

U.S. DEFENSE PLANNING**A Critique 1/****BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, AND SCOPE**

Sound planning must underpin programs designed to defend the United States from all foes, both foreign and domestic. The President, National Security Council (NSC), State Department, Pentagon, Congress, and senior military commanders in the field all are important participants. So are intelligence, academic, and research communities, which provide support.

This critique first establishes standards, then proceeds to appraise top planners, staffs, apparatus, procedures, and output since World War II, with particular attention to chronic or recurring problems that adversely affect U.S. national defense efforts. Essential improvements at acceptable costs will be difficult (perhaps impossible) until identified defects are reduced substantially.

The ultimate aim of the study is to stimulate debates that could help decisionmakers appraise competing courses of corrective action and pick the most appropriate options at an expeditious pace.

PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS OF PRESIDENTS

No defense planning system can be any better than the people who shape and operate it.

Presidents are the pivot. They either make the most important planning decisions or retain responsibility when they delegate that authority to subordinates. Eisenhower, however, is the only defense specialist to occupy

1/ Summarizes Collins, John M., U.S. Defense Planning: A Critique, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1982, 337p.