centuries. This is essential for comprehension of how congressional attitudes toward the general staff were shaped by understanding—or lack of it—of the German General Staff.

### FROM THE PRE-INDUSTRIAL TO THE MODERN GENERAL STAFF <sup>1</sup>

Originally, the term "general staff" was applied, beginning in the middle of the 18th Century, to the collected central administrative officials, and commanders of specialized combat troops, of an army at its national headquarters or of the headquarters of an army in the field. These groups of individuals were almost exclusively concerned with *maintaining* and *supporting* forces in the field, rather than actually *employing* and *operating them*.<sup>2</sup> Well into the 19th Century, not all of them were professional soldiers; those with logistical and medical responsibilities were often civilians under contract.

The "general staff" of a field army, for instance, might consist of those persons responsible for supply, transport, finance (both paying the soldiers and disbursing money for provisions and equipment purchased on the march), military justice, and military discipline (policing the army, preventing desertion, and insuring that any pillaging or foraging was done on orders, or did not unduly interfere with the army's march). Also part of the general staff were commanders of what, in the preindustrial era, were the arcane, specialized, and "high-tech" artillery and engineer branches (even these leaders could be contract civilians). "Such

<sup>1</sup> This section is based largely on van Creveld, Martin. *Command in War*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1985: 27-40, which is in turn the most recent and comprehensive synthesis of scattered older works. Of the latter, see especially Irvine, Dallas D. "The Origins of Capital Staffs." *Journal of Modern History*, June 1938: 161-179.

<sup>2</sup> This distinction is appropriated from Barrett, Archie D. *Reappraising Defense Organization*. Washington, National Defense University Press, 1983.

lesser figures as surgeons, soothsayers, and executioners completed the colorful picture."<sup>3</sup>

The term "general staff" was first used to describe this type of staff in American military history during the War of 1812. One historian described the U.S. Army General Staff of that era in the following terms:<sup>4</sup>

It was not a general staff in the present sense. Rather, Congress established the War Department administrative offices which in modern terminology would become the special staff . . . The Secretary [of War] could henceforth call upon an adjutant and inspector general with two assistants, the inspector general and the assistant adjutant general; a quartermaster general; a commissary general of ordnance together with two deputies and an assistant; a paymaster; and an assistant topographical engineer. These officials, unlike previous holders of some of the same titles, were expected to settle in Washington and act as the permanent management staff of the War Department.

The "Army General Staff" came to denote this collection of War Department administrative and logistical bureau chiefs until the establishment of the modern U.S. Army General Staff in 1903.

What this traditional "general staff" did *not* do was provide a staff to assist the commander—whether of a national army or an army in the field—in planning and conducting actual military operations. To the extent that he had any such support, he obtained it from a very few individuals whose duties varied according to the situation—the quartermaster general, whose duties encompassed logistical and supply supervision; a personal secretary; and the senior commanders of military units.<sup>5</sup> Frequently, however, "An aggressive, fast-acting command . . . might well try to concentrate everything—intelligence, planning, operations, staff work—in his own hands, relying on his secretariat simply as a technical organ responsible for taking down his orders and allowing nobody to share his thoughts."<sup>6</sup>

The general staff of pre-industrial war was concerned with administration and logistics rather than operations because of the nature of pre-industrial war and the tasks and demands placed on field commanders in pre-industrial battles. Winston Churchill described the wholly personal nature of a general's actual command responsibilities in a pre-industrial battle in his biography of the Duke of Marlborough (1650–1722). The Churchillian language is no less accurate for being flamboyant:<sup>7</sup>

The task of the commander in Marlborough's wars was direct. There were no higher formations like divisions and

<sup>3</sup> van Creveld, *Command in War*: 35. See also David G. Chandler, "Armies and Navies: 1. The Art of War on Land." in J.S. Bromley, Editor. *The New Cambridge Modern History. Vol. VI, The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*. Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 1970. pp. 761-762.

<sup>4</sup> Weigley, Russell F. *History of the United States Army*. New York, Macmillan Co., 1967. p. 123.

<sup>5</sup> van Creveld, *Command in War*. pp. 37-38; Chandler, "Armies and Navies." p. 761.

<sup>6</sup> van Creveld, *Command in War*. p. 38.

<sup>7</sup> Churchill, Winston S. *Marlborough: His Life and Times*. Abridged and with an introduction by Henry Steele Commager. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968, pp. 281-283.

corps . . . The control of the battle was maintained on each side by eight or ten superior officers who had no permanent commands of their own, and were virtually the general staff officers of modern times, working in a faithful subordination.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the midst of the scene of carnage, with its drifting smoke-clouds, scurrying fugitives, and brightly coloured lines, squares, and oblongs of men, [the commander] sat on his horse, often in the hottest fire, holding in his mind the positions and fortunes of every unit in his army from minute to minute and giving his orders aloud. We must picture him in those days when the Signal Corps was non-existent, attended not only by three or four generals of high rank, but by at least twenty young officers specially trained and specially mounted, men who were capable of following the event with intelligent eyes, who watched the field incessantly, and who knew where to find the subordinate commanders, their brigades and regiments.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the times of which we tell the great commander proved in the day of battle that he possessed a combination of mental, moral, and physical qualities adapted to action which were so lifted above the common run as to seem almost godlike. His appearance, his serenity, his piercing eye, his gestures, the tones of his voice—nay, the beat of his heart—diffused a harmony upon all around him. Every word he spoke was decisive. Victory often depended on whether he rode half a mile this way or that. At any moment a cannon-shot or a cavalry inrush might lay him with thousands of his soldiers a mangled bundle on the sod. That age has vanished forever . . .

This language, written of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1702-1713, was almost as applicable to the Napoleonic Wars a century later, and almost all other wars waged until the middle of the 19th Century. Administration was considered to be susceptible to systematic control; combat operations were not. Furthermore, battlefield command, while perhaps requiring men with an extraordinary high degree of both moral strength and intellectual ability, was not yet exercised over forces and areas so large and/or complex as to be beyond the ability of any one man to control, regardless of his innate abilities.

Martin van Creveld has summarized why the duties of pre-industrial military staffs—including those, after the mid-18th Century, called “general staffs”—remained confined to administration: <sup>8</sup>

. . . the much greater uncertainty associated with operations, and the difficulty of reducing it to a set of rules, help explain why the modern general staff was so slow to develop; as late as the middle of the eighteenth century it

<sup>8</sup> van Creveld, *Command in War*. p. 90.

was an open question as to whether its functions should be carried out by the traditional council of war, by the commander's secretary, by the quartermaster general, or simply in the commander's head . . . The growing use of written letters of instruction between courts and their commanders in the field enabled governments to impose strict controls on strategy, but only at the price of reducing it essentially to trivia. On the tactical level, moreover, communications had not improved a bit since Roman times. As a result, the main action was still almost invariably confined to the commander's own place . . .

The pre-industrial general staff, therefore, was a small administrative staff with only a rare and tangential, and never systematic, responsibility to support a commander in the planning and conduct of actual combat operations. One of its major features was that it was geared for administration and logistics, tasks that must be performed in peacetime as well as during a war. As a result, it tended to develop distinctive and semi-autonomous units that had little to do with actual combat operations. In the United States, these units—the administrative bureaus of the War Department—were closely overseen by, and linked to, the Congress.

Warfare became much more complex during the 19th Century. One major aspect of this increased complexity was armies of a much greater size than had ever been fielded, requiring more and more machine-based logistical and administrative support, and representing a much greater proportion of total national resources—both human and material.<sup>9</sup>

Armies such as these could no longer be commanded, either in the field or from a national capital, by mostly idiosyncratic and improvisational methods of a single commander, no matter what his intrinsic capabilities. High-level commanders needed staffs that could assist them in the planning and conduct of actual combat operations, as well as in providing administrative, clerical, and logistical support for their forces.<sup>10</sup> By the last third of the 19th Century, the amount of intelligence to be assimilated, the range of potential alternative actions, and the plethora of detailed instructions required to implement general high-level orders had all become too large to be managed on the almost purely intuitive basis that had characterized pre-industrial armies.

A dramatic transformation of general staffs took place during the second half of the 19th Century. By 1900, virtually all armies of industrialized nations had institutionalized a general staff organization designed to assist military commanders in the conduct of actual military operations. Such institutions remain standard features of modern armed forces. General staffs are charged with collecting intelligence, preparing and analyzing alternative operational plans, translating the general directives of senior line command-

<sup>9</sup> The literature on these developments is exhaustive. A recent survey is Hew Strachan. *European Armies and the Conduct of War*. London, George Allen and Unwin, 1983. See also Larry H. Addington. *The Patterns of War Since the Eighteenth Century*. Bloomington, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 1984. A standard older work is Theodore Ropp. *War in the Modern World*. Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1962.

<sup>10</sup> Irvine, "The Origins of Capital Staffs," p. 162, has the most concise delineation of the distinction.

ers into the specific and detailed instructions required by subordinates, and monitoring and insuring the implementation of command decisions after they are made.

Modern general staffs of this type are organized by broad operational function rather than by the specific commodity or service provided by their members. For instance, modern American general staff organization, basically unchanged since World War I and applicable to any command with a general officer in charge, has had four main divisions: personnel, intelligence, operations, and supply.<sup>11</sup> Another category—civil affairs (dealings with local civilian populations and institutions, including, but not limited to, military government of formally occupied territories)—has been added when appropriate.<sup>12</sup>

The modern general staff is as concerned with support and logistics issues as the pre-industrial "general staff," but the modern functional general staff system makes clear that the ultimate purpose of armies is preparation for and the conduct of war, and that its support and logistical activities are directed to those ends rather than to maintenance of peacetime routine.

A national army's general staff, defined in these functional terms, performs for a country's highest politico-military leadership the same function that the general staff of a separate military unit performs for that unit's commander. This highest level of national leadership, with ultimate command of the armed forces, can be civilian or military (if military, it could conceivably derive from the national general staff itself, but need not automatically do so), democratic or authoritarian. Regardless of the nature of the "national command authority"—to use a modern term—whose decision-making processes a national, functionally-organized general staff supports, it is still a general staff—the term applies because of the technical military responsibilities it has, and is not related to the philosophical or ideological orientation of the political leadership it serves.

#### THE GERMAN GENERAL STAFF<sup>13</sup>

The German General Staff was not a functional general staff as described above, but a separate branch of the German Army career officer corps. It was the military-intellectual elite of the German Army from the mid-19th Century through 1945. Its members constituted a cadre of specially selected and trained officers deemed capable of meeting the demanding management and leadership tasks of modern warfare. Its members were recruited and retained through extremely selective and rigorous recruiting and retention

<sup>11</sup> See Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, pp. 314–320, 322–323, 379–80, 405, and Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, JCS Pub. 1., Washington, April 1, 1984, p. 158.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> The Prussian and German General Staff has generated much less historical literature than might be expected, and much of what exists is either polemical or hagiographical. Also, there is a tendency for histories of the German General Staff to become heavily involved in German civil-military relations, which is understandable but not helpful to the analyst trying to find out just how the institutions themselves worked. A brief historical survey is in John M. Collins, *U.S. Defense Planning: A Critique*. Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1982, pp. 54–56. See also Walter Goerlitz, *History of the German General Staff, 1607–1945*. Translated by Brian Battershaw. New York, Praeger, 1953; and Trevor N. Dupuy, *A Genius for War: The German Army and General Staff, 1807–1945*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1977.

First, the German army enjoyed unique prestige for, as Ritter concisely put it, "in western Europe the military were considered a necessary evil, whereas in Germany they were the nation's pride." He also stresses that this was a new strain not derived from the aristocratic Prussia of Frederick the Great; rather it was the bourgeoisie who were not perverted by patriotic pride and free citizens who were captivated by a sense of power. In other domestic issues they might be quite critical of government policy. Indeed, it was the educated middle classes, considerably influenced by academics, who were particularly prone to swing full circle from antimilitarism to idolatry after 1870 because they were most keenly aware of Prussia's historical achievement. For a generation after 1870, German patriotism was strongly nostalgic. Middle-class society . . . generally continued to show tremendous respect for the officer's uniform . . . The reserve officers, who excluded a wide range of "undesirables" such as socialists, peasants, artisans, shopkeepers, and Jews, became more militaristic than the regulars, aping and exaggerating their manners and vices such as gambling, drinking, and brawling. Hence a sort of "pecking order" arose even in civil life and the very status of civilian came to be widely despised by these prigs in uniform.

In such an atmosphere, it was not surprising that German military institutions generally, and the German General Staff in particular as the dominant agency within the German Army, came to possess great prestige. The German General Staff, therefore, rarely had to truly threaten civilian control of the military to get what it wanted—the civilians were in general only too glad to give it to them, often through what observers from nations with a stronger liberal-democratic tradition would call the voluntary abrogation of civilian responsibilities.<sup>17</sup> In Imperial Germany, it is true that "between the 1860's and 1900 the Reichstag [the national legislature] lost the right even to discuss the military budget for as long as five or seven years; that the war minister became a figurehead with no real authority over the army; and that actual authority steadily accrued to the kaiser [emperor] who looked for advice mainly to his own military cabinet and to a lesser extent to the general staff."<sup>18</sup> These things could not have happened, however, without the assent of the civilian institutions involved, including the ultimate civilian, the kaiser.

