

tions, the forces shall be assigned in such a manner that all forces operating within the geographic area of responsibility of a unified commander "shall be assigned to, and under the command of" that commander.

The Secretary of Defense is given the necessary latitude, in carrying out these provisions, to allow for circumstances that the committee cannot anticipate. He may decide which forces shall be assigned to combatant commands and to which command those forces shall be assigned.

#### COMMAND OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS

##### *Description of the changes relating to command of combatant commands included in the bill*

Subsection 162(b) of the new chapter 6 would specify that each unified or specified commander *commands* the forces assigned to his command. *Command* is defined in that section to empower the commander "to give authoritative direction to subordinate forces necessary to accomplish assigned missions." The bill adds a number of provisions intended to safeguard the combatant commanders' authority:

A requirement in subsection 162(b)(2) that makes the Secretary of Defense responsible for ensuring that combatant commanders have sufficient authority to exercise effective command.

A requirement in subsection 162(b)(3) that any combatant commander who does not believe that he has sufficient authority to command effectively promptly inform the Secretary of Defense.

Authority in subsection 162(c)(1) for the unified or specified commander "to prescribe the chain of command and organizational structure of forces assigned" to his command.

Authority in subsection 162(c)(2) for the unified or specified commander "to train forces assigned to that command; and to employ those forces to accomplish assigned missions."

A requirement in section 166 of the bill that the unified and specified commanders shall have a strong voice in the selection of their principal subordinate commanders and personnel assigned to their staffs.

Authority to convene general courts-martial provided in subsection 166(b) of the bill.

Authorization in subsection 164(b) to assume responsibility for support of assigned forces as directed by the Secretary of Defense.

Subsection 162(b) of the new chapter 6 would replace a section in subsection 124(b) of title 10 that states that "a force so assigned [to a combatant command] is under the *full operational command* of the commander. . . ." [emphasis added].

##### *The concept of military command*

The term "full operational command" has been used as a device to limit the authority of combatant commanders. As a result, the commanders of the single-service forces assigned as subordinates to the unified commanders (who are referred to as "component" com-