

which advising. For example, former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown testified that:

When it comes to the formal product, the papers that come up through the Joint Staff that are approved by the action officers, the planners, the various desks, and the chiefs themselves, and to which they put their signatures, are almost without exception either not very useful or the reverse of being helpful. That is, worse than nothing.

Former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger agrees with Brown. He has stated that JCS advice is "generally irrelevant, normally unread, and almost always disregarded."

The advice rendered by the JCS is also faulted for a lack of realism and the absence of strategic content. The structure of the Joint Chiefs is such that the group often can not deal realistically with issues that affect service interests. Those issues include matters of fundamental importance to national security: the allocation of resources to various defense missions; the Unified Command Plan which assigns the geographical and functional responsibilities of field commanders; roles and missions to the services; and joint doctrine and training. Concerning strategic thought, witnesses suggested that the multitude of disparate responsibilities shouldered by the chiefs leaves little time or inclination for reflective strategic analysis.

Former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, testifying as a spokesman for the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies Defense Organization Project, summed up many of these shortcomings in the following excerpts from his testimony:

Professional military advice that rises above individual service interests to provide a broader cross-service perspective is an essential ingredient for the effective direction and management of the defense establishment. . . . Today that advice comes primarily from the services, . . . What is lacking is an independent, cross-service perspective. As now organized, the JCS are too frequently unable to provide effective, cross-service advice on issues that affect important service interests or prerogatives. These issues include the most important on the JCS agenda: the formulation of national military strategy, the distribution of service roles and missions, and particularly the allocation of scarce defense resources among competing needs. . . .

The absence of a strong independent joint military voice also undercuts the strategic planning process that links ends (national objectives established by political authorities) and means (the military forces, weapons, and capabilities developed by the service departments). The chairman is the only member of the JCS who is unconstrained by current service responsibilities. But he lacks both the staff and the statutory mandate to make consistently meaningful strategic planning recommendations on the broad range of subjects required. The service chiefs, on the other hand, control large staffs, but the inherent conflict be-