

The House amendment contained no similar provision.

The House recedes with two amendments. First, the Secretary of Defense would be required to include in his guidance for the preparation and review of contingency plans the specific force levels and specific supporting resource levels projected to be available for the period of time for which the contingency plans are to be effective. The second amendment would require the Secretary of Defense, with the advice and assistance of the JCS Chairman, to provide annually to the heads of Department of Defense components written policy guidance for the preparation and review of the program recommendations and budget proposals of their respective components.

With respect to the additional duty assigned to the Secretary of Defense concerning the qualifications of political appointees, the conferees remain concerned about the lack of sufficient experience and expertise by persons appointed to political positions in the Department of Defense. In a field as complex as national defense, inexperienced political appointees are a fundamental weakness in achieving sound and effective management. Although the executive branch can most effectively solve this problem through its selection process, the Senate conferees agreed to establish and exercise more rigorous confirmation standards for persons nominated for these political positions.

Section 113(b) of title 10 (as redesignated by section 101 of the conference substitute amendment) provides that:

The Secretary [of Defense] is the principal assistant to the President in all matters relating to the Department of Defense. Subject to the direction of the President and to this title and section 2 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 401), he has authority, direction, and control over the Department of Defense.

This current provision ensures that the Secretary has full power over every facet of the Department of Defense. The Secretary has sole and ultimate power within the Department of Defense on any matter on which the Secretary chooses to act. Provisions of the conference substitute amendment refer to various activities as being subject to the powers of the Secretary of Defense, using the phrase "subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense". The conferees agreed that use of this phrase is solely for purposes of emphasis and that the absence of this phrase elsewhere in the conference substitute amendment is not to be construed as limiting the power of the Secretary under section 113(b) to exercise authority, direction, and control over an activity. Likewise, the conferees agreed that provisions of the conference substitute amendment concerning the decisionmaking process or requiring the Secretary to act with the advice or assistance of another officer or official do not limit the power or responsibility of the Secretary of Defense in the exercise of his authority, direction, and control.

**SEC. 103. MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO REORGANIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

The Senate amendment contained a provision (section 101) that would repeal the authority of the Secretary of Defense to change