

fense programs are carried out by the Department of Defense. The Council would be required to provide advice on its own initiative as well as responding to requests from the President and the Secretary of Defense. A member of the Council designated as its Chairman would preside over the Council, and represent the Council at meetings of the National Security Council.

Section 5 of H.R. 2560 contains several more provisions designed to ensure that the members of the Joint Military Staff are the most outstanding in the armed forces. It requires that joint experience be given substantial weight in the promotion of officers to flag rank. In addition, it permits the Chief of Staff of the National Command Authorities to recommend a certain number of officers for promotion to flag rank from among those serving on the Joint Military Staff.

Response to my proposal, from our colleagues here in the House, from the military, and from others has been extremely favorable. General David C. Jones, General Maxwell D. Taylor, and the respected military historian and analyst Trevor N. Dupuy are only a few of those who have indicated their support. There are currently twenty-five cosponsors of the bill.

As you can see, H.R. 2560 is designed specifically to remedy the flaws in the current system. By taking away the joint responsibilities of the service chiefs, the bill frees them to devote full time to running their individual services. No matter how delicate and talented, no man can serve two masters. My bill removes the need to—the built-in conflict between service interests and joint interests is eliminated.

The National Military Council would improve the quality of advice from the military to civilian decision-makers, particularly on long-term national problems and future military policy. This is precisely the kind of advice that is needed in order to make sound decisions on future force structures and on the long-term procurement of weapons systems. The Chief of Staff of the National Command Authorities would be responsible for advice on matters related to current military policy, strategy, and major Department of Defense programs, and on all major matters related to current forces.

To improve the level of experience on the Joint Military Staff, the number of officers who may be reappointed within three years is increased from thirty to one hundred. In addition, to encourage outstanding officers to seek joint assignment, provision is made for performance in joint assignments to be given substantial weight in promotions.

Let me emphasize that I don't believe that the problems in the JCS are related to people. Thus, I reject the contention of the Secretary of Defense that organizational change is not needed, since good people can make the JCS system work. To the contrary, some of our most outstanding JCS members have been leaders in pointing out the flaws in the present system, and the need for drastic reform. There is another point that must be made: Even if they are able to overcome inherent institutional flaws temporarily, neither the current members of the JCS or the current Administration will be in office forever. These defects in the JCS organization have long been recognized. They will not disappear by being ignored.

There is another point which I need to make. H.R. 2560 will not lessen civilian control of the military. If anything, the bill will improve civilian control, by ensuring that decision-makers get better, and more timely, advice on military strategy and policy. The inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the present JCS system is not the best way to ensure civilian control. Indeed, the problem today is that because of the watered-down common-denominator advice received from the JCS, Secretaries of Defense have turned more and more to advice from civilian staffs on matters where the military voice needs to be heard. H.R. 2560 would help restore a proper balance. Moreover, it contains specific protection against military dominance. The bill makes it clear that the Chief of Staff is to be subordinate to the Secretary of Defense and the President, and that his duties are to be primarily advisory. Our nation has a long tradition of the military being subordinate to civilian authority. H.R. 2560 will not change that tradition.

The next question is whether having a single, dominant military officer will stifle divergent views within the military. Here again, the bill is drafted so that this will not happen. The bill requires the Chief of Staff to consult with and give close attention to the views and recommendations of the service chiefs and the commanders of the unified and specified commands. In addition, the National Military Council will serve as a form of "checks and balances" on the Chief of Staff, and it is provided that Members of the Council may act individually in providing advice and assessments in the same manner as the Council may act as a body. In short, a President or Secretary of defense who wants divergent views should have no trouble obtaining them under the system established by my bill.