

PREFACE

Recent months have seen a growing interest in the Congress in addressing what are perceived as structural inhibitors to rational and efficient policy-making within the Department of Defense. Increasingly, criticism has focused on structure as the key problem behind such "newsy" failures as disparate as huge prices for spare parts and the failure of the Desert I attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran.

At the direction of the chairman of the committee, the staff has compiled background materials relating to four areas the Investigations Subcommittee is now reviewing: the role and authority of the commanders-in-chief of the unified and specified commands; ways to provide a more joint or unified perspective view within the officer corps of the four services; problems with duplication of effort between the military and civilian staffs at the top of each military department; and weaknesses in the defense agencies.

This document is essentially a collection of comments and critiques by a wide variety of sources, and is intended to give Members of the House Committee on Armed Services a full view of the criticisms that have been made about the existing structure of the Department of Defense. This document also does not address questions of reforming the Joint Chiefs of Staff since the committee reviewed those questions in previous years and reported legislation to the floor that was enacted in the last session and transmitted to the Senate.

This document, it should be noted, is not an effort to present a balance of pro and con views on particular legislation. That will come out in the hearings before the Investigations Subcommittee. The purpose here is to collect the views of many retired military officers, former Pentagon officials and other commentators concerning the scope and scale of the structural problems inside the Pentagon as they view them.