

The provisions enacted in 1984 made the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the spokesman on operational requirements of the unified and specified commanders, increased the tour of duty of Joint Staff officers from three to four years, reduced to two years the minimum time between assignments of an officer to the Joint Staff and removed the three-year limit on the tour of duty of the Joint Staff Director.

Moreover, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was made responsible for selecting Joint Staff officers and determining when issues under consideration by the Joint Chiefs of Staff were to be decided. The Secretary of Defense was made responsible for ensuring that officer personnel management policies of the military services concerning promotion, retention, and assignment give appropriate consideration to the performance of an officer as a member of the Joint Staff.

In 1985, four bills on JCS reorganization were introduced in the House of Representatives. After the third series of hearings in as many Congresses, the committee reported a bill (H.R. 3622) on October 29, 1985 by a vote of 38-2 that would establish the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the principal military advisor and require most of the changes, albeit in modified form, contained in the provisions in the JCS bills considered by the 97th and 98th Congresses. That bill passed the House on November 20, 1985 by a vote of 383-27.

The Senate Armed Services Committee, on October 16, 1985, published the staff study begun in 1983. The 645-page study, entitled "Defense Organization: the Need for Change" (S. Prt. 99-86), is the single most comprehensive congressional examination of the nation's defense establishment. In and of itself, the study makes a compelling case for comprehensive reform of the organization of the national defense establishment. Although authored by the Senate Armed Services Committee staff, the study was prepared with the guidance of and under the review of a task force of 9 members of the committee led by the chairman and ranking minority member. Following publication of the study, the committee held 10 hearings and received testimony from 27 witnesses concerning the contents.

Recognizing that the leadership of the Senate Armed Services Committee intended to make a concerted effort to address organization problems throughout the Department of Defense, the House Armed Services Committee, having completed work on the JCS bill, expanded the compass of its reorganization activities.

During February and March 1986 the committee held another series of hearings. Fifty-two witnesses were called to give their views on the major issues of defense organization. The following letter to the Secretary of Defense announcing the hearings details the issues examined by the committee.