The same pattern of deference to the Army, which by definition entailed deference to the Army's controlling organ, the General Staff, took place during the Weimar Republic (1918–1933). Even liberal or socialist governmental leaders may have disliked the Army

<sup>17</sup> There is a plethora of literature on German civil-military relations, and the role of the German Armed Forces in German society, from 1871 to 1945. These include Goerlitz, *History of the German General Staff*; Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640–1945*, Oxford, United Kingdom, Oxford University Press, 1955, and Karl Demeter, *The German Officer Corps in Society and State, 1650–1945*. New York, Praeger, 1965. See also John Gooch, *Armies in Europe*. Boston, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980. pp. 114–117, 136–138, 147, 154–155, 162–163, 165–166, 170–172, 177–178, 195–200, 205–210.

<sup>18</sup> Bond, *War and Society in Europe, 1870–1970*. p. 58.

and the General Staff, but it appears that in practice they did little to control what the Army actually *did*, to the extent that was normal for parliamentary bodies in countries such as France, Great Britain, or the United States. German Army evasions of Treaty of Versailles disarmament provisions, secret military cooperation with the Soviet Union, and mobilization planning took place with either the tacit or explicit acquiescence of the Weimar Republic civilian leadership, or else civilian oversight of the Army was so intentionally superficial as not to reveal their existence.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, under the Nazi regime (1933–1945), Adolf Hitler may indeed have had an intense “populist” disdain for the old-line aristocratic members and characteristics of the traditional German General Staff, but he shared its generally authoritarian outlook, belief in the efficacy of force in international relations, social-Darwinist concepts about war determining the “survival of the fittest” among nations, and character-building aspects of compulsory military service. Hitler—a civilian, a former wartime corporal in the Imperial German Army during World War I—reduced the General Staff as an institution to absolute impotence in terms of major strategic decisions. These he reserved for himself, as absolute dictator.<sup>20</sup> But although the *power* for ultimate military decisions remained in civilian, if authoritarian, hands under the Third Reich, the attitudes and beliefs of both the popular civilian dictator and the professional General Staff toward “the military virtues” of discipline, authority, and obedience were quite similar, and *both* were only reflecting underlying values of German society of the time:<sup>21</sup>

The majority of senior officers readily accepted [Hitler’s] policies—though some failed to grasp their dangerous implications—and many of those who did protest or drag their feet were only really alarmed at the tempo of the build-up for war, not at the prospect of war itself.

#### SINGLE-SERVICE AND JOINT GENERAL STAFFS

*Neither* type of general staff—the functional type found in all modern armed forces or the military-elite type unique to pre-1945 Germany—has been anything but a single-service institution *at the national level*. Because the army is the dominant military service in most countries, a national army general staff has frequently dominated national strategy as a whole, but there has never been a truly joint, fully-integrated interservice national general staff.<sup>22</sup> In

<sup>19</sup> As well as the general discussions cited above in note 17, for civil-military relations in Germany during the Weimar era see John W. Wheeler-Bennett, *The Nemesis of Power: The German Army in Politics, 1918–1945*. London, Macmillan Co., Ltd., 1954, and F. L. Carsten, *The Reichswehr and Politics, 1918–1933*. Oxford, United Kingdom, Oxford University Press, 1965.

<sup>20</sup> See the sources cited in notes 17 and 19, as well as R. J. O’Neill, *The German Army and the Nazi Party, 1933–1939*. London, Cassell, 1966; and Albert Seaton, *The German Army, 1933–1945*. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982.

<sup>21</sup> Bond, *War and Society in Europe, 1870–1970*. p. 158. For a discussion of German Army—as distinct from Gestapo or SS—involvement in Nazi wartime atrocities, see Daniel Goldhagen. “A Bitburg Footnote: The German Army and the Holocaust.” *The New Republic*, May 13, 1985. pp. 16–17.

<sup>22</sup> The Soviet General Staff may be the closest approximation. See William Scott and Harriet Fast Scott, *The Armed Forces of the USSR*. Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1979. pp. 108–113.

the German case, because Germany had been overwhelmingly a land power, the Army had always been the dominant service, and therefore the German Army's General Staff, which provided that Army's elite leadership, ended up dominating German military institutions. Germany, however, never institutionalized a joint general staff, and therefore by definition never had a single chief of staff for all three services (Army, Navy, and Air Force).

Some major *subordinate* military commands of the *only* two powers—the United States and Great Britain—in which the army, for geostrategic reasons, is *not* the overwhelmingly dominant service, *have* had truly joint general staffs. Examples include the major Allied theater commands in World War II (European, Mediterranean, Central Pacific, and Southwest Pacific theaters), the United Nations Command/U.S. Far Eastern Command during the Korean War, and the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) during the Vietnam War. Current United States geographically-based unified commands (European, Atlantic, Southern, Pacific, and Central Commands) have interservice joint general staffs along functional lines described above.

### III. THEMES IN CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD A GENERAL STAFF, 1903–1985 <sup>23</sup>

The legislative histories of the six most important Army and defense organization-related statutes of the 20th Century were reviewed to determine congressional attitudes toward a general staff. These statutes are:

- Act of February 14, 1903* (39 Stat. 830, ch. 553; Public Law 88, 57th Congress). This Act established the modern U.S. Army General Staff.
- National Defense Act of 1916* (39 Stat. 166; Act of June 3, 1916; Public Law 85, 64th Congress). The National Defense Act of 1916 created the basic tripartite structure of the Army that still exists in 1985—the active Army, the National Guard with a continuing State role but trained and equipped to Federal standards and with Federal service obligations; and a purely Federal Army Reserve.
- National Defense Act of 1920* (41 Stat. 759, Act of June 4, 1920; Public Law 242, 66th Congress). The National Defense Act of 1920 strengthened and reaffirmed the basic structure provisions of the 1916 Act in the context of World War I experience.
- National Security Act of 1947* (61 Stat. 495, Act of July 26, 1947; Public Law 253, 80th Congress). This Act establishes a separate U.S. Air Force; unified the Armed Forces under a National Military Establishment headed by a Secretary of Defense; and provided a statutory basis for the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- National Security Act Amendments of 1949* (63 Stat. 578; Act of August 10, 1949; Public Law 216, 81st Congress). The 1949

<sup>23</sup> For a listing of *all* congressional documents consulted in which relevant material was found, see the Appendix. Footnotes in this chapter cite direct quotations from congressional primary sources only.

Amendments to the National Security Act of 1947 changed the name of the National Military Establishment to the Department of Defense; strengthened authority of the DoD over the individual military services; and established the office of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

—*Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958* (72 Stat. 514; Act of August 6, 1958; Public Law 85-599). The 1958 DoD Reorganization Act strengthened the authority of the Secretary of Defense; clarified the role of the unified and specified commands in the national military chain of command, and clarified the duties and organization of the Joint Staff.

