

in June 1986, is intended to develop for the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Congress, the outline of a consensus for further improvements in defense management and organization.

Notwithstanding the progress which has been made to date, Secretary Weinberger has expressed the willingness to consider change wherever it will strengthen national security. In addressing defense management issues, we believe that the best solutions will emerge through close and continuing cooperation between the Congress, the Administration, and the Blue Ribbon Commission in the coming year. For this reason, it is crucial that the nation obtain the full benefit of all current and impending proposals prior to making a commitment to a specific course of action. The Secretary believes that once he has the opportunity to evaluate the Blue Ribbon Commission's report in conjunction with the Senate Armed Services Committee Report and the various legislative proposals, we shall be in a better position to determine the direction in which to move. Accordingly, we urge that action on any legislation be postponed until this evaluation can be completed.

In the event that we are called upon to take a position on the pending legislation without having had the opportunity to consider it in relation to the upcoming reports, the Department's position on the issues at hand will be consistent with those expressed to Members of Congress by Secretary Weinberger over the past few years. We are hopeful, however, that adequate time will be available to give these matters of national import appropriate consideration in a carefully reasoned manner.

In the final analysis, it is essential that the Congress preserve, not just for this Secretary, but for all future Secretaries of Defense, the flexibility necessary to adapt specific defense organization and management arrangements to meet the demands of changing national security requirements. We are optimistic that this will be accomplished through mutual cooperation with the Congress.

Sincerely,

CHAPMAN B. COX.

COMMITTEE ACTION

The Committee on Armed Services on October 29, 1985, a quorum being present, agreed to report H.R. 3622 by a vote of 38 to 2.

FISCAL DATA

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ESTIMATE

In compliance with clause 7 of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the committee requested the Department of Defense to estimate the impact that passage of the legislation would have on the Department's budget for the next five years. The Department's response is set forth below: