

as those required to support the preparation and execution of complex military operation plans.

There is now no systematic, effective plan for assuring that officers assigned to Joint duty have the requisite staff experience, technical knowledge of Joint systems, practical knowledge of DoD staff activities, and sense of the imperatives of Joint military preparedness to deal effectively with their responsibilities. The Services would not think of manning a submarine or an aircraft or an infantry battalion the way they staff Joint headquarters. Here are some of the statistics. Of the officers serving in the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time of our analysis:

a. Only two percent had previous Joint Staff experience. Only about one third even had prior Service staff experience—that is, experience in the Washington arena. Most were assigned directly from the field without training.

b. Only thirteen percent had attended the five-month resident course at the Armed Forces Staff College specifically aimed at training young officers for Joint duty.

c. Although two-thirds of the colonels and Navy captains had been to one of the five senior military colleges—the three Service war colleges, and the two Joint schools (the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces), less than one-quarter had been to either of the two Joint schools. And while improvements are being made, the two Joint schools have not focused specifically on educating officers for Joint assignments.

d. Their average tour length is less than thirty months. This means that at any given time their average experience level on the Staff is about fifteen months. And there is virtually no corporate memory. The law limits both repetitive tours and tour lengths, and even if it didn't, there are few if any incentives for lengthy or repetitive tours as the system is now managed.

e. The normal tour of general and flag officers is twenty-four months, even less than that of their subordinates. Thus the average level of experience on the Joint Staff for generals and admirals is about one year. Moreover, for those who served during the past five years, less than sixty percent had served previously in any kind of Joint assignment, even though DoD policy states that a Joint duty assignment is a prerequisite to promotion to flag rank and Joint duty for that purpose is very broadly (actually, too broadly) defined.

This combination of lack of Washington staff experience, lack of practical knowledge of Joint activities, and lack of formal preparation through the Joint school system—coupled with the very short tours without repetition—makes it very difficult for Joint Staff officers, no matter how capable, to deal effectively with their responsibilities. Thus, the Chairman and the JCS as a corporate body are similarly handicapped.

Actually, Joint assignments are seldom sought by officers. There are few rewards and there are significant haz-