In addition, legislative activity which led up to the comparatively minor Joint Chiefs of Staff reorganization enacted in 1984 was revised (98 Stat. 2611; Sec. 1301, P.L. 98-525; Act of October 19, 1984; Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1985), as well as some floor debates running into 1985. (The legislative history of the Act of October 21, 1977; P.L. 95-140; Stat. 1172, which changed the number of Deputy and Under Secretaries of Defense and made some other modifications in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, contained no references to the general staff concept.)

All available hearings, reports, and floor debates on the above statutes were surveyed for any references to the term "general staff." Such references were scattered, frequently made only in passing, and often made in a context other than actual legislative consideration of matters affecting the U.S. Army General Staff. Taken as a whole, however, they enable an analyst to acquire a reasonable understanding of how congressional attitudes toward a general staff have evolved since the U.S. Army General Staff was established in 1903.

The survey which follows is thematic and topical within broad chronological lines. Sections on pre- and post-World War II congressional attitudes toward the general staff concept are followed by sections on the reasons for the change in these attitudes after World War II.

#### PRE-WORLD WAR II CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES

Congressional attitudes toward a general staff before World War I, as exemplified in action on the Acts of 1903, 1916, and 1920, revolved around two basic themes. First, it was acknowledged by almost all members of Congress that the United States Army should have a general staff, but a functional one only—not an elite branch of officer corps along German lines. Second, there was ongoing debate over the nature of the relationship between the traditional administrative and support bureaus of the Army and the modern Army General Staff established by the Act of 1903.

The Army General Staff was, for example, subjected to explicit congressional revilement during debate over the National Defense Act of 1920 for allegedly trampling over traditional Army administrative practices during World War I. In a comment echoed by many other members of Congress during debate over the National

Defense act of 1920, Representative Dent stated on the floor of the House that: <sup>24</sup>

. . . the General Staff in Washington is too large and the powers of the General Staff should be curbed and restored to the duties of its original creation. The original General Staff was provided for the purpose of studying plans of the Army, studying ideas as to how the Army should be organized and equipped. But the General Staff has gone beyond its function and has reached out into the various bureaus and different departments of the Army and taken charge of the administrative functions of the Army which heretofore have been operated by the different bureaus charged specifically with that purpose.

Indeed, after World War I there was so much congressional concern that the Army General Staff had, during the war, trespassed on the prerogatives of the Army's administrative bureaus—Adjutant General's, Medical, Supply, Ordnance, and similar departments—that the National Defense Act of 1920 specifically stated that after the Act's enactment Army General Staff officers: <sup>25</sup>

. . . shall not be permitted to assume or engage in work of an administrative nature that pertains to established bureaus of offices of the War Department, or that, being assumed or engaged in by members of the General Staff Corps, would involve impairment of the responsibility or initiative of such bureaus or offices, or would cause injurious or unnecessary duplication of or delay in the work thereof.

Ironically, modern scholarship agrees that the Army General Staff did indeed involve itself in detailed administrative work during World War I, rather than confine itself to broad planning and operational supervision. It did so, however, because the traditional administrative bureaus charged with support and logistics functions had, over the course of the preceding century, become so ossified and bogged down in petty peacetime routine that they could not function adequately in a modern industrial war. <sup>26</sup>

The Army General Staff was also implicitly criticized by some Members of Congress for "interfering" with hitherto sacrosanct congressional prerogatives in what today would be termed Army tactical organization and force structure. Representative Dent further asserted on the floor of the House that under the National Defense Act of 1920: <sup>27</sup>

. . . Congress surrenders the right that it has always retained heretofore of fixing the size of the Army and the units of its organization. This principle is surrendered in this bill, and if the very first section of this bill is adopted, then the Congress of the United States leaves it to the

<sup>24</sup> Army Reorganization. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 59, March 9, 1920: 4072.

<sup>25</sup> Sec. 5, Act of June 4, 1920; 41 Stat. 764.

<sup>26</sup> See Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, pp. 364–370, 377–380.

<sup>27</sup> Army Reorganization. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 59, March 9, 1920. p. 4071.

General Staff to say how many regiments of Infantry you shall have, how many regiments of Cavalry, and how many regiments of Field Artillery.

\* \* \* \* \*

Whenever you give the General Staff the power to organize the Army into units of organization as it sees fit, it inevitably follows that you must give to the War Department lump-sum appropriations.

Although not, for obvious reasons, alluded to directly on the floor of either the House or Senate, it appears that Members of Congress opposed to the Army General Staff were concerned that by its very competence, even in the fields of planning and coordination (rather than detailed administration) it was supposed to be confined to, it would interfere with direct, informal ties between influential Members of Congress and Army administrative bureaus. Such ties had developed throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, and had often frustrated the Army commanding general and the Secretary of War in exerting centralized control over Army policies and procedures.<sup>28</sup>

The Army General Staff was *not*, however regarded by the Congress as contributing to militarism of fundamentally erroneous concepts of defense strategy and organization. General staffs were usually regarded as necessary organizational components of a nation's military command structure, required by any modern armed force for overall planning and coordination of military policy. During the 1903 debates on the bill which established the modern U.S. Army General Staff, Representative Parker expressed this view:<sup>29</sup>

Thus there are these two great duties of the General Staff. First, to acquire the information and arrange it so that an order can be intelligently made; and, second, when it has been made, not to command, but to exercise supervision, inform and advise all the different persons in command and all the members of the various departments, so that they shall work together in doing that work, reporting meanwhile to headquarters, so that the Government can find what has been done.

\* \* \* \* \*

The whole civilized world has found out that a general staff is an absolute necessity.

In a similar vein, Representative McClellan asserted that:<sup>30</sup>

. . . the only civilized armies of the world which are not provided with general staffs are those of England and the United States. England's need for a general staff was emphasized in the South African War [the Boer War, 1899-1902].

<sup>28</sup> Weigley, *History of the United States Army*. pp. 284-290, 326-333, has some examples of this tendency. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891*. New York, MacMillan, 1973. pp. 57-65, has some oblique mention of the issue.

<sup>29</sup> To Increase the Efficiency of the Army. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 36, January 6, 1903. p. 537.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 536.

In floor debate over the National Defense Act of 1916, Senator Cummins was highly supportive of the Army General Staff: <sup>31</sup>

Neither the [General Staff] nor any of its members as such staff officers have any authority whatsoever. It is a board created in order to exchange views, to discuss military affairs, to look into the future, to apprehend military needs, to provide in a broad way for the national defense. It is, I think, an invaluable arm of the service. I think its existence has vindicated the wisdom of the men who not long ago organized it, and I have no criticism upon it or quarrel with what it is appointed to do.

