

of the President as Commander in Chief. Any legislation in which the issues of Legislative and Executive responsibilities are confused would be constitutionally suspect and would not meet with my approval.

My views concerning legislation on defense reorganization now pending in the House and Senate reflect a reasoned and open-minded approach to the issues, while maintaining a close watch on the constitutional responsibilities and prerogatives of the Presidency. While I had considered forwarding a separate bill to the Congress, I concluded that this was not necessary since many of the legislative recommendations of the Packard Commission are already pending in one or more bills. However, additional changes in law are also proposed in those other bills, and such changes must be carefully weighed.

Certain changes in the law are necessary to accomplish the objectives we seek. Among these are the designation of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the principal military adviser to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council, and the Chairman's exclusive control over the Joint Staff; the creation of a new Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and the creation of a new Level II position of Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition.

Other proposed changes in law are, in my judgment, not required. It is not necessary to place in law those aspects of defense organization that can be accomplished through executive action. Nevertheless, if such changes are recommended by the Congress, I will carefully consider them, provided they are consistent with current policy and practice and do not infringe upon the authority or reduce the flexibility of the President or the Secretary of Defense.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The organization of our present-day defense establishment reflects a series of important reforms following World War II. These reforms were based upon the harsh lessons of global war and were hastened by the new military responsibilities and threats facing our Nation. They culminated in 1958 with the reorganization of the Department of Defense under President Eisenhower.

President Eisenhower's experience of high military command has few parallels among Presidents since George Washington. The basic structure for defense that he laid down in 1958 has served the Nation well for over 25 years. The principles that governed his reorganization proposals are few but fundamental. They are of undiminished importance today.

First, the proper functioning of our defense establishment depends upon civilian authority that is unimpaired and capable of strong executive action.

As civilian head of the Department, the Secretary of Defense must have the necessary latitude to shape operational commands, to establish clear command channels, to organize his Office and Department of Defense agencies, and to oversee the administrative, training, logistics, and other functions of the military departments.

Second, if our defense program is to achieve maximum effectiveness, it must be genuinely unified.