Appropriations Committees. Most are lawyers, businessmen, bankers, and lifelong public servants. A minute fraction of those who once wore military uniforms ever profited from duties that dealt with national defense planning.

Congressional workloads and focus on force requirements and funds inhibits the learning process, despite continuity that often is measured in decades. Some absorb strategic skills by osmosis over the years, but not many ever become serious students of strategy. Neither do staff assistants who, in the main, are professional program analysts and budget specialists.

Divided responsibilities distract 100 Senators, each of whom struggles to stay in step with three different drums labelled "federal," "state," and "political party." Most of the 435 Congressmen are beckoned by a fourth, inscribed "district." JCS "dual hat" problems pale by comparison.

Defense plans and programs forwarded to Capitol Hill for approval face fearsome problems, partly because the 535 Members of Congress currently populate approximately 300 committees and subcommittees. Defense planners often fumble, trying to plug into that apparatus at the most appropriate spot, because Congress has no hierarchy even remotely comparable to that in the Executive Branch. House Speakers and Senate Majority Leaders, once so strong, no longer possess assured implementing powers. Neither do committee chairmen.

Parliamentary surprises are commonplace. Decisionmaking is a ponderous process that depends on compromise among many participants, who must develop coalitions that contain working majorities, while beset by lobbyists and internal special interest groups that further fragment Congress. Some within Congress question whether the current composite structure is well suited