Although the Army General Staff was criticized vehemently for intrusion into routine administrative work during World War I, after that war there remained a great deal of support for an Army General Staff confined to broad policy-related planning and coordinating duties. Representative Miller, endorsing the General Staff concept in 1920: <sup>32</sup>

The bill provides for an effective General Staff Corps. I am a strong believer in a strong, effective, vigorous General Staff. Without it no Army, however well organized and equipped, can effectively operate. The staff is the planning section of the Army, as well as the coordinating. To give it administrative authority only as a "lastditch" expedient would tend to throw every other administrative branch to the wind. Our experience in the late war has demonstrated beyond all possible doubt the advantages of the staff principle. When we look about to locate the force, the organization that brought about the expansion of our establishment to meet the emergency of war, the eye, as well as the hand, rests upon the General Staff Corps. It must be retained to have an effective Army.

Representative McKenzie expressed similar views: <sup>33</sup>

. . . I appreciate the prejudice in the mind of the average man against what is known as the General Staff of the Army. It is a regrettable fact, and perhaps much of that prejudice is due to mistakes made by officers heretofore appointed to the General Staff. I say, and I speak to you in all sincerity, do not make a mistake. A general staff, and a general staff with troops, is the very foundation and bulwark of our Military Establishment. Do not fall into the error of believing that the functions of a general staff are not necessary. It was due to the fact that we did not have a large, able, efficient general staff when we got into this war that many mistakes were made, and another reason was due to the fact that civilians, dollar-a-day men, came into the city of Washington and pushed the General Staff of the Army off the map to a great extent.

<sup>31</sup> To Increase the Efficiency of the Military Establishment of the United States. Remarks in the Senate. Congressional Record, v. 53, March 31, 1916. p. 5219.

<sup>32</sup> Army Reorganization. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 59, March 8, 1920. p. 4040.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., March 11, 1920. p. 4184.

Before World War II, the Prussian-German General Staff was cited as an example of technical military excellence. In debate over the 1903 Act, for instance, Representative Slayden suggested that:<sup>34</sup>

. . . the advantages of having a military staff, such as is proposed by this bill, were exemplified in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. One of the countries engaged in that war went into the conduct of a campaign upon a specially devised plan made by a general staff which sat in the city of Berlin; the other went into that war without the preparation which it might have had had it had the privilege of enjoying the benefit of a similar staff sitting in the city of Paris.

Representative Kahn, Chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, had similar words of praise for the German General Staff system during debate over the 1920 Act:<sup>35</sup>

The Germans . . . detailed men permanently in the general staff. The planning for the German Army became the life work of men who were found adaptable for general staff duties. In this country, we have had practically no law which enabled men to be prepared for general staff work. One of the important features of this legislation now under consideration is a general staff school, so that men may be trained for general staff work.

This is an entirely new feature of our military law, and in my opinion it is an excellent feature.

Later that day, Representative McKenzie added that:<sup>36</sup>

Old Frederick the Great, of Germany . . . was the first man to lay the foundation for a general staff. No man will say that Germany did not have a powerful military machine; but Germany laid the foundation first for a real general staff . . .

The German General Staff was also occasionally mentioned, in a value-free fashion, as one model of organizing a national general staff. Even in 1903, the fundamental distinction between a general staff as a functional organization on the one hand, and as an elite career branch of the officer corps on the other—the latter peculiar to Germany—was apparent to some congressional analysts of the issue such as Representative McClellan:<sup>37</sup>

There are two general staff systems in existence: First, the Prussian, by which an officer once a member of the general staff always remains so; second, the French, by which the staff is made up of graduates of the Superior

<sup>34</sup> To Increase the Efficiency of the Army. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 36, January 6, 1903, p. 534.

<sup>35</sup> Army Reorganization. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 59, March 11, 1920, p. 4182.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4184.

<sup>37</sup> To Increase the Efficiency of the Army. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 36, January 6, 1903, p. 533.

War School, detailed for a term of years, by competitive examination.

The German General Staff was *never* criticized for either leading to or representing militarism, dictatorship, or faulty strategic planning. No antipathy to German military institutions *per se* was found in detailed reading of the debates and hearings on the 1903, 1916, and 1920 Acts. There was an occasional use of the term "Prussian" in a derogatory context, denoting authoritarian tendencies, but *never* in relation to the German General Staff—or indeed any other general staff, including that of the United States.

#### POST-WORLD WAR II CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES

After World War II, congressional discussion of the general staff concept revolved around fundamental issues of civil-military relations and service roles and missions. The extent and vehemence of negative attitudes toward a general staff increased immeasurably over pre-1945 levels. Members of Congress were no longer concerned with the issues of organizational "turf" and executive-legislative relations which had dominated pre-World War II debates over the general staff concept and the Army General Staff.

Congressional opponents of a general staff, for example, regarded one of its consequence as militarism and subordination of civil authority to the military. During floor debate on the National Security Act of 1947, Representative Hoffman states this opinion when discussing the Joint Staff that the proposed Act would establish in support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: <sup>38</sup>

The argument may come up that this Joint Staff is not a National General Staff. The fact is that it can be a National General Staff in all but name, and the Director can become a National Chief of Staff.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is the imperceptible, gradual, and constant accumulation of authority in carrying out the policy of their so-called superior authorities that national general staffs became a dominant force in their government.

Senator Robertson, 12 days before, had voiced a similar view: <sup>39</sup>

It is almost axiomatic that militarism in any country increases proportionately to the power of the Nation's general staff.

Representative Ford was just as vehement in his equation of a general staff with militarism during debate on the National Security Act Amendments of 1949, arguing that there was: <sup>40</sup>

. . . a deep-seated conflict between those, both in the military and in civilian life, who favor a republican form of government and those who apparently believe an extreme

<sup>38</sup> Unification of the Armed Services. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 93, July 19, 1947. pp. 9436-9437.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Remarks in the Senate. Congressional Record, v. 93, July 7, 1947. p. 8316.

<sup>40</sup> National Security Act Amendments of 1949. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 95, August 2, 1949. pp. 1949-1950.

concentration of authority and power of decision is a very small and carefully selected cadre of officers known as the general staff.

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The General Staff of the United States Army [was] neither American nor democratic in its scope or intent . . . However, with the perfection attained by years of operation and by the distortion and perversion of opportunists it now assumes a role approaching that of military autocracy.

During debate on the DoD Reorganization Act of 1958, *supporters* of strengthening the authority of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff were at pains to disassociate themselves from the "general staff concept," which they implied constituted a threat to civilian control of the military. Senator Saltonstall: <sup>41</sup>

I should like to emphasize that this bill in no sense destroys the identity of our separate military services nor does it propose the creation of a Supreme General Staff. Rather, it emphasizes civilian control of our Military Establishment.

Senator Thurmond: <sup>42</sup>

In recommending these changes to the Senate, the committee has wisely preserved in full force and effect the civilian control of the military which is essential in a democratic form of government, especially this of ours. Some persons have been greatly alarmed for fear that the reorganization bill would bring into existence a so-called general staff setup. Certainly, under this bill there is no room for justifiable alarm.

A general staff was also regarded by Members of Congress *opposed* to service unification as both the cause and result of the "autocratic" subordination of the individual military services, each rigidly structured so as to control all national military assets on the ground, at sea, and in the air (i.e., the Army controlling all land forces, including the Marine Corps; and the Air Force controlling all aircraft, including naval aviation), to an overall joint command authority. During the 1947 debate, for instance, Senator Robertson contrasted the "authoritarian" military "philosophy" exemplified by Nazi Germany (and, by implication, by its General Staff), Napoleonic France, Fascist Italy, and the Soviet Union with the "democratic [military] philosophy" of "the democratic nations of the world," in which each service is provided with all forces required to accomplish its broad mission (i.e., in which the Navy is provided with a Marine Corps to accomplish land-warfare missions, and naval aviation to accomplish air-warfare missions, incidental to prosecution of naval campaigns). <sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Department of Defense Reorganization Act. Remarks in the Senate. Congressional Record, v. 104, July 18, 1958. p. 14254.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14267.

<sup>43</sup> Unification of the Armed Services. Remarks in the Senate. Congressional Record, v. 93, July 9, 1947. pp. 8490-8491. For a recent analysis by a naval officer which asserts the same point of

Continued

Finally, after World War II Congress always viewed the overall concept of a general staff in the context of the German General Staff. The German General Staff was regarded as an autocratic institution, responsible in large part for German militarism and aggression in both World Wars. Representative Martin, in debate over the 1947 Act: <sup>44</sup>

Between 1857 and 1906, the period in which Germany forged the iron spells which ripped our world apart, there were but three directors of the Prussian general staff: Generals von Moltke, von Waldersee, and von Schlieffen. Of these three, von Waldersee was unimportant, holding office but 3 years. Two ruthless, brilliant, and aggressive military intellectuals, Moltke and Schlieffen, actually affected the transition of Prussia into the aggressive, war-mongering state which we have unhappily learned to know well, and it was their descendants in office who made World War II a reality.

*Critics* of the U.S. Joint Staff asserted that it would constitute a general staff that resembled the German General Staff. Senators Mike Mansfield and Paul H. Douglas, in a letter to Senator Stuart Symington written in 1958, regarding the proposed DoD Reorganization Act of that year, expressed fears along these lines: <sup>45</sup>

While ostensibly rejecting a single Chief of Staff and a General Staff setup, [the proposed legislation] in effect accomplishes that purpose. The language refers to the Chairman of the Joint Staff and the Joint Chiefs of Staff as separate entities, gives the Chairman—not the Joint Chiefs of Staff—control over the management of the Joint Staff as well as authority to select its members. This in effect creates the factual single Chief of Staff system which the bill and its report endeavor to deny *and which the unhappy experience of other nations warns us not to adopt*. [CRS]

*Supporters* of the DoD reorganization measures argued that anything resembling the German General Staff should and would be avoided in the United States—even if these supporters did not always agree with all of the criticisms leveled at the German General Staff. Representative Charles Gubser, during hearings on the DoD Reorganization Act of 1958, represented this point of view, asking rhetorically: <sup>46</sup>

Where in a Prussian general staff system . . . was there any individual who exercised within the framework of a democracy the degree of power or control that would be

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view, albeit in nonpejorative language, see Commander T. R. Fedyszyn, U.S. Navy. JCS Reorganization: A Maritime Perspective. U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, July 1985. pp. 80-87.

<sup>44</sup> Unification of the Armed Services. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 93, July 1947. p. 9454.

<sup>45</sup> U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. Hearings, 85th Congress, 2nd session. June 17-July 8, 1958. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1958. p. 209.

<sup>46</sup> U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Reorganization of the Department of Defense. Hearings, 85th Congress, 2nd session. April 22-May 21, 1958. H.A.S.C. No. 83. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1958. p. 6268.

exercised under this administration proposal by a civilian Secretary of Defense or the President?

Mr. Gubser went on:<sup>47</sup>

. . . it seems to me that when we compare this legislation with the Prussian general staff system, we are just comparing horses with cabbages or something equally as ridiculous.

In the first place, the Prussian general staff system . . . evolved out of a dictatorship. We have a democracy. Now some people will say, "Well, the Weimar Republic was not," because of the fact that it operated under the dictates of the allies of World War I and the Treaty of Versailles.

Another thing: The Prussian general staff was in existence before the Weimar Republic and it never surrendered all of its power to civilians under that Republic.

Now, it seems to me that this, again, is a red herring that is being dragged around here and I, for one, am willing to be convinced, but need to be convinced, that this legislation will ever or could ever result in bringing about a Prussian general staff system.

In 1985, speaking on his proposals for Joint Chiefs of Staff reform, Representative Ike Skelton stated that:<sup>48</sup>

Many of these same critics express the fear that proposals such as the one I am advocating today would lead to the creation of an elite, German-style general staff. This fear deserves to be addressed. The larger answer to their concerns is that the United States has no tradition of military dominance and is not remotely in danger of any such development today. France, Britain, Canada, and the Federal Republic of Germany have unified service staffs. No one has argued that those democracies have been undermined by such efforts.

Clearly, Representatives Gubser and Skelton, and others who held the same point of view, apparently rejected the German General Staff concept just as much as those persons opposed to further unification of the Armed Forces. Where they seemingly differed was on the relationship between unification on the one hand and both (1) a German General Staff system and (2) military superiority over civil authority on the other.

A very few Members of Congress drew the distinction between the general staff concept and the German General Staff branch. In 1958, Senator Stuart Symington spoke on the distinction between a general staff as a functional organization and as an elite branch of the officer corps:<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6269.

<sup>48</sup> Reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In *Extensions of Remarks*. Congressional Record [daily ed.], June 13, 1985. p. E2770.

<sup>49</sup> Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. Remarks in the Senate. Congressional Record, v. 104, July 18, 1958. p. 14259. Senator Symington's lengthy address, covering pp. 14256-14260, is probably the most analytically complete congressional discussion of the general staff concept and the German General Staff discovered in the course of researching this study.

. . . I think I am right in saying that no proposal for a more unified Military Establishment has ever been made in this century, from Elihu Root's general staff bill [the Act of 1903] down to the present, without dire predictions that a man on a white horse would take over; and that we would find ourselves saddled with a military dictatorship on the German, Japanese, or Latin American model . . .

The Prussian general staff is designated as the threat to our liberties, apparently without realization that both our Army and our Navy adopted a general staff organization based on the Prussian model in the early years of this century—the Army in 1903, the Navy in 1915.

I emphasize the word "organization" in that last sentence.

