

The House recedes with an amendment to require the Presidential notification at least 60 days after establishing a new combatant command or after significantly revising the missions, responsibilities, or force structure of an existing combatant command.

The Senate amendment contained a provision (section 112) that would define four terms for chapter 6 of title 10: unified combatant command, specified combatant command, combatant command, and combatant forces.

The House amendment contained no similar provision.

The House recedes with an amendment to delete the definition of the term "combatant force" which is not used in chapter 6 of title 10 (as provided by the conference substitute amendment).

Social Combatant Commands

The House amendment contained a provision (section 101) that would authorize the President to establish special combatant commands if the President determined that the situation warranted such a force to perform a specific military mission. This provision would also require the President to prescribe the shortest practicable chain of command for each force deployed consistent with proper supervision and support.

The Senate amendment contained no similar provision.

The House recedes. The conferees agreed that the President already has authority, as Commander in Chief, to establish such special combatant commands and to prescribe their chains of command. The conferees do believe that considerable study of how the President can more effectively use such authority in crises is needed. The role of the President and the Secretary of Defense in crises during the last 30 years has been inconsistent. In some instances, the President and the Secretary have failed to take prompt action to ensure the effective organization, employment, direction, and control of U.S. military forces committed to combat operations. As a consequence, streamlined command arrangements and other necessary adjustments tailored to the situation have not been established. In other instances, the President and the Secretary have been over-involved and have engaged in unnecessary micro-management of tactical operations.

The conferees agreed that there is a genuine requirement for effective Presidential control in efforts to manage certain crises, especially those with the potential for superpower confrontation. In today's international security environment, in which both the United States and the Soviet Union possess substantial nuclear arsenals and in which the two superpowers are locked in competition either directly or indirectly in numerous world areas, the need to manage and terminate confrontations before they escalate to war has become increasingly important.

To begin the necessary study of how the President can more effectively manage crises, the conferees agreed to direct that the initial review of the combatant commands (Unified Command Plan), as required by section 212 of the conference substitute amendment, should develop procedures by which the President could systematize his evaluation of command arrangements, including the chain of command. Such procedures should produce more effective re-