

the Secretary of Defense and then to the President if he disagrees with the military advice of the chairman of the JCS.

Relieving the service chiefs of the responsibility for corporate advice on the myriad second order joint issues should have other beneficial effects for the Department of Defense. The services have significant problems that require attention. The shortcomings in service procurement practices that have come to light in recent years are a good example. The testimony revealed that the service chiefs are overloaded. Discharging the responsibilities of a service chief is a full-time job. Adequately fulfilling the present responsibilities of a member of the JCS is a second, equally demanding, full-time job. In addition to these responsibilities, because no position of deputy JCS chairman exists, each service chief assumes the role of acting chairman on a rotating basis for three months each year whenever the chairman is not available. Enactment of H.R. 3622, by focusing the JCS on major joint issues and establishing the position of deputy chairman, should free the service chiefs to devote more time to the problems of their services.

Unified and specified commanders advisory role

In strengthening the chairman, the committee also intends to expand the sources of military advice, thereby correcting another shortcoming in the current structure. Notwithstanding the advantages afforded by an advisory body consisting of service chiefs, the present structure suffers from the absence of a corresponding mechanism for eliciting the advice of the unified and specified combatant commanders. These commanders head U.S. forces in Europe, the Pacific, Latin America, and throughout the world, as well as strategic, airlift and other specified forces. The Nation places on the ten unified and specified commanders the awesome responsibility of employing U.S. forces in wartime and maintaining the peacetime preparedness of the combat forces for war. Yet they play a relatively small role as military advisors, and they lack sufficient influence at the seat of government. Testimony strongly suggested that the joint military structure should be strengthened by increasing the stature of the unified and specified commanders. The committee believes that the way to ensure the quality and relevance of military advice is to seek it from those who would be responsible for carrying it out. Consequently, the committee has included provisions in H.R. 3622 that would forge stronger links between the unified and specified commanders and the JCS chairman.

In the 1984 changes to the joint military structure, the JCS chairman was made the spokesman for the unified and specified commanders. H.R. 3622 would make the chairman responsible for consulting with the unified and specified commanders, as well as the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in performing his legally assigned joint responsibilities. The bill would require consultation "as appropriate" in order to allow the chairman needed flexibility. Consultation might be foreshortened, or precluded, by time constraints imposed by civilian authorities or external events. The committee does not intend to impose on the chairman the requirement to consult with each chief and combatant commander on every joint matter. It intends that he consult with those whose services or commands