his advisory responsibility is not confined by the bill to any one area, the committee intends that the Chairman give special attention to those issues which the collegial JCS has been unable to address effectively—for example, resource allocation, roles and missions, the unified command plan, and joint doctrine and training. The committee also intends for the Chairman to forge stronger links with the unified commanders in developing his positions. He should serve as their spokesman in Washington, establishing priorities and integrating their recommendations, into a coherent set of combatant command proposals.

Strengthening the Chairman's advisory role should provide an opportunity for Defense Department action which would relieve the present burden of the service chiefs by diminishing the issues they address as members of the JCS and making it less difficult for them to arrive at joint positions articulated by the Chairman. Evolution along these lines is not meant to stifle legitimate dissent, however. To insure open channels for expressing opposing views, H.R. 6954 provides that a Chief may submit any opinion in disagreement with the military advice of the Chairman or the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense, and subsequently, to the President.

Although the argument for creating a deputy chairman is strengthened by the provisions which increase the Chairman's responsibilities, establishing the position makes sense in any case. The JCS Chairman is the senior military officer in the United States. His responsibilities are in proportion to his rank. Yet, unlike the Secretary of Defense, secretaries of the military departments, or chiefs of each service, the Chairman has no deputy. As a consequence, when he is absent the acting chairmanship is often passed among the other chiefs. Testimony revealed that it was not uncommon for the acting Chairman to change numerous times within a few days during the Chairman's absence. Adm. Carl Thor Hanson, a former Director of the Joint Staff, testified:

During one week of my Director's tour, we had, as I recall, seven changes of the Acting Chairman. There was a fairly active crisis at the time and each rotation involved an updated briefing book for the new Acting Chairman and the resultant quickly and possibly inadequately absorbed knowledge.

On more than a few occasions during my tour as Secretary Brown's Military Assistant, I recall his frustration with having to take a quickly and inadequately briefed Acting Chairman to an NSC, SCC, or PRC meeting when then-Chairman Gen. George Brown was out of town. Although theoretically any member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should be completely conversant with all national security issues, practically the responsibilities of being a Service Chief simply preclude complete familiarity with the complex national security issues faced by the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense daily.

H.R. 6954 would correct this situation and provide added support and continuity in the performance of the Chairman's responsibilities.

I now turn to provisions designed to improve staff support. First, Joint Staff personnel.

Testimony revealed a number of disincentives which at times have had the effect of discouraging officers from seeking Joint Staff assignments. Promotions of Joint Staff members have lagged. Services disagree on the caliber of the officers who should be assigned. Joint Staff influence is perceived as limited; as a result, officers who seek challenge may avoid Joint Staff service.

The committee considers the Joint Staff the preeminent U.S. military staff. The personnel provisions of H.R. 6954 are designed to insure that the committee's conviction concerning the Joint Staff become manifest in the structure of the Department of Defense. The bill clearly requires assignment of the most outstanding service officers to the Joint Staff. To insure that result, the bill provides that selection of Joint Staff assignees shall be made solely by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from service lists containing only officers considered to be among the most outstanding.

The bill also includes two provisions concerning promotions. First, it requires the JCS Chairman to submit an evaluation to the President of the performance of any officer who has worked on the Joint Staff and who is recommended for promotion to a grade above major general or rear admiral. Second, the bill makes the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Chairman, responsible for insuring that Joint Staff officers receive equitable career rewards for their performance. Because the demands and complexity of Joint Staff work require talented and dedicated officers, the committee is convinced that performance at the Joint Staff level should be considered a mark of distinction deserving special attention by promotion boards. Though no individual should be guaranteed advancement as a result of Joint Staff service, statistical analyses of serving and former Joint Staff officers should be developed and monitored to insure that Joint Staff performance is given appropriate consideration.

Next, provisions which would improve Joint Staff continuity and experience. Existing legislative provisions limiting Joint Staff assignments to 3 years and prohibiting reassignment in less than 3 years—except for 30 officers—erect insuperable obstacles to staff continuity. At present, the average Joint Staff assignment is less than 30 months; that means the entire staff turns over every 2½ years and the average experience level of Joint Staff officers is less than 15 months.

The legislative faults are compounded by poor Department of Defense managment. General Jones indicated that only 2 percent of the Joint Staff officers have previous Joint Staff experience. Moreover, he reported that only 13 percent of middle grade Joint Staff officers, and less than 25 percent of the colonels and Navy captains, have joint schooling.

General Jones remarked to Congressmen:

It is just as though every time you went through an election and came to Washington, you had a whole new staff and only two percent of them ever had any experience in the Congress.

H.R. 6954 relaxes the legislative restrictions on Joint Staff assignments. It provides that the Secretary of Defense may extend the 3-year assignment for as much as an additional 3 years. Also, as many as 100 Joint Staff members, as opposed to 30 at present, could return to Joint Staff duty in less than 3 years. These less restrictive provisions should afford the flexibility needed to overcome the deficiencies in Joint Staff continuity. At the same time, retaining legislative constraints on the tenure of Joint Staff assignments continues safeguards against the possibility, however remote, that the Joint Staff could evolve into a powerful, self-sustaining, elite military organization superimposed between civilian authorities and the services and combatant commands.

The bill does not address the problems of Joint Staff inexperience caused by faulty Department of Defense personnel management procedures and inattention to joint education. Several witnesses discussed these problems during the hearings. Based on their thoughtful comments, the committee is convinced of the seriousness of those problems and the necessity for corrective measures. But legislative relief is not required. Consequently, the committee intends to monitor Defense Department actions to resolve the problems relating to Joint Staff experience identified in the hearings.

Finally, I will review provisions to improve Joint Staff management and procedures, and establish a Joint Staff charter.

At present the Joint Staff is smothered by complex, voluminous operating procedures which insure that the services control the form and content of Joint Staff work. Although the Chairman manages the Joint Staff, by law, he does so on behalf of the Joint Chiefs. And the Chiefs, over time, have developed an ironclad system which protects service interests and, as a corollary, tends to convert the Joint Staff into an executive secretariat dependent on service staffs.

The following description of the joint staffing process graphically illustrates the debilitating effects of the present system. It is excerpted from an answer for the Record received from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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