

The proposal to establish by legislation a Senior Strategy Advisory Board was rejected as unnecessary on the basis of our study. The former members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff or former commanders of Unified or Specified Commands, who would serve on the proposed Board, are already available to provide advice, and recommendations on matters of military tactics and strategy. There is no need to establish yet another advisory committee, with the attendant bureaucratic trappings, in order to obtain this kind of help. There is presently no difficulty in consulting any retired officer, whether on a special committee or not, whenever the need arises. Experience demonstrates that career habits of "service-to-country" continue in retirement, so that these retired officers are generous in spending their time and energy whenever called upon for advice or recommendations. We find nothing to be gained by establishing a formal statutory institution to do the same thing. An additional concern would be the overlap, duplication and confused lines of authority and responsibility that would inevitably result from having two bodies presenting military advice.

Other proposals have as a common theme the perceived need to relieve the Chiefs of the Services of the responsibility for providing the planning and advice that is now the statutory function of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Advocates of these proposals would substitute a body of advisers made up of experienced military officers, perhaps in a final tour of duty, and perhaps supplemented by civilian experts in national security matters, to recommend military strategy, force development, and advice on the allocation of military resources. Service Chiefs would be limited to the task of running their own services in connection with their secretaries. In other words, they would no longer be "dual hatted," as they currently are.

The major disadvantage with this type of proposal is that it separates responsibility from advice. There is considerable benefit derived from the forced discipline on the advisor who must consider his advice in the light of his responsibilities. The Service Chiefs are in the best position to establish priorities and make choices among competing needs and to avoid the luxury of theoretical solutions at unacceptable costs. Moreover, the President and Secretary of Defense would be less likely to hear in person the views and concerns of the Service Chiefs who have the responsibility for organizing, training, and equipping the forces for use by the unified and specified combatant commands. Therefore, I am not convinced that a case has been made for this separation; many witnesses before your Committee last year share my skepticism.