

can begin to shape plans. Progress is slow. Many products are spongy. The Joint Chiefs have no programming/budgeting shop whose express purpose is to link plans with resources realistically.

Civilian analysts working for the Secretary of Defense fill the resultant vacuum. They develop alternatives, provide convincing rationale, and often become ultimate arbiters when the Secretary decides what strategy and associated force posture he should recommend the President approve and Congress support.

Commanders-in-chief (CINCs) of unified and specified commands are poorly integrated into the planning process. The Joint Chiefs therefore shoulder part of their burden, overloading the Joint Staff; the CINCs prepare respective plans in relative isolation; and no one effectively ties the eight interdependent CINCs together.

JCS prestige as strategic planners consequently has been low for the last 22 years. The Chairman and individual members sometimes enjoy strong personal influence with the President and Secretary of Defense, but corporate JCS planning went into eclipse after the Bay of Pigs and has remained so ever since.

CONGRESSIONAL CONNECTIONS

Congress, cast in the role of resource allocator and concept critic, does not participate directly in the defense planning process. Its authorizations, appropriations, and oversight authorities, however, frequently shape strategy in a decisive sense.

Many problems mirror those just described for the Executive Branch.

The House and Senate contain few freshman who possess impressive defense credentials the day they are assigned to Armed Services or