The thing we did not adopt from the Prussian system was the practice of building up a continuing military elite—called in Germany the general staff corps and distinguished by a red stripe on the uniform trousers. This corps held a special status, permitting them to entrench themselves on a permanent basis in the highest staff and command positions; and thus to acquire great practical power through influential contacts in political and financial circles.

Another was Senator Barry Goldwater, who in 1958 felt that a general staff could be accompanied by constitutional safeguards in the context of American democracy:<sup>50</sup>

I state again, as I have stated before in discussions on this subject, that I believe the ultimate organization of the armed services must be one military, one uniform, a General Staff, and a Chief of Staff, surrounded by proper civilian protection and surrounded by Congress and the President, so as to eliminate any chances that there might occur what some people seem to think could possibly occur under such a system.

Senators Symington and Goldwater, however, were virtually the only Members of either House of Congress in the post-World War II era who precisely delineated the nature of general staffs in general or the German general staff in particular, or were willing to suggest that the general staff as a term and concept might be applicable to American military institutions.

Nothing better demonstrates the degree of congressional opposition to a general staff than the identically-worded provision found in both the National Security Act Amendments of 1949 and the DoD Reorganization Act of 1958 that the intent of the legislation was "not to establish a single Chief of Staff over the armed forces nor an armed forces general staff,"<sup>51</sup> and the provision of the 1958 Act which stated that "The Joint Staff shall not operate or be organized as an overall Armed Forces general staff and shall have no executive authority."<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14266.

<sup>51</sup> Sec. 2 of both Acts.

<sup>52</sup> Subsection 5(a) of the 1958 Act.

REASONS FOR CHANGED CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES AFTER WORLD WAR  
II: THE GERMAN QUESTION

Two major factors seem to have combined in the post-World War II era to bring about this fundamental change in congressional attitudes toward a general staff. The first involved Germany and the distinctive character of its general staff.

The defeat of Nazi Germany was viewed as the culmination of roughly a century of German history in which the German General Staff had played a unique role in shaping German military institutions. The German General Staff, unlike all other national general staffs, constituted an elite career branch of the officer corps, selected, promoted, and trained accordingly to rigorous and highly selective criteria. It furnished both the leadership of the national high command *and* the commanders and senior staff officers of major commands in the field. It thus wielded correspondingly more influence than other national general staffs which were functional organizations, and whose members returned to their regular branch upon completion of a tour of general staff duty.

By the time congressional debate on the National Security Act of 1947 began, therefore, the German model of a general staff was inextricably linked with the larger course of German history from the 1860s through 1945—the rise of an authoritarian and military-oriented culture and society; disastrous defeat in two world wars, for which the first Germany was substantially and the second Germany almost completely responsible; and the commission of mass murders and atrocities then regarded as unparalleled in human history.

Given the temper of the times, it is therefore not surprising that a more analytical interpretation of the role of the German General Staff in shaping German history did not dominate congressional opinion in the post-World War II era. As noted previously in this study, the German General Staff existed and became powerful in the militaristic *environment* of Prussia and Germany from the mid-19th Century through 1945, but rarely threatened civilian authority *per se*, precisely because “civilian authority”—whether that of Imperial Germany (1871–1918), the Weimar Republic (1918–1933), or Adolf Hitler’s Third Reich (1933–1945)—was itself so military-oriented and authoritarian, as was German society and culture. There was thus substantial congruence between German military institutions and ideals—including the prestige of the general staff—and German society as a whole.

REASONS FOR CHANGED CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES AFTER WORLD WAR  
II: SERVICE UNIFICATION

The second major reason for the change in congressional attitudes toward a general staff after World War II involved the coincidental unification of the Armed Forces that was taking place at the time, and the concurrent creation of an independent Air Force out of the Army Air Forces. Prospective service unification created a great deal of uncertainty and fear among traditional senior officers of the Armed Forces and their congressional supporters. In particular, Members of Congress who were strong partisans of the Navy and Marine Corps were concerned that in a unified national

defense organization, the allegedly continental viewpoints of the Army and newly-created Air Force would dominate the naval and amphibious concerns, concepts, and forces of the two sea services. Even more specifically, they were concerned that a dominant Army would attempt to drastically constrain the size, roles, and missions of the Marine Corps, and that a dominant land-based Air Force would attempt to curtail both carrier-based and shore-based naval aviation. The Members of Congress holding these views, of course, reflected similar views on the part of many senior Navy and Marine officers.

Accordingly, Members of Congress opposed to the principle, or the anticipated degree, of service unification searched for arguments with which to oppose it. One was that unification would result in a "general staff" system similar to that of the Germans—in particular, that unification would inevitably require a joint general staff to administer and control the central national defense organization or department. Senator Robertson, in arguing against service unification in 1947, expounded on this point:<sup>53</sup>

Nominally, the Joint Staff is to provide assistance to the Joint Chiefs of Staff—a function performed satisfactorily heretofore by a secretariat . . . By virtue of its permanence, its availability, and its invitation to the Secretary of National Security to bypass the Joint Chiefs of Staff and place reliance upon it for the administration of the military services, the Joint Staff will inevitably expand, accumulate executive authority, and become the fountainhead of policy and direction for the Military Establishment. Its members will become a permanent national general staff corps, an inner circle of professional military men of the Nation, just as the Army General Staff Corps did within the War Department. It will be a short step indeed from such a position of actual power to a position of titular power and a position of dominance in the affairs of the Nation.

This joint staff was held to be analogous to the pre-1945 German General Staff. The German General Staff, both congressional and executive branch opponents of unification argued, had been a numerically large joint staff with command over all German services (Army, Navy, and Air Force), with a single military Chief of Staff for all three services, and with responsibilities for manning both major field command and staff positions and those in the central headquarters of the German Army. Representative Hoffman, speaking in debate on the 1949 National Security Act Amendments:<sup>54</sup>

The Congress of the United States has gone on record repeatedly ever since 1903 against the Prussian-type national general staff and against an all-powerful Chief of Staff

<sup>53</sup> Unification of the Armed Services. Remarks in the Senate. Congressional Record, v. 93, July 7, 1947. p. 8318.

<sup>54</sup> National Security Act Amendments of 1949. Remarks in the House. Congressional Record, v. 95, August 2, 1949. p. 10604.

of our armed forces, and the Congress went on record in 1947 against absolute "merger" of our armed forces.

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As much as we respect the purely "military" ability of men like General Bradley and General Vandenberg, I am shocked to hear them say before a congressional committee that they believe in a single Chief of Staff of all the armed forces. General Gruenther, director of the Joint Staff, has given his opinion before the House Armed Services Committee that we would have a single Chief of Staff in 5 years.

Forewarned should be forearmed.

What good are pious sentiments if the opening wedges for a Nazi-Prussian consolidation of military power are already hidden in the law?

