

money than almost any other department. His role there is clear. He generates and maintains Armed Forces to meet the needs of national security. But in the chain of command he has an undefined responsibility for determining how all these forces that he has generated would be used in time of war. If this committee can solve that question, I can take over and write you a program of reform for the Joint Chiefs.

Mr. NICHOLS. All right. One of your suggestions is very interesting to me, in that it would certainly seem to strengthen the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and here is a situation that I pose to you.

You have a meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and you are five men at the table, and you have a very difficult issue to make a decision on, to advise the Secretary of Defense and to advise the President.

OK, you find yourselves, as we do in the Congress, and we will today in the Congress, divided; and two people believe this way, and three people on the other side believe differently. And, as we do in the Congress sometime, we water things down, and we dilute, and we come to a conclusion. You seem to think in the military that it is not good policy to dilute and water down, and you leave to the Chairman of that Joint Chiefs of Staff the ultimate authority of the Supreme Court, to use your example, to make that decision.

If two people are of this opinion, and three of that, we don't do it in the democratic principle like we do in the House, in which the majority necessarily rules. You would delegate to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the authority to make the ultimate decision and to settle that issue.

Am I generally correct in that?

General TAYLOR. That is correct.

Bear in mind that under my recommendation any dissatisfied Chief could appeal to the Secretary of Defense. While I favor his device, as long as we have the Joint Chiefs, my preference is to do away with the JCS committee entirely.

I recognize that committees have advantages as well as weaknesses. They have the advantage of representing differing views that ought to be considered. They have the weaknesses of delay, compromise, and so on. And a military command cannot function on that basis operationally. A poor decision made in time is usually better than a better decision too late when you command troops in time of war.

When we get to the interface between civilian leadership and military leadership, at the level of the National Command Authority, clearly the military must adjust to the requirements of the political leadership; but they must be sympathetic to military needs and allow us to mitigate the disadvantages of a committee if indeed we are required to keep the JCS system.

I really believe my suggestions for strengthening the hand of the Chairman are sound and should facilitate business.

Mr. NICHOLS. Mr. Ray.

Mr. RAY. General Taylor, thank you so much for coming today. I have followed your career through the years, and I have admired it very greatly. I am from the hometown of Gen. Courtney Hodges. I have just a couple of questions.