

as stipulated in Section 141(d)(1), title 10, United States Code.

All agreed with General David C. Jones, who was Vessey's immediate predecessor, that a four-star Deputy JCS Chairman could perform many useful functions. They decided, however, after extensive deliberations, not to make that recommendation, primarily because they could not define his duties effectively or his place in the "pecking order." That determination almost certainly will cause continuing controversy.

Clear command responsibilities are particularly important in wartime. The chain currently runs from the President and Secretary of Defense through the Joint Chiefs of Staff to unified and specified commands. Whether the Joint Chiefs should recommend statutory changes which would include the JCS Chairman as an integral link in that chain is still under debate.

Institutional Interrogatives

All but one of the current Joint Chiefs (Admiral Watkins) had joint education and/or experience before receiving present appointments. All had close previous relationships and work well together. General Meyer, the Army Chief of Staff, once served under General Vessey; Vessey later served under him. General Gabriel, the Air Force Chief of Staff, was Vessey's subordinate in Korea. Vessey and Admiral Watkins, The Chief of Naval Operations, were Vice Chiefs of their respective Services at the same time and established rapport. General Barrow, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, backed General Vessey to become JCS Chairman. General P.X. Kelley, nominated as the new Marine Commandant, not only has more joint experience than any predecessor but has dealt extensively with the Joint Chiefs, first as Commander, Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force and more recently as a substitute Chief in Barrow's absence. Kelley and General Wickham, nominated as Army Chief of Staff, were colonels together on the Joint Staff in 1971, and have been close ever since.