Senator Robertson, in 1947, was even more explicit:<sup>55</sup>

The development of the German General Staff has been characterized by continued efforts to bring all elements of the armed forces under control of a single agency controlled directly or indirectly by the general staff. Without going into the separate problem of what form the so-called merger of our armed forces should take, we should remember that any plan that would place all armed forces directly or indirectly under the War Department General Staff or any agency indirectly controlled by it would conform to a method by which the German General Staff militarized Germany.

The arguments voiced by our War Department for its plan for unification of the armed forces and creation of a high command seems inspired by the philosophy of those who militarized Germany.

Congressional critics of unification—which they identified with the German General Staff—further noted not only the supposed moral deficiencies of the pre-1945 German General Staff, but also noted that despite that staff's alleged technical excellence, Germany had been defeated in both world wars. Unification, therefore, would lead to a German-type general staff, which would lead to military defeat, rather than the traditional American system of comparatively independent services, which had twice in the 20th century led to military victory.<sup>56</sup>

Congressional *supporters* of unification challenged—and modern historiography on the subject supports them—the assertions that the German General Staff was a joint staff with direct command over all services. Representative St. George noted in 1958 that:<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Unification of the Armed Services. Remarks in the Senate. Congressional Record, v. 93, July 7, 1947. p. 8317.

<sup>56</sup> For example, see *Ibid.*, July 9, 1947. p. 8490.

<sup>57</sup> U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Reorganization of the Department of Defense Hearings, 85th Congress, 2nd session. April 22–May 21, 1958, H.A.S.C. No. 83, Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1958. p. 6263.

. . . the German General Staff was strictly under the Army . . . the Luftwaffe was never included, nor was the Navy.

Members of Congress seeking to refute those critics of unification who were attacking it through attacks on the general staff also noted that while powerful, it had usually been subordinated to civil authority—even if the latter was itself authoritarian, as was the case in Germany, and asserted that the entire panoply of American democratic institutions, concepts, and attitudes—not specific structural characteristics of the military—were what guaranteed that unified U.S. Armed Forces, with or without a joint general staff, would not challenge civilian control of the military. Senator Symington, in debate over the 1958 Act, observed that:<sup>58</sup>

Hitler's Germany was a party dictatorship, not a military dictatorship.

Beginning in 1938, Hitler had a high command of the armed forces, called the OKW; but this was an instrument for Hitler to impose his will on the army, not the reverse.

We deplore Hitler as a civilian authority, but that's what he was.

\* \* \* \* \*

These latter [military] dictatorships do not stem from any particular form of military organization, but from the political immaturity and the habit of authoritarian government, which are the outgrowth of a low level of education of the people.

\* \* \* \* \*

The liberties of this country hang on no such slender thread as what this Congress may legislate as to the powers of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the structure of the Joint Staff.

Under our proposal civilian control is still assured by three levels of civilians in the executive establishment—the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Defense, and the President—in addition to the concurrent authority exercised by the two Houses of Congress.

Congressional critics of unification and, *inter alia*, the general staff concept were *correct* in describing the German General Staff as a German Army elite whose members occupied both national headquarters command and staff positions and senior field commands. In asserting that service unification in the United States would inevitably lead to creation of a joint general staff elite with a similar “lock” on both headquarters and field commands, however, these critics were confusing the *functional* and *organizational* characteristics of whatever joint staff organization might exist in the unified Armed Forces with the *military elite* characteristics of the German General Staff. The actual Joint Staff which was established to provide staff support to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for ex-

<sup>58</sup> Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. Remarks in the Senate. Congressional Record, v. 104, July 18, 1958. p. 14258.

ample, had and has none of the highly selective and meritocratic assignment, educational, and separate career branch characteristics of the pre-1945 German General Staff.<sup>59</sup>

#### IV. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

At first glance, congressional attitudes toward a general staff during the 20th Century appear to vary greatly, depending on whether they were stated before or after World War II. Yet a common thread can be discerned throughout the 80-odd years of intellectual history examined in this study—one entirely consistent with basic strains of American thought and belief. A persistent suspicion of hierarchy and authority, however meritocratically chosen or subordinate to democratic institutions, and an equally persistent egalitarianism, however administratively untidy or counter to “effective” government, pervaded congressional discussion of the general staff concept during 1903–1985.

Thus, before World War II, Members of Congress opposed the U.S. Army General Staff—a small, unelected body of professional soldiers—becoming involved in detailed aspects of Army administration, because to do so would decrease the direct influence of the national legislature on the Army. The Army General Staff could plan strategy all it wanted—the Congress was little interested in strategy anyway. Let the general staff influence resource allocation, however, or personnel decisions, and it constituted the injection of technocratic specialists into areas where democratic generalists—i.e., Members of Congress—should have the final say.

After World War II the distinction became even greater. Support for egalitarian institutions was extended by many into the area of interservice relations, where equality of bureaucratic and political power among the three major military services was held to be the logical outcome of democracy, and the subordination of the services to a central authority, however constitutional, was equated with autocracy. Even supporters of service unification who rejected this latter point of view were at pains to declare their opposition to a general staff which was an elite branch of the officer corps, on the German model, although in their next breath they would carefully delineate why American conditions would prevent the rise of militarism like that of Germany regardless of the type of general staff we had—if any.

In retrospect, the vehemence of objections to an elite general staff based on the assumption that such an organization would threaten American *political* democracy seems misplaced. Modern scholarship suggests that the power and prestige of the German General Staff was more a product of Prussian or German militarism than a creator of it. Yet the congressional opponents of “the general staff” may very well have been correct in sensing something “un-American” about it—even the restricted U.S. Army General Staff. The missions of a general staff—to prepare for war, based on the assumption that *there will be a “next war”*; to conduct systematic *long-range* planning; to do all this in an atmosphere of at least relative secrecy—all fly in the face of the traditional Amer-

<sup>59</sup> Collins, *U.S. Defense Planning: A Critique*. p. 58–60.

ican qualities of optimism (there need not be a next war), ad hoc pragmatism (long-range planning is an undemocratic narrowing of options by technocrats), and openness (the public's "right to know").

Congressional attitudes toward a general staff in the 20th Century, therefore, many indicate the persistence of American social myths (a "myth," in this sense, need not be false—or even susceptible to evaluation as to its truth or falsehood), and the truly representative nature of the Congress in reflecting popular attitudes and beliefs, however, inchoate, formless, or subliminal. If the Congress changes its attitudes about a general staff (either the term itself or the concepts it embodies) it may indicate a strong confidence in the ability of American political institutions to control the military, regardless of how the Nation's highest military command is structured. It might also reflect a changed, deeper, and more substantial acceptance and understanding of the nature of wars and military institutions themselves among not only Members of Congress, but the people they